

THE CONCEPT OF CREATION IN PROPHETIC  
TRADITION FROM AMOS TO DEUTERO ISAIAH

Thesis submitted by  
EMANUEL GERRIT SINGGIR,  
born at Jakarta, Indonesia,  
on the 7th of August, 1949,  
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Supervisor:

Professor R. Davidson,  
M.A., B.D.

# E R R A T A

P. 279, alinea 2, line 8 from below.

These following descriptions should be inserted between alinea 1 and alinea 2, and thus precede the discussions on verse 8:

אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	You have never heard, you have never known,
אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	from of old your ear would not be opened.
אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	For I knew that you would be very treacherous,
אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ	and that from birth you were called a rebel.

V. 8. The construction  $\text{אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ}$  is odd. The *prop.* in the BHS suggested the reading of *gal* passive  $\text{אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ}$ . This is supported by the V and the Syr. On the other hand Schoors (*op.cit.*, p. 290) thinks we should follow G.R. Driver's proposal to read it as  $\text{אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ}$ . This reading is supported by the T and indirectly by the LXX:  $\text{ἐν ὅτι οὐκ ᾔδεισας}$  (the first pers. can be explained as a misreading of a sec. pers., due to defective writing), and is confirmed by the Q<sup>a</sup>. We opt for the first possibility.

P. 393, alinea 1, line 10 from above.

These following descriptions should be inserted between verse 9ab and verse 10.

V.9c.  $\text{אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ}$  -  $\text{אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ}$ , "You cleave the earth with rivers".  
The word  $\text{אָוֹרֶה}$  is usually associated with the splitting of water rather than land (cf. Pss 74:15; 78:13). We have seen above J.A. Emerton's view on Ps 74:15, which refers to Yahweh's drying up of the Flood. He cleaves ( $\text{אָוֹרֶה}$ ) the spring and torrent and dries up the perennial streams ( $\text{אָוֹרֶה לֹא יָדַעְתָּ}$ ) (in "'Spring and Torrent' in Psalm LXXIV 15", SVT XV(1965), pp. 122-33).

Because of this usual association, B. Margulis thinks it is syntactically improbable that v.9c in itself belongs to v.9 (in "Psalm of Habak-

kuk: A Reconstruction and Interpretation", ZAW 82(1970) pp. 409-42). His solution is to transpose v.15a, which according to him is also out of place in the context of vv.15-16 to v.9, and to emend v.9c :

You lead your horses through the sea,  
 you cleave the Rivers of the Earth (i.e.  
 the Abyss).

The context of Hab 3:8-9b is about Yahweh's anger towards the sea. In v.10 however, it is the mountains which are frightened. It is possible that a later hand could have been influenced or controlled by v.10 when v.9c was transcribed. The context of Hab 3:8-9 thus gives weight to Margulis' suggestion.

On the other hand the JB retains the MT by giving v.9c a natural explanation. The phrase refers to the torrential rain which accompanies the storm. V.9 is compared with Ps 77:16-18. We have rejected this kind of approach to Hab 3. Still, a later hand could interpret the text in that way, and such became confused when he tried to see a relationship between v.9 and v.10.

We do not think that v.15a is out of place in the context of vv.15-16, so Margulis' suggestion of transposing it to v.9 is unnecessary. But his proposal of emendation is in our opinion the best that can be made out of the text.

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## Preface

The draft of this doctoral thesis was done in the academic years of 1978-1982 and finally submitted to the Department of Old Testament and Semitic Studies, Faculty of Divinity, The University, Glasgow, on the 23<sup>th</sup> of December, 1982. I wish to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to my supervisor, Professor R. Davidson, for his guidance and encouragement during the writing of this thesis. I have also enjoyed his personal goodness and that of his family. The staff of both the main library of the University and the Divinity library must be given credits for their attention and service. Ms Kathleen Clark typed the draft with speed and accuracy.

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Special thanks are to be rendered to Dr I.J. Cairns at Invercargill, New Zealand. Without his personal effort and sacrifice it would not have been possible for me to achieve the completion of my study. It is to him and to his wife Mae that I dedicate this work. My parents did not always succeed in hiding their concern for a son thousands of miles away from home with their words of humour and trust. Again I am fortunate to have faithful friends who comforted me with their letters. Finally, I am grateful to the Synod of the Protestant Church in Western Indonesia (GPIB), which has given me permission to complete my theological studies.



Abbreviations

AB	The Anchor Bible
abs.	absolute
AJSL	American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures
Akkad.	Akkadian
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament
art.	article
ASTI	Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute
AV	Authorised Version
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beiträge
BDB	F. Brown-S.R. Driver-C.A. Briggs, <u>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</u>
BHK	Biblia Hebraica edidit Rudolf Kittel
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CB	The Century Bible
CBQ	Catholic Bible Quarterly
ChQR	Church Quarterly Review
def.	definitive
DI	Deutero Isaiah
DOTT	Documents from Old Testament Times
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
Enc.	Encounter
EvTh	Evangelische Theologie
ExpT	Expository Times
fem.	feminine
fol.	following

GNB	Good News Bible
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
Hiph.	Hiphil
HThR	Harvard Theological Review
IB	The Interpreter's Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
imperf.	imperfect
inf.	infinitive
Int.	Interpretation
J	The Jahwist source
JB	The Jerusalem Bible
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JCS	Journal of Cuneiform Studies
JPS	The Jewish Publication Society of America
JR	Journal of Religion
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
JThC	Journal of Theology and Church
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KBH	L. Koehler - W. Baumgartner - W.L. Holladay, <u>A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</u> , Brill, Leiden, 1971.
KT	Kerk en Theologie
LXX	The Septuagint
lit.	literally
masc.	masculine
MSS	Manuscripts
MT	Masoretic Text
NEB	The New English Bible

NCB	The New Century Bible
OT	The Old Testament
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studien
P	The Priestly source
part.	participle
pers.	personal
Pl./Plur.	Plural
prop.	proposal
Q	Qumran
RevExp	Review and Expositor
RGG	Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RSV	The Revised Standard Version
sg/sing.	singular
SJT	Scottish Journal of Theology
SOTS	Society for Old Testament Study
ST	Studia Theologica
SVT	Supplement to Vetus Testamentum
Syr.	Syriac
T	The Targum
TB	Theologische Bucherei
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
TGUOS	Transactions of Glasgow University Oriental Society
THAT	Theologisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament
ThL	Theologische Literaturzeitung
USQR	Union Seminary Quarterly Review
V	The Vulgate
VT	Vetus Testamentum

WMANT      Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament  
ZAW        Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft  
ZThK        Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

The abbreviation of the name of the books of the Old Testament follows that of the Revised Standard Version.



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1. The purpose and method of this investigation

A quick glance at the material in Isaiah 40-55 is enough to give an impression of frequent references to creation. Our aim is to investigate whether the use of statements concerning creation in Deutero Isaiah (DI) could be the result of a conscious utilisation of materials of tradition, and whether DI's treatment of the existing materials concerning creation is a continuation of a certain pattern already established by his prophetic predecessors during the pre-exilic period. To achieve our aim we follow some directions indicated by D.F. Knight.<sup>1</sup> In order to get a full insight into Knight's directions we present them again in a condensed form.

Knight divided verbal tradition into two aspects: the traditio, which is the process (in its totality and its details) whereby the material of tradition is passed from one generation to the next, and the traditum, the traditional material itself which is being transmitted.<sup>2</sup> The traditio in turn has several aspects<sup>3</sup>: 1. Interpretation and actualisation. Each generation needs to interpret and apply the old traditions to the present age. 2. Agglomeration and fusion. Original units became gathered together with other units for several reasons, thereby forming a larger whole. 3. Traditionists, circles, schools. A tradition would not have survived unless some group or groups were responsible for forming, cultivating and preserving a given tradition. 4. Geographical location. Traditions

1. D.F. Knight, Rediscovering the Traditions of Israel, revised edition, Missoula, 1975.

2. ibid., p. 5.

3. ibid., pp. 5-10.

often remain attached to specific locations. 5. Outside forces (political, social, psychological, religious/cultic factors). 6. Means of transmission: oral, written? 7. Memory. 8. The transition from oral to written form. Traditions undergo a change when they are removed from their Sitz im leben and made part of a written composition. The attempt to fix an oral tradition in itself is an act of (redactional) interpretation. 9. Composition and redactional techniques.

Traditum, too, has several aspects<sup>4</sup>: 1. Expressions of faith and community life. This is closely related to traditio aspects 1, 3 and 5 above. 2. Changes in size. 3. Changes in meaning. At various stages in the development of the content of tradition a shift in meaning and thus in function occur, e.g. the reactualisation and reworking of the ipsissima verba of the prophet by his disciples. 4. Changes in language. 5. Form and Gattung.

Besides these five aspects, traditum has also several other facets which are abstractions derived from the contents of a tradition or a text but not transmitted by and for themselves in isolation from a context.<sup>5</sup> These abstractions are divided again into 'substance' and 'import'. Substance in turn is divided into: 6. plot: the dramatic plan or skeleton of happenings which constitutes the basis of sagas, epics, narratives and novelles. Plot is not to be confused with motif. 7. motif: smaller than plot, but nevertheless presents a material, situational element (an item or a person). 8. theme: the basic idea from which a narrative springs and which holds it together. On the other hand, import could also be divided into: 9. concept:

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4. ibid., pp. 11-20.

5. ibid., pp. 13-18.



the mental image of a thing, e.g. love, sin, goodness. 10. problem: e.g. theodicy, nature, fate. 11. notion: e.g. the violent fate of the prophets. Then comes the last two of the aspects of traditum: 12. Streams of tradition. There existed in Israel a number of traditional lines or 'streams'. To determine such a stream requires the work of synthesis, drawing together the traditio-historical insights gained from the examination of a wide range of texts and traditum elements. Two characterising features of a stream will be its geographical localisation and its special circle of traditionists (e.g. prophets, priests, court officials). 13. Post-history of the text. Many but not all of these aspects will be dealt with in our discussion. Concerning the traditio, we are going to examine the interpretation and actualisation of creation, its possible fusion with other units such as the Zion tradition and the problem of its belonging to a certain group. Especially in this last aspect we shall try to decide whether cultic materials may be given a reinterpretation by a group which is closely related to the cult, but nevertheless maintains distinct characteristics. However, we are not certain whether Amos or DI may be said to belong to a group (unless the series of prophets from Amos to DI may be regarded as one group). Even if it is possible that there is a group of traditionists, it is more likely that it is they who are attached to a prophetic figure and not the other way round. Moreover, the scope of our investigation is the texts of the 'writing' prophets in the Old Testament (OT), so it is more concerned with the traditum than the traditio. But as Knight has indicated, close attention must also be paid to the aspects of traditio such as the traditionists and the outside forces.

More problematic is to locate where creation belongs. It could be a theme. The theme of the Genesis narrative chapters 1-11

is creation.<sup>6</sup> But the subject of our study is not the creation narratives, although of course they will be taken into consideration. We are not sure whether creation belongs to the same category as love, sin or goodness. Nevertheless, we are going to use the term 'concept' for creation, because at least it gives us an image of an idea or belief. The difference in our use of the term 'concept' from Knight's perhaps could be stated as this: the 'concept' of creation serves as a pointer towards other 'concepts' (in the sense of Knight's) such as salvation or judgement. This is related to the traditum aspect.

3. The change however, is not in the content of tradition but in its context. Concept in Knight's direction then will be dealt as 'context' in our investigation. In the light of these considerations our study could be titled "The Concept of Creation in Prophetic Tradition from Amos to Deutero Isaiah."<sup>7</sup>

## 2. Survey of modern interpretations of Creation in the Old Testament

Gone are the days of the late 19th century, when the usual explanation was that creation stories only become known in Israel after her encounter with other nations and higher civilisation at the time of her exile and after.<sup>8</sup> One explanation was that before the exile there existed the danger of syncretism with the Canaanite cult of Baal and Astarte. This danger is best faced by being silent about

6. However, according to D.J. Clines, the theme in Genesis 1-11 is "Creation-Uncreation-Recreation", "Theme in Genesis 1-11", CBQ 38 (1976), pp. 483-507.

7. Some scholars, however, used the term 'tradition' for creation, like H.A. Brongers, De Scheppingstradities bij de Profeten, Amsterdam, 1945; G.M. Landes, "Creation Tradition in Proverbs 8:22-31 and Genesis 1", A Light Unto My Path, H.M. Bream et al (eds.), Philadelphia, 1974, pp. 279-93; in our discussion on scholarly opinions the phrase "Creation Tradition" will be left as it is.

8. On this see B.W. Anderson in Creation versus Chaos, New York, 1967, p. 26 and in IDB, K-Q, pp. 481-86.



things concerning nature. During the exile and after there is no need to fear the old enemy, so creation is taken up and used freely by DI.<sup>9</sup> But it is more likely that fear of syncretism is overcome by polemics, by taking over some of the characteristics of the alien god/gods, in fact by becoming to a certain extent, 'syncretistic'.<sup>10</sup>

Many came to realise that it is not fruitful to judge the significance of an idea by the number of its appearances in an early or late period. So, while being ready to admit an early date for several passages concerning creation (either in explicit or in what they thought as implicit references),<sup>11</sup> most of the scholars continued to centre their attention upon the theological role or significance of creation in ancient Israelite religion both before, during and after the exile.<sup>12</sup>

The prevailing idea until fairly recently, an idea mostly associated with the name of Gerhard von Rad, holds that creation faith in the OT has no independence of its own, but only plays a supporting role to

9. T. Boman, "The Biblical Doctrine of Creation", ChQR 165 (1964), pp. 140-151. By stating that the great prophets almost never talked about creation (our underline) Boman is greatly minimising the existence of the creation concept in the pre-exilic prophetic tradition.

10. Here we are denying Boman's way of argumentation. We ourselves regard syncretism as a necessary process in the historical development of a religious tradition, but even so we do not agree that the creation concept was the result of a syncretistic process during the exile.

11. As in passages like Gen 14:19, 22; 24:3; 1 Kings 8:12(LXX), several psalms, the occurrences of the word נִצַּח in the pre-exilic writings and related to that, the 'doxologies' in the book of Amos. To those who give a certain significant role to creation in Israel since early times the list of creation passages could become longer, especially regarding the psalms.

12. Our purpose is to examine creation in the prophetic tradition from Amos to Deutero Isaiah, so we limit our discussion up to the exilic period.

the complex of a historico-soteriological faith.<sup>13</sup> von Rad observed that Deut 6:21-23 and 26:5-9, which he regarded as ancient historical credal statements concerning the gift of the land and fertility, had nothing to say about creation. And in the most serious polemic with Baalism which the faith of Israel had to face regarding the conception of nature, known to us from the books of Hosea and Deuteronomy, there were no arguments based on creation, although such arguments might have been conclusive in pointing out the fact that nature and its forces are the creation of Yahweh.<sup>14</sup> Ps 136:5-9 deals with the creation of the world, but at v.10 it abruptly changes course in order to recount the deeds of Yahweh in history. In this psalm the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of redemption stand side by side, but unrelated to each other. The climax of the psalm, however, is concerned with the latter. Pss 98 and 33 may also have the same climax. The main theme moves from protology to soteriology. Ps 74:22-23 referred to the creation of the world by Yahweh, but the term *לְשׁוֹנֵי יְשׁוּעָה* in v. 12 which one can only translate as "saving acts" underlines that the doctrine of creation there is not standing on its own but subordinate to the interests and content of the doctrine of redemption. From the result of his examination of creation statements in DI von Rad concluded that at no point in DI does the doctrine of creation appear in its own right; it never forms the main theme of pronouncement, nor

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13. G. von Rad, "The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation", The Problem of Hexateuch and Other Essays, Edinburgh-London, 1966, pp. 131-43. This is his article from 1936. See also his Old Testament Theology, I, London, second impression, 1977, pp. 136-65. The idea of the subsidiary role of creation also appears in E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, London, 1974, pp. 136-58 and in L. Koehler, Old Testament Theology, London, 1957, pp. 87-88.

14. von Rad, op. cit., p. 132.



provides the motive of a prophetic utterance. Even in DI it was used only as a stimulation to faith and to perform an ancillary function.<sup>15</sup>

But this idea has been increasingly attacked by other scholars who are sceptical about the emphasis on a soterio-historical faith and by these who like to assign more independence and importance to creation. Th.C. Vriezen is strongly doubtful of von Rad's opinion that Deut 26:5b is an ancient credo, which can be used as evidence that the faith of Israel is a historical one since from the early times. According to Vriezen it is a typical deuteronomic product.<sup>16</sup> We do not wholly agree with him. The shortness of two phrases in Deut 26:5b-9, 'יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד and לֹא יָדָענוּ מִלְּפָנָיו are probably an indication of their antiquity. But the antiquity of these two is not sufficient to regard the whole of Deut 26:5b-9 as ancient. The silence of creation in it and in the books of Hosea and Deuteronomy actually proves nothing. It is dangerous to argue from silence.

15. ibid., p. 136. His opinion on creation in DI and in the OT as a whole has been supported by many, Anderson, op. cit., p. 131; W. Foerster, κτιλω, TDNT, III, pp. 1000-5; R. Rendtorff, "Die Theologische Stellung des Schöpfungsglaubens bei Deuterojesaja", ZThK 51 (1954), pp. 12-13; C. Stuhlmüller, Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah, Rome, 1970, pp. 3-15, 191-208; Stuhlmüller went further than von Rad in entirely disclaiming the pre-supposedness of creation in DI by stating that DI's concern is mainly '(re-) creation' or 'creative redemption' not 'first creation' (i.e. creation in the cosmic sense).
16. Th.C. Vriezen, The Religion of Ancient Israel, London, 1967, pp. 126-27. Actually Vriezen is referring to von Rad's opinion that originally the Sinai tradition was independent from the Exodus and the Settlement traditions, but his argument can also be used to refute von Rad in this case. Cf. his other work, "The Credo in the Old Testament", Studies in the Psalms, A.H. van Zijl, (ed.), Potchefstroom, 1963, pp. 5-17.

As for von Rad's ideas concerning creation in DI, Ph.B. Harner has argued that even if it does not acquire the status of an independent article of faith, creation does play a major, integral role in DI's thought.<sup>17</sup> It is necessary to distinguish between the metaphorical use of the vocabulary of creation by DI as in Is 55:12; 40:3-5; 41:17-20<sup>18</sup> and the direct reference to creation traditions as an integral part of the total structure of thought in DI, with at least a relative independence of its own, as in 45:11-13; 40:27-31; 44:24-28.<sup>19</sup> Harner rightly saw that both the Exodus tradition and the creation tradition have a functional relationship within DI's thought of imminent restoration for the exiled people.<sup>20</sup> He also stated that creation faith serves to bridge the gap between the Exodus tradition and the expectation of the imminent restoration of Israel, but he did not explain clearly what he meant by this.<sup>21</sup>

Th.M. Ludwig went further in asking whether the use of creation terminology for election and deliverance of Israel is merely "metaphorical."<sup>22</sup> According to him DI is following cultic usage of mythological language in describing Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The Exodus tradition

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17. Ph.B. Harner, "Creation faith in Deutero-Isaiah, VT 17 (1967), pp. 298-306.

18. ibid., p. 300.

19. ibid., p. 301.

20. Cf. C. Westermann, Creation, London, 1974, p. 117.

21. Harner, op. cit., p. 304.

22. Th.M. Ludwig, "The Tradition of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah", JBL 92 (1973), pp. 345-357. Ludwig's concern in including what Harner called as "metaphors" in DI's references to creation is of course to strengthen the role it plays in DI's thought. But equally hasty is it to regard references to creation and nature in the OT as having a mythological background. This problem shall be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter.



itself plays little part. This cultic tradition appears to stand independently in DI and form a motif for prophetic utterances and a basis for proclamation of deliverance.

We have seen above, although Harner's opinion is considerably different from von Rad, he did not question that Israel's faith was primarily oriented toward Yahweh's deeds of salvation in history.<sup>23</sup> But is there a possibility, that even this, is not true? Let us have a look at the theological outlook which forms the basis of von Rad's thesis. According to this outlook history is the arena of God's activity. Yahwism understands itself exclusively as a salvation faith, springing out of special historical experiences.<sup>24</sup> The OT consists of narrative and confessional documents which are primarily historical in character. Parts of the OT which do not fall into this category, like creation stories and passages concerning wisdom have to be regarded as secondary and to be placed within a framework of history or better, Heilsgeschichte.

This view lacks conviction if it can be proved that in no way in the OT do creation stories function in a secondary role. J. Barr outlined some principles for dealing with the multiplex character of the OT tradition.<sup>25</sup> From the point of view of religious history he

23. Harner, op. cit., pp. 299, 302.

24. von Rad, Old Testament Theology, I, p. 137. However, it has to be noticed that von Rad has somewhat modified his opinion in 1964, see "Some aspects of the Old Testament world view", in The Problem of Hexateuch and Other Essays, pp. 144-65, especially the statement in p. 144; and in Wisdom in Israel, London, 1978, p. 225, he acknowledges to Wisdomic creation faith a high measure of independence.

25. J. Barr, Old and New in Interpretation, London, 1966, pp. 15-33, 65-102.

thought it is unlikely that creation stories, whose existence in Israel from the early times is acknowledged, should not attain significance until later times. In them we do not see a productive process uniquely initiated by an act of God in history, but a process of thought and worship, sifting and reconstructing earlier ideas. The tradition may have its beginning not in a particular act of God within history but in a series of facts and thoughts which emerge from an impenetrable antiquity.<sup>26</sup> Based on the principle of a cumulative progression of a narrative he holds that a certain type of 'independence' could be found in the creation stories.<sup>27</sup> He explains the principle as follows: firstly, what is told first is told when the following elements are still in the future; secondly, the structure of the earlier stages may be different from that which is to come, and not be dominated by the pattern of the later stages even if these later stages from another point of view could be called 'more important'. Accordingly, the Genesis creation story is not 'independent', but the content of the creation story does not reveal any dependence on the Exodus theme. So, accordingly, to Barr, "'History', when used as an organising and classifying bracket, is not a biblical category."<sup>28</sup>

From what we have seen in the discussion concerning the concept of creation in the preceding pages, it is indeed difficult to maintain

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26. ibid., pp. 18-19; see also W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, II, London, 1967, p. 96.

27. Barr, op. cit., p. 76.

28. ibid., p. 69. On Barr's criticism of the notion of Heilsgeschichte see pp. 65-102; cf. G. Fohrer, History of Israelite Religion, London, third impression, 1977, pp. 183, 275. From the other side of the hill B. Albrektson has demonstrated that contrary to what was commonly believed as unique to Israel history too, was much the concern of other faiths surrounding her, History and the Gods, Lund, 1967, pp. 89-97. But even if there is no concept of Heilsgeschichte and no word in Biblical Hebrew for 'history', we should not deny that Israel knows about historiography.



von Rad's theological outlook. Creation has an important and self-standing position in DI as well as in the whole of the OT. The impression of the scarcity of references to creation in the pre-exilic writings is probably due to a reluctance to grant such an importance to creation, to regard certain pre-exilic passages as belonging to creation, or to accept a pre-exilic date for some admitted creation passages. If we hold to the pre-exilic date of some passages which many regards as post-exilic<sup>29</sup>, then it becomes clear that the pre-exilic writings are not so silent about creation.

Although we agree with Barr in his analysis of the independence and significance of creation his concern, however, is more with the narrative passages of the OT such as the Genesis creation stories and not with statements of creation such as in Jeremiah and DI.<sup>30</sup> These statements undoubtedly indicated the importance of creation. But important as they are, they may not be put in the place of the 'ousted' heilsgeschichtliche faith. They must be related to something. We must avoid the inadequacy of limiting the content of Israel's faith. Her faith in neither a "salvific-historical" nor a "creation-natural" faith, but is all-embracing, covering the whole realm of the world and life.<sup>31</sup> This of course does not mean that there is no theology

29. e.g. the 'doxologies' in the book of Amos. We would also include the J narrative of creation and many of the psalms, even if von Rad rightly saw (in Old Testament Theology, I, p. 136) that the J narrative is more about the creation of man than about the creation of the world and that many of the psalms have to be examined carefully as to whether they belong to creation or not.

30. So his suggestions to use the concept of story instead of history in JR 56 (1976), pp. 1-17 is not of much use for us, for how can creation statements be called 'story'? This is of course unless the statements are regarded as part of a story, but precisely in this case there is disagreement whether the whole of the OT could be described as one story.

31. Fohrer, op. cit., p. 183.

concerning creation in the OT, but it is not a body of doctrine deliberately set apart from other doctrines.

Is there a possibility that creation has to be related, not to history or to other concepts such as the covenant (E. Jacob) but to the understanding of existence of life in the worshipping community? Could it be that creation in the cult and in the prophetic tradition are seen in tension with chaos?<sup>32</sup> Is it possible to take over Harner's argument on DI, without accepting that DI's structure is of salvation faith in history? If creation is important in the OT, then there must be a possibility of describing Yahweh the creator as being involved in history, or to put it another way, there must be a possibility of relating the belief in creation to the everyday experience of the people.

The word 'creation' has many connotations in the OT scholarship. So it is necessary to make some limitations in the next chapter concerning its use.

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32. The study on creation and chaos begins long ago with H. Gunkel, Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit, Göttingen, 1895; Anderson, Creation versus Chaos, New York, 1967; B.S. Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament, London, 1960; P. Ricoeur, The Symbolism of Evil, Boston, 1969, K. Nielsen gives a new treatment of this theme in Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge, Sheffield, 1978.



A. The Scope and Limits of Creation Thought in the Old Testament

CHAPTER TWO: CREATION, NATURE AND MYTH

1. Creation and the World, Creation and human beings.

Based on the results of scholarship on creation stories from all over the world C. Westermann put forward his thesis that stories of the creation of the world were formed in the high civilisations. Because creation of the world and creation of man existed together in the high civilisations while in the primitive civilisations only stories of creation of man were found. Westermann thinks that the stories of creation of the world were formed later than stories of man, as a reflection by man on his existence.<sup>1</sup> Concerning the OT, Westermann sees his view reflected in the Genesis narrative of creation. In the J narrative, which is much older, the emphasis is on the creation of man, while the much younger P narrative, which is mainly concerned with the creation of the whole universe, incorporated without fully integrating the story of creation of man in his scheme of creation of the world.<sup>2</sup> The consequence of this view is that we should not think of the tradition materials used in the J narrative, because of its more simple presentation of creation, as later than the more sophisticated presentation of creation in the materials of tradition used in the P narrative.<sup>3</sup> It seems it should be the other way round: the more simple

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1. Westermann, op. cit., p. 71; cf. S.G.F. Brandon, Creation Legends in the Ancient Near East, London, 1963, p. 14. It means that stories about 'beginnings' were never told for their own sake, but always have an existential meaning.

2. Westermann, Genesis, BKAT 1/2, Neukirchen - Vluyn, 1967, pp. 95-7.

3. Against von Rad, Theology of the Old Testament, I, pp. 140-41.

the presentation of creation in a certain tradition, the earlier it seems to be. It might well be that creation of the world is a later concept than creation of man. However, we have reservations if Westermann's thesis is applied straight away to Genesis creation narrative. The lateness of the concept of creation of the world in human reflection is one thing, the lateness of this idea in the thinking of ancient Israel is another thing. It might be possible that the reason J used materials of the creation of man is caused by other considerations than the unavailability or non-existence of materials of the creation of the world. This implies that J might be later than P. Even if this is possible it can still be said that J utilised very ancient materials.

R. Albertz developed further Westermann's thesis. Different origins of the two stories of creation could mean different purposes in their use in the OT. From his examinations of the references to creation of the world and creation of man in the Psalms, DI and Job he came to conclusion that the creation of man material belongs to the life situation of the lamentation of the individual and in the Heilsorakel, i.e. the small, occasional prayer ceremony where Yahweh was invoked to turn to help his creatures in family circles, which was the 'sub-religion' of the people of ancient Israel. Creation of the world material belongs to the hymns (beschreibendes Lob) of the official religion, in which Yahweh's mighty powers are praised. These two traditions existed side by side, and it is not until the exile that there was an attempt to bring them together. The reason for this is that after the fall of Jerusalem's holy place the religious occasions of the family groups came much more to the surface, while the official Yahweh cult dwindled rapidly and later its elements were transferred to the family cult. Thus it is understandable that DI could use both



of the traditions to underline his message.<sup>4</sup>

Albertz's work throws light on the previous role of diverse traditions in the life of the people of ancient Israel. But his assertion that the two traditions of creation did not become one until the exilic period is not convincing. The J narrative already blended together the two traditions, although it must be admitted that the emphasis in it is on the creation of man. Pss 8 and 104, which are most possibly pre-exilic, also have depictions of both. And in DI, judging from the rather smooth descriptions of his move from creation of the world to creation of man, as in Is 45:12, we get the impression he already has before him one tradition which includes both elements. Without denying that personal devotions could exist in the pre-exilic period it is difficult to see whether these two traditions are really separate in the Psalms. Moreover, materials of personal devotion could also be incorporated later on into the official cult instead of the other way round. Although Albertz mentioned the blending of the traditions, he seems to think that the significance of the creation traditions, both for Israel and for us in the present day has to be looked for in their former stage, when they were still separate.<sup>5</sup> Here we think Albertz is disregarding the development of meanings which were involved and carried along in the streams of traditions and which caused the traditions to be worked over and become what we have now in their present form.<sup>6</sup> While it is

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4. R. Albertz, Weltschöpfung und Menschenschöpfung in Deuterojesaja, Hiob und in den Psalmen, Stuttgart, 1974, pp. 161-64, 173-4.

5. ibid., p. 173.

6. Cf. W. Zimmerli's criticism on Albertz in "Prophetic Proclamation and Interpretation", in D.F. Knight, (ed.), Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament, p. 100 fn. 51.

useful to trace historically the backgrounds of a tradition, a theological assessment has to concern itself with the present existing material, as it is.

Creation then has to be seen as including both creation of the world and creation of man.



## 2. Creation and nature

### 2.1 Problems concerning the use of the word 'nature'.

Not much systematic work has been done by OT scholars on the meaning of nature.<sup>7</sup> To be sure, creation, although important and having a relative independence of its own, is still to be related to a larger frame, the understanding of existence. But then it means that we have to pay attention to the references to heaven, earth, wind, mountains, the sky (firmament) as real-concrete objects (except of course, when they were used as metaphors, e.g. Ezek 6:1ff). At the same time we have to be aware that not all references to these real-concrete objects have anything to do with creation.<sup>8</sup>

One of the difficulties concerning the application of the term 'nature' to these real concrete objects is that the term itself has many different connotations. Following the discussions in G.D. Kaufman's article and P. Gregorios' book we attempt here to present the four meaning-contexts where the term or word was found:<sup>9</sup>

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7. H.W. Robinson, Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament, Oxford, 1946, pp. 1-16; E.C. Rust, Nature and Man in Biblical Thought, London, 1953, pp. 22-36. This work is much indebted to Robinson's; J.L. McKenzie, Myths and Realities, London, 1963; also in his A Theology of the Old Testament, New York, 1974, pp. 173-95; Th.C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology, Wageningen, 1970, pp. 206-207, 338-41; W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, II, p. 16ff; recently there is a study on Eichrodt by P. Addinall, "Walter Eichrodt and the Old Testament View of Nature", *ExpT* 92 (1980/81), pp. 174-78; J.P. Weinberg, "Die Natur im Weltbild des Chronisten", *VT* 31 (1981), pp. 324-45.
  8. On the other hand we also object to the other tendency to see all the references to nature as having a mythological background. In the coming discussion on mythology we shall discuss whether the ancient Near East peoples always think mythologically about nature.
  9. G.D. Kaufman, "A Problem for Theology: the concept of nature", *HTh R* 65 (1972), pp. 337-66; P. Gregorios, The Human Presence, Geneva, 1978, p. 18.

a. In ordinary secular language, 'natural' as opposed to 'artificial', nature as the realm of the unalterable physical laws, nature as given, which happens or comes into being without human intervention.

b. In modern western languages, nature as the non-human part of creation; when for instance people talk of the beauty of nature, they mean nature as the visible aspects of creation around us, excluding the man-made, artificial ones.

c. In Christian theology:

1. 'nature' as opposed to 'history' and 'culture', which are the realm of human action. Protestant theology since the 19th century usually makes the opposition between God's action in history and natural revelation, or at least it emphasises the former and underplays the latter.

2. This Protestant view has a predecessor in the Roman Catholic view which makes a distinction between nature and grace, natural and supernatural. Grace counteracts, supplements or overcomes nature.

d. Underlying all the above meanings; nature as the given structure or constitution of a person or thing, the given behaviour pattern and expected character of an entity. For an example: it is not the nature of a cat to fly.

Our reference to the term 'nature' concerns the meanings in b. and c. In b. alone we already have the difficulty of deciding the place of man. On the one hand he is part of nature, on the other hand he stands apart from nature. Even in the OT we can see the same tension.

In Ps 104 man is part of the panorama of nature. He is formed with the same material as the animals in the J narrative of Genesis,



and yet in Ps 8 and in the same narrative it is also clear that man is different from the other creations.

Moreover, as we have seen above, we are not sure whether we can speak of all the references to mountains, rivers, water, wind, the earth as 'non-human part of creation', when it may be that they do not have as a background the concept of creation. Nevertheless, as long as we are aware of the problem, we can include these activities within b., except when they are explicitly mentioned in a context of creation. Concerning c l., not all Protestant theologies are against natural revelation. But by employing the term 'nature' for the real concrete objects either under a self-standing and important concept of creation, or independently in the OT, we do not necessarily mean a return to the old static meaning of the concept of revelation in nature.

The other difficulty is that in the OT we do not have a word for nature,<sup>10</sup> or even for cosmos or the world.<sup>11</sup> How shall we regard this? It could be used as a point of advantage, in denying that the Hebrew tradition was responsible for the view of nature and as under the dominion of man.<sup>12</sup> But on the other hand we could ask:

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10. Even in the LXX the Greek word for nature, φύσις occurs only in the late books of Wisdom and in III and IV Maccabees. See E. Hatch and H.A. Redpath et al, Concordance in the Septuagint, Oxford, 1897 - Wisdom 7:1; 13:1; 19:20; III Macc 3:29; IV Macc 1:20; 5:7, 8, 25; 13:27; 15:13, 25 and 16:3.
  11. See IDB, A-D, p. 702. The word עֲוֹלָם which later on was used in the meaning of 'cosmos' is actually more related to time than to place. אֶרֶץ which repeatedly was translated as 'the world' actually means nothing more than terra firma or "continent." The nearest word to the idea of the universe is כֹּלֵל But again this is more about the totality of a number of entities than the totality of existence.
  12. As was done by Gregorios, op. cit., pp. 19-20. Apparently he regards the absence of a word in a body of literature as indicating the absence of the meaning. McKenzie explained the absence of the word nature and (according to him) also the idea of nature either in Akkadian or in the OT as caused by mythological thinking, which regard the diversity of nature as manifestations of different and divergent personal wills, A Theology of the Old Testament, p. 195.



even if there is no word for nature in the OT, does it mean that this notion is unknown to the writers? Besides these three words, we have other terms which have no equivalent in the OT.<sup>13</sup> It is crucial that we should be aware of this; but by no means can we conclude from this fact alone that they are of no concern to the OT, even when the terms we have do not quite have the same sense as the issues with which the OT is concerned. Also, we do not have to worry about the possibility of tracing a logical conclusion from the Hebrew tradition to the secular western concept of dominance over nature, because this possibility is very slight.<sup>14</sup> After all these considerations, we think the use of the word 'nature' is valid in our discussion, as long as we are aware that this does not mean the all-embracing concept of 'Mother Nature'<sup>15</sup>, and that in the OT the fundamental unity and order of the context within which man lived as provided directly by God.<sup>16</sup>

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13. e.g. the words 'revelation', 'body', 'history'. In Indonesian there is no 3rd pers. fem. For both masc. and fem. the word dia is used. By this we cannot conclude that Indonesian culture has no awareness of the difference in sex or that the fact has something to do with the position of woman in Indonesia. Cf. J. Barr, The Semantics of Biblical Language, reprinted, Oxford, 1978, p. 93, concerning the language of the Turks.
14. J. Macquarrie, "Creation and Environment", pp. 32-47; J. Barr, "Man and Nature; The ecological controversy and the Old Testament", pp. 48-75. Now both in David & Eileen Spring, (eds.), Ecology and Religion in History, New York, 1974. According to Barr the verbs אָרַב in Gen 1:26 and וַיַּבֵּן in Gen 1:28 is not to be understood in a "strong" sense. In 1 Kings 5:4 אָרַב is used to describe Solomon's peaceful dominion. Only in Joel 4:13 does it have the meaning of "to tread out". וַיַּבֵּן could indeed mean, "trampling down". But in Gen 1:28 it is concerned with the basic needs of settlement and agriculture. Basically what is intended is tilling.
15. Kaufman, op. cit., p. 345.
16. Robinson, loc. cit.

## 2.2 Nature as accompaniment<sup>4</sup> to theophany.

The idea that ancient or primitive man understands the surrounding world as a living and active reality<sup>17</sup> leads to attempts to look at the meaning of nature, creation and even the meaning of God in the OT from the references to passages describing God's self-manifestation in which natural elements were pictured as accompaniments to that manifestation - the theophanies.

J.L. McKenzie described how mythical polytheism explains the disorder and the diversity of nature as manifestations of different and divergent personal wills. Gods and goddesses are associated with different natural forces and phenomena precisely because these forces and phenomena frequently are in opposition to each other. The Israelites, however, escaped from mythological polytheism, although not from the problem created by apparent disorder and clash in natural phenomena.<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, the portrait of Yahweh was based on the theophanies which have strong resemblance to the pictures of the storm-gods of Israel's neighbours. But although there is a resemblance the writers of the OT took pains to distinguish Yahweh from natural forces and phenomena. This lay in the motivation. The powers of the gods are blind powers, while all the theophanies picture God as coming in wrath to judge.<sup>19</sup>

17. See H. Frankfort & H.A. Frankfort, (eds.), The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, Chicago, 1948, p. 3. The world was regarded by the primitive man as a "Thou", in the sense of Martin Buber's "I" and "Thou".

18. McKenzie, op. cit., pp. 196-197.

19. ibid., p. 198. In p. 197 he gave various examples of these theophanies, such as theophany of storm/wind (Pss 29:3-9; 77:16-20; Is 30:27, 30; Nahum 1:3. He also mentioned Ps 107:25-29, but is this a picture of nature accompanying God's manifestation? We think it belongs to a different kind of picture, the description of Yahweh's power or lordship over nature); earthquake (Nahum 1:5; Is 5:25; Ps 29:6; Job 38:25, 35, 37); clouds (Ps 104:4); rider of the clouds (Ps 68:4).



McKenzie did not mention the possibility of a manifestation of a deity in a more ordered picture of nature. W. Eichrodt starts precisely from this point.<sup>20</sup> While the neighbouring religions tend to describe their gods in relation to the benevolent aspects of nature, according to him the character of Israel's god demands pictures of frightening natural forces, such as lightning-flash, the dark thunder-cloud or the raging storm - all of which are combined in the majestic phenomenon of the thunderstorm.

After giving many examples of these pictures<sup>21</sup>, he proceeds to include other phenomena of sinister or terrifying kind, such as volcanic eruptions, subterranean fire, and regards the best instance of the extremely concrete way in which this vision of the divine majesty was experienced to be the description of the Sinai theophany.<sup>22</sup> However, at the later times, this concrete picture was spiritualised. Yaweh's manifestation became more represented with references to his

ו'י, ה'י and his ה'י 23

20. Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 16.

21. Thunderstorm (Ex 19:9ff; Deut 5:21ff; 33:2; Judg 5:4ff); riding upon the storm-clouds as if in a chariot or on a charger (Pss 18:11; 104:3; Is 19:1; Hab 3:8); causing his voice to resound in thunder (Ex 19:19; 20:18f; I Sam 7:10; Amos 30:27; Cf. ה'י ה'י Ps 18:14; 46:7; Jer 25:30; hurling lightning as his arrows and spears (Pss 18:18; 77:18; Hab 3:9f); shooting forth fire from heaven as his burning breath or tongue of flame (Ps 18:9; Is 30:27); in the snorting of his anger he sends down the lashing rain (Is 30:28); with his fist he smites in the hail or the shattering storm (Amos 9:5; Is 2:10, 19; 9:8, 10). For other examples see the footnotes in his book, p. 16.

22. In Ex 19:16; 20:18ff; according to Eichrodt, loc. cit., in Ex 19:16ff, individual details from the description of a volcanic eruption may have been interpolated into the account of a storm theophany - Is 29:6; Hab 3:6ff; Judg 5:4f; Pss 29 and 77:18ff refer not to volcanic phenomena but to a combination of thunderstorm and earth tremors, the latter being especially frequent in Palestine.

23. ibid., pp. 23-45.



To Vriezen the theophanies of God could mean both the violent pictures of nature as in the passages mentioned by McKenzie and Eichrodt and the benevolent pictures of nature as in Ps 19 and Is 6. Behind these descriptions lie an attitude to nature which reminds him of the piety of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, namely, the same eudaemonistic-natural attitude to life. This attitude in turn was based on the theology of creation which, although it does not predominate, does form an integral part in the whole of the OT.<sup>24</sup>

von Rad also places theophany in the frame of creation.<sup>25</sup> He calls the theophanic passages which picture Yahweh's appearing and condescending as "the highest beauty in all creation."

It seems that there is no clear agreement to what constitutes a theophany, what is the relationship between God and nature in the theophanies, and what is the relationship between theophany and creation. Let us try to look for some ways which we hope could lead to a clearer meaning of nature in the theophanic passages, beginning with the problem of the relation between God and nature.

As we have suggested above, the ancient man looked at the world surrounding him as real-objective. It has been more and more recognised that the gods of nature were not regarded as personifications of or identical with the forces of nature, although they still have close relationships with each other. The view that ancient man regarded

24. Vriezen, op. cit., pp. 281-83.

25. von Rad, op. cit., I, p. 366.

the outside world as a "Thou" is too strongly an oversimplification.<sup>26</sup> The Mesopotamian ancient people were in reality quite objective in their dealings with the surrounding world, as their laws and historical records show.<sup>27</sup> This means that we do not need to emphasise the otherness of Yahweh from the gods in dealing with nature; indeed, Yahweh could be spoken of having the aspects of the gods of nature, and H.W. Robinson had great insight when he said that what we call creative natural force is to the Israelite - God.<sup>28</sup>

What are the implications of this understanding for our study of creation in the OT? First, we should stop thinking that only in the OT is the world depicted as real world. Second, we should equally check the tendency to think that creation stories everywhere (either in the OT or outside) are only important in their existential meaning. In the OT the existential meaning is clear. It is Yahweh that is the Creator. But we also have to see that for OT man the thing that is referred to as created is the world! Of course the picture of the world in his mind is different from ours, but it is still the same

26. G.S. Kirk, *Myth*, Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1975, pp. 84-115; J.M. Kitagawa, "Chaos, Order and Freedom in World Religions", *The Concept of Order*, Paul G. Kuntz, (ed.), Seattle-London, 1968, p. 277. For the relation between ancient man and nature see now J.W. Rogerson, *Myth in Old Testament Interpretation*, Berlin-New York, 1974.

27. S.M. Kramer's article review in JCS II (1948), pp. 39ff.

28. Robinson, *loc. cit.*

real world.<sup>29</sup> In this context J. Barr's suggestions concerning the study of the Bible are particularly helpful.<sup>30</sup> According to him, three important aspects have to be taken in mind when we study the Bible; referential, intentional and poetic or aesthetic. In the case of creation stories we should ask these questions: what do we affirm about the creation of the world (referential)? What was the theological intention of the Genesis writer (intentional or historical)? As for the third aspect it is wiser to wait until we discuss myth in the coming paragraphs. But the first aspect can be seen in our emphasis on the real-objectiveness of creation. The second in our mention of the existential meaning of creation.

Although McKenzie admitted that the civilised people of the ancient Near East could distinguish between "It" and "Thou"<sup>31</sup>, he still assumes that their thinking operates within the framework of what has commonly been called "mythopoeic thought". And so, it is not "a waste of time"<sup>32</sup> if we try to look at whether the Israelite

29. S. Herrmann, "Die Naturlehre der Schöpfungsberichte", ThL 86 (1961), pp. 413-24, criticised the stress on the meaning and message of the creation story and suggested that we take seriously the mention of heaven and earth as creation. Actually, this is already in the thinking of a Dutch theologian, J.M. de Jong, Kerygma, Assen, 1958, although his interest lies more in the relationship between systematic theology and the New Testament. de Jong objects to Bultmannian tendency to extract 'kerygmas' from the stories in the Bible. This stress on the realness of creation differs from fundamentalist attitudes, which misunderstood the meaning of 'real world' as if the Biblical writers already have the kind of world-picture we conceive nowadays in our contemporary modern-scientific situation.
30. J. Barr, The Bible in the Modern World, London, second impression, 1977, pp. 61-62; 174-75.
31. McKenzie, Myth and Realities, p. 188; also in A Theology of the Old Testament, pp. 179-98.
32. Eichrodt's remark in op. cit., p. 18.



was really seeing God in natural phenomena or whether he thought of natural phenomena as a figurative-pictorial appearance of the perception of the deity. He was seeing God in real natural phenomena, and yet it does not mean that for him God is identical with nature. We nowadays tend to regard what ancient man sees as the divine as symbols (whatever we mean by this word) of natural forces, while it is more likely that the ancient man did just the reverse. They began from the real world around them, and from there they tried to sense a transcendent world. If we are allowed to make a comparison, this is more or less like the meaning of the icons in the Greek Orthodox Church.<sup>33</sup> Natural phenomena are symbols of the divine, not just in the sense of a 'mere' allegory<sup>34</sup>, but symbols as realities, which could be perceived by sense or imagination, and point at the other supposed realities, which could only be understood in and through the symbols.<sup>35</sup> Here to some extent we are against J. Barr, who denies the symbolic meaning of myth.<sup>36</sup>

33. In the sense that what the Greeks are thinking about the icons could be applied to the phenomenon of nature in the OT. On the meaning of icon, see J. Pelikan, The Spirit of Eastern Christendom, The Christian Tradition, II, Chicago-London, 1975, pp. 91-145. Of course we are aware of passages such as Deut. 4:12, 16 which explicitly warned against תַּבְרִיטִים (forms) or תַּבְרִיטִים (likeness/image). But what about the fire?

34. See Kirk's description of the Dumuzi myth in op. cit., p. 114. However, there is no explicit definition in his book of what he means by "symbols". It is also clear that Kirk thinks of the gods as symbols of natural forces and not natural forces as symbols of the gods.

35. We followed to a certain extent A. Dulles' definition in "Symbol, Myth and Biblical Revelation", New Theology 4, M.E. Marty - D.G. Peerman, (eds.), New York, 1971, pp. 39-68. But we do not agree with him that myth is symbol.

36. J. Barr, "The meaning of 'mythology' in relation to the Old Testament", VT 9 (1959), p. 1ff.

But this apparently was caused by his understanding that mythology is a total outlook, not just a way of expression, and of symbol as a mere allegory. According to Barr, Zeus in mythology is rain.<sup>37</sup> From our definition of symbol it is clear that symbol is not just a metaphor, but also not identical with the divine. True, Barr is right in the aspect that there is no symbolic meaning of myth, but the content of a myth may contain symbols. Zeus is not rain, but rain points to Zeus. He is there, behind the rain.

McKenzie has taken over E. Cassirer's understanding of myth, in which myth is one of the four symbols of expression (beside art, language and science).<sup>38</sup> Myth explains in an acceptable way that is unknown and could not be defined but recognised by man. Here it is clear that myth refers not to what is not yet known by the other symbols, but to that which is impossible to be expressed through the other symbols. One difficulty in maintaining this theory is that it is not clear whether ancient man (or even modern man) has these four symbols of expression. If we look in the P narrative of creation in Genesis we can see that there is more or less a 'scientific' interest in the ordering of plants and animals as creation. It is more likely that there is no difference in kind, although there may be differences in degree, when the perception of modern man is compared with the primitive.<sup>39</sup> Empirical consciousness and scientific thinking did not come late in the life of the ancient man. We can take an example by looking at the ancient Chinese system of medicine and ways of treating

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37. ibid., p. 6.

38. McKenzie, A Theology of the Old Testament, pp. 173-95.

39. Rogerson, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

a sick man. The western man may get perplexed by the philosophy which lies behind this system, which seems to defy any western scientific presuppositions. But actually the Chinese also started from the given data, i.e. the body and its symptoms. They may have come to different solutions, which are influenced by the prevailing philosophy of life, which in turn was conditioned by the surrounding environment, but nevertheless there are points of contact. Admittedly, after centuries past it is difficult to disentangle these scientific thoughts or empirical consciousness from what Mao's followers branded as "superstitious remains" without destroying the system to some extent.

The other difficulty is Cassirer's definition of myth as the way to express the unknown, or as McKenzie puts it, the divine, death and the origin of life. In the coming discussion we shall deal with the term 'myth', so here let us comment briefly on this problem. As we have seen above, Cassirer's definition of symbol is different from ours. Symbol is not identical with myth. On the other hand, myth (not in Cassirer's meaning) may contain symbols which point to the (unknown) transcendent world. McKenzie makes the picture more complicated, when, after admitting that Israel thinks in the same mythical intuition as her neighbours, he goes on to say that the difference for Israel is that the transcendent Reality has revealed himself to her.<sup>40</sup> Granted that Christian scholarship has to have presuppositions, it still has to be open to the possibility that other faiths too, have their own concepts of how the transcendent is revealed to them.

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40. McKenzie, Myth and Realities, p. 198. Our underline. Rogerson, op. cit., pp. 168-69 agrees with the reason behind McKenzie's opinion. To him too, Christian scholarship has to have presuppositions.



If we accept this explanation of the essence of the relation between God and nature then we can proceed further to look at the difficult passage in 1 Kings 19, the story of the theophany to Elijah and Horeb. J. Jeremias argues that the story is a polemic against similar pictures of other gods of nature.<sup>41</sup> Vriezen on the other hand regards it as a subtle form of criticism against the way of force of militant Yahwism, and considers it as a new substitute of revelation.<sup>42</sup> If it is a polemic, what then is the content of the polemic about? Vriezen's argument is against McKenzie's theory of natural theophany in the preceding pages. He implied that there is no difference in the character of Yahweh and the gods in the violent pictures of the theophany, while McKenzie found behind the same picture a different motivation. We do not agree with Vriezen that the picture of violent upheavals of nature in the theophanic passages of the OT and in the religious literature of the neighbouring nations are necessary indications of the blind powers of Yahweh or other gods. On the other hand, if this is so, then it is better to abandon the search for differences in motivation. Could it be that although Israel has the same approach to the forces of nature as symbols of the deity the prohibition of images caused them to see themselves as different from the other peoples, as has been suggested by McKenzie?<sup>43</sup> But what we

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41. J. Jeremias, Theophanie, Neukirchen - Vluyn, 1977, p. 115.

42. Th.C. Vriezen, The Religion of Ancient Israel, London, 1967, pp. 190-91.

43. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 196. But then he opened the possibility for us to ask further; could it be that one of the possibilities of the background of this prohibition is the failure of Israel to understand the nature of her neighbours' religions? On this see the interesting article by R.P. Carroll, "The Aniconic god and the Cult of Images", ST 31 (1977), pp. 51-64.

have here is unfortunately not the case of images or idols as objects of worship, where the polemic is more likely to have taken place. And we do not consider the attempt to prove a relationship between prohibition of images and reference to nature as creation as convincing.<sup>44</sup> For here we are faced with an OT fact: Yahweh or any other gods could not be pictured in images, but He could be seen in natural phenomena.

If the passage has to be regarded as a substitute revelation, why did the violent accompaniment of nature to God's appearance last till after the exile?<sup>45</sup> In what sense is it a substitute revelation? Does the phrase  $\eta \rho \tau \eta \mu \mu \tau \eta \rho$  have anything to do with the voice of a person<sup>46</sup>, so that the phenomenon could be seen as a progress in revelation, that is from revelation in nature to revelation in words, and that the revelation in words is a contradiction to or

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44. As was attempted by von Rad in The Problem of Hexateuch and Other Essays, pp. 146-55; also in Theology of the Old Testament, I, p. 218. Created things (nature) which constitute the image for Israel could never possibly be a god, even if they were so regarded by the world outside. In his Wisdom in Israel, pp. 177-85, the emphasis shifted a little to a matter of necessity. Nature is already the self-revelation of God the Creator. So according to the OT understanding it is a folly to erect an image of God. In addition to the above, our objection to von Rad is that nature does not always have to be connected with the concept of creation. Although von Rad mentioned the 'spiritual' aspect of an image of a deity and that the pagans did not think of their god as the Israelites think they did, he ignored this problem when trying to reconstruct the supposedly different world view of the pagan, whose god is included in the world and of the Israelite god who stands over the world. Then of course he could not explain the theophany in nature except by using creation concepts. Even on this ground we might ask: if the pagans see their gods as part of the world, does it mean they have no concept of creation? Why then do they have creation myths?

45. J.J. Stamm, "Elia am Horeb", Studia Biblica et Semitica, W.C. van Unnik - A.S. van der Woude, (eds.), Wageningen, 1966, p. 333 fn 2. The late texts are Nahum 1:2a; 3b-6; Hab 3:3-15; Ezra 1:4; Is 59:15b-19; 66:15b; Hag 2:6, 21; Zech 9:14.

46. As in the RSV, "a still small voice"; the GNB: "soft whisper of a voice."



a spiritualisation (not necessarily contradicting) of the former?<sup>47</sup>

We do not think that there is a progress in revelation of that kind here. The phrase should not be translated as "a still small voice", for  $\eta\eta\eta\eta \text{ } \text{ל} \text{ } \text{פ}$  in this passage has nothing to do with a voice. We prefer the translation of the NEB, "a low murmuring sound"<sup>48</sup> (of a breeze?). Although this is not a change in the mode of revelation and thus not a spiritualisation, we still face a possible change of the nature of Yahweh within the same mode of revelation (in nature) as suggested by Vriezen. It has to be said that we get a strong impression of something that has changed when we read the repeated denial that God was not in the storm or in the earthquake or in the fire (lightning). Nevertheless we hold that this passage has nothing to do with the change of Yahweh's nature. We have already suggested that the violent pictures of nature in the theophany do not necessarily mean the blind powers of the deity. Yahweh indeed chose a different way of revealing Himself through the accompaniment of a softer kind of the movement of nature - the breeze. This change does not necessarily mean that now there is a change in the nature of Yahweh from a terrible god to a kind or benevolent god and that the former ways of appearing are discarded. Yahweh has been known as a personal god to Israel since the earliest times. He was seen as an

47. Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 19 fn 3. According to him the phrase  $\text{ל} \text{ } \text{פ}$  "in the ear", has the meaning of whispered voice as proof of God's intimate conversation with man. But this phrase is absent in this passage and we are not sure whether Eichrodt is right in this case. In Jer 28:7 the phrase  $\text{ל} \text{ } \text{פ} \text{ } \text{ל} \text{ } \text{פ}$  simply means "(addressed) in front of you and in front of the whole people".

48. However, the neutrality of this translation could also point to another direction. 'Murmuring' could indicate either a speech or a sound. Although JB translated the phrase as "the sound of a gentle breeze", it means that God is now spirit (the connection presumably is the double meaning of  $\text{ל} \text{ } \text{פ}$  as wind and spirit) and that there is a change in the way of God's appearance here (the natural phenomena signify as heralds of his coming) from what happens in Ex 19 (where nature manifests God's presence). We are not sure.  $\text{ל} \text{ } \text{פ}$  could still belong to natural phenomena. If so, then where is the difference from Ex 19?



angry god and as a kind god. Our difference with Vriezen is that for him the change begins here, in this passage. To us the change begins in the presentation of natural phenomena as symbols of Yahweh, thus not a change in Yahweh's nature in itself.<sup>49</sup>

We might see in this phrase the uttermost Angst of man, the deepest point in which man, who is standing hopelessly alone, came to experience his moment of death in a high piercing sound, the point of which God appears.<sup>50</sup>

What is the context of this passage? G. de Ru thinks that Elijah here stands under judgement. The question "what are you doing here" is to be regarded as a demand for an explanation of his irresponsibility in running away from his task. And precisely in the height of the hour of judgement, salvation appears.<sup>51</sup> Although many other theophanic passages have judgemental contexts, we are not compelled to agree with de Ru. E. Wurthwein has pointed out that there is something odd in this passage with the recurrence of the question of Yahweh in v. 9 and the answer of Elijah in v. 10 respectively in vv. 13b and 14. He saw a profound disturbance in the narrative. According to him, vv. 11-14 are alien to the story.<sup>52</sup> But could it be that the narrative deliberately

49. Cf. R. Davidson in "Some aspects of the theological significance of doubt in the Old Testament", ASTI 2 (1970), pp. 47-47, concerning the inadequacy of older symbols. The problem is of course whether the symbols above are regarded as inadequate onwards or only in this context. See also the warning by Knight, op. cit., p. 155 fn 21. Most scholars today would not be willing to affirm that God appeared and acted exactly in the forms described in the theophanic texts.

50. G. de Ru, "Exegetische kanttekeningen bij het verhaal van een moedeloos mens (I Kon 19:1-8)", KT 3 (1976), pp. 188-98, following de Boer.

51. ibid., p. 191.

52. E. Wurthwein, "Elijah at Horeb: reflection on 1 Kings 19:9-18", Proclamation and Presence, I.J. Durham - J.R. Porter, (eds.), London, 1970, p. 165. But then where did it originally come from? And even if it is so, the problem we have been dealing is still within vv. 11-14.

uses repetition to intensify the salvation aspect of the story? After all the order to rise and eat in v. 5 is repeated again in v. 7. It is more likely that this passage has no condemnation or judgement against Elijah. He came to Horeb to bring to God his feeling of great frustration on the outcome of his mission. God let him see the change in the way He manifests Himself in nature, from the rumbling to the quiet kind, so that Elijah may realise that the things which are happening in society now, which are so different from what he is hoping for, do not have to mean that the work he had begun is doomed to failure. It is still going on, but in a more quiet way. Yahweh has many ways. What looks like a failure of Elijah (or of Yahweh) is essentially not a failure. Yahweh is powerful still. Elijah is upright still and not to be blamed. But the quiet way means that Elijah now has to go and look for his successor.

Our concern is more about the natural phenomena as accompaniment to theophany. We have discarded a certain passage as belonging to a theophany passage although it mentions God and nature (Ps 107:25-29). So what really is a theophany? This is not easy to define. The discussion on the nature and definition of theophany is still going on.

In his study on the Sinai tradition von Rad had already insinuated that the origin of theophany lies in the cult, with the Sinai tradition as background. There were some free, poetical variants of this Sinai tradition preserved in Deut 33:2, 4; Judg 5 and Hab 3.<sup>53</sup> A. Weiser used the phrase 'theophanic traditions' and found its setting in life in the feast of covenant renewal in the cult.<sup>54</sup> Weiser mentioned the

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53. G. von Rad, The Problem of Hexateuch and Other Essays, pp. 18-22.

54. A. Weiser, The Psalms, London, 1979, pp. 38-52. Eichrodt also mentioned Sinai theophany as the model, op. cit., p. 29.



natural phenomena which accompanied the theophany of Yahweh. But what he means by theophany apparently is all ways in which God's presence is acknowledged in the cult. In this feast of covenant renewal the Ark played a great function as the spot in the temple, where theophany takes place. W. Beyerlin went further in asserting that this cultic happening had been celebrated from the earliest times in the Tent of Meeting during Israel's wanderings in the wilderness. The references to clouds of smoke ( ׀ ִיָּהּ , ׀ ִיָּהּ ) have been influenced by incense ritual.<sup>55</sup> Although he admitted that there is no explicit mentioning of Mount Sinai as the dwelling place of Yahweh (a very important reason for the argument of the cultic theophany, in which the deity is supposed to dwell in a certain place), R.E. Clements agreed with Weiser and Beyerlin in regarding the probability of Mount Sinai as the subject of a sacred tradition concerning a theophany when it became central for the Israelite covenant faith.<sup>56</sup> As the ensuing generations of Israelites recalled the founding of the covenant, they inevitably associated it with a manifestation of Yahweh as the God of Sinai. From numerous passages in the OT, especially in the Psalms, it is clear that this theophany was re-enacted in the Israelite cultic festival which recalled and reaffirmed the making of the covenant on Mount Sinai. The oldest Sinai narrative (Ex 19:2b-24:14, JE) then is not a reporting of the event but is a literary form, which continued to be repeated in Israel's cultic life. In this process of tradition-history the storm imageries, volcanic phenomena,

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55. W. Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, Oxford, 1965, pp. 134-35. Another proof of cultic origin is the sound of trumpets in Ex 19, which are from real trumpets and is not a metaphor for thunder. But Beyerlin holds that Yahweh was connected with Sinai.

56. R.E. Clements, God and Temple, Oxford, 1965, pp. 19-27.



and general ideas of theophanies in the ancient Near East religions have all affected the presentation. A different approach was followed by C. Westermann in his treatment of the subject theophany in relation to the Psalms.<sup>57</sup> He distinguishes between epiphany, in which God is coming or going forth from.....to help Israel, and theophany, in which God appeared to a mediator who will speak to the people. Epiphany is described primarily by meteorological (storm) phenomena, theophany by volcanic phenomena. Judg 5:4f is an example of epiphany, Ex 19 of theophany. This distinction was taken over by F. Schnutenhaus.<sup>58</sup> By examination of the words involved in these two categories he comes to the conclusion that most of the verbs used for the coming and appearing of God are found mainly in the description of the epiphany. Its origin is Mesopotamian, and this argues against the supposition of a cultic theophany. This classification of epiphany and theophany is useful,<sup>59</sup> but it is not without problems. A brief look at the example in Judg 5 is enough to make us aware how difficult it is to decide whether the description of natural phenomena there is meteorologic or volcanic. Is  $\text{לִי־יָדָהּ הַיָּם וְהַיַּבֹּשֶׁת}$  in v. 5 to be seen as earth tremors and not connected with volcanic activity?<sup>60</sup> But then in the same verse Sinai is mentioned. As in the case of Westermann's examination of the

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57. C. Westermann, The Praise of God in the Psalms, Richmond, 1965, pp. 93-101. Now republished as Praise and Lament in the Psalms, Edinburgh, 1981.

58. F. Schnutenhaus, "Das Kommen und Erscheinen Gottes", ZAW 76 (1964), pp. 1-22.

59. It was taken over by Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology, pp. 190-91, although he also saw both descriptions as very close to each other.

60. As suggested by Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 16 fn 9. And even earth tremors could not be possibly regarded as meteorological phenomena!

concepts of creation of the world and creation of man, this interest in historical origin of a tradition, although helpful, could lead us to forget to look at its present situation. It is more likely that in its long process of formation the epiphany and the theophany aspects have been mixed up together.

J. Jeremias considers theophany as belonging to a certain Gattung, in which the components are Yahweh's coming and the account of nature's response. Judg 5:4, 5 and Ps 68:8-9 have the components and because they are the oldest forms of theophanic descriptions in the OT, all the others must have eventually developed from them.<sup>61</sup> While the second component was derived from sources outside Israel, the first was originally Yahwistic. Here he differs from Schmutenhaus, who thinks that this too was taken from outside, namely from Mesopotamian traditions concerning the appearance of a deity.<sup>62</sup>

From all of this we can see that theophany has to do with violent upheavals of nature. Whether this is developed from the Sinai or from the Mesopotamian or Canaanite storm-god traditions is of secondary importance to us.

Now a few words of caution about the references to theophany as having a cultic setting. Firstly, due to the vagueness of the biblical evidences it is very difficult to decide what really happened

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61. J. Jeremias, Theophanie: die Geschichte einer alttestamentlichen Gattung, WMANT 10, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1977, pp. 56-59, 109. In IDB Supplementary volume Jeremias defined theophany as 1. a demonstration of favour, which in turn could be divided into non-cultic and cultic theophanies, and 2. theophanies of Yahweh as warrior.

62. Knight thinks Schmutenhaus is right, op. cit., p. 155. Although we agree that it is not originally Yahwistic, the picture of the deity's appearance could be taken either from Canaanite or Mesopotamian tradition.



in the cult. Secondly, the theory of the independence of the Sinai traditions and its cultic connections<sup>63</sup> could lead to the conclusion that the Sinai narrative was developed from the cult. Clements' opinion is still guarded against this view.<sup>64</sup> There is a connection between the clouds and the use of incense, but we cannot say that the picture of the clouds in the narrative comes from the impression people got from the use of incense as Beyerlin says. It is more likely that it is the other way round. What about the trumpet sounds? Here it is safer to say that we do not know exactly why it comes in the picture of the theophany in Ex 19. If it is real trumpet sounds, then it could be that later hands thought that the sounds of trumpets in the cult could represent the sound of thunder in their handling of the original material.<sup>65</sup> It is not necessary that there is no original material.

Vriezen stressed the historical accurateness of the tradition. He thinks that the Sinai tradition forms an integral part of the narrative.<sup>66</sup> In his book on OT theology, epiphany shows the historical character of the revelation of Yahwey.<sup>67</sup> If the narrative is historically correct, it means that God's presence goes with Moses to Egypt after

63. The thesis of von Rad and M. Noth. See the discussion in E.W. Nicholson, Exodus and Sinai in History and Tradition, Oxford, 1973.

64. Clements, op. cit., p. 22; also Beyerlin, op. cit., p. 169.

65. Cf. D.J. McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant, Rome, 1978, p. 259. According to him the Sinai narrative is certainly a matter of cult. On the other hand burning coals, incense smoke and the shofar sounds are perhaps intended to represent the storm and the mountain god.

66. In The Religion of Ancient Israel, p. 129. Nicholson has the same opinion, op. cit., p. 58.

67. In An Outline of Old Testament Theology, p. 190.



the scene of the burning bush and later on leads him and the people back to Sinai, and on to the land.

The problem is, where can we discern the historical accurateness of a tradition so ancient as the story of Exodus and Sinai? The least we can say is that the narrative contains what was thought to be historical journeys of the liberated people from Egypt - the Sinai event, the conquest and the settlement. Following the cumulative principle of a narrative, we have strong reservations in separating them from each other. So it is still not a historical narrative in the sense of Vriezen's; on the other hand, even if we do not close the possibility of cultic influence to a certain extent on this narrative, the narrative itself need not necessarily be connected with cult rituals.<sup>68</sup> And does Yahweh dwell permanently, either on Sinai, in the Tabernacle, or in the sanctuary in Jerusalem? Undoubtedly, Yahweh was regarded as having close association with Sinai as can be seen from his title (?) ' ] ' D 71 in Judg 5:5; Ps 68:9. But whether He dwells there permanently is not altogether clear.<sup>69</sup>

G. Fohrer thinks that in the narrative the mountain functions to serve as a temporary place of revelation or as a point of departure for Yahweh's further journey towards the land (Judg 5:4-5; Deut 33:2;

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68. See G.S. Kirk, op. cit., pp. 8-41 (esp. pp. 12-13), who convincingly proved that many stories and narratives are not connected with rituals.

69. Clements, op. cit., p. 19 pointed to the translation by F.M. Cross and D.N. Freedman in Deut 33:16 as a possible exception. The translation emended 71 ] D to ' ] D (see also the prop. in the BHS). But this is unlikely. In Ex 3:2 71 ] D was mentioned, but here the name of the mountain is Horeb.

Hab 3:3-4; Ps 68:18).<sup>70</sup>

For the sake of clarity, it is proper to differentiate between cultic theophany and its associations with  $\text{נֶבֶל}$ ,  $\text{עָנָן}$ , clouds (if explicitly mentioned in a cultic-sanctuary context) and the theophanic descriptions with violent natural phenomena as accompaniment.<sup>71</sup> And in turn, we should distinguish between the latter with references to God with nature in other passages, as in Ps 107:25-29, which have been mentioned before. For what we have here is not theophany but passages concerning God's lordship over nature.

Let us now consider whether theophany is concerned with the concept of creation, as held by several scholars. von Rad placed theophany within the framework of creation.<sup>72</sup> He was followed by J.L. Crenshaw who tried to see a relationship between creation, theophany and judgement in the OT.<sup>73</sup> But the doxologies of Amos,

70. Fohrer, History of Israelite Religion, p. 167. He went further to discuss the passage concerning the building of the temple in 1 Kings 6:13 in which Yahweh is said to dwell among the children of Israel. The same narrative later denied this possibility (1 Kings 8:27) and proposed that instead of Yahweh, His name shall be there (1 Kings 8:29).

71. Our discussion of theophany does not include the self appearance of God to certain persons, as in 1 Sam 3:10; Ex 6:3; Gen 12:7; 17:1b; 18:1, 2; 26:24; 35:9. Most of these theophanies are hardly or not described in detail. Shall we put these passages within the natural theophany? But we have seen above the difficulty in deciding man's place in nature. It is better to leave the question open. Although it is still debated whether God is described as having human form or that the anthropomorphism is only used to describe Him as a personal god, one thing is clear in the OT: Yahweh could be seen in the phenomenon of man, cf. J. Barr, "Theophany and Anthropomorphism", SVT VII (1959), pp. 31-38; Vriezen, op. cit., pp. 182-85; S. Terrien, The Elusive Presence, New York-London, 1978, p. 98 fn 31, prefers to apply the term "epiphanic visitations" to such passages as Gen 12:7 and 18:1 ff because there is no description of natural disturbances in them.

72. Apparently what von Rad intended is that which is referred to in Pss 50:2 and 96:6.

73. In his dissertation, Hymnic Affirmation of Divine Justice, Missoula 1975, pp. 92-114, esp. pp. 107 ff; also in "Amos and the Theophanic traditions", ZAW 80 (1968) pp. 203-15.



which Crenshaw regarded as belonging to theophany do not belong to it, as we shall see later on, and it is difficult to see why theophany should be regarded as almost an 'aesthetic' expression as held by von Rad, when the expression in theophany is of terror and violent upheavals of nature. What von Rad had said could be more appropriately attached to pictures of creation in Pss 19 and 104. We think J. Gray is right in making a distinction between beneficent description of creation and the destructive description of theophany.<sup>74</sup> We also have to deal with the view that theophany belongs to creation through the mythical image of Yahweh as the Divine Warrior. This thesis has been put forward strongly by F.M. Cross and P.D. Miller, and has been supported by many.<sup>75</sup> We shall try to present the thesis briefly. By analysis of the supposedly ancient passages such as Num 10:35-36; Judg 5:4-5 (Cf. Ps 68:8-9); Deut 33:2-3; Ps 68:18; Ex 15:13 (could be as early as the 12th century BC) Cross came to conclusion that from the earliest days Yahweh was conceived as a Divine Warrior who comes to help His people. This is characterised by a number of cosmic elements, which may be seen in the imagery of the heavenly council of Yahweh (Judg 5:20, 23; Josh 10:12-13, etc.). The wars He leads were

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74. J. Gray, The Legacy of Canaan, second revised edition, London 1965, pp. 161-62.

75. F.M. Cross jr., "The Divine Warrior in Israel's early cult", Biblical Motifs, A. Altmann, (ed.), Cambridge, Mass., 1966, pp. 11-30; also "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite myth", JThC 5, (1968) pp. 1-25; and Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic, Cambridge, Mass., 1973; P.D. Miller jr., The Divine Warrior in Early Israel, Cambridge, Mass., 1973. Among their followers: P.D. Hanson, The Dawn of Apocalyptic, Philadelphia, 1975. He saw the Divine Warrior motif in Zechariah. In the coming discussion on Creation and Myth we shall return to deal with some implications of Hanson's taking over of Cross' argument: W.R. Millar, Isaiah 24-27 and the origin of apocalyptic, Missoula, 1976, tried to see the Divine Warrior motif in the shaping of the current form of Is 24-27.



called the wars of אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם which Cross translated as "Creator of the heavenly armies."<sup>76</sup> In Israel myth and history always stood in a strong tension, myth serving primarily to give a cosmic dimension and transcendent meaning to the historical, rarely functioning to dissolve history.<sup>77</sup> The Anknüpfungspunkt (point of contact) between these two could be seen in the singling out of the role of the sea in the Exodus story because of the ubiquitous motif of the cosmogonic battle between the Creator god and the sea in west Semitic mythology.<sup>78</sup> In his article in JThC Cross admitted that in Ex 15:8, which is early poetry, there is no sign of battle. The sea is passive there.<sup>79</sup> But still, Cross holds to the mythical conflict pattern.

In P.D. Miller's book the pattern of the theophany was given, with Deut 33:2-9, 26-29 as an example:<sup>80</sup>

1. Theophany of Yahweh and His heavenly army (vv 2-3).
2. Establishment of kingship (vv 4-5).
3. Israel's resettlement of the land (vv 26-29).

In Cross' latest book on the Divine Warrior theme,<sup>81</sup> the pattern is broadened to include:

76. Cross, "The Divine Warrior in Israel's early Cult", p. 28. See also Appendix B, below.

77. ibid., p. 19.

78. ibid., pp. 14 and 16.

79. Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myths", p. 16. This fact apparently caused no problem for Cross, because what matters as important is that there is a combat between God and his enemy. The passive sea means that the enemy is an historical enemy (the Egyptians). Here we already feel the difficulty in finding an Anknüpfungspunkt by looking for a certain corresponding pattern.

80. Miller, op. cit., p. 75.

81. Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic, pp. 162-163.

- a. Battle of the Divine Warrior against a chaos figure.
- b. Convulsive reaction of nature to the warrior's wrath.
- c. Return of the warrior to his mountain to assume kingship of the gods.
- d. Utterance of the warrior's voice from his temple and revival of nature's response - the heavens fertilise the earth, animals writhe in giving birth, men and mountains whirl and dance in festive mood.

The themes a. and b. have been replaced in Israel's 'epic pattern'<sup>82</sup> by the Exodus and conquest march from Egypt or Sinai; theme c. by the theophany on Sinai; themes c. and d. are reflected in numerous psalms. Cross distinguished between early poetry - Ex 15 (around 1300 BC) which depicted the passive role of the sea; late prose - Josh 2:10 which depicted the drying up of the sea; late poetry - Is 51:9-11 which depicted the activity of the Monster Sea. All passages mentioned used the same mythical pattern.

How shall we evaluate Cross' work? His first assumption is that Israel historicised myth from the very beginning. Israel did not come out of the desert tabula rasa, and had the same mythical pattern of her neighbouring religions. But the pattern was employed in Israel to portray historical events such as the story of the Red Sea. The problem is whether the mythical stories outside Israel are unconnected

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82. See the definition in p. viii, ibid., Myth is concerned with primordial events beyond history. Epic is designed to recreate and to give meaning to historical experiences of a people. In this epic the god of the people and gods interact in temporal course events. This is the difference between an epic and a historical narrative in which every appeal to divine agency is illegitimate.

with history, and therefore justify Cross' opinion. After the appearance of Albrektson's work we think we have to be more careful in making polarisations in the world-views of peoples. Can we say that Is 51 is a historification of myth? To us it looks more like a mythicising or mythologising of history! The second assumption is the same mythical pattern. The storm god phenomena are related to the battle motif of creation and chaos. Baal (Hadad) is connected to El through the symbol Bull, which could also signify power, and so warriorlike habits.<sup>83</sup> But this by no means is clear. Probably the reference to the Canaanite El as warrior is in the context of theogony, not cosmogony.<sup>84</sup> The storm god phenomenon is of course mythical, but probably it has no relation to a myth of cosmic combat. The storm god phenomenon could not be connected with the mentioning of strong wind sent by Marduk to crush Tiamat in the Akkadian creation myth<sup>85</sup>, even if there is a possibility of a Mesopotamian equivalent of the Ugaritic Hadad. The storm god is not a Creator god.

If the pictures of the coming of a deity with upheavals of nature were borrowed from the Canaanites then it means that what we have now in Judg 5, Ps 68, Ex 33, etc. is not related to creation. At least the content of the said passages proves that there is no mention in them of creation. For the sake of clarity, we think it is appropriate that we hold to the distinctive features of the theophany and the features of a cosmic combative creation story or tension between creation and chaos, which usually have the Sea or Waters as opponent.

83. See Miller, op. cit., pp. 54-58.

84. J.C. de Moor and M.J. Mulder in TDOT, II, p. 251.

85. ANET, p. 67.



Later on it will be clear that some descriptions of earthquake are included within Chaoskampf and not regarded as theophanic passages, as in the case of Amos 9:5, 6 and Ps 46:2-4.

Ex 15:8 may not be included either in the former or in the latter. It is indeed very ancient (probably earlier than J) and there is indeed a miraculous colouring in its description of the piling up of the waters,<sup>86</sup> but there is no need to see in it a creation myth. We are also against the view of B.W. Anderson, who apparently saw in the creation of Israel as it was described in Ex 15 the theme of creation of the world.<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, we admit that the passage implies that Yahweh was seen as powerful over nature. And later on as we can see in Is 51, the crossing was described in a cosmic dimension. It must also be said that there were attempts to combine these two pictures of combat creation myth and theophany in later times, as can be seen in Pss 18:7-15; 77:15-20 and Hab 3:3ff.<sup>88</sup>

But on the whole, we are sceptical about the theories of Cross and Miller on the motif of Yahweh as Divine Warrior as an all-embracing concept which forms the background of ubiquitous passages referring to a tension between creation and chaos.

86. Cf. J.W. Rogerson, The Supernatural in the Old Testament, Guilford and London, 1976, pp. 44-5. Although he holds that both J and P give supernatural accounts on the theme of the crossing, Rogerson saw the possibility that both J (vv 21b, 27) and P (15-19, 21a, 21d-23, 26, 28-29 attempted an Israelite natural explanation (his underline) of the miracle. But even if this is true the narrative itself could still not be seen as objective reportage. We are also aware that God's creation is seen as a miracle (אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא, אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא) but not all miracles belong to creation. And it was only in a later period that אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא was applied to creation (as in Job 5:9; 9:8; 37:14; Ps 139:14; cf. Jer 10:12f).
87. B.W. Anderson, Creation versus Chaos, p. 37.
88. Jeremias regarded these passages (together with Nah 1:4; Pss 107:7; 114:3, 5) as "Reminiszenzen" of Yahweh's Chaoskampf. But Jeremias did not relate Chaoskampf with creation because of the possibility of having their origin in Canaanite Kampf texts, op. cit., pp. 90-95.

### 2.3 Yahweh's lordship over nature

We have seen above the implication of the descriptions of nature obeying Yahweh's command in Ex 15. We proposed that this passage should be included within Yahweh's lordship over nature. Now we are going to discuss whether references to Yahweh's lordship or ownership over nature are connected with creation.

Crenshaw included such passage as Deut 10:11-22 within creation because the mention of heaven and earth as belonging to Yahweh, as can be seen in v.14, implied that a creation concept is operative behind it. Although he is aware that it does not contain any reference to Yahweh as Creator, he holds that it is but a step from the notion of ownership to creatorship.<sup>89</sup> Apparently Crenshaw regarded the creation concept as being implicit in the references to the ownership or lordship of God over nature.<sup>90</sup> If we regard the concept of creation as having its origin in the impenetrable past then of course we can assume the implicitness of the concept of creation. By the term 'implicit' we mean something explicit at a later time, which we assume was already there in the past. But how do we decide that something is implicit in an earlier document? What are the criteria for it? H.W. Robinson already struggled with the problem. Although written in the context of the now outdated theory of evolutionary progress of religion, his words are still worth remembering:

89. Crenshaw, op. cit., p. 107.

90. ibid., p. 94.

"....there is already a nucleus ready to be developed into the larger belief in Yahweh's universal control of nature and ultimately the assertion of this in the explicit doctrine of His creatorship. But this development seems to have been dependent on that of the history. Yahweh had to conquer the Baalim before He could be conceived as absolute Lord over them, ....It was the prophet of the exile who first clearly shows Him to be the Creator of all Nature...." 91

Notice that there is an inconsistency in his opinion. On the other hand he indirectly refers to the implicitness of the concept of creation in the belief that Yahweh has power over nature, but on the other hand he rightly saw the difficulty of holding together Yahweh's creatorship and lordship.

If we do not accept that a concept necessarily develops by itself in the progress of history then what are our criteria for deciding the implicitness of an idea in an earlier work from a present work of literature? Vriezen thinks that we must accept a priori that Israel has a creation belief, although it is not of such paramount importance in the religion of Israel.<sup>92</sup> His reason for the implicitness of the belief are:

- on general grounds that all religions consider their principal god to be the Creator and that therefore belief in creation must be admitted to have existed as an integral element in the conception of God in Israel.
- when Israel's belief in the creation does appear, it immediately shows a character of its own by completely ignoring the idea of a theogony or any form of dualism.

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91. Robinson, op. cit., p. 23.

92. Vriezen, op. cit., pp. 331-32.



- because the account of the creation in Gen 1, which may date from the days of the later kings, certainly must have been preceded by older elements.

We found another reason in Vriezen's work (we wonder why he did not put it in the same paragraph above), namely in the principle of monotheism (rather in the meaning of mono-Yahwism, but to Vriezen this determination of Yahweh's nature has not brought any change in Yahweh himself, so the term monotheism is acceptable to him.) Because of monotheism, it can be said that the doctrine of creation was already implicit (and not only potentially) in Israel's conception of God.<sup>93</sup> J.F. Priest also thinks that creation belief could be in the earlier traditions of Israel, apart from the Wisdom tradition. He pointed to the song of Deborah as an example, and said that there "reference to Yahweh as Creator is unmistakable."<sup>94</sup>

We are not convinced by the connection of the concept of monotheism (whatever may be meant by that) with creatorship of a deity. Creatorship does not in itself imply monotheism. A Creator deity could be one of the deities, as can be seen in the religions outside Israel. We can say that because Israel worships only Yahweh, the Creator could not be any other than He. But this, at least theoretically, does not have to be necessarily so. It might also be that Yahweh is not originally a Creator deity. Hyatt tried to show this (see Appendix A, below,

93. ibid., pp. 34-35.

94. J.F. Priest, "Where is Wisdom to be placed?", in J.L. Crenshaw, Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom, New York, 1978, p. 286. In fn. 33 of the same page he disagreed with the tendency not to give any significance to creation faith until it was explicitly avowed. Apparently in his dismissal of a critique of his statement on Yahweh as Creator in the song of Deborah, he accepts the relation between theophany and creation.

p. 460). Although we disagree with his conclusions, we do not deny the validity of his questions.

Priest's example of the song of Deborah is very weak. As we have said before, theophany is not to be confused with creation.

As for the rest of Vriezen's argument we can only agree with him. We would like to add one other factor: the tendency of the exilic prophet to refer to the creation of the past as a guarantee of Yahweh's faithfulness to His people. This could not be done unless the belief in creation has been sufficiently embedded in the minds of the people. We think Vriezen is being inconsistent if after mentioning his arguments on the implicitness of creation belief he still holds to the unimportance of the belief in Israel.

But, even if we accept the implicitness of the concept of creation in the earlier periods of the Israelite religion, due to the factor of unpredictability inherent in the course of a concept from one period to another (for who can say that an idea should necessarily become what we see it to be in its explicit form?), it is wiser not to base any argument on this implicitness. Consequently, all references to the lordship or ownership of Yahweh over natural entities, including reference to Him as a god of fertility as in Hos 2:18-25, should be regarded as such, and not to be included in creation except if the context is explicitly so, as in Pss 95:3-5, 100:3 (RSV) (cf. Ezek 29:3, where Pharaoh is referred to as the owner of the Nile because he made it). We also need to make a distinction between the problem of the relationship between lordship or ownership of God over nature and creation with the problem of indirectness of creation in certain passages such as Amos 9:1-3 and Is 6:1-5.

## 2.4 The effect of sin upon nature

That man's sinfulness can be regarded in the OT as affecting nature has long been recognised.<sup>95</sup> In the biblical version of the Flood, it is precisely this fact that was put forward as the cause of the Flood.<sup>96</sup> We found the same thinking in the swearing of Elijah in the presence of Ahab, that rain shall not come down except by his word (1 Kings 17:1). In the prophetic tradition we can find numerous passages portraying the wickedness of man as threatening the order of nature, as can be seen in Amos 4:7-9; Hos 4:1-3; Is 24:1-3; 30:8-14; Jer 12:4.

J.M. Ward tried to deny this relationship in his commentary on Amos.<sup>97</sup> According to him all the evils mentioned in Amos 4:6-11 are not explained as punishments for crimes, either moral or ritual. All that is said is that on each of these occasions the victims failed to 'return' to Yahweh (4:5, 8, 9, 10, 11). The absence of an explanation of the specific causes of the afflictions should probably be considered

95. J. Pedersen, Israel, I-II, London, 1964, pp. 459-60; S. Porubcan, S.J., Sin in the Old Testament, Rome, 1963, p. 394.

96. See R. Davidson, Genesis 1-11, Cambridge, 1973, pp. 66-67. In the Akkadian epic of Gilgamesh no reason is given for the Flood. Later the blame for it is fixed firmly on one god Enlil who is said to have sent the deluge 'without reflection'. In the Sumerian version of the story, Ziusudra (the true man) only received instruction how to escape the coming deluge. But there is a possibility that the reason was in the 37 damaged lines which preceded the instruction (ANET, pp. 42-43). In the Atrahasis epic, the noise of mankind which disturbs the sleep of the gods was put forward as a reason. However, based on the findings of W. von Soden and G. Pettinato, R.A. Oden jr. has shown that the word huburu, "noisy activity", is not to be taken in a neutral sense. It means the noise of rebellious activity against the gods; see his "Divine aspirations in Atrahasis and in Genesis 1-11", ZAW 93 (1981), pp. 197-216.

97. J.M. Ward, Amos and Isaiah, prophets of the word of God, Nashville, New York, 1969, pp. 50-51.



deliberate on the part of the writer. Nowhere else in the book of Amos is a natural disaster cited as a divine punishment for Israel's sinfulness. Elsewhere the punishment is always military conquest, deportation, and attendant evils, that is to say, calamities produced through the agency of man. The point of 4:6-11 is simply that Israel has been given many occasions for a turning to God and has allowed them all to pass without making the appropriate response. Ward pointed to the preceding oracle (4:4-5) which mocks the people's delight in sacrificial turning to God. Thus if there is a significance in the placement of 4:6-11 beside this other utterance, it is probably to counter the acknowledgement of their readiness to turn sacrificially.

Despite this interesting probability, we still think that Am 4:6-11 has to do with the relationship between sin and nature. The mentioning of the series of calamities is meant to give a climactic impression, to justify what is said in v. 12. The absence of any other references to natural disaster as a divine punishment should not be put forward as a reason to deny the relationship. Rather, the coming catastrophe (which we know as having cosmic dimensions, Am 8:9) could be either a natural disaster or a man-made disaster or both.

Where shall we place this relationship between sin and nature? We think that this relationship shows one of the consequences of the lordship of Yahweh over nature, namely in His capacity as a fertility god.<sup>98</sup> It also shows that nature and man are linked in destiny to each other through their dependence on God, to form an indivisible whole. From here it is but a step to understand the pictures of

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98. See W. Harrelson, From Fertility Cult to Worship, New York, 1970, pp. 10-11.

nature as returning to chaos, but these pictures belong to creation, and shall be discussed in the coming paragraphs.

### 3. Creation and future hope

The statement in Koehler's book is well-known: "Creation in the OT theology is an eschatological concept."<sup>99</sup> Behind this statement lies an opinion that creation is the first in a series of events which together make up a definite world age, so that at any point in the process one can ask when the end and the fulfilment will come. To the beginning there corresponds an end, to creation there corresponds a consummation, to the "very good" here a "perfectly glorious" there.<sup>100</sup> In short, the principle that Urzeit gleich Endzeit. What is meant here is of course not the mythical understanding of a cyclical character of time, but that all that is said about creation in the OT is directed to a certain goal, namely the new creation, created following the pattern of the old creation.

Still, it has to be asked: is there really a continuous link from creation in Genesis to creation in Deutero Isaiah or beyond?

Is  $\aleph' \psi \aleph \gamma$  in Gen 1:1, a necessary parallel to  $\gamma \psi \aleph \gamma$  and  $\gamma \gamma \pi \aleph$  in Is 44:6; 48:12 as held, for example, by Childs?<sup>101</sup>

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99. Koehler, Old Testament Theology, p. 88, followed by B.W. Anderson, Creation versus Chaos, p. 110: "Eschatological orientation is already implicit in the first chapter of Genesis." In p. 111 he followed Eichrodt's opinion in "In the Beginning", Israel's prophetic Heritage, B.W. Anderson-W. Harrelson, (eds.), London, 1962, pp. 1-10, in regarding  $\aleph' \psi \aleph \gamma$  as an absolute temporal beginning. Also E. Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, p. 141f; H.D. Preuss, Yahweglaube und Zukunftserwartung, BWANT 27, Stuttgart, 1968, p. 98.

100. Koehler, loc. cit.

101. B.S. Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament, London, 1960, p. 40. He takes  $\aleph' \psi \aleph \gamma$  as the absolute opposite of  $\aleph' \gamma \pi \aleph$  and not as a beginning of a series. He refers to Koehler as supporting his view.

Is Genesis written with a picture of the end of creation held in mind? Or is it written with the intention of describing the state of the coming future?

Is 44:6 is in a context of prediction; Yahweh is a true God because unlike the other deities, he announced beforehand what He is going to do. Is 48:12 is followed by a creation passage. But even here we have the same context of prediction (vv. 3-5). The creation passage (v. 13) is mentioned in relation to what God has done in the past, and not necessarily pointing to the future.

It is more likely that we have to look at the references to Yahweh as  $\text{יְיָשׁוּעַ}$  and  $\text{יְיָמֶלֶךְ}$  in a context of history (the context of Is 44:6 is about the coming superb condition of the elect of Yahweh; Is 48:12 is about the coming Exodus, which shall be more superb than the old Exodus).

Even if we regarded creation as subservient to history there is difficulty in connecting creation in Gen 1 with creation in DI. Creation in Gen 1 has been argued as "the opening of history".<sup>102</sup> But creation in DI has only been argued as having a secondary role to history and not as "the closing of history". To argue that they are connected to each other because they have been historicised, teleologically directed and placed in relation to the future, and that the future can be described in creation terminologies<sup>103</sup> does

102. See for instance Preuss, op. cit., p. 94.

103. ibid., pp. 98-99. On the other hand there is an opinion that the language of creation in P is similar to the language of ancient conquest tradition. So creation actually means "restoration to the land", W. Brueggemann - H.W. Wolff, The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions, Atlanta, 1976, p. 111. But this opinion is in danger of ignoring the self-standing position of the creation concept in the OT. It is better to argue that P refers to creation as a guarantee that there shall be a restoration to the land (cf. Is 45:18).



not help much. It does not prove that creation in DI is the result of this thinking. It seems that the pictures of creation in DI and the pictures of new creation (a new heaven and a new earth) in Trito Isaiah have been mixed up with each other.<sup>104</sup> And even in the case of Trito Isaiah it can be argued whether pictures of new creation belong to statements of creation or not. It remains to be demonstrated that there is any direct link between Genesis and DI. This will be thoroughly examined in the coming chapters.

Nevertheless, there is a connection between what God has done in the past (the old creation) and what he is going to do in the future. The connection is the belief in the actual relationship to God, the certainty of communion with Him in the present.<sup>105</sup> By arguing that creation in the OT is more concerned with the wozu and wohin than the woher, we think that Preuss has overstressed the future aspect of this communion with God.<sup>106</sup>

104. R.P. Carroll, in pp. 23-24 of his "Twilight of Prophecy or Dawn of Apocalyptic?", JSOT 14 (1979), pp. 3-35, makes the same mistake as Preuss, although in a different context. There is no reference to new heaven and new earth in DI. But there is a possibility that it is implied in the sayings about natural transformations.
105. Vriezen, op. cit., p. 431 ff. But in Vriezen's work all references to new things in DI are placed in the context of creation through the word, נָצַח (p. 450). Although we do not agree that creation has only a supporting role to history in DI, the use of creation verbs such as נָצַח in a non-creation context means that the context is still a non-creation context. Here it is about the historical future of Israel.
106. Preuss, op. cit., p. 96. C. Stuhlmüller, Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah, pp. 196-97, 208 thinks in the same direction as Preuss. DI has no interest in the past creation. Yahweh's creative activities start from redemption to cosmic creation. Stuhlmüller's recent position in "Deutero-Isaiah (chaps. 40-55): Major Transitions in the Prophetic Theology and in Contemporary Scholarship", CBQ 42/1 (1980), pp. 1-29, is basically unchanged.

This certainty of communion with God rests on the prophetic understanding of existence as a tension between creation and chaos. No matter how deep Israel feels trapped in a "chaotic" situation, the belief in creation, which is about the createdness of the world and of man, is a source of hope, that God will save His people. Let us reflect briefly on this.

If we hold that the picture of creation is about real-objective entities then one can ask: are the pictures of chaos in the OT also real-objective? We can answer the question by referring to Jer 4:23-26. There the picture of the return of chaos is harshly realistic.<sup>107</sup> The same will hold for the Flood narrative in Genesis. The water is real, not the personification of a mythical dragon.

But chaos is never fully triumphant. The tension never lapses. Many of the pictures of chaos in the prophetic tradition as in Amos (Amos 8:9) and in Jeremiah are only pictures of the coming situation or are only used to produce a threatening effect.

This view of a tension may be developed from the liturgical tradition. Even the terrible experience of the exile is not regarded as being right in the middle of chaos, because the fact of creation is still there for everyone to see (Is 40:26)!

The tension between creation and chaos clearly shows in DI. The old creation is still to be trusted. It can be a source of hope in facing the future history. The future hope is centred on the fulfilment of creation.

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107. R. Davidson, The Old Testament, London, 1964, p. 223.

We are not sure whether this tension can be seen in Trito Isaiah. What did the writers have in mind when they mentioned new heavens and new earth (Is 65:17, 18; 66:22)? Do they imply that the old creation has returned to chaos? Is the link between God's act in the past and in the future broken? It seems that what Preuss said about the future being described in creation terminology and Koehler's statement about creation being an eschatological concept have to be placed in the context of Trito Isaiah rather than in DI.

But what is really the relation between creation and eschatology? To answer this we have to decide first what we mean by eschatology in the OT. We are aware of the discussion of the problems concerning the use of this term.<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, let us say that eschatology is a future outlook or a future hope of God's reign. There are two kinds of eschatology, prophetic eschatology and apocalyptic eschatology.<sup>109</sup> Prophetic eschatology is talk about the future in terms extrapolated from the present and the past and indicative of a belief and a hope in the future. It is a belief of a future hope within history.<sup>110</sup>

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108. See H.D. Preuss, (ed.), Eschatologie im Alten Testament, Darmstadt, 1978. This is a collection of many articles written through the years concerning eschatology.

109. P.D. Hanson in IDB, Supplementary Volume; E. Jenni in IDB, E-J. Also cf. Carroll, op. cit., pp. 26-27. He discussed Hanson's definition of prophetic and apocalyptic eschatology in Hanson's book, The Dawn of Apocalyptic, pp. 11-12. For the social background of these eschatologies see Hanson's book and Carroll's article. Also O. Plöger, Theocracy and Eschatology, Oxford, 1968; W. Brueggemann, "Trajectories in Old Testament Literature and the Sociology of Ancient Israel", JBL 98/2, (1979), pp. 161-185.

110. R.P. Carroll, When Prophecy Failed, London, 1979, pp. 37-38.



In turn, there are two kinds of prophetic eschatology: active prophetic eschatology, where God's reign shall be established with the help of His people and passive prophetic eschatology where God alone shall establish His reign. Apocalyptic eschatology can be seen as a continuation or a late development of prophetic eschatology. Both are concerned with the matter of the coming of the reign of God, in which the salvation of Israel is completely established. But instead of direct intervention of God in the history of this world, one now expects the destruction of this secularised world and the coming of the new aeon. The direct connection between the present and God's impending act of salvation is broken down.<sup>111</sup>

Apocalyptic eschatology can be found not only in the Daniel Apocalypse, but as a religious perspective, also in the writings which are not regarded as apocalypse, such as Jer 29:10; 25; 11:11-12.<sup>112</sup> DI has the passive kind of prophetic eschatology, while Ezekiel and Haggai, through their temple building programme as a prerequisite of the reign of Yahweh, can be regarded as having the active kind of prophetic eschatology.<sup>113</sup>

What about Trito Isaiah? If the references to new heavens, new earth and new Jerusalem in Is 65:17, 18; 66:22 mean the end of this existing world (the disappearance of the old creation) then the passage belongs to apocalyptic eschatology. But if they mean renewal of the

111. Jenni, op. cit.; cf. Plöger, op. cit., p. 28. Even if we accept Jenni's definition we are uncertain about his term 'secularised world'. Maybe it is better to change it to 'evil-engulfed world'.

112. Jenni, ibid.

113. Carroll, "Twilight of Prophecy or Dawn of Apocalyptic?", p. 26.

existing world, the return of the condition of the old created world as it is supposed to be, then they belong to passive prophetic eschatology. Is 65:17, 18 and 66:22 are ambiguous passages. We could not say they belong to creation statements. They do not refer to creation, but to new creation. On the other hand, the typology of creation is used. It is new heavens and new earth, not just  $\aleph \psi \gamma \pi$  as in Is 43:19.<sup>114</sup> But we could not say either that they belong to apocalyptic.<sup>115</sup> There is no mention of chaos, and nor could we say that chaos is implied in the passages.

A last question remains: is apocalyptic eschatology unconcerned with creation belief? In apocalyptic traditions there is much reference to chaos, return to chaos (the destruction of creation), or even the defeat and oblivion of chaos, but no reference to creation. We have described our uncertainty about the references to new heavens and new earth, but our answer to this question is still in the affirmative. That is why in our future discussion we will not touch upon apocalyptic passages such as Is 24-27. Although we need to define chaos, our discussion concerning chaos will be centred on its relation with creation.<sup>116</sup>

114. Koehler's statement then actually should be: new creation is an apocalyptic eschatological concept.

115. C. Westermann, Isaiah 40-66, OTL, London, 1978, p. 408, too thinks that they do not belong to apocalyptic. R.N. Whybray, Isaiah 40-66 NCB, London, 1975, p. 276, argues that the author of these passages has reinterpreted Is 51:6, where heaven and earth appear to be destroyed. However, he cautions against classifying them as apocalyptic.

116. Our approach is different from what was taken by B.W. Anderson in Creation versus Chaos. He follows the lines of Gunkel, who stated that there is a continuous pattern of the beginning which corresponds with the end in the whole of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Passages where chaos or chaos monsters are mentioned are implicitly regarded as creation passages, while the result is that very little is actually said about creation. Creation is not seen in tension with chaos, but as identical with chaos.

#### 4. Creation and myth

##### 4.1 Problems concerning definitions of myth

The term 'myth' has been included in The Expository Times as one of the words in its article serial "Slippery words".<sup>117</sup> Indeed it is. To take departure from etymology of the word is unhelpful. For the Greek *μῦθος* just meant a tale, a statement, a story or the plot of a play. The English word 'mythology' can be confusing, since it may denote either the study of myths, or their content, or a particular set of myths.<sup>118</sup> On the other hand it is also confusing to try to define myth according to the scope of interest of the definers. In the conclusion of his book on the problems of myth in the OT, Rogerson has put forward 12 possible definitions of myth!<sup>119</sup>

Davidson has tried to discern two contexts of meanings when people talk about myth in the OT.<sup>120</sup> The first is 'story myths', which provide answers to ultimate questions such as about life, society and the world; but also to question about present existing customs. The 'story myths' appear in two forms: the traditional, popular one handed down from generation to generation within the community and the conscious literary creation of a teacher.

The second is myth as spoken words which accompanied the performance of religious rituals. This myth usually focused upon the

117. ExpT 90, (1979-1980), pp. 10-14.

118. G.S. Kirk, op. cit., p. 8.

119. Rogerson, Myth in Old Testament Interpretation, pp. 174-178.

120. Davidson, Genesis 1-11, pp. 10-12.



beneficent and harmful forces in man's natural environment. These forces are personalised as gods and goddesses, mutually inter-related and often locked in conflict with one another. This kind of myth tries to give a guarantee to man about the continuing stability of the natural world and society.

The story of the garden (Gen 2:5-3:24) and the Flood (Gen 6-8) can be regarded as 'story myth' while the second understanding can be seen as the background of the whole creation story in Gen 1:1-2:4. But the creation story in Gen 1:1-2:4 itself is a counterstatement to certain of the presuppositions in the second kind of myth.<sup>121</sup> Gen 1:1-2:4 is then more a theological reflection than a myth.

Although we shall put forward our reservation concerning one of the presuppositions, namely that the gods outside Israel are personifications of nature and to the tendency to regard a counterstatement to myth as non-myth, on the whole we tend to accept these two helpful meanings of myth. Still, we should keep in mind the confusion of so many efforts to define myth.

#### 4.2 Myth and nature

In our discussion about the relation between creation and nature we hold that the idea which regards the gods of the religions outside Israel as personifications of nature cannot be held any longer. We agree that there is a conflict or battle motif in cosmological hymns of the ancient Near East, but probably the same ambivalence in the

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121. ibid., p. 13.

view of nature is also evident in some of them.<sup>122</sup> The difference between the other creation myths and Gen 1:1-2:4 then should not be looked upon in the relationship of the divine with nature/the world, but in the lack of battle motif in the latter (which could be a theological reflection on the borrowed material, or that the borrowed material itself contains no such motive). It is still valid to hold that Gen 1:1-2:4 is a counterstatement to other creation myths of the second kind, but if it is a theological reflection, then it may well fit into the definition of the first myth. It depends on what we mean by the word 'theology'. We shall return to this subject later on. Let us direct our attention now to the opinion that differs significantly from both Davidson and us in stating the relationship between myth and nature. According to this opinion, references to nature, both in the Ancient Near Eastern literature and in the OT are not to be taken literally, but are to be regarded as having a 'mythological' background. That is to say that nature always serves to function as symbols for the gods. This is the emphasis of Othmar Keel with his iconographic approach to the Psalms.<sup>123</sup> Iconography is important for our understanding of the biblical realia that are products of human creativity. We frequently know from the context and from the tradition of translation that a particular phenomena must denote some weapon, cult object, musical instrument or architectural element. In most cases, only archaeology can instruct us concerning the exact appearance of these man-made objects. But, according to Keel, iconography is also important, perhaps even more important, in

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122. W.G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian background of Genesis", JTS XVI (1965) pp. 288-300.

123. O. Keel, The Symbolism of the Biblical World, London, 1978.

discerning the meaning of unchanged (not man-made) entities, such as the moon, storms, earth and trees.<sup>124</sup> Keel gave an example of the meaning of the mountains in Pss 89:12; 90:2; 97:4-5; 104:32; 121:1-2. This complex phenomenon (the mountains) dominated ancient man. On the one hand, they provide a barrier of protection for the settlement. On the other hand, they could effectively impede communication. The arbitrary character of these entities made them seem to be spheres of the divine, even gods in their own rights. So when the Psalms speak of mountains, they mean gods, but gods who "praise Yahweh" and "tremble before Him" in acknowledgement of His superiority.

This is an attractive approach. But while we agree that symbols are drawn out of nature<sup>125</sup> and that Yahweh or the gods can be seen in the phenomenon of nature, it is not necessary that nature always functions as symbols of the divine. Moreover, it is clear that Keel differs from us on the meaning of 'symbol'. If the mountains can be seen as gods in their own right, then it means that the divine is identical with nature. This view, of course, makes it difficult for him to see that ancient man can regard nature as a 'non-Thou', nature as it is, as real-objective entity. In the case of the passages of the Psalms above, we tend to regard the sayings of "trembling" mountains as metaphors used to describe the lordship of Yahweh. Admittedly, Keel never used the term 'myth' or 'mythology' when he explains his approach. Nevertheless, in our opinion he comes close to identify symbol with myth.

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124. ibid., p. 8. Our underline.

125. ibid., p. 20.



Mary Wakeman has the same approach as Keel, but in her work she clearly refers to all natural entities in the OT as related to mythological figures or monsters.<sup>126</sup>  $\text{Y}^{\text{N}}$  is the name of a monster. He swallowed Pharaoh and his host (Ex 15:12), Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Num 16:32).<sup>127</sup> The frequent mention of the phrase  $\text{Y}^{\text{N}}$  either  $\text{Y}^{\text{N}}$  or  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  is also to be seen as mythological language about Yahweh subduing the monsters  $\text{Y}^{\text{N}}$  and  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$ .<sup>128</sup> Later the functions of the monsters differ: the former enemy now does Yahweh's work under His command, as can be seen in Ex 15 and Num 16 above, but  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  remains in the role of the enemy.<sup>129</sup>

It is true that in Job 9:8 and Ps 74:13  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  alludes to the mythological monster, but it is not necessary that the case should be always so. The significance of the phrase  $\text{Y}^{\text{N}}$  is not exactly known.  $\text{Y}^{\text{N}}$  is most frequently associated with  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  (Deut 23:29; Amos 4:13; Mic 1:3; Job 9:8; Hab 3:19). The other verbs are  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  (Deut 32:13; Is 58:14),  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  (Is 14:14) and  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  (2 Sam 22:34; Ps 18:34). By studying its counterpart in Ugaritic and Akkadian Patrick Vaughan concluded that  $\text{N}^{\text{N}}$  refers to anatomical and topographical senses, but with no idea of

126. Mary K. Wakeman, God's battle with the Monster, Leiden, 1973.

127. In the latter she carefully notes that the definite article (as in Ps 106:17) prevents  $\text{Y}^{\text{N}}$  from being read as a name; nevertheless, according to her, the language of myth persists, ibid., p. 109.

128. ibid., p. 118.

129. ibid., p. 126.

130. Other occurrences of phrases of this kind: Deut 32:13; 33:20; 2 Sam 1:19, 25; Is 14:14; 58:14; Amos 4:13; Mic 1:3; Job 9:8; 2 Sam 22:34; Ps 18:34; Hab 3:19.

height inherent in it at all.<sup>131</sup> If  $\text{𐤃 𐤍}$  is not to be regarded literally, then we can regard  $\text{𐤃 𐤍 𐤑}$  as having a metaphorical sense. The phrase is essentially denoting divine activity, possibly indicating ownership of the land.<sup>132</sup> This picture of ownership seems neutral, i.e. it gives no impression of a violent motion, either on the side of the owner or on the side of the object.  $\text{𐤃 𐤍 𐤃}$  should not be translated "trample", but "walk along/across."

Let us close our paragraph with this conclusion: an iconographical or mythological approach in the sense of Keel and Wakeman is not a fruitful approach to explain the phenomena of myth and nature in the OT. Mythology can contain reflection on nature as symbol of God/gods, but can also contain considerations on nature as such.

#### 4.3 Myth and History

We have referred above to Cross' work, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic, in which he described what he believes is the theme of Yahweh as the Divine Warrior, which is related to the concept of creation.<sup>133</sup> The emphasis on the antiquity of this concept which he included in the realm of myth remains a guiding principle in his thought concerning the evolution of the biblical religion. According to Cross, the Deuteronomistic history promulgated a theology of history, and not just that, but of a kind that has the sense of a 'horizontal' history. The hand of God was found plainly visible in the course of historical

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131. Patrick H. Vaughan, The meaning of bāmâ in the Old Testament, London, 1974, pp. 10-11. And  $\text{𐤃 𐤍 𐤑}$  is not the equivalent of  $\text{𐤃 𐤍 𐤑}$ . The former never occurred in any cultic context as  $\text{𐤃 𐤍 𐤑}$  the latter could mean 'heights' (where the cultic place is situated), see pp. 13-14.

132. ibid., pp. 9, 59.

133. See above, p. 41.

events.<sup>134</sup> But if a comparison is made between Deuteronomistic history and Job, then it is obvious that history in Job has become a riddle beyond man's fathoming. The God of history ceases to speak. Instead He was revealed in the myths of chaos and creation, which are strikingly absent in the former. These myths were re-introduced through Wisdom tradition to fill the gap caused by the regressing of the historical faith, which in turn was caused by painful historical experiences. Cross commented that in Job, to some extent, begins the end of the ancient religion of Israel.<sup>135</sup> Second Isaiah tried to revive something of this old religion's sense of history, but did not repudiate Job's myths. Instead he tried to 'historise' them, as can be seen in Is 51:9-11. The so-called proto-apocalypticists (Zech 9-10, Is 24-27) continued this process, but the later works of apocalypse find it hard to maintain this dialectic. They fully employed mythical imageries and transformed them into an eschatological setting.

Let us reflect for a moment on these descriptions. The assumptions of the antiquity of creation concepts which Cross wrongly identifies with chaos concepts apparently caused Cross to reflect on the scarcity of the concept in the earlier and its abundance in the later literature. If the crossing of the sea in the Exodus episode is considered as within the concept of creation, then one possibility is of course the recrudescence of this theme and then to look for the reasons of this recrudescence.

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134. F.M. Cross, jr., Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic, pp. 343f.

135. ibid., p. 344.



But was there ever a time when Israel did not think mythologically? This view of the recrudescence of myth is very similar to the opinion of S.B. Frost,<sup>136</sup> that at the time of the exile there was a remythologising of eschatology which reached its peak in the Apocalyptic. This view has been rightly criticised by Barr<sup>137</sup> who points out that both the early and the late eschatology used mythological imageries. We could not make a distinction in the nature of, for instance, the 𐤏𐤁𐤕 𐤏𐤁𐤕 in Amos 7:4 and the pictures of Golden Age in the Apocalypse. Both Cross and Frost seem to disregard the possibility that myth could contain history and that there are 'historical' and 'non-historical' myths.

So, why is myth (in this case, creation) contrasted with history? Apparently because Cross believes in the antithesis between these two kinds of thinking, which supposedly dominates the social life of the people of ancient Israel.<sup>138</sup> Basically, this theory of antithesis tries to show that creation myth serves to legitimise the status quo of the existing order, the city-state, or the monarchical institution, or the social conservative position within the nation in contrast to the militant Mosaic Yahwism, which depicts historical events and opens the way to liberation, to a new social possibility.<sup>139</sup>

136. S.B. Frost, "Eschatology and Myth", VT 2 (1952), pp. 70-80.

137. J. Barr, "The Meaning of 'Mythology' in relation to the Old Testament", VT 9 (1959), pp. 1-10.

138. Cross has enormous influence on other scholars. Hanson takes over this antithesis in The Dawn of Apocalyptic. In pp. 24-31 of his book there is an elaboration of the outlines of Cross' view. See also W. Brueggemann, "Trajectories in Old Testament Literature and the sociology of Ancient Israel", who draws heavily from both Cross and S. Terrien's assumptions in "The Yahweh Speeches and Job responses", RevExp 68 (1971), pp. 497-509.

139. Brueggemann, ibid., put a list of the differences between 'royal trajectories' and 'liberation trajectories', (p. 180).

What shall we say to this? Despite our deep sympathy with the theme of liberation in theology, and although we agree that there are warring factions in the ancient Israelite society, we still doubt that these factions are so sharply polarised that we can say the situation is of a class-struggle. Some scholars emphasised the ideological origin of the Yahwistic faith<sup>140</sup>, but no sufficient evidence has been forwarded to support this hypothesis<sup>141</sup>, far less to show that this ideological structure can be seen through the historical development of the nation. P.D. Hanson's theory on the origin of apocalyptic is based on this antithesis between myth and history.<sup>142</sup> The warring factions are 'the visionaries', who used inspiration from prophecy, which is related to history; and the 'hierocrats' who were inspired by the cult with its interest in myth. But by referring to Albrektson's History and the Gods, Carroll has stated that the antithesis between myth and history is a false antithesis. Both factions existed in

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140. Among them G. Mendenhall and N.K. Gottwald.

141. The term 'hypothesis' comes from Gottwald himself. See his "Early Israel and "The Asiatic Mode of Production" in Canaan", Society of Biblical Literature 1976 Seminar Paper, George Macrae, (ed.), Missoula, 1976, pp. 145-154. See also the refutation of Mendenhall's thesis in H. Cazelles, "The History of Israel in the pre-exilic period", Tradition and Interpretation, G.W. Anderson, (ed.), Oxford, 1979, p. 284f. If this is the case, then it would be better if we stop trying to show that class-struggle analysis has some biblical grounds, in case we meet the same fate as the 'secular' theologians, who failed in their claim that secularisation has some roots in the OT. We suspect that behind these efforts lie some residue of fundamentalistic attitude to prove that 'the Bible is always right' or that 'the Bible is always relevant', whenever an ideology or an attitude is gaining ground in the world.

142. In The Dawn of Apocalyptic, Philadelphia, 1975.

history and both operate with mythical concepts and motives.<sup>143</sup> To say that somebody thinks 'historically' because he exists in history is true to some extent, but is not a wholly clear statement. Somebody could exist in history, while having a 'non-historical' concept of thinking. But then it is also true that even historiography could contain myths. In other words, a 'history oriented' thinking could use mythical concepts.<sup>144</sup> And that is what the ancient people were doing.<sup>145</sup> Carroll's statement of the false antithesis between myth and history in the field of Old Testament study holds. The Old Testament is the product of ancient people.

143. Carroll, "Twilight of Prophecy or Dawn of Apocalyptic", pp. 19-21. The same opinion can be seen in J.J.M. Roberts, "Myth versus History: Relaying the Comparative Foundations", CBQ 38 (1965), pp. 1ff.

144. We think that the third possibility, that somebody exists in history, and has a 'history oriented' thinking without mythical concepts could only be applied to modern-scientific man. When modern man talks about creation he means it in a non-biblical sense, just to convey how the process of the present world is taking shape. We are not saying that there is nothing in the OT which could inspire people nowadays, but that perhaps there is nothing in the OT which could inspire the modern scientific man, if he is honest to his milieu. It is still inspiring, however, for the Third World man. This does not mean looking for or framing parallels between modern ideologies and biblical situations. Personally we would like to see Third World liberation theologians using more inspirations from creation themes, which have unitary principle (H-J. Hermisson, "Observations on the Creation Theology in Wisdom", Israelite Wisdom, John J. Gammie et al. (eds.), New York, 1978, pp. 43-57). This could check the tendency for self-righteousness and separatism in the struggle for liberation. We do not believe that the Third World Man will automatically come to the stage of the modern-scientific man, as if modern rapid secularisation is a 'fate', an inevitable or unhindered process in the world. The difference in the thinking of modern man and ancient man is in degree, but the modern-scientific man has reached a degree, which excludes transcendence, and in our opinion this is a bad sign of man losing his horizon.

145. Carroll, op. cit., p. 21.



There is something to be said for Cross' thesis that creation served to confirm the status quo. The strange dissonance of the pictures of creation in the context of judgement may have something to do with the prophetic reaction to creation as an assurance of the status quo before the exile. While this is true to some extent, Cross' thesis is too one-sided. Certainly the concept of creation in DI is thoroughly intended to break the apathy of the people in the exile, who tend to accept their fate. Creation was used to serve both interests, to legitimise the existing order, or to break away from the existing order. By getting rid of the principle creatio ancilla historiae, we can reappraise creation concept in Ps 74 in its own right. The phrase **וַאלֹהִים מִלְכִּי מִקְדָּם פֶּעַל יְשׁוּעוֹת בְּקִרְבִּי הָאֲדָרָץ** links up creation with liberation.<sup>146</sup>

And when we look at Job, especially in the famous episode in Chs 38-41, in which God answers him, it is difficult to believe that he is simply intimidated into accepting his 'fate'.<sup>147</sup> Anyway, the fact that man can suffer, even to the point of dying, does not hinder him from striving to achieve liberation.

Wisdom tradition - as in the book of Ecclesiastes (e.g. Eccles 5:8) - gives a strong impression of the maintenance of the status quo. It has been almost common acceptance to relate creation with Wisdom.<sup>148</sup>

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146. V. 12. This link has been elaborated by E.J. Beker and K.A. Deurloo, Het begin in ons midden, Baarn, 1977, pp. 28-42. But their description sometimes is in danger of falling back into the contrast between myth and history and putting back creation against history.

147. Despite J.B. Curtis, "on Job's Response of Yahweh", JBL, 98/4 (1979), pp. 497-511.

148. e.g. W. Zimmerli, "The Place and Limit of Wisdom in the Framework of the Old Testament Theology", SJT XVII (1964), pp. 146-158. While having some reservations, Hermisson agrees with him, op. cit., pp. 43-57. In the prolegomenon of his anthology, Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom, pp. 26-35, Crenshaw stated that this relationship is still something of a mystery. B. Vawter on the other hand denies the connection between wisdom and creation. Wisdom is acquired by Yahweh, not created. "Wisdom and Creation", JBL 99/2 (1980), pp. 205-16. But he immediately consented that wisdom played a part in creation as something of a model.

However, the impression of social conservatism in Wisdom (may be not in all wisdom literature) should not automatically mean that creation theology is also in the same boat.<sup>149</sup>

Our opinion that creation can be used either to confirm or disconfirm the status quo is also different from the other opinion, which maintain that creation myths outside Israel are always concerned with the continuation of the status quo, while creation stories in the OT (especially the P story) are polemics against this kind of myth.<sup>150</sup> Even if we have to admit that our knowledge of the rituals and their background in the Ancient Near East is very limited, we doubt if there were no cynics or rebels among non-Israelite people. This also depends on the meaning of status quo, but on the other hand, is there no status quo in Israel? Is the critique against the existing order, even in the form of the anti-monarchists, concerned with democracy? No doubt there were points of difference among all Near East nations, but they share a very large common pool of beliefs<sup>151</sup>, and we think that this contrast between myth outside Israel as supporting the status quo and creation in Israel as polemical against that kind of myth, too, should be modified.

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149. Even wisdom could not be said always to support the status quo. "It is a misinterpretation of wisdom if it is credited with the stabilising of an unchangeably rigid order", Hermisson, op. cit., p. 45. Prov 22:2 and 29:13 are asserting that the poor man is to be respected; he is still God's creature.

150. For instance, Barr, op. cit., p. 10. He even holds that status quo is the rationale of mythology.

151. Carroll, loc. cit.

#### 4.4 Myth and theology

It is common in the OT scholarship (especially by 'biblical theology' proponents, but also, here and there, by their opponents) to make an antithesis between myth and theology. The argument is that in the OT there is no myth, only theology. All that was borrowed from the surrounding world, including creation stories, have been 'demythologised'.<sup>152</sup> This raises the question: is there no theology outside Israel?

If we hold that the opinion about nature outside Israel as god/gods is wrong, then we cannot say that the borrowed materials have gone through a process of Entgötterung.<sup>153</sup> It has been popular for some time to stress that this Entgötterung makes it possible for man to regard nature objectively, and so enable him to use it for his benefit and prosperity. The process of 'disenchantment' with nature, which in turn triggers the process of secularisation, is said to have its roots in the OT. But if the world outside Israel was able to distinguish between a god or gods and nature, then the reason for this 'disenchantment' has to be sought in other fields.<sup>154</sup>

152. Although the word 'demythologised' originated in the field of the New Testament and systematic theology (R. Bultmann and P. Tillich), it also appears frequently in literature concerning the OT: see H.W. Wolff, Anthropology in the Old Testament, Philadelphia, 1974, pp. 102, 162; B.W. Anderson, "Exodus typology in Second Isaiah", Israel's Prophetic Heritage, p. 193; Barr, op. cit., p. 7 (On Gen 1); 3x in D.J. McCarthy, "'Creation' motifs in Ancient Hebrew Poetry", CBQ 29 (1967), pp. 393-406. Those who are prepared to accept myth in the OT to a certain extent use terms such as 'broken myths', 'faded myths', 'torso of a myth', etc.
153. See J. Barr, "Man and Nature: The Ecological controversy and the Old Testament", David & Eileen Spring (eds.), Ecology and Religion in History, p. 50.
154. For why can people such as in Bali, produce a sophisticated system of irrigation if they are afraid of nature? They believe in the gods of nature, they can see god in nature, but nature can also be seen as gifts of the gods that can be cultivated.



If theology is defined as reflections on history, then the creation stories, which are concerned with nature, must have gone through a process of 'historicising' to become theology, i.e. containing reflections on the relation of man and God in history. But if it is also wrong to make a distinction between the understanding of Israel and her surrounding world concerning history, then it will be better if we begin to think that even outside Israel (as well as in Israel), reflections concerning the divine and the divine realm in relation with the purpose and destiny of man in man's realm are also theology.

Theology of course has something to do with the transcendence of God. But while agreeing with the opinion of many on the relation between God and the world in the OT<sup>155</sup>, we asked ourselves whether we are not a little too harsh if we deny that there is a concept of transcendence outside Israel (not to mention that transcendence also caused problems for both Jewish and Christians in their effort to understand the OT). Could not we say that what we have in the OT concerning creation is also 'myth'?

Then of course it is better to get rid of the term 'demythologising'.<sup>156</sup>

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155. W. Zimmerli, The Old Testament and the World, London, 1976; R. Davidson, "The Old Testament - A question of theological relevance", Biblical Studies, J.R. McKay - J.F. Miller, (eds.), London, 1976, pp. 52-55.
156. After all it is a confusing term. It gives us associations with R. Bultmann's program of Entmythologisierung (which is translated as 'demythologising'), and these associations can mislead us to think that what were done by the OT writers centuries ago, is caused by the same frame of mind as the modern contemporary man in the Western technological society. See the mistake made by W.H. Schmidt in his explanation about myth in Rogerson's Myth in Old Testament Interpretation, p. 158. This is not a denial that a group of people can be further advanced in the degree of their own thinking than others. The Western modern technological culture has shown that this is possible. However, this started to happen in history during the middle ages, out of a deliberate determination to exploit the world. Before that date all thinking is generally on the same level.

Maybe it is more appropriate to regard creation stories as having been accommodated to the faith of Israel, in the sense that subjectively, the claim of creatorship was put in the hands of Yahweh. In other words, the faith of Israel denies it to other gods. This act of claiming and disclaiming is theology, but this theology is still within the framework of myth. The creation stories in the OT contain polemic or counterstatement, but this in the light of the nature of the Israelite understanding of Yahweh is inevitable. Yahweh could not tolerate other gods.<sup>157</sup> What McKenzie said is true: that which we have in the OT is myth, but a myth which at once is an anti-(another) myth.<sup>158</sup>

If we propose to include creation stories in the OT into the second definition of myth, it does not mean that they have a ritual function in a cultic context. We have already mentioned G.S. Kirk's opinion, which denies that myth is always concerned with ritual<sup>159</sup> or a dramatic performance. While this is certainly true, nevertheless it is still possible to assume that the words employed in a myth are believed to convey a cultic "now". Myth is actualisation.<sup>160</sup> Those who defend that the OT is concerned with past events (which is an

157. And by no means is this process of claiming and disclaiming completed. It goes on in the reflection of Christians in the realm of the great non-monotheistic Asian religions, and sometimes becomes a cause of irritation on the side of their theologians, who complain that the Christians always claim whether they like it or not, that what is good in theirs comes from the Christian's god.

158. McKenzie, A Theology of the Old Testament, p. 191.

159. See above, p. 38 fn 68.

160. See G. van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, volume II, New York - Evanston, 1963, p. 413.

indication of its historical objectivity) would of course object to the term 'actualisation'. But 'actualisation' does not always mean the recurrence of primordial events following the cyclic line of history. What has happened in the past, is past. But in the reading of the narrative of the materials of myth people express their conviction that the great things which happened in the past are determinative and decisive for today. The triumph of God over chaos long ago provides the present security which benefits His people in everyday life. The same holds true for the 'historical' deeds of God. There is evidence in the OT that the past 'historical' deeds of God provide the people with lasting hope in spite of their present suffering.<sup>161</sup>

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161. Cf. C. Westermann, "The 'Re-presentation' of History in the Psalms", Praise and Lament in the Psalms, Edinburgh, 1981, pp. 214-49.



### CHAPTER THREE: CREATION, CHAOS AND CULT

#### 1. Introduction

Since the publication of H. Gunkel's Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit it has become common to place chaos in an opposite relationship to creation. In every day language, however, when people say "chaos", it can have the meaning of "disorder" (and usually it is this meaning which they want to convey). But "disorder" does not quite mean the same as "chaos", as can be seen in Paul G. Kuntz's discussion on order and chaos.<sup>1</sup> He mentions seven different definitions of order and its opposite. But we think only two of them are directly important to our discussion:-

a. Order in the sense of order of the world; a categorical order; opposite: chaos or the undifferentiated, the state of things to which categories do not apply. Chaos here is the undifferentiated state of precreation, without light or dark or wet or dry, and probably also without before or after, up or down, cause or effect.

The conceptualisation of chaos is done by negation of order which now is taken for granted. It is hardly ever experienced. Chaos is then only a hypothetical state. We have only a hypothesis of the state of affairs to which our normal categories do not apply. As nobody has ever witnessed the beginning of creation<sup>2</sup>, similarly, nobody has ever witnessed the beginning of chaos.

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1. Paul G. Kuntz, in the introduction to The Concept of Order, Paul G. Kuntz, (ed.). Seattle and London, 1968, pp. xxxix.

2. Brandon, op. cit., pp. 2-12; Westermann, Creation, pp. 74-114; D.F. Knight, "Revelation through Tradition", in Traditions and Theology in the Old Testament, D.F. Knight, (ed.), Philadelphia, 1977, p. 170.

b. Order in the sense of correlation or orders; opposite: disorder, that which is the lack of such correlation, and which, by following some ordering principle, we may set in order. Disorder, however, is different from chaos. It is the unco-ordinated which we can co-ordinate, whereas chaos is the undifferentiated which we cannot differentiate. If disorder means unco-ordination, then it could also mean too many orders.

Kuntz's definition of chaos may not entirely fit the pictures of chaos in the OT. In the OT chaos is of course undifferentiated. But still, it is described as a state of darkness or a watery mass (Gen 1:2). Besides, the OT also gives some impression that there is relationship between the first and the second definition (see Pss 40:3; 69:1-16; 71:20; 88:7; 2 Sam 22:5; Jon 2:6). Somehow, people in the OT could feel that they are inside the realm of chaos. Should we regard this as coming from real experience or just as metaphors? To say that these passages are metaphors seems to undermine the seriousness of the feeling of helplessness experienced by the people. They are in mortal danger. Still, the distinction between chaos and disorder could be maintained in this OT problem. The people are not really in chaos. This is not to deny the relationship between the first and the second definition. Serious illness, war and natural catastrophes are threats of chaos (or, at most, chaos in its weak form) and could be pictured in images of chaos. Nevertheless, illness, war and natural catastrophes are not chaos in themselves. We can experience illness, war and natural catastrophes, but we cannot experience chaos.<sup>3</sup>

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3. Contra W. Brueggemann, "Weariness, Exile and Chaos; a motif in royal theology", CBQ 34 (1972), p. 34. Sickness or any other weaknesses of life could be included within these threats of chaos, see C. Barth, Die Errettung vom Tode in den individuellen Klage-und Dankliedern des Alten Testaments, Zollikon, 1947. But A.R. Johnson's view, "death in the strict sense of the term is for the Israelite the weakest form of life", in The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel, Cardiff, 1964, p. 95 is questionable. Of course death can only be explained in terms of life (we doubt if there is any other way of explaining it), but we cannot say that death is a (weak) form of life.

We can use these two definitions in clarifying a most confusing problem of the relationship between creation, chaos, order and disorder. Generally, recent OT scholarship tends to associate creation with wisdom theology.<sup>4</sup> It means of course that the question of order is to be discussed within the framework of creation. But the problem does not stop here. R.E. Murphy asked: where does creation theology fit into the OT?<sup>5</sup> Following H.H. Schmidt he sees that the concept of world order as a basic category of thought present in the ancient Near East is also in Israel's reflection on her experiences, even in the particular experiences of her history. To him it is a false problem to ask how creation fits with history. The horizon of world order subsumes both arenas into itself. In this view, faith is not limited to the area of God's history with His people, but to the total experience of the world.<sup>6</sup> Here Murphy is developing his former thoughts about the relation between wisdom and Yahwism.<sup>7</sup> There he attacked the usual habit of seeing how wisdom could fit into Yahwism and proposed that it should be the other way round. Actually, we should ask: how is Yahwism to be inserted into wisdom, into what was the daily experience of Israel?

On the whole, we tend to agree with Murphy's opinion, albeit with some reservations. But before we proceed, just a small observation: the connection of "wisdom" with "daily experience" indicated that wisdom

4. However, see above, p. 68 fn 148.

5. In Israelite Wisdom, p. 36.

6. ibid., p. 37.

7. R.E. Murphy, "Wisdom and Yahwism", in No Famine in the Land, J.W. Flanagan-A.W. Robinson, (eds.), Claremont, 1975, pp. 117-126.



in Murphy's argument means "wisdom thinking", and not wisdom literature or wisdom tradition.<sup>8</sup> This distinction is worth holding in mind, to prevent wisdom becoming what J.R. Porter called "something of a King Charles's head in modern OT criticism".<sup>9</sup>

These are our reservations:

1. There should be a clear description of the relationship between creation, world order and order. Murphy attempted to describe the relationship in "Wisdom and Yahwism". The result is not wholly satisfying. We do not think that world order or order should be identified with creation. This does not mean that there is no relationship between world order, order and creation. World order could be a basic category of thought in Israel since the earliest times, but how shall we describe its relation with Yahweh? Yahweh is certainly not included in the world order.<sup>10</sup> It seems that through the concept of creation what is "world order" becomes or could be seen as "order". This 'order' however, is not to be regarded in the sense of Kuntz's second definition, because it is concerned with categories and not just with co-ordination. It is God who provides the order, or better, regularity, both in natural (Gen 8:22) and ethical realms (Prov 16:4).

8. For these distinctions see Crenshaw, op. cit., p. 130 and R.N. Whybray, "Wisdom", ExpT 89 (1977-78), pp. 359-362.

9. J.R. Porter in Tradition and Interpretation, p. 151.

10. Although we agree with Murphy that it is wrong to make an anti-thesis between wisdom and Yahwism, the fear of confining the god of Israel to something of a world order is understandable. Actually we should not limit this fear to the god of Israel, but also include the deities of the ancient Near East, see J.J.M. Roberts in Unity and Diversity, Baltimore, 1975, pp. 181-190. Based on his examination of Prov 8:22, Vawter insists that Yahweh first acquired wisdom (in this case the world order) and then used it as a model for the creation of the world, op. cit.

von Rad expressed hesitation on the use of the word 'order' or 'world order'.<sup>11</sup> He feels that the teachers of wisdom were talking in a kind of dialectic; on the one hand there are valid rules, but on the other hand there are ad hoc divine actions. Only in Jer 31:35 and 33:25 did he think that the dialectic is resolved. The אֱלֹהִים actually appear as something inherent in creation.

But is this the common belief in Israel as to how things happen? Did Israel really have two ways of seeing phenomena? It is more likely that Israel makes no distinction between Yahweh's purposes and human action.<sup>12</sup> Prov 21:31 and 24:6 are not to be placed in a dialectical relationship. It is Yahweh who wages war against the indigenous peoples of Canaan so that His people can dwell in the land (Deut 1:30); it is He who gives sons to Israelite fathers (Ps 127:3). And yet, it is the people that go to war, and we doubt whether the Israelites were so naive that they were unable to relate sexual intercourse with pregnancy. Could not we say that this common belief as to how things happen is precisely based on some kind of order or regularity, which is somehow connected with Yahweh? (His constancy? "For His name's sake"?). There is no place in the OT which shows more clearly how important order was in Israel than the creation stories in Genesis. The purpose of the 'list science' in Mesopotamia, in which all phenomena were named and ordered, is to recognise and realise order in the world. This was taken over in the J historical work, which begins with the story of

11. In Wisdom in Israel, pp. 106-7.

12. Of course we are aware of passages such as Is 55:8, 9 where it is said that the אֱלֹהִים and the אֱנוֹשׁ of the Lord are different from that of men. Nevertheless, it remains true that Yahweh's thought is generally compatible with human thought.

creation.<sup>13</sup> The P account does not lack this interest in order, as can be seen in the frequent use of the word לִבְרִית.<sup>14</sup>

It should be noted, however, that it is not only order which is implied in the above accounts, but also 'disorder' in the sense of too many orders. In the J narrative the serpent has an alternative order<sup>15</sup>, and so has Cain and the people in the land of Shinar (Gen 2:2-4). This disorder can also be seen in the P narrative of the Flood.

2. Talk about order naturally brings us to the subject of 'natural law' and the possibility of seeing it in the OT. For a long time this term has been anathema to OT scholars. It was common to argue that what we have in the OT is precisely not natural law. The Decalogue was considered to be unique in the ancient Near East, until E. Gerstenberger cogently argued that the so-called 'apodictic laws' grew out from the realm of Sippenweisheit.<sup>16</sup> The prophetic claim

יְהוָה אֱמָר יְהוָה was regarded as an antithesis to the sage's exhortation שִׁמְעוּ בְנֵי מֹשֶׁה אֲבִיךָ until B. Gemser succeeded in showing that the wisdomic יִצְחָק has a strong element of religious authority. The well-known phrase "the fear of the Lord is the beginning

13. H. Gese, "The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East and the Old Testament", JThC 1 (1965), pp. 52-53.

14. Cf. W.H. Schmidt, Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift, Neukirchen, 1973, pp. 167-69; B. Otzen, TDOT, II, pp. 1-3.

15. K. Joines, "The Serpent in Gen 3", ZAW 87 (1975), pp. 1-11.

16. In Wesen und Herkunft des "Apodiktischen Rechts", Neukirchen, 1965; see also J.J. Stamm - M.E. Andrew, The Ten Commandments in Recent Research, London, 1967, pp. 44-75.



of wisdom" is taken by Gemser as the key to the understanding of Israel's wisdom.<sup>17</sup>

Recently, John Barton has tried to revive the discussion about the concept of natural law in the OT.<sup>18</sup> According to him we can approach the problem by asking; a. is the OT aware of any moral norms embracing all mankind and existing over and above particular moral injunctions (either God-given or man-made)? b. does the OT acknowledge any moral norms or principles built in to the nature of things?

As for the first question Barton refers to Job 31:13-15. There an appeal is made to the common origin of all men as a principle which shall rule out injustice between them, and to Gen 9:6(P), where God is not mentioned as a lawgiver, but the giver of the sacrosanctity of men. That is why to take his life is wrong. The oracles against the nations in Amos 1 and 2 are not necessarily related to their being the enemies of Israel. Moab shall be punished because she burned the bones of the king of Edom. Their atrocities were put forward in assumption that the audience will know that they were wrong. Atrocities are wrong deeds by nature. As for the second question, Barton pointed at Gen 18:25, "Shall not the judge of the earth do what is just". He then commented on this passage:

17. Now in Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom, pp. 208-19. Seen from this light W. Brueggemann's efforts in "Scripture and the Ecumenical Life-Style", Int, 24 (1970), pp. 3-19 and in In Man We Trust: The Neglected Side of Biblical Faith, Richmond, 1972 where wisdom teaching is stated as profoundly secular need re-examination.

18. J. Barton, "Natural Law and Poetic Justice in the Old Testament", JTS 30, 1 (1979), pp. 1-14.

"....The very possibility of asking the question does seem to indicate that men may obtain their moral norms not just from what God chooses to reveal, but from the perception of some ethical principle inherent in the way things are: from a sociological perspective, we might say by the projection of the universe of moral principles drawn from the consensus view of the society of which the storytellers form a part." 19

It appears that even God can be faced with this ethical principle, although Barton immediately added that the point of the argument is that God never deviates from this norm. It is clear from his further discussion in Is 1:2 and Amos 6:12 that this ethical principle, this cosmic order, is God-given in the sense that He is the Creator of the world.<sup>20</sup>

In the second part of his article Barton tried to look for clues to indicate where a writer is considered to be thinking in the categories of natural law. He proposed that we look for it in Is 5:8-9, where divine judgement is declared in appropriateness to the sin which has called it down. The term used for this is "poetic justice".<sup>21</sup> By poetic justice it is not meant that there is a mechanism of retribution with the principle of "the deed is the seed". Although he mentioned cosmic order, later on Barton considered that it would be better to see the prophetic references to poetic justice not as expressions of a world view, to which there was no conceivable alternative, but rather as the expressions of a conscious point of view, as positive assertions of a definite theological position. God is described as having an ethical consistency: He acts according to moral principles which are essentially the same as those recognised

19. ibid., p. 5.

20. ibid., pp. 6-7

21. ibid., p. 44.

among men. The prophets who use the notion of poetic justice are implicitly appealing to human consensus about what sort of acts are just and unjust, in other words - natural law. In his other work on Amos 1:3-2:5 which was published subsequently<sup>22</sup> this 'natural law' is termed 'international customary law'. 'International' because it is concerned with conduct between independent nations in time of war, and 'customary' because it is not the subject of explicit legislation.<sup>23</sup> The 'consensus view' is now termed 'social morality' and regarded as almost a part of the order of nature.<sup>24</sup>

What shall we say to Barton's arguments? Undoubtedly, his efforts to justify the term 'natural law' in the OT is salutary. The harsh antithesis between the divine and the human in the ethical laws of the OT must be abandoned, or at least greatly modified. We also agree that there is no principle of "the deed is the seed" in the OT, despite the allegations of K. Koch concerning certain prophetic passages such as Hos 8:7.<sup>25</sup> However, we have seen that Barton tried to make a distinction between world order and natural law, which in our opinion is not necessary. Apparently he thought that the term 'world order' excludes conscience, or will, or freedom. In other words it means mechanical retribution, the principle of 'the deed is the seed'. But the concept of world order does not necessarily exclude freedom,

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22. John Barton, Amos's Oracles against the Nations, Cambridge-Sydney, 1980.

23. ibid., p. 44.

24. ibid., p. 49. Our underline.

25. K. Koch, "Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im Alten Testament?", ZThK 52 (1955), pp. 1-42.



either in Israel or in the surrounding world, as has been shown by J.J.M. Roberts.<sup>26</sup> In the Sumerian King List there is a reference to the goddess Inanna turning against her city Akkad for no apparent reason, but the final denouement is provoked by two human actions, that of Naram Sin's defiance of the God Enlil in ignoring the oracles and destroying the Ekur, and of the continuing supplications of the inhabitants of Nippur.<sup>27</sup>

World order in the ancient Near East then includes the law of retribution, where sin is punished and virtue rewarded. But it is not a kind of mechanical retribution of a closed or 'blind' order, where mankind is willy-nilly confirming the world order. Roberts' article implies that 'freedom' here concerns the freedom of man to sin. On the other hand, Barton stresses the ethical consciousness of God in His consistent dealing with the world. Nevertheless, we think that the concept of world order in the ancient Near East also includes freedom to disconfirm the world order. References to God threatening, punishing or cheating without apparent reason in the OT (Ex 4:24-26; 9:12; 10:1; 2 Sam 24:1-17; Josh 11:20; 1 Kings 22:19-23; Gen 2:16-17; Jer 15:18b; 20:7) are frequently regarded as an indication of the incomprehensibility of the free God of Israel. However, references to the same divine characteristics outside the OT are not infrequently regarded as having to do with a closed or 'blind' order. This antithesis cannot be held any longer. There is tension

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26. In "Myth versus History", CBQ 38 (1976), pp. 1-13. Roberts is against Gese, op. cit., p. 55, who argues the other way round; both the ancient Near East and Israel have the same closed order, but nevertheless the Yahwistic faith put Yahweh behind order, e.g. Prov. 21:31.

27. Roberts, op. cit., p. 55.

in both, between the divine consistency and the divine incomprehensibility (the latter is often referred to as the 'demonic' or 'sinister' in God), although the tendency in the OT is towards Yahweh's consistency. Not only God, but man also is free to disconfirm the world order. He can protest or at least complain against God when the laws of retribution do not seem to work properly: the wicked prospers while the righteous suffers. This gives rise, especially in the field of wisdom, to the orthodox party and the party of the sceptics in Israel,<sup>28</sup> but by no means can we say that this kind of protest is only to be found in the OT. Scepticism is one of the many themes in ancient Near East religious literature.

Barton also mentioned that even idol worship was regarded as contrary to natural law, i.e. unnatural.<sup>29</sup> Here we have to ask: what are really the criteria for deciding whether something is natural law? Granted that it somehow depends on the consensus view of the society, it is still valid to ask: can this be relied upon as 'objective'? What is the radius of the society? Israel? The surrounding world? From all the examples Barton put forward he never asked how Israel came to know these common natural laws. In our opinion, it is preferable if we suppose that Israel's knowledge is part of the common knowledge that spread around the ancient Near East. Nevertheless, we should also examine whether there is a specific outlook in Israel expressed in some laws. The prohibition of pork meat, for instance, is certainly not natural law. It could be the result of the tendency to regard oneself as different from others, or to put it positively, it could

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28. See J.L. Crenshaw, Prophetic Conflict, excursus B, Berlin-New York, 1971, p. 123.

29. Barton, op. cit., p. 7.

be the result of a desire to maintain Israel's uniqueness from the surrounding world.

So Israel is prohibited from eating pork meat because her neighbours have no such a prohibition.

We cannot agree with Barton that prohibition of images is natural law. It could grow out of a possible misunderstanding of the true nature of other nations' faiths<sup>30</sup>, or/and also probably because the other nations do not have such a prohibition!

In short, although Barton's assertion that the eighth century prophets uphold natural law must be confirmed, he did not fully describe the criteria for natural law in the OT and the possibility of a wrong perceptiveness of society.

3. More should be said about world order. The light of Roberts' discovery above could help us in modifying Zimmerli's view on the relation between Yahweh and the world.<sup>31</sup> Zimmerli is clearly struggling with the term 'the world'. On one hand he stressed that OT thought has no equivalent of the notion 'cosmos' or 'world'. The 'world' is never understood in the OT as a self-contained organism which follows its own internal laws of order. On the other hand, he recognises that

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30. See Carroll, "The Aniconic God and the Cult of Images", pp. 51-64. To be fair, Barton did mention this misunderstanding of idol worship. Nevertheless, he insisted upon regarding this as unnatural. It seems that we need a future discussion on the limit and distinction between the norms and laws produced by a subjective feeling of one's uniqueness. R. Goodsir, "Animal Sacrifice - Delusion or Deliverance?", Studia Biblica 1978: I, Sheffield, 1979, pp. 157-60, has a reverse approach from Barton's, but nevertheless falls into the same error. He stressed that Israel is called to be a "natural people" and to reject unnatural things. This can be seen among others in the list of sacrificial animals.

31. W. Zimmerli, The Old Testament and the World, London, 1976.



the P account of the beginning of the creation of heaven and earth is by no means lacking in elements of order.<sup>32</sup> To prove that the world is not self-sufficient Zimmerli resorts to the concept of blessing. This is what makes the concept of the 'world' in the OT different from 'cosmos'.<sup>33</sup> He also stressed that everything in the OT is related to Yahweh and his will (Prov 16:9; 21:30-31), and even if there is order in this world, men are not encouraged to scrutinise it (Prov 3:5-8).

Apparently Zimmerli thought that all concept of reality outside Israel is of a self-sufficient cosmos. While it is true that Israel has no word for 'world' or 'cosmos', it does not necessarily mean that Israel has no awareness of the reality around her. What happened to Israel - or better, to OT belief - is that whenever she thinks about reality, she thinks about God and whenever she thinks about God, she thinks about reality.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand it is with greater probability that we can hold that even the faiths outside Israel have more or less the same outlook on reality as she has.

Are the people not encouraged to discern order? On the contrary. It could even be asked what is it that makes people search for order. In his examination of Prov 10-12, B. Otzen concluded that the urge to divide mankind and the world into two spheres **בְּיָמֵינוּ** and **בְּיָמֵי הַלְלוּ** has its origin in the craving for order. This is the motive power of

32. ibid., p. 25.

33. ibid., pp. 25, 28. Very different is the opinion of C. Westermann, What does the Old Testament say about God? London, 1979; the blessing is inherent in creation.

34. Perceived long ago by H.W. Robinson, Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament, Oxford, 1946, p. 1ff.

all wisdom thinking.<sup>35</sup> We are not sure about Otzen's conclusion. It is more likely that the division of mankind and the world into two spheres is accepted as such. It is precisely the task of man to acquire wisdom so that he may be aware of these spheres and to look beyond this division for a unitary concept of the world.<sup>36</sup> This still does not answer our question. It should be asked further: why are people urged to crave for order?

We have seen that the תורה is authoritative. It is concerned about matters of life and death (e.g. Prov 11:9). It is the awareness of the threat of evil, death, disorder that makes people look for order. This is also one reason for the belief in creation. It is a response to the existential problem of mankind's vulnerability in the world.<sup>37</sup> It gives assurances that no matter what happens, the Creator holds His creation.

C. Westermann commented on the story of the Flood after creation:

"humanity has to live with catastrophes: no power in the world and no religion can alter this; but the promise of the creator at the end of the Flood assures every generation that no catastrophe can cut off the creator's blessing." 38

35. B. Otzen, "Old Testament Wisdom Literature and Dualistic Thinking in Late Judaism", Congress Volume, SVT, 28, Leiden, 1975 pp. 146-57.
36. Hermisson in Israelite Wisdom, p. 44.
37. Westermann, Creation, pp. 12-15; Crenshaw, Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom, pp. 26-31. Hermisson, however, thinks that it is only in special cases that wisdom is concerned with the threat to order. Usually it is only concerned with the continuation of order, op. cit., pp. 54 and 55 fn 10.
38. Westermann, What does the Old Testament say about God?, p. 41. Though he adds a little bit further, "only God can put an end to humanity."

So the concept of creation is not a guarantee that evil will never reach one, but grows out of an understanding of grace.

4. 'Order' could face the danger of becoming an all-purpose word. In this respect let us have a look at D.J. McCarthy's proposal not to use the term 'creation' but 'order' for the creation narratives in Genesis and the reference to Chaoskampf in some of the poetic passages.<sup>39</sup> His assumption is that to the most OT scholars Chaoskampf means having to do with creation, and so consequently, the idea of Chaoskampf must be behind all passages that are supposed to be creation passages. However, he cannot see that Gen 2:4b-5 contains the theme of Chaoskampf. The water there is described in an "unfamiliar guise" (that is to McCarthy, not like the familiar picture of the waters as a raging monster, p. 396). Here the waters are doing their task quietly as God's instrument. Even in the flood story the waters are passive instruments of divine punishment. As for the Chaoskampf, McCarthy found this imagery in Gen 49; Ex 15:2-18; Deut 32:1-43; Deut 33; Judg 5; 2 Sam 22:2-51; Pss 29 and 68 which according to him brings us back to Israel's beginnings. To explain these materials McCarthy discussed the verbs used in relation to creation, the association of the imagery used with creation and the reason why the imagery was used.

The dominant verbs found are, **יָצַק** (Ex 15:2-18; Deut 32:6b), **יָצַח** (Deut 32:6) and **יָצַח** (Deut 32:18). The first verb means "to get", in the sense of "acquire", with some overtones of "produce" and "procreate", as it is demonstrated by its Ugaritic parallel, qnh.

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39. D.J. McCarthy, "'Creation' Motifs in Ancient Hebrew Poetry", CBQ, 29 (1967), pp. 393-406. Long ago H.A. Brongers already stated a similar view, De Scheppingstradities bij de Profeten, pp. 16-17, 110.



The second verb means "to make firm", "found". Deut 32:8 is a description of Yahweh setting the boundaries of peoples, assigning them to the various places of the "sons of God" (changing  $\text{לְאֶלֶּיךָ יְיָ}$  in the MT into  $\text{ἐγγελαὺν ἑαυτοῦ}$  in the light of the LXX).

Here Yahweh has formed a social order with each people given a proper place and guide.  $\text{לָדָר}$  means "to bear a child" (Deut 32:18). It uses the image of Yahweh as a mother, to introduce the section on the faithlessness of Israel which deserves and gets parental (presumably fatherly) punishment. McCarthy concludes from the analysis of the verbs that they refer to the coming to be of things; but where in Ugarit these verbs are used in the context of origins of the gods and men (the cosmos), here they are used to speak of Yahweh's favour in making Israel His people. Israel seems to have done something new in applying these "creation" verbs to the context of the chosen people. So here it has nothing to do with creation, but with a social order.

However,  $\text{לָדָר}$  could be connected with creation in the OT as in Ugarit,<sup>40</sup> as can be seen in the blessing of Malchizedek (Gen 14:19; not mentioned in McCarthy's article). Admittedly it is not used later on in a context of creation, but we cannot argue from this fact that

$\text{לָדָר}$  was only used in the context of social order. One thing has to be asked of McCarthy: why did not he refer to Gen 1, where there are so many verbs of creating? It is difficult not to suspect that McCarthy is very selective in his choosing of passages. Also it has

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40. See Appendix A below.

to be asked whether his method in determining creation in the OT is valid. He started from the assumption that other scholars connect Chaoskampf with creation. So he presumes that the reverse argument is also valid: creation means Chaoskampf. By examining Gen 2:4bff, which is of course a creation passage, he concludes that it has no connection to Chaoskampf. Even if the conclusion is correct, McCarthy's reverse argument is wrong. Chaoskampf is connected with creation, but creation is not necessarily connected with Chaoskampf, as indeed is the case in Gen 2:4bff! Further, we cannot see why the absence of Chaoskampf means that the passage above is not connected with creation but with order. His arguments that the verbs are not connected with creation has the same correct conclusion but the wrong way of argumentation. Of course they are not connected with creation, if what was looked for is creation in the cosmic sense. There is a categorical difference between creation of the world and creation of Israel as a people. Later in the exegesis of passages we shall deal thoroughly with this problem.<sup>41</sup> Concerning the verbs themselves,  $\text{׀׀׀}$  could be included in terminologies for creation and so could  $\text{׀׀׀}$  although admittedly it is a transitional verb. But  $\text{׀׀׀}$  is definitely not a creation verb. Deut 32:18 is not a creation passage, because both the verb and the object are unconnected with the concept of creation. The same mistake is made again concerning the passages he supposes to be regarded by others as Chaoskampf passages. Ex 15 is not about creation or Chaoskampf. It is ancient, but the background is about the birth of Israel as a people. Not until Is 51 is the picture of Exodus expressed with the imagery of Chaoskampf. Why did not McCarthy choose Ps 89:10f or Job 26:12 (besides Is 51) for identifying the Chaoskampf? The

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41. See below, pp. 186ff.

conclusion that Chaoskampf in McCarthy's selection of passages is not connected with creation, and thus means that they are concerned with order is as puzzling as his first conclusion that the absence of Chaoskampf motif in creation passages means order.

Of course there is the question whether the battle motif is always connected with creation. L.R. Fisher has argued that themes of conflict, kingship, ordering of chaos and temple building are all related to an overarching theme that he would call 'creation'. And so the conflict theme in the Ugaritic myths could be included within creation, or better, a Baal type of creation.<sup>42</sup> But it is strange that the Ugaritic texts do not mention creation explicitly.<sup>43</sup> It is safer to say that the Ugaritic myth of battle between the gods is more in the context of maintaining of order, just as it is indeed suggested by McCarthy. This is of course without denying that the Ugaritic battle myth could also have an influence in ancient Israel. If this is the case then the battle between Baal and Yam is probably not a Chaoskampf, but a battle for kingship or just a battle. On the other hand, what about the Mesopotamian Chaoskampf? There it is clear that after the battle, Marduk created the world from the carcass of Tiamat.<sup>44</sup> In Ps 89:10f and Job 26:12 the establishment of the world is explicitly mentioned. McCarthy is right in denying the relationship between the battle motif and creation in Ugarit, but we cannot argue

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42. L.R. Fisher, "Creation at Ugarit and in the Old Testament", VT 15 (1965), pp. 313-24.

43. See the negative conclusion of A.S. Kapelrud, Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts, Copenhagen, 1952, p. 138. Kapelrud's position in his recent work, "Creation in the Ras Shamra Texts", ST 34 (1980), pp. 1-11 is basically unchanged; J. de Moor, New Year with Canaanites and Israelites, I, Kampen, 1972.

44. ANET, p. 67.



from there that the same holds for the OT, that in the OT there is no connection between battle motif and creation, and that there is no creation in the OT. We have to be open to the possibility that there is a mixing between the Ugaritic myth and Mesopotamian myth in Israel's use of mythological themes of the ancient Near East.<sup>45</sup>

From the starting point that Chaoskampf is concerned with the maintenance of order, McCarthy continued his argument to the "why" of the use of this imagery in the OT and stated that the intention is to give the picture of a social order.<sup>46</sup> Creation means order in the sense of a "historical order", which has nothing to do with nature. And so there is no connection whatsoever left between creation and world order. This is what we mean by the danger of the use of 'order' as an all-purpose word. It seems that in McCarthy's work order in the sense of Kuntz's first definition has been mixed up with order in the second sense. The only thing to prevent this happening is to hold to the verbs of creating and to the place of creation in the OT. The term 'creation' should not be sacrificed in favour of 'order'. One of the reasons which caused McCarthy to propose using order instead of creation is that our present usage of 'creation' as a term can only be related with some sort of absolute beginning of the world.<sup>47</sup> In other words the problem is that for us creation can only mean creation ex nihilo, while it is clear that what we have in the Genesis creation

45. As suggested by Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament, p. 37 fn 3; Anderson, Creation versus Chaos, pp. 25-26.

46. McCarthy, op. cit., pp. 397 and 406.

47. ibid., p. 394.

stories are not creation ex nihilo, not even in its implicit form.<sup>48</sup> Still, we think we can retain the term 'creation'. We have no alternative, because it is creation that the OT talked about, and we have to accept the texts as they are, which refer to God as creating out of something. On the other hand, although we have said earlier that world order should not be identified with creation, it does not mean that they are to be contrasted with each other. Creation is not something that makes the OT world view different from her neighbours.<sup>49</sup> Murphy tried to explain that wisdom in Proverbs is not quite like the Egyptian ma'at, although it might be influenced by ma'at.<sup>50</sup> Apparently he thought that wisdom attempts to establish or impose a kind of order upon the myriad human experiences that form the raw material of wisdom sayings and upon nature itself. Wisdom has to co-ordinate experience and the created world. But is this attempt specifically Yahwism? Is the notion of creation alien to the Egyptians?<sup>51</sup> It is preferable to think that the struggle to define the relation between ma'at and freedom is common to the religions in the ancient Near East.

48. Cf. W.R. Lane, "The Initiation of Creation", VT 13 (1963), p. 65. We cannot take the word נָצַח as the equivalent of the English 'creation', because even if it always has God as its subject, נָצַח does not mean the activity of producing out of nothing. Not until 2 Mac 7:28 can we find a clear formulation of creation ex nihilo. See also Appendix A below.
49. As attempted by C. Tresmontant, A Study of Hebrew Thought, New York, 1960. Otzen seems to take the same opinion, when he wrote that the Israelite wisdom has certain limitations in its effort to understand the laws of existence, and the limitations could be indicated by the notions 'creation' and 'determination', op. cit., pp. 120-21. This new (?) tendency seems strange compared with the former tendency to play down the role of creation in the OT by stressing that it is not originally Yahwistic!
50. Murphy, "Wisdom and Yahwism", pp. 120-121.
51. See the Egyptian parallels of the Israelite creation stories in W.H. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 22f; on divine freedom in Egypt, see L. Perdue, Wisdom and Cult, Missoula, 1977, p. 21.

## 2. The Character and Constitution of Chaos

We have seen that chaos is the opposite of creation. Let us now see how it is pictured in the OT. We shall start with the examination of the much discussed passage in Gen 1:2<sup>52</sup>:

והארץ היתה תהו ובהו	The land was without form and void:
וחשך על-פני תהום	and darkness was upon the face of
	the deep;
ורוח אלהים מרחפת	and (yet) the spirit of God was moving
על-פני המים	over the face of the waters.

Strong evidence for the pre-existence of chaos can be seen in the use of the word היתה "was". B.S. Childs remarked that the occurrence of this verb is somewhat surprising, since in a nominal clause it is superfluous. According to him what we actually have is a description of the condition of the earth in its proper sphere of time: "the earth having been chaos".<sup>53</sup> Without denying its superfluity in a nominal clause, W.R. Lane, however, holds that here the use of היתה does not need to be regarded as superfluous. One must inquire why the word is there rather than make the ad hoc assumption that the sentence contains an unnecessary word.<sup>54</sup> The verb is used to indicate that the state described is one which has existed in the past. It is to call specific attention to the fact that the stage described in v. 2 is one that had existed previous to the action either in v. 1 or v. 3.<sup>55</sup>

52. We are aware of the problem of different sources of tradition behind the relationship between v. 1 and v. 3. But while the importance of this problem is not denied, we prefer to treat the narrative as it stands. See G. von Rad, Genesis, London, 1979, pp. 47-48.

53. B.S. Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament, p. 32.

54. W.R. Lane, "The Initiation of Creation", p. 70.

55. ibid., p. 71. Lane prefers to take v. 1 as a temporal cause with v. 2 as a parenthetical note. This could be compared to 1 Kings 11:29.



In contrast to the ancient Near Eastern creation texts Gen 1:2 is not negative in form, even though it may be somewhat in meaning.<sup>56</sup> It is asserted there not what  $\text{אֶרֶץ$  was not, but what it was - that is,  $\text{אֶרֶץ וְחָלָה}$ .<sup>57</sup>

Childs is prepared to accept the pre-existence of chaos in the creation narrative. He acknowledged that grammatically, v. 1 can be read as a temporal clause subordinated to v. 3.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, he also admitted that even if we hold to v. 1 as a complete independent sentence, the problem raised by the pre-existence of chaos is still essentially the same.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, Childs stressed that the intention of the P

56. See further below .

57. G.M. Landes, "Creation Tradition in Proverbs 8:22-31 and Genesis 1", A Light unto my Path, H.N. Bream et al, (eds.), Philadelphia, 1974, pp. 279-293; K. Gallig, "Der Character des Chaosschilderung in Gen 1:2", ZThK 47 (1950), pp. 149-150. He compared Gen 1:1 with Ecc 1:12.

58. Childs, op. cit., p. 39.

59. ibid., p. 31. See also Lane, op. cit., p. 72. It must be said, however, that although there is no difference in significance between the two translations the picture of chaos is somewhat clearer if v. 1 is read as a temporal clause. B. Otzen apparently regarded that a clearer picture means greater significance, Myths in the Old Testament, B. Otzen et al., London, 1980, p. 32. There are several ways of putting the syntactical relationship between v. 1 and v. 3: 1. v. 1 is taken as an independent statement: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." 2. v. 1 is taken as a temporal clause: "In the beginning of creation, when God made the heaven and earth". The first main statement is in v. 2: "the earth was without form and void". 3. v. 1 is taken as temporal clause, v. 2 as a parenthesis describing primeval chaos: "the earth being without form.....and a mighty wind sweeping over the surface of the waters". The first main statement then comes in v. 3: "God said, 'let there be light'"; see Davidson, Genesis 1-11, pp. 12-13. We prefer the second possibility.

writer is in the independent statement: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." God is the complete and sole source of the world, which, by his creation, exists as a reality outside of Himself.<sup>60</sup> The word  $\aleph \gamma \beth$  is taken as a support of this intention. While acknowledging that the principle of creatio ex nihilo is never explicitly mentioned, Childs thinks that it is implied in the use of  $\aleph \gamma \beth$ . However, he did not demonstrate how this could be. He stated that "world reality is a result of creation, not a reshaping of existing matter."<sup>61</sup> Actually Childs demonstrated the reverse. Because creation necessarily means creation out of nothing  $\aleph \gamma \beth$  then consequently implied creation out of nothing! As for  $\aleph \gamma \beth$  there is no evidence that its use in the OT ever implied creation out of nothing.<sup>62</sup> Beside  $\aleph \gamma \beth$  Childs pointed to the occurrence of the word  $\aleph \psi \aleph \gamma \beth$  which must be taken as indicating an absolute state.<sup>63</sup>

However, many of the occurrences of  $\aleph \psi \aleph \gamma$  do not appear in the absolute, but in the relative state.<sup>64</sup> N.H. Ridderbos tried to see an exception in v. 1, likewise in Is 46:10.<sup>65</sup> But as Lane rightly

60. Childs, op. cit., p. 40.

61. loc. cit.

62. See Appendix A. below.

63. Childs, loc. cit., following Koehler, Old Testament Theology, p. 88, Eichrodt has the same opinion in "In the beginning", Israel's Prophetic Heritage, p. 10.

64. Lane, op. cit., p. 67. We do not, however, deny that there is inconsistency in the MT pointing. Otherwise the phrase should begin with  $\aleph \gamma \beth \aleph \psi \aleph \gamma \beth$  or  $\aleph \gamma \beth \aleph \psi \aleph \gamma \beth$  (prop. BHK). The sporadic Greek transliterations  $\beta \alpha \rho \eta \sigma \eta \nu$  and  $\beta \alpha \rho \eta \sigma \epsilon \nu$ , alongside  $\beta \rho \eta \sigma \iota \nu$ , may show that in ancient times the word sometimes was read....  $\gamma \beth$ .

65. N.H. Ridderbos, "Genesis 1, 1-2", OTS 12, Leiden, 1958, pp. 214-260.

saw, אֵלֵּיךְ there is not in the context of creation, but in the context of Yahweh predicting His coming deeds in contrast to the idols who cannot do likewise.<sup>66</sup>

If Childs defended the implicitness of the principle of creation ex nihilo, then of course it could be asked: why did he accept the pre-existence of chaos? We think one of the reasons is that the textual evidence is too strong to be overlooked. Childs tried to solve the problem of this textual evidence by way of assuming an antithesis between myth and the theological attitude of P. So even when the text mentioned chaos, it has nothing to do with the belief of the Genesis writer. This creates a new and interesting problem of how a theological outlook comes to be expressed through what seems to be its antithesis! This problem apparently never troubles Childs. Following K. Barth<sup>67</sup> and von Rad<sup>68</sup>, he tried to give some significance to chaos by regarding it as the negative side of creation. Both Barth and von Rad also acknowledged the textual evidence of chaos in Genesis. Barth regarded chaos as "something", but "something" on the very frontier of nothingness, while von Rad speaks of chaos as a constant temptation of faith. Therefore v. 2 teaches one to understand the marvel of creation from the view point of its negation. Here we think they are treading on a dangerous ground of logical inconsistency. If the

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66. Lane, loc. cit. He stated that the RSV translation of אֵלֵּיךְ אֵלֵּיךְ אֵלֵּיךְ "declaring the end from the beginning" is inaccurate. The end is never announced from the beginning (or creation). Brongers is inconsistent. While stating that אֵלֵּיךְ אֵלֵּיךְ has to be seen as a status absolutus, he admitted that this could not be applied to the context of Gen 1 because of the portrayal of chaos, op. cit., pp. 12-15.

67. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, III/3, Edinburgh, 1961, p. 296

68. von Rad, op. cit., p.51.



principle of creatio ex nihilo is accepted, then actually what we have in the OT ought to be not creation, and maybe it is right to speak of what God did in the primeval times as ordering and not creating. 'ex nihilo' is not a constructional phrase like 'from stone' or 'from brocade'. To talk of a creation ex nihilo is not at all like talking of a building from stone or a dress from brocade.<sup>69</sup> Nothing means nothing. It seems that the idea of a negative side of creation based on the principle of creation out of nothing is a very vulnerable one. But then, how are we going to see chaos, if we still hold to the idea of creation in the OT?

Lane thinks of the possibility of the P writer accepting chaos as such.<sup>70</sup> Galling apparently has the same opinion when he states that chaos has no "mythical character." But as with Barth and von Rad he also holds that there is no contradiction between Gen 1:2 and 2 Mac 7:28.<sup>71</sup> Without using the principle of creatio ex nihilo, we would like to hold to the idea of the negation of creation, what Barth referred to as "das Nichts".<sup>72</sup> Chaos does not belong to the realm of the created world. It is always put on the margin of the created world. Sometimes it is pictured as a passive unthreatening matter (as Gen 1), sometimes as a potential threat (as in the Flood story), but sometimes also as Yahweh's monstrous adversaries in the Chaoskampf (as in some poetical passages). This view does not seem to be far from von Rad's opinion that chaos is the farthest from God in the

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69. I.T. Ramsay, Religious Language, London, 1957, pp. 74-75. He is criticising Tillich and Berdyaev, but this also holds for Barth and von Rad. cf. J. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, London, 1966, pp. 134-50.

70. Lane, op. cit., p. 73.

71. Galling, op.cit., pp. 156-157.

72. Barth, loc. cit., p. 66.

relation between the creatures and the creator, although he also said that chaos can scarcely be formulated theologically.<sup>73</sup> But the difference is that we do not put chaos in parallel with the creatures. It also has to be distinguished from the idea of the uncreated as the source of evil, as held by Augustine.<sup>74</sup> Firstly because chaos in Gen 1 is not necessarily identical with the chaos dragon, which personifies all evil, either 'natural' or 'moral'. Admittedly, in the OT these two notions are not separated, but they are not identical either. Secondly, although it is said that God regarded creation as  $\text{לֹא־טוֹב}$  (Gen 1:31), this does not imply that the uncreated is evil. Yet chaos is not 'neutral' either. It is the negation of creation.

This we could not explicitly see in Gen 1, but in the P story of the Flood we can read that  $\text{מַי־הַבְּרִיחַ}$  (the waters of the Flood) came upon the earth. Could not we say that God used the negation of creation for his purpose of punishment, so that although it is not evil in itself, it causes evil? Here it is but a step to the further question: who or what is the source of evil? But apparently P did not take this step. What is important to him is that God is the source of all creation and so He is in control of the world, and this prevents P from referring either to God or to chaos as the source of evil.<sup>75</sup>

73. von Rad, op. cit., p. 66.

74. See the discussion in Hick, op. cit., p. 43ff; also Hick's negative evaluation of Barth's distinction between "das Nichts" and "der Nichtige", pp. 134-150.

75. The case is of course different if we hold that God is also responsible for evil. There are passages in the OT which suggest this "demonic" in Yahweh, such as Is 45:7; Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:6; these passages are actually more in the context of Yahweh's sovereignty than about His "demonic" aspects (although, of course, the latter is the logical consequence of the former), but in Ex 4:24-26; 9:12; 10:1; 2 Sam 24:1-17; Josh 11:20 we find references to Yahweh's dealing which can not merely be said as "unexplainable", cf. J.L. Crenshaw, Prophetic Conflict, BZAW 124, Berlin, 1971, p. 77f; R.P. Carroll, When Prophecy Failed, pp. 197-204. However, this "demonic" in Yahweh serves His purposes.



So far we have only discussed )הב)הא Let us proceed to the next phrase. Darkness is clearly associated with or belongs to chaos (cf. Jer 4:23). But it is not always hostile to God. It is sporadically connected with the sea monsters or with the sea (Job 3:8f; 22:11; 26:13; Is 5:30). But in these cases darkness is in the context of becoming too powerful and overstepping its bounds.<sup>76</sup> It is actually included in the order of the world (Gen 8:22; Pss 74:13-16; 65:7-9; Jer 33:25; Job 38:4-15). Nevertheless, there is a tension in this role of darkness as "night". While light is called "good", darkness is not.<sup>77</sup> It is associated with evil (Is 45:7; Job 24:16, 17), or even death (Job 38:17; Ps 88:13; 49:20). It seems that darkness represents a latent possibility of chaos.<sup>78</sup>

It is somewhat surprising to discover that in Is 45:7 God is said to be not only the creator of light, but also of darkness. K. Elliger tried to make a distinction between darkness in Is 45:7 and in Gen 1:2 by holding that darkness in Gen 1:2 is chaos while in Is 45:7 it is included in the creation through the principle of kontrares Gegensatz, to indicate a totality.<sup>79</sup> There is support for this view in the text. It is clear that in Is 45:7 darkness becomes the parallel of אור. But the opposite parallel to אור here is not the usual אין, but אילוש.<sup>80</sup> אור then could be regarded as not in an abstract sense, but as 'calamity' or 'adversity' (cf. Amos 3:6). If this is so, then

76. S. Aalen, TDOT, I, pp. 157.

77. Westermann, Creation, p. 43.

78. Aalen, loc. cit.

79. K. Elliger, Deuterojesaja, BKAT, XI, Neukirchen - Vluyn, 1978, p. 499, "Denn 'Finsternis' hier ist nicht 'Finsternis' dort."

80. Q<sup>a</sup> reads אין instead of אילוש.



darkness could also be associated with Israel's experience of the exile, and not with the chaos of the primeval times. C.R. North<sup>81</sup>, R.N. Whybray<sup>82</sup> and J. Muilenburg<sup>83</sup> also take  $\text{לחוש}$  in the sense of Amos 3:6. On the other hand  $\text{לחוש}$  and  $\text{לחוש}$  could also be directed towards the Babylonians (cf. references to  $\text{לחוש}$  in Is 47:5 and  $\text{לחוש}$  in v. 11 of the same chapter). However, the question of the createdness of darkness is still left largely unanswered. C. Westermann holds that Second Isaiah stands in direct opposition to Gen 1. The oracle describes God's divinity as transcending the limit on human speech or thought about Him - which means the limit imposed on all theology.<sup>84</sup> Is this opposition a later development of insight or did it come from a different view of the world held in a different circle of tradition but not necessarily belonging to a different period?

G. Fohrer holds that Is 45:7 is written in the context of controversy with Iranian dualism.<sup>85</sup> Without indicating the context, Ph.B. Harner also suggested that Second Isaiah goes further than P in Gen 1:2, where light alone is explicitly mentioned as the result

81. In The Second Isaiah, Oxford, 1974, p. 151.

82. In Isaiah 40-66, p. 106.

83. In IB, V, p. 524.

84. In Isaiah 40-66, p. 162. J.L. McKenzie, The Second Isaiah, New York, 1968, p. 77, also recognised the contradiction between Is 45:7 and Gen 1:2, but he insisted that the thought pattern remain the same.

85. G. Fohrer, Introduction to the Old Testament, London, 1978, p. 376. On the other hand, J.G. Vink thinks it is P who is influenced by Persian dualism. "The Date and Origins of the Priestly Code in the Old Testament", OTS 15, Leiden, 1969, p. 83.

of God's creative work.<sup>86</sup> Childs, however, thinks that it should be the other way round. "The Priestly writer already had the example of Second Isaiah to follow".<sup>87</sup>

If we argue that before the exile Yahweh is conceived as the source of all things and that after the exile a certain dualistic world view has crept in, then P could be regarded as later than DI. But if it is held that at the exile the problem of dualism becomes acute, then the passage in DI could be regarded as having a polemical character, and so maybe later than P, who does not have to worry about the consequences of his writing because at his time there is no such problems. The matter is actually more complicated, because even if P is regarded as later than DI, he might have used older sources than DI. However, as we have said in chapter 1, we are sceptical about this possibility. The more sophisticated a presentation of creation looks as in P, the more likely it comes from a later period. Moreover, it seems that both DI and P used the same source of creation narrative. Of course there are differences here and there. In Is 42:5 and 44:24  $\text{וְיִפְרֹץ}$  is applied to the surface of the earth and not to the firmament as in the P account. The word  $\text{מְלֵאכָה}$  frequently used by DI in a context of creation is also lacking in P. But on the whole it can be said that they were using the same concept of creation. This, however, should not necessarily mean that the one is dependent on the other.

There is little or no evidence at all about the Iranian (Zoroastrian) religion influencing the thinking of the Jewish people in the exile.

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86. Ph.B. Harner, "Creation faith in Deutero-Isaiah", VT 17 (1967), p. 298. Our underline.

87. Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament, p. 32.



Probably it is wiser to say that it is not the encounter with Zoroastrianism (because there is no such encounter) that produced the claim that Yahweh is the Creator of everything, including chaos.<sup>88</sup>

Is 45:7 is not a polemic against Zoroastrian dualism. Many, however, still hold that it must be seen as a polemic against Babylonian gods. On the whole we tend to follow this line, albeit with some reservations. We need to observe further: in what sense is Is 45:7 actually 'polemical'? The idol parodies and the emphasis on the singleness of Yahweh in the prophetic tradition are undeniably polemical. The context of Is 45:5-7 is about the singleness of Yahweh, so it can be regarded as a polemic passage. But what about Is 45:7 itself? Many, for instance, regard the P account as a polemic against Enuma Elish or other alien creation accounts similar to it. But if both the uncreatedness of darkness in Gen 1 and its createdness in Is 45 are regarded as having a polemical intention, then these have to be qualified. Could it be that the view in Is 45:7 developed from the cult? In the pre-exilic cult Yahweh is celebrated as the incomparable King of the universe. He controls everything, including chaos. Chaos is the enemy, which in the celebrations is always pictured as being wiped out from earth. However, the fact that God controls chaos could develop to be a reflection of Him as its Creator. For instance, Ps 74:16 used the language of ownership (  $\text{ל}$  ) in describing the relationship between Yahweh and the night, and Ps 104:20 used the root  $\text{נָשָׂא}$  "to set", for the same relationship. These are not explicit creation verbs, but come close to convey creation. This possibility will be examined in

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88. See E.W. Nicholson in Tradition and Interpretation, p. 207. Long ago G.W. Wade, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, London, 1911, p. 293 and R. Levy, Deutero-Isaiah, Oxford, 1925, p. 186, were already sceptical about this possibility.



the coming paragraphs and the result will be taken into consideration in our exegesis of Is 45.

What is אֲוֵהַת? Formerly it was taken for granted that this word has a connection with the Babylonian tiamat, the mythical goddess or monster of chaos. But A. Heidel has argued that there is no proof of this connection whatsoever.<sup>89</sup> Scholars who hold that we can find in the OT evidence of a 'demythologising' or a 'historicising' process frequently tried to undermine the result of Heidel's examination.<sup>90</sup> This is not surprising because this view depends on the evidence of the existence of myth in the OT with the narrow understanding of myth as personification of nature. Although Heidel's conservative assumption<sup>91</sup> may have coloured his arguments, they are still valid enough to be accepted. אֲוֵהַת in Gen 1 is nothing but flood, or waters of the flood or the deep. It is not necessary anymore to think that this meaning is the result of 'demythologising' by P.<sup>92</sup> The question is now is אֲוֵהַת then not chaos? Westermann apparently has this idea. Because אֲוֵהַת is not a widergöttliche Macht, it belongs to the created world.<sup>93</sup> We do not think there is textual evidence for this.

89. In The Babylonian Genesis, Chicago and London, 1963, pp. 89-101. אֲוֵהַת has a masculine while tiamat has a feminine ending. If the word tiamat was taken over, it should be tiamā or teamā and not אֲוֵהַת. It would have no h, unless it had been derived from tihamat. Moreover, אֲוֵהַת is grammatically speaking older than tiamat.

90. Childs, op. cit., p. 36 fn 1; Anderson, Creation versus Chaos, pp. 20 fn 12, 39 fn 41.

91. Such as retaining the doctrine of inspiration while still asserting that it is not incompatible with the assumption that the Genesis creation story might be dependent to some measure on the Enuma Elish, and that what we have in the former is creation while what we have in the latter is fashioning after the manner of craftsman, Heidel, op. cit., pp. 138-39.

92. Westermann, Genesis, I<sub>2</sub>, p. 146.

93. Westermann, אֲוֵהַת in THAT, II, p. 1032.

אֲוֹרֵחַ has no power, but nevertheless it clearly belongs to chaos.<sup>94</sup>  
 Otzen still argued that there is a mythological background in the  
 creation narrative of Gen 1. Support for this view was found in  
 Pss 89:9-12 and 74:12-17. In face, he insisted that these passages  
 are important for the understanding of the mythological background of  
 Gen 1.<sup>95</sup> This of course prompted the question: do the above psalms  
 really have the same background as Gen 1? After all, the word אֲוֹרֵחַ  
 does not occur in them! In Gen 1 אֲוֹרֵחַ appears in the same  
 context with אֵלֹהִים (Gen 1:10). But even if אֲוֹרֵחַ frequently  
 has אֵלֹהִים as its parallel (Pss 106:9; 135; Job 28:14; Jes 51:10)  
 we could not directly identify אֵלֹהִים with אֲוֹרֵחַ in all passages  
 of the OT. אֲוֹרֵחַ frequently appears in the Psalter.<sup>96</sup> But only  
 in Ps 148:7 does it occur in parallel with אֵלֹהִים. And even  
 there the picture is no different from Gen 1:21, where the אֲוֹרֵחַ  
 are clearly creatures and not personifications of chaos as monsters.  
 Again, Pss 77:17 and 104:6, 7 give a similar impression to Gen 1:2,  
 although it must be admitted that there the violentness of the picture  
 is more felt. We might guess that there is a trace of Chaoskampf left  
 there. But the overall picture of אֲוֹרֵחַ in the Psalter is passive  
 or neutral.

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94. It depends on what we mean by 'chaos'. To us it is the uncreated,  
 which could even be 'anti-creation', but does not always have to be  
 identified with widergöttliche Macht. G.M. Landes has the same opinion  
 as Westermann. Gen 1:2 is not about chaos, "Creation and Liberation",  
 USQR, 33, 2 (1978), pp. 81 and 88 fn 14. Landes' explanation of אֲוֹרֵחַ  
 makes us more and more convinced of the need for strict definitions of  
 chaos and disorder in OT discussions. Our insistence that Gen 1:1-2  
 does not give a picture of violent chaos or even traces of a Chaoskampf  
 could imply that there life is described as very good to the point of  
 being unrealistic about the threats of life. But we cannot see Gen 1:1-2  
 in isolation from the whole narrative of creation which stretches from  
 Gen 1 to 11. In Gen 3 we soon come to the story of "the Fall" and in  
 Gen 7 chaos in the form of the great Flood is allowed to return to cover  
 the whole earth. As we shall see later on, the message of Gen 1-11  
 corresponds with the prophetic interpretation of creation, which stresses  
 the freedom of God and creation as an expression of His grace.

95. Otzen, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

96. 12x: 33:7; 36:7; 42:8 (2x); 71:20; 77:17; 78:15; 104:6; 106:9;  
 107:26; 135:6; 148:7.



We turn now to references to the mythical dragon monsters, which are regarded as symbols or personifications of chaos.<sup>97</sup> In Ps 104:26 the picture is still the same as in Gen 1. There Leviathan is pictured as a creature, who "sports" (RSV) in the sea. But in other pictures they are clearly related to or are regarded as symbols of the pre-existent chaos, and are the violent adversaries of Yahweh in the primeval Chaoskampf. These dragon pictures have been regarded as merely metaphors used in a poetical sense. But we think that what we have here are accommodated (not demythologised) myths. Then admittedly, we cannot avoid an impression of duality to a certain extent here. But the important thing is that Yahweh is mightier than the **לִיָּתָן** and the **תַּיִם** (Ps 93:3, 4)<sup>98</sup> and that the dragons have been defeated and even serve the purposes of Yahweh (Amos 9:3). This acceptance of the explicit mentions of mythical dragons as they are in the texts of the scripture does not mean that all appearances of nature in the OT which formerly were elements of chaos should be automatically regarded as having a monster background. We have to remember that to the ancient man nature can serve as symbols of the gods, but can also be seen as such. On the other hand it is also true that sometimes the name of the monsters is used metaphorically, as in Is 30:7 (for Egypt) and Ps 87:4 (Babylon).

More problematic is the following statement: **וַיִּסַּח אֱלֹהִים** **וַיִּסַּח אֱלֹהִים**. It is translated in the NEB as "and a mighty wind that swept over the surface of the waters", apparently

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97. Rahab (Ps 89:11; Is 51:9; Job 26:12, 13); Leviathan (Pss 74:13; 104:26; Jes 27:1; Job 40:25); **וַיִּסַּח אֱלֹהִים** in Amos 9:3.

98. Cf. H.G. May, "Some Cosmic Connotations of Mayyim Rabbim, 'Many Waters'", JBL LXXIV (1955), pp. 9-21. See also Ps 144:7 and Is 17:12, 13.



following the proposal of J.M.P. Smith,<sup>99</sup> who regarded "of God" as a superlative. There are examples of this superlative in other parts of the OT, which show that this translation is possible.<sup>100</sup> And so the phrase  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי רוּחַ}$  could also be regarded as belonging to chaos. This corresponds with the Akkadian creation myth where "a fierce wind" is mentioned.<sup>101</sup> However, it is difficult to see why

$\text{אֱלֹהֵי}$  should be used in this adjectival sense here when it occurs more than thirty times elsewhere in this creation hymn in its primary sense.<sup>102</sup> D. Winton Thomas has issued a warning that while

$\text{אֱלֹהֵי}$  is sometimes used in a superlative sense, it appears to do so without ever quite losing its literal meaning.<sup>103</sup> Probably it is better to follow the other translations which translate

$\text{אֱלֹהֵי רוּחַ}$  as "the spirit of God" (RSV), "the power of God" (GNB) or even "the wind from God".<sup>104</sup> It is not to be included in the picture of chaos. On the other hand this spirit of God is not "brooding"

99. In "The Syntax and Meaning of Genesis I:1-3", *AJSL* 44 (1927/28), pp. 105-115, esp. p. 111.

100. e.g. Gen 30:8, "wrestlings of God" could be translated as "mighty wrestlings" (RSV); Ex 9:28, "powerful thunders"; Ps 36:7, "mighty mountains", von Rad takes over this meaning in his commentary, *op. cit.*, 49-50.

101. *ANET*, p. 67.

102. R. Davidson, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 16; cf. Ridderbos, *op. cit.*, p. 243. One cannot remove reference to the Deity in a passage where the Deity is one of the actors - indeed the only actor - in the narrative.

103. In *VT* 3 (1953), pp. 200-219.

104. As in the translation of *The Torah*, Philadelphia, 1978.

over the face of the waters. This is not yet the beginning of creation. The word  $\text{מְרַחֵם}$  (from the root  $\text{רָחַן}$ ) is a rare word in the OT.<sup>105</sup> It denotes an action of "hovering, shaking, flapping"<sup>106</sup> or just "poised".<sup>107</sup> The  $\text{מֵן}$  then, may be viewed as the creative power of God, about to burst forth into word and deed.<sup>108</sup>

$\text{מַיִם}$  appears frequently with  $\text{תְּהוֹם}$ ,  $\text{יָם}$  or  $\text{יָהַל}$  as its parallel.<sup>109</sup> This gives us a picture of chaos as a watery mass.<sup>110</sup> This watery mass later underwent a process of separation in the act of creation to become "the waters above the firmament" and "the waters under the firmament" (Gen 1:6, 7), and the waters under the firmament later were separated from the dry land to become what is now called "the sea" (Gen 1:10; Ps 104:9). Does it mean that the sea was created after all? In other passages in the OT we find explicit mention that this is indeed

105. Its appearance in Gen 1:2 is piel, as in Deut 32:11. In Jer 23:9 it is in the gal form.

106. Childs, op. cit., p. 33, fn 2.

107. D.F. Payne, "Approaches to Genesis i 2", TGUOS 23 (1969-70), pp. 61-71.

108. ibid., p. 68. Cf. Childs, op. cit., p. 35; also L. Neve, The Spirit of God in the Old Testament, Tokyo, 1972, pp. 70-71. A full length review of the scholarly discussion concerning  $\text{מַיִם יָהַל מְרַחֵם}$  in Gen 1:2 is to be found in Neve's book, pp. 63-71.

109. e.g. Pss 93:3-4; 107:23-24; 104:6; 77:16. See also the table in THAT, p. 1028.

110. O. Kaiser, Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Aegypten, Ugarit und Israel, BZAW 78 (1959), p. 116; W.H. Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 85-86; L.I.J. Stadelmann, The Hebrew Conception of the World, Rome, 1970, p. 12.

so (Ex 20:11;<sup>111</sup> Neh 9:6; Pss 95:5; 146:6). But it is probably better to say that such passages have a different concept of creation from what we have in Gen 1. A somewhat different picture of chaos can be seen in Jer 4:23-26:

רֵאִיתִי אֶת-הָאָרֶץ  
וְהִנֵּה תֵהוֹ וְכֵהוּ  
וְאֶל-הַשָּׁמַיִם  
וְאֵין אֹרֶם  
רֵאִיתִי הַהָרִים  
וְהִנֵּה רַעֲשִׁים  
וְכָל-הַגְּבוּעוֹת הַתְּקַלְקְלוּ  
רֵאִיתִי וְהִנֵּה אֵין הָאָדָם  
וְכָל-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם נָדְדוּ

רֵאִיתִי וְהִנֵּה הַכְּרִמֹּת  
הַמְדֻבָּר  
וְכָל-עֲרֵיוֹ נִתְּצוּ  
מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה  
מִפְּנֵי חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ

I looked at the earth, and see, it  
was without form and void,  
and to the heavens, and they have  
no lights.  
I looked at the mountains, and see,  
they were quaking,  
and all the hills rocked to and fro.  
I looked, and see, nobody was there,  
and the birds of the heavens had  
flown away.  
I looked, and see, the fertile land  
was a desert,  
And all the cities were in ruins,  
before the Lord, before His fierce  
anger.

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111. Generally this passage is regarded as belonging to E, see M. Noth, A History of the Pentateuchal Traditions, Englewood Cliffs, 1972, p. 28 fn 84. Because of the reference to the Sabbath it is also suspected as having the same source as Gen 2:3(P). And so this passage must be later than Deut 5:12-14. But from the more recent research it seems that Ex 20:11 is older than Deut 5, see Stamm-Andrew, op. cit., p. 16; E. Nielsen, The Ten Commandments in New Perspective, London, 1967, pp. 39-41; 101-103. Then it is less likely that there is a connection between Ex 20:11 and P; probably it goes back to an ancient source. If this is the case, then it adds weight to the possibility that the mention of the sea as created (and also of darkness in Is 45:7) comes from an older source than the apparent picture of dualism in P.



The same phrase  $\text{יְהִי עָרְבָּו}$  as in Gen 1:2 is again used here. However, the image is of a desert or wasteland, which is similar to Gen 2:4bff. And the background of Gen 2:4b is not of chaos. Although the form of a 'negative exposition' common to many ancient stories of creation, "When....there was not yet, then...." is used here, Gen 2:4b clearly implied that what God is going to do takes place after the creation of heaven and earth. As to the picture of the wilderness, we are still not convinced that it should be included within the realm of chaos.<sup>112</sup> The occurrence of  $\text{יְהִי עָרְבָּו}$  in this Jeremianic passage should not bring us to conclusion that the picture of chaos in Gen 1:2 is also of a wasteland and not a watery mass. We can not decide the precise notion of  $\text{יְהִי עָרְבָּו}$  by a comparative study of the passages in which the words  $\text{יְהִי עָרְבָּו}$  and  $\text{יְהִי עָרְבָּו}$  occur.<sup>113</sup> It seems that what we have in Jer 4:23f is an attempt to portray the destruction and desolation of war (cities in ruins, v. 26) through the categories of chaos. Or better still, this is a picture of the reversal of creation to chaos, as in Gen 7 (the story of the Flood). M. Fishbane termed this strange phenomenon as bouleversement.<sup>114</sup> Jer 4:23f is a perfect example of the tension in the existing relationship between chaos and disorder in the OT. It is not a witness to the coming of chaos in a real sense, and yet it is not merely a picture of disorder in the form of war.

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112. Despite J. Pedersen's argument in Israel I-II, London, 1964, pp. 456-60. G.M. Landes' argument is different: Gen 1:2 has the same picture as Jer 4:23ff and Gen 2:4bff. According to him they are about emptiness and desolation, but still, do not belong to chaos, because there is no chaos in the OT, "Creation and Liberation", p. 88 fn 14.

113. Stadelmann, loc. cit.

114. M. Fishbane, "Jeremiah IV 23-26 and Job III 3-13: A Reversed use of the Creation pattern", VT 21 (1971), pp. 151-67.

### 3. The relationship between life and death, creation and chaos.

J. Pedersen asserted that there is a close connection between life and death, creation and chaos. In fact, according to him, it is precisely this contrast between life and death which determine the Israelite concept of the universe.<sup>115</sup> The world falls into three parts: the heaven above, the earth in the centre and the waters of the nether worlds.<sup>116</sup> Above the heavens are the mighty waters, which belong to the deep. Under the earth there is an extension of these waters. This is roughly the external sides of the Israelite view of the world. There is another side to which attention must be paid, namely the psychic side of how the Israelites experienced the surrounding world. The centre of the world forms the basis of life. Its opposite is the desert-land.<sup>117</sup> How far the conception of the universe is determined by the conception of the psychic whole appears from one of the denominations of the wilderness, the  $\aleph \bar{\nu} \bar{\nu} \psi$  (Is 1:7; 49:8; Jer 32:43; 49:33; Joel 2:3). But the word  $\aleph \bar{\nu} \psi$  is also applied to stupefied or dumbfounded persons (2 Sam 13:20; Is 54:1; 42:14; Jer 4:9).  $\aleph \bar{\nu} \bar{\nu} \psi$  is the country lacking the blessings of the country of man, the place which struck horror in the heart of man, so much that the place becomes the word for all cases of stupefactions or feelings of desolation. In short, it is the land of chaos.<sup>118</sup>

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115. Pedersen, op. cit., p. 460.

116. ibid., p. 453. This is the common reconstruction of the ancient Israelite cosmology, which forms part of the ancient Near East cosmology. See L. Jacobs, "Jewish cosmology", in Ancient Cosmologies, C. Blacker and M. Loewe, (eds.), London, 1975, pp. 66-71; Stadelmann, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

117. Pedersen, op. cit., p. 454.

118. ibid., p. 457.



If the wilderness is chaos which threatens from outside the borders of the land of blessing (  $\aleph \gamma \aleph$  ), the waters are chaos threatening from below. Because the principle of psychic or internal view of the world is still strongly confirmed, the conception of chaos could not be native to Israel, because water is regarded as something good and precious there. It must have its origin in the realm of the great rivers, with their threats of annual floods to the populated areas along the banks.<sup>119</sup>

Not only waters are below the earth, but also  $\aleph \aleph \psi$ , the realm of death. And  $\aleph \aleph \psi$  is identical with the grave (Gen 47:30; 37:35). It is the entirety into which all graves are merged, the sum of the graves.<sup>120</sup>  $\aleph \aleph \psi$  is also connected with the desert-land (Hos 13:15), and as if this is not enough, it is also connected with the waters below the earth. He who is in  $\aleph \aleph \psi$  is also in the ocean (Ps 40:3; Jon 2:6).<sup>121</sup> The grave is simultaneously "dry" and "liquid".

We must admit that the whole chapter devoted to the problem of "the world of life and death" in Pedersen's book is very impressive and illuminating. We cannot but accept that creation and chaos are connected with life and death. However, we are not satisfied with the "psychic" approach used in this work. Of course people could be frightened of the desert. But on the other hand, there are people who roam the desert. And they are not only non-Israelites such as the Bedouins today, but also, in the past, Israelites. After all, the Israelites came from the desert, and there are even people like

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119. ibid., pp. 471-472.

120. ibid., pp. 460-462.

121. Pedersen, op. cit., p. 463.



the Rechabites and Hosea who consider the wandering period as the ideal life for Israel. This is a fact which Pedersen himself admitted.<sup>122</sup> Nevertheless, he held that for the average Israelite the desert is nothing but terror. Even if this is true, we are still unconvinced that it automatically means that the desert is regarded as chaos. The same objection is also valid for the discussion of the waters. Here the case is somewhat different from that of the wilderness. In Gen 1 the waters are clearly regarded as chaos.<sup>123</sup> Pedersen held that this view of the waters as chaos comes from outside Israel. Equally it could be native to Israel, and the same approach of the psychic view of the world used. The Mediterranean sea was regarded as dangerous area; this is why the Israelites were not known as seafaring people.

But whether it is or it is not derived from foreign or native sources, we hold that it is not just the fear of the annual floods or the Mediterranean sea which makes the waters considered as chaos. F. Stolz tried to explain the origin and meaning of the Chaoskampf in the ancient Near East.<sup>124</sup> According to him the background of the earlier Chaoskampf is the nature religions with their seasonal cycles. But the later Chaoskampf materials, which may have come from the 4-3 millennium BC are more in the context of the history and politics of the high civilisations of the cities. Here Stolz is following the view of Th. Jacobsen. The military activities around the two great

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122. ibid., p. 456. For an analysis of Pedersen's view see P. Addinall, "The Wilderness in Pedersen's Israel /1/", JSOT 20 (1981), pp. 75-83.

123. Not in Gen 2:4bff and Gen 49:25. There the water has a positive value.

124. F. Stolz, Strukturen und Figuren im Kult von Jerusalem, Berlin, 1970, pp. 39-42.

rivers caused so many changes in the course of life of the peoples, that they became conscious of the fact that society is not only affected by the powers of nature, but also by the powers of man. The later Chaoskampf materials then have the background of military operations, but retain the original violent picture of the waters.

Stolz's explanation implied that, contrary to what is usually held in OT circles, there is no essential differences between the employment of pictures of nature in Israel and in the ancient Near East to illustrate historical situations. While this is probably true (see Pss 124:2-4; 144:7; Is 17:13), it is still not clear whether there is a connection between the fear of the consequences of military operations and the pictures of the waters. Even if pictures of nature could be used as illustrations of historical situations, it is not necessary that references to nature in the ancient texts have always to be regarded as 'functional', i.e. related to historical situations or even produced in a certain historical context.

As in the case of the fear of nature, fear of fellow man is also inadequate to explain why it is that the waters become regarded as chaos. Probably we have to be content that there is no explanation for this. We do not deny that there is fear included in the process of the conceptualisation of chaos, but the fear of chaos is more likely fear without any reason, in the sense of the existential Angst. As with creation, chaos is one result of man's reflection on his vulnerability in the world.<sup>125</sup> And again, as with the concept of

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125. See p. 88 above.



creation, which is not the result of an observation of nature,<sup>126</sup>  
 chaos, too, does not come out of an observation of nature.

Whether  $\text{לֵוַשׁ}$  and the grave are identical with chaos remains to be demonstrated. There are passages in the OT which give us this impression, e.g., the prayers of Jonah (Jon 2) and Ps 69:16:

$\text{אֵל-תִּשְׁטַפְנִי}$  Let not the waters (the flood)  
 $\text{שִׁבְלֵת מִיָּם}$  sweep over me.  
 $\text{וְאֵל-תִּבְלַעְנִי מְצוּלָה}$  or the deep swallow me up,  
 $\text{וְאֵל-תִּטְאֶמְדַּע-עָלַי בְּאֵר פִּי}$  or the pit close its mouth over me.

We have mentioned above that creation and chaos are connected with life and death. We are not sure, however, that the relationship could be seen in the supposed connection between chaos and  $\text{לֵוַשׁ}$  or the grave. Although it seems that there is no problem in the identification of  $\text{לֵוַשׁ}$  with the grave,<sup>127</sup> it is still not certain whether there is a notion of a 'liquid grave' in Israel. Let us have a look at the cosmology of the Israelites. Both  $\text{לֵוַשׁ}$  and the waters of the deep or the flood or chaos are below the earth. But are they the same, or are they connected with each other? The phrase "the depth of  $\text{לֵוַשׁ}$ " in Deut 32:22 and Ps 86:13 may give us the impression of a watery abyss. However, there is no certainty in this, so probably it is safer to say with Stadelmann that  $\text{לֵוַשׁ}$  and  $\text{מְצוּלָה}$  are not synonymous and that there is no direct evidence of tunnels or passages

126. See p.74 above.

127. Stadelmann, however, still holds that  $\text{לֵוַשׁ}$  and  $\text{קֶבֶר}$  are not synonymous despite all the characteristics being applicable both to the grave and the abode of death, op. cit., p. 170.



connecting  $\text{לִיָּאֵל}$  and  $\text{אֵלִים}$ .<sup>128</sup> If this is the case, then it is less likely that  $\text{לִיָּאֵל}$  or the grave (whether they are synonymous or not is secondary) are identical with chaos. However, we cannot totally separate the idea of chaos and the grave.<sup>129</sup>

Also we must not leave out the possibility that there are inconsistencies and incohesiveness in the way these realms of the unknown were described.<sup>130</sup>

#### 4. Creation and Chaos in the cult

##### 4.1 The Problem of the "Enthronement" Festival

While some scholars of the OT associate creation and chaos with wisdom, many others see a connection of this theme with the cult, especially in the field of Psalm research.

According to Gunkel the Sitz im leben of most of the Psalm types is the cult.<sup>131</sup> But some examples from the types which are found in the Psalter come from a later stage (post exilic) where there is no relation left whatsoever with the cult. They are individual compositions ("I" Psalms) which expressed the spiritual and individual

128. loc. cit. Similarly N. Sarna, Understanding Genesis, third printing, New York, 1974. In his picture of the Biblical conception of the world there is no connection between the deep and  $\text{לִיָּאֵל}$ . On the other hand Johnson still thinks that sometimes  $\text{לִיָּאֵל}$  was thought to lie beneath the subterranean ocean, so one goes down to the abode of the death through the mass of water, The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel, p. 91f. Jon 2:3 is taken as an example of man on his way down to  $\text{לִיָּאֵל}$ .

129. See Jon 2 and Ps 69:16. We must also remember that Jon 2 and Ps 69:16 are in the context of the language of faith. It is not an objective experience they were telling us about. Actually, "He who goes to  $\text{לִיָּאֵל}$  does not come up", Job 6:9.

130. Stadelmann, op. cit., p. 165.

131. For Gunkel's categorisation of the Psalms see A.R. Johnson, "The Psalms", The Old Testament and Modern Study, H.H. Rowley, (ed.), Oxford, 1956, pp. 166-181.

piety of the people of Israel.<sup>132</sup> On the other hand S. Mowinckel holds some of the Psalms in the Psalter could have a background of what is usually termed as "enthronement festival".<sup>133</sup> In this festival the stories of creation in primordial times were dramatised anew. Although nothing is explicitly mentioned about this festival in the OT itself, Mowinckel tried to defend his assertions by several facts:

- a. The existence of enthronement songs and royal psalms in the Psalter and other parts of the OT.
- b. Materials in post-biblical Jewish literature which mentioned a New Year festival.
- c. The existence of a New Year festival in ancient Babylon.

According to Mowinckel the Israelites knew and took over this custom through the Canaanites.<sup>134</sup>

A. Weiser and H.J. Kraus also agreed on the cultic background of the Psalms, but they have different opinions concerning the Sitz im leben. Weiser argued for the "covenant festival" which does not have the same motif as in the cultic events outside Israel. In this festival the relationship between the people and Yahweh is renewed. Josh 24 is regarded by Weiser as containing the words used in this covenant renewal. The ark plays an important role here. Several elements of the divinity of the King and the creativity

132. This opinion of Gunkel is discussed in G.W. Anderson, A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 177 and R.E. Clements, A Century of Old Testament Study, London, 1979, p. 81.

133. S. Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, vol. I, Oxford 1962, pp. 106-189. They are Pss 47:93; 96; 97; 98; 99. The first part of Ps 95 also belongs to this category.

134. ibid., p. 132. John Gray tried to elaborate this with evidences from the Ras Shamra Texts, The Biblical Doctrine of the Reign of God, Edinburgh, 1979.



of the deity are admitted as part of this festival, but the main motif of this festival is covenant renewal.<sup>135</sup>

Kraus criticised Mowinckel and Weiser because they tend to ignore the complexity of the traditions of Israel and her cult. Behind the literature which appears from the life of Israel as a worshipping community lies a long and varied history. According to him there are several festivals; the tent festival which commemorates the Exodus and the period of wandering in the wilderness, a covenant renewal celebration which exists before the monarchy and the Jerusalem tradition with their royal concepts which have been influenced by Canaanite mythology and which appeared at the time of David and Solomon. The cult in Jerusalem is important as a sign of Yahweh's presence among His people, and also the choosing of Jerusalem as the holy site where the presence is manifested. He called this festival "royal Zion festival".<sup>136</sup> A.R. Johnson agreed with the idea of the enthronement festival as proposed by Mowinckel. But he tried to look for evidences within the OT itself, namely from Zech 14:16; Pss 47 and 132 which have a similar pattern to what we find in 2 Chron 20:3ff.<sup>137</sup>

All the above opinions emphasised the cult as the Sitz im leben of most of the Psalms. There are also scholars who deny this, as for

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135. A. Weiser, The Psalms, pp. 23-52.

136. H.J. Kraus, Worship in Israel, Oxford, 1966. For the tent festival see pp. 54, 131f; the covenant renewal, pp. 141f, 196f; for the Jerusalem traditions, p. 201f.

137. A.R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel, Cardiff, 1955.



instance, R. De Vaux<sup>138</sup> and Fohrer<sup>139</sup>. Their denial is based on:

- a. The New Year rite originated from the New Babylonian era. It is not something that already exists since the earliest times and that Israel came to know it through the Canaanite culture. The autumn festival is a harvest festival and has no connection whatsoever with the cult.
- b. We do not know precisely where and when 'entry psalms' (Pss 24 and 132) were sung.
- c. The enthronement psalms are monotheistic hymns dependent on Deutero Isaiah.
- d. The mention of Yahweh as King together with the tent festival in Zech 14:16 is merely coincidence.

All these should be taken into consideration. The term "psalms of Yahweh's enthronement" could indeed lead to a misunderstanding. It must not mean that there is a time when Yahweh was not regarded as King.<sup>140</sup> It would be better to follow A.A. Anderson's proposal to change the term into "psalms which celebrated Yahweh as King."<sup>141</sup>

138. In Ancient Israel, London, fourth impression, 1978, pp. 502-506.

139. G. Fohrer, History of the Israelite Religion, pp. 204-205.

140. Mowinckel is thoroughly aware of this fact, op. cit., p. 114. How then shall we translate יהוה מלך (Pss 93:1; 97:1; 99:1)? Mowinckel translated it as "Yahweh has become King". Johnson disagrees, op. cit., p. 57 fn 2. According to him the emphasis is on Yahweh who is King. Ps 93 is taken as an example of this emphasis. v. 1 and v. 2 has to be seen together. We tend to take Johnson's view, which is still different from de Vaux, op. cit., p. 505, who regarded this phrase as an acclamation, such as "long live the King"; Fohrer, op. cit., p. 204, "it is Yahweh that reigns as King"; Kraus, op. cit., p. 214, who thinks that this is a shout acknowledging that Yahweh comes as King.

141. In Psalms, vol. I, London, 1972, pp. 33-35.

Nevertheless, we should also consider the importance of the cultic "now". If the covenant "renewal" ceremony is not taken as a new form of a covenant, then why is the idea of Yahweh's enthronement seen as contradicting the other fact that He is always known as King in Israel?

The autumnal festival<sup>142</sup> is still celebrated in the monarchical period, but other aspects have been introduced into it so that it is no longer a mere harvest festival, but has become something which contains a spiritual message both for the King and the people. There are passages in the OT which point to the function of the King in the cult and in the sacral drama (2 Sam 6:14, 17ff; 1 Kings 8:22ff; 54ff and Ps 132).<sup>143</sup> It is too hasty a conclusion if we immediately state that the enthronement psalms are monotheistic hymns dependent on DI. The most that can be proved in the OT is that there are some conformities between the Psalms and DI. The question of dependence is, however, still a possibility. We tend to follow Mowinckel, who takes the Psalms as being prior to DI.<sup>144</sup> Are the enthronement psalms monotheistic hymns? In our opinion the emphasis in these psalms is more on the God of Israel as the most high. The contrast

142. Also described as 'feast of ingathering', 'feast of booths', 'feast of tabernacles'. Actually, various names such as the New Year Festival, Covenant Renewal Festival and Royal Zion Festival could possibly mean various aspects of this traditional festival from one period to another. In fact, this possibility is also admitted by Mowinckel, *op. cit.*, p. 121 fn. 51. So to say that Mowinckel's thesis is wrong because there is no mention of an 'enthronement festival' in the OT is too harsh.

143. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 17f.

144. Mowinckel, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-17; C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, London, second impression, 1978, pp. 23ff and 56; Th.M. Ludwig, "The Traditions of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah", pp. 345-357.



between Yahweh and the alien gods in DI (Is 41:9; 43:10; 44:8; 45:5, 6, 14, 21f; 46:9) is of course close to what we now call 'monotheism'. Yahweh is the God. The passages in DI are referring to Yahweh's unicity. It is still possible, of course, to see in the psalms this kind of incomparability. But even so we are not convinced that psalms are dependent on DI. In the latter we find that Israel is called to share her faith with other peoples. This motif is absent in the enthronement psalms. The 'universalism' in the above psalms is more of a God who has control over all than a universal faith. This 'universalism' is not necessarily something which only became known at the sixth century BC (the time of DI), but could come from a very ancient tradition, as can be seen in Gen 14:19-20.<sup>145</sup>

It is true that Zech 14:16 and Num 29:12-38 mention only a "festival". The content and form is of course a matter of guess, but that this festival is related to the cult (that is, cult in the broadest sense of the word: every form of worship which is considered as normal and accepted), contains a cosmic dimension and therefore could have a possibility of a dramatisation, or better, actualisation (at least in a form which has been accommodated to Yahwism) is in our opinion not an improbable guess. This is not to agree with the opinion that all the texts which give suggestion of an act or performance

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145. See J.A. Emerton, "The Riddle of Genesis XIV", VT 21 (1971), pp. 401-39. Gen 14:19-20 is an insertion from the time of David with the purpose of: 1. Syncretism concerning the El Elyon worship in the cult. David as King inherited the priestly status of Melchizedek. 2. Concerning Jerusalem. The city was given a sacral status by the story of Melchizedek. 3. Politics. David became King of both Israelites and Canaanites. 4. Military implications. David is pictured as a warrior and protector of his Canaanite neighbours just as Abraham in the ancient times.



should immediately be regarded as belonging to a ritual or as having a ritual background. H. Gottlieb has also warned us against this tendency. The "drama" should not be taken too literally.<sup>146</sup> But even if there is no necessary relationship between myth and ritual it could still be asked whether the participants of the festival really believe that the words they employed convey an actual reality, a cultic "now", or is what they are doing just a remembrance of an eternal attribute of their deity such as His kingship? Maybe this is a false problem which arises from the usual antithesis between "the Mass" and "the Communion service", between the 'actual' and the 'commemorative' aspects of a religious celebration. To answer this question we have to look at the supposed background of this festival, namely the theme of dying and rising and its related problem of the function of the King in the re-enactment of this theme.

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146. H. Gottlieb, "Myth in the Psalms", Myths in the Old Testament, pp. 64-65. Gottlieb gives an example from the modern church hymn, "O come all ye faithful", to clarify what he means. The worshippers in today's church stand quite peacefully in their places while they sing of their journey to Bethlehem. But the problem is: do the worshippers believe that the journey happens during their singing? Do they really believe that they are participating in an event which happens long ago? Do they really believe that the time and space dimension disappear during their singing? We are doubtful if this is the case in Protestant churches, where one could even say: "we kneel before your presence" while still standing in a pulpit or before a lectern. Both Gottlieb and Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 113 take another example from the Orthodox Easter greeting. While it is true that this greeting can be said outside the liturgy, it could only be said after the celebration of the Easter liturgy. Orthodox liturgy is drama in its literal sense. This is why Mowinckel took it as an example to strengthen his argument.

#### 4.2 The content of the background of the "Enthronement" Festival

This topic has been extensively discussed. For our purposes it is sufficient to say that the Canaanite New Year Festival has three other motifs beside the dragon battle motif:

1. The death and resurrection of the fertility god Baal.
2. His sacred marriage with the goddess Anath.
3. His enthronement as King over gods and men.

Two of these motifs - the no. 1 and 2, - are absent from the OT as we have them today. Yahweh is never described as dying or rising, nor has He a consort.<sup>147</sup> A distinction should be made between the theme of dying and rising and the theme of creation and chaos. From the findings of the history of religion we know that there is no common pattern of dying and rising in the ancient Near East, while it is possible to talk about a common concept of creation and chaos.<sup>148</sup> And so the dying and rising theme should not be included or regarded as concerning creation and chaos.<sup>149</sup> If this is so, then we do not think that it is necessary to link the function of the King in the cult with this dying and rising theme, nor with the divine character of Israelite kingship.<sup>150</sup> We can talk about sacral kingship in the

147. Gottlieb, op. cit., p. 78. Gottlieb also adds that apparently Yahweh is compared with El and not with Baal.

148. W. Zimmerli, in Tradition and Interpretation, pp. 352-357.

149. Despite Fisher, see p. 97 fn 40 of this thesis. However, some scholars confirmed this Baal type of creation as a kind of creatio continua, Gray, op. cit., p. 43. In p. 18 he agreed that initial creation is nowhere implied as a function of Baal in the Ugaritic myth. Also Stolz, op. cit., p. 46 fn 159.

150. On the other hand, we should also be aware that not all offices of kings outside Israel are regarded as divine, Zimmerli, loc. cit.



OT, but not about divine kingship.<sup>151</sup> The King acts in the cult as the representative of God on earth, and at the same time, as the representative of the people at the moment of the presence of God.<sup>152</sup> In other words he has a priestly function. How this priestly function of the King is to be related to that of the officiating priests is not exactly clear. Gottlieb thinks that the King has to endure a ceremony of "cultic suffering" in the New Year Festival, at the hands of the officiating priests before he is to be restored to his rightful place.<sup>153</sup> This ritual might be construed as signifying that the King of Israel owed all his power to Yahweh.<sup>154</sup> But is this "cultic suffering" of the King not actually following the pattern of dying and rising? Are Pss 18 and 89 really indicative of this ritual? During the heyday of the "myth and ritual" school the pattern of dying and rising was regarded as common in the ancient Near East, and so with this assumption in mind people tried to see whether there were textual evidence in the OT for the existence of this kind of ritual in Israel's cult. But this method is now a thing of the past. In Pss 18 and 89 we read about suffering and hope, or better, the

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151. H. Ringgren, Israelite Religion, p. 233; Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel, p. 14; against Gottlieb, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

152. Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 51. Nevertheless, J.H. Eaton pointed that in actual practice the King's priestly function might be blurred by the physical necessity to delegate his functions, by the survival of privileged groups from before the monarchy, by vagaries of inspirational gifts, especially prophecy. Sometimes the historical books acknowledge the King's cultic leadership, but sometimes tend to diminish it. However, by nature the psalms reflect his cultic role, see Kingship and the Psalms, London, 1967, p. 173.

153. Gottlieb, op. cit., pp. 86-87; Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel. Usually Pss 89 and 18 are taken as an evidence of this ritual humiliation.

154. Gottlieb, op. cit., p. 91.



pattern of faith - suffering - hope, but whether this is specifically about "cultic suffering" can not be ascertained.<sup>155</sup>

Is there any connection between the cultic function of the King and the kingship of Yahweh? The King has very close relationship with Yahweh. He called the King, "my son" (Ps 2:7). And yet there is no proof that the King played Yahweh's part. Even in Ps 110 where the King is mentioned as sitting on Yahweh's own throne at His right hand, a clear distinction is still made between Yahweh and the King.<sup>156</sup> So, if the New Year Festival is a celebration and actualisation of Yahweh's eternal kingship, how was it performed? Because of his insistence that the translation of  $\text{לְהַמְלִיכָהוּ}$  should be "Yahweh has become King" it would have been easy for Mowinckel to opt that the King played the part of Yahweh to actualise the "now" of His kingship. But strangely enough, he denied this option, and chose to see the picture of the Lord 'going up' (in Ps 47:5) as happening only in the vision of the poets.<sup>157</sup> There is no description of this enthronement as such; they merely refer to it in hymnal form as something real and well-known, and which the audience also can understand. If even Mowinckel admitted that there is no real dramatic performance of Yahweh's kingship, then it would be better not to look for the "now" of His kingship in certain possible acts performed in the Festival, but at the acts of Yahweh which he did in the primordial days, His triumph over the powers of chaos resulting in creation, the triumph which is enjoyed and celebrated by His people "today".

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155. J.M. Ward, "The Literary Form and Liturgical Background of Psalm LXXXIX", VT 11 (1961), p. 321. On the other hand, Johnson in The Cultic Prophet and Israel's Psalmody, pp. 74-75 still maintains that there is a ceremony of cultic suffering played by the King.

156. Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 59.

157. ibid., p. 111. Also in vol. II of this book, p. 253f. Eaton, op. cit., p. 110, has remarked that Mowinckel's argument could be countered by using his own insights into ritual. If there is no 'role-play', could not we say that the 'ritual' is the act of reading or remembering the myth?

#### 4.3 The kingship of Yahweh and Creation

Some remarks are needed concerning the view that the understanding of Yahweh as King came only after the introduction of the monarchy to Israel, especially in connection with the temple building. No doubt there is evidence that the kingship of God is related to temple building outside Israel. But is this also the case in Israel? The three themes: creation, kingship and temple sometimes appear together, e.g. in Pss 95, 96, 24, but whether they are related to one another is still to be examined.

The idea behind this taking over of the theme of Yahweh's kingship at the period of the monarchy is based on the functionalist theory of myth, where one's idea about the world is regarded as a projection of the social structures where he lives. If Yahweh is pictured as a King or a monarch, then this picture could only come from a projection of the existing monarchic structure of the nation. Because the monarchy appeared late in Israel, and the temple building did not start till after the establishment of the monarchy, then, according to this functionalist logic, Yahweh's kingship must be late. However, this theory is now contested. There may be a connection between a myth or a view of the world and the social structure. Nevertheless, this connection is not by necessity.<sup>158</sup> So even if

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158. Cf. J.R. Oden, jr., "Method in the Study of Near Eastern Myths", Religion 9 (1979), pp. 182-96. Oden's view is actually stronger than that mentioned above. Following the view of Claude Levi-Strauss on myth, he asserted that although myth uses codes drawn from the world, it ceases to speak about the world. So the method used by W. Brueggemann, "David and His Theologian", CBQ 30 (1968), pp. 156-81 in looking for one-for-one correspondence or parallels between the creation story and the succession narrative and J. Blenkinsopp, Prophecy and Canon, Notre Dame, London, 1977, pp. 54-69 in holding a parallel between the creation formulation and the formulation concerning the building of the sanctuary and the distribution of the land need re-examination. However, we are not convinced that myth is totally unrelated to the social situation. If it is employed in a celebration - even if it is not necessarily connected with ritual - it means that somehow, it must have a certain amount of relevance to the people.



the monarchy or the building of the temple is late, the kingship of Yahweh could be earlier than them.

Is temple building connected with the theme of creation? Again, we do not doubt that in some of the ancient Near East texts the temple is regarded as some kind of microcosm, so the temple building can be paralleled with the act of creation. But although the temple in Jerusalem was built following the pattern of Canaanite temples and may be regarded as a kind of microcosm, there is no evidence that Yahweh was thought of as creating or building His temple in the same sense as He created or built the world in the primordial times.

In the Canaanite texts the temple building is connected with the kingship of the deity, but there is no explicit mention of the relationship between this kingship and creation. In the OT there is an explicit relationship between the kingship of Yahweh and creation, and with the temple or sanctuary, but not with the building of the sanctuary. Pss 24, 95, 96, 100, 145-149 all have references to this relationship between Yahweh as King and His creation. In Pss 147:20 and 149:20 creation is connected with Yahweh as the King of Israel. Ps 104 gives us a trace of the former Chaoskampf in its description of the orderly created world. In Pss 74, 93 and 29 this theme of the triumph of God over chaos is dominating. The question now is: does creation always have to stand in a relationship with the kingship of Yahweh? Apparently this is what J. Gray thinks. The kingship of God is a central theme in the OT<sup>159</sup> and creation is one of the functions of this reign of God.<sup>160</sup> While we do not deny the importance of the

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159. J. Gray, op. cit., pp. 1-6.

160. ibid., p. 48.



reign of God as a theme in the OT, we hesitate to say that it is the central theme of the OT. Many attempts to see a central core of the OT such as the covenant theme, Heilsgeschichte, communion have failed to convince OT scholarship. We think it is wiser to say that the character of the OT lies more in its diversity than its unity. We could, however, use a broad theme such as "God" for the uniting core of the OT, but precisely because it is such a broad theme it actually becomes something that shows the diversity of the OT! Also, many passages in the OT mention the kingship of Yahweh without referring to creation (Pss 44:4; 47, 48, 68:24) and creation without referring to His kingship (Pss 8; 19; 134-136). Of course we can say that the one is implied in the other, but we have strong reservations in deciding the implicitness of a recent idea in an earlier text.

Nevertheless, we hold that Yahweh and  $\text{אלהים}$  belong together since the early times,<sup>161</sup> so the addition of  $\text{אלהים}$  to this epithet could well be an indication of the status of Yahweh as Creator. After all, worshippers shouted  $\text{אלהים}$  at the New Year's Festival, which commemorates Yahweh's triumph over chaos. On the other hand we must not think that  $\text{אלהים}$  is a recent term. It could have originated from both ancient cultic or non-cultic background. We are also not certain which idea is earlier than the other, kingship of God or creation.

In Appendix B<sub>2</sub> we discuss  $\text{אלהים}$  as a title for God, and accept an early date for the kingship of Yahweh. So what we are going to investigate is whether the concept of creation is much earlier than this early date of the idea of the kingship of Yahweh or is it from

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161. See Appendix B below.

a later period. It goes without saying that we do not accept the opinion that Yahweh's kingship is an eschatological concept which grew from the failure of the earthly kingdoms which have been experienced by the people both in the north and the south, and so, by necessity, must have come from after this monarchial period, either in the exile or after. This is not to deny that the kingship of Yahweh could have been developed to include an eschatological dimension, but this is not unrelated to but grew out of the early understanding of Yahweh's kingship (cf. Ps 93:2; יְהוָה מִלְּקִדְמוֹת  
מִלְּקִדְמוֹת מִלְּקִדְמוֹת "Your throne is established from of old; You have been (reigning) from of old").

Childs looked for the origin of the creatorship of Yahweh in Northern Mesopotamia. Following Gunkel and Albright, he thinks that the Babylonian traditions of the chaos myths were brought to Israel during the period following 2000 BC. As the Hebrews came in contact with the Canaanite mythology (which has no relation with the creation theme) they used this mythology within the framework of the chaos myth.<sup>162</sup> Gray keeps a close connection between creation and the theme of the kingship of Yahweh. In two articles<sup>163</sup> he emphasised that Israel inherited the Baalistic type of kingship from the neighbouring Canaanites. However, in his book The Legacy of Canaan<sup>164</sup> he somewhat changed his mind and decides that it is the El type of kingship which

162. Childs, op. cit., p. 37.

163. "The Hebrew Conception of the Kingship of God: its Origin and Development", VT 6 (1956), pp. 268-285; "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and the Psalms", VT 11 (1961), pp. 1-29; in both articles the kingship of God is said as late.

164. Leiden, 1965, pp. 161-162.

the Israelites inherited from the Canaanites, and that references to creation are connected with El of the Canaanite pantheon as the beneficent and tolerant ruler.<sup>165</sup> The date is placed far back in the patriarchal beginnings. In fact here Gray's opinion is close to Child's. In his latest book<sup>166</sup> Gray's view changes again. Now he tends to follow W. Schmidt,<sup>167</sup> who thinks that Israel took both the static (El) type and the dynamic (Baal) type of the kingship of the god from the Canaanites.

It is actually difficult to decide at which period Israel came to be familiar with the notion of creation. We tend to follow Child's view. It is possible to regard the Baalistic type of kingship as a kind of continuing creation, but this is because it is placed in the framework of the creation of the world by El. Moreover, it should also be asked whether the distinction between a 'static' and a 'dynamic' type of kingship can be applied to Yahweh.<sup>168</sup> He created the world long ago after His triumph over the forces of chaos, but it is still He who is the focus of attention in the "enthronement festival". It is His deeds long ago which were commemorated and actualised for 'today'. Granted that in the course of history of the Canaanite

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165. This is to contrast the picture of El of the creation with Baal of the theophanies, see also H. Schmidt, "Yahweh und die Kulttraditionen von Jerusalem", ZAW 26 (1955), pp. 168-197; Yahweh's kingship is derived from the Canaanite El worship in pre-Israelite Jerusalem.

166. J. Gray, The Biblical Doctrine of the Reign of God, p. 139.

167. W. Schmidt, Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel, BZAW 80, 1961.

168. See Stolz, op. cit., p. 228. Stolz's concern is admittedly more on the problem of Yahweh as "naher und ferner Gott", but what he said could also be applied to the problem of Yahweh as both a 'static' and 'dynamic' god.



religion Baal became more important than El, in Israel it is Yahweh who reigns forever. This is not because he received both the 'static' and the 'dynamic' characteristics of El and Baal subsequently, but because He is always known as an active God, whose triumph in the past is decisive for the present and future. However, we do not deny that pictures of the characteristics of El and Baal were applied to Yahweh without having been harmonised. This is why we hold that the pictures of theophany cannot be used as reference to creation.<sup>169</sup>

Finally, it has to be said that it is not always clear in the texts of the OT whether the triumph of God is concerned with creation or with the tradition of the Exodus. In Ps 77:11ff we find the chanting or intonation (?) of the deeds of Yahweh:<sup>170</sup>

לֹא רָאוּךָ מַיִם אֱלֹהִים	The waters saw you O, God, the Waters
וַיִּחַיֵּל רָאוּךָ מַיִם יְחִיֵּל	saw you and they were frightened.
אֶקְרַע יְגִדּוֹ תַהֲמוֹת	Yea, the deep was troubled (v. 17)

It is not difficult to see here a trace of the primordial Chaoskampf. The absence of def.art before **מ'ח** may suggest the name of a chaos monster.<sup>171</sup> But the following verses make clear that the reference is to the miracle of the crossing of the sea by the people of God under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. If we think that the interest of Israel is primarily on history, then we can say that here is an example of the 'historification' of myth or the 'mythologising' of history, but we have already decided not to follow an antithetical view between myth and history. This passage (together with Pss 135-136) is actually evidence that creation and Exodus could belong together in the past as salvation acts of the same God.<sup>172</sup>

169. See 2.2 above.

170. Eaton, op. cit., p. 192. Eaton, however, thinks that it is the King who recites this chant.

171. See May, op. cit.

172. Cf. A.S. van der Woude, "Genesis en Exodus", KT XX (1969), p. 9.

To say that "creation is an act of salvation" is not without its problems. D. Baly tried to defend this in his book<sup>173</sup> but unfortunately he did it in the framework of creation being subdued to history. On the other hand G.M. Landes protested that creation is not essentially an act of salvation or liberation. The heavens and the earth are not brought into existence from a situation requiring their liberation.<sup>174</sup> For according to Landes there is no chaos in the OT.

In our opinion Landes is underestimating the textual evidences of Chaoskampf and the references to the passive pre-existent matter which we still refer to as chaos. And if Yahweh's deed in creation is mentioned alongside the Exodus or his other acts in history, it means that there could be an association between them. This is admitted by Landes when he stated that although creation is in itself not an activity of liberation, it was nonetheless the crucial presupposition of God's liberating work in history, which was also a form of creation.<sup>175</sup> On the other hand what he said concerning Baly's statement that "in Israel every act of creation is an act of salvation" being hyperbolic<sup>176</sup> is true. Creation is not always associated with salvation.

Still, it is a fact that in the cultic festival they are mentioned together. And so we do not need to decide whether the festival is primarily concerned with the renewal of the historic covenant in a

173. In God and History in the Old Testament, New York-London, 1976.

174. G.M. Landes, "Creation and Liberation", p. 80.

175. ibid., p. 81 Our underline. Actually the association is not just a "crucial presupposition". van der Woude called it an a limine relationship, op. cit.; and Westermann, Creation, p. 117, assumes a relationship of polarity between creation faith and salvation faith.

176. Landes, op. cit., p. 88 fn 12.

Sinai-like theophany in the sense of Weiser or an enthronement festival concerned with nature-creation in the sense of Mowinckel. Both realms belong to Yahweh.



#### CHAPTER FOUR: THE PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION OF CREATION AND CHAOS

##### 1. The Prophets and the cult

Recent OT scholarship agrees that the general view in the earlier part of this century concerning the prophets of Israel as opponents of the traditions of worship and sacrifice which were current in their day cannot be accepted any longer. Certainly, there could be a sharp conflict with tradition, and a negative attitude towards it, but this does not characterise the prophets throughout.<sup>1</sup> It is not denied that the prophets might have thought of themselves as champions of a pure form of religion, but still, they too are indebted to the ideas and practices of Israel's religious (and national) tradition. Tradition occupies a place of considerable importance in prophetic preaching, and our purpose is to see how the prophetic creativity utilised these sources of tradition, in particular, creation theology.

We have discussed the relationship of creation and chaos with wisdom and cult. The common object of interest in these two circles may point to the possibility that they are not two totally separated spheres. There are some passages in wisdom literature which seem to show a critical attitude towards the cult at first sight, as for instance, Prov 21:3 and Ecc 4:17. But actually they are admonitions concerning the right attitude and the orderly manner in which one ought to approach the cult.<sup>2</sup>

H.J. Hermisson attempted to see a characteristic difference between creation in wisdom and in the cult. The psalms of the

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1. See R.E. Clements, Prophecy and Tradition, Oxford, 1975, pp. 1-3.

2. L.G. Perdue, Wisdom and Cult, Missoula, 1977, pp. 165, 182. The conclusion of his story is that although the wise men are in some ways critical of the cult, the relationship between them is not antithetic.

Jerusalem cult (Pss 89:10-14; 93) reflect the experience of a world which time and again is kept from chaos by Yahweh's superior creative power. In the creation hymns conceived by wisdom (Ps 104:5; Job 38: 8-10), on the other hand, there is a conviction that chaos was fundamentally eliminated from this world at one time.<sup>3</sup> In the latter there is no allusion to the myth of a chaos battle. The chaos (the sea) remains completely outside the world. But Hermisson also admitted that this difference between cult and wisdom involves the difference between times of the festivity and those of everyday life. Therefore, the two concepts do not have to be completely separated. Nevertheless, he insisted that these two concepts lead to very different views of the world, each with theological problems.<sup>4</sup> Probably this is more of a problem to us in the modern world. Mowinckel, as we have seen, succeeded in showing that the 'everyday' aspect of the reign of Yahweh does not have to be placed in contrast to its 'now' aspect as it is experienced in the cult. Nevertheless, later on we shall return to discuss Hermisson's thesis. So, while being very much aware of the problems behind the relationship between the prophets and wisdom,<sup>5</sup> for the time being we tend to focus our attention on the relationship between the prophets and the cult.<sup>6</sup>

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3. H.J. Hermisson, "Creation Theology in Wisdom", Israelite Wisdom p. 51.

4. ibid., p. 54.

5. Clements, op. cit., pp. 73-86; J.A. Emerton, in Tradition and Interpretation, Oxford, 1979, pp. 214-237; D.F. Morgan, "Wisdom and the Prophets", Studia Biblica 1978, Sheffield, 1979, pp. 200-204.

6. However, this cannot be decided without an exegesis of some prophetic passages. So in our exegetical section we shall return again and again to the problem of the prophets and wisdom.

How is this problem to be seen? Generally, two related approaches are used: by identifying the prophet as a cultic functionary or a cultic prophet<sup>7</sup> and by making the effort to find and confirm the cultic Sitz im leben of the lawsuit form of expression frequently used by the prophets.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. The cultic prophets.

A.R. Johnson holds that there are professional prophets in the OT, particularly connected with the Jerusalem cult. The function of these cultic prophets is to promote the welfare of the individual and that of the society at large. In this function they play a dual role: as spokesmen of Yahweh and as the representatives of the people.<sup>9</sup> In discussing Ps 81 Johnson alleged that until the early post-exilic period the cultic prophet had as responsible a role within the cult as the priest.<sup>10</sup> Pss 50, 15 and 24 show that the cultic prophet is concerned with the educational aspect of Israel's worship. It is his duty to keep the worshipper on the right path, i.e. to help to develop his character by inculcating a due recognition of the part which the worshipper should play as a member of society with definite responsibilities towards Yahweh and towards his fellow men, as well as individual rights to which he himself may lay claim. Beside this, the cultic prophet has the fundamental task of preserving the traditions of

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7. As in A.R. Johnson, The Cultic Prophet and Israel's Psalmody, Cardiff, 1979.

8. The literature is vast. We mention only several of them: E. Würthwein, "Der Ursprung der prophetischen Gerichtsrede", ZThK 49, (1952), pp. 1-16; H.E. von Waldow, Der traditionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund der prophetischen Gerichtsreden, BZAW 85, Töpelmann, Berlin, 1963, K. Nielsen, Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge, Sheffield, 1978.

9. Johnson, op. cit., p. 3.

10. ibid., p. 15.



the nation's past, as can be seen in the song of Miriam (Ex 15)<sup>11</sup>. However, it is not so clear how we are to understand the connection between the cultic and the canonical or the writing prophets. The sources are insufficient and the answer to some extent has to be ambiguous.<sup>12</sup> Ethical concerns are not a factor that makes the difference between the writing prophets and the cultic prophets. The "portal liturgies" in Pss 24 and 15 clearly show an ethical concern, and it is not necessary that these are influenced by the canonical prophets.<sup>13</sup> H. Ringgren prefers the term "prophetic priests" rather than "cultic prophets", but then he also admitted that priest and cult are not necessarily the same thing.<sup>14</sup> Even Johnson warns us against the one-sidedness of claiming all the canonical prophets as cultic prophets or vice-versa.<sup>15</sup>

Ps 95 is regarded by Johnson as an example of the function of the cultic prophet in the cult. In vv. 1-7 the prophet assumes the role of the leader of the assembly, but from vv. 7-11 his role changes to that of the spokesman of Yahweh. Here he reminds the people of their historic past and so urges them to a renewal of their pledge

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11. ibid., pp. 29-30: 86-87.

12. H. Ringgren, Israelite Religion, London, 1966, pp. 249-250: O. Kaiser, Introduction to the Old Testament, Minneapolis, 1975, pp. 212-214.

13. J.T. Willis, "Ethics in a Cultic Setting", Essays in Old Testament Ethics, J.L. Crenshaw - J.T. Willis, (eds.), New York, 1971, pp. 145-169.

14. Ringgren, op. cit., pp. 218, 249.

15. Johnson, op. cit., p. 30.

of obedience.<sup>16</sup> The psalm contains references to creation, connected with the kingship of Yahweh (vv 3-5);

כי אל גדול יהוה	For Yahweh is a great God,
ומלך גדול על כל-אלהים	a great King over all the gods;
אשר בידו מחקרי-	In whose hands are the depth of the
ארץ ותועפות הרים לו	earth and the summit of the mountains.
אשר-לו הים והוא עשהו	He owns the sea, <sup>17</sup> for He made it,
ויבשת ידיו יצרו	and the dry land, His hands formed it.

Not only the kingship of Yahweh, but also His ownership is emphasised. Even the sea is created by him and, as such, belongs to Him.<sup>18</sup> Vv. 6-7b form part of this hymn of praise,<sup>19</sup> but here it is concerned with Yahweh as Maker of His people. After praising Yahweh, the second part of this psalm (vv. 7c-11), in which the cultic prophet becomes the spokesman of Yahweh, changes into a different mood. Johnson regarded this part as admonitions, but we get the impression that the people are being strongly reminded of their ancestors' sin, almost as if the cultic prophet warns them to behave under the threat of their ancestors' sad fate. This threatening prospect could indicate that creation here is in the context of judgement, as held by Weiser.<sup>20</sup>

16. ibid., p. 19. Because there is no mention of Mt. Zion, he takes the date back to the Settlement period and sees a parallel with Ps 81. If this is correct, then it adds weight to our view of the possibility of a very early date of creation. But probably this psalm belongs to the cultic celebrations in Jerusalem. However, the Jerusalem cult could utilise older traditions (Cf. Pss 110 on Melchizedek). The problem is how to differentiate between a formal and an actual Sitz im leben.

17. lit: "whose is the sea".

18. Cf. pp. 46 and 101 above.

19. A.A. Anderson, Psalms, II, NCB, London, 1977, p. 678.

20. In The Psalms, OTL, London, 1979, pp. 46 and 625. Weiser however thinks that creation theme is secondary and that the context of this psalm is of the cult of the Covenant.

Yet the phrase  $\text{לֹא יִשְׁעוּ לְךָ יְיָ}$  in v. 1 makes us hesitate to follow him.<sup>21</sup> Despite the threatening prospect in the cultic prophet's warning, creation in Ps 95 is used in a 'neutral' sense.

Another psalm which Johnson regards as showing the characteristic function of the cultic prophet is Ps 89.<sup>22</sup> According to his hypothesis, which we do not follow, the cultic prophet in this psalm directed the King (as in Ps 72), who has to play a role in the "cultic suffering" ceremony. Creation here is connected with Chaoskampf. Whether the background is ceremonial or not, clearly the reference to creation is in the context of hope and salvation. The psalmist finds the assurance of Yahweh's power to uphold the covenant with David in the stability of the world which Yahweh has created; this serves to remind people of Yahweh's supreme and unshakeable power. Johnson rightly notices the connection between stability in nature and stability in the moral realm.<sup>23</sup> Yahweh rules the world with  $\text{קִדְּשׁ}$  and  $\text{כֹּחַ שׁוֹפָר}$  (v. 14). In v. 9 there appears the epithet  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי צָבָא}$ . In v. 13 the word  $\text{צָבָא}$  is used. The expression  $\text{לְךָ}$  in vv. 12 (2X) and 14 links the ownership of Yahweh over nature and His creatorship. As we shall see later  $\text{צָבָא}$  and  $\text{צָבָא לְךָ}$  also appear in the 'doxologies' in the book of Amos. It might be that Ps 89 and the 'doxologies' have their sources in a northern provenance.

21. It belongs to the function of the cultic prophet to keep the congregation on the right path, cf. Johnson, op. cit., p. 20.
22. ibid., pp. 74-5. See also Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel, revised edition, at various points.
23. Johnson, The Cultic Prophet and Israel's Psalmody, p. 75. Although it must be said that there is a blur in Johnson's distinction between chaos and disorder. The one who cried for help (vv. 47, 48) is still in the land of the living.



Ps 90 is also regarded by Johnson as having a relationship with wisdom.<sup>24</sup> We are aware that many scholars do not share this view.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, the psalm shows the same interest as that in wisdom: the brevity of one's span of life and thus his vulnerability, compared with God's eternal nature. The psalmist acknowledges ethical standard required by the Creator, even if it is in a negative way of a confession of failure.<sup>26</sup> This association of creation and order makes us wonder whether the cultic prophet has the concept of world order in his mind. The context of creation in Ps 90 is ambiguous. On one hand the vulnerability of man compared with the might of the creator resulted in the pessimistic view of man (v. 3):

תָּשֹׁב אִנוֹשׁ עֲדָרָכָא      You will turn man to dust<sup>27</sup>  
וְתֹאמַר שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי־אָדָם      and said: turn back sons of men!

On the other hand the supplication in vv. 13-17 shows that people are placing their trust in Yahweh.

24. ibid., p. 194.

25. e.g. R.E. Murphy, "A Consideration of the Classification 'Wisdom Psalms'", SVT, 9, 1963, pp. 156-167. Murphy mentions Pss 1, 32, 34, 37, 49, 112 and 128 as wisdom psalms; J.K. Kuntz adds Ps 133, "The Retribution Motif in Psalmic Wisdom", ZAW 89, (1977), p. 232.

26. Cf. Johnson, loc. cit.

27. By changing לֹא to לֹא־ and including it in v. 3 Johnson translates the phrase as a plea: "do not turn mankind back into dust!", and thus managed to convey a reminder from the people to God of His responsibility of creating mankind so weak (cf. Pss 22:9; 89:48; Job 10:8). However, in our opinion the text as it is already makes sense.

Ps 90:2 is interesting:

<p>בטרם הרים ילדו          וַתַּחֲזִילָא אֶרֶץ וְתַבֵּלָא          וּמִעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים</p>	<p>Before the mountains were born,          and you had brought forth the earth          and the world,          from everlasting to everlasting you          are God!</p>
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Other references to the birth of mountains can be seen in Job 38:8 and Prov 8:25. This may confirm the relationship of Ps 90 with wisdom. Most commentaries follow the ancient versions in reading the second line as third pers. sing. fem., וַתַּחֲזִילָא "and she (the earth).....were brought forth". But the MT makes sense. The emphasis here is on "you". Yahweh is before everything, including the mighty mountains, because He is the everlasting Creator.

Ps 74 also comes into Johnson's consideration.<sup>28</sup> In v. 16 we find again the expression גָּבַהּ in the context of creation. Although the content is clear, namely the destruction of a sanctuary by the enemy, it is not certain to which period in history the psalm belong. Probably it concerns the temple in Jerusalem (the reference to Mount Zion in v. 2). Johnson thinks of the period immediately following the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC and finds confirmation of this in Lam 2:6f and 20.<sup>29</sup> Even if the data is exilic, we can still imagine what actually went on in the temple during its glorious days from what is referred to in v. 9. Obviously there were cultic prophets in the service of the temple who somehow could determine the signs and length of the time of suffering. The reference to Chaoskampf, as we have seen, is part of the familiar picture of the cult. Creation

28. Johnson, op. cit., p. 135.

29. ibid., p. 133. Mowinckel gives a much earlier date (before the centralisation of the cult), The Psalms in Israel's Worship, II, p. 261.

here is closely connected with hope and salvation. Although Johnson defines the cultic prophet as the one who proclaims  $\square \gamma \psi$  he also holds that not all of those who hold this function were prepared to tell their audiences things which were likely to be to their taste.<sup>30</sup> Deut 32 is put forward as one example. But we hesitate to see Deut 32 as a creation passage. As we have seen in chapter three, the verbs used in Deut 32 are more in the context of birth than in the context of creation. It is still possible though to see Deut 32 in the context of judgement or even as one of the examples of the prophetic lawsuit form.<sup>31</sup> Another passage is taken as having the context of judgement (1 Sam 15:22ff), but again it has nothing to do with creation.

It has to be said that the general picture of the association of the cultic prophets with the concept of creation in Johnson's study is in the context of hope.<sup>32</sup>

30. Johnson, op. cit., p. 160.

31. G.E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God: A Form-Critical Study of Deuteronomy 32", in Israel's Prophetic Heritage, pp. 26-27. Johnson, however, denies this possibility, op. cit., p. 151.

32. With the possible exception of Habakkuk (which is not discussed by Johnson). The language of Habakkuk is very close to that of the Psalter, which indicates him as a cultic prophet. Yet his message is of judgement, and the content of his message has affinity with the writing or canonical prophets (Hab 1:5-17; 2:6-20). But Hab 3:1-15 is in line with the tradition of the cultic prophets, although we have warned above that Hab 3:3f is a mixing of theophanic and Chaoskampf imageries.



### 3. The prophetic lawsuit form

Discovering the Sitz im leben of a certain Gattung is an old problem in the OT scholarship. Very briefly, we shall trace the development of the discussion concerning the Sitz im leben of the lawsuit form, up to von Waldow's proposals.

Formerly it was usual to regard the prophetic lawsuit as a form whose Sitz im leben was the administration of justice in the city gate. The prophets borrowed this form in order to employ it in their proclamation. It is not until E. Würthwein published his study that the question of the relationship between prophetic forms of speech and the cult comes to the fore.<sup>33</sup> Würthwein makes a distinction between prophets of weal, who are closely associated with the cult and the prophets of woe, who are loosely connected with the cult. Amos for instance is formerly a prophet of weal, but later becomes a prophet of woe. However, the main task of a prophet is to proclaim weal and not woe, so the references to woe are probably dependent on the cult both in respect of the series of accusations and in the pronouncements of judgement. Würthwein regards many prophetic passages as having a judgemental context. They may be classified as lawsuits (Hos 4:1f; 12:3f; Is 3:13f; Mic 6:1ff; Jer 2:5ff; 25:30ff; Mal 3:5). He also included some passages from the Psalms, which suggest the scene of a cultic trial either against Israel if she transgresses the covenant or against the foreign nations (Pss 50; 68; 75; 76:8-10; 96:11-13; 98:7-9). F. Hesse, on the other hand, feels that the cultic prophets are not called to prosecute Yahweh's accusations against

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33. E. Würthwein, "Der Ursprung der prophetischen Gerichtsrede", ZThK 49 (1952), pp. 1-15.

Israel. Therefore he rejected the cultic Sitz im leben of the lawsuit. Of all the psalms mentioned by Würthwein only Ps 50 is specifically directed at Israel. The content of Ps 82 is disputable so it is better not to be taken as supporting the judgemental side of the cultic prophet's function.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile H. Huffmon<sup>35</sup> and J. Harvey<sup>36</sup> pointed to international law as the Sitz im leben of the lawsuit, with particular reference to Hittite treaties.

E. von Waldow tried to take a mediating position between these two positions.<sup>37</sup> The prophetic lawsuit is only meaningful if we see it against a background of the covenant. It is the broken covenant that causes Yahweh to appear as prosecutor. He distinguishes between the formal aspect of the lawsuit, which is the secular law, and the content, which can be traced back to the traditions of Yahweh's covenant with Israel. These traditions are associated with the cult. So the actual Sitz im leben of the lawsuit is the cult, but the formal Sitz im leben is the administration of the law in the gate.

von Waldow's study introduced the notion of the broken covenant. But he did not pursue whether this is a new precedent which needs the borrowing of the secular city gate lawsuit form. And it is still not clear whether judgement belongs as a part of the cult or not.

34. F. Hesse, "Wurzelt die Prophetische Gerichtsrede im israelitischen Kult?", ZAW 65 (1953), pp. 45-53.

35. H.H. Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets", JBL 78 (1959), pp. 285-95).

36. Discussed in J. Blenkinsopp, "The Prophetic Reproach", JBL 90 (1971), pp. 267-78. Blenkinsopp follows this non-cultic approach.

37. von Waldow, op. cit., p. 20f.

Mowinckel has written at some length on the judgement motif in the "enthronement" Festival.<sup>38</sup> He did not deal with specific forms of speech concerning judgement, but his theory concerning the motif of judgement in the cult could lead us to consider the possibility of judgement in the cult without necessarily being part of a cultic trial. According to Mowinckel the ultimate purpose of the Israelite cult, broadly speaking, is the preservation of the cosmos. For this project to succeed, everything evil and harmful must be eliminated. There are myths in this Festival: myth of creation, dragon battle, battle of the gods, Exodus, foreign nations and judgement. In the "enthronement" Psalms (Pss 96:13; 98:9) Yahweh is pictured as coming to sit in judgement. In Pss 75:3; 149 and 82 it is the external enemies who are going to be judged. But also internal enemies are included in the judgement, as can be seen in Pss 12, 14, 15 and 125. According to Mowinckel this internal judgement may even be seen in Pss 81 and 95.<sup>39</sup> These two psalms are best seen as attempts to tackle the problem of theodicy. If the promises of the Festival do not come to their fulfilment in every-day reality during the ensuing year, then it is not Yahweh's fault, but the people's. However, in his description of the myths we got the impression that Mowinckel is mixing passages of cultic theophanies with Chaoskampf and creation. We have given a warning against this tendency in chapter two.<sup>40</sup>

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38. Mowinckel, op. cit., I, 1962, pp. 142-169.

39. ibid., p. 161 in volume I and p. 71 in volume II.

40. See p. 44 above. Ps 24 should not be regarded as a mixing of cultic theophany and creation. It has no description of a theophany, only the description of the place where the theophany will take place.



There is also no sufficient exegesis of the given psalms to show them as really having a judgemental context. Pss 95 and 81 could hardly be considered as judgement on the people.<sup>41</sup> This is in fact admitted by Mowinckel himself. The "winnowing" process of the people, as in Pss 24, 15 originally had nothing to do with the myth of judgement, since this myth never had Israel as its object. However, he holds that in spite of this the judgement myth later on became fused with matters of purification of the people as a whole. Ps 50 which according to Würthwein is a lawsuit is in turn regarded by Mowinckel as an example of the time of κρίσις. But then this is still a secondary theme. There is no judgement in Ps 50, only admonitory scolding with pedagogical intention.<sup>42</sup> In a recently published book K. Nielsen discussed the relationship between the prophetic lawsuit and the cult.<sup>43</sup> He does not agree with Mowinckel about the internal and external aspects of Yahweh's judgement. According to him it is no longer possible to distinguish in the Psalms between the internal and external enemies, as can be seen in Ps 75 and 94. It is not the origin which needs to be considered, but the application of judgement. The problem is: how to demonstrate the connection between κρίσις (internal judgement), myth of judgement and prophetic lawsuit.<sup>44</sup> The prophets, according to Nielsen, are mediators between Yahweh and the people. Their task is to compel the people to return to the covenantal relationship, and the covenant breakers as such are to be excluded from the congregation. The prophets utilised the language of the myth and the judicial forms borrowed either from the administration of the gate or international

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41. Cf. Johnson, see pp. 137ff above.

42. Mowinckel, op. cit., vol. II, p. 71; cf. Johnson, op. cit., p. 27.

43. K. Nielsen, Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge, Sheffield, 1978.

44. ibid., p. 47.

law. But the difference is that now Israel is included within the covenant breakers. The prophet did more than what we find in Ps 50. Not only individuals, but all the people could be regarded as apostates. We notice that although Nielsen disregards the distinction between internal and external enemies, in reality his attention is focused only on internal enemies which could include Israel as a whole.<sup>45</sup>

The prophetic lawsuit is therefore strongly ideologically dependent on the cultic themes which have to do with the renewal of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel; it is also influenced by the myth of judgement. The possibility of a cultic trial is rightly regarded by Nielsen as very scant.<sup>46</sup>

Although the formal resemblance between Pss 81 and 95 is not very great, both concern covenant renewal and employ forms of address which stem from the procedure of covenant making. Ps 50 too belongs to this category.

Nielsen does not think that the origin of the form in the Hittite treaty texts is crucial to the elucidation of the prophets' use of it.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, he nevertheless places a great value on the Hittite texts for helping us to understand the background of the metaphor of Yahweh as suzerain.<sup>48</sup>

45. Cf. below, p. 154f, on our examination of the 'prophetic reversal'.

46. Nielsen, op. cit., p. 50. Here he agrees with von Waldow, op. cit., p. 25ff.

47. ibid., p. 53. Blenkinsopp takes a different view, op. cit., p. 268. The proceedings taken by an overlord against a vassal guilty of violating his treaty-oath is an adequate analogy for the prophetic reproach, because here the judge and the prosecutor are one and the same person.

48. ibid., p. 55.

Nielsen's conclusion is that there is no possible application of the lawsuit in connection with the New Year Festival. However, there is much to suggest that the prophets employ associations and forms of address with which they are familiar from cultic covenant making. The problem, then, is whether there is some connection between the lawsuit and the cult, without being part of a cultic trial.<sup>49</sup>

So far, what shall we say about this on-going discussion? It seems that Johnson's opinion about the cultic prophets can be defended. While Mowinckel holds that there is a myth of judgement in the cult, he also admitted that this theme is secondary. Nielsen criticised Mowinckel because of his separation of the external and internal enemies and insisted on treating both the external and internal enemies as one enemy under Yahweh's judgement. In our opinion this criticism is invalid. We have seen that Mowinckel's argument for the internal judgement is weak. The judgemental aspect of the dragon battle myth mentioned by him is directed towards the foreign enemies who to some extent were seen as representatives of the dragon. It is one thing to talk about judgement of internal enemies (which in the text of the mentioned psalms refers to individuals), it is another thing to say that Israel stands under judgement. Although Nielsen mentioned the shift from judgement on individuals among the people to the people as a whole, it is far from clear that the latter is the logical development of the former. If the cultic celebrations contain no aspect of internal judgement, or better, judgement on Israel (except strong admonitions concerning ethical purification matters) and yet

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49. loc. cit.



there is an aspect of judgement on the people of God and even a specific speech form of judgement called lawsuit in the prophetic message, then the question is: how come that the prophets insisted on this?

We have seen the difficulty in making a distinction between the cultic prophets and the canonical prophets. It is too hasty to conclude that the canonical prophets are not cultic prophets, although it must be said that the result of our survey pointed to this possibility, namely that the cultic prophets indeed lay stress on the proclamation of hope. Johnson argued that the office and stature of these cultic prophets decline soon after the fall of Jerusalem. The author of Lamentations, for instance, holds the cultic prophets as responsible for this on the ground that they misled the people by glossing over the corruptions in the society and offering empty assurances of the future.<sup>50</sup> Although a later evaluation of a phenomenon in the OT is helpful, it is not sufficient to answer our question. Indeed Amos and Jeremiah predicted doom and what they predicted did happen. But it takes a long period for Amos' prediction to be fulfilled (from ca. 760-750 BC till 587 BC!).<sup>51</sup> Of course the redactor of Amos regarded the fall of Jerusalem as the fulfilment of Amos' prediction, but on the other hand, in a long span of time any disaster can be regarded as fulfilment of a prediction. Besides, there is strong possibility too, that despite

50. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 202-3.

51. 722 BC is the date of the northern kingdom's fall, but Amos predicted the fall of all of Israel, including Judah. On the other hand, E. Hammershaimb, The Book of Amos, Oxford, 1970, p. 19 thinks that the occurrence of the violent earthquake mentioned in Amos 1:1 was seen as fulfilment of his prediction of divine punishment.

their emphasis on doom, Amos, Jeremiah and the others also predict hope, and it is not necessary to regard passages of hope in their writings as coming from secondary sources.

We could look for ethical consciousness as the reason, but we have seen above that there is an interest in ethical problems in the cult, although admittedly the prophets attacked society because of ethical reasons rather than just giving general admonitions as the cultic prophets did. Nielsen tried to solve the problem by looking at the function of the א'ן: its function is primarily parenetic; the prophets do not prosecute their lawsuits merely to announce Yahweh's judgement, but because they wish to show that the breach of the covenant is already the actual catastrophe. It is because the people have broken their covenant with Yahweh that their case has to end in condemnation and punishment.<sup>52</sup> At this point Nielsen is developing the line of thought of von Waldow, who related reference to the covenant as the indication of a cultic background.

The other reason that Nielsen puts forward is the understanding of Yahweh as the God of the covenant. The people have wronged Yahweh by breaking the covenant. This justifies Yahweh's prosecution of His people. But the uniqueness of Yahweh demands that at the same time He is also the judge, in the sense of securing the rights of the needy. As God of the covenant Yahweh is both the judge of the people and the one who must intervene if they overstep themselves.<sup>53</sup> The characteristics of the lawsuit fitted this description. This compels us to ask: what is Nielsen trying to prove, the characteristics of Yahweh or the characteristics of the lawsuit form of judgement? It

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52. ibid., p. 59.

53. ibid., p. 74.

appears after all, that Blenkinsopp is right at this point. There must be something in the lawsuit form which corresponds to something in the understanding of Yahweh. This means that we have also to pay attention to the form of the vassal treaties. Nielsen is inconsistent in his opinion if he appreciates the value of the Hittite texts for the understanding of Yahweh as suzerain while disregarding their cruciality for understanding the prophets' use of it.

Nielsen is rather ambiguous concerning the verdict. On the one hand he stressed the parenetic function of the 2'7, on the other hand he also insisted on the rhetorical purpose; the prophets intended the people to understand their catastrophic situation so that they, at least a remnant, will repent.

R.P. Carroll stated that the notion of repentance does not belong to a covenant paradigm at all. The broken covenant means the end of the covenant.<sup>54</sup> To examine this statement we have to consider first whether there is no rhetorical purpose in the lawsuit form or whether the lawsuit form is not necessarily connected with the covenant idea! As for the first possibility, we have to remember that which is termed the 'dialectic'<sup>55</sup> or the 'archetypal'<sup>56</sup> thinking in the mind of the prophets. Even in the midst of a message of total destruction there could linger a longing for peace and hope. The

54. R.P. Carroll, When Prophecy Failed, p. 16, taking support from D.J. McCarthy, Old Testament Covenant, Oxford, 1972, p. 46.

55. See Carroll, op. cit., pp. 16-21. The degree of this dialectic differs: for Amos it was an inarticulated possibility, for Hosea a definite conviction and for Isaiah a distinct possibility.

56. Northrop Frye's theory, used by A.S. Kapelrud to explain the inconsistency of the prophets of doom, in The Message of the Prophet Zephaniah, Oslo-Bergen, 1975, pp. 11f, 85, 94.



prophetic lawsuit then contains rhetorical purpose. It is up to both sides to decide whether the breach in the covenant is forever or only temporary. The second possibility is more difficult to deny. Recent research in the covenant theme claims that the covenant does not play such a great role as it is supposed to have. L. Perlitt has argued that the theological use of the covenant is late, i.e. Deuteronomic. The silence of the earlier prophets on this theme is because they knew nothing of such a covenant.<sup>57</sup> Hos 8:1 is not authentic, but originated from a later Deuteronomistic covenant theology.<sup>58</sup> However, it must be said that Perlitt's work actually proves that it is the use of the term א'בך as a theological theologoumenon which is late, and not necessarily the whole idea of the "covenant", that is the idea that Yahweh has a special way of intercourse with Israel. True, the prophetic judgement on Israel in the form of a lawsuit does not necessarily depend on the phenomenon of covenant making. Nevertheless, even if the theological understanding of the "covenant" (in the sense of the Deuteronomistic א'בך theology) is relatively late, we could still hold that the significance of the covenant itself is not necessarily late.<sup>59</sup> The judgement of the people

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57. L. Perlitt, Bundestheologie im Alten Testament, WMANT 36, Neukirchen, 1969, p. 129ff; J. Barr, "Some Semantic Notes on the Covenant", Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie, H. Donner et al, (eds.), Göttingen, 1977, pp. 23-28.

58. Perlitt, op. cit., pp. 146-49.

59. Barr, op. cit., p. 37; Nielsen, op. cit., p. 88 fn 18. It is also worth noting H. Wildberger's insight, five years before Perlitt published his arguments. Wildberger stated that the problem of the relationship between Yahweh and the people in Amos, Isaiah and Micah does not depend on the value of א'בך; however, the prophets knew about Bundesdrohungen, "Jesajas Verständnis der Geschichte", SVT IX, 1962, p. 104 fn3. Cf. D.J. McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant, second edition, p. 23.

in the prophetic thought is still probably influenced to some extent by the understanding of the election of Israel.

Mowinckel referred to the problem of theodicy in Pss 81 and 95.<sup>60</sup> Although we do not follow his view that these psalms are of judgement, his opinion of theodicy as a pre-exilic phenomenon merits attention. According to Mowinckel, if the promises of the festival fail in the everyday reality, it is not the fault of Yahweh, but the people's. If this is so then the purpose of the festival is to celebrate Yahweh's upholding of the world order, as it is indeed re-emphasised by Nielsen. God is always triumphant in the battle against chaos, and if this is not a reality in the present life of the worshippers, then it means that somehow, they have chosen the side of chaos. The cultic prophets regarded this as a possibility and so the people are strongly warned against going in that direction. For the prophets however this is no longer so. There is a reason why the promises of the festival fail. Israel has become the enemy of Yahweh. Could not we say that their insistence on Israel as the enemy of Yahweh or Yahweh as the enemy of Israel is the result of an attempt for theodicy?

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60. Cf. above, p. 145; cf. Crenshaw, who stated that creation has to be seen in the context of divine justice, Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom, p. 34. But he regarded this mainly as an exilic or post-exilic phenomenon (e.g. the 'doxologies' of judgement).

#### 4. The 'prophetic reversal'

R.E. Clements argued that it is 'natural' to have ideas of the lawsuit in Israel's cultic life without referring to the covenant.<sup>61</sup> But we have seen that not only the form of the lawsuit but also the idea of judgement of the people are alien to the general thought of the cultic milieu where only foreign enemies are judged. So it could not be 'natural'. How then shall we explain this 'unnatural' case? It is known that the prophets reversed many traditional motifs. For instance, the understanding of God as Rock and Stone of salvation becomes something on which men will stumble and fall (Is 8:14). The concept of inviolability of Zion becomes precisely the threat that Jerusalem will fall (Is 8:10, 18). The proclamation of  $\text{אִשׁוּר}$  will result in the opposite (Jer 14:1-10; 14:17-15:2). The Day of Yahweh is darkness and not light (Am 5:18). Election becomes the cause for punishment (Am 3:2).

The insistence of judgement on Israel in the writing prophets probably is also related to this 'prophetic reversal'. Election as the cause for punishment is probably one driving factor. The reversal of the concept of the inviolability of Zion probably also influenced this judgement on the people, and so could be regarded as the other driving factor. If we still regard the covenant as important to the basic understanding behind the concept of judgement then we could follow Nielsen in his construction of the framework of the prophetic judgement. The understanding of the covenant demands the turning of judgement from the foreign people towards Israel.<sup>62</sup>

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61. R.E. Clements, Prophecy and Tradition, p. 20.

62. Or by using Nielsen's terminology, the understanding of the covenant demands the reversal of the role of Yahweh from judge to prosecutor!



But although we retain some of its significance, we tend to follow the opinion of not making the covenant as the basic operating thought in the prophetic mind. Nevertheless, Nielsen's effort to find a "why" of this case is valid, and if we disagree with his proposal it is only fair if we also try to give an alternative answer.

In our examination of the Psalms<sup>63</sup> we have noticed that the cultic prophets often connected their message with creation and order, and we wondered whether they were thinking in the framework of world order. Could it be that the same way of thinking is also in the mind of the canonical prophets? We have also seen in the preceding chapter our decision to follow Barton's opinion in confirming that the eighth century prophets knew about natural law.<sup>64</sup>

Mowinckel mentioned the myth of creation in the enthronement Festival, which he sometimes confuses with the dragon battle myth. It is understandable that he did not elaborate on this point, but went on instead to ponder the relationship between the Festival and the historical covenant motif which at his time is considered as a dominant factor in Israel's way of life.<sup>65</sup>

In Ps 75, which Mowinckel included as one of the enthronement psalms, the theme of judgement of the external enemies<sup>66</sup> is closely connected with the concept of creation (v. 4):

63. See above, pp. 136ff.

64. See above, pp. 82, 85.

65. He tried to answer some criticism that he disregards the historical concern of the OT.

66. It could be questioned whether the phrase "the wicked of the earth" (v. 8) refers to internal or external enemies. However in our opinion this psalm is about judgement on foreign enemies.

וּמַגִּים אֶרֶץ וְכָל-  
 יִשְׁכֵּיהָ totters,<sup>67</sup>  
 אֲנֹכִי תִכְנֶנָּה עֲמֻדֶיהָ I keep its foundations steady.

Although Weiser agrees on the creation context of this psalm he goes further in identifying creation with judgement.<sup>68</sup> This, however, is not supported by all creation passages in the OT, even by those which can be taken to have a pre-exilic date.

In Ps 96, again another enthronement psalm, we find a clear description of creation in association with the foreign enemies (v. 5). The roaring of the sea, which in the Chaoskampf references show, the threatening aspect of Yahweh's adversaries, here becomes a token of the praise of nature (together with the heavens and the earth) towards its Creator. Pss 75 and 96 show us that creation concept is a source of hope for the people but a threat to the enemy. This corresponds with what we have surveyed above, namely the salvation context of creation in the cultic prophet's proclamations.

Does the use of the lawsuit form have anything to do with creation? Although Nielsen concludes that there is no necessary connection between the lawsuit and the cultic festival he traced the associations of the idea of Yahweh as prosecutor and judge in this form with the understanding of the covenant. Apparently he is aware that the idea of Yahweh's ambiguity does not necessarily depend on the covenant, because there is another reason he added for this, namely the monistic understanding of Yahweh in the history of ideas.<sup>69</sup>

67. Johnson, op. cit., p. 319 translates "when the earth and its inhabitants sways to and fro".

68. Weiser, op. cit., p. 522.

69. Nielsen, op. cit., p. 78.

Nielsen quotes Is 45:5-7 for this monistic understanding. Everything derives solely from Yahweh; as such, it can be said that there is an ambiguity in Yahweh, in which the horizontal expression can be seen in the tension between creation and chaos. Chaos is not conquered once and for all; the sacral actions of the cult re-enact the battle which is the basis of the people's existence; in fact, it is here that the actual subjugation of chaos and the establishment of cosmos took place.<sup>70</sup> The battle is against foreign enemies or natural disasters, but also against internal enemies. In this case Israel assumes the same position as the forces of chaos, which must be combatted. However, the struggle against chaos always takes place to ensure the preservation of cosmos, and "cosmos" in this sense is the maintenance of Israel as Yahweh's people.<sup>71</sup> Nielsen's conclusion about the improbability of the connection of the lawsuit form with the concept of creation is not exactly right. Hos 4:1-3 may well be concerned with creation. But on the whole we must admit that in many passages which suggest the use of the lawsuit form we cannot detect reference to creation.<sup>72</sup>

It is to his credit that he comes to associate the tension between creation and chaos as having associations with the lawsuit. However, his treatment of the concept of creation is unsatisfactory. It is not denied that threats of chaos are used in connection with

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70. ibid., p. 81. We disagree on this, see above p. 125.

71. ibid., p. 82.

72. e.g. Is 1:2-3; 3:13-15; 2:4-17; Ps 50; even in Is 41:1-5; 21-29; 43:8-13; 42:18-25; Job 9:2ff which are regarded by Clements as a lawsuit, op. cit., p. 20 are in reality a lament which forms part of the Klageerhörungsparadigma, the common ancient Near East pattern in which a lament is made, heard and wins redress. See J.A. Baker, "Job: Unity and Meaning", Studia Biblica 1978: I, Sheffield, 1978, p. 18, following H. Gese.



Israel's enemies as we have seen in the preceding pages. But although creation is in a practical sense concerned with Israel it actually has a larger background, namely the world order. Nielsen is also silent on the problem of how the existence of the creation concept along side the understanding of the covenant is to be explained. This could be an indication that the choosing of the tension between creation and chaos as the basic idea behind Yahweh's ambiguity is after all, an afterthought.

Hermisson's distinction between creation in the understanding of the cult and creation in the understanding of wisdom might have helped in clarifying the problem of the interrelationship between influences in Israel. Mowinckel and Nielsen, especially the latter in his interpretation of Is 45:7 may have been guilty to some extent of claiming too central a place for the cult in the life of the society in Israel. The prophets as we have seen above, could have had relationship with both the cult and wisdom. Their understanding of creation then could have incorporated elements from both. Probably the prophetic understanding of creation on the whole tends to be based on the tension between creation and chaos as it is in the cultic view of the world order. In this view 'the world' in a practical sense means 'Israel'. Perhaps the reversal of Israel as 'the world' to Israel as 'chaos' could be influenced by the wider horizon in the prophetic understanding of creation in the sense of wisdom; but we have seen that chaos too, is acknowledged in wisdom. The difference in the understanding of the world order probably lies in particular emphases, but not in such a way that we can say that there are different world-views in pre-exilic Israel.

## 5. The Zion Tradition and Creation

The Zion tradition centred around Yahweh's choice of Jerusalem as His dwelling place. Pss 46, 48 and 76 are especially thought of as Zion psalms.<sup>73</sup> Formerly the content of the praise to God in these psalms was regarded as having an eschatological character. But now it is agreed that very ancient traditions lie behind the idea of Zion. In Ps 48:3 Mount Zion is said to be located in "the far north" ( 193 ), which defies the real topography of Mount Zion.

} 193 is really the name of a holy mountain north of Ras Shamra.  
 It is also a designation of the highest of the mountains, which  
 serves as the dwelling place of Baal. In Ps 46:5 there again occurs  
 a passage which originally has nothing to do with the real topography  
 of Zion:

וְהָיָה כְּנָהָרְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
There is a river, its streams make  
glad

עיר - אלהים the city of God,

קדש משכני עליון the holy dwelling place of Elyon.

Ps 46:5 is about a mythical river which was identified locally (this process of local identification is called translatio) as 'the waters of Siloah' (Is 8:6) and the Gihon (Gen 2:13).<sup>74</sup> By comparing this passage with Is 33:21 A. Weiser suggested that here "figurative"

73. See H.J. Kraus, Theologie der Psalmen, Neukirchen, 1979, pp. 94-103; J.H. Hayes, "The Tradition of Zion's inviolability", JBL 82 (1963), pp. 419-26; S. Kelly, "Psalm 46: A Study in Imagery", JBL 89 (1970), pp. 305-12; F. Stolz, } 1'3 in THAT, II, pp. 543-51. The antiquity of the Zion tradition has been questioned in R.E. Clements' recent monograph, Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem, Sheffield, 1980.

74. Is 8:6 is not referring to the waters of chaos, nor is it a parallel to them. Here native waters are contrasted with foreign waters (of the Euphrates), see O. Kaiser, Isaiah 1-12, London, 1979, p. 113. The identification of the Gihon as one of the four streams of the Paradise in the J creation narrative (Gen 2:10-14) indicated that there is a blending of Mesopotamian (the identification of the two other sources as the Tigris and the Euphrates) and the Canaanite traditions.

language of the river and its tributaries is used to express the abundant wealth of the powerful blessings that flow from God and His presence, which at the same time also preserves the city whenever it faces a threat of danger.<sup>75</sup> The description of streams flowing out from the temple in Ps 46:5, Ezek 47:1-12 and Zech 14:8 is indeed an expression of God's abundant blessings to the world, but it is not just a figurative expression. Ps 46:5, Ezek 47:1-12 and Zech 14:8 share the same ancient tradition of the sacred streams.

The other feature of this Zion tradition is the theme of the enemy threatening the city of God (Pss 46:7; 48:5; 76:6f). The enemy is characterised as "the nations, the kingdoms" (Pss 46:7), "princes" (Ps 76:13) or "kings of the earth" (Pss 48:5; 76:13). Placed side by side with this theme in another theme, the inviolability of the city. God is its strength and safety (Pss 46:2-4; 76:2-3). He acts to protect His possession (Pss 46:9-10; 48:6-9; 76:4-10). This protection of the city is at the same time judgement to the enemy. The city holds, because Yahweh has destroyed the enemy.

Isaiah's reliance on Zion theology can be seen in Is 14:32. Zion is the place which Yahweh founded. It is also situated in "the far North" (Is 14:13c). It is the place where Yahweh dwells (8:18; 31:19) and where He reveals Himself (2:3; Cf. 6:1; 28:16).<sup>76</sup>

Whether Isaiah believed in the inviolability of Zion or attached some conditions to it is still a matter of discussion. A glance at

75. Weiser, Psalms, p. 370.

76. Th.C.Vriezen, "Essentials of the Theology of Isaiah", Israel's Prophetic Heritage, pp. 129-130; other Zion passages in Isaiah are Is 10:5-11, 27b-34; 14:24-27, 28-32; 17:12-13; 28:14-22; 29:1-8; 30:27-33; 31:1-8; 33:20-24; Cf. Hayes, op. cit., p. 424.



Is 17:24 and 31:4-5, for instance, shows the themes of the enemy's threat and Zion's inviolability. But these themes do not correspond to the judgemental tone of Isaiah's message. According to one view Isaiah is a prophet of judgement and predicted the destruction of Jerusalem by Assyria throughout his career, even during the siege of Sennacherib in 701 BC (Is 1:4-8). The sudden Assyrian withdrawal from Judah saved the city and proved that the prophet was wrong (Is 22:1b-14). The belief in Zion's inviolability is a later reaction to the event of 701 BC and found its way through glosses and expansions into the book of Isaiah.<sup>77</sup> The opposite view holds that Isaiah started as a prophet of salvation and ended as a prophet of destruction. From the very beginning Isaiah is influenced by the belief in God's protection of His people, which could be derived from the theophanic tradition (Ex 14:13) or the Zion tradition. When Jerusalem was besieged by the enemy, Isaiah admonished the kings of Judah to act upon this belief (Is 30:15). However, when Hezekiah paid tribute to Assyria in 701 BC, which probably was the real cause of the withdrawal of the siege (2 Kings 18), Isaiah was disappointed and turned into a prophet of judgement (Is 30:16).<sup>78</sup>

B.S. Childs realised that the book of Isaiah contains some perfect examples of how tradition is interpreted in a certain historical situation. From his examination of many passages (1:4-9; 22:1-14; 28:7-13; 28:14-22; 29:13-14; 30:1-5; 31:1-3; 30:8-17; 14:24-27; 10:5-15; 18:1-6; 30:27-33; 17:12-14) he confirmed that the Zion

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77. Proposed again in Clements, op. cit., p. 84.

78. These two opposing views are discussed in Ward, op. cit., pp. 229-31; on the cause of the Assyrian withdrawal see O. Kaiser, Isaiah 13-39, London, 1978, p. 384.

tradition played a decisive role in Isaiah. However, this tradition was used in two directions. When it appeared in the primary level of the oracles of Isaiah it was directed against Assyria and served to emphasise the supreme power of Yahweh against all other claims. In the secondary level the Zion tradition appeared in oracles of promise directed to the comfort of Israel (Is 10:20-27; 29:17-21; 30:18-26; 32:15-20; 33:1-4.<sup>79</sup> To Childs then, the utilising of the inviolability of Zion and judgement upon the foreign enemy by Isaiah was applied in the actual situation of the Assyrian threat. Childs' main attempt is to resolve the tension between 'Isaiah of the legend' and the alleged 'historical Isaiah' in the problems involving the account of the Assyrian invasion.<sup>80</sup> Although we highly appreciate Childs' book, we cannot but get the impression that his attention to this tension has caused him to neglect to some extent the tone of judgement against the people, which is the main core of Isaiah's message.<sup>81</sup> Admittedly, in his exegesis of Is 30:8-17 Childs mentioned the words of reproach and judgement against the leaders of Jerusalem with their political strategies, the judgement which was also shared by the entire people (1:4f; 22:1). But still, it is the Assyrian event which is thought to have prompted this interpretation of tradition. In our opinion, no less attention has to be paid to Isaiah's utterly negative opinion about Israel as a whole. There is a possibility that Isaiah did not take the belief of Zion's inviolability as granted. True, Is 18:15, 16 could imply

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79. B.S. Childs, Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis, London, 1967, pp. 63, 67.

80. ibid., pp. 11-19.

81. Vriezen, op. cit., pp. 133-134.



that Isaiah held to this belief and that only a lack of steadfast faith in this belief could cause its impotence. On the other hand, Is 8:10, 18 may be a prophetic reversal of Zion's inviolability. Is 1:15 and 1:21, 27 also indicate the other aspect of the Isaianic utilising of Zion tradition. Zion has become a 'whore'. Therefore, only justice can redeem her. J.M. Ward has some important observations on this conditional requirement.<sup>82</sup> He stressed that Isaiah preached "Zionism" in a unique way. Ahaz and the people of Judah believed that God's presence in Zion is granted and thus Jerusalem is inviolable. But to Isaiah God's presence is a hidden one (Is 8:17). Zion has ceased to become the symbol of Yahweh's presence. Now His presence is limited to Isaiah, together with his children (7:3; 8:1-4) and his disciples (8:16). In other words, God's distinctive dwelling on Mount Zion was confined to Isaiah's prophetic witness.<sup>83</sup> Where the prophetic teaching was, there was the "dwelling" of Yahweh. Thus in principle the old Zionism was abolished in Isaiah's theology.<sup>84</sup>

We shall not go as far as Ward in suggesting that the idea of Mount Zion as a spatial dwelling site of Yahweh in Isaiah has been replaced by the idea of Yahweh's presence in the words of preaching. There is no need to make an antithesis between Yahweh's spatial presence and His presence in preaching! For Isaiah, Zion is still an impregnable fortress. Nevertheless, Ward's observation of justice as requisite for the inviolability of Zion is right and this can be noticed in Is 4:4.<sup>85</sup>

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82. Ward, op. cit., pp. 228-256.

83. ibid., p. 249.

84. ibid., p. 250.

85. Ward himself did not regard this passage as Isaianic. He thinks it is post-exilic, but with strong affinity to the thinking of Isaiah. In our opinion Is 4:2-6 could still belong to Isaiah.





clear at all whether they are concerned with creation. That is why we shall not discuss them in our exegesis of passages.

There is a different description of the waters in Is 17:12-14:

הוֹי הַטּוֹן עַמִּים רַבִּים	Ah, <sup>89</sup> the thunder of many peoples,
כְּהַמוֹת יַמִּים יְהַמְיוֹן	like the roaring of the waters they thunder!
וּשְׁאוֹן לְאֻמִּים	and the roaring of the nations,
כְּשְׁאוֹן מַיִם כְּבִירִים יִשְׁאוֹן	like the roaring of the mighty waters they roar!
לְאֻמִּים כְּשְׁאוֹן מַיִם רַבִּים	The nations, like the roaring of many waters they roar;
יִשְׁאוֹן	
וְגַעַר בּוֹ	But He will rebuke them,
וְנִסּוּ מִמֶּדְחָק	and they will flee far away.
וְיִדְרֹךְ	They will be driven
כַּמֶּץ הַרִים לִפְנֵי רוּחַ	like chaff on the mountains before the wind,
וְכַגְלִגַּל לִפְנֵי סוּפָה	like whirling dust before the storm.
לַעֲתָ עֶרֶב וְהָנָה בַּלְהָה	At evening, terror!
בַּטָּרֶם בֶּקֶר אֵינוֹן	Before morning, they are gone!
זֶה חֶלֶק שׁוֹסֵינֵנוּ	This is the lot of our despoilers,
וְגוֹרֵל לְבַזְזֵינוּ	the lot of those who plunder us.

In his study of the occurrences of the phrase מַיִם רַבִּים in the OT<sup>90</sup>, H.G. May commented on the word-play between "many peoples" in v. 12a and "many waters" in 13a. He holds that as in Pss 93:3, 4 and 144:7 the "many peoples" are the "many waters". But in our opinion there is a difference in the characterisation of the passages where מַיִם רַבִּים occurs. In Ps 93:3, 4 it appears without other parallels

89. We take הוֹי as an interjection. H. Barth, Die Jesaja-Worte in der Josiazeit, WMANT 48, Neukirchen, 1977, p. 181, thinks otherwise. Is 17:12-14 belongs to the Woe-Speeches in Isaiah (the others, Is 1:4; 18:1; 28:1; 30:1), so the translation should be "Woe" (Wehe).

90. H.G. May, "Some Cosmic connotations of Mayyim Rabbin, "Many Waters", JBL 34 (1955), pp. 9-21.



except parallels of the same category (floods, the sea). Pss 144:7 has **כַּיִן וְכַיִן** as the parallel of **מִיִּם רַבִּים**. Here we can say with May that "the enemy defeated by Yahweh is something more than just the enemy of Israel or of an individual Israelite; he is the enemy of Yahweh and identified with the corporate whole of Yahweh's antagonists".<sup>91</sup> But this cannot be said of Is 17:12-14. The use of the particle **כִּי** in v. 12a, **כִּי הָמוּת יָמִים יִהְיוּ** 12b, **כִּשְׂאוֹן מִיִּם רַבִּים** 13a, **כִּשְׂאוֹן מִיִּם כְּבִירִים** shows that the roar of the enemies is merely compared with the roar of **מִיִּם רַבִּים**. The same holds for Is 28:1, 2, **כִּזְרֵם מִיִּם כְּבִירִים**. It goes without saying that Isaiah must have known the myth of the waters as Yahweh's violent adversaries to be able to make this comparison, but we do not need to conclude from this that the myth has been 'historicised' or 'demythologised'. Nor is it necessary to think that the waters and the nations are identified with each other as held by May. The context of this passage is clearly the threat of historical enemies, although their description is vague and undefined. Probably Is 17:12-14 was intended by Isaiah as an indirect threat of Assyria.<sup>92</sup> To make his audience feel the full impact of his message, Isaiah used the imagery of Chaoskampf (which is concerned with creation) to picture the enormity of the enemy's approach and his confidence in Yahweh's victorious supremacy. But the Chaoskampf itself was not used as a basis for this confidence. There is no indication here of a cultic actualisation in the sense that May claims.

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91. ibid., p. 11.

92. Childs, op. cit., p. 53: Barth regards this passage as non-Isaianic, op. cit., pp. 180-183; 210; 326-327.



It could be that some elements of Zion tradition are also used in this passage. The enemy, the nations and the rebuke of the enemy are all expressions akin to the Zion tradition (cf. Pss 46; 48; 76). The mention of the roar of the waters can even be seen in Ps 46. We are convinced that there too, the waters belong to the imagery of Chaoskampf as in Is 17:22-14. Although Ps 46 belongs to the Zion tradition, its Zion content does not begin till v. 5ff. Let us take a closer look at Ps 46:3, 4:

על כן לא יִדָּא	Therefore we will not fear,
כִּהְמִיר אֶרֶץ	though the earth should change,
וּבִטְּאוּ הָרִים	though the mountains shake
בִּלְבַּיִם	in the heart of the sea;
יִהְיוּ יַחַמְרוּ מִיֵּם	though its waters roar and foam,
יִרְעָשׁוּ הָרִים	though the mountains tremble with
בִּגְלוֹתָן	its tumult.

Kelly has noted that the mention of  $\text{יִדָּא}$  and  $\text{הִמְיִר}$  within the description of the waters of chaos is rather odd. Elsewhere in the OT the shaking and the trembling or melting of  $\text{יִדָּא}$  appears in the context of theophanic events.<sup>93</sup> Attempts have been made to clarify the meaning of the shaking of the mountains in the heart of the sea. Weiser, for instance, translated v. 3 as "Therefore we fear nothing though' the earth should dissolve, and the mountains should be cast into the midst of the sea".<sup>94</sup> Others tried to see  $\text{יִדָּא}$  in v. 3 not as a passive entity as in Ps 104:5-9, but a rebellious enemy of Yahweh.<sup>95</sup>

93. Kelly, op. cit., p. 306.

94. Weiser, op. cit., p. 365, following the other meaning of as a preposition before a verb of motion.

95. By amending  $\text{יִדָּא}$  into  $\text{יִרְעָשׁוּ}$ , "be rebellious", "become a tumult".

Thus the picture of the mountains in the middle of the sea is essentially the picture of the earth, not in its usual meaning, but as the underworld, the region under the sea.

We retain the MT. There is no need to emend v. 3. It can still be taken in its ordinary cosmic sense.  $\text{יְהוָה}$  and  $\text{דָּגַי הַיָּם}$  indicate the wholeness of the created world, which is surrounded by the waters of the sea (cf. Ps 104:5-9). We do not think that the mountains refer to a theophanic context. Together with the roaring of the waters, the tottering of the mountains in Ps 46:2-4 belong to a Chaoskampf. It is not necessary to see in Ps 46:4 a mixing of the earthquake image with a picture of the raging primeval flood.<sup>96</sup> In Ps 46:2-4 the psalmist proclaims his trust in God, even if the whole creation seems to be in danger of returning to chaos. Vv. 2-4 then have no obvious relationship with v. 5ff. This is not to deny that Ps 46 is a unity. But while they are mentioned together, the one is not subservient to the other, and so we can not say that a reference to Zion is just another way of expressing creation concepts in the OT.

The other attempt to identify Zion theology with creation is through the omphalos theory. Mount Zaphon is not only the highest of the mountains, but also the very centre of the universe.<sup>97</sup> In the OT this expression is found in the reference to Zion as  $\text{שִׁוְיוֹ הָאָרֶץ}$  (Ps 48:3) and references to the centre of the earth in

96. Cf. the LXX:  $\text{ἐν τῷ ταρασσέσθαι τὴν γῆν}$ , "when the earth is troubled". The Hebrew of this phrase then could be  $\text{יָגַעְתִּי הָאָרֶץ}$ . If the LXX is right then again we can see the use of the same word  $\text{לִיב}$ .

97. Stolz, op. cit., p. 547; S. Terrien, "The Omphalos Myth and the Hebrew Religion", VT 20 (1970), pp. 315-338; B.S. Childs, Myth and Reality in the Old Testament, pp. 84-93; also the conclusion of Kelly's work, op. cit., pp. 303-310.



Judg 9:37 and Ezek 38:12. Solomon's temple is built on a rock which is the earth-centre, the world-mountain, the foundation stone of creation, the link between heaven, earth and the underworld.

It is true that later Jewish post-canonical literature this idea abounds.<sup>98</sup> And it must be admitted that Ezek 38:12 gives the impression that a cosmic centre of the world is intended.<sup>99</sup> It could be that ancient Israel knew about the omphalos belief and that this belief may have coloured the Zion tradition to some extent in the OT, but it is still not clear whether omphalos belief is concerned with the concept of creation. Ps 48:3 and Ezek 38:12 are not within a context of creation and  $\Psi\text{ } \Psi\text{ } \Psi$  in Ps 48:3 does not mean "centre". Judg 9:37 is also not in a context of creation and the passage could as easily convey a meaning of the centre of the land in an ordinary sense. Our main objection to the inclusion of the omphalos idea within the concept of creation is that in the former the navel of the world or the world-mountain is "the first of creation", in the sense that it is always there, before the creation of the rest of the world. Of course in the OT we face the problem of how to deal with texts describing the state of things before the creation of the world (Gen 1:2; 2:4b; Prov 8:22-31). We have seen that they are regarded as "something", as the OT does not follow the principle of creatio ex nihilo. But there is an essential difference between a "something" and this "first of creation". The former went through a process of creation before pronounced as 'good', while the latter is already 'good' and does not need any creation.

98. Cf. Jub 8:19, "Mount Zion, the centre of the navel of the earth" ; 2 Baruch 4:24 speaks of a pre-existent Jerusalem; see other examples in Childs, op. cit., p. 89.

99. Cf. Ringgren, op. cit., p. 161.



## B. Exegesis of Prophetic Texts related to Creation

### CHAPTER FIVE: DEUTERO ISAIAH

So far we have been seeking to elucidate certain concepts related to the theme of creation in the OT, and to examine some of the presuppositions present in contemporary discussion of these concepts. Against this background we wish to examine in detail how creation functions in prophetic tradition up to and including Deutero Isaiah.

First of all we shall look at the materials in Is 40-55. They may function as a kind of controlling standard by which other materials, either from the prophetic or the cultic tradition can be evaluated. There are several reasons why we are doing this:

- a. There is almost total agreement on the sixth century BC date for the body of Is 40-55.<sup>1</sup>
- b. There is also agreement that apparently Is 40-55 forms a fairly cohesive piece of writing.<sup>2</sup> In the early stages of form critical approach to DI the tendency was to see Is 40-55 as a collection of literary units.<sup>3</sup> But increasingly people tend to regard the chapters

1. Except C.C. Torrey, who holds that Is 34-35, 40-66 comes from about 400 BC, The Second Isaiah, Edinburgh, 1928. He is followed by J.D. Smart, History and Theology in Second Isaiah, Philadelphia, 1965; U.E. Simon also takes a different view. A Theology of Salvation: A Commentary on Isaiah 40-55, London, 1953.
2. However, not all agree on what belongs to the bulk of DI. Torrey accepts chapters 34-66 (except 36-39); Smart, 35 and 40-66; J. Morgenstern acknowledges only 40-48, The Message of Deutero-Isaiah in Its Sequential Unfolding, Cincinnati, 1961. Recently R.P. Merendino asserts that only 40-48 can be said as genuinely Deutero-Isaianic, Der Erste und der Letzte, Leiden, 1981.
3. H. Gressmann, "Die literarische Analyse Deuterjesajas", ZAW 34 (1914), pp. 254-97; L. Koehler, Deuterjesaja stillkritisches untersucht, BZAW 37, Giessen, 1923; K. Elliger, Deuterjesaja in seinem Verhältnis zu Tritojesaja, BWANT 63, Stuttgart, 1933. J. Begrich, Studien zu Deuterjesaja, now reprinted as TB 20, München, 1963 and 1969.

40-45 as a well-planned unity (except perhaps in the problem of the Servant Songs), although the results of form-critical approach are still very much taken into account.<sup>4</sup>

The results of a form-critical approach to DI may function as a back-up to our effort to detect the possibility of a common source of tradition from which both DI and the pre-exilic prophets drew the inspiration for their messages.

c. It is in DI that we find specific and explicit utilisation of creation concepts. As we have seen above in section A, this very fact until recently has not been fully acknowledged or given primary theological significance. The tendency has been to regard references to creation in DI as having a secondary function following von Rad. Its starting point has been the supposition that the dominant and operating thought in DI is a theology of salvation in history. From there it has proceeded to see the role of creation within the whole framework of that theology. Here we are going to try the reverse: starting from references to creation, we shall proceed to see what role they might have within the prophet's message of salvation, which does not necessarily have to be based on a theology of history.

The materials in Is 40-55 are in the main divided into literary forms called salvation oracles, trial-speeches and disputations. We shall first explain the characteristics of each and the development in scholarly understanding of these forms before we examine the references to creation in them and in other passages which do not belong to these forms.

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4. Most apparent in J. Muilenburg, The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66, IB, V, New York, 1956; also in C. Westermann, Isaiah 40-66, OTL, London, 1966, second impression, 1978.



# 1. The salvation oracles.

It is J. Begrich who first tried to look at both the Gattung and the Sitz im leben of Is 40-55.<sup>5</sup> His thesis is that DI borrowed the priestly oracle of salvation from the ancient Israelite cult as an appropriate form to announce comfort and salvation to the community in the exile. He identified eight texts as representing the priestly oracle of salvation: Is 41:8-13; 14-16; 43:1-3, 5; 44:2-5; 48:17-19; 49:7, 14-15; 51:7-8; 54:4-8.<sup>6</sup> The structure of the Gattung is as follows: first comes an introduction with the formula "fear not". Then comes the description of the addressee (e.g. "Jacob, my servant"). After that follows the basis or ground for the formula "fear not" (e.g. phrases such as "I am with you", "I am your God"). Sometimes it is followed by the particle 'ו. If there is no designation of the addressee it could be attached to the introduction. Then we may find sentences in the perfect which indicates that Yahweh has heard ("I have redeemed you") or sentences in the imperfect which describes what Yahweh will do (e.g. "I will not forget you"). Begrich compared his findings with materials in the Psalter and noted that they correspond with the expressions in the Psalms of Lament. "I am your God" in Is 41:10 for instance is similar to "You are my God" in Ps 140:6. "I have helped you" in Is 41:13 is close to "say to my soul, I am your help" in Ps 35:3.<sup>7</sup>

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5. In "Das priesterliche Heilsorakel", ZAW 52 (1934), pp. 81-92; now in J. Begrich, Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament, München, 1964, pp. 217-31.

6. ibid., p. 217.

7. ibid., p. 220.



Elements of lament can sometimes be found in the oracles of salvation in DI. Is 49:14-15 begins with recollection of lament. Is 41:44ff contains a note of praise which can often be found in the end of a lamentation psalm. And Is 41:8-9 has the same phenomenon as the lamentation psalms where Yahweh's past deeds are remembered by way of employing relative clauses.

He also points to other similarities. Ps 143:12, "I am Your servant" is paralleled by "you are my servant" (Is 41:8-9). Ps 31:13 which expresses fear and anxiety is a parallel to the "fear not" formulations in the salvation oracles in DI. Questions in Ps 22:1 find answers in Is 45:7. Begrich holds that we can locate such oracles in the cult. Lam 3:57 was cited as proof:

You did come near when I called on you,  
You did say "do not fear".....

This passage refers explicitly to the moment when the beseeching worshipper narrated his conviction that his prayers have been heard during the imparting of the oracle.<sup>8</sup>

Although he did not look for evidences of the existence of the oracles of salvation in the Psalter, Begrich found support for this in the curious phenomenon in the individual Psalms of Lament, in which a sudden change of mood took place, from sadness to joy, from lament to praise. H. Gunkel had already expressed his opinion that a priest might have given the beseeching worshipper the answer to his supplications in the name of God.<sup>9</sup> But it is F. Kückler who

8. ibid., p. 219.

9. H. Gunkel, "Psalmen", RGG, Tübingen, 1909-1913, IV, p. 1935.

elaborated the theory that the task of the priest in ancient Israel was not only to lead in sacrificial acts but also to involve himself in the imparting of oracles. He cited Pss 60:6; 118:8ff; 21:8-12; 75:2f; 12:5; 91:14-16; 81:6-16; 95:8-11 as proofs of this "priestly oracle."<sup>10</sup> Pss 6; 13; 31; 54; 57; 115; 22; 69; 109 according to KÜchler are proofs that the suppliant underwent a change of mood as his conviction grew that his laments have been heard and answered.<sup>11</sup>

H.E. von Waldow on the whole accepted Bégrich's theory on the oracle of salvation. But he described the structure somewhat differently. The basic structure consists of an introduction and a main body. The introduction contains a direct apostrophe and the formula "fear not".

The body of the oracle consists of three parts:

- a. The intervention of God. Here God is the subject and speaks in the first pers. sing. We also find nominal sentences ("I am with you") or verbal declarations with the verb in the perfect.
- b. The consequences of God's intervention. God is no longer subject. The help of God announced in the intervention is illustrated by a description of the consequences or accompanying phenomenon.
- c. The objective of God's intervention. Here we find an indication of the objective which God wants to realise through His intervention (usually His own honour or recognition).

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10. F. KÜchler, "Das priesterliche Orakel in Israel und Juda", Festschrift W.W. Graf von Baudissin, BZAW 33, Giessen, 1918, pp. 285-301.

11. ibid., p. 299.

Examples of these oracles are: Is 41:8-13, 14-16; 43:1-4, 5-7; 44:1-5; 46:12f; 49:22f, 24-26; 54:4-6, 11-17; 55:3-5.<sup>12</sup>

He also holds that this genre, along with the lament psalms, have a close connection with the cult and belong there. Both are parts of the liturgy of the penitential service in times of emergency, distress or disaster. The participant could be an individual or could also be the whole nation. Although we must distinguish between the individual and the public or community penitential service, the basic structure of the services are the same. The order of the service is recognisable: first the proper lament psalm, then the prophetic salvation oracle and the assurance of being heard.<sup>13</sup>

Although Begrich located the Sitz im leben of the oracle of salvation in the cult, he did not conclude that DI was a priest or a cultic official. His words of salvation are literary imitations of the content and form of the prototype of a priestly salvation oracle.<sup>14</sup> But von Waldow contested this. According to him they are not imitations, but real salvation oracles. He pointed to Zech 7:1ff which refer to a regular celebration of penitential days and 1 Kings 8:46-50, which was written by the Deuteronomist and reflects conditions

12. Other modified forms are 43:16-21; 46:3f; 49:8-12; 54:7-10, H.E. von Waldow, "The Message of Deutero-Isaiah", Int XXII/3 (1968), pp. 259-287. This article contains the sum of the points he described in his dissertation, Anlass und Hintergrund der Verkündigung des Deuterojesaja, Bonn, 1956, which is inaccessible to us.

13. ibid., p. 266. The fourth part may have been the singing of the thanksgiving psalm.

14. Begrich, op. cit., pp. 230-31.



of the exilic period. From here he conjectured that the people in exile in Babylon were continuing the ancient liturgy. Since Jer 28:8 mentions the activity of salvation prophets among the exiles, it is possible that DI was one of the cultic prophets.<sup>15</sup> It also means that the genre should be called prophetic cult-oracle rather than priestly salvation oracle.

It is for this reason too that von Waldow insisted on the oral characterisation of the salvation oracles, although he admitted that later on they may be written down for preservation.

J. Gitay tried to reconcile these two positions.<sup>16</sup> According to him the fact is that in the ancient times every writing in the end is intended to be read aloud to the hearing of an audience. This opens the possibility that the prophet could compose written oracles, which then were subsequently imparted orally to the audience.

Whether there existed in the exile a kind of penitential service we are not sure. von Waldow's theory on the actual Sitz im leben of the Deutero-Isaianic salvation oracles is interesting but as direct evidence is scant we hesitate to follow him. He also asserted that oracles must be orally given. Even if this is true and that written oracles were formerly oral, it still does not support von Waldow's insistence on an actual Sitz im leben for the salvation oracles. On the whole we think that Begrich's view on the salvation oracles in Deutero Isaiah as literary imitations detached from the cult is still sound.

15. von Waldow, op. cit., p. 268.

16. J. Gitay, "Deutero-Isaiah: oral or written?", JBL 99/2 (1980), p. 191.

G. Westermann built on Begrich and von Waldow.<sup>17</sup> On the basis of Is 41:8-13 he reformulated the same structure as follows:

1. Address.
2. Assurance of salvation ("fear not").
3. Substantiation: a. nominal clause ("I am with you", "I am your God"). b. verbal clause ("I help you", "I strengthen you").
4. Outcome (in the imperfect) on behalf of the suppliant and against his enemy.
5. (Final goal).

He distinguished between two types of salvation oracles. The one is as characterised by Begrich, the other while still closely related is located in another cultic situation and should be given another name: announcement or proclamation of salvation (Heilsankündigung). Here there is no direct apostrophe, no introductory formula "fear not" but only an announcement of salvation with the verb in future tense (Is 41:17-20; 42:14-17; 43:16-21; 45:14-17; 49:7-12(?)). The salvation oracle is related to the individual penitential service and the priest as speaker. The announcement or proclamation of salvation on the other hand belongs to a public or community service and the cultic prophet.

von Waldow doubted whether this distinction is necessary, for the following reasons: 1. These are two kinds of penitential ritual which basically belong closely together. 2. With the oracles it is often difficult to decide whether they refer to an individual or to a community lament psalm since DI sometimes calls the collective

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17. C. Westermann, "Das Heilswort bei Deuteriojesaja", EvTh 24 (1964), pp. 355-77. See also his commentary, op. cit., pp. 11-15.

entity Israel by an individual name (Is 40:9; 51:17ff; 54:1-8).<sup>18</sup> While giving some qualifications to Westermann's position, A. Schoors confirmed this distinction as worthwhile.<sup>19</sup> The point of the oracle of salvation is assurance to the recipient, in which appeal is made to the existing relationship between him and his God. The point of the proclamation of salvation is more on the coming of salvation. But these different points should not be overstressed, for every oracle of salvation includes a proclamation of salvation.

Begrich's identification of the Gattung with the priestly salvation oracles has recently been contested by E.J. Conrad.<sup>20</sup> According to him Begrich did not consider texts in the Psalm and elsewhere in which divine oracles actually appear as answers to lament. Included in Conrad's criticism is K  chler's criticism above. K  chler for instance cited Ps 12:5 as an example of a priestly salvation oracle. But if this psalm is placed side by side with an example of a priestly salvation oracle in Is 40-55 cited by Begrich then it is not clear that there is a common structure between them. Ps 12:5 does not have a common introductory formula "fear not", no personal address, no nominal sentences. The same holds true for the passages in Jeremiah (Jer 11:21-23; 12:5f; 15:19-21). These oracles do not follow the structure given by Begrich. This according to Conrad is Begrich's first oversight. The second is that Begrich

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18. von Waldow, op. cit., p. 267.

19. Antoon Schoors, I am God your Saviour, SVT XXIV, Leiden, 1973, pp. 167-71.

20. E.W. Conrad, "Second Isaiah and the Priestly Oracle of Salvation", ZAW 93/2 (1981), pp. 234-46.



did not study the occurrence of this Gattung in extrabiblical materials. Conrad refers to Ph.B. Harner, who has collected examples of salvation oracles from Mesopotamia and the area just to the west.<sup>21</sup> Their structure is similar to what Begrich has described concerning the Israelite salvation oracles, including the reassuring statement "fear not". Conrad specifically points to Harner's note that in Mesopotamia the oracles occur in "royal" contexts.<sup>22</sup> The third is that Begrich failed to use proper controls in the text of Is 40-55 itself. In Begrich's article from 1934 eight passages are identified as representatives of salvation oracles in Second Isaiah. Four years later in his book Studien zu Deuterojesaja the number has increased to twenty-four. The reason for this increase according to Conrad lies in Begrich's faulty method in determining the Stiz im leben of the eight passages. Begrich wanted to show that both the individual psalm of lament and the salvation oracles in Is 40-55 share the same Stoff, namely ideas, motifs and expressions. In 1938 Begrich noted that the same Stoff can also be identified in the other sixteen passages. But here Begrich was wrong. The relationship of the eight passages to the lament psalm is not through a Gattung from which they were derived but rather through a pervasive theme in DI's entire message: Yahweh will intervene to save those lamenting their desperate plight in exile.<sup>23</sup> So, concludes Conrad, it is not evident

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21. Ph.B. Harner, "The Salvation Oracle in Second Isaiah", JBL 88 (1969), pp. 418-34.

22. Conrad, op. cit., p. 242. He also refers to many other scholars who have proposed different Sitze im leben than the cult: Holy War traditions (Dion, Reventlow, Merendino, von Rad, Preuss); Installation ceremony (McCarthy); Theophany (Kuntz).

23. Conrad, op. cit., p. 245.

that DI used the oracle of salvation. It is more possible that the phrase "fear not" belongs to a different Gattung which occurs in contexts of encouragement to a person or persons who are called to perform a certain task (Joshua - Deut 31:7-8, 23; Josh 1:9; Solomon - 1 Chron 28:20-21; Jeremiah - Jer 1:8, 17). This can include people who are called to rebuild the temple (Hag 2:4-9) and those who are called to the task of the Holy War (Num 21:34; Deut 3:2; 20:3-4; 31:6; Josh 8:1-2; 10:8-25; 11:6; 2 Chron 20:15-17; 32:7-8)<sup>24</sup>

What shall we say to Conrad's suggestion?

Conrad's third criticism of Begrich is fair enough. The latter indeed failed to see that the sixteen other passages he added in 1938 to the collection of salvation oracles are not real salvation oracles. But Conrad is not the first who noticed this. Westermann in fact has, and at this point corrected Begrich. According to Westermann only six passages which contain the formula "fear not" (41:8-13; 14-16; 42:1-4; 5-7; 44:1-5; 54:4-6) are real salvation oracles with the cult as their Sitz im leben.<sup>25</sup> The other similar oracles without the formula, as we have seen above, are to be regarded as announcements or proclamations of salvation. It is also obvious that Begrich did not refer to extrabiblical passages. But others who did, such as Harner and Schoors,<sup>26</sup> affirm rather than weaken the position of Begrich. Harner stated explicitly that the extrabiblical evidences provide control and confirm that DI employed the salvation oracle form.<sup>27</sup>

24. ibid., p. 246.

25. In Westermann, "Das Heilswort bei Deuterojesaja", pp. 359, 365. Harner accepted Westermann's proposal, op. cit., p. 432 and so did Schoors, op. cit., pp. 167-71. Although Conrad referred to Westermann's article he did not mention at all Westermann's correction.

26. Schoors, op. cit., pp. 34-36. He came to study them independently of Harner.

27. Harner, op. cit., p. 430.



Conrad argued that there is no correspondence at all between what Begrich suggested to be salvation oracles in Is 40-55 and the salvation oracles in the Psalter. In regard to this first criticism it must be admitted that Begrich was using somewhat circular reasoning.<sup>28</sup> The individual psalms of lament do not preserve the salvation oracle. The non-existence of this form in the Psalter could indeed show the fragile side of Begrich's theory, but nowhere in his article did Begrich assert such a claim that the identification of salvation oracles in DI must necessarily lead to an identification of the same Gattung in the Psalter. It is KÜchler who identified Ps 12:5 as an oracle of salvation and whether this identification is right or wrong (in our opinion it could be included in the Heilsankündigung) it is clear that Begrich does not deserve the blame. Gunkel, not KÜchler was referred to by Begrich to back-up his thesis.

Begrich's description of the common Stoff between the passages in DI and the lamentation psalms is very impressive<sup>29</sup> and proves that there is a close interdependence (enge Zusammenhang) between the two. Approaching the psalms of lamentation as a clue to the existence of salvation oracles in the ancient Israelite cult is valid enough. And although KÜchler might have gone a little bit off course in his identification of salvation oracles in the Psalter, the fact that there is a change of mood from lament to praise in some of the lament psalms could indeed be traced to the imparting of salvation oracles as its cause. Our conclusion: there are salvation oracles in Is 40-55. They may be divided into two sub-genres, namely real

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28. ibid., p. 418.

29. Begrich, "Das priesterliche Heilsorakel", pp. 225-29.



salvation oracles and proclamations of salvation, but they belong together closely. Conrad's proposal to see another Gattung then is not necessary, but his view that this different Gattung has the context of encouragement for person/persons to carry out a certain task needs careful attention.

H.M. Dion has studied the occurrences of salvation oracle forms in the Patriarchal traditions.<sup>30</sup> He concludes that it is possible to see a relationship between this literary form and the tradition of Holy War. So it is not necessary that the Gattung must be placed in a cultic background. Here we see again the significance of making a distinction between a formal and an actual Sitz im leben.<sup>31</sup>

Harner on the other hand tried to show that despite their being "royal" oracles, all the extrabiblical salvation oracles have the cult as their Sitz im leben.<sup>32</sup> The "fear not" assurance was given because salvation there was regarded as being presented concretely in the "now". He even thinks that it is possible to point to the New Year's Festival as the Sitz im leben of the Mesopotamian salvation oracles.<sup>33</sup>

30. H.M. Dion, "The Patriarchal Traditions and the Literary Form of the Oracle of Salvation", CBQ 29 (1967), pp. 198-206.

31. See above our description of von Waldow's distinction between an actual and a formal Sitz im leben in his effort to solve the problem of the Sitz im leben of the lawsuit, p. 143f. It seems strange that in the case of DI, von Waldow arrived at the conclusion which denies the possibility that the form could be used outside its original setting.

32. Harner, op. cit., p. 423. He noted that the same holds for the individual laments in the Psalter, which bear the heading 717<sup>b</sup>. This heading shows that they are associated with a royal figure.

33. ibid., p. 421.

Royal occasions may indeed be celebrated within a cultic context in the ancient Near East including Israel, but the same question which concerns the Israelite salvation oracles could also be asked of their Mesopotamian parallels: is there a possibility that they too might be used outside their original Sitz im leben? Although Harner's findings are useful to confirm that DI used the form of salvation oracles we cannot use them to trace the actual Sitz im leben of the Deutero Isai~~an~~ic salvation oracles. What might be true of the Mesopotamian materials does not necessarily hold in the case of the Israelite ones.

Nevertheless, the fact that DI used salvation oracles form at least points to the fact that he was very familiar with the cult. There is little or no evidence at all that DI functioned as a cultic prophet in a penitential service in Babylon as proposed by von Waldow, but still he may well have been inspired by the cultic sources of tradition in underlining his message of salvation. Rather than accept Conrad's suggestion for a different Gattung we tend to hold to the same Gattung as proposed by Begrich. It is still appropriate for the prophet's use, even more if the context is that of encouragement.





the absence of Yahweh and the longing of His presence (Pss 22:16; 137:6; 42:2; 63:2; 143:6). Apparently Westermann is influenced in his interpretation by the following verses (vv. 18-19), which described the transformation of nature. He contrasted this description with the picture of drought above.

What is the reason of this borrowing? According to Westermann the key to the understanding of this passage is the exiles' situation. It reminds them of God's deed in the past, and for the present the same power of Yahweh which granted rain in the past will provide a new history to the people. This new history is concrete: the desert shall turn into fertile country and thus prepare the way that leads to the homeland. Schoors on the other hand offers a symbolic interpretation. One should remember the oracles of doom such as Jer 4:23f; 12:7-13; 14:2-9, according to which Israel would become a desert. Now it is reversed: the desert has become fertile land again or indeed, paradise. The growth of vegetation in the desert symbolises the restoration of Israel. The prophet has in mind the journey home as well as the rebuilding of the homeland.

We agree with Schoors that the images of thirst and water do not necessarily convey a picture of severe drought. Where Yahweh is, there is life. Formerly He seems to be absent from among His people and they feel forsaken. But now He has answered them. The people shall see the evidence of Yahweh's care in the transformation of nature. However, against the symbolic interpretation of Schoors on vv. 18-19, we hold that they are literal descriptions. Although the names of some of the trees are obscure,<sup>36</sup> the whole picture in

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36. For the description of the trees see C.R. North, The Second Isaiah, Oxford, reprinted, 1967, p. 102 and K. Elliger, Jesaja II, BKAT, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1970, pp. 163-68.

vv. 18-19 is quite clear, namely of an oasis. It is tempting to follow Schoors' proposal to refer to the oracles of doom with pictures of fertile land turning into desert. If this is true then what we have here is an element of the cultic phenomenon, where the benefits of the created world are related to Yahweh and His triumph while the lack of them is related to chaos. But we hesitate. Although it may be true that the passage mixes the favourable conditions of the home journey with the pleasantness of the homeland, the stress is clearly on the journey through the desert.

למען יראו וידעו that men may see and know,  
 וישִׁמוּ וישְׂכִּילוּ יחדוֹ may consider and understand together,  
 כִּי יַד־יְהוָה עֲשָׂתָה זֹאת that the hand of the Lord has done this,  
 וְקִדּוּשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּרָאָה the Holy One of Israel has created it.

v. 20. Here we find an acknowledgement formula (Erkenntnisformel).

It is the God of Israel who provides this salvation for His people.

In fact, He creates this salvation (verbs: עָשָׂה and בָּרָא).

This salvation of course has a historical context. But still it is concretely pictured as transformation of nature. This transformation of nature in itself does not automatically imply a creation belief, but the direct relationship of the creation verbs with this subject at least indicate how close the concepts of nature and history are related in the thinking of DI.

2.2 Is 43:1-4<sup>37</sup>

וְעַתָּה כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה But now, thus says the Lord,  
 בָּרָאךְ יַעֲקֹב who creates you Jacob,  
 וַיַּצְרֶךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל who forms you Israel,

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37. In Begrich's article only Is 43:1-3a, 5 is regarded as a salvation oracle. But in his book 43:1-7, 16-21 appears on the list. Westermann dealt with 41:1-7 as a unity consisting of two parts, 1-4 and 5-7.



אל-תִּירָא  
 כִּי גִאֲלִיתִךָ  
 קִרְאתִי בִשְׁמֶךָ  
 לִי-אַתָּה  
 כִּי תַעֲבֹר בַּמַּיִם  
 אִתְּךָ-אֲנִי  
 וְכִנְהַלְוָתָא  
 לֹא יִשְׁטָפוּךָ  
 כִּי תֵלֵךְ בַּחוּ-אֵשׁ  
 לֹא תִכְוֶה  
 וְלֹהֲבָה לֹא תִבְעַר בְּךָ

fear not!

Because I am your Redeemer,  
 I have called you by your name,  
 you are mine.

When you go through the waters,

I am with you,

and through the streams,

they will not overwhelm you.

When you walk through fire,

you shall not be scorched

and the flame shall not consume you.

וְעַתָּה, "but now". The phrase might indicate that this passage should be linked to the preceding verses.<sup>38</sup> However, see Is 44:1 and 49:5 where the same phrase appears again. In the latter it occurs after a lament. וְעַתָּה belongs to the terminology of the oracle of salvation (von Waldow) and indicates the passage as a corresponding oracle to a lament. Is 42 is not a lament so it probably has no direct connection with Is 43. The introduction contains verbs in hymnic participial style, תִּקְרָא and תִּשְׁמָע. F. Crüsemann has done an examination of the hymns in the OT.<sup>39</sup> According to him the hymn which has its Sitz im leben in the liturgical praises of the assembled community includes various groups of forms differing in origin. The dominant form in the OT

38. According to North, op. cit., p. 119. 42:25 is cited as proof. The flames that scorched provides contrast with the flames that will not scorch in 43:2. However, we noticed that the term תִּכְוֶה does not occur in 42:25. Westermann has the same opinion as North, op. cit., p. 115.

39. F. Crüsemann, Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel, WMANT 32, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969, pp. 81-152. In pp. 136-50 he gave a list of parallels between OT passages and ancient Near East concerning the theme of the participial hymns.



is the imperative hymn, which extols the gracious deeds Yahweh has done for His people and calls them to praise Him. This is regarded by Crüsemann as the authentic response of Israel to the actions of Yahweh which the people experience in their course of history. In contrast to the former is the kind of hymn that glorifies Yahweh with participial predication which are strikingly similar to the hymnody of the rest of the ancient Near East. The reason for the glorification is the creation and preservation of the universe by the Creator deity, His goodness and righteousness, His care for the needy and the oppressed, His power over humankind and the forces of nature, in short, all the universal deeds of the deity. In this passage, however, it is clear that the participial predication is used in connection with Jacob-Israel. R. Rendtorff admitted that the conception of Yahweh as the Creator of the universe is an original motif of the hymn. DI borrowed that motif and the creation terminology with the participial style in order to display Yahweh's activity in history. But he also argued that here we have an indication that there is an identification of Yahweh's "creation-act" and "salvation-act" in the theology of DI. Both are one act of God. Creation is not something that belongs to the past but finds its actuality in the present salvific act of God. It must be understood in a soteriological sense.<sup>40</sup>

Schoors also admitted that here the individual oracle (as well as in the case of other forms in DI) borrowed from the hymn. But he went further than Rendtorff in denying that the creation motif can occur in a pure salvation oracle.<sup>41</sup> There is, however, no sufficient explanation for this inconsistency.

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40. R. Rendtorff, "Die theologische Stellung des Schöpfungsglaubens bei Deuteronomus", ZThK 51 (1954), pp. 12-13.

41. Schoors, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

Harner argued that the belief in Israel as God's creation does not directly mean belief in creation. The use of verbs of creating do not give direct evidence for the function of creation faith in relation to salvation in history.<sup>42</sup> In one sense Harner is right. The verbs (here,  $\text{נָצַח}$  and  $\text{נָסַח}$ ) are indeed no direct evidence that creation belief is operative within the context of the passage. They may already be used there as common expressions to picture the close relationship between Yahweh and His people. This would imply that the belief in creation came early in ancient Israel, because a considerable period is needed for certain words to become common expressions so that they can be borrowed for use in other contexts.

In his article Harner acknowledged that creation belief does play a major role in DI's thought. However, he is careful not to refer to this passage as support. In his view no reference to cosmic entities means no creation belief, even if the subject of the verbs of creating is Yahweh Himself. This distinction is questionable. In chapter 1 we have refused to accept the view that the use of verbs of creating in a context of history is caused by the subservient role of creation belief to the belief of salvation in history. Let us look more deeply at this problem by asking how the verbs of creating came to be used in the context of Israel.

D. Baltzer tried to see in the occurrences of  $\text{בָּן}$  and its parallels in DI the clue to the answer of this question.<sup>43</sup> Is 50:1 make clear that Yahweh functions as the nearest next of kin (the

42. Ph.B Harner, "Creation faith in Deutero-Isaiah", pp. 298-306.

43. D. Baltzer, Ezechiel und Deuterojesaja, Berlin-New York, 1971. Yahweh as  $\text{בָּן}$  in DI: 41:14; 43:14; 44:6, 24; 47:4; 48:17, 20; 49:7, 26; 54:5, 8.



husband) in redeeming His wife Israel from the exile. The parallels to  $\text{לָאֵל}$  in the context of Israel are frequently verbs of creating. Our passage has  $\text{לָאֵל}$  and  $\text{וַיֵּצֵא}$ ; 43:14-15,  $\text{לָאֵל}$ ; 44:6/44:2;  $\text{וַיֵּצֵא}$  and  $\text{וַיֵּצֵא}$ ; 44:24,  $\text{וַיֵּצֵא}$  and  $\text{וַיֵּצֵא}$ ; 54:8/54:5,  $\text{וַיֵּצֵא}$ . The last passage according to Baltzer is crucial because there it is explicitly stated that "your husband is your Maker". Baltzer concluded that these passages prove the close relationship between the Redeemer and the Creator in Is 40-55. The one is unthinkable without the other.<sup>44</sup> In DI soteriology has become a function of creation belief through  $\text{לָאֵל}$ . In opposition to von Rad, Baltzer is ready to accept that even creation is a Heilsbegriff in DI.

We have seen above in section A that creation as a Heilsbegriff is not an unfamiliar insight in the cult. Is it possible that the use of verbs of creating in a historical context originated in the cult and that DI was only continuing the use of this cultic vocabulary? After all, there is a possibility that  $\text{לָאֵל}$  originated from the cult.<sup>45</sup> We must wait for the final conclusion until all salvation oracles which refer to creation have been examined. Yet it remains a strange fact that DI should share the assumption we find in the cult, that creation (or if we are to take heed to Harner, reference to the Creator) exists in a context of hope and salvation.

"I have called you by your name". In the OT the expression is used only with reference to a special task as can be seen in the case

44. ibid., p. 97.

45. H.W. Wolff, Joel and Amos, Hermeneia Series, Philadelphia, 1977, p. 223; recently this cultic background and pre-exilic date of  $\text{לָאֵל}$  has been confirmed by W. Rudolph, "Amos 4, 6-13", in Wort-Gebot-Glaube, Zürich, 1970, pp. 36-37.



of Bezalel (Ex 31:2; 35:20) and Cyrus (Is 45:3-4). Many connected the phrase with the notion of election.<sup>46</sup> But Elliger connected it with the tradition of name-giving (Gen 32:29), which is more suited to the following phrase "you are mine".<sup>47</sup> The latter according to Westermann is originally a legal formula of ownership.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand it corresponds with the motif of confidence in a psalm of lament, "I am thine" (Ps 119:94).

V. 2. As the result of Yahweh's intervention His people will be invulnerable. The reference to a safe passage through the waters may be an allusion to the Exodus but the picture of fire is difficult to associate with any specific event in Israel's past history. Probably the sense in v. 2 is the same as in Ps 66:12 where water and fire are metaphors of extreme danger.

כי אני יהוה אלהיך	For I am the Lord your God,
קדוש ישראל מושיעך	the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.
נתתי כפרך מצרים	I give Egypt as your ransom,
כוש וסבא תחתך	Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
מאשר יקרת בעיני	Because you are precious in my eyes,
וכבוד ואני אהבתיך	and honoured, and I love you,
ואתן אדם תחתך	I give men in return for you,
ולאמים תחת נפשך	peoples in exchange for your life.

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46. Schoors, op. cit., p. 71; Westermann, op. cit., p. 116; North, op. cit., pp. 119-20.

47. Elliger, op. cit., p. 293.

48. Westermann, op. cit., p. 117.

V. 3. "The Holy One of Israel". This epithet appears 11 times in DI and may be taken over from the Isaiah tradition. In Is 6:3 we can find the clue to the meaning of the epithet. Yahweh's holiness is concerned with His otherness.

"your Saviour". In the psalms of lament, Yahweh is addressed as יְיָ שִׁלְוָה (Ps 17:7; Jer 15:8). In 2 Sam 22:3 and Ps 7:11 the title is recalled. The phrase "your Saviour" may also correspond with the frequent appeal "save me" (Pss 3:8; 6:5; 7:2; 31:17; 54:3; 59:3; 69:2). In Ps 106:21 we find the phrase "their Saviour" in the context of the Exodus. Yahweh is the Saviour of Israel from slavery in Egypt. This God, who had done wonders in the past is now with the people and will deliver them safely from their place of exile.

Vv. 3-4 is usually connected with the conquests of Cyrus (cf. v. 14).<sup>49</sup> The release of Israel will be the result of a bargaining between Yahweh and Cyrus. Israel is ransomed with large chunks of African territory. Is 44:24 and 45:1, however, pointed out that this bargaining is not between equals. Cyrus was only doing his vocation. In vv. 3-4 it is clear that it is the nations who give up their life for Israel. This picture clashes with Is 52:13ff, where the Servant's exaltation lies in giving up his life for the other nations. J.L. McKenzie holds that the line does not go so far.<sup>50</sup> It merely implies that whatever price is necessary to redeem Israel, Yahweh is prepared to pay. This, however, does not soften the contrast. There is an ambiguity in DI's attitude towards the foreign nations.

49. North, op. cit., p. 120.

50. J.L. McKenzie, Second Isaiah, AB, New York, 1968, p. 51.

2.3 Is 43:5-7

אֶל-תִּירָא  
 כִּי אֲתָךְ-אֲנִי  
 מִמְּזֶרֶחַ אֲבִיא זֶרַעְךָ  
 וּמִמְּעֵרֶב אֶקְבֹּץ  
 אֶמַר לַעֲפוֹן תִּנִּי  
 וּלְתִימָן אֶל-תְּכַלְאִי  
 הֲבִיאִי בְנֵי מִרְחוֹק  
 וּבָנוֹתַי מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ  
 כָּל-הַנוֹקְרָא בִשְׁמִי  
 וְלִכְבוֹדִי בְּרֵאשִׁית  
 יִצְרֵתִיו אֶף-עֲשִׂיתִיו

Fear not!

Because I am with you;

I will bring your offspring from the east,

and from the west I will gather you.

I will say to the north: give up!

and to the south: restrain not!

Bring my sons from afar

and my daughters from the end of the earth,

everyone who is called by My name,

whom I created for My glory,

whom I formed and made.

The passage gives us a picture of a salvation event: the return from the exile, or even, the return from the Diaspora, from every place in the world where the people of God were scattered before. It seems strange that the return is not intended for those who are now languishing in exile but for their descendants. In 44:1-5 we also read of a great increase in the population of the nation to the descendants of the present Israel. On the other hand see the second pers. sing. masc. suff. of **יָבֹא**, which seems to point that the return shall include the present nation as well. The mention of the four corners of the world is intended to convey a sense of wholeness. Westermann noted that DI's language is sometimes sweeping and extravagant<sup>51</sup>, so that it is not necessary to aim for a geographical accuracy in pin-pointing the exact places.

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51. Westermann, op. cit., p. 119.



The Diaspora already existed as early as the sixth century.<sup>52</sup> It is plausible that the prophet was not only thinking of those in exile in Babylon, but also of the Jewish community in Assyria and Egypt. Jeremiah (Jer 31:1-22) and Ezekiel (Ezek 37:15-28) also looked for a reunion of all Israelites under a ruler of the Davidic dynasty.

In 43:1-4 Israel is described collectively as a nation. Here the picture is more individualistic. The relationship between Yahweh and every individual person is understood as a relationship between a father and his children ("my sons", "my daughters"). However, this kind of relationship is still within the framework of Israel as a nation.

The connection of the three verbs of creating with the sons and daughters of Yahweh could mean that  $\aleph \gamma \beth$ ,  $\gamma \delta$  and  $\eta \psi \upsilon$  are used in a context of birth. Occasionally we find in the OT that a verb of creation has some associations with procreation (see Ps 89:48 and Ezek 21:30). As with the terms "my sons" and "my daughters", it is possible that the three creation verbs here are only used in a metaphorical sense. But there is one consideration which make us hesitate to follow this line of thought. In v. 7 it is stated that the final aim or purpose of this salvation event is not for the sake of the people of God, but for God's glory. Nevertheless, precisely because of this the men and women of Israel stand within the salvific purpose of Yahweh as they are created by Him. Again we see that here creation is a Heilsbegriff.

"who is called by My name". In Deut 28:10; Jer 14:9; 15:16 we find that called by the name of the Lord means protection for the

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52. North, op. cit., p. 120; Schoors, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

people or the individual. So it is not an exact parallel to 43:1, "I have called you by your name", which refers to Israel as the property of Yahweh. However, the fact that Israel belongs to Yahweh could mean that Yahweh will protect Israel.

#### 2.4. Is 43:14-15

כה-אמר יהוה גאלכם	Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,
קדוש ישראל	The Holy One of Israel:
למענכם שלחתי בכלה	For your sake I will send to Babylon <sup>53</sup>
והורדתי בריחים כלם	and I will bring down <sup>54</sup> those who are fleeing <sup>55</sup> , all of them!
וכשדים באניות רגתם	And for the Kasdim, their shouts of joy shall be turned into lamentations. <sup>56</sup>
אני יהוה קדושכם	I am the Lord, your Holy One,
בורא ישראל מלכם	Creator of Israel, your King!

This passage is not an oracle of salvation in the exact sense. It lacks the formula "fear not". Westermann regards it as a proclamation of salvation.

53. Q<sup>a</sup> has: לבבל, "against Babylon". Although this sounds more forcible, we think the MT already contains this sense.

54. והורדתי from ירד, "to bring down". The ancient renderings vary: the LXX has καὶ ἐπείρασεν, "I stir up"; the Syr: ואני ירד, "I make come"; the T: ואני ירד, "I put down".

55. בריחים, from ברך, "to flee". In Lisowsky's concordance the occurrence of the word in 43:14 is placed under ברך, "to chase away". Kissane offered בריח, "young men"; Koehler: בריח, "the prison bars"; בריח is emended into ברך while בריח is read as ברך, from ברך, "iron bar". The LXX: φεύγοντες; the Syr.: פרוגים, both mean "fugitives" and thus support the MT.

56. Following Ewald and Duhm in changing באניות into באניות; we are aware that the absence of a verb in the sentence makes this proposal a little bit suspect.



"the Holy One of Israel". In Is 1-39 (1:4; 5:19, 24; 17:7; 29:23; 30:11f; 31:1) the context is of Yahweh standing in judgement against the nation.<sup>57</sup> Here, however, (and elsewhere in DI) it is always of salvation. Seen in the context of this passage, it seems that the Judge of Israel will take a righteous action against her enemy (see also the phrase "for your sake", which give a different picture from 43:5-7 where it is for Yahweh's own sake that Israel shall be restored.) The literal translation of the MT of 14b and 14c runs as follows:

For your sake I will send to Babylon,  
and bring down (as) fugitives all of them,  
and the Kasdim in the ships of their shrill cry.

There are attempts to hold as much as possible to the MT. The LXX rendering of  $\text{וְנִלְכַּד בְּיָדָם}$  is  $\epsilon\nu\ \kappa\lambda\omicron\iota\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \delta\epsilon\theta\eta\sigma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\iota$ , "shall be bound in neck chains". However, Torrey noted that  $\delta\epsilon\theta\eta\sigma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\iota$  may be a corruption of  $\delta\epsilon\eta\theta\eta\sigma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\iota$ , "shall cry for mercy". In turn  $\kappa\lambda\omicron\iota\omicron\iota\varsigma$  may be corrupted from  $\pi\lambda\omicron\iota\omicron\iota\varsigma$ , "ships". North hesitantly offered an interpretation of  $\text{וְנִלְכַּד}$  as coming from  $\text{וְנִלְכָּד}$ , which is some kind of low craft or 'vessel' like the circular oracle (the kuffa) still used today on the Euphrates.<sup>58</sup> In his translation, however, he retains the meaning of  $\text{וְנִלְכַּד}$  as "fugitives".

The RSV appears to follow Koehler in 14b: "and break down all the bars" but in 14c it follows Ewald and Duhm: "and the shouting of the Chaldeans will be turned into lamentations".<sup>59</sup> J. Muilenburg thinks that this is the best that can be made of a difficult text.<sup>60</sup>

57. North, op. cit., p. 100.

58. ibid., pp. 123-24.

59. Cf. the other modern versions. The NEB: "I will lay the Chaldaeans prostrate as they flee, and their cry of triumph will turn into groaning"; the GNB: "I will break down the city gates, and the shouts of her people will turn into crying".

60. J. Muilenburg, The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66, IB, V, p. 493.



L.G. Rignell holds that  $\text{לִּשְׂכָּרָם}$  must be retained, but the ships are not to be understood as real ships. In their festival-processions the Babylonians carried ships which symbolised the carriage of the deity. The passage then has a polemical intention. When Yahweh acts, the enemies of Israel flee with the ships that were their delight.<sup>61</sup>

We retain the MT at 14b but follow Ewald and Duhm in 14c. This gives us the reverse of the usual picture in the prophetic tradition from the pre-exilic time. Instead of the people fleeing (see Amos 9:1-3) now it is the turn of the enemy to flee. And just as Yahweh had reached and slain those who fled wherever they tried to hide so shall He reach and bring down those fleeing Chaldeans. Instead of the people lamenting as we can see in the psalms of lament now it is the turn of the enemy to lament. "I will send to Babylon". According to Westermann this phrase refers "beyond question" to Cyrus' capture of Babylon.<sup>62</sup> But the passage does not mention who or what Yahweh is to send or 'let loose' (piel, cf. Job 12:5) against the enemy.<sup>63</sup>

Again Yahweh is referred to as the Holy One. But the stress is on "your" as in other references to Yahweh in this passage: "your" Redeemer, "your" King. They all are parallels to  $\text{לִּשְׂכָּרָם}$ . In the cultic tradition the kingship of Yahweh can be associated with creation, although we must also be aware that not all references to Yahweh as King are in the context of creation. Here the kingship of God is connected, not with creation in the cosmic sense, but with the

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61. L.G. Rignell, A Study of Isaiah, Ch. 40-55, Lund, 1956, p. 38.

62. Westermann, op. cit., p. 125. He translated the phrase in the present: "for your sake I send to Babylon".

63. North, op. cit., p. 124.

creation of Israel. As in the preceding passages here too Israel is reminded of her Creator.

2.5 Is 43:16-21

כה אמר יהוה	Thus says the Lord,
הנותן כים דרך	who makes a way in the sea,
ובמים עזים נתיבה	a path in the mighty waters,
המוציא לכב-וסוס	who brings forth chariot and horse,
חיל ועזוז יחדו	army and warrior;
ישכבו בל-יקומו	They lie down, they cannot rise,
דעכו כפשתה כבו	they are extinguished, quenched like a wick;
אל-תזכרו ראשונות	Remember not the former things,
וקדסניות אל-תתכוננו	nor consider the things of old.
הנוי עשה חדשה	Behold, I am doing a new thing;
עתה תצמח הלוא תדעוה	now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
אף אשים בסדבר דרך	I will make a way in the wilderness
בישמון נהרות	and rivers in the desert.
תכבדני חית השדה	The wild beasts will honour me,
תנים ו בנות יענה	the jackals and ostriches;
כי-נתתי במדבר מים	for I give water in the wilderness,
נהרות בישמון	rivers in the desert,
להשקות עמי בחירי	to give drink to my chosen people,
עם-זו יצאתי לי	the people whom I formed for myself
תהלתי יספרו	that they might declare my praise.

Vv. 16-21 are also in the form of a proclamation of salvation. Here we find remembrance of the Exodus with its usual descriptions of a passage through the waters and the total annihilation of the Egyptian

cavalry. But Yahweh as the God of the Exodus now asks His people not to remember His past victory.<sup>64</sup> The reason is that the new Exodus will not take the form of the old Exodus. Of course it is true that this plea at least indicates the importance of the past Exodus as the ground for hope in a new Exodus. The parallel between the fleeing Chaldeans and the annihilated Egyptian warriors is clear enough to point to this. But the 'new' in this new Exodus must not be overlooked. It will be a very smooth process. No enemy shall pursue because he will be destroyed. The wandering through the desert will not be a time of so much testing and difficulties for there is enough water. Yahweh will produce rivers in the desert (v. 20). Q<sup>a</sup> has a different reading in v. 19. Instead of  $\aleph \iota \gamma \eta \aleph$  it has  $\aleph \iota \beta \iota \aleph$ . Schoors followed Q<sup>a</sup>.<sup>65</sup> Just as in v. 16 "the sea" has a parallel in "the mighty waters" and "a way" is a parallel to "a path" so in v. 19 "the wilderness" is a parallel to "the desert" and "a way" should have  $\aleph \iota \beta \iota \aleph$  as its parallel and not  $\aleph \iota \gamma \eta \aleph$ . No doubt the Q<sup>a</sup> rendering make a smoother reading, but as the MT already makes sense, we tend to retain it.

The new thing that Yahweh will make (  $\aleph \psi \aleph$  - in participial form), namely the new Exodus, includes the transformation of nature (vv. 19b, 20). This is part of DI's prediction (40:4; 41:17-20; 44:3; 48:21; 49:9-11; 55:12-13). Passages in DI which concerns transformation of nature should not be regarded as metaphors<sup>66</sup> or

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64.  $\aleph \iota \iota \aleph \gamma \eta \aleph$ , from  $\aleph \gamma \eta \aleph$ , "what lies in the front" ("past"), compare with the Latin pro-.

65. Schoors, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

66. ibid., p. 96.



literal remnants of mythology.<sup>67</sup> Neither should we regard them as elements of an eschatology in the sense of the term Endzeit (Gunkel). They are to be taken literally. R.P. Carroll also accepts a literal interpretation.<sup>68</sup> Because the transformation of nature did not materialise he takes this as one of the evidences of DI's failure in predicting things to come. But this is not yet a problem for the prophet's audience. DI's extravagant language and rhetorical exhortation is expected to revive some glimmer of hope inside the dejected and dispirited people.

V. 21. A verb of creation occurs again in this verse. Yahweh's chosen people (v. 20) are formed ( ָ ִ ֶ ) by His own hands. As in 43:7 here also a clear purpose is delineated: "that they may continuously declare my praise". This corresponds to Ps 9:15, "that I may declare continuously all your praises."

## 2.6 Is 44:1-5

וְעַתָּה שִׁמַּע יַעֲקֹב עַבְדִּי	But now, hear, O Jacob, My servant!
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל בַּחֲרָתִּי בּוֹ	Israel, whom I have chosen!
כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה עֹשֶׂךָ	Thus says the Lord who makes you,
וַיִּצְרְךָ מִבֶּטֶן יִעֲזָרְךָ	who forms you from the womb and helps you,
אַל-תִּירָא עַבְדִּי יַעֲקֹב	Fear not, O Jacob, My servant!
וְיִשְׁרֹון בַּחֲרָתִּי בּוֹ	Jeshurun, whom I have chosen!
כִּי אֶצְק-מַיִם עַל-צִמְאָ	For I will pour water on the thirsty
וְנֹזְלִים עַל-יַבֶּשֶׁה	and brooks on the dry ground;
אֶצְק רוּחִי עַל-זֶרְעֶךָ	I will pour My spirit upon your descendants,
וּבִרְכָתִי עַל-צֵאֵאִיךָ	and my blessing on your offspring.

67. Th.M. Ludwig, "The Traditions of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah", JBL 92 (1973), pp. 345-357.

68. R.P. Carroll, "Second Isaiah and the failure of Prophecy", ST 32 (1978), p. 121.

Although  $\text{לשׁוּׁב}$  forms part of a salvation oracle, v. 1 may still be connected loosely to 43:22-28. The latter, however, is not a lament, but a trial speech. There Yahweh accuses Jacob of false worship.<sup>69</sup> This provides one of the reasons why Jacob-Israel found defeat at the hands of Babylon, notwithstanding the nation has the powerful Yahweh as God. But all that is past now. All the sins of the past are forgotten. (Cf. 43:25). Once more Jacob-Israel is the servant of Yahweh, the chosen people.

"from the womb". Jacob (here the personification of Israel) was formed since the time of conception (Cf. similar views in Job 31:15; Ps 139:13-16; Jer 1:5). Westermann noted that the addition "who forms you from the womb" shows every sign of a creation belief. The prophet was thinking of God's creative activity in the primary sense of the word.<sup>70</sup> Muilenburg's opinion is close to him: "Second Isaiah is constantly seeking to ground Israel's unique character in something more ultimate than the Exodus."<sup>71</sup> The use of participial verbs (here  $\text{לשׁוּׁב}$  and  $\text{לִשְׁׁבֵׁת}$ ) certainly prove that creation theology is operative here.

"Jeshurun". Other occurrences of this name are found in Deut 32:15; 33:5, 26 and in the Apocrypha, Ecclus 37:25. It is probably a title of honour. The meaning is not clear. North (following Bacher) thinks it is related to  $\text{שׁוּׁב}$ , "upright", in contrast to the folk-etymology of the name of Jacob in Gen 27:36; 32:28.<sup>72</sup> L. Wächter

69. See Westermann, op. cit., pp. 130-33. He translated 43:23, 24 as follows: "Not to me did you bring your sheep for burnt offerings, it was not I whom you honoured with your sacrifices.....Not for me did you buy sweet cane with money, not me did you satisfy....."

70.. Westermann, op. cit., p. 135.

71. Muilenburg, op. cit., p. 501.

72. North, op. cit., p. 132.



on the other hand argued that the title brings a reminder to the original form  $\text{ל' אלהים}$ , "El is trustworthy".<sup>73</sup> North's proposal looks more attractive.

"For I will pour water on the thirsty". North again noted that  $\text{אֶרֶץ}$  is masculine and should not be related to words denoting land, which are all feminine. V. 3a then is not concerned with transformation of nature. References to "dry ground", "the thirsty" and "water" are allusions or metaphors to the barrenness and the much decreased population in exile.<sup>74</sup> "My spirit". Yahweh's spirit is His breath, which creates life to plants and animals (32:15; Ps 104:30) and humankind (Num 16:22; 27:16; Eccles 12:7). God's blessing in the form of population increase is given to Jacob's "descendants" and "offspring". Possibly this is thought of in the line of that promised to the patriarchs (Gen 12:3; 22:17; 26:3-4; 28:14), as argued by Schoors.<sup>75</sup> However, in all these examples it is the patriarchs that are the objects of blessing. Only Gen 28:14 refers to "you and your descendants." So it is not the present generation, but the next who shall experience an increase in the number of Israelites. This sense becomes stronger if we directly relate vv. 3b, 4 with v. 5.

$\text{וְצִמְחוּ כַּבֵּיץ הַצֵּדִי}$  They shall spring up like the green  
ben-tree,  
 $\text{כַּעֲרָבִים עַל-יְבֵלֵי-מַיִם}$  like willows by the watercourses.  
 $\text{זֶה יֹאמַר לַיהוָה אֲנִי}$  This one will say: I am the Lord's,

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73. L. Wächter, "Israel und Jeschurun" in Schalom, Festschrift A. Jepsen, Berlin, 1971, pp. 58-64.

74. North, op. cit., p. 133.

75. Schoors, op. cit., p. 79.



וזה יקרא בשם-יעקב

another will call himself by the name of Jacob,

וזה יכתב ידו ליהוה

and another will write on his hand: to Yahweh,

ובשם ישראל יכנה

and he shall be titled with the name Israel.

V. 4. "They shall spring up like the green ben-tree". Here we follow the proposal of J.M. Allegro.<sup>76</sup> "Like willows by the water-courses". Cf. Is 30:25, which alludes to irrigation canals connected to a river.<sup>77</sup> Both phrases are similes used to describe the abundance and fast growth of the coming population of Israel.

V. 5. Lit: "This one will write his hand 'to Yahweh'". RSV proposes "on his hand". There could be a possibility that a preposition has been dropped by haplography. North tried to hold to the MT. "His hand" should be seen as acc.obj., as the English might write, "witness my hand....".<sup>78</sup> But he gave no evidence that this was also the case with ancient Hebrew. Since v. 5 refers to somebody who will say "I am the Lord's", this phrase may mean that another will write (either "with his hand" or "on his hand") that he belongs to Yahweh.

וזה יכנה בשם ישראל, "and he shall be titled with the

name Israel". All the descendants of those who went to exile will call themselves "sons of Israel". This and the fact that ליהוה is an adoption formula (Elliger) open the possibility that reference to the descendants and offsprings are meant to be proselytes.

However, in this passage itself only מן is mentioned. That is why we hold that v. 5 is related to 3b. They are references to blood-descendants, not to proselytes.

76. J.M. Allegro, "The Meaning of ב' in Isaiah XLIV, 4", ZAW 58 (1951), pp. 154-56. He proposed ב' instead of the MT: ב' "in among grass".

77. See North, op. cit., p. 133.

78. ibid., p. 134.

2.7 Is 51:1-8

שמעו אלי דרפי צדק	Hearken to me, you who pursue righteousness,
מבקשי יהוה	you who seek the Lord;
הביטו אל-צור חצבתם	look to the rock from which you were hewn,
ואל-מקבת בור נקרתם	and to the quarry from which you were digged,
הביטו אל-אברהם אביכם ואל-שרה תחוללכם	Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you
כי-אחד קראתיו	for when he was but one I called him,
ואברכהו ואדכהו	and I blessed him and made him many.
כי-נחם יהוה ציון	For the Lord will comfort Zion;
נחם כל-חרבתיה	He will comfort all her waste places,
וישם מדברה כעדן	and will make her wilderness like Eden,
וערבתה כגן-יהוה	her desert like the garden of the Lord;
ששון ושמחה ימצא בה	joy and gladness will be found in her,
תודה וקול זמרה	thanksgiving and the voice of song.

According to Westermann the position of the verses in 51:1-8 has been disturbed by redactional hands. In his commentary he proposed what the original position is supposed to be.<sup>79</sup> On the other hand, Schoors tried to show that Is 51:1-3, 6-8 is a twofold proclamation of salvation, with some elements of a disputation.<sup>80</sup>

V. 1 The proclamation is addressed to "you who pursue **פד**". What is the meaning of **פד** here? The phrase is put in a parallel with "you who seek the Lord". The expression "to seek the Lord" is related to the vocabulary of lament psalms, along with the term (Pss 27:8; 40:17; 69:7; 70:5; 9:11; 22:27; 34:5; 69:33; 77:3).

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79. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 232-33.

80. Schoors, op. cit., pp. 155, 167.



In psalms of lament God is referred to as יְהוָה יִשְׁלָח (Ps 4:2), and many passages in the Psalter refer to God's יְשׁוּעָה or הַיְשׁוּעָה (Pss 9:5; 31:2; 35:24; 71:2; 109:40; 143:1, 11). This proclamation is directed to those who appeal to God to confirm or re-confirm His world order. In the RSV יְשׁוּעָה is translated as "deliverance" as in vv. 5-6, but as in the context of the psalms of lament we think "righteousness" would be more appropriate. The parallel in 1a then is directed to those who really placed their trust in Yahweh and His righteousness.

"Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were digged" (1b). Again the prophet uses metaphoric language which in this passage is difficult to be discerned. The repetition of יְהוָה יִשְׁלָח in v. 2 might indicate that the metaphors "rock" and "quarry" are referring to Abraham and Sarah. This is the traditional Jewish and Christian interpretations. Commentators disagree. North and Schoors accepted this traditional interpretation. P.A.H. de Boer thinks differently.<sup>81</sup> He observed that nowhere in the OT is the term "rock" a metaphor for Abraham. On the other hand it refers to God 33 times. "Rock" is a title of Yahweh as Israel's protector and provider of security (Pss 18:3; 19:15; 78:35; Is 44:8). The same parallel to Is 51:1b which refers to God as the provider of life can be found in Deut 32:18; there the people are reminded of "the Rock that begot you". Taking support from the LXX he argued that the verbs for "hew" and "dig" must be taken as actives. The root of יִשְׁלָח is שָׁלַח, which has a derivative הַשְׁלָח, "hole, cleft, cavern". Ex 33:22 and Is 2:21 refer to the caverns which function as hiding places. חֲבִית also has the meaning of "cistern".

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81. P.A.H. de Boer, Second-Isaiah's Message, OTS XI, Leiden, 1956, pp. 58-67.



אֲבִיָּה is a hole, hewn in the rock to keep some water in it.

The metaphor of the hole which one digs to preserve water conveys the same meaning as the metaphor of the rock which one hews to provide a shelter or hiding-place. The rock according to de Boer also provides water. He cited Ex 17:6; Deut 8:15; Pss 17:20; 105:4; 114:8; Is 48:21 as proofs. But in this case he went a little bit too far. Schoors rightly pointed out that these examples are all in the context of the miracle of the water in the desert. Yahweh made water pour out even from things which people thought was impossible, such as from a rock!<sup>82</sup> The meaning of v. 1b according to de Boer is: "look at God, whom you seek for life and protection". Westermann agreed that the references to "rock" and "hole" point to Abraham and Sarah.<sup>83</sup> Following Volz, he thinks that they are not simply metaphors, but allusions to very ancient mythological ideas about the birth of mankind from a rock or a quarry. By referring to these ancient allusions the prophet wished to give Israel's descent from Abraham and Sarah the status of an act of creation.

Which interpretation is correct? North's denial that "there is no ambiguity" in this passage is probably too strong.<sup>84</sup> Deut 32:18 clearly points out that God as Rock can be seen as the giver of life or birth of His people. In Is 44:8 the prophet referred to God as Rock, so why should it be different here? It is plausible that DI referred first to God as the source of life then after that to Abraham and Sarah as proof or examples of His power to grant progeny (v. 2).

82. Schoors, op. cit., p. 161.

83. Westermann, op. cit., p. 136.

84. North, op. cit., p. 209.

In his interpretation de Boer appeared to be controlled by the phrase "seek the Lord" in v. 1a. Hence his image of the metaphor as "hewing the rock, digging the cistern". The phrase "seek the Lord" as we have seen is cultic language, but elsewhere in the OT there is no evidence that the phrase has been used in metaphors as proposed by de Boer. His estimation that later hands changed the active sense of the verbs into the passive remains possible, but in regard to the absence of such metaphors we think this estimation is not necessary. The first metaphor then can be seen as referring to God as the giver of life.

However, it is difficult to hold to this interpretation if we come to the second metaphor. Nowhere else in the OT is Yahweh referred to as "the pit/cistern" or "the quarry/water-hole". Digging a hole in the water-bearing rock as suggested by de Boer is a forced interpretation. The use of the apparently rare word  $\text{אֲבַקֵּן}$  (712 might be a glossary explanation to it) may be caused by association with  $\text{אֲבַקֵּן}$ , "female", which derived from the same root. If so then the metaphor is suitable for Sarah.<sup>85</sup>

It appears that the strong point of de Boer's interpretation is the Rock as reference to God and not to Abraham, while the strong point of the traditional one is the Hole as reference to Sarah and not to God. The former's weakness is the latter's strength and the latter's weakness is the former's strength. Both are possible. We can still then hold to the traditional interpretation, although de Boer's effort (after some modification) is attractive.

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85. From a feminist perspective, however, this is far from satisfying. There are "female" metaphors in the OT which refer to God.



Volz - Westermann's proposal is tempting. If it is accepted we can say that creation belief is operational here. But the alleged allusion to Abraham and Sara as creators of Israel is surely not from the prophet who elsewhere always refer to Yahweh as Creator of Israel. Even if the subject is God we hesitate to say that the background is of creation. In section 1 we have stated that although they are close to each other, creation does not necessarily mean procreation and vice-versa.

V. 3. Here too we can hear echos of laments such as in Lam 1:17, "Zion stretches out her hands, but there is none to comfort her". Cf. 40:1. The verse is not concerned with the transformation of nature which Yahweh will provide during the journey home, but with the restoration of Jerusalem. The background is perhaps the theology of Zion. In contrast to Jer 9:10 and all the laments of Zion, DI predicted that Zion shall be restored to her former glory, as  $\text{חֲשׁוֹשׁ כְּהֶאֱרָאָה}$  (Ps 48:3, notice  $\text{שִׁשׁ}$  in this verse). From ruins the city will become as beautiful as Eden. The term here is used in a comparative sense, as in Gen 13:10; Ezek 36:35; Joel 2:3. She will be re-inhabited, and pleasant sounds shall come from inside the city.

The vocabulary is vv. 4-5 is very close to that of the Servant songs.  $\text{חֲשׁוֹשׁ}$  and  $\text{הִרְוָה}$  can be found in 42:4;  $\text{יָצַע חֲשׁוֹשׁ}$  in 42:1;  $\text{לְאוֹר עַמִּי}$  is close to  $\text{לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם}$  in 49:6. For "the arm" of Yahweh see 53:1. V. 5b is very close to 42:4. This is why Westermann thinks that this part is a post-exilic re-interpretation of 42:1-4 concerning the availability of salvation for the non-Israelites.<sup>86</sup> We shall examine his view.

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86. Westermann, op. cit., p. 235.



"My people", "my nation" (RSV). In the MT the suffixed are in the singular. However, 12 MSS and the Syr. read them in the plural. There is support for a plural reading in vv. 4b, 5 which refer to "peoples". According to Schoors  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$  is used nowhere else with a suffix of the first person and never refers to Israel.<sup>87</sup> If so, then "my people" and "my peoples" would be more probable. However, in 4b, 5 the peoples are not the addressee. The odd construction of  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$  notwithstanding, we can still see v. 4 as an address from Yahweh to the people concerning the (other) peoples. This concern for the foreign nations does not need to be a post-exilic phenomenon. On the contrary, it is in the post-exilic period that Israel experienced a strong feeling of particularity. But we hesitate to call this concern for other peoples as "universalism" for reasons which we shall elaborate later on in our discussion of chapter 42.

"My instruction will go out from me and my justice for a light to the peoples".  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$  here refers to what Yahweh has done for His people. Yahweh shall let the world know that His people are vindicated by their Lord. The restoration of Israel is the workings of Yahweh's  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$ . It appears as self-evident that the nations shall all come to acknowledge Yahweh's  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$ . This will happen "in a moment".<sup>88</sup> It is possible that the reference to the peoples accepting Yahweh's instruction may indicate proselytes. But it is not necessary that this passage reflects the actual situation of the proselytes at the post-exilic period.  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$  could mean "judgment" (Zeph 3:5; Jer 48:21). But here it clearly has a salvific context. It is the light to the nations. The references to "the arm"

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87. Schoors, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

88.  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$ , "I will accelerate" from  $\text{אֶלְלֵךְ}$ . The RSV wrongly connected the word to v. 5.

of Yahweh, which is a metaphor for God's rule and power (Cf. Ezek 30:21), of which the peoples wait in expectation (v. 5) confirm this salvific context of **יְהוָה**.

Vv. 6-8. This part is admittedly difficult to be fitted to the framework of DI's thinking. If as we hold, he follows the cultic patterns where creation is a guarantee of Yahweh's steadfastness, then these sayings may not be from him.<sup>89</sup> But in 54:10 the same thing is said about the mountains and the hills, and that right after the reference to Yahweh's determination never again to send the Flood. And in 40:7-8 the prophet referred to human transitoriness in a creation passage. That creation could convey transitoriness in the cultic tradition can be seen in Pss 22:9; 89:48; 90:3.

Thus this part could still belong to DI. The emphasis on the transitoriness of creation is possibly intended to build-up a motif of confidence. Even if everything seems gone, Yahweh's world order is perpetual and His salvation stands for generations to come.

V. 7 refers to those "who know righteousness", while v. 1 to those who "pursue righteousness". Although commentators maintain that there is a difference between these terms, we should not make too much of them. Probably they are addressed to the same object, namely the people. Allusion to "my people" who have Yahweh's instruction in their hearts is intended as a contrast to the peoples who faced the **יְהוָה** in v. 4.

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89. See Section A above, pp. 87-88. Westermann is quite bold: the language is apocalyptic, op. cit., p. 236.

From all these considerations it seems that Westermann's view about the post-exilic date of vv. 1-8 can still be doubted. The passage has a rough unity. Vv. 1-3 addresses the people concerning their fate; 4-6 describes the fate of the nations; they are not enemies any more, because they have acknowledged Yahweh's rule; 6-8 resorts to a general theme: the transitoriness of the world contrasted to Yahweh's steadfastness.

## 2.8 Is 51:9-16

עוֹרִי עוֹרִי לְבָשִׁי-עֹז  
זְרוּעַ יְהוָה

Awake, awake! Put on strength, O arm of Yahweh!

עוֹרִי כִּימֵי קֶדֶם  
דְּרוֹת עוֹלָמִים

Awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago.

הֲלוֹא אַתָּה הִיא הַמַּחְצֶבֶת  
רָהַב מַחֲלֹלֶת תַּנִּין

Was it not you who hacked Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon?

הֲלוֹא אַתָּה הִיא הַמַּחְרֶבֶת  
יָם מִי תְהוֹם רַבָּה

Was it not you who dried up sea, waters of great deep?

הַשְׁמַח מַעֲמָקִים דְּרָךְ

(Was it not you) who made the depth of the sea a way,

לְעֹבֵר גְּאוּלִּים

for the redeemed to cross over?

V. 9 clearly refers to a Chaoskampf. It has parallels in Pss 74:13b, 14 and 89:11. The appeal to Yahweh for help supported by a reminder of His former deeds can also be found in collective laments such as in Pss 44:3-9, 24-27 and 80:3, 9-12. The appeal "awake" or "arise" to God belongs to a cultic formula (Ps 68:2; also the Ladespruch in Num 10:35).<sup>90</sup> This pericope may be the best example of how DI utilised cultic materials in his message of salvation.

90. H. Ringgren, "Zur Komposition von Jesaja 49-55", Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie, H. Donner et al, (eds.), Göttingen, 1977, p. 373.



The result of Yahweh's victory in the Chaoskampf is described in v. 10. Creation appears. D.M. Gunn tried to show that v. 10 is actually a reference to the drying up of the waters after the Flood.<sup>91</sup> However, he did not totally succeed in demonstrating where the distinction lies between creation and that which he termed as "the Flood tradition". There is indeed reference to the drying-up of the Flood within the context of creation, but the vocabulary there is different from Is 51:10 and from all the other examples (Is 44:27; 50:2; Pss 106:19; 66:6) which Gunn has put forward. We refer to  $\text{יָצַק}$ ,  $\text{יָרַח$  and  $\text{לָחַץ}$  in Ps 74:15.<sup>92</sup> There Yahweh cleft open the springs and torrents to let water descend to allow dry land to appear. Gunn argued that the Flood tradition is recognisable from the imagery it conveys, namely the drying-up of the waters. But this imagery can serve both references to God's act of creating the cosmos before and after the Flood. Only a careful look at the vocabulary can throw light on each's own distinctiveness.

According to Schoors the questions in vv. 9c, 10 are rhetorical ones, in response to Begrich's view that these are doubtful questions which betray uncertainty.<sup>93</sup> The rhetorical serve to underline the insistence in v. 9ab. Begrich must have noticed that the citations on Yahweh's deeds in Pss 44, 74 and 89 are in the form of statements.

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91. D.M. Gunn, "Deutero-Isaiah and the Flood", JBL 94 (1975), pp. 495-96.

92. J.A. Emerton, "'Spring' and 'Torrent' in Ps 74.15". Volume du Congress, SVT XV 1966, pp. 122-33.

93. Schoors, op. cit., p. 123.

Presumably in borrowing from the community lament DI took the liberty of changing these statements into rhetorical questions.

By this utilisation of the Chaoskampf DI wanted to remind the people of the old celebrations, where Yahweh's victory over chaos is acknowledged. This must become the basis of their faith. Westermann demonstrated that the whole of Is 51:9-52:3 forms a unified poem in three sections.<sup>94</sup> Is 51:11 as a proclamation of salvation probably forms the conclusion of the whole poem. This insight is important because it means that the allusion to the crossing of the Red Sea in v. 10b exists there as the result of its assimilation to the Chaoskampf image.<sup>95</sup> This phenomenon is termed as "mythologising/mythologisation of history".<sup>96</sup> However, it does not have to mean that in the whole thinking of DI "salvation in history" is subservient to "creation" as the all-encompassing horizon, as opposed to the other view that it is creation that should be subservient to salvation in history. A definitive conclusion must wait until all the relevant passages in Is 40-55 have been examined. But so far it is clear that in this passage the other view is wrong and from the preceding examinations it is impossible to agree that "the doctrine of creation was something of an afterthought"<sup>97</sup> in Deutero Isaiah.

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94. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 238-47.

95. Th.M. Ludwig, "The Traditions of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah", p. 352.

96. See W.J. Johnstone, "The Mythologising of History in the Old Testament", SJT 24 (1971), pp. 201-17. This is the reverse of North's view that here the Hebrews "historicised" the myth, op. cit., p. 212.

97. North's statement in the introduction of his commentary, op. cit., p. 13.



Observation on the function of the Chaoskampf imagery confirms that it is appropriate for creation theology to be operational in this passage. It is probable that here DI was employing creation theology to give a character of newness to his message. In Is 54:7-10 he was doing the same thing. H. Ringgren has made a study on Ps 74 and Is 51.<sup>98</sup> His starting point is evidence from Akkadian Chaoskampf parallels in the context of laments on temple ruins. These ruins symbolise a dire situation, which must be overcome. But as temple building is regarded as a divine creation act in the ancient Near East, it cannot be done without invoking the deity to act in the same way as he did before. Hence the citation of the Chaoskampf. The same thing holds for Ps 74 and Is 51. Only in the latter it is concerned with the exile which must end, and (this escaped Ringgren's attention) to the ruins of Zion, which must be rebuilt (see the references to Zion in vv. 11, 16, 52:1, 2 and Jerusalem in v. 17, 52:1, 2). Without the original creation act there would be no new temple, no new exodus.

We have stated that in the OT temple building is not regarded as an act of creation, although a temple may be seen as a microcosmos. It is true that in Ps 74 the citation of God's past victory in the Chaoskampf shows that the Creator was expected to grant a new situation through His power, which includes the rebuilding of the place of worship. But this does not necessarily mean that the rebuilding is an act of creation. The same holds for Is 51. It seems that here Ringgren has totally identified the Exodus event as an act

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98. H. Ringgren, "Die Funktion des Schöpfungsmythus in Jes 51", Schalom, Festschrift A. Jepsen, Berlin, 1971, pp. 38-40.



of creation which needs to be re-created. We do not agree with this total identification. But on the whole his opinion holds: without referring to God's victory long ago over His adversary which resulted in the creation of the world there will be no new Exodus and no new Zion-Jerusalem.

וְצִדִּיקֵי יְהוָה יָשׁוּבוּן	And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
וּבָאוּ צִיּוֹן בִּרְנוּה	and come to Zion with singing;
וְשִׂמְחַת עוֹלָם עַל-רִאשָׁם	everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
וְשִׂשְׁוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה יִשְׁגּוּן	they shall obtain joy and gladness,
וְסוֹרֵגוֹן וְאִנְחָה	and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

V. 11 is identical to Is 35:10. It is possible that the prophet borrowed from the Isaiah tradition. O. Kaiser thinks that what we have here in Is 35:10 is a compiler's re-working of a Deutero Isaianic material.<sup>99</sup> So it is not easy to decide who was borrowing from whom. We prefer the first possibility. The prophet had picked up a theme of hope from Isaiah which is probably in a context of the remnant,<sup>100</sup> and applied it to the people as a whole.

The double "I" in v. 12 followed the double imperatives in vv. 9, 17 and 52:1. This verse is reminiscent of 40:1-6. There are inconsistencies in the use of personal suffixes. In 12a it is masc.pl., in 12b fem.sing. and in v. 13 masc.sing. Schoors gave a detailed study on the MT and the ancient renderings.<sup>101</sup> He noticed

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99. O. Kaiser, Isaiah 13-39, London, second impression, 1978, pp. 365-66.

100. Even if the word רִמָּה is absent from the passage. Is 1-39 contains the three prerequisites for a remnant concept: there is a threat of punitive-destructive judgement, there is the conception of the people of God and there is a pledge of restoration for those who survive, cf. G.W. Anderson, "Some Observations on the Old Testament Doctrine of the Remnant", TGUOS 23 (1972), pp.1-10.

101. Schoors, op. cit., pp. 124-25.

that they are inconsistent also in their understanding of the personality of the figure in v. 12. The plural **מְנַחֵם** is attested by  $q^a$  **מְנַחֵמָה**. The LXX thinks of a feminine personage. But in a lament it is usually a male which is addressed, so while being aware that the oracle is directed to Zion-Jerusalem, Schoors opted for a masc.sing. We think that in general Schoors is right. But **מְנַחֵם** can be retained. In v. 12 the prophet could be thinking about the people (after all this part continues the address to the people in vv. 1-8) but then succumbed to the traditional style of the lament with its masc.sing. suffixes in v.13.

<b>אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא מְנַחֵם</b>	I, I am He that comforts you;
<b>מִי-אַתָּה וְתִירָאִי</b>	who are you that you are afraid
<b>מֵאֲנוּשׁ יָמוּת וּמִבֶּן-אָדָם חַצִּיר יִנָּתֵן</b>	of men who die, of the sons of men, who are constituted (like) grass?
<b>וְתִשְׁכַּח יְהוָה עֲשִׂיךָ</b>	and have forgotten the Lord your Maker,
<b>וְנִמְנֵה שָׁמַיִם</b>	who stretches out the heavens,
<b>וַיִּסֵּד אֶרֶץ וְתַפְחָד</b>	and lays the foundation of the earth,
<b>תִּמְדַּךְ כָּל-הַיּוֹם</b>	and you tremble continually all the day,
<b>מִפְּנֵי חֲמַת הַמֹּצִיק</b>	because the fury of the oppressor,
<b>כַּאֲשֶׁר כּוֹנֵן לְהַשְׁחִית</b>	when he sets himself to destroy?
<b>וְאַיֶּה חֲמַת הַמֹּצִיק</b>	Where is the fury of the oppressor?
<b>מִהֵר צֵעָה לְהַפְתֵּחַ</b>	He who is bowed down shall speedily released,
<b>וְלֹא-יָמוּת לַשְׁחָת</b>	he shall not die and go down to the Pit,
<b>וְלֹא-וַחֲסֵד לַחֲמוֹ</b>	neither shall his bread fail.

V. 13. "and lays the foundations of the earth", or "and establishes earth". Th.M. Ludwig examined the occurrences of this terminology in the OT.<sup>102</sup> Although **וַיִּסֵּד** does not exist as an independent

102. Ludwig, op. cit., pp. 350-52.

formula, it stems from a "creation tradition" that involves conflict with chaotic forces and victory over them by Yahweh with subsequent ordering of the cosmos. He pointed to passages where the formula appears in this context (Ps 104:5; Job 38:4; Prov 3:19; Pss 24:2; 89:12). Is 51:12-16 is connected and forms a unity with Is 51:9-11.

If the addressee seems to be the people in exile, what is it that makes them so frightened? It cannot be Cyrus, because he shall be their liberator. One possibility is Babylon, and this is supported by references to Babylon anywhere else in Is 40-55. The only objection to this is that the picture of Babylon as  $\text{בְּבָבֶל}$ , "the oppressor" clashes somewhat with the picture of the community's relative prosperity in the exile.<sup>103</sup> Then it might be that the last line in v. 13, "where is the fury of the oppressor?" must literally mean, "there is no oppressor". The people are in fear without reason. They are imagining things. Probably in reality they are not as frightened as the prophet imagined, but their reluctance to return to the homeland could be interpreted as lack of courage.

The picture in vv. 12-13 compares the transitoriness of man with the might of the Creator. DI tried to transform the fear in his people by referring to the belief in the Creator, who will protect the people against their enemy.

V. 14.  $\text{הַשֹּׁמְרִים}$ , "those who are stooping" (North). According to Schoors it indicates the prisoner who is bowed down because of his heavy chains.<sup>104</sup>  $\text{לְבֵּית הַמָּוֶת}$ , "to the pit". The pit is the

103. P.R. Ackroyd, Exile and Restoration, London, 1967, p. 32.

104. Schoors, op. cit., p. 126.



synonym of Sheol (Ps 16:10). Those who are on their way to death will soon get a reversal of their fate. They shall not die. On the contrary, they will never have any shortage of bread.

ואנכי יהוה אלהיך For I am the Lord your God,  
 רגע הים ויהמו גליו who stirs up the sea so that its  
 waves roar -

יהוה צבאות שמו the Lord of Hosts is His name!  
 ואשים דברי בפיך And I have put my words in your mouth,  
 וכצל ידי כסיתיך and hid you in the shadow of my hand,  
 לנטע שמים planting the heavens  
 וליסד ארץ and laying the foundations of the  
 earth,

ולאמר לציון עמי-אתה saying to Zion: you are my people!

In all the occurrences of the participial hymns in DI (40:21-30; 42:5; 43:16; 54:6b, 7; 45:18; 51:15) only one specifically refers to a particular historical event, namely the miracle of the Red Sea (43:16). The others refer to God's universal deeds in Nature, His creation and care for this world. This is one proof that the participial hymns are borrowed from Israel's surrounding.<sup>105</sup> When were they taken over? Crüsemann pointed to Is 51:15 as proof that the take-over happened at the pre-exilic period. The first line is of course the Selbstvorstellungsformel. But the refrain יהוה צבאות (in the third pers.suff.) and the participial predicate in the second line with reference to Yahweh's dealing with nature (the sea) indicate that they are portion of a hymn (or at least imitation of hymns) incorporated within DI's proclamation of salvation.<sup>106</sup>

Crüsemann gave evidence of this take-over in the pre-exilic prophetic

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105. Crüsemann, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

106. ibid., pp. 103, 105.

tradition, so it could not be DI that indicated this borrowing. What he did is continuing what the other pre-exilic prophets had done.

Schoors regarded v. 15 as a quotation from Jer 31:35, added by a glossator and "is not absolutely necessary".<sup>107</sup> But it could also be that Jer 31:35 is a borrowing from the participial hymn as well, and since the refrain  $\text{וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַיָּם}$  and the participial predication also appear in the book of Amos then we must ask ourselves whether this phenomenon is not a necessary element in the prophetic tradition.

V. 15. "who stirs up the sea so its waves roar". The phrase is different from Ps 65:8 where it is explicitly mentioned that God stills ( $\text{וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַיָּם}$ ) the roaring of the seas and the roaring of their waves. However, it does not mean that here God is turning the sea loose in the sense of chaos returning. In Jer 31:35 the hymnic-portion appears in the context of God regulating the cosmic order. The orbit of the sun, the moon and the stars, the waves of the sea, all are under the control of Yahweh. Its function in Is 51:9-16 is the same. God is the Creator with a mighty saving power. He who is able to move the sea will have no difficulty at all in releasing His people from captivity.

Ludwig argued that v. 15 belongs together with the picture of the Chaoskampf in 51:9-10. Using Marvin Pope's translation he refers to Job 26:12-13 as proof:<sup>108</sup>

107. Schoors, op. cit., p. 127.

108. Ludwig, op. cit., p. 352. Pope's translation can be found in his commentary Job, AB, New York, 1965, p. 166.

By his power he quelled the sea ( כַּחֲזֹקָתוֹ ),  
 by his cunning he smote Rahab,  
 by his wind he puts water in a bag,  
 his hand pierced the fleeting serpent.

Undoubtedly DI has the same picture of a Chaoskampf, and it is also clear that the verbs of creating in v. 16 (there יָצַח appears) belongs to the Chaoskampf imagery in 51:9-10. But in regard to v. 15 we prefer Crüsemann's view. It came from a different source.

V. 16. "planting". In other passages in DI it is usually "to stretch out" ( יָצַח ), which occurs in relation to the creation of the heavens (40:22; 52:5; 45:12; 44:24; 51:13). But the meaning is probably the same. We retain the MT because DI also used three other words in connection with the heavens (see 48:13; 45:18; 42:5; 40:22).

The thought in the first line in v. 16 already occurs in 50:4 while that of the second line in 49:2. Schoors did not accept this verse as belonging to a proclamation of salvation. As we have seen above he also had doubts on v. 15. According to him the genre insists that there should be no intervention by Yahweh after the motif of outcome appears (v. 14).<sup>109</sup> Schoors also stated that the references to creation in v. 16b defies explanation in the present context as well as the last line, "and saying to Zion: you are my people".<sup>110</sup> However, we have seen Ludwig's explanation of v. 16b. The last line indicates that in DI, creation and election can stand side by side. What the character of this relationship is like will be discussed in the coming paragraphs.

109. Schoors, loc. cit. It can be asked, however: was DI a strict follower of the genre, or did he allow himself a certain limit of freedom?

110. On the other hand Westermann thinks it is 16a which defies explanation! op. cit., p. 244. In his opinion this is likely a fragment of a missing Servant Song.



2.9 Is 54:4-6

אל-תיראי כי-לא תבושי	Fear not, for you will not be ashamed,
ואל-תכלמי כי לא תחפירי	be not confounded, for you will not be put to shame,
כבשת עלומיך תשכחי	for you will forget the shame of your youth,
וחרפת אלמנותיך לא תזכרי- עוד	and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.
כי בעליך עשיר יהוה צבאות שמו	For your Maker is your husband, The Lord of Hosts is His name!
וגאלך קדוש ישראל	and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer,
אלהי כל-הארץ יקרא כי- כאשה עזובה	the God of the whole earth is He called! For the Lord has called you,
ועצובת רוח קראך יהוה ואשת נעורים כי תמאס	a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, that she should be rejected;
אמר אלהיך	says your God.

This passage has the form of a salvation oracle. The whole of Is 54 can be regarded as a unity consisting of four parts: the summons to the barren one in vv. 1-3,<sup>111</sup> salvation oracle (vv. 4-6), and two proclamations of salvation (vv. 7-10 and vv. 11-17). The form of the addressee is constantly in the fem.sing. But no name has been given except Israel (v. 5) and Noah (v. 9). The usual word of assurance "fear not" is developed with a parallel, "be not confounded."

"the shame of your youth". Schoors has noted that nowhere else can we find עלומים with a pejorative meaning. He proposed that the meaning of עלומים here should be "bondage", with proofs from

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111. DI wanted to remind his audience to the lament of the childless woman and the praises such as in Ps 113, Westermann, op. cit., p. 272.

the Aramaic ܥܠܡ and Ugaritic ʿl̥m , and 1 Sam 20:22; Song 6:18.<sup>112</sup>

However, "youth" here must be understood in its traditional meaning in the sense of being nubile. V. 4b is a reply to an adult girl who is without a husband although her age requires one, and to a woman who is also without a husband although she has been married.<sup>113</sup>

V. 5 describes the reply: there is a ܠܝܬ for the girl, - her Maker; there is a ܠܝܬ for the widow, - the Holy One of Israel.

The stress according to W.A.M. Beuken must be on ܠܝܬ and ܠܝܬ. The prophet calls God by these names precisely because he wants to proclaim that He is Creator and the Holy one of Israel. Because He is Creator of Israel He will be her husband, because He is her Holy One He will be her kinsman.<sup>114</sup>

"The Lord of Hosts is His Name". Crüsemann proved that the occurrence of this refrain in connection with participial predications (here ܠܝܬ and ܠܝܬ ) is borrowed from the hymns which praise God as Creator. But he also noted that Is 54:5 among others (beside Is 47:4 and Jer 50:34) were not taken from the original hymnic form. The participial predications in them are connected with suffixes.<sup>115</sup> However, the refrain's parallel in this passage, "the God of the whole earth is He called" indicates that the prophet was

112. A. Schoors, "Two Notes on Isaiah XL-LV, Is XL20 and LIV4", VT 21 (1971), pp. 503-505.

113. W.A.M. Beuken, "Isaiah LIV: The Multiple identity of the Person addressed", OTS, XIX, Leiden, 1974, p. 35.

114. *ibid.*, p. 44.

115. Crüsemann, *op. cit.*, p. 106; North, *op. cit.*, p. 246. noticed that their suffixes are all in the plural fem., which could indicate a pluralis excellentiae. The masoretic spelling is artificial to avoid associations with Baal and strong anthropomorphism.

thinking about Yahweh's universal dominion. V. 6. "for the lord has called you". Does  $\int \lambda \gamma \rho$  mean "recalling" (Kittel) or "called long ago" (Ewald)? North explained v. 6 by starting with the second half of the verse. The particle ' ) ..... ) denotes an unreal question, a stylistic device to express an absolute certainty. In Mal 2:14-15 and Prov 5:18 it is clear that the term "wife of youth" is a technical term for the legitimate wife. So North: "No decent husband would dream of disowning the bride of his youth, much less would Yahweh!"<sup>116</sup> The right translation then should be something like "a wife of youth, who can reject her?".

North's understanding of Mal 2:14-16 and Prov 5:18, the perfect of  $\int \lambda \gamma \rho$  and the contexts of Hos 9:10; 11:1; Ezek 16 as support, persuaded him to take the second possibility. Long ago when the woman stood forsaken and grieved in spirit, Yahweh took compassion and made her His wife of youth.

However, the contexts of the following verses (vv. 7, 8) explicitly stated that Yahweh, contrary to all expectations, had indeed forsaken His wife. Schoors' emphatic statement: "Yahweh does not forsake Zion"<sup>117</sup> is too strong. It should be: "Yahweh does not forsake Zion forever". North argued that as no husband would leave his wife of youth, even more should we refrain from thinking that Yahweh would leave His spouse. But here we think he is making too much of the metaphor of Yahweh as husband and the people as wife. Besides, Prov 5:18 only stated that one should

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116. North, op. cit., p. 250.

117. Schoors, op. cit., p. 84.



enjoy the wife of his youth and Mal 2:14-16 is a rebuke to husbands who left their wives of youth. These passages are not at all mirrors to the real situation in which the Israelite families live. The line in 6b, "and a wife of youth, that she should be rejected"(lit) then does not imply that the woman in the context of this passage was not rejected. We prefer the first possibility. Yahweh recalls His wife.

2.10 54:7-10

בְּרֵגֶעַ קָטָן עֲזַבְתִּיךָ	For a brief moment I forsook you,
וּבְרַחֲמִים גְּדֹלִים אֶקְבֹּץ	But with great compassion I will gather you.
בְּשֹׁעַף קֶצֶף הִסְתַּדְתִּי פְּנֵי אֶרְאֵךְ מִמֶּךָ	In overflowing wrath for a moment I hid my face from you,
וּבְחֶסֶד עוֹלָם רַחֲמֵתִיךָ	but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,
אָמַר גְּאֻלְךָ יְהוָה	says the Lord, your Redeemer.

Although we deal with vv. 7-10 and vv. 11-17 separately as they employ different literary forms from vv. 4-6, we must bear in mind that they are in essential unity with vv. 4-6.

Vv. 7-8 contains replies to laments such as in Lam 5:20: "Why dost thou so long forsake us?" and complaints concerning God hiding His face from the people in the Psalter. They still refer to the metaphor of a woman without a husband, but the occurrence of the word **קָבַץ**, "to gather", in the sense of to gather from exile points to the fact that the prophet is not always consistent in using metaphors. The theological content of vv. 7, 8, however, is very important. It is not denied that the pre-exilic prophets of doom could also give messages of hope. But their emphasis is always

on judgement. DI confirmed this judgement. God had forsaken His people, He hid His face from them. But this is only temporary banishment (v. 7, קטן, "a brief moment"). There is a great change of attitude going on inside Yahweh. He has decided to re-accept His people. The prophet proceeded to back up his argument by referring to the story of the Flood (v. 9):

כימי נח זאת לי For this is like the days of Noah to me;  
 אשר נשבעת מעבר as I swore that the waters of Noah  
 מי-נח עוד על-הארץ should no more go over the earth,  
 כי נשבעתי מקצק עלך so I have sworn that I will not be  
 ומגער - כך and I will not rebuke you.

The name of Noah also appears in Ezek 14:14, 20 together with those of Daniel and Job. It seems that there these three names are regarded as examples of righteousness. But in Ezek 14 it is stated that even if these three righteous persons were in the land, the destruction of it will go on. The righteousness of these three persons will only save themselves but not the land. In this passage, however, the comparison is between Israel and the earth, and between the Flood and the exile. The Flood story is part of the creation narrative such as can be found in Gen 1-11. Commentators have noted that DI here is close to the P tradition. The prophet was appealing to the state of things 'at the beginning'. These are taken as the reason why Yahweh has changed His mind. As DI looks back into the past in search of the same phenomenon which presently face Israel, he cannot find it in Israel's history.<sup>118</sup> The creation narrative provides it for him. Thus by employing creation theology

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118. Westermann, op. cit., p. 275.

the prophet was able to give a character of newness to his message.<sup>119</sup>  
 How shall we see the comparison? The emphasis on the "never again" seems to point to an absolute identification between the Flood and the exile and creation (here the earth) and Israel. The prophet's appeal to creation theology then contains something that is vulnerable: what if Israel is to undergo another exile in the future? On the other hand it might well be that DI was just thinking about the restoration of Israel in the framework of creation theology without wholly considering its implications.

Before we reach any conclusion, we need to observe that although the comparison above is similar it is not the same: the Flood was a cosmic event and belongs to the category of chaos (or as D.J. Clines defined it: "chaos-come-back") whereas the exile was a historical event and belongs to the category of disorder.<sup>120</sup>

References to  $\text{לֵךְ}$  and  $\text{לֵךְ}$  are associated with the exile elsewhere in Deutero Isaiah. The prophet was referring to the end of the present exile. In his enthusiasm he used the formula  $\text{לֵךְ} \dots \text{לֵךְ}$  which clearly imply that there will be no more exiles, just as there will be no more punishment as severe as the primeval Flood.

$\text{כִּי הָהָרִים יִסּוּשׁוּ}$  For the mountains may depart  
 $\text{וְהַגְּבָעִים יִנָּחֲצוּ}$  and the hills be removed,

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119. Cf. J. Barr, "Themes from the Old Testament for the Elucidation of the New: Creation", *Enc 31* (1970), pp. 25-30. The title of this article is wrongly printed as ".....New Creation".

120. See above, pp. 74-75; Schoors recognised the distinction, *op. cit.*, p. 139.



וְחַסְדִּי מֵאֵתְךָ לֹא-יִמּוּשׁ

but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,

וְכִרְיִת שְׁלוֹמִי לֹא תִמּוּשׁ

and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,

אֵמַר מֵרַחֵם יְהוָה

says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

V. 10 provides further evidence to strengthen our argument. According to Westermann it continues the comparison with the Flood story, specifically with the Noahite covenant.<sup>121</sup> Just as in Gen 8:22 God promised permanence and continuity so here too in the present time God intends to make the salvific condition of the new Israel permanent by confirming it with כִּרְיִת שְׁלוֹם. The term "covenant of peace" (peace in the sense of the well-being of the community) occurs in DI only in chapters 54 and 55. The prophet uses it when he speaks of God's salvation as a condition of things, as something that is permanent. The covenant is the confirmation of God's saving act (the deliverance) and the confirmation of the new relationship established between God and the chosen people.<sup>122</sup> In our opinion v. 10 is not referring to the Flood. The picture here is different. It is similar to that which can be found in the Psalter, such as Ps 46:1-3. This psalm expresses the believer's trust in God in the midst of the threat of chaos. But what Westermann stated is true. This passage gives a strong impression of the permanent character of Israel's salvation. Here again we discover that the prophet's thinking fits very well with the whole framework of thinking with the cultic tradition concerning the relationship between Yahweh and His people. Israel is always on

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121. Westermann, op. cit., p. 275.

122. ibid.

the side of creation. What the prophet wanted to convey is this: for a little while Israel had slid down to the side of chaos, but now she is back to her rightful position.

2.11 Is 54:11-17

עֲנִיָּה סַעֲרָה לֹא נִחְמָה 0 afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted,

הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי מִרְבִּיץ בְּפֹךְ אֲבֹנִיךָ look, I will set your stones in antimony,

וְיִסְדֹּתֶיךָ בַּסַּפִּירִים and lay your foundations with sapphires.

וְשִׁמְתִּי כֶדֶד שִׁמְשֵׁתֶיךָ I will make your pinnacles of agate,

וְשַׁעֲרֶיךָ לְאֲבֹנֵי אֶקְדָּח your gates of carbuncles,

וְכָל-גְּבוּלְךָ לְאֲבֹנֵי-חַפֵּץ and all your wall of precious stones.

In this passage, which is also a proclamation of salvation<sup>123</sup>, the prophet lets Yahweh speak directly to the woman. Now the picture is of a barren woman who is to become a mother. It refers to Zion-Jerusalem, which will be rebuilt in splendour. The address again is a recollection of a lament, more precisely the lament of a childless woman. Here it is applied collectively to the people.

The expression **לֹא נִחְמָה** in v. 11 in the context of Jerusalem corresponds with the cry to comfort Jerusalem in 40:1, 2.

**הִנֵּה** and the participial **מִרְבִּיץ** indicate the presentness of Yahweh's intervention, a phenomenon which can also be found in the Mesopotamian salvation oracle as pointed out by Harner. This is also one factor which makes us think that 54:6 is a recalling in the present, not a reference to something that was done long ago.

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123. At least in its contents, so Schoors, op. cit., p. 140.

Vv. 11b-12 describes the city, ablaze with precious stones. Similar descriptions can be found in Ezek 28:13f and in Gen 2:11f, except that in them it is not a city but a garden which is laid in gems.

וכל-בניך למורי יהוה All your sons shall be taught by the Lord,

ורב שלום בניך and great shall be the prosperity of your sons.

בצדקה תכוני In righteousness you shall be established;

רחקי מעשק you shall be far from oppression,

כי-לא תיראי for you shall not fear;

ומסתחה כי לא-תקר רב אליך and from terror, for it shall not come near you.

הן גור יגור If any one stirs up strife,

אפס מאותי it is not from with me;

מי-גד אתך whoever stirs up strife with you

עליך יפול shall fall because of you.

V. 13. "your sons". Marti and Duhm suggested to read בִּנְיָ, "your builders". But this will mar the metaphor of the woman, so we retain the MT. Besides, there is no support from the ancient renderings.<sup>124</sup> The city will or is being rebuilt in splendour and her inhabitants will become disciples of Yahweh, and they will greatly prosper.

Vv. 13-17 according to Westermann is originally a promise of blessing which function is different from an oracle of salvation. The latter is God's answer to a lament and promises the removal of

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124. The LXX, Syr., T, V, Q<sup>a</sup> all read "your sons".



the suffering which is lamented upon. The former promises God's constant presence, help, protection and blessing.<sup>125</sup> The application of a personal promise of blessing to the nation means that DI had in mind a new era of divine blessing for Zion-Jerusalem, either in the present or in the immediate future. Probably the promise of blessing is combined with a proclamation of salvation.<sup>126</sup> to give an emphasis on the permanence of the salvation. V. 14 "in righteousness you shall be established". יָיִן יְשׁוּעָה, from the word יָשַׁע which belongs to verbs of creation and the occurrence of יָשַׁע in v. 11 indicate that the rebuilding of the city is considered as an act of creation.

יָשַׁע . The word has many nuances. יָשַׁע is used in the contexts of wisdom, nature and fertility, war and victory, cult and sacrifice, justice and kingship. The ancient Near East background of יָשַׁע is the idea of a general world order (its Egyptian parallel: ma'at), whose realisation can be seen in those contexts. The world order is closely related to the Creator God who provides it.<sup>127</sup> Originally there is a difference between יָשַׁע and יָשַׁע . The former is the world order while the latter is the attitude or action which creates or corresponds to the world order. But sometimes the distinction is not observed.<sup>128</sup> In the individual psalms of lament יָשַׁע occurs in the context of Yahweh as a just God.

125. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 278-79.

126. Schoors, op. cit., p. 143.

127. See H.H. Schmid, Gerechtigkeit als Weltordnung, Tübingen, 1968, pp. 14-23, 130-34. Also our discussion above, pp. 77ff.

128. Schmid, op. cit., pp. 23-69.

In the world full of injustices, the believer looks at Yahweh as the upholder of justice (Pss 31:2; 71:2). Is 41:10 may be regarded as an answer to this kind of lament.<sup>129</sup> Elsewhere in Is 40-55  $\text{הַיְּשׁוּעָה}$  is paralleled to  $\text{יְשׁוּעָה}$  (45:8; 46:13; 51:5-6) and  $\text{הַיְּשׁוּעָה}$  (48:18; 54:13-14). If this is so, then it is clear that Jerusalem's new prosperity will be in perfect accordance with God's world order. Or better, the splendour and prosperity of the new city are parts of the world order which Yahweh as the Creator is going to realise on this earth..

Vv. 14b-15 describe the salvific condition of the new city. Its inhabitants will have no oppression, fear and terror. The salvation that Yahweh created will protect the city from its enemies.

$\text{מִיָּדִי}$ , "from with me". This is a variant form of  $\text{מִיָּדִי}$  (which is the reading in Q<sup>a</sup>; see also the prop. in the BHK). This construction is also used in Ps 22:26 and 1 Kings 1:27.<sup>130</sup> No attack from the foreign enemies outside would be regarded as sent from Yahweh. This is something very different from the old situation, where the triumphant foreign enemies were regarded as Yahweh's agents as in Is 10:5 and Jer 27:5-7; 32:28. Moreover, every attack against the city is doomed to failure. The new city will be strong enough to put down the attackers.

$\text{וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁרָף הַיָּם וְהָיָה הַיָּם כִּי יִשְׁרָף הַיָּם}$  Look, I have created the smith  
 $\text{וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁרָף הַיָּם וְהָיָה הַיָּם כִּי יִשְׁרָף הַיָּם}$  who blows the fire of coals,

129. In the RSV it is translated as "victory", following the context of Abraham (v. 8) and reference to war in v. 12.

130. North, op. cit., p. 253.

ומוציא כלי למעשהו and produces a weapon for its purpose.  
 ואנכי כדאתי משחית לחבל I have also created the ravager to  
 חבל - כלי יוצר עליך no weapon that is fashioned against  
 לא יצלח you shall prosper,  
 וכל לשון תקום - אתי and every tongue that rises against  
 למשפט you in judgement you shall confute.  
 זאת נחלת עבדי יהוה This is the heritage of the servants  
 of the Lord,  
 וצדקתם מאתי and their vindication from me,  
 נאם - יהוה says the Lord.

Vv. 16-17 give the reason why there will be always peace in the community: it is because the craftsman who produces the weapons and the person who uses them (משחית, "the ravager") are created by the same God who creates the salvific condition of the city. The use of the special term נחלה in our opinion is to stress these facts. Even the enemies are controlled by Yahweh.

The reference to the accusing tongue may be out of place here, but Westermann finds here a reminiscence from the promise of blessing to the individual, such as can be seen in Job 5:21, "you shall be hid from the scourge of the tongue".<sup>131</sup>

North saw a parallel between נחלה and צדקה. This is contrasted to the material inheritance such as the promised land of Canaan (in Deuteronomic literature). "DI was more concerned with the spiritual than with the material welfare of the servants of the Lord."<sup>132</sup> It is of course true that Israel here shall inherit צדקה. But the צדקה is not something which has a spiritual

131. Westermann, op. cit., p. 279.

132. North, op. cit., p. 254.



character. It is something concrete that is going to be realised by God in this world. In this context it is the abundant prosperity and well-being of the new Zion-Jerusalem. Both the material and the spiritual aspects are included in  $\eta \rho \tau \upsilon$ . In the end of this passage the prophet switched from the language of metaphor to a more concrete one. The addressee is no longer the woman figure, but "the servants of the Lord".

## 2.12 Conclusion

In his article Begrich identified eight salvation oracles, while in his book he mentioned twenty-four of them. As we have seen his method in determining the salvation oracles in the latter is not very clear, so we will refer only to his findings in the article. The salvation oracles according to Begrich are 41:8-13, 14-16; 43:1-3, 5; 44:2-5; 48:17-19; 49:7, 14-15; 51:7-8; 54:4-8. von Waldow gave a list of the same number of salvation oracles, but he identified them slightly differently: 41:8-13, 14-16; 43:1-4, 5-7; 44:1-5; 46:12f; 49:22f, 24-26; 54:4-6, 11-17. He also holds that there are another four slightly modified salvation oracles: 43:16-21; 46:3f; 49:8-12; 54:7-10. Westermann on the other hand thinks that there are only six real salvation oracles: 41:8-14, 14-16; 42:1-4, 5-7; 44:1-5; 54:4-6. Beside the real salvation oracles he mentioned five other passages as belonging to proclamations of salvation: 41:17-20; 42:14-17; 43:16-21; 45:14-17; 49:7-12(?). As we have seen von Waldow objected strongly to this distinction, while on the other hand Schoors supported Westermann. We think it is right to make a distinction between an oracle of salvation and a proclamation of salvation as long as we remember that they belong closely together and cannot be separated from each other. Schoors himself had his own

list. Six passages belong to the oracle of salvation: 41:8-13; 41:14-16; 43:1-4; 43:5-7; 44:1-5; 54:4-6. He included the other twelve within the proclamation of salvation: 41:17-20; 42:14-17; 43:16-21; 46:12-13; 49:7-12(13); 49:14-26; 51:1-8; 51:9-16; 51:17-23; 54:7-10; 54:11-17; 55:1-5.

From these lists we can see that in DI about 6-8 passages belong to the oracles of salvation and about 12 are proclamations of salvation. All in all, about 18-20 passages have salvation as their main concern. Our examination has shown that eleven of these passages contained concepts of creation, not as secondary or ancillary motives or metaphors, but as basis for the prophet's message of salvation. Four passages belong to the true salvation oracles: 43:1-2; 43:5-7; 44:1-5; 54:4-6. The rest belong to the proclamation of salvation: 41:17-20; 43:14-15; 43:16-21; 51:1-8; 51:9-16; 54:7-10; 54:11-17. It is impossible to argue that creation in DI is not a Heilsbegriff. If there are still other passages in the trial-speeches and disputations and in the other passages which do not belong to these forms that contain reference to creation then we think it is time to ask whether creation theology is not a dominant or a decisive element in DI's thinking.

### 3. The trial-speeches and the disputations

The trial-speech refers not to a single unique type of prophetic speech but to a group of types having in common the presupposition of an imagined judicial action.<sup>133</sup> According to von Waldow the structure of the trial-speech is as follows:

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133. von Waldow, "The Message of Deutero-Isaiah", p. 270.

1. The speeches of accusation:
  - a. the accuser's starting a legal action
  - b. the plaintiff's speech in court
2. The speeches of defense:
  - a. the defendant's starting of a legal action
  - b. the defendant's speech in court, or a speech in favour of the defendant
3. The speeches of the judge

Most of the general discussion of the trial-speech has been done in section A, (pp. 143ff) so there is no need to repeat it here. But we need some remarks on the characteristics of the trial-speech in DI.

In regard to Israel as the people of God we find the same phenomenon as in the pre-exilic adaptation of the form: Yahweh is both the prosecutor and the judge. von Waldow, however, thinks that at least in two passages (Is 43:22-28; 50:1-3) Yahweh is simultaneously playing the role of the judge and the role of the defendant accused by Israel. In these passages some of the exiles thought that Yahweh had broken or suspended the covenant or failed to meet His obligation.<sup>134</sup> In His reply Yahweh simply turns the table and proves the lapses of the other side. Keeping in mind von Waldow's evidence, on the whole we can still see Yahweh as the prosecutor and the judge. If the task of the judge in Israel includes securing the rights of the needy then it is inevitable that he could also be accused of neglecting his obligation. In regard

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134. ibid., p. 271.



to the foreign nations we need to be more careful in identifying the participants. According to von Waldow in this case Yahweh is judge, and as such identical with the prosecutor; but the accused are the foreign nations, and the witness is Israel.<sup>135</sup> Westermann, however, thinks that in trial-speeches involving the foreign nations Yahweh confronts both the gods of the foreign nations and the foreign nations themselves.<sup>136</sup> Although these two are closely intertwined in DI it is useful not to make a total identification of them. The gods of the foreign nations are futile but the foreign nations are not totally futile. We have noted that there is concern for the foreign nations in the salvation oracles. If the same concern could also be found in the trial-speeches and disputations then we may have a strong case for the prophet taking a new direction from the usual cultic view on the fate of the foreign nations.

Both von Waldow and Westermann agree that this form of legal speech against the foreign nations is a new invention of the prophet himself.<sup>137</sup> Westermann points at the actual situation of the exiles as the reason of this invention.<sup>138</sup> Since Israel had ceased to be an independent state, her God could not now prove her superiority to the gods of Babylon by means of victory over her foes. So DI shifted the arena of decision from the battlefield to the law court. Military victory as proof of one God's superiority over the others is superseded by the deity's ability to announce future events,

135. ibid., p. 272.

136. Westermann, op. cit., p. 15.

137. von Waldow, op. cit., p. 272 and Westermann, loc. cit.

138. Westermann, loc. cit.

including the defeat of the very nation which worships the deity. According to both von Waldow and Westermann this is something unheard of in the ancient Near East.<sup>139</sup>

The adaptation of the form of the trial-speech in relation to the foreign nations is indeed DI's own invention. No prototypes of this form appear in the writings of the pre-exilic or even the other prophets. However, we have seen above in section A that the idea of Yahweh judging the nations is ancient and can be traced back to the cultic traditions of Jerusalem (Pss 24; 93; 94:2; 95:3; 96; 97; 99).<sup>140</sup>

This view is contested by Schoors<sup>141</sup> He argued that DI does not follow this Jerusalem tradition. Nowhere in DI is Yahweh called **יְהוָה**, and His kingship is not universal. In Is 41:21 Yahweh is King of Jacob, while in 44:6 He is King of Israel. The nations are not accused. The trial-speeches are not about accusations but about claims. They are a defence of Yahweh's claim (Anspruchsstreit). There is a note of accusation in them and even condemnation (Is 41:24), but this is not the emphasis. The importance of the trial-speeches lie in the fact that there the claims of Yahweh's adversaries are proved false.

It is actually difficult to make a clear distinction between claims and accusations. Perhaps Schoors is a little bit too subtle.

139. von Waldow, op. cit., pp. 278, 281; Westermann, loc. cit.

140. See section A above, pp. 120-21; it is also von Waldow's view, op. cit., p. 272.

141. Schoors, op. cit., pp. 239-43.

Whether DI followed the Jerusalem cultic traditions or not will be examined by exegesis of passages. But if Yahweh as King of Israel is referred to in a context of nations then we must ask ourselves whether it is true that Yahweh is only King of Israel. His kingship must be related somewhat to His creatorship. In exegesis of passages we will examine how this relationship between particularism and universalism is characterised by the prophet and the problem that lies behind Westermann's claim, that there is a shift from military victories to legal success in court as proof of Yahweh's superiority over other deities.

The disputation genre is frequently used by the prophets to defend their message and convince their hearers (cf. Amos 3:3-6, 7-8; 9:7; Is 10:8-11; 28:23-29; Jer 8:8).<sup>142</sup> This is not the usual arguing back and forth by persons holding different opinions on a specific subject. The aim is to convince and refute objections. We can find disputations in 40:12-17, 21-26, 27-31; 44:24-28, 45:11-13; 45:18-25; 46:8-11; 48:12-16; 55:8-13. Again von Waldow provides a scheme: usually the debate opens with a basis of discussion to which the other party is supposed to have already agreed. Then follows the inferred consequence which comprises what the prophet wants the other party to believe.<sup>143</sup>

In the disputations (as well as in the salvation oracles or the proclamations of salvation) hymnic elements can be found. This shows that both the prophet and his audience lived in the tradition

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142. Begrich, Studien zu Deuterjesaja, München, 1969, pp. 48-53.

143. von Waldow, op. cit., p. 273.



and theology of the Psalter as the Psalms were sung throughout the centuries in Israel's worship. But whether they can serve as proof of the existence of a penitential worship as held by von Waldow is not at all certain.

#### 4. References to creation concepts in the trial-speeches

##### 4.1 Is 45:18-25

כי כה אמר - יהוה	For thus says the Lord,
בורא השמים הוא האלהים	who creates the heavens, He is God!
יצר הארץ ועשה הוא כוננה	who forms the earth and makes it, He establishes it!
לא-תהו בראה	He did not create it a chaos,
לשבת יצרה	He formed it to be inhabited.
אני יהוה ואין עוד	I am the Lord and there is no other.
לא בסתר דברתי	I did not speak in secret,
במקום ארץ חשך	in a site at the land of darkness.
לא אמלתי לזרע יעקב	I did not say to the seed of Jacob:
תהו בקשובי	seek me in chaos.
אני יהוה דבר צדק	I the Lord speak what is right,
מגיד מישרים	I declare what is true.

V. 18. Four creation verbs are used in this hymnic praise. All refer to the sole God, the Creator. V. 18c may be taken as a general statement on creation. What God creates is good for Him (the heavens) and good for humankind (the earth). At the same time there must be some connection with the restoration theme, not in the sense that the reference to creation functions figuratively to convey a picture of restoration of the land but that creation of the earth becomes the basis or ground for the restoration. Westermann thinks that the

phrase must be connected with the content of vv. 20-25. Other nations too have a certain place in God's creation. Yahweh created the world to be inhabited by all nations.<sup>144</sup> "I did not say to the seed of Jacob: seek me in chaos". Schoors and Westermann translated  $\text{לִנְיָן}$  as "vain"<sup>145</sup>; North: "void".<sup>146</sup>  $\text{שׁוֹפָר}$  is a cultic term which designates the oracular questioning of Yahweh. The same phenomenon is also practiced by the surrounding countries concerning the future. North gave a rather dogmatic explanation.<sup>147</sup> He started by stating that man cannot by searching find out God. Job 11:7 was quoted as support. "Seek me in the void" then was directly connected with v. 15. People cannot seek God, because He hides Himself and could only be known as far as He chooses to reveal Himself. But  $\text{שׁוֹפָר}$  is not a negative word in the OT. On the one hand God is acknowledged as the hidden or the unfathomable One as in Is 45:15 and in Job 11:7. On the other hand people are encouraged to seek God. The prophet used the term  $\text{שׁוֹפָר}$  in Is 51:1 in a positive way. God hides Himself, but He is not unapproachable. North referred to Gen 1:2 as a possible allusion, but did not see any relationship between 19a and 19b. Westermann, however, is close to grasping the meaning of the whole passage. The words refer to the previous prophecies (by the prophets of doom) which had led to darkness and nothingness of the exile.<sup>148</sup> It is not the word "seek" that must be regarded in a negative sense

144. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 172-73.

145. Schoors, op. cit., p. 233; Westermann, op. cit., p. 173.

146. North, op. cit., p. 48.

147. North, op. cit., p. 159.

148. Westermann, op. cit., p. 173.

but the words "secret", "darkness" and "chaos". These three words have the same parallel meaning in the context of v. 19. We do not see why  $\text{לִהְיוֹת}$  in v. 19 should not be translated in the same sense as  $\text{לִהְיוֹת}$  in v. 18. So if Yahweh said that He did not say "seek me in chaos" it means that the seed of Jacob must now look for Him on the side of creation.

"I the Lord speak what is right, I declare what is true". In Prov 1:3 and 2:9  $\text{קִדְשׁ}$  and  $\text{מִישׁוֹרֵי עֵד}$  also occur together. The pair of words convey a totality of what is understood to be right. These words do not provide a contrast against "secret", "darkness" and "chaos"; they confirm the previous statement. It is only right and true that Yahweh stands on the side of creation. The time of the disconfirmation of the world order is over. Yahweh's act is once again in accordance with the order of the world.

$\text{הַקְבִּצוּ וּבֹאוּ}$	Assemble yourselves and come,
$\text{הַצִּנְגְּשׁוּ יַחְדָּו}$	draw near together, you survivors of
$\text{פְּלִיטֵי הַגּוֹיִם}$	the nations!
$\text{לֹא יָדְעוּ}$	They have no knowledge
$\text{הַנֹּשְׂאִים אֶת-עֵץ פְּסִלִים}$	who carry about their wooden idols,
$\text{וּמִתְפַּלְלִים אֶל-אֵל}$	and keep on praying to a god that
$\text{לֹא יוֹשִׁיעַ}$	cannot save,
$\text{הִגִּידוּ וְהִגִּישׁוּ}$	Declare and present your case;
$\text{אִם יוֹעֲצוּ יַהְדּוּ}$	let them take counsel together!
$\text{מִי הַשְׁמִיעַ זֶאת מִקֶּדֶם}$	Who told this long ago?
$\text{מִאִזְ הִגִּידָהּ}$	Who declared it of old?
$\text{הֲלוֹא אֲנִי יְהוָה}$	Was it not I, the Lord?
$\text{וְאֵין-עוֹד אֱלֹהִים מִבְּלַעַדִּי}$	And there is no other God besides me,
$\text{אֵל-צַדִּיק וּמוֹשִׁיעַ}$	a righteous God and a Saviour;
$\text{אֵין זֹלָתִי}$	there is none besides me.



V. 20. "survivors of the nations". <sup>ל</sup>יִשְׁבְּרוּ are those who survived a battle. Seen in the light of 45:1-7 they seem to point at the nations who survived Cyrus' exploits, including the Babylonians. V. 20b gives the reason: they have placed their trust on idols. The phrase "a god that cannot save" is to be contrasted to the phrase "a righteous God and a Saviour", which refers to Yahweh as the only God.

Because 20b is similar to 44:18 Westermann regarded it as a gloss intended for 46:1-2, but wrongly placed in this text. The original reason then is found in v. 21. The nations are defeated because Yahweh predicted their defeat long ago. Schoors thinks that <sup>ל</sup>יִשְׁבְּרוּ in v. 21 pointed to Cyrus as in all other passages in DI which refer to proof by prediction (Weissagungsbeweis).<sup>149</sup> We think this passage refers to the defeat of the nations and only indirectly to Cyrus, who of course is going to defeat them. The sureness in which the prophet presented this prediction is striking, as Cyrus was still on campaign. But the events show that defeat is approaching and the prophet interpreted these events as evidence of Yahweh's ability as the only true God.

פֹּנֵה-לִי וְהוֹשֵׁעַ	Turn to me and be saved,
כָּל-אֶפְסוֹסֵי-אֲרֶץ	all the ends of the earth!
כִּי אֲנִי-אלֹהִים וְאֵין עוֹד	For I am God, and there is no other.
בִּי וַשְׁכַּעְתִּי	By myself I have sworn,
צֵא מִפִּי צֶדֶקָה	from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness
דָּבָר וְלֹא יָשׁוּב	a word that shall not return:

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149. Schoors, op. cit., p. 235.

כי-לי תכדע כל-ברך	To me every knee shall bow,
תשבע כל-לשון	every tongue shall swear.
אך ביהוה לי אמר	Only in the Lord, it will be said of me,
צדקות ועז	are righteousness and strength;
עדיו יבוא ויבשו	to Him shall come and be ashamed,
כל הנחרים בו	all who are incensed against Him,
ביהוה יצדקו ויתהללו	In the Lord all the offspring of Israel
כל-זרע ישראל	shall triumph and glory.

V. 22. "For I am God and there is no other". In the pre-exilic cultic celebrations Yahweh is identified with **ל** as "the Most High" (Pss 55:20; 73:11; 78; 118:27). There He is celebrated as King and Creator of the world. But basically this thought means that Yahweh has control over the foreign nations. He thus protects the people from their threat. It is in this sense that we must use the term 'universalism' in the Jerusalem tradition. Yahweh, the god of Israel, but not of the foreign nations, He is the King and Creator of the world. Yahweh's control over the whole world then means that what we have in the cultic traditions is a kind of practical monotheism. The existence of other deities is not denied, but they are considered less powerful. The hymns of praise stress the incomparability of Yahweh over the other deities. Undoubtedly DI continued this tradition. However, the way he dealt with the materials of tradition causes H. Wildberger to wonder whether it is right to say that DI was continuing the notion of Yahweh's incomparability in his message.<sup>150</sup> Regardless of how we translate

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150. H. Wildberger, "Der Monotheismus Deuterjesaja", Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie, Festschrift W. Zimmerli, H. Donner et al, (eds.), Göttingen, 1977, pp. 506-30.

the phrase in Is 45:18, ה' אלהים can only mean that Yahweh is the God and no longer one god among many. V. 18 is reconfirmed by v. 21, "and there is no other אלהים besides me". In v. 22 the Selbstvorstellungsformel emphatically stated כי אני-אלהים

אין אחר, "For I am God, and there is no other".. The same holds for 43:10-13 and 45:5-7. For the prophet Yahweh is not just incomparable, but the only one that exists as God. Wildberger concluded that in the case of DI we can only talk of Yahweh's unicity (Einzigkeit), and not of His incomparability (Unvergleichlichkeit).<sup>151</sup>

Wildberger's examination of the passages in Is 40-55 carries conviction. It is thus legitimate to talk about DI's monotheism. But whether this implies that DI's God is also a universal God in the "ontological" sense is still an open question and must be examined in the proceeding exegesis. Because Yahweh only is God and the only One who is a saviour (v. 21), there is no other way for the survivors of the nations (which now were regarded as weak and small) to save themselves from oblivion but to turn to Yahweh. North noted that "be saved" can be regarded as Niph. tolerativum, "let yourselves be saved".<sup>152</sup> As in Is 51 we can also see in vv. 22-25 that DI has concern for the foreign nations. In v. 23 it is only right that "every knee shall bow" to the triumphant figure of God and that "every tongue shall swear" allegiance to His name.

V. 24. אמר לי, "to me he said". Schoors proposed "it will be said", taking אמר לי as emphatic and Q<sup>a</sup> אמר לי (niph imperf. of

151. ibid., p. 516.

152. North, op. cit., p. 161.



יְהוָה).<sup>153</sup> In vv. 24-25 there is a slight change of emphasis.

Previously the stress is on Yahweh's concern for the foreign nations.

He is **לֵא**, but in this section the stress is on Yahweh's victory.

Those who were previously enemies of Yahweh shall come to him and

be ashamed, not in the sense that they regret their former attitudes,

but lose face. And because it is Yahweh's victory (**וְנִצָּח** has the

meaning of "victory" in the context of this section), it is also

Israel's victory, and they may glory in it. Here we can see that

although there is concern for the foreign nations in the thinking

of DI, he did not place them on the same level as Israel. Salvation

is offered to non-Israelites, in the sense that they are sharing

Israel's salvation. The notion of election in DI is not the same as

in the cultic tradition, where it contains the element of hatred.

But it is not abandoned, so we can not talk of universalism in DI

without qualification.<sup>154</sup> The same holds for Israel's deity. He

is the **לֵא**, no other gods exist beside Him. But He is still Yahweh, the God of Israel.

## 5. References to creation concepts in the disputations

### 5.1 Is 40:12-31

מִי-מִדַּד בְּשַׁעֲלוֹ מַיִם

Who has measured the waters in his hollow of the hand,

וּשְׁמַיִם בְּזַרְתָּ תַכְךָ

and calculated the heavens by the span (of the hand),

וְכָל בְּשָׁלַשׁ עֶפֶר הָאָרֶץ

and contained the dust of the earth in a measure,

153. Schoors, op. cit., p. 236; North, op. cit., p. 156, and the RSV.

154. Cf. N.H. Snaith, "The Servant of the Lord in Deutero-Isaiah", Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, H.H. Rowley (ed.), Edinburgh, 1950, pp. 187-200.

ושקל בפלס הרים and weighed the mountains in a scale,  
 וגבעות במאזני ׀ and the hills in a balance?

V. 12, Q<sup>a</sup> reads ׀'י, "waters of the sea". But this is not necessarily the original reading as its parallels in Job 28:25 and Prov 30:4 also refer to ׀'י. The latter also has similar rhetorical questions. It is also possible that here DI has a creation narrative similar to that in Gen 1 in mind, and besides, the phrase could also be a reminder of the cultic assumption of ׀'י being under the control of the Creator.

׀ is gal perf. third pers. sing. masc. of כול, "to contain".<sup>155</sup> The LXX lacks ׀'י and understood ׀'י as και παντα (וכל), "and all".

מי-תכן את-רוח יהוה Who has measured the spirit of the Lord,

ואיש עצתו יודיענו and who was His counsellor that causes Him to know?

את-מי נועץ ויבינהו With whom did He counsel for His understanding,

וילמדנו בארץ חשפט and who taught Him the path of what is right,

וילמדנו דעת and who taught Him knowledge,

ודרך תכונות יודיענו and who caused Him to know the way of understanding?

V. 13. According to Rignell, "the most natural translation" would be "Who directs the spirit of the Lord and makes known to Him the man of His counsel?".<sup>156</sup> The verse is to be connected with 46:10f

155. See North, op. cit., p. 81.

156. Rignell, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

and necessitates an answer which could only be: Cyrus. However, it appears that these rhetorical questions are not intended that way. The answers are regarded as so obvious as not to need stating. In v. 12 the expected answer would be "nobody" or "God" while in vv. 13-14 it would be "nobody". The literal translation of v. 13 makes enough sense to be used as a basis for any effort to express its meaning in different words: "and was the man of His counsel who caused Him to know"?

V. 14. The LXX lacks וַיִּלְמַדְהוּ לַעֲדָת; R.N. Whybray and Schoors followed the LXX.<sup>157</sup> But we decide to retain the MT. Repetition and assonance are the characteristics of rhetorical questions.<sup>158</sup> לִמְדָה in the context of this passage means "mind" (cf. Ezek 11:15; 20:32), in the sense of "will".

Vv. 12-14 describe Yahweh's mighty acts in creation and that he did all these without anybody's assistance. Elliger's argument that the answer for v. 13 should be niemand because the passage is not concerned with the creatorship of Yahweh<sup>159</sup> is not convincing.

הֵן גּוֹיִם כִּמְדָּל Look, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,

וְכִשְׁחָק מֵאֲזוּנֵי נַחֲשָׁבוֹ and are accounted as the dust on the scales,

הֵן אֲיִלִּים כִּדְקֵי טֹל Look, the islands weigh like fine dust.

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157. R.N. Whybray, Isaiah 40-66, NCB, London, 1975, p. 54; Schoors, op. cit., p. 252.

158. Cf. Gitay, "Deutero-Isaiah: oral or written?", pp. 195-96.

159. Elliger, Jesaja II, XI<sub>1</sub>, BKAT, p. 47.



ולבנון אין די בער  
וחיתו אין די עולה

Lebanon would not suffice for fuel,  
and its livestock would not be  
enough for a burnt offering.

כל-הגוים כאין נגדו

All the nations are as nothing in His  
presence,

מאפס ותהו נחשבו-לו

they are accounted by Him as less than  
nothing and emptiness.

Vv. 15-17 contain statements concerning the foreign nations.

D.W. Thomas in the BHS proposed to emend <sup>ל'יט'</sup> in v. 15c into

<sup>ל'יט'</sup>. The meaning of <sup>ל'יט'</sup> is "weigh", as in Prov 27:3

(cf. Zeph 1:11). This is supported by the Syr. It fits the context  
better so we decide to follow D.W. Thomas.

Although the ancient versions emended <sup>וְדָלַעַל</sup> into <sup>וְדָלַעַל</sup>  
in v. 17, we decide to retain the MT. <sup>וְדָלַעַל</sup> can be explained  
with a comparative min: "less than nothing".

From vv. 12-17 we get a picture of Yahweh's transcendentness as  
Creator whose plan is unfathomable, which is contrasted to the  
nations as "nothing" (the absolute-substantivated use of <sup>אין</sup> in  
v. 17). North regards vv. 15-17 as referring to history.<sup>160</sup> In our  
opinion what we have here cannot be directly related to history. The  
prophet was primarily thinking in the framework of creation belief,  
in which absolute contrast between Creator and creature (here the  
nations) was intended by the prophet to build confidence. But  
indeed, this section may well refer indirectly to a relationship  
between creation and history. The phrases in v. 14:

who taught Him the path of justice ( <sup>לְדַרְשׁוֹ</sup> )?

.....  
and who caused Him to know the way of  
understanding ( <sup>לְיָדְעוֹ</sup> )?

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160. North, op. cit., p. 84.

are to be understood as pointing to the course of history as determined by God's will and by His insight. The phrases then function as a disputation against the complaint which is quoted by the prophet in v. 27, and that is why in the end of v. 28 the prophet referred again to **וְיִלְכֹךְ**: "His understanding is unsearchable".<sup>161</sup>

This section may have a hymnic background.<sup>162</sup> On the other hand the contrast between Creator and creature and some of the vocabulary betray an affinity with the form of a Wisdom disputation.<sup>163</sup> These two positions need not be polarised. Crüsemann shows that hymnic elements or style can be used in Wisdom passages.<sup>164</sup>

<b>וְאֵל-לֹא-מִי תִדְמֶינָהוּ אֵל</b>	To whom then are you going to compare God?
<b>וְמִה-דְּמוּת תַּעֲרֹכֶנּוּ-לוֹ</b>	or what likeness are you going to compare with Him?
<b>הַפֶּסֶל נֹסֵךְ חָרָשׁ</b>	The idol? A craftsman sets it up,
<b>וְצֹרֵךְ בִּזְהָב יִדְקְעֵנּוּ</b>	the smith plates it with gold,
<b>וְדַתְקוֹת כֶּסֶף צוֹרֵךְ</b>	and he is smithing silver chains.
<b>הַמִּסְכֵּן תְּרוֹמָה</b>	The impoverished (as for) an effigy,
<b>עֵץ לֹא-יִרְקָב</b>	chooses a wood that would not rot.
<b>חָרָשׁ חָכֵם יִבְקֹשׁ-לוֹ</b>	He seeks a skilled craftsman
<b>לְהַכִּין פֶּסֶל לֹא יִמוּט</b>	to set up an idol that will not totter.

161. W.A.M. Beuken, "Miṣpāt. The First Servant Song and its Context", VT 22 (1972), p. 8.

162. In the studies of Gressmann, Gunkel and Volz.

163. R.F. Melugin, "Deutero-Isaiah and Form Criticism", VT 21 (1971), pp. 326-37. The words that belong to Wisdom vocabulary in this passage are **וְשִׁי** - cf. Job 38:2; 42:3; **יָד** - Job 28:23; Prov 3:2; **יָד** - Job 28:13, 23; Prov 30:3.

164. e.g. Job 12:17-25; 26:7-8; 28, Crüsemann, op. cit., pp. 118-21.

Vv. 18-20 offer an idol-parody. The  $\eta$  in v. 19 was taken as generic by the masoret, but it could be interrogative. The first  $\eta\eta\zeta$  is in the substantive, referring to the smith while the second  $\eta\eta\iota\zeta$  is a verb, "and he is smithing". North proposed to delete  $\eta\eta\iota\zeta\eta\eta\eta$  ; "It is wanting in V, was unintelligible to LXX, and in Q<sup>a</sup> has obviously written in by a second hand. It makes an awkward subject to  $\eta\eta\eta$  and breaks in between two tristichs in vv. 19 and 20".<sup>165</sup>  $\eta\eta\eta\eta$  has been interpreted in many ways: 1. as pual part. of  $\eta\eta$ , "poor" (G.R. Driver). The word then means "the impoverished". 2. as a parallel to the Assyrian musukkanu, which means "palm-tree" (H. Zimmern) or "mulberry-tree" (S. Smith). The word then is an explanation of  $\eta\eta$ . 3. as a parallel to the Akkadian and Ugaritic šiknu, "construction", "image" and Ugaritic skn, "to form", "to make an image" (J. Gray-Schoors). 4. as a derivation from  $\eta\eta$ , "steward", as in Is 22:15. The word then means "He who takes care of", "he who manages" (Rignell). 5. as a derivation from  $\eta\eta$ , "to dwell", "to be acquainted with", "to be prosperous", as in Job 34:9 (P. Trudinger).

$\eta\eta\eta\eta$  on the other hand has also been explained as 1. as a derivation from the root  $\eta\eta$ , which developed into "contribution" and became a technical sacrificial term, "offering". 2. as related to the Akkadian tarimtu, "sacred object", "effigy(?)" (G.R. Driver).

It is of course difficult to choose from so many possibilities, even more as they all have been rejected by scholars such as North

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165. North, op. cit., p. 82.



and Elliger.<sup>166</sup> But we try: G.R. Driver's proposal on **הַמִּסְחָה** as "the impoverished" looks most attractive. If it is only one idol being discussed here then the translation of **הַמִּנְחָה** as "offering" will suffice. The poor man offers a wood that will not rot to the smith, who eventually will cover it with layers of precious metal.<sup>167</sup> But if two kinds of idols are described here (and we suspect this is the case) then again G.R. Driver's proposal to see **הַמִּנְחָה** as an effigy may be taken over.

The meaning of vv. 19-20 is that the rich uses a superior form of idol (made from gold and silver) while the poor uses a much inferior material for his idol (wood). But it makes no difference what material people choose for their idol. It still needs to be set up so that it will not totter.

The idol-parody is intended to provide a contrast between the tottering idols - worthless no-gods in the eyes of the prophet - and the real **אל**, Yahweh.<sup>168</sup> The occurrence of the term in a context of idol-parody may add as a confirmation to Wildberger's opinion that DI's understanding of God is a monotheistic one.

**הֲלֹא תָדָעוּ הֲלֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ** Do you not know? Have you not heard?  
**הֲלֹא הֵגַד מֵרָאשׁ לָכֵן** Have you not been told from long ago?  
**הֲלֹא הִכִּינוּ תֵּם מוֹסְדֵי הָאָרֶץ** Have you not understood the foundations of the earth?  
**הִישָׁב עַל-חֹג הָאָרֶץ** It is He who is enthroned above the fault of the earth,

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166. For the latter see Elliger, op. cit., pp. 59-62.

167. Cf. Muilenburg, op. cit., p. 440.

168. For a recent confirmation of the intertwining aspects of idol-parody and creation see R.J. Clifford, "The Function of Idol Passages in Second Isaiah", CBQ 42 (1980), pp. 450-64.

וישביה כחגבים

and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers.

הנוטה כדק שמים

It is He who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,

וימתחם כאהל לשבת

and spreads them like a tent to dwell in.

הנותן תוזנים לאין

It is He who brings princes to naught,

שפטי ארץ כהו עשה

and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing!

אך כל-נטעו אך כל-זרעו

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,

אך כל-שרש בארץ גזעם

scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,

וגם-נשק בהם ויבשו

when He blows upon them, and they wither,

וסערה כקש תשאם

and the tempest carries them off like chaff.

The four questions in v. 21 are also rhetorical questions. DI took it for granted that his audience had heard of what he has been saying.

"Have you not understood the foundations of the earth?" This could be a parallel to the preceding question (where **שרש** occurs).

On the other hand the question could also be part of the description of creation, as in v. 26, where people are asked to observe the stars.

Thus here people are asked to ponder upon the pillars of the earth,

i.e. the mountains which according to ancient cosmologies support

the earth. If the first possibility is taken, then we must accept

either a haplography of **ח** or a double duty prefix (**שרש**),<sup>169</sup>

or emend **חִסְדֵּי** into **חִסְדֵּי** (Duhm) or **חִסְדֵּי** (Koehler).

The ancient versions (LXX, Syr., V, T) correspond with the MT. We

prefer the first, but whatever possibility we choose, the phrase refers

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169. See Schoors, op. cit., p. 255.

to the content of Israel's ancient traditions and even to revelation as it is understood in the sense of "revelation through tradition" as in Schoors,<sup>170</sup> but not as reference to revelation through creation.

The questions in v. 21 are not exact rhetorical questions, because in vv. 22-23 DI provided answers. Yahweh is the King and Creator of the world. He is so powerful that princes and rulers of the earth are nothing compared to Him. Participial verbs are used again, which constitute the familiar elements in the hymns. DI was not giving them new teachings, but was referring to things they ought to have known. The questions in v. 21 were intended to jolt the mind of the prophet's audience to make them aware of their traditions. It would be an exaggeration to state that DI did not develop any new theological insight, but it would have been impossible for him to utter the rhetorical questions without reflecting on already established concepts of creation.

V. 22 contains rare words.  $\lambda \lambda \Pi$  occurs only in Prov 8:27; Job 22:14 and probably also in Job 26:10.  $\rho \dot{\gamma}$  and  $\Pi \lambda \eta$  are hapax legomena. This suggests well-defined, distinctive traditions.<sup>171</sup>

V. 24 explains and strengthens the worthlessness of the powerful people. They are compared to chaff scattered by the wind.

Vv. 25-26. This section stresses the incomparability of Yahweh, not in the sense that Yahweh here is placed against the stars, but that Yahweh is comparable to nothing.

170. loc cit.

171. Westermann, op. cit., p. 56. Cf. N.C. Habel, "Appeal to Ancient Tradition as a Literary Form", ZAW 88 (1976), pp. 253-72.



וְאֵלֶּי-חַי תְּדַמּוּנִי	To whom then will you compare me,
וְאִשׁוּהָ	that I should be like him,
יֹאמַר קְדוֹשׁ	says the Holy One.
שֶׁאוֹ-מַרְוֹם עֵינֶיכֶם וְרֹא	Lift up your eyes on high and see:
מִי-בָרָא אֵלֶּה	who created these?
הַמּוֹצִיא בְּמִסְפָּר צְבָאָם	He who brings out their host by number,
לְכֻלָּם בְּשֵׁם יְקָרָא	calling them all by name;
מַרְבֵּה אוֹנִים	by the greatness of His might,
וְאִמִּיץ כֹּחַ	and because He is strong in power
אִישׁ לֹא נִעְדָּר	not one is missing.

It is common to refer to vv. 25-26 as have been directed as a polemic against Babylonian astral cult.<sup>172</sup> This is of course possible. The employment of נִעְדָּר might point to the creatureness of the heavenly bodies in the same sense as in Gen 1. But we think it is hardly the emphasis here. People were asked to lift up their eyes and observe the stars. The impression one gets from their regularity of appearances at night, that "no one is missing" can only lead to an acknowledgement of Yahweh's power behind all this and trust in His faithfulness and care in dealing with the order of the world.

Vv. 27-31 echo and develop what is already said. The harking back to the ancient traditions has a certain purpose: to counter some statements which according to the prophet is certainly wrong.

לָמָּה תֹאמַר יַעֲקֹב	Why do you say so, Jacob,
וְתִדְבֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל	and why do you speak like this Israel:

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172. ibid., p. 58; North, op. cit., p. 88; Schoors, op. cit., p. 256.

נסתרה דרכי מיהוה "My way is hidden from the Lord,  
 ומאלהי משפט יעבור and my right is disregarded by my God"  
 הלוא ידעת אם-לא שמעת Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
 אלהי עולם יהוה the Lord is the perpetual God,<sup>173</sup>  
 בורא קצות הארץ the Creator of the ends of the earth!  
 לא ייעק ולא ייגע He does not faint nor grow weary;  
 אין חקר לתבונתו His understanding is unfathomable.

According to Westermann in v. 27 DI "obviously" quoted a community lament.<sup>174</sup> By quoting this DI wanted to make clear that it is about time to stop this ritual of self-pity. The time of lamenting is over, for the exile is about to end. He compared the passage with many examples from the Psalter,<sup>175</sup> e.g. Pss 44:25:

Why do you hide your face?  
 Why do you forget our affliction  
 and oppression?

R.P. Merendino has recently contested this opinion.<sup>176</sup> In the psalms of lament the subject is not that the way of the Lord is hidden, but that the face of the Lord is hidden. Concerning 'right' (צדק) as one of the topics in the community lament, Merendino points out that the examples from the Psalter collected by Westermann are not about the disregard by Yahweh for the rights of His people, but about the people's plea to Yahweh to grant them their rights. In short, v. 27 is not a quotation from the community lament but a

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173. For the translation of עולם as "perpetual" see J. Barr, Biblical Words for Time, London, 1962, p. 117.

174. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

175. 'hid', Pss 13:2; 22:25; 27:9; 30:8; 44:25; 'right', Pss 26:11; 35:23; 37:6; 140:13, loc. cit.

176. Merendino, Der Erste und Der Letzte, pp. 117-118.

quotation from the people's expression of scepticism. This is not a lament any longer, but a hopeless resignation and disillusionment.<sup>177</sup>

There is indeed a weak point in Westermann's example of Ps 44:25 as basis for his argument that v. 27 is DI quoting a community lament. It is not a parallel to Ps 44:25. In the former it is the prophet who asked "why" to the people's statement, while in the latter the "why" is put by the people to Yahweh. Merendino is right in seeing v. 27 as a quotation of the people's expression of disappointment. However, we are not sure whether we can make a rigid distinction between 'questionings' and 'statements'. Ps 44, for instance, contains both statements of disappointment (vv. 10f) and questionings (v. 25). The same holds for Ps 80:5, 13 (questionings) and 6f (statements). Even if Is 40:27 is not in the form of questioning, it can still belong as a part of a lament. Although Merendino is able to prove that what Westermann regarded as "obvious" is by no means so, we do not want to disregard the possibility of v. 27 being a quotation taken from a context of community lament. Merendino also seems to differentiate rigidly between 'lament' and 'scepticism' but in the OT a lament could include sceptical statements. The prophet referred back to creation concepts to counter such scepticism - concepts which surely the people must have known. Why this revival of old traditions?

North stated that what we have in vv. 12-26 is something like a cosmological argument. But he implied that he was perplexed by DI's use of this kind of argument. ".....the argument from creation

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177. ibid., p. 118.



to the Creator might well seem more appropriate for idol-worshipping polytheists than to a people who had known God's goodness but were now, however, deservedly, rejected by him".<sup>178</sup> But perhaps there is a valid reason for the appeal to cosmological argument in the context of this passage. Hymns of praise and joy became largely muted after 586 and their place was taken by lamentations.<sup>179</sup> The present situation in the exile made it impossible for the people to praise. For "how shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" (Ps 137:4). The praises formerly employed in the cultic celebrations contradict the blatant reality of the exile. Any attempt to sing these praises might as well be considered as a mockery towards the people (Ps 137:3). We have seen above von Waldow's opinion of the actual Sitz im leben of salvation oracles in Is 40-55 as the penitential services in the exilic period. We have doubted this possibility in the case of DI for lack of internal evidence. It does not mean that we deny the existence of such services in the exilic period. Zech 7, Pss 44, 79, Lam 5 all point out that people used to gather from time to time to rise their lamentations. To be able to discern the reason of DI's revival of the hymns of praise and their contents, it is important to know first what exactly the content of the lamentations are. In Zech 7 Yahweh is acknowledged as right. The exile is caused by the people's stubbornness. In Ps 44, however, there is no such acknowledgement. The people confirm that it is Yahweh that caused them to suffer (v. 10), but they do not know the reason for this suffering (v. 25). They have not forgotten Yahweh, and have not departed from His ways and have not been false to the covenant (v. 18). Nevertheless

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178. North, op. cit., p. 89.

179. Westermann, op. cit., p. 58.

they still hope in Yahweh. They will not forget His name (v. 20), and appeal to Him to attend to the needs of His people (v. 24). In Ps 79 people acknowledge that God is angry with His people. There is an appeal for forgiveness of "our sins" (v. 9), but in v. 8 the sins of the forefathers are referred to. The situation is regarded as that of an injustice, which could do harm to the name of Yahweh. So there is an appeal to God to transfer this situation of oppression to the other nations, as it is their due. Lam 5:7 also refers to the sins of the forefathers who have been dead long ago, of which the present generation must still bear. From the content of these passages it is clear that although Yahweh was held to be the cause of the exile not all among the people, and in particular among those who grew up in the exile, were ready to admit that they had done something wrong which caused the prolongation of the exile. What is the situation in Is 40-55? We have seen in the trial-speeches how DI thought it necessary to counter some accusations from the side of the people that God is being unfair to them (50:1). Is 42:24-25; 43:23-24 give the answer: it is indeed Yahweh who sent them into exile, but He had to do it (43:28), it is their sins which caused their defeat. It seems that the prophet's audience too did not think of their present situation as a just one. Their problem is not concerned with divine impotence, but with divine justice. If the God of Israel sends His own people to defeat, humiliation and danger of extinction then it could only mean that that God is an unfair God.

Westermann and von Waldow's insights are basically right. DI tried to fight this assumption by emphasising that it is precisely the defeat of the nation which proves that Yahweh is the God of

Israel.<sup>180</sup> Their insights are marred by their insistence that this is something unheard of in the antique world, because there are indications that in the ancient Near East the deity could be responsible for the destruction of his own nation - destruction as punishment for national shortcomings.<sup>181</sup> The defeat of a nation was not necessarily regarded as the defeat of the national god at the hands of the enemy's national god, either in Israel or in the surrounding world. But on the whole Westermann and von Waldow's opinions still hold: in the mind of the prophet, Israel's God proved Himself as a just God precisely in the defeat of His people.

So far we have described the context in which DI employed the revived hymns. It still does not answer the question why DI revived the hymns. To achieve this we shall examine Is 40:29-31:

וַתֵּן לֵיעָק כֹּחַ	He gives power to the faint,
וּלְאִין אֲוִיִּים עֲצָמָה יִרְבֶּה	and to him that has no might He increases strength,
וְעַפְּסוֹ וְעַרְיָם וַיִּגְעוּ	youth shall faint and be weary,
וּבְחֹרִים כְּשׁוֹל יִכְשָׁלוּ	and young men shall utterly stumble
וְקוֹי יְהוָה יַחֲלִיפוּ כֹחַ	But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,

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180. Westermann, op. cit., p. 15; von Waldow, op. cit., pp. 278, 281.

181. J.B. White, "Universalisation of History in Deutero-Isaiah", in Scripture in Context. C.D. Evans - W.W. Hallo (eds.), Pittsburgh, 1980, p. 183. He pointed to one cuneiform text concerning the destruction of Babylon at the hands of the Elamites. The text (probably from the time of Nebuchadnezzar I) described how Marduk became angry with the evil things which were going on in Babylon and used the Elamites to punish his own people - the Babylonians. White also noted Y. Kaufmann's reference to the Moabite Stone inscriptions. Moab was humbled by Omri for many years "for Chemosh was angry at his land", p. 192 fn 23. For the Moabite Stone inscriptions see ANET, p. 320.



יִעֲלֶה אֶבֶר כְּשִׁנְיִם they shall soar with wings like eagles,

יִרְצוּ וְלֹא יִיָּגְעוּ they shall run and not be weary,

יִלְכוּ וְלֹא יִיָּעֲפוּ they shall walk and not faint.

Reference to those who "faint", "has no might" or "weary" immediately after reference to Yahweh as a God who never faints nor grows weary (v. 28) is the clue to the meaning of the whole of Is 40:12-31.

Yahweh is the Creator who will give strength to His weary people Israel. It is a cosmological argument as North noticed, but it is not conjured out of a vacuum. To make this clear we have to return to the prophet's insistence that it is Israel's own fault that causes her banishment. However, he did not stop at just this. Yahweh is Creator, He sent His own people to defeat. But precisely because they are defeated, Yahweh as Creator is going to change His people's fate. Hence the re-employment of the hymns. DI was trying to convince his audience that this revival of old traditions was not a mockery of the people. Israel has valid reasons to rejoice:

and cry to her: that her time of service  
is over, that her iniquity is pardoned,  
and that she has received from the Lord's  
hand double 182 for all her sins.

I, I am He  
who blots out your transgressions  
for my own sake,  
and I will not remember your sins.'

(Is 40:2; 43:25)

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182. ד'לפפ. לפפ in Ex 26:9; 28:16; 39:9; Job 41:5 indicates something that is placed exactly on top of its counterpart. 'The double' in Is 40:2 meant that Jerusalem's sins were wholly covered. Recently A. Phillips, "Double for all her Sins", ZAW 94/1 (1982), pp. 130-32, argued for a literal meaning of ד'לפפ: the exile has been twice as long as it should have been - covering another generation. Phillips also referred to Lam 5:7 in which this problem becomes an issue.

Westermann wrote in his commentary: "The trial-speeches which the prophet addressed to his fellow countrymen were not designed to move Israel to repentance, now that she saw the true state of things, and to make her beg God for mercy; no, with a certitude which admitted of no doubt DI now tells them that the situation has been completely transformed. God has forgiven his people (43:25). And now he looks for one thing and one only from men who could not understand him, and who accused him - their acceptance of the change to salvation which accompanied forgiveness..."<sup>183</sup>

By stressing that the people have sinned the prophet defended the understanding of Yahweh as a just God against their reluctance to admit that they have been wrong. Israel deserves to be punished. But at the same time DI responded to their impatience and frustration. The punishment is over, they are forgiven.

That the situation had been completely transformed was not at all obvious at that time. It is here that we can see the role of the traditional hymns and creation theology in the disputations (and in the salvation oracles). They function to give assurances to the people that a new situation has really dawned, in spite of the bitter reality of the present exile.

"They who wait for the Lord". They are not those in v. 27, but they who are willing to share the prophet's optimism. Those who had been waiting for God in the whole period of the hopelessness of the

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183. Westermann, op. cit., p. 18.

exile are about to witness the fruit of their waiting.<sup>184</sup>

"They shall soar with wings like eagles". <sup>לַיָּלִי</sup> could be taken as gal with the meaning as our rendering above or as hiphil transitive with the meaning of "they shall grow" as understood by the LXX. It is interesting to notice how the prophet's description of those who renew their strength runs from climax to anti-climax. First they soar up, then they run and at last they walk.

## 5.2 Is 44:24-28

כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה גֹּאֲלֶךָ	Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,
וַיֵּצֶרְךָ מִבֶּטֶן	who formed you from the womb:
אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה כָל	I am the Lord, who makes all things,
וְנֹטֵה שָׁמַיִם לְבַדִּי	who stretches out the heavens alone,
דֹּקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ	who spreads out the earth -
מִיָּאִתִּי	who is with me? <sup>185</sup>
מַפְזֵר אֶתֹת כַּדִּים	who frustrates the omens of sorcerers,
וְקֹסְמִים יְהוֹלֵל	and makes fools of diviners;
מַשִּׁיב חַכְמִים אַחֲוֹר	who turns wise men back,
וְדַעְתָּם יִשְׁכַּל	and makes their knowledge foolish;
מְקִים דְּבַר עַבְדּוֹ	who confirms the words of His servant,
וְעֹצֵת מַלְאָכָיו יִשְׁלִים	and performs the counsel of his messengers,
הָאָמַר לִירוּשָׁלַם תּוֹשֵׁב	who says of Jerusalem: she shall be inhabited,

184. Vv. 27-30 may be a response to a community lament used as an argument against the statement in v. 27, see R.F. Melugin, The Formation of Isaiah 40-55, Berlin-New York, 1976, pp. 35-36.

<sup>לַיָּלִי</sup> generally occurs in the context of expectation and hope as in Pss 37:39 and 130:5, Lam 3:25.

185. The MT has <sup>מִיָּאִתִּי</sup>. The Qere, <sup>מִיָּאִתִּי</sup>, "from with me"; the Kethib and 31 Mss, <sup>מִיָּאִתִּי</sup>, "who is with me"; Q<sup>a</sup> and the LXX renderings are similar to the Kethib. We follow the second rendering.



וְלְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה תִּבְנוּ וְהָיוּ and of the cities of Judah: they shall be built,

וְחָרַבְתִּיהֶן אֶקְוִמָם and I will raise up their ruins;

Many regard vv. 24-26 as an introduction to the oracle concerning Cyrus in 45:1-7.<sup>186</sup> Others differ in seeing 45:1 as the beginning of a new oracle, though it has to be understood in relation to the preceding oracles.<sup>187</sup> The disputation contains many hymn-like participles. The self-glorification of the deity in this section made Westermann think that it is probably closer to the trial-speeches between God and the foreign nations than to the disputations. Probably this section is a mixed genre, but primarily it is addressed to Israel.

"who formed you from the womb". The phrase also occurs in 44:2 and 49:5. In both the subject is Jacob-Israel. In the ancient Near East this phraseology always indicates a motif of divine predestination and selection. The subject is usually an individual (royal or prophetic figure). If DI applied the phraseology to a collective entity (Israel) then it means that Israel is selected to a predestined role in the near future. The rhetoric of unicity is more explicitly stated here than in Is 40:12ff. It is Yahweh alone who created all things. He creates alone. Nobody is assisting Him.

V. 25. וְהָיוּ דְבָרֵי אֵלֶיךָ רֵיקָה is "idle-chat", cf. Jer 50:36; Job 11:3. In this context וְהָיוּ could mean

186. Westermann, op. cit., p. 154; North, op. cit., p. 148; Whybray, op. cit., p. 102; Merendino, op. cit., pp. 402-403.

187. Muilenburg, op. cit., p. 521; J.L. McKenzie, The Second Isaiah, AB, New York, 1968, p. 75; Melugin, op. cit., p. 123.

"idle-chatterers". Put in a parellel with the diviners (  $\text{נִחְסֵי}$  ) it probably refers to people with alike professions. It is also plausible that the original word is  $\text{נִחְסֵי}$ , from the Akkadian baru(m), "sorcerer - priests", which also suits the use of  $\text{נִחְסֵי}$  as its parallel. If this is so then what we have here is one instance where a foreign word came to be Hebraized (W. von Soden). The figures in v. 25 (sorcerers, diviners and wise men) are usually regarded as Babylonians with their failed predictions, in contrast to Yahweh's servant (Israel) and messengers (those who function within Israel - Moses, the prophets and other functionaries) in v. 26, whose words are attestable. The pre-exilic prophets of doom have predicted defeat, and now the people are in defeat. But now God through one of His messengers predicts the restoration of Jerusalem, and people can be sure that this prediction will come true as the pre-exilic predictions of doom.

Because the line in v. 26 is longer than the other phrases the reference to the "cities of Judah" is suspected as an insertion. But this depends on whether DI was a strict formalist so that the meters in his work are always the same. Anyway, the suspected line does no harm to the context of the passage.

הָאָמַר לְצוּלָה חֲרָבִי	who says to the deep: be dry!
וְנִהַרְתִּיךָ אֹבֵי־שׁ	I will dry up your rivers;
הָאָמַר לְכוּרֵשׁ רַעִי	who says of Cyrus: He is my shepherd,
וְכָל-חֲפְצֵי יִשְׁלֵם	and he shall fulfil all my purposes;
וְלֵאמֹר לִירוּשָׁלַם	saying of Jerusalem: she shall be
תִּבְנֶה	built,
וְהִיכַל תוֹסֵד	and the foundations of the temple
	shall be laid.

V. 27. <sup>ל</sup>תְּהִי יָם is hapax legomenon. The word <sup>ל</sup>תְּהִי יָם however, appears in Pss 68:23; 107:24; Jon 2:4, which means "the deep". Possibly <sup>ל</sup>תְּהִי יָם has the same meaning. Together with תְּהִי יָם it forms part of the realm of chaos. V. 27 then could be seen as a reference to God's activity in the primordial times, when in His triumph over chaos He started to create the earth by drying up the deep. It also could mean that the rebuilding of Jerusalem is paralleled to the creation of the world, or even more, that Yahweh's use of Cyrus is seen as an act of creation.<sup>188</sup>

On the other hand v. 27 may function as a reminder to the people of Yahweh's early triumph in the Exodus which resulted in the safe crossing of the Red Sea by the people. Ex 15:5 and Neh 9:11 refer to תְּהִי יָם in the context of the Red Sea, and in Ex 14:21-22 the same vocabulary (יָם and יָבֵשׁ) is also used. Even if this is true, in the context of 44:24-28 the Exodus event is seen through a much broader perspective, namely that of creation.

Cyrus is given the title "my shepherd". In the ancient Near East the application of this title to a King is quite common. Kings are given the task by the deity to shepherd the people. In ancient Israel we find David, called to be shepherd of Israel (2 Sam 5:2); Jeremiah and Ezekiel denounced the Kings as being bad shepherds (Jer 2:8; 10:21; 23:1, 2; Ezek 34:2). Jer 3:15; 23:4 speaks of better shepherds, and Ezek 34:23 refers to a Davidic King, who will be the shepherd of Israel. Q<sup>a</sup> reads "my friend". This is very similar to the reference to Marduk as Cyrus' real friend.<sup>189</sup> North holds that

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188. See Melugin, op. cit., p.124.

189. See ANET, p. 315.



the meaning of "friend" here is not in the same sense as in 41:8 (concerning Abraham).<sup>190</sup> But in 48:14 Cyrus is presented as Yahweh's friend using a word derived from the same root as in 41:8.<sup>191</sup> The Q<sup>a</sup> reading then understood the prophet as placing Cyrus in the same level as Abraham. If Yahweh could choose a foreign sojourner as Abraham to be Israel's progenitor, why can't he choose a foreign ruler as Cyrus to do His purpose? But we retain the MT, which implies that Cyrus stands on the same level as David, and even nullified the place of David. Here the view of DI is in contrast to Ezekiel's.

V. 28b. After the usual הָאֱלֹהִים (26b, 27, 28a) the construction shifts to הָאֱלֹהִים. It introduces the words Cyrus speaks in the execution of his task. הָאֱלֹהִים is fem. as in Assyrian. Both Jerusalem and the temple can be referred to in the third pers.<sup>192</sup>

### 5.3 Is 45:9-13

הוֹי רֹב אֶת-יֹצֵרוֹ	Woe to him that strives against his Maker,
חֲרָשׁ אֶת-חֲרָשֵׁי אֶרֶץ	a piece of clay among earthen vessels!
הִיאמֵר חֲמֵר לִי־צֵרוֹ	Does the clay say to him who fashions it:
מָה-תַּעֲשֶׂה	what are you making?
וּפְעֹלָךְ אֵין-יָדִים לוֹ	or, your work has no hands!
הוֹי אֹמֵר לֹאב מָה-תּוֹלִיד	Woe to him who says to a father,
וְלֹאשָׁה מָה-תַּחֲלִילֶיךָ	what are you begetting?
	or to a woman, with what are you in travail?

190. North, op. cit., p. 147.

191. Schoors, op. cit., p. 270.

192. ibid., pp. 267 (his translation of v. 28), 273.

This kind of woe-speech was frequently used by the pre-exilic prophets in their proclamations of judgement. It is rather odd that DI should use this form of condemnation within the context of his own people. It is for this reason that Elliger assigned vv. 9-10 to Trito Isaiah.<sup>193</sup> According to Elliger, vv. 11-13 was originally a word directed to the Babylonians who wanted to keep the prophet from speaking about Cyrus. Trito-Isaiah changed the meaning of vv. 11-13 by adding vv. 9, 10.

On the other hand E. Gerstenberger's examination of the prophetic woe-formulas pointed that these are all general and unhistorical accusations against wicked persons. They originated from the realm of wisdom. The prophetic tradition borrowed this common formula from that realm.<sup>194</sup> Gerstenberger's findings certainly weakens Elliger's view. DI can use this formula in his message in a general sense. However, a satisfying conclusion may only be reached after exegesis of the section.

V. 9.  $\psi\eta\eta$  means "clay", in the sense of baked clay.<sup>195</sup> The literal translation of v. 9b is not unintelligible.  $\eta\lambda$  in 9b, "among", is not governed by  $\eta\lambda$  in 9a, "against".

Partly following the LXX - Volz, G.R. Driver and Whitley change the exclamatory  $\eta\lambda\eta\eta$  into interrogative  $\eta\lambda\eta\eta$ . Each understood the rest of the phrase differently. Volz:  $\eta\lambda\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta$

193. See Elliger, Deuterojesaja in seinem Verhältnis zu Tritojesaja, p. 179ff.

194. E. Gerstenberger, "The Woe Oracles of the Prophets", JBL (1962), pp. 249-63.

195. See KBH, p. 118.

"with his Master the foremost of the earth (mit seinem Meister der Ton von Erde)".<sup>196</sup> Whitley: אֶת-חַרְשׁ אֶרֶץ, "the land with the ploughman".<sup>197</sup> Driver: וְחַרְשׁ אֶת-חַרְשׁ אֶרֶץ, "or the ploughland with the ploughers of the soil".<sup>198</sup> Thirty-two years later Driver came up with a new proposal: חַרְשׁ אֶת-חַרְשׁ אֶרֶץ "(or shall) the potsherd (contend) with the scraper(s) of the earth"?<sup>199</sup> All these proposals do not seem to give a better meaning to v. 9, so we decide to retain the MT.

וּפְעַלְךָ אֵין-יָדִים לוֹ. The phrase could be translated in two ways. If it is regarded as part of the speech which belongs to the clay then we have something like this:

Does the clay say to him who fashions it:  
 "what are you making?" ;  
 or, "your work, it has no hands!"  
 (or, "your work has no hands!")

But if "your work" is regarded as distinct from the clay then the translation is like this:

Does the clay say to him who fashions it:  
 "what are you making?"  
 and does your work (say): "he/it has no hands"?

Based on the LXX and the Syr., Driver proposed this rendering

וְפְעַלְךָ אֵין-יָדִים לוֹ, "and his work, you have no hands".<sup>200</sup>

196. P. Volz, Jesaja II, übersetzt und erklärt, Leipzig, 1932, pp. 65-66.

197. C.F. Whitley, "Textual Notes on Deutero-Isaiah", VT 11 (1961), pp. 457-61.

198. G.R. Driver, "Linguistic and Textual Problems: Isaiah XL-LXVI", JTS 36 (1935), pp. 396-406.

199. G.R. Driver, "Isaianic Problems", Festschrift W. Eilers, Wiesbaden, 1967, pp. 43-57. In his rendering חַרְשׁ can be regarded either sing. or plur.

200. ibid., p. 51.



But the MT makes sense, so it is retained in our rendering. "Does your work (say)" in the second possibility seems out of place. The prophet was referring to the fashioner's work, not his audience's work. The first possibility serves the syntax better.

RSV (following Buber-Rosenzweig) translated  $\square : \overline{\text{7}} ?$  as "handles", but as North has noted, the word for handles is  $\text{7} \text{ } \overline{\text{7}} ?$  (Ex 26:17; 1 Kings 10:19; 2 Chron 9:18).<sup>201</sup> What do "hands" refer to? According to H. Leene  $\text{7} \text{ } \overline{\text{7}} ?$  denotes activity rather than the result of the activity. It should be translated as "labour, work, deed".<sup>202</sup> The "hands" then refers to the hands of the fashioner. Following Gesenius-Kautzsch and König, Leene prefers a non-literal sense of "he has no hands": "your work is unhandy". Leene's translation is very close to J.L. McKenzie.<sup>203</sup> Leene's proposal may give us an impression of over-subtlety. Even if  $\text{7} \text{ } \overline{\text{7}} ?$  is regarded as a piece of finished work (as in North's commentary) it still conveys a criticism to the fashioner. But as we have rejected the meaning of  $\text{7} \text{ } \overline{\text{7}} ?$  as "handles", Leene's proposal to read it as "handy" or "skill" is acceptable.

The metaphor of the potter and the clay can also be found in other parts of the OT (Is 29:16; Jer 18:1-6). They function to stress the freedom of God as Creator in dealing with His creature. V. 10 continues the thought in v. 9. Just as the clay can not question the potter, so too one can not question a father or a mother for giving birth to a child.

201. North, op. cit., p. 153.

202. H. Leene, "Universalism or Nationalism? Isaiah XLV 9-13 and its Context", Bijdragen 35 (1974), p. 312.

203. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 76.

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה      Thus says the Lord,  
 קִדּוּשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל      the Holy One of Israel,  
 וַיַּצֵּי      and his Maker:  
 הֲאֵתִיוֹתַי שְׂאֵלֶנִי עַל-כֵּן      Will you question me about my children,  
 וְעַל-פְּעֻלַּי יִצְוֵנִי      or command me concerning the work  
    of my hands?

V. 11. The phrases in 11b could be regarded as indicating encouragement. The verb **וַיַּצֵּי** in piel with acc. of the person and **לִי** means "to entrust someone with something" (cf. 1 Chron 22:12; 2 Sam 7:11; Neh 7:2). The MT makes sense and could be retained:

Ask me of things to come concerning my children,  
and entrust me with the work of my hands.

Rignell argued that **וַיַּצֵּי** here has the usual meaning of "command", so the second line should be rendered: "command me/you may command me regarding the work of my hand".<sup>204</sup> It is also possible that only the first line is indicating encouragement while the second indicates reproach: "and about the work of my hands will you command me?"<sup>205</sup> However, that encouraging statements should follow immediately after the questions in vv. 9, 10 make them suspect. Leene has theological objections to Rignell's view. One does not "command" God, even if to command means only "to speak".<sup>206</sup> But the appeals to God in the psalms of lament could have the urgency of a command, so Leene's objection can not be sustained. However, the context of the section is probably more of a reproach than an encouragement.

In BHK we have the proposal to emend **הֲאֵתִיוֹתַי שְׂאֵלֶנִי** into **הֲאֵתִיוֹתַי שְׂאֵלֶנִי אִתְּךָ**, "are you to question me.....?"

204. Rignell, op. cit., p. 46.

205. de Boer, op. cit., pp. 87-101.

206. Leene, op. cit., p. 314.

(A.B. Ehrlich). This proposal is partly influenced by the T. However, G.R. Driver noted that a **ו** could not easily be changed into a **ל** or **ל'**. Taking support from 1 Sam 25:29; Gen 13:5; 21:13; 47:21 he proposed another emendation, with the stress on "me": **הֲאֵתִי תִשְׁאַלֵנִי**, "will you question me?"<sup>207</sup> **Q<sup>a</sup>** has **יֹצֵר הָאֲתֵּוֹת**, "who shapes the future", which is close to the LXX: **ὁ ποιῶν τὰ ἐπέρχόμενα**. Muilenburg<sup>200</sup> and North<sup>209</sup> think that this is possible. After all, in Is 46:11 Yahweh forms the future. On the other hand Leene has no doubts that **הֲאֵתִי** is not the object of **יִצַּע**. He remarked that the phrase "The Holy One of Israel, the Former of things to come" would be very awkward.<sup>210</sup> We do not see why a reference to Yahweh as "the Former of things to come" would be awkward. The meaning of v. 11 such as it is understood by **Q<sup>a</sup>** and the LXX has nothing that can be regarded as awkward. It only becomes awkward when we try to force the renderings of **Q<sup>a</sup>** and the LXX into the MT. Because it would indeed be awkward if we try to connect **יֹצֵר** with **הֲאֵתִי**. It seems that Driver's suggestion is the most attractive. So we accept the rendering in RSV, which apparently takes over his.

**אֲנִי עָשִׂיתִי אֶרֶץ** I made the earth,  
**וָאָדָם עָלֶיהָ כִּדְאֵתִי** and created man upon it;  
**אֲנִי יָדִי נִטְו שָׁמַיִם** it was my hands that stretched out  
the heavens,

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207. G.R. Driver, "Studies in the Vocabulary of the Old Testament", JTS 34 (1933), pp. 33-34.

208. Muilenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 527.

209. North, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

210. Leene, *op. cit.*, p. 315.



וכל-צבאם צויתי and I commanded all their host.  
 אנכי העידתהו כצדק I have aroused him in righteousness,  
 וכל-דרךיו אישר and I will make straight all his ways;  
 הוא-יבנה עירי he shall build my city  
 וגלותי ישלח and set my exiles free,  
 לא במחיר ולא בשחר not for price or reward,  
 אמר יהוה צבאות says the Lord of Hosts.

Yahweh's statement of Himself as Creator in v. 12 is directly related to v. 11. It is His hands that stretched out the heavens; He commanded the hosts of heavens. V. 11 in turn is connected with vv. 9, 10. The question in v. 11a is related to the mindless questioner in v. 10, while 11b is related to the clay's mindless statement in v. 9. This proves that vv. 9-13 is a unity.

V. 13. "I have aroused him in righteousness". The "him" could only refer to Cyrus. The meaning of vv. 9-13 thus becomes clear. It is an attempt to explain and defend the convictions of the prophet that Yahweh can indeed be behind Cyrus.

פ 732. The anointing of Cyrus (45:1) is not a random or disorderly deed. The creation of heaven and earth, the creation of man and the anointing of Cyrus, the liberation of the exiles are all done in view of the order of the world.<sup>211</sup>

The last line in v. 13, "not for a price or reward", contradicts the thought in 43:3-4. There it is clear that Yahweh is preparing ransom for the release of His people. The name of the countries to

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211. Cf. ibid., p. 322.

be ransomed in 43:3-4 appear again in 45:14. But obviously vv. 14-17 is not continuing the preceding thoughts. The fem. suff. makes clear that the subject is not Cyrus. Most commentators agreed that the address in v. 14 is directed to Zion-Jerusalem.<sup>212</sup>

Leene tried to solve this contradiction by pointing out that while Cyrus indeed conquered Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba, their wealth and manpower do not flow to him but to Israel.<sup>213</sup>

To whom is vv. 9-13 directed to? Most commentators agree that it is directed against those within Israel who are shocked at the thought that a foreign ruler could be anointed by Yahweh.<sup>214</sup> However, by picking up Westermann's suspicions that the section shows traces of a trial-speech against the foreign nations, Leene argued the reverse: it is directed against the non-Israelites, who find it hard to accept that the triumph of Cyrus will result in them being put to shame.<sup>215</sup> 45:9-13 is connected to 45:22-25 and 45:16, 17. Salvation is restricted to Israel, the other nations will perish except if they are ready to acknowledge Yahweh, in the sense that they become potential Israelites.

We ourselves have asked whether DI can be regarded as a universalist in the truest sense, so Leene's conclusion is worthy

212. Whybray, op. cit., p. 109; Westermann, op. cit., p. 168; North, op. cit., p. 154.

213. Leene, op. cit., p. 325.

214. Muilenburg, op. cit., p. 526; North, op. cit., p. 154; Westermann, op. cit., p. 165; Schoors, op. cit., p. 266.

215. Leene, op. cit., p. 320ff.

of consideration, but even if there is nothing in Is 45 which could be taken against Leene's suggestion that the reproaches are directed to the foreign nations, the fact that the reproaches come right after the oracle concerning Cyrus make us prefer the general agreement that they are directed to the sceptics within Israel.

#### 5.4 Is 48:1-11

The whole tone in this section is harsh accusation against Israel. Westermann thinks that vv. 1 (the last cause), 4, 5b, 7b and 8b-10 are secondary. Without them 48:1-11 forms a well-constructed utterance familiar to 46:3-13; 48:12-16.<sup>216</sup> Others agree that while there are many incongruities, the main body of 48:1-11 must be traced back to DI himself.<sup>217</sup>

שמעו-זאת בית-יעקב Hear this, O house of Jacob,  
הנקראים בשם ישראל who are called by the name of Israel,  
וממי יהודה יצאו and who went out from the waters of  
Judah;

הנשבעים בשם יהוה who swear by the name of the Lord,  
ובאלהי ישראל יזכירו and confess the God of Israel  
לא באמת ולא בעדקה but not in truth or right.

כי-מעיר הקדש נקראו For they call themselves after the  
holy city,

ועל-אלהי ישראל נסמכו and stay themselves on the God of  
Israel,

יהוה צבאות שמו the Lord of Hosts is His name!

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216. Westermann, op. cit., p. 196.

217. Schoors, op. cit., p. 289; Merendino, op. cit., pp. 506-507;  
North, op. cit., pp. 175-76.



V. 1. "went out from the waters of Judah". In 41:9 and 44:26 the prophet referred to the cities of Judah, but the motif there is different. The LXX has  $\xi\ \iota\omicron\upsilon\delta\alpha$ , "from Judah", and is adopted by Schoors.<sup>218</sup> In Gen 15:4; 2 Sam 7:12; Is 48:19; 2 Chron 32:21,  $\lambda\upsilon'$  is directly related to  $\lambda\upsilon\epsilon\iota$ , but whether 48:1 could be indicating the same thing is not at all certain. The word  $\lambda\upsilon\epsilon$  only occurs here in Is 40-55 and also  $\lambda\upsilon\epsilon\iota$  in the sense of human conduct. The verse is referring to people with hypocritical attitudes.

V. 2. Mention of the holy city is also rare in Is 40-55.

The only other reference is in 52:1. The re-occurrence of the term "the God of Israel" so soon after v. 1 makes v. 2 also suspect.

The epithet "the Lord of Hosts is His name" is not a later gloss. In Is 51:15 we have seen that it could be a borrowing from pre-exilic liturgical traditions.

$\text{הָרָאשׁוֹנוֹת מֵאִזְ הַגְּדָתִי}$	The former things I declared of old,
$\text{וַיֵּצְאוּ מִפִּי יָצְאוּ}$	they went forth from my mouth
$\text{וְאֲשַׁמֵּעֵם}$	and I made them known;
$\text{כִּתְּאֵם עָשִׂיתִי וַתֵּבֵאוּנָה}$	then suddenly I did them and they came to pass;
$\text{מֵדַעְתִּי כִּי קָשָׁה אַתָּה}$	Because I know that you are obstinate,
$\text{וְגִיד בְּרִזְלָךְ עֵרֶפֶךָ}$	and your neck is an iron sinew
$\text{וּמִצַּחֲךָ נְחוֹשֶׁה}$	and your forehead brass,
$\text{וְאֶגִּיד לְךָ מֵאִזְ}$	I declared them to you from of old,
$\text{בְּטֵרֵם תֵּבֵאוּ הַשְּׁמַעְתִּיךָ}$	before they came to pass I announced them to you,
$\text{כִּן-תֹּאמַר עַצְבִּי עָשָׂם}$	lest you should say, "My idol did them,
$\text{וּפִסְלִי וְנוֹסְכִי צִוּם}$	my graven image and my molten image commanded them."

218. Schoors, op. cit., p. 283.

V. 3. "the former things I declared long ago". In 41:22 **אֲנִי הָאֵל** occurs in a trial-speech between Yahweh and the gods. It seems to refer to former events in general, of which the gods are asked to report (and which they are not able to do). In 42:9 the content of the former things that have come to pass could possibly be Israel's past events as contrasted to the new things which will soon arrive. 43:9 is in the context of a trial-speech between Yahweh and the nations. The content of the former things is not clear, but possibly it is Israel's defeat as God's deed. In 43:18 it is clearly the (old) Exodus. In 46:9 it is the whole past of Israel. It seems that in this passage too, **אֲנִי הָאֵל** refers to Israel's past events. Vv. 3bc clearly convey that Yahweh had predicted these past events and that they have come to pass.

Long ago Elliger noted that v. 4 is an insertion.<sup>219</sup> The thinking in this insertion is that Yahweh made the **אֲנִי הָאֵל** come to pass because of the people's stiff-neckedness. The four words, **הָאֵל**, **אֲנִי**, **הָאֵל** and **אֲנִי** occur only here in Is 40-55. The original reason is stated in v. 5. It is Yahweh who foretold the **אֲנִי הָאֵל** so that nobody could claim otherwise - that an idol was behind the past events. According to Westermann 5b makes a bad link with 5a. The problem in 5a is not idolatry but Yahweh's announcement of the coming of the past events. But there are other instances concerning idolatry in Is 40-55 (41:21-29; 43:8-13; 44:6-8; 45:18-25), so 5b may not be a gloss after all.<sup>220</sup>

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219. Elliger, op. cit., p. 192.

220. Schoors accepted it as original, op. cit., p. 287.

Elliger hesitated to regard 5b as secondary, as there is a possibility that in his rhetorical way of speech the prophet wants to express negatively the idea that Yahweh is the cause behind every event in Israel's life: "lest you should say: another god did it".<sup>221</sup> If the reference to idolatry is accepted as originally Deutero Isaianic it leaves us with a question: what is the advantage of the other side if he manages to claim the  $\text{הָאֱלֹהִים שֶׁנִּשְׁכַּחְתָּם}$  as caused by his idol? There is no point in claiming that Yahweh is behind the  $\text{הָאֱלֹהִים שֶׁנִּשְׁכַּחְתָּם}$  if the other side thinks that his idol is behind the exile. This question does not need to be asked if the  $\text{הָאֱלֹהִים שֶׁנִּשְׁכַּחְתָּם}$  is only a general reference of things past, but then the  $\text{הָאֱלֹהִים שֶׁנִּשְׁכַּחְתָּם}$  must also be thought in the same way. In the context of Is 48 it is not certain whether  $\text{הָאֱלֹהִים שֶׁנִּשְׁכַּחְתָּם}$  indicates the future in general. Although we accept 5b as original it is only with great reservation that we come to that decision.

$\text{שָׁמַעְתָּ חֲזֵה כֻלָּהּ}$  You have heard; now see all this;  
 $\text{וְאַתָּה הֲלֹא תִגִּידוּ}$  and will you not declare it?  
 $\text{הַשְׁמַעְתִּיךָ חֲדָשׁוֹת מַעֲתָה}$  From this time forth I make you hear new things,  
 $\text{וְנִצְרוֹת וְלֹא יָדַעְתָּם}$  hidden things which you have not known.

V. 6. "You have heard; now see all this". The imperative  $\text{חֲזֵה}$  expresses a distinct assurance (cf. Job 15:17; 24:1; 34:32). It is lacking in the LXX. "will you not declare it?". This must be taken in the same sense as in 41:22 - to report, to testify new things which have never been heard before.

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221. Elliger, op. cit., p. 192.



חֲדָשִׁים . In 42:9 the new things referred to Yahweh's prediction of future things, which seem to point to the Cyrus event. In 43:19 חֲדָשָׁה refers to the transformation of nature.

נִצְּנָת , "preserved things". Its root נָצַח also occurs in 42:6b and 49:6a, 8b. Here the word indicates things Yahweh never announced before.

עֲתָה נִבְרָאוּ וְלֹא מֵאֶזְלָם They are created now, not long ago,  
וְלִפְנֵי-יָמִים וְלֹא שָׁמַעְתֶּם until now you have never heard of them,  
כִּן-תֹּאמַר הִנֵּה יָדַעְתִּין lest you should say: "that I already knew!"

יָדַעְתִּי . The fem. suff. is in contrast to the masc. of 6b, 7a, and 5b. That is why Schoors regarded the last line as secondary. But notwithstanding the difference in suffixes, are 5b and 7b not clues to the understanding of 48:1-11, including why the insertions (if 5b and 7b are insertions) were thought to be necessary? Either we accept both of them as original or we regard both of them as secondary. If 5b and 7b are connected we can detect a framework of thought: past events were announced beforehand so that no one could claim they come from his idol; new events arrived unannounced and unexpected so that no one could claim he has already anticipated them.

In 42:9 Yahweh's superiority over the idols lies on His ability to predict the future. V. 7 (or, more precisely, 7a) gives a different if not contradictory view: the new things or the future events are not predicted but created, and Yahweh created (וַיַּבְרֵא) them. It is this new argument that the framework of thought is serving.

Schoors is right in his opinion that  $\text{אֵלֶּיךָ}$  never directly occurs in a context of creation,<sup>222</sup> but here  $\text{אֵלֶּיךָ}$  is an act of creation. It is possible that DI himself used this new argument in face of the increasing opposition to his message (cf. 45:9-11). The purpose of DI's argument can only be: Yahweh was behind the past event of the defeat and exile and now He is behind the new event of Cyrus, which eventually leads to the restoration and triumph of Israel. There is an element of clumsiness in the prophet's framework of thought as we have noted in our question concerning v. 5b. But for the prophet the important thing is to convince his audience that the exile is not caused by Yahweh without reason. He is just God, that is why Israel was sent to the exile because of her sins. But precisely because Yahweh is just God, her sins are forgiven and Yahweh employed Cyrus to send His people back to their homeland.

V. 8. It is surprising that only Begrich suggested that the whole of v. 8 should be regarded as secondary.<sup>223</sup> Apparently it is vv. 8b-10 which are usually regarded as an inserted explanation to v. 8a. But if the new events are created and not predicted beforehand then even v. 8a is out of place, and should be regarded as a mis-explanation of v. 7!

V. 8b. Westermann noticed that the idea of Israel as rebellious and treacherous from birth is not alien to DI.<sup>224</sup> In 43:27 all of

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222. Schoors, op. cit., p. 276.

223. See the list of proposed deletions in Schoors' dissertation, ibid., p. 285.

224. Westermann, op. cit., p. 198.

Israel have sinned back to the mediators and ancestors. But there is an important difference in Is 43. The context there is of forgiveness (v. 23). Here the sin is regarded as permanent, which is reminiscent of Ezek 16 and 23 (as pointed out long ago by Duhm).

למען שמי אאריך אפי	For my name's sake I defer my anger,
ותהלתי אחטם לך	for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you,
לבילתי הכריתך	that I may not cut you off.
הנה צרפתיך ולא בכסף	Look, I have refined you, but not for silver;
בחרתיך בכור עני	I have tried you in the furnace of affliction.

V. 9. According to Rignell the precise translation of 9b should be "My praise I curb for your benefit so that I do not exterminate you".<sup>225</sup> The stress is not "for the sake of my praise" but "for your benefit." It was the Lord's due that people should honour Him because of His deeds, but He overlooked their neglecting to do so and did not exterminate them in spite of their sins. However, this can only be done by ignoring v. 9a. The sense of v. 9 is that Israel deserves to be cut off, but Yahweh "slowed" or "lengthen" His anger and restrain it for the sake of His name.

V. 10. **כספך**. The RSV has "like silver". It is possible that **כ** is miscopied as **כ**. North retained the MT by regarding the **כ** here as "beth of price" (Cf. Gen 18:28; 1 Sam 3:13). Israel has been refined, but not for any profit, that is for any silver that has accrued to him in the process.<sup>226</sup>

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225. Rignell, op. cit., p. 52.

226. North, op. cit., p. 179.



בַּחֲרֹתֶיךָ. As a parallel to חֲרֹתֶיךָ the meaning of חָרַב could only be "purify".<sup>227</sup> North understood it as "chose" with a background of election. "The meaning, on the normal sense of the verb ..., must be that Yahweh, without expecting any good metal in Israel, nevertheless chose her".<sup>228</sup> We are not sure whether the evidence goes that far. There is a difference between חָרַב in the sense of "to choose" and חָרַב in the sense of "to purify" or "to test". Purification or testing is prior to choosing or selection.

What is the result of our examination on vv. 8b-10? There is actually little which can be argued against them being Deutero Isaianic, except of course the significant aspect of forgiveness which is lacking in vv. 8b-10. And even this aspect does not provide too sharp a contrast to the content of these suspected passages as argued by Westermann. Although purification and forgiveness are not the same thing, Yahweh has forgiven His people during the course of the exile, while on the other hand in v. 10 the experience of the exile is regarded as the purification of Israel. Both notions can only appear if there is a certainty that the exile is soon to end.

Our opinion is that vv. 8b-10 most probably belong to DI. They do not function as justifications or explanations for the preceding verses, but serve as a balance between the creation of the new event of Cyrus and Israel's present situation which will soon pass away. Only in regard to both, does v. 11 make sense.

227. See BDB, pp. 140f. The meaning is "testing, prior to selection".

228. North, loc. cit.

למעני למעני For my own sake, for my own sake,  
 אעשה I do it,  
 כי איך יחל For how would it be profaned?  
 וכבודי לא אחר לא-אתן My glory I will not give to another.

V. 11. "For how would it be profaned". The LXX understood this as referring to Yahweh's name. In the whole of Is 40-55 "for my sake" is used rather than "for my name's sake". But they refer to the same thing. Besides, reference to the name of the Lord is frequent enough in DI. If v. 9 is regarded as original then we have there one reference to the second formula in DI. So we would not assign the phrase above as secondary.

This verse provides the closing to the section, which shows that 48:1-11 is an attempt to describe Yahweh's unicity and its implications. The harsh accusations in v. 1 are disturbing indeed. But if we are ready to accept that there were sceptics who ridiculed the prophet's opinion that Yahweh is using Cyrus, then it would not be a surprise if DI started to make his conviction an article of faith for others. Those who do not believe in his message are in reality hypocrites, even when they profess Yahweh outwardly and have high regard for Jerusalem.

#### 5.5 Is 48:12-15(16)

שמע אלי יעקב Hearken to me, O Jacob,  
 וישראל מקראי Israel, whom I called,  
 אני-הוא אני ראשון I am He, I am the first,  
 אף אני אחרון and I am the last.  
 אף-ידי יסדה ארץ My hand laid the foundation of the earth,

וּיְמִינִי טָפַחַה שָׁמַיִם and my right hand spread out the heavens;

קָרָא אֲנִי אֲלֵיהֶם when I call to them,

יַעֲמִדוּ יַחְדָּו they stand forth together.

R.F. Melugin regarded 48:12-15 as a trial-speech.<sup>229</sup> According to him the typical Deutero Isaianic structure of summons to trial and argument by means of a question introduced by <sup>ו</sup> can be plainly seen. Vv. 12-13 have the style of self-praise. The structure is similar to 45:18-21. Although it has similarities with the form of a trial-speech we think 48:12-15 can still belong to the disputations. V. 13 can be regarded as Disputationsbasis. The line of argument in vv. 12-15 is close to the disputations. Yahweh the Creator of heaven and earth, the One behind all events in history has decided to call Cyrus to open the way for the liberation of Israel.

הַקְבִּצוּ כָלְכֶם וּשְׁמָעוּ Assemble, all of you, and hear!

מִי בֵּהֶם הִגִּיד אֶת-אֱלֹהֵי Who among them has declared these things?

יְהוָה אֱהָבֵנִי The Lord loves him,

יַעֲשֶׂה חֲפָצוֹ נִבְבֵּל he shall perform His purpose against Babylon,

וּזְרָעוֹ כַּשְׂדִּים and His arm against the Chaldeans.

אֲנִי אֲנִי דִבַּרְתִּי אֶף-קִרְאתִיו I, even I, have spoken and called him,

הִבִּיאתִיו וְהִצְלִיחַ דַּרְכּוֹ I have brought him, and he will prosper in his way.

V. 14. "Assemble, all of you, and hear! Who among them has declared these things?" According to Melugin the plural suffixes refer to the foreign nations.<sup>230</sup> Schoors on the other hand denied that foreign

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229. Melugin, op. cit., p. 137.

230. ibid.



nations are involved.<sup>231</sup> The whole pericope is directed to Israel. "Them" according to Schoors refers to the gods of the foreign nations. North thinks that "all of you" indicates the nations and "them" points to the gods of the nations.<sup>232</sup> We think that the thought in 48:12-15 continues the argument in 48:1-11. The prophet was trying to convince the sceptics within Israel concerning the Cyrus phenomenon. So it is best to regard "all of you" as being addressed to Israelites. "Them" could be either the nations or their gods.

V. 14b. "Yahweh loves him". "Yahweh" is lacking in the LXX; Q<sup>a</sup> has 'יהוה ידיד', "Yahweh my friend". Based on the two ancient renderings Schoors emended the text to become: "My friend performs my purpose against Babylon....."<sup>233</sup> The purpose of his effort is how to reconcile Yahweh in the third pers. with His speech in v. 15 in the first pers. "Yahweh" is probably a later addition, to stress that it is Yahweh who is speaking here.

R.P. Merendino on the other hand thinks that יהוה ידיד' is original. It functions as an answer ("Yahweh!") to the questions in the second part of v. 14a (cf. 41:26f; 43:9a, 10a, 11; 44:7a, 8a; 45:21b).<sup>234</sup> We also think that יהוה ידיד' should be retained. However, in all the examples Merendino puts forward to support his view we find that the answers are not really needed as the questions

231. Schoors, op. cit., p. 279.

232. North, op. cit., p.179.

233. Schoors, op. cit., p. 278.

234. Merendino, op. cit., p. 517.

are in the form of rhetorical questions. Even if we expect answers they could only be "none" or "I" (self-praise). Perhaps Melugin has the most satisfying view: 14b functions like a quotation of a previously-uttered word concerning Cyrus. It has the ring of royal oracle spoken in the third person.<sup>235</sup>

וְיִזְרְעוּ כְּשֵׁרֵיָם, "and his arm the Chaldeans". The word "arm" is used in Is 51:9 in relation to the Lord, so there is no need to emend it to יִזְרַע, as understood by the LXX. If the כ in כְּכַל governs כְּשֵׁרֵיָם as well then the whole of MT makes sense and should be retained:

The Lord loves him,  
he shall perform His purpose against Babylon,  
and His arm against the Chaldeans.

The same root אָהַב which is used to describe Yahweh's relationship with Cyrus is also used in 41:8 concerning Abraham ("My friend"). Cyrus the foreign ruler is placed on the same level with the patriarch.

V. 15. This verse emphasises that Yahweh alone (the double "I") has spoken the words in v. 14b. It is Yahweh who brought him and therefore he will prosper (וְהִצְלִיחַ) in his way.

קִרְבוּ אֵלַי שְׁמַעוּ-זֹאת	Draw near to me, hear this:
לֹא מֵרֵאשִׁית בְּסֵתֶר דְּבַרְתִּי	from the beginning I have not spoken in secret,
מֵעַתָּה הִיוֹתָה שָׁמָּה	from time it came to be I have been there.
וְעַתָּה אֲדֹנֵי יְהוָה שְׁלָחוּנִי	And now the Lord God has sent me and
וְרוּחוֹ	His spirit.

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235. Melugin, op. cit., p. 138.

V. 16. Melugin thinks that v. 16 stands apart by form (there is a new address: "Draw near to me...") and by content (a disputation authenticating the prophet's mission). V. 16ab is a speech in the mouth of Yahweh and v. 16c a word of the prophet. A similar pattern can be found in Zech 2:13, 15; 4:9; 6:15.<sup>236</sup> But the examples from Zechariah are not clear at all. We doubt whether v. 16 as a whole can be seen as a unity. Merendino placed 16a within 48:12-15.

יָנִיךְ in v. 16a corresponds with יָנִיךְ in v. 15. 16b belongs to 17-22.<sup>237</sup> Schoors commented that the summons in v. 16a is more suitable for the beginning than the end of a pericope. But since the verse does not seem to go with the following pericope he put it within 12-15. Westermann had re-arranged what he thinks are textual disturbances as follows:<sup>238</sup>

- 15 I, even I, have spoken....I have brought him....
- 16c But now, the Lord Yahweh has sent me....
- 16a Draw near to me, hear this;
- 17a Thus says Yahweh, your Redeemer....
- 16b From the beginning....from the time it came into being...
- 17b I, Yahweh, am your God, who teaches you to profit,  
who makes for you the way.....

We keep v. 16 within the disputation in vv. 12-15 in the sense that it has a loose relationship with them.

V. 16b. "from the beginning" means events long past. The phrase is a parallel to מֵעַתָּה הֵיוֹתָ, "from the time it came into being". The suffix in הֵיוֹתָ is third pers. sing. fem. What "it" indicates is not clear. The other reference to the

236. ibid.

237. Merendino, op. cit., p. 519.

238. Westermann, op. cit., p. 200.



statement that God does not speak in secret in 45:9 occurs in a context of creation. It is tempting to understand "it" as the earth (v. 13). "from the beginning" then can be seen as since the creation of the earth. But probably it indicates the Cyrus event (Duhm).

V. 16c is probably in insertion, done by a glossator who knew Is 61:1 (Elliger). The vocabulary in 48:16c is similar to the former. It might be true that the glossator thought that it is the prophet who speaks in v. 15. But it is still not clear why the insertion was thought to be necessary. The verse also gives the impression of being awkward or incomplete. Merendino argued that 16b (that is 16c to us) belongs to vv. 16b-22 as the beginning of a new oracle. He pointed at the familiar **וַעֲתִיךָ** and also to the fact that **יְהוָה יִשְׁלַח** also occurs in other parts in DI (40:10; 52:4; 49:22; 50:4-9). He did not think that the verse is awkward or incomplete, and tried to translate it smoothly: "Jetzt hat mich ja mein Herr, Jahwe, gesandt: da, sein Geist!"<sup>239</sup> But as Merendino himself pointed out some of the passages he cited are suspect and later on he presented what he thought is the original text: "Siehe! Jetzt hat mich Jahwe gesandt!"<sup>240</sup>

## 6. References to creation concepts in Is 42:5-9 and 45:1-7

### 6.1 Is 42:5-9

**כֹּה אָמַר הָאֵל יְהוָה**      Thus says the God, the Lord,  
**בֹּרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנוֹטִיהֶם**      who created the heavens and stretches them out,

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239. Merendino, op. cit., p. 523.

240. ibid., p. 528.

רָקַע הָאָרֶץ וְצִאֲצִיאָהּ    who spreads forth the earth and  
 everything that comes out of it,  
 נָתַן נְשָׁמָה לָעָם עָלֶיהָ    who gives breath to the people upon it,  
 וְרוּחַ לְהֹלְכִים בָּהּ    and spirit to those who walk in it;  
 אֲנִי יְהוָה    I am the Lord,  
 קָרָאתִיךָ בְּצִדְקָה    I have called you in righteousness,  
 וְאַחֲזָק בְּיָדְךָ    I shall take hold of you by the hand,  
 וְאַצְרֶךָ וְאֶתֵּן לְךָ    I shall keep you and I shall give you  
 לְבָרִית עִם    as a covenant to the people,  
 לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם    a light to the nations.

V. 5.    הָאֵל יְהוָה, "the God Yahweh" It is only here in DI that  
 הָאֵל occurs with a definite article. The emphasis is on the unicity  
 of Yahweh. He is the God who creates the universe and all that is  
 within (Wildberger).

רָקַע הָאָרֶץ, "who spreads forth the earth". Gen 1:6  
 refers to רָקִיעַ, "firmament", which comes from the same root  
 However, in Gen 1:6 רָקִיעַ is related to the heavens and not to  
 the earth. In Is 44:24 the phrase רָקַע הָאָרֶץ is paralleled to  
 נִשְׂאָה הַשָּׁמַיִם. The other difference between the Genesis 1 and  
 this section is that the word נִשְׂאָה does not occur in the former.

וְצִאֲצִיאָהּ, "and everything that comes out of it". The  
 word also appears in 44:3; 48:9. נְשָׁמָה is hapax legomenon in  
 DI meaning "breath". לָעָם עָלֶיהָ, "to the people upon it".  
 The occurrence of עָלֶיהָ requires that עַל should be understood  
 as "peoples". רוּחַ is the parallel to נְשָׁמָה and means "life".  
 The hymn-like introduction states that Yahweh is the Creator of the  
 universe and the human race.

V. 6. "I have called you". In DI נָקִי is related to Israel (41:9 - this verse contains the words "you are my Servant"; 43:1, 7; 48:12; 54:6); Abraham (51:2); the human race (41:4); Cyrus (45:3f; 46:11; 48:15). According to North vv. 5-9 belongs to a separate unit than the "Servant Song" in 42:1-4. North regarded the contents of 42:1-4 as referring to the Servant in an individual sense.<sup>241</sup> As the vocabulary in vv. 5-9 has close affinity with both vv. 1-4 and 49:7-12 he hesitated to say whether the sing. "you" in v. 6 is the Servant of vv. 1-4 or "Israel" as in 41:8. Probably vv. 5-9 and 49:7-12 were originally "Israel" passages which have been adapted to individual Servant contexts. Apparently there are three possibilities: Israel, Cyrus and the individual Servant, whom the sing. "you" in v. 6 may refer to.

Muilenburg and Rignell had no hesitation in seeing the whole of 42:1-9 as a unity and in affirming that the passage refers to Israel.<sup>242</sup> קָדַשׁ , "in righteousness". Cyrus is "aroused in righteousness" (45:13). In DI קָדַשׁ is the parallel to נְדָבָה. In 51:4 the words occur in straight parallel (as a pair). Other parallels can be seen in 45:8; 46:13. If 42:1-9 is seen as a unity קָדַשׁ in v. 6 can be seen as a parallel to the threefold occurrences of נְדָבָה in vv. 1-4. The meaning of the phrase "I have called you in righteousness" is that whoever is called by Yahweh, is called to establish Yahweh's קָדַשׁ , namely to bring out salvation in (re-)establishing the right order of the world.<sup>243</sup> "I shall take

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241. North, op. cit., pp. 111, 113.

242. Muilenburg, op. cit., p. 468; Rignell, op. cit., p. 34.

243. Cf. Merendino, op. cit., p. 243; Elliger, op. cit., p. 120.



hold of you by the hand". In 41:9-13 this phrase refers to Israel; in 45:1 to Cyrus. In the 'Cyrus cylinder' there is a similar phrase which refers to Marduk looking for a friend and an upright prince to take his hand.<sup>244</sup>

יָיָאֵל could come from the root יָאֵל, "form" (Elliger, Westermann, Merendino) or יָאֵל, "keep" (North, Muilenburg, RSV). Both are grammatically possible. But probably after a description of Yahweh leading or accompanying "you" the second possibility is preferable, in the sense of protection.

עַמֵּי. Commentators are divided on the meaning of עַמֵּי in this context. Some pointed to Israel (de Boer, Rignell, Merendino) while others refer to "peoples" (Muilenburg, North, Westermann, Elliger, McKenzie). Considering the parallel עַמֵּי and the context of עַמֵּי in v. 5, which also demanded the same meaning of "peoples" we choose the second possibility. A certain presupposition also plays a role in deciding what עַמֵּי means. If it is thought that DI has no or little concern towards the foreign nations then of course עַמֵּי can only mean "people (Israel)". But if we concede that there is concern towards foreign nations in DI (as in our opinion) then the logical context of the passage demands that the meaning should be "peoples".<sup>245</sup>

244. See DOTT, pp. 92, 94 (notes by T. Fish).

245. J.J. Stamm, however, has examined the history of the interpretation of עַמֵּי back to the 19th century and concluded that those who followed the ancient renderings which read "people" for עַמֵּי are more numerous than those who understood עַמֵּי as "peoples", see "Berit 'Am bei Deuterojesaja", Probleme biblischer Theologie, Festschrift von Rad, München, 1971, pp. 516-521.

ברית is usually translated as "covenant" in the modern English renderings (except in NEB's translation of Is 42:6), but there is an ongoing discussion of what it really expresses.<sup>246</sup> Apparently there are several meanings involved in ברית : as a covenant formulary, as a covenant formula (which is not the same as the first) and as a theological theologoumenon. Its functional context could be bilateral, obligatory or commandatory. Etymologically the word could be derived from the Hebrew אכל , "eat/meal" or אכל , "see, search out, select"; or from the Akkadian biritu, "fetter, binding"; birit, "between/mediation" or bararitu from the word bararu, "to shine" (Torczyner).<sup>247</sup>

North discussed several possibilities in the interpretation of עַם בְּרִיתִי:<sup>248</sup>

1. As "covenant people", in which "people" refers to Israel.

Although the Hebrew expression would be עַם בְּרִית , there are other similar constructions in the OT which may support the rendering (Prov 15:20; 21:20, כֹּסֶל אִישׁ , "fool of a man = foolish man"; Gen 16:12, אִשׁ אֶרֶץ , "wild-ass of a man"; Is 9:5, "wonder of a counsellor = wonderful counsellor"). The objection is that the rendering gives a very awkward parallel to אֵלֹהֵינוּ . We could add other objections: nowhere else does the phrase עַם בְּרִית occur in the OT and it is by no means certain that Prov 15:20; 21:20; Gen 16:12; Is 9:5 belong to the same category as Is 42:6.

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246. See Anderson (ed.), Tradition and Interpretation, pp. 376-383; W. Zimmerli, Old Testament Theology in Outline, Edinburgh, 1978, 247. However, Elliger (following W. von Soden) noted that bararu means "flicker" rather than "shine", op. cit., p. 234. Stamm also referred to von Soden's view, op. cit., p. 511.
248. North, The Second Isaiah, pp. 112-13; The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah, London, 1948, pp. 132-33.



2. As "(the mediator of my) covenant with the people". The people refers to Israel and the mediator to an individual Servant. This rendering tends to overlook the parallel לאור גוים.
3. As "(the mediator of my) covenant with the peoples". The mediator here might be Israel or the individual Servant.
4. If לְיָגֵב means "to shine" as suggested by Torczyner, then "to be a light to all peoples" (taken over by the NEB) would be a perfect parallel to "light of the nations". The Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2:32) may be reminiscent of עַל יָגֵב in this sense.

North himself chose the third possibility. We agree with his objection to the first and we have added our own objections. We also agree with North's objection to the second possibility. North's objection to Torczyner is that the meaning of לְיָגֵב as "covenant" occurs 300 times in the OT and it is difficult to see why in this instance לְיָגֵב should mean "light".<sup>249</sup> According to him the fourth possibility looks like a cutting of the Gordian knot.<sup>250</sup> But if North is aware of the semantic problem behind the word לְיָגֵב probably he would not have given this objection. And his remarks on the Gordian knot betrays the fact that theological pre-suppositions behind 42:6 often exist like Gordian knots, which prevent people from a serious consideration of proposals which might undermine their theological pre-suppositions.

Our view of the meaning of לְיָגֵב עַל is close to the third possibility, but without necessarily giving stress to the meaning of

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249. In The Second Isaiah, p. 112.

250. In The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah, p. 133.



תִּכְוֶנָּה as "covenant". The occurrence of the phrase חֲשׂוֹן לְגוֹיִם<sup>l</sup> in 42:1 may function as a clue. חֲשׂוֹן here is a situation, a state of being to be realised.<sup>251</sup> תִּכְוֶנָּה in the context of 42:5-9 most likely has the same meaning as the context of חֲשׂוֹן in 42:1 demands. תִּכְוֶנָּה then is more or less a model of what happens between Yahweh and the world. In this sense the meaning is closer to the Akkadian birit than bararitu. The conventional translation "covenant" may still be retained as long as we are aware of the special nuance of the word in this section. Who then is the sing. "you" in v. 6?

We have seen that Muilenburg and Rignell chose Israel. North hesitated between the individual and the collective Servant (= Israel). According to the latter the possibility of Cyrus is out of question, as it would be impossible to think of him as the עַבְדְּךָ לְיְהוָה.<sup>252</sup> Others, however, do not think that way. Elliger is very explicit: "für Dñs ist 'das Licht der Völker' hier Kyros".<sup>253</sup> Although Merendino's interpretation of עַבְדְּךָ לְיְהוָה corresponds with the second possibility above he also argued that it is Cyrus who was given the task here.<sup>254</sup> Westermann hinted that the clue lies in the

251. See W.A.M. Beuken, "Mišpāt. The first Servant Song and its Context", VT 22 (1972), pp. 6-7. חֲשׂוֹן has many varied meanings; see G. Liedke in THAT, II, p. 1000f. The meaning of 42:1 according to Beuken is that the Servant will establish justice which effects the foreign nations in a positive way (p.29).

252. North, The Second Isaiah, p. 111; The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah, p. 133. Stamm has the same opinion, op. cit., p. 514.

253. Elliger, op. cit., p. 239.

254. Merendino, op. cit., p. 246.

reference to creation in this section. Elsewhere in Deutero-Isaiah this substantiates or underpins God's dealing with either Israel or Cyrus, but never with the individual Servant.<sup>255</sup> As 41:9 and 45:1 refer to Jacob-Israel as the Servant we think eventually all the supposed references to the individual Servant ought to be included as indicating Israel. The LXX of 42:1 has

Ἰακωβ ὁ παῖς μου..... Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου, "Jacob my Servant, Israel my chosen". The first "Servant Song" (42:1-4) then could be said as referring to Israel. The Servant is to bring

יְדוּנָה to the peoples by way of witnessing to the world that the restoration of Israel is the work of Yahweh in redeeming His chosen people. There is no question of revenge here. Vv. 2-3 explain how the workings of the יְדוּנָה among the people will like:

He will not cry or lift up his voice  
or make it heard in the street,  
a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench.

This witness will probably take a passive form of mission, as there could be an immediate expectation that the nations shall acknowledge this יְדוּנָה straight away. If 42:5-9 is regarded as a continuation of vv. 1-4 then the task of Israel as a covenant to the peoples and a light for the nations expresses this passive form of mission.<sup>256</sup> The reference to creation in vv. 5-9 then could be considered as the theological basis for this new horizon in the life of the restored people. There is, however, also strong

255. Westermann, op. cit., p. 99.

256. Against H.H. Rowley who holds that 42:5-9 is concerned with mission in an active sense, The Biblical Doctrine of Election, London, 1950, pp. 73-80, and against de Boer, who holds that there is no notion of mission in DI, Second Isaiah's Message, p. 87f.



indications that it is Cyrus who was intended here. Cyrus could indeed be the  $\text{נֹרְאָה}$  and the light to the nations in the eyes of the prophet. In 44:24-28; 45:18-25 (45:1 refers explicitly to Cyrus); 48:1-11; 12-16 the Cyrus event is seen as an unprecedented one. Therefore we can see references to new things in a context of prediction and references to creation in them. These two elements also occur in 42:5-9 and in our opinion form the basis of this section.

V. 7. Other references to "blindness" can be found in 42:16, 18, 19a; 43:8.  $\text{גִּדְלוֹן}$ , "dungeon" is hapax legomenon in DI, and so is  $\text{גִּדְלוֹן}$ , "bound" (but see  $\text{גִּדְלוֹן}$  in 49:9).  $\text{בֵּית כְּלִא}$ , "prison-house" (the plur. in 42:22). According to Westermann the reference here is not specifically to the blindness of Israel nor to the sufferings of the exile but to human suffering in general. God has designated Israel to be a light to the world; she is to bring enlightenment and liberation to others. Westermann quoted a hymn to Marduk as parallel: "make him who is cast into prison see light" (Stummer).<sup>257</sup> North and Muilenburg take this in a spiritual sense to mean liberation of all peoples from bondage.<sup>258</sup> As it is to be expected, Merendino regarded this verse as referring to Israel. Through her liberation from the imprisonment of the exile Israel regained her right as people of the covenant.<sup>259</sup>

Elliger also quoted the parallel from Stummer and connected v. 7 with reference to "light" in v. 6. According to him v. 7 can

257. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

258. North, The Second Isaiah, p. 113; Muilenburg, op. cit., p. 469.

259. Merendino, op. cit., p. 246.



only refer to Cyrus. The task of Cyrus is to lay the physical and political basis whereon the peoples can lead their own lives in peace and freedom.<sup>260</sup> Israel's fate is included in the fate of the nations. The liberation of Israel by Cyrus also means the liberation of other peoples who were Babylonian victims of deportations as well. Elliger accused many others of being guilty of spiritualisation (among others Muilenburg, North, Westermann, McKenzie);<sup>261</sup> but as Cyrus is given the task by Yahweh for a special purpose it seems that Elliger's view is too concrete. In the eyes of the prophet, nation and religion are one. The liberation of the peoples has one purpose: not just that they shall live in peace, but that they shall come to acknowledge Yahweh as  $\text{YH}$ . As in v. 6, here too either Israel or Cyrus can fit in with the descriptions.

Vv. 8-9. Here comes the reason why this task is given. Because "He" (  $\text{N} \text{ } \text{I} \text{ } \text{I}$  ) is Yahweh, that is His name. If it is Israel who was given the task then the reference to the  $\text{I} \text{ } \text{I} \text{ } \text{I}$  in relation with the name of Yahweh may stress that it is not the prophet, but Yahweh himself who intended that from now on Israel must have concern for the foreign nations. If it is Cyrus, then the Selbstvorstellungsformel and evidence from prediction in v. 9 emphasise that the God of Israel is behind Cyrus and not some other deity.

260. Elliger, op. cit., p. 237.

261. ibid., p. 236. The above named commentators all pointed to Israel as the Servant. Although North and Muilenburg spoke about the "spiritual sense" of v. 7 their description is close to what Westermann meant by a general description of liberation from bondage. If so, then even Elliger's description of the task of Cyrus could belong to the same sense!

V. 9. The "you" is in the plural. This makes v. 9 suspect (Duhm, Volz, Westermann, Merendino). Merendino even argued that the content of v. 9 is different from that of vv. 5-8.<sup>262</sup> The former is intended to show that Yahweh has proved Himself as God (or has proved the others as non-gods). In the latter Yahweh is to prove Himself as God and Redeemer in the coming events of the near future. But apparently this is only a difference in emphasis. We do not see why the content of v. 9 should be unrelated to vv. 5-8; here Yahweh's superiority over the other gods is stressed by the provenness of His sayings concerning past events. The proof of Yahweh's predictions of the past events (including the exile) guarantees that the new things He is declaring now will also be realised in the near future. The plural "you" may indicate that Yahweh is now addressing His words (via the prophet) to the audience.

If the new things can denote both the new mission of Israel and the new unprecedented choosing of Cyrus then vv. 8-9 do not help much in deciding whether Israel or Cyrus is meant by the sing. "you" in v. 6. As it now stands, vv. 1-4 must be seen as related to vv. 5-9 in the unity of chapter 42, and there is of course little doubt that the whole chapter is concerned with Israel as a nation. She was sent by her God to exile because of her sins, but her suffering is not suffering in vain because Yahweh has given her a new task to bring enlightenment to the world. But seen from an historical perspective, from the actuality of the prophet's message and its relevance to his audience, vv. 5-9 can only point to Cyrus.

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262. Merendino, op. cit., p. 249



He is the new thing, the main factor which will lead to Israel's liberation. In the eyes of DI (and in the eyes of the writer of the Cyrus cylinder) the Cyrus event is a turning point in the history of the whole world. While it is too hasty to say that this turning point is the beginning of a messianic-eschatological era, still Cyrus' rise is seen as good news for the whole world and therefore he can be described as the covenant to the peoples or the light to the nations.

Now it is time to make clear the issue of universalism in the thinking of DI. We have seen that there is concern for the foreign nations in Is 40-55. On the other hand it is also clear that Israel is still the elected. Even if it is a foreign ruler who will save Israel, he will only do that under the orders of Israel's God, the only God in the world. The character of DI's message is probably too complex to be assigned as either particularism or universalism. U.E. Simon noted that Is 40-55 remains curiously silent on the relationship between its new universalism and "Jewish" exclusiveness on the one hand, and universalistic world religions and movements on the other.<sup>263</sup> Its heritage is not denounced, but nor is there an endorsement of a "non-Jewish" universalism.

R. Davidson saw in DI a continuation of an essential paradox of particularism and universalism in the prophetic stream of tradition of the pre-exilic Israel.<sup>264</sup> Israel's notion of her being chosen or

263. U.E. Simon, A Theology of Salvation: A Commentary on Isaiah 40-55, London, 1953, p. 139.

264. R. Davidson, "Universalism in Second Isaiah", SJT 16 (1963), pp. 166-185.



elected is just the other side of the coin which is her universality. Israel has a perfect paradox of universality which is rooted in particularity. But if nation and religion are one in DI (and in the whole of OT) then it is clear that we can not see DI's ideal of the new Israel as implying universalism as in the great world religions where nationality and religion (at least in theory) are separated. What then shall we say of DI's ideal?

If there is concern for the foreign nations in DI, it means that he saw them in a different light from the cultic view, where they are always pictured as being wiped out from the earth. True, in Is 47 the cultic form of oracles against the nations was used against Babylon. And Is 43:3, 14; 45:9 and 49 probably show the tension in DI between hate and concern towards the nations. But these are not prominent. We can say that this concern is something new in DI. Whether they are derived from the pre-exilic tradition as held by Davidson can only be affirmed or denied by exegesis of passages from the pre-exilic prophetic tradition. This difference between DI and the cultic view may be seen as a difference between a broad kind of particularism as opposed to a narrow kind of particularism. To make the difference between these two distinctions clear in the context of the OT perhaps we can state it like this: that DI's view of Israel's election is not based on a narrow particularist desire to be different from the others for the sake of being different as can be detected later on in the case of Ezra and Trito Isaiah (e.g. Is 65:4b). Ezra has been taken by Carroll as an example of those who regard DI's preaching as a catalyst for their programme of restoration in the post-exilic period.<sup>265</sup> But if DI's

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265. Carroll, "Second Isaiah and the failure of Prophecy", pp. 119-31.

ideal and Ezra's programme are far apart from each other, can we really say that Ezra took his inspiration from DI? Or is it possible that Ezra misunderstood DI?

So far we have seen the problem "from below". Now let us approach the problem "from above". In the pre-exilic cultic celebrations  $\text{לַיהוָה}$  is acknowledged as "the Most High" (Pss 55:20; 73:11; 78). Yahweh, the gods of Israel is identified with  $\text{לַיהוָה}$  (Ps 118:27). However, the existence of other gods is not denied (Pss 82:1; 136:2; 138:1). The hymns of praise emphasise the incomparability of Yahweh. DI continued this tradition, but as we have seen in our examination for DI only Yahweh is God. The others are non-gods. The gods of the foreign nations do not exist, only the God of Israel exists. This is monotheism, but not in the ontological sense, as the God retains His special relationship with Israel. This is universalism, not in the truest sense, but universalism as it is usually understood in the great missionary religions in which it is assumed that everybody without exception ought to acknowledge their God as the only true God.

We have seen in section A that creation in the cultic tradition has a practical reason: it concerns the safety of Israel. Election and creation there stands side by side. In DI too, creation and election stand side by side. But there is a difference in DI: creation is not necessarily connected with the safety of Israel. Although DI stressed that his message is concerned with the time of salvation and employed creation theology to convince his audience of this period of salvation, he did not deny that the same Creator punished Israel in the past because of her sins. In our coming



discussion concerning the pre-exilic prophets we will see whether there is something in their tradition which was taken over and developed by DI.

6.2 Is 45:1-7.

כה אמר יהוה למשיחו	Thus says the Lord to His anointed,
לכורש אשר - החזקתי	to Cyrus, whose right hand I have
בימינו	grasped,
לדר - לפניו גוים	to subdue nations before him,
ומתני מלכים אפתח	and ungird the loins of kings,
לפתח לפניו דלתים	to open doors before him
ושערים לא יסגרו	that gates may not be closed:
אני לפניך אלך	I will go before you
והדורים אושר	and level the fortified walls,
דלתות נח ושה אשבר	I will break in pieces the doors of
	bronze,
ובריחי ברזל אגדע	and cut asunder the bars of iron.

V. 1. "to His anointed". The LXX has  $\mu\epsilon\upsilon \tau\omicron \chi\rho\iota\varsigma \tau\omicron \varsigma \epsilon\mu\epsilon$ , "to my anointed". Based on this, Budde proposed to emend למשיחו to למשיחי. But apparently the real address to Cyrus does not begin till v. 2, so this proposal is not necessary, although it will make a smoother reading if all the personal pronouns of Yahweh are in the first pers. מְשִׁיחַ is the title of Israel's reigning King (1 Sam 24:7 - Saul; 2 Sam 19:22 - David; Pss 2:2; 18:50). According to North in Pss 105:15 the word is used metaphorically of the patriarchs.<sup>266</sup> It is the same with this verse. Cyrus is of course a King, but he was never ceremonially anointed in the name

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266. North, op. cit., p. 150.



of Yahweh. The meaning of "anointed" here is that Cyrus has become Yahweh's vicegerent. Elliger on the other hand pointed to the biblical evidence in 1 Kings 19:15f where it is said that the Syrian King Hazael shall be anointed by Elisha.<sup>267</sup> It means that Cyrus could be regarded by the prophet as the anointed of Yahweh in his capacity as the King of the Persians. What is shocking to the prophet's audience is not his assertion that Cyrus is anointed, but that he speaks of an anointed foreign ruler without saying anything about an anointed from among their own. As Westermann noted, by reporting this divine address to his audience DI wanted them to realise that for him the exile means the end of the monarchy and the end of Israel as a state and a political power.<sup>268</sup> On the other hand Westermann stressed that Cyrus is anointed but is not the Servant. The Servant implies a mutual relationship in which there is permanence.<sup>279</sup> In other words, the functions of Cyrus is only temporary. But Westermann's remarks concerning the Servant are questionable. Nebuchadnezzar is called "my servant" (Jer 25:9; 27:6; 43:10), but is he a servant permanently?

How shall we translate: "to" or "concerning" Cyrus? We think the first possibility is best. But we have to bear in mind that here the prophet was reporting to his audience the content of God's word to Cyrus "Whose right hand I have grasped". This

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267. Elliger, op. cit., p. 491.

268. Westermann, op. cit., p. 161.

269. ibid., p. 160

phrase has a close parallel in the Cyrus cylinder. This cylinder was made after the capture of Babylon so there is no question of the prophet imitating it. But the court style used in writing the inscription was common in the ancient Near East, so there is a possibility that DI imitated this style. We quote some of the contents of the cylinder and compare them to vv. 1-5:<sup>270</sup>

He (Marduk) scoured all the lands for a friend,  
 seeking for the upright prince  
 whom it would have to take his hand. (v. 1b)  
 He called Cyrus.....(vv. 3, 4)  
 He made the land of Gutī, all the warrior band of Manda,  
 submit to him. (v. 1c)  
 He went at his side....(v. 2, "I will go before you")

גָּל is inf. cons. gal of גָּלָה, "to beat down".<sup>271</sup> The form is unusual but the proposed emendation by McKenzie, גָּלָה, which is inf. cons. hiphil from גָּלָה is not necessary. The MT is satisfactory.

v. 2. הָרִיבִּים. The root of this form is not known except from conjectured parallel with the Arabic root hdr, "swollen, inflated". Based on the Q<sup>a</sup>: הָרִיבִּים, "and the mountains" and the LXX: καὶ ὄρη which means the same, North proposed to emend the word to הָרִיבִּים.<sup>272</sup> The Syr. has אֲרָבִים, "uneven (land), hindrances". The T: אֲרָבִים, "walls, fortified walls". 45:13 has אֲרָבִים, "and all his ways". Based on this,

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270. See DOTT, p. 92. The translation is done by T. Fish. The version in ANET, p. 315 by A. Leo Oppenheim is less literal: "He scanned and looked (through) all the centuries, searching for a righteous ruler willing to lead him (i.e. Marduk) (in the annual procession)". In this version it is not Cyrus but Marduk who needs to be led.

271. North, op. cit., p. 148.

272. ibid.

Kissane, Westermann and McKenzie proposed **וְהָיָה כִּי** as emendation. Ch. H. Southwood thinks that **וְהָיָה וְיָרִים** came from the Akkad. dūru, "city-walls".<sup>273</sup> This is supported by the Targum. Elliger accepted this proposal.<sup>274</sup> As the meaning fits the context of v. 2 we also tend to accept this solution.

**וְיָרִים**. We follow the Qere in reading **וְיָרִים** as in 45:13.

<b>וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ אוֹצְרוֹת חֹשֶׁךְ</b>	I will give you the treasures of darkness
<b>וּמִטְמוֹנֵי מִסְתָּרִים</b>	and the hoards in secret places,
<b>לְמַעַן תֵּדַע כִּי-אֲנִי יְהוָה</b>	that you may know that it is I, the Lord,
<b>הַקּוֹרֵא בְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל</b>	the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.
<b>לְמַעַן עַבְדִּי יַעֲקֹב</b>	For the sake of my servant Jacob,
<b>וְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחִירִי</b>	and Israel my chosen,
<b>וְאָקְרָא לְךָ בְּשִׁמְךָ</b>	I call you by your name,
<b>אֲכַוֵּךְ וְלֹא יִדְעַתְנִי</b>	I surname you, though you do not know me.

Vv. 2b, 3a describe the way in which Babylon will be captured. The ease pictured here is also close to the Cyrus cylinders:<sup>275</sup>

Marduk.....ordered him to march  
against his city Babylon

.....  
Without any battle, he made him enter Babylon,  
sparing Babylon any calamity.

v. 3b **לְמַעַן תֵּדַע**, "that you may know". Duhm and Koehler proposed to omit this phrase (See also the prop. in the BHK). The

273. Ch. H. Southwood, "The Problematic *hadūrim* of Isaiah XLV 2", VT 25 (1975), p. 801f.

274. Elliger, *op. cit.*, p. 483.

275. ANET, p. 315.



bestowal of wealth can not be the reason why Cyrus will come to know Yahweh. It also contradicts v. 4b, "you do not know me". Perhaps this proposal is not necessary. The phrase could be the prophet's interpretation of Cyrus' rise. When Babylon is captured and its wealth taken, that will be a sign to Cyrus that the God of Israel has revealed Himself to him.

V. 4. Cyrus is called by Yahweh for one purpose: for the sake of the chosen people. "I surname you". North translates: "I give you a title of honour".<sup>276</sup> In 44:5 the honorific title is "Israel", but here apparently it is the title  $\text{ל' שם}$ .

V. 5. "I gird you". The girding of a King is an act of investiture (Westermann). This phrase is obviously meant to be contrasted to the ungirding of kings in v. 1b.

Twice (in vv. 4, 5) we find the phrase "though you do not know me". As we have seen above, the passage (beginning from v. 2) is in the form of a direct address of Yahweh to Cyrus. But it is in a context of the prophet's report to the people that there is such an address to Cyrus. Whether Cyrus was really addressed by God can never be affirmed by historical evidence. In reality Cyrus never acknowledged the God of Israel either discreetly or openly. The emphasis put by the prophet that Cyrus does not know functions as a buttress against possible future accusations that DI is a false prophet.<sup>277</sup>

276. North, op. cit., pp. 134, 151.

277. Cf. Westermann, op. cit., p. 161.

According to Westermann, what we have in vv. 1-5 (reference to anointing, holding somebody by the hand, giving him a honorific title, to gird him) are elements of an enthronement ritual which can also be found in Pss 2 and 110 besides the Cyrus cylinder.<sup>278</sup> Merendino has again contested Westermann's view. According to Merendino the reference to holding somebody by the right hand, the calling of a name and the honorific title do not necessarily belong to the enthronement vocabulary. To call someone by name means to give him a special task (Ex 31:2; 35:30 - Bezalel; Is 43:1b - Israel). The same holds for the phrase "to take by the hand". In 1 Sam 10:1; 11:15; 16:13; 2 Sam 2:4, 9; 5, 3; 1 Kings 2:12; 2 Kings 9:13; 11:12, 17 there is no trace that this phrase goes together with an enthronement ritual. And the most important is that Merendino did not discover a similarity between the phrases mentioned by Westermann in vv. 1-5 and the contents of Pss 2 and 110.<sup>279</sup> There is no proof that in vv. 1-5 the prophet was thinking of a King's investiture. For the prophet only Yahweh is the King of Israel.

That "to call someone by his name" and "to take someone by the hand" in the OT do not necessarily have anything to do with an enthronement ritual is true. It could simply mean "to lead" as in Jer 31:32 or "to accept" as in Job 8:20.<sup>280</sup> From Ps 2 only v. 2 has the same word "his anointed". Ps 110:1 has "sit at my right hand"; v. 5 has "the Lord is at your right hand".

278. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 158-59.

279. Merendino, op. cit., pp. 417-18.

280. ibid., p. 417. Merendino's example of Lev 25:35 does not fit this context. It has nothing to do with taking someone's hand.

Westermann never suggested that Cyrus is becoming the King of Israel in this passage. What he stated is that the vocabulary used to describe Cyrus being addressed by Yahweh is close to the court style common to the ancient Near East as can be seen in the Cyrus cylinder. But he is wrong to say that Ps 2 and 110 contain the same vocabulary (except the reference to "his anointed" in Ps 2:2). Merendino on the other hand is wrong in his denial that 45:1ff do not contain any vocabulary of the ritual of a King's enthronement. The fact that Pss 2 and 110 do not contain them does not mean that it is the same in Is 45:1-5. The prophet could have imitated the court style of the ancient Near East. This possibility is totally ignored by Merendino. He did not refer to the Cyrus cylinder at all in his work.

V. 5a. Again we find a statement of Yahweh's unicity. Behind Cyrus stands the God Yahweh and not some other god because there is no other god.

אני יהוה ואין עוד	I am the Lord, and there is no other,
זולתי אין אלהים	beside me there is no other god;
אאזרך ולא ידעתני	I gird you, though you do not know me,
למען ידעו ממזרח- שמש	that men may know, from the rising of the sun,
וממערבה כי-אפס בלעדי	and from the west, that there is none beside me.
אני יהוה ואין עוד	I am the Lord, and there is other,
יוצר אור ובורא חשך	who form light and create darkness,
עשה שלום ובורא רע	who make peace and create evil,
אני יהוה עשה כל-אלה	I am the Lord, who does all these things!

V. 6. "the rising of the sun"; we find this phrase again in 41:25 (and in 59:19). The pair מזרח and מערב occur also in 43:5



and 59:19. V. 7.  $\square \text{לש}$  , "peace", in the sense of fullness of life.  $\text{ש}^{\text{ל}}_7$  could be taken in an abstract way but also in a concrete sense as "calamity" or "adversity".

Westermann remarked that this passage ought not to be generalised. The calling of Cyrus is something wholly unprecedented and thus this statement (which is not "about" God) is necessary. Those who heard the prophet's words could have asked the question: if God's action reaches so far beyond his chosen people, if a worshipper of foreign gods can be given approval, help and guidance of the God of Israel, where can it all end?<sup>281</sup> Merendino connects v. 7 with the reference to men from the rising of the sun and the West in v. 6. The meaning of v. 7 then must be taken in its context: people from the East where light appears and people from the West where darkness comes shall acknowledge Yahweh, the Creator of light and darkness.<sup>282</sup> But this does not explain why the word נֶגֶד is used in connection with עַל and מִן.

We have partly discussed 45:7 in section A above.<sup>283</sup> What can we say now about this peculiar passage? As we have seen above chaos is regarded as the threatening enemy in the cult. However, it is also pictured as being wiped out from earth. This picture signifies that although chaos is dangerous, Yahweh is more powerful than chaos and thus has control over it. In everyday life chaos is identified with the foreign nations. Yahweh thus has also control over the foreign nations. Although chaos is never referred to as

281. Westermann, op. cit., p. 162.

282. Merendino, op. cit., p. 420.

283. See above, pp. 100-104.

created by God (except in this passage) and although the foreign nations (which are of course created by Yahweh as well as the people of Israel) are never referred to as being "created" by Yahweh (in contrast to the phrase  $\text{לִי יִשְׂרָאֵל}$  in 43:15), having control over something could develop to mean creating it. Beside the already mentioned Pss 74:16 and 104:20 above, Ps 115 comes close to express this. What DI did is to make an explicit expression of what already is implicit in the thought that Yahweh has control over darkness and evil. In Is 47:5 we find the phrase "go into darkness" which is directed against Babylon and the Chaldeans. God creates darkness in the form of the exile, but He also creates darkness for the Babylonians. We think it is in this sense that v. 7 finds its context rather than in the problem of Cyrus as held by Westermann.

C. Stuhlmuehler regarded DI as using a much older source than P taken from Babylonian cult and mythology, or from an earlier but undeveloped biblical tradition. According to him this is a theologically inferior source to P and because of that chronologically prior as well.<sup>284</sup> This argument is weak. P could also have been influenced by "Babylonian cult and mythology", and it is not necessary that DI should be inferior to P. It is possible that DI was utilising older sources than P, i.e. the cultic tradition. But this tradition has nothing in its contents which could be regarded as different from P. The creation of darkness is solely the responsibility of DI. Where he got this notion from must of course still be examined, but why should P be theologically superior? If we want to see the

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284. C. Stuhlmuehler, Creative Redemption in Second-Isaiah, p. 156. On the other hand A.S. Kapelrud believed that it is P who is prior to DI, see "The Date of the Priestly Code (P)", ASTI 3 (1964), pp. 58-64.



theological consequence of DI's statement then it is clear that he solved the problem of dualism but opens a new problem of 'the sinister' as part of the duality in God. In P it is exactly the opposite. Neither P nor DI solved the problem. Besides, an idea's inferiority or superiority could not be decided by its early or late appearance in history. It is also dangerous to try to decide who has the more developed thinking or who is nearer to truth than the other in this perennial problem of good and evil. From age to age there will be religious people who will take the stance either of P or DI.

## 7. Conclusion

According to von Waldow there are six trial-speeches (43:22-28; 50:1-3; 41:1-5; 21-19; 43:8-13; 44:6-8) and nine disputations (40:12-17; 21-26; 27-31; 44:24-28; 45:11-13; 18-25; 46:8-11; 48:12-16; 55:8-13) in DI. Schoors listed eight trial-speeches (43:22-28; 50:1-3; 42:18-25; 41:1-5; 41:21-29; 43:8-13; 44:6-8; 45:18-25) and seven disputations (40:12-31; 45:9-13; 44:24-28; 46:5-11(13); 48:12-15(16); 48:1-11; 55:8-13). Begrich: seven trial-speeches (41:1-5; 21-29; 43:8-13; 22-28; 44:6-8; 48:1-11; 50:1a)<sup>285</sup> and eleven disputations (40:12-17; 18-20 and 25-26; 21-24; 27-31; 44:24-28; 45:9-13; 18-25; 46:5-11; 48:1-11; 12-15; 50:1-3).<sup>286</sup> Westermann: nine trial-speeches (against the foreign nations and their gods: 41:1-5; 21-29; 43:8-15; 44:6ff; 45:20-25;

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285. Begrich, Studien zu Deuterоjesaja, p. 26.

286. ibid., p. 49.



54:11ff(?); against Israel: 43:22-28; 50:1f; 42:18-25).<sup>287</sup>

In the number of disputations in DI Westermann follows the list of Begrich.

In our examination only one trial-speech (45:18-25) deals with the concept of creation. This is not surprising as the trial-speeches are mainly concerned with Israel's past guilts. But four disputations (40:12-31; 44:24-28; 48:1-11; 48:12-15(16) and two other passages (42:5-9; 45:1-7) contain creation theology to explain the prophet's view of the exile and his expectations of the imminent restoration of the people. The disputations especially emphasise that being the Creator of all things, God is in control of everything.

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287. Westermann, Isaiah 40-66, pp. 15-17. In Forschung am Alten Testament, TB 24 München, 1964, pp. 137, 141 only seven trial-speeches are listed by Westermann. Three trial-speeches are against Israel (43:22-28; 50:1-3; 42:18-25(?)), and four against the foreign nations (41:21-29; 43:8-15; 44:6-8; 45:20-25).

## CHAPTER SIX: THE EIGHTH AND THE SEVENTH CENTURY PROPHETS

### 1. Amos.

Passages which explicitly refer to creation in the book of Amos are of course the doxologies (Amos 4:13; 5:8(9); 9:5,6). Many however claim that they are secondary. We shall examine whether this claim and the reasons behind it are justifiable.

#### 1.1 Textual and exegetical problems concerning the doxologies.

a/4:13

כִּי הִנֵּה For look,  
 יוֹצֵר הָרִים וּבֹרֵא רוּחַ He who forms mountains<sup>1)</sup> and creates wind,  
 וּמְגִיד לְאָדָם מַה-שֶּׁחַו and declares to man what is his thought;  
 עֹשֶׂה שָׁחַר עִפּוֹפָה He who makes dawn turn into darkness<sup>2)</sup>  
 וְדָרַךְ עַל-בְּמֹתַי אֶרֶץ and walks along/across the sides of the land 3) ;  
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי-צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ Yahweh, the God of Hosts, is His name!

The first Hymn has many problems and interpretation. יְהוָה is hapax legomenon. The meaning is probably the same as יְהוָה which occurs in Pss 55:3; 104:34; Job 7:13; 1 Sam 1:16.<sup>4)</sup> These parallels could also

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1) The LXX reads  $\beta\rho\omicron\nu\tau\eta\nu$  =  $\text{בְּרָא}$ , followed by the NEB. We retain the MT, cf. Pss 65:7; 90:2; Prov 8:25, which mentioned the creation of the  $\text{בְּרָא}$  although the verb used for creation is different in each passage.

2) The LXX has  $\delta\mu\iota\chi\lambda\eta\nu$ , "mist, fog".  $\text{יְהוָה}$  is understood as "misty darkness".

3) For the problem of translating this phrase see section A above, pp. 62-63

4) R.S. Cripps, A Critical & Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos, London, 1969, p. 177; E. Hammershaimb, The Book of Amos, Oxford 1970, p. 75

be taken as one of the clues to the subject of the suffix in  $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$  as referring to man. The other clues commonly suggested are: 1/ the translation of  $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$  as "spirit", ie. the spirit of man.<sup>5)</sup>  $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$  then is to be taken as a parallel to  $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$ . The meaning of the second phrase seems to become clear. God knows what is in man's thought, because it is He who created man. 2/ comparisons and associations with other OT passages such as Jer 11:20<sup>6)</sup> and Ps 94:11. 3/ the inner connections between the hymn and the context and the interpretation of the hymn in the light of these connections.<sup>7)</sup> The second phrase then ought to be translated in the light of Amos 4:1 and 4:4-5. On the other hand, J.L. Crenshaw translated the phrase as "who declares to man what is His thought".<sup>8)</sup> The reason for this is the prophetic lawsuit ( $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$ ) which according to him provides the background for a correct understanding of the doxologies. The phrase can be seen as a verdict or decision on God's part.<sup>9)</sup> Although the proposal to translate  $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$  as "spirit" is attractive, we tend to follow the majority in translating it as a natural entity, "wind", in accordance with its parallel in the first line, "mountains". The existence of the verb  $\text{לָמַד}$  before  $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$  cannot be taken as a reason for referring it to man, because elsewhere in the OT  $\text{לָמַד}$  is also

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5) LXX:  $\text{πνεῦμα}$ . H.W. Wolff takes the middle position. He suggests that  $\text{לְנֶפֶשׁ}$  is best to be translated as "breath", Joel and Amos, Philadelphia, 1977, p.223.

6) Cripps, loc.cit.; Hammershaimb, loc.cit.

7) Cullen I.K. Story, "Amos Prophet of Praise", VT 30, (1980), pp 67-80.

8) In Hymnic Affirmation of Divine Justice, p. 74. Others who take God as the subject are J.M. Ward, Amos and Isaiah: Prophets of the Words of God, p. 122 and Wolff, op. cit., p.224. He sees Amos 3:7 as parallel; cf. the GNB.

9) Crenshaw, op.cit., p. 122. But Crenshaw is also open to man as subject.



used for other entities. But the parallels and comparisons from other passages and the inner connections between the hymn and the context seem convincing enough to support man as the subject of the suffix. The alternative to put God as subject looks odd in this passage which concerns nature, although of course, in itself the second phrase with God as its subject makes perfect sense! However it has to be said that all the ancient versions refer to God in their translations, although due to the difficulty in grasping the exact meaning of  $\Pi\psi$  they read it differently. The LXX has  $\kappa\alpha\iota \acute{\alpha}\pi\alpha\gamma\chi\epsilon\lambda\lambda\omega\nu \epsilon\iota\varsigma \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \tau\omicron\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  ("and proclaim to men his Messiah";  $\eta\eta' \psi\eta$  for  $\eta\eta' \psi\eta$ ; the Syr.: "how great is his glory"; the T : "what are his works"; the V : "his declaration". One modern version, the NEB, has: "who showers abundant rain on the earth", which is the result of a somewhat forced attempt to conform 4:13 with 5:8. We also have objections to the proposal to use the concept of  $\eta' \eta$  to understand the doxologies, which will be described later on. The LXX rendering of the third phrase "He who forms the morning and the darkness" seems to be the meaning rather than the actual translation of the original text.<sup>10</sup> We retain the MT, but still take it in the sense of the regular course of day and night,<sup>11</sup> despite strong arguments to see in this and the following phrase references to theophany or theophanic elements.<sup>12</sup> They do not give an impression of the violence of nature which usually accompanies a theophany.

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10. As in the GNB, "He changes day into night". NEB is too free, "who darkens the dawn with thick clouds".

11. See E.A. Edghill, *The Book of Amos*, London, 1926, p.47 Crenshaw, *op.cit.*, p. 111; also in his article, "Amos and the Theophanic Tradition", ZAW 80 (1968) pp. 203-215; Wolff, *op.cit.*, p.211; J.L. May, *Amos*, London, 1978, p.83; Hammershaimb, *loc.cit.*

12. Crenshaw, *Hymnic Affirmation of Divine Justice*, p.128. The possible inner connection between 5:8 and 5:26 does not come to the attention of Story.

We shall discuss the refrain **יהוה אלהי-צבאות שמו** after the examination of the text of the doxologies.

b/5:8

<b>עשה כימה וכסיל</b>	He who makes the Pleiades and Orion,
<b>והפך לבקר צלמות</b>	He who turns deep darkness into morn-
<b>ויום לילה החשיך</b>	ing, and darkens the day into night;
<b>הקורא למי-הים</b>	He who summons the waters of the sea,
<b>וישפכם על-פני הארץ</b>	and pours them out upon the surface
	of the earth,
<b>יהוה שמו</b>	Yahweh is His name!

The character of the reference to Yahweh as Creator of the stars might be polemical, in view of Amos 5:26.<sup>13</sup> The names of the stars, Sakkuth and Kaiwan, occur together along with the names of other stars in an Assyrian text.<sup>14</sup> But whether there was an Assyrian astral cult in the time of Amos cannot be ascertained. Some even though that Amos 5:26 (which is a very difficult text) is best taken as an addition which was inserted after the time of Amos, with the extreme assumption that star worship was unknown at his time. If this is true, then the possible polemical intention in 5:8 carries the implication that it could also be a later addition. It is possible that the polemical intention is not directed against the Assyrian astral deities, but to the astral deities of other nations.<sup>15</sup> But due to the lack of further information it is wiser to think of 5:26 and 8:14 as sidelines in Amos' attack on the worship of his people. The reference to

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13. Hammershaimb, op.cit., p.93.

14. Wellhausen and Duhm, followed by Cripps, op.cit., p. 301

15. Possibly Babylonian, cf. Amos 8:14, the mention of Ashima.



Yahweh as Creator of the stars should then be seen as showing his might. Seen in the light of the context of the preceding verses, this might is now directed towards the people of Israel. The LXX has  $\pi\alpha\nu\tau\alpha\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\sigma\tau\epsilon\lambda\lambda\alpha\zeta\omega\nu$ , "all and changes them". Apparently it reads  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$  as  $\text{ל}^{\text{ל}}$  and connected the word with  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$ . The A.V. translated  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$  as "the shadow of death." Most commentators regard this as due to an incorrect vocalization of the MT.<sup>16</sup> The right one should be  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$ <sup>17</sup> or  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$  (intensive plural)<sup>18</sup>. The translation then ought to be "deep darkness", as in many modern versions. It is not necessary however to take it as always appearing in a theophany and/or judgemental context as held by Crenshaw.<sup>19</sup> In Job 10:21-22  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$  is placed beside  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$  and the context of the passage clearly denotes that the abode of the death is meant by this combination. But it does not necessarily mean that  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$  itself connotes something sinister.<sup>20</sup>

The second phrase, "He who turns deep darkness into morning, and darkens day into night" can be taken, just as 4:13b, in the sense of what Yahweh is doing continuously, namely, regulating the course of day and night.

Story noticed the double use of  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$  in the change or perversion by the people of what is just into what is bitter (v.7) and the regular

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16. W.R. Harper, Amos and Hosea, ICC, Edinburgh, 1973, p.115.

17. Cripps, op.cit., p. 186.

18. Hammershaimb, op.cit., p. 81.

19. Crenshaw, op.cit., pp. 70-71.

20. On the other hand, it is equally unnecessary to try to point out that  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$ , which is an irregular construct of  $\text{ל'ס}^{\text{ל}}$ , commonly refers to protection and love as in e.g. J.F. Sawyer, Semantics in Biblical Research, London, 1972, pp. 14-15.



change which Yahweh effects in sustaining the created order (v.8.)

This again may be one of the inner connections between the hymnic passage and the immediate context of Amos' discourse.<sup>21</sup> The  $\text{לִי־יְהוָה}$  of Yahweh guarantees the preservation of the created order, while the  $\text{לִי־יְהוָה}$  of the people turns justice into bitter injustice.

Opinions differ again on the exact meaning of the third phrase. It may be a reference to the Deluge or a destructive event reminiscent of the Deluge.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, by taking parallels with Job 12:5; 36:27, 28, 30 the waters can also be seen as beneficial rains in the cyclic view of the seasons where rains are drawn from the sea and poured down on the earth.<sup>23</sup> The participial form  $\text{שֶׁיִּשְׁקֹט}$  could be taken as a clue to the second possibility,<sup>24</sup> but it is also clear that participial forms can be used both for the past and the present. In relation to other occurrences of these participial forms in 4:13 connected with the creation of cosmic entities, it can be said that creation here, although it concerns itself with the real-objective world, is not merely a static view looking to the past, but is also open to the future.<sup>25</sup> Again it is worth noting F. Crüsemann's findings in his examination of the hymns.<sup>26</sup> According to him, the hymn,

21. Story, op.cit., p. 72.

22. By the occurrence of the words  $\text{לִי־יְהוָה}$  and  $\text{לִי־יְהוָה}$ , Harper, op.cit., p. 116; Crenshaw, op.cit., pp. 128 and 154. But there is a change of opinion in Crenshaw's later work, "Wēdōrēk al-bāmōte ares", CBQ 34 (1972) p. 43. There he said that the waters are "refreshing rain for man's sustenance".

23. Cripps, op.cit., p. 186; F. Horst, "Die Doxologien im Amosbuch", Gottes Recht, München, 1961, pp. 157, 164; Story, loc. cit. Hammershaimb, op.cit., p. 81 and Edghill, op.cit., p. 51 are non-committal.

24. Story, loc.cit.

25. See p. 51f above.

26. F. Crüsemann, Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel, pp. 136-150.

which has its Sitz im leben in the liturgical praises of the assembled community, includes various groups of forms differing in origin. The dominant form in the OT is the imperative hymn, which extols the gracious deeds Yahweh has done for His people and calls them to praise Him. This is regarded by Crusemann as the authentic response of Israel to the actions of Yahweh which the people experience in their course of history. In contrast to the former is the kind of hymn that glorifies Yahweh with participial predications strikingly similar to the hymnody of the rest of the ancient Near East. The praise of God in this kind of hymn is free from intellectual speculation: What the Israelites did was to apply all the demonstrations of power to Yahweh through the addition of the polemic formula: יהוה שמו. In our opinion the formula necessarily connected with the participial hymn in the OT comes from the earlier form יהוה צבאות, which later on developed into the form יהוה צבאות שמו.<sup>27</sup> But on the whole we tend to agree with Crusemann on the origin and function of the participial predications.

Most problematic is the relationship between 5:8 and the following verse (5:9):

המבליג שד על-עז He who makes destruction to flash<sup>28</sup>  
 ושר על-מבצר יבוא against the strong,

So that ruin comes upon the fortress.

Many find it difficult to see the connection between 5:9 and 5:8. The main reason is that reference to punishment and evil seems to be out

27. See below Appendix B.

28. The LXX reads: ὁ διαρῶν συστρίμμον ἐπὶ ισχυρ, "who dispenses ruin to strength....." But למבליג probably comes from the root לבג, "to gleam, to smile" (BDB, p. 114b). Cf. Job 10:20.



of place in a hymn of praise. Later on we shall see that we do not follow this principle, but it must be admitted that the problem of how to see these two verses is difficult and it is best to leave it open. Crüsemann did not include v.9 within the doxologies, presumably because there is no parallel to it in the ancient Near East texts. However, he did include the element of punishment in the participial hymns.<sup>29</sup> Crenshaw also holds that praises of God could include elements of punishment. He pointed to 9:5, "all who dwell in it mourn".<sup>30</sup> However, he agreed on the disharmony between the two verses and proposed that v.9 originally belongs as a sequel to 9:5 (the same mention of punishment). So his rearrangement of the two strophes stands as follows:<sup>31</sup>

5:8	He who makes the Pleiades and the Orion ..... And turns deep-darkness into morning, who darkens the day into night, Yahweh, God of Hosts, is his name.
9:5	He who touches the earth so that it melts And all its inhabitants mourn, He who makes destruction to flash against the strong, so that ruin comes upon the fortress..... <sup>32</sup>

Story also regarded v.9 as belonging to the hymn, He tried to explain it as Yahweh's consequentness. His power and faithfulness can still

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29. Under the heading of "Bestrafung der Frevler, Machthaber und Weisen", Crüsemann, op.cit., p. 147f.

30. Crenshaw, op.cit., p. 58.

31. i b i d., p.74.

32. Reference to the Nile in 9:5b is apparently regarded as a gloss.



be sung in the face of human sin and disaster (v.8). But perversity (v.7) cannot go unpunished. V.9 then, is the description of the punishment to the "fortress" Samaria.<sup>33</sup>

G. Hoffmann proposed to amend v.9 so that the passage becomes a reference to the creation of the stars.<sup>34</sup>  $\text{רִשׁ}$ , "ruin, destruction" is changed into  $\text{רִשׁ}$ , "ox, bull, Taurus";  $\text{יָצַד}$ , "strong, mighty" to  $\text{יָצַד}$ , "she-goat, Capella";  $\text{מִצְדָּת}$ , "fortress, stronghold" to  $\text{מִצְדָּת}$ , "harbinger of vintage, Vindemiator (or Vindemitor, Vindematrix)".<sup>35</sup>

This proposal is taken over by G.R. Driver who rendered v.9 as follows:

Who makes the Bull rise hard on (the rising of)  
the She-goat,  
and causes the Bull to set hard on (the rising of)  
the Vintager. 36

But there are several reasons which make us consider this proposal to be unlikely: 1/ references to creation of the stars seem to end at 5:8a, unless 5:8b is regarded as originally belonging to 9:6b. 2/ the MT of 5:9 itself makes sense. If we do not agree that hymns of praise could include reference to punishment then v.9 is not part of the doxologies. However, hymns of praise can mention punishment, and moreover, as can be seen in some psalm which have been examined above,

33. Story, op.cit., p. 73. He comes to this conclusion by assuming that Amos is the writer of the doxologies and that this could be proved by holding to the principle of inner connections between the hymns and the context. In Story's article there is no problem left on the apparent awkwardness between the hymnic passages and their contexts.

34. G. Hoffmann, "Versuche zu Amos", ZAW 3 (1883), pp. 87-126, esp. pp. 110 - 11.

35. O. Procksch in the prop. BHK has  $\text{מִצְדָּת}$ , "vindemiator".

36. G.R. Driver, "Two Astronomical Passages in the Old Testament", JTS IV (1953), pp. 208-12. Cripps also agreed with Hoffmann, op.cit., p. 299. He translated:

Who bids Taurus with (=and) Capella rise  
Who bids Taurus with (=and) Vindematrix set  
See also rendering of 5:9 in the NEB.

creation could include judgement, albeit to foreign enemies.

Nevertheless, we think it is better not to regard v. 9 as part of the hymn, but as part of Amos' predictions concerning the fall of the northern capital. The other reason is that in 4:13 and 9:5,6 the hymns end with the formulaic reference to the name of Yahweh, so it may be the same with 5:8.<sup>37</sup> 3/ the uncertainty of the date of the reference to the stars and the fact that there are no indications of knowledge of the name of the stars in ancient Israel. However, this argument is more concerned with 5:8 and 26 than 5:9.<sup>38</sup>

c/9:5,6.

וְאֵלֹהֵי יְהוָה הַצְבָּאוֹת But the Lord Yahweh of Hosts:<sup>39</sup>

הַנוֹגֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ וְתִמּוֹג is He who touches the earth and it totters, 40

וְאֵבֶלָן כָּל-יוֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ and all who dwell in it mourns;

וְעֹלָתָהּ כִּיָּאֵר כָּלָהּ and all of it rises like the Nile,

וְשִׁקְעָהּ כִּיָּאֵר מִצְרַיִם and subsides like the Nile of Egypt;

37. Cf. Ward, op.cit., p.119.

38. Besides the argument has its weakness too. Amos 5:26 does refer to "star" (כוכב) and "your god" (אלהיכם), although admittedly we do not know whether Kaiwan is the name of the star or the name of the god of the star (as in the RSV). Moreover, the LXX mistranslated references to the stars in 5:8 and 26. It remains a possibility that the star-names are ancient and already forgotten at the time of the translation. Although the LXX rendering of 5:9 is different from the MT, it is still close to the meaning. This gives weight to the rejection of the allusion to the stars in v.9

39. or "but the Lord is Yahweh of Hosts, who....", see Hammershaimb, op.cit., p. 133 fn 1. According to him the best way of translating the whole sentence is "as truly as the Lord Yahweh of Hosts, who touches.....His name is Yahweh". All that comes in between is a description of His might.

40. or "crumbles", cf. Ps 75:4. "To melt" in the sense of melting like wax is more appropriate for the word נִמַּח (niph. of נָחַח) as in Ps. 97:5



הַבִּנוּה בַּשָּׁמַיִם מַעֲלוֹתָיו is He who builds His upper chambers<sup>41</sup>  
in the heavens,

וַיִּגְדָּתוּ עַל-אֶרֶץ יִסְדָּהּ and founds His vault upon the earth,

הַקָּרָא לַמַּיִם-הַיָּם who calls for the waters of the sea,

וַיִּשְׁפֹּךְ עַל-פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ and pours them out upon the surface of  
the earth;

יְהוָה שְׁמוֹ Yahweh is His name!

The formulation in the first phrase of v.5 is never used in other parts of the book of Amos.<sup>42</sup> In fact, in the whole of the OT it appears only in this passage.<sup>43</sup> But this does not tell whether it belongs to the hymn or is a later insertion introduced by somebody who has been reading the words of Amos.<sup>44</sup> The other assertion that 9:5,6 stands in no applicable relation with the preceding verses<sup>45</sup> is not strong. They add weight to the words of the prophet. The connection between 9:5,6 and the preceding verses is not unlike the connection between 4:13 and 4:6-11. Just as in 4:6-11 we find the list of five kinds of punishment before the hymn in v. 13, here too in 9:1-6 we find a list of five conditional sentences suggesting the inability of Israel to escape from Yahweh's judgement.<sup>46</sup>

As in the case of the formulaic refrain, we tend to follow

41. Cripps, op.cit., p. 261; cf. Ps 104:3,13. Actually מַעֲלוֹת (pl.) means "staircase", but probably it should be taken in the same sense as מַלְיָה, "upper floor/chamber", see the proposal in the BHS.

42. the vocalization of הַבִּנוּה also differs from the usual one.

43. see appendix B, below.

44. for the latter view see Harper, op.cit., p.190

45. as in Edghill, op.cit., p. 89

46. Story, op.cit., pp. 75-76.



Hammershaimb's proposal on the arrangement of the hymn.

The allusion to God "touching" the mountains refers to lightning (Ps 144:5,6) or earthquake (Ps 104:32). On the other hand tremors can also be the result of a volcanic eruption.<sup>47</sup> As we have seen in chapter 1, it is difficult to decide whether a natural phenomenon in the OT is a meteorologic or volcanic one. In Pss 77:18 and 97:5 again we see tremors as the result of lightning, but there is no mention of Yahweh "touching" the mountains. However, in Ps 75:4 we find reference to an earthquake steadied by the power of Yahweh. The same word  $\lambda\dot{\imath}\nu(\lambda\dot{\nu})$  is used as in the second phrase. We have included Ps 75:4 within references to creation. The earthquake then should be taken as an allusion to the work of God in primeval times.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, in Ps 75 creation is closely connected with the theme of judgement on external enemies.<sup>49</sup> It is also interesting that the picture of chaos in Jer 4:23-26 includes the description of an earthquake as one of the signs of the return of chaos (v.24):

$\eta\lambda\dot{\imath}\nu\eta\lambda\dot{\imath}\nu\eta\lambda\dot{\imath}\nu$  I looked at the mountains,  
 $\eta\lambda\dot{\imath}\nu\eta\lambda\dot{\imath}\nu\eta\lambda\dot{\imath}\nu$  and they were quaking.....

And in Ps 144:5-7 the appeal to God to "touch" the mountains is

47. see A.A. Anderson, Psalms, 11, p. 725.

48. Our conclusion here is not very different from B.S. Childs' "The Enemy from the North and the Chaos Tradition", JBL LXXVII (1959), pp. 187-98. However, Childs regarded this chaos tradition as belonging to the apocalyptic stream and came to this conclusion through examination of the word  $\psi\psi\eta$  and the Jeremianic passages which refer to the enemy from the north.

49. although admittedly here it is the earth that quakes, while in Amos 9:5 it is the mountains.

followed by a plea of delivery from  $\eta' \gamma \eta \eta' \eta$ , which in this psalm is the parallel of  $\gamma \gamma \eta \eta' \eta$ . But this parallel does not diminish the cosmic meaning of the former. The pleader was remembering and actualizing Yahweh's deed in the past so that what he experiences now may have some meaning, and not be just a senseless suffering.

Seen in this light probably the second phrase too belongs to creation. Or if we want to see it from the opposite side it may be an allusion to the coming of chaos. If the audience of Amos is already regarded as standing on the side of chaos then the relation of creation and judgement in Ps 75 now seem to be directed towards them, following the "prophetic reversal" tendency. Here we confirm what Story said in his article.<sup>50</sup> Amos sings of a God of creation and judgement. Deutero Isaiah however, sings of creation and salvation. Story found it difficult to accept that the redactor of the exile would have omitted a redemptive note from the Amos hymns. We have to be seriously open again to the possibility of a pre-exilic date of these hymns (whether composed or incorporated by Amos). Story sees the difference of the doxology/ies in the absence of terms such as  $\eta' \psi \eta$  and  $\eta' \lambda$ . However, the date of these two terms cannot be said to be post-exilic. Why DI used them and why Amos did not is obviously determined by the context of the situation which they were facing. On the other hand Story has a valid point when he mentions the possibility of DI utilizing old pre-exilic cultic traditions - the same materials used earlier by Amos!

It is also clear that the second strophe cannot be regarded as

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50. Story, op.cit., pp. 68 and 78.



indication of an allusion to theophany.<sup>51</sup>

If the reference in the second strophe is to a cosmic earthquake, then the other references to earthquake in 8:8 and 9:1 probably have the same meaning.<sup>52</sup>

The third phrase (9:5c) is practically the same as 8:8. Does it mean that 9:5c is a repetition of 8:8 or vice-versa? F. Horst<sup>53</sup> regarded 8:8 as originating in dependence upon 9:5. He however thinks that the doxologies are originally post-exilic products. This implies that 8:8 is also from the same date. But it is also possible that the hymn in 9:5 is in the back of Amos' mind when he delivered his message to the people. The problem of dependence between 9:5 and 8:8 then is not very crucial for the determination of 9:5 as post-exilic.

Commentators have noticed that the comparisons of the earthquake with the annual rising and subsiding of the Nile is somewhat odd. Hammershaimb attempted an explanation, namely that Amos had never been in Egypt, and only knew the rise of the Nile by hearsay.<sup>54</sup>

51. Against Crenshaw, op.cit., pp. 134-135, who, besides Pss 97:4-5 and 104:32 also mentioned Nahum 1:5 and Hos 4:3 as support.

52. Amos 8:8 and 9:1. Hammershaimb, op.cit., p. 133, thinks of an earthquake in the ordinary sense. Cripps, op.cit., p. 261 and Story, op.cit., p. 77 also thinks in the same way. Hammershaimb even asserted that the earthquake mentioned in 1:1 was seen as fulfilment of Amos's prediction of divine punishment, see above p. 139 fn 51. However, we are doubtful of this possibility. It is probably better to say that Amos had in mind a universal earthquake, and not a local one. But of course the editor of Amos could misunderstand the universal earthquake with local earthquake, as in 1:1.

53. Horst, op.cit., p. 156. Also May, op.cit., p. 84.

54. Hammershaimb, op.cit., p. 125



If this is true, then probably 9:5c does not originally belong to the hymn after all, although the pre-exilic date of the latter could still be maintained. As against Horst, we may regard 9:5c as dependent upon 8:8. The description of v. 6 depicts God as building His dwelling place (Cf. Ps 104:3).  $\text{בָּנָה בְּיָמָיו}$ , which literally means "bond, bound", is used for the firmament. The picture and vocabulary are rather different from Genesis 1 but closer to Job 26.

The second phrase is exactly the same as the third phrase in 5:8. Both rightly belong to the hymns.

Each of the hymns ends with a formulaic refrain. We have seen Crusemann's view, that the refrains were added to the participial hymnody taken over from the surrounding cultures. Originally the formula was short,  $\text{יְהוָה יִשְׁלַח}$ . Later on there appeared variations.<sup>55</sup> Accordingly in Crusemann's rearrangement of the hymns the refrain in 4:13 is emended to become like the ones in 5:8 and 9:5,6.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand Crenshaw emended the refrains in 5:8 and 9:5,6 to become like 4:13.<sup>57</sup> Although we agree with the latter (while holding to the pre-exilic date of this refrain), we are also open to the possibility that Amos freely used existing formulations from his time without an attempt to smooth them into one fixed formulation.

## 1.2. Problems of unity, authenticity and function of the doxologies.

Although opinions may differ on the question of the compiler, purpose

55. See appendix B below.

56. Crusemann, op.cit., pp. 102-103.

57. Crenshaw, op.cit., p. 74.

and date of the hymnic passages, many scholars have no doubt about their secondary character.<sup>58</sup> Several reasons have been alleged for the secondary nature of the doxologies.

a) There is the discontinuity between the doxologies and their immediate contexts. Herein lies the problem of the relationship between 4:13 and 4:12, 5:8 and 5:7 5:9 (10); 9:5,6 and 9:4; 9:7. Story tends to hold to the continuity between 4:13 and the context of chapter 4. Following W. Brueggemann,<sup>59</sup> Amos 4:4-13 is regarded as a coherent unit which reflects ancient traditions of Covenant renewal (as in Ex 19, 34 and Lev 26). 4:4-5 shows that Israel has broken the covenant; 4:6-11 refer to the incurring judgement; 4:12-13 is a call to covenant renewal.<sup>60</sup> Brueggemann sees the relation between 12b and 13 as follows:<sup>61</sup>

- transition from old covenant to covenant renewal: 12b.
- call to renewal: 12c
- the doxology of motivation: 13a, which refer to Yahweh's works in the past.
- the assertion of His name: 13b - the refrain.

However, we find it hard to accept this argument. Even if we agree that the idea of creation is early, it still needs to be demonstrated

58. Even the very conservative ones like J.A. Motyer, The Day of the Lion, London, 1974, pp 20, 111 assumes that Amos was quoting from some hymnic source.

59. W. Brueggemann, "Amos iv 4-13 and Israel's Covenant Worship", VT 15 (1965), pp. 1-15.

60. Story, op.cit., p. 68.

61. Brueggemann, op.cit., p. 14.

how covenant making can be the logical consequence of faith in the Creator God. Apparently Brueggemann regards the covenant theme as early and consequently tries to find an early date for Creation too, but we have argued above that the idea of the covenant is recent. Moreover, Brueggemann implies that the hymnic passages are not originally portions of one hymn. If 4:13 is a component of the covenant renewal ceremony, then what about the other two similar passages in Amos? They are not discussed at all in Brueggemann's article.

Let us have a closer look at v. 12:

לכן כה אעשה-לך ישראל Therefore, thus I will do to you, Israel!  
 עקב כי-זאת אעשה-לך Because I will do this to you,  
 הכון לקראת-אלהיך ישראל prepare to meet your God, Israel!<sup>62</sup>

It has been noted that the relation between 21a and 21b is rather awkward. Although it is by no means certain, probably there are some missing words between "thus I will do" and "because I will do this". On the other hand the occurrence of  $\text{לכ}$  is similar to Solomon's oath pronounced in 1 Kings 2:23,  $\text{לכ}$  and  $\text{לכ}$  may be regarded as words which accompany threatening gestures.<sup>63</sup> Or stronger still as referring to a certain prophetic symbolic action<sup>64</sup> although admittedly, the text gives no indication as to the meaning of the reference in either case.

62. The LXX reads:  $\epsilon\tau\omicron\iota\mu\alpha\zeta\omicron\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\pi\iota\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \iota\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ , "prepare to call on your God, Israel!"

63. Hammershaimb, op. cit., p. 74.

64. A.R. Johnson, The Cultic Prophet and Israel's Psalmody, pp. 183-184, fn.2,; taking parallels from 1 Kings 22:11; 2 Chron 18:10. This may add to the consideration of Amos as a cultic prophet, or at least somebody who is familiar with the cultic rites of symbolic action.



The third phrase which Brueggemann regards as a summons for covenant renewal is more likely a dire warning that the coming of Yahweh is not a saving act as commonly expected, but an act of judgement against His own people.<sup>65</sup> The doxology in 4:13 can be seen as a description of the might of Yahweh the Creator who comes to judge His people. So we agree with Story on the connection between 4:12 and 13, although we do not follow his uncritical acceptance of Brueggemann's view.

The second hymn clearly interrupts the sequence of verses in chapter 5. There are proposals to put vv.8-9 to follow after V. 10, or v.7 after v.9. This interruption however does not disturb the thread of thought in chapter 5. But it puts more weight on the consideration to deny the authorship of the hymns to Amos. Probably Amos incorporated existing hymns to add force to his message. As for the third hymn, Crenshaw has noticed that the doxology does no violence to the context, but it can also be omitted without loss of the meaning of 9:1-4, 7-8a.<sup>66</sup> Actually the same can be said for the other doxologies.

b) The function of the doxology/ies. Crenshaw puts the date of the doxology/ies in the exilic or post-exilic age and regards them as belonging to the doxology of judgement.<sup>67</sup> He develops F. Horst's theory on the doxologies.<sup>68</sup> According to Horst the doxologies,

65. The opinion of Crenshaw that this is a kind of battle cry of the nation against a punishing covenant God, "Amos and the Theophanic Tradition", p. 204 fn.6 is not convincing. We are also doubtful whether this phrase means "prepare for the worst", Cripps, op.cit., p. 296. Although 12c does not sound like a gospel trumpet (Cripps) we have to remember the dialectic in the prophetic reproach; see p.151 above.

66. Crenshaw, Hymnic Affirmation and Divine Justice, p. 9.

67. i b i d., p.141

68. Horst, op.cit., pp. 155-166.

together with the confession, are components of sacred law. As an example he referred to Josh 7:19, where Achan was told "to give glory" to God after he was found guilty of transgression of the Banngut. The same thing can be said of Job 4-5, if we regard 5:8 as a trial before God and 5:9-16 as the doxology. Further examples are Jer 13:15f; 1 Sam 6:5; Ps 118:17-21; 2 Chron 30:8 (LXX).<sup>69</sup> He also gives parallels from history of religions, and put the doxologies in the penitential prayers of the exilic or post-exilic community as an affirmation of Yahweh's just judgement on Israel, that the bitter experience of the exile is not a sign of Yahweh's impotence. On the contrary, it is a sign of His omnipotence as judge.<sup>70</sup>

On the whole, we are not convinced by Horst's coinage of the term "doxology of judgement" for the doxology/ies of Amos.<sup>71</sup> We must consider the possibility that an individual or a group within society can come to the conclusion that the time of reckoning has arrived for the whole society. We do not deny the possibility of a communal penitence after the exile, but we disagree that the relations of creation with judgement could only occur after the exile.

69. Horst's last example was wrongly printed as 1 Chron 30:8 (LXX). It was still left uncorrected in Crenshaw's dissertation, op.cit., p. 28. Ward, op.cit., p. 115 agrees with Josh 7:16ff and 2 Chron 30:8 as the examples of the doxology of judgement, but disagrees on Ps 118, which according to Ward is a confession of innocence to the God of love. Ward proposes other examples such as Pss 106 and 51.

70. Horst, op.cit., p. 166. As for the words of Amos, 4:6-11 later come to be cited as the prophetic words to the exilic people and 9:1-4 as the confessions of the community.

71. Crenshaw asserted that the doxologies contain judgement, op.cit., pp. 83, 113. It has to be said that while the immediate context of the doxologies is judgement, only the third doxology (9:5,6) contains judgement. And it also needs to be asked: judgement for whom? We have seen above that in relation to Ps 75 the third doxology was put in its present place through the workings of the "prophetic reversal".



If it is clear that the object of the Creator's judgement in the cult is the opposite from what Amos preached, then we have to ask ourselves why such reversal could happen. Moreover, a closer look at the example from the story of Achan in Josh 7:19 makes clear that it is not in parallel with the doxologies at all. True, Achan was told "to give glory", but does it mean reciting such passages as the doxologies in Amos?

Besides developing Horst's theory, Crenshaw also tried to pursue A. Weiser's theory on the idea of theophany connected with the New Year's Festival and covenant renewal.<sup>72</sup> Later on he confirmed his opinion on the relationship between the doxologies of Amos and the theophanic tradition by locating theophanic language in both the prophet's message and the doxologies (references to creation, judgement, earthquake, darkness and destructive waters).<sup>73</sup> However, we have seen

72. ibid., p. 111. Here his interest meets that of Brueggemann, although their conclusions differ.

73. Crenshaw, "Amos and the Theophanic Tradition", pp. 203-215. The interest in natural order links together the theophanic tradition and wisdom. In this Crenshaw continues his earlier opinion on the link between Wisdom tradition and Amos in "The Influence of the Wise upon Amos", ZAW 79 (1967) pp. 42-51. Here he disregarded almost all the supposed relationship between Amos and Wisdom in stylistic, theological and ideological reasons except the doxologies which, according to him, have much affinity with Job 5:9-16; 9:5 5-10. Although the doxologies came from a subsequent stage textually and historically, the kinship between them and Job is striking, and possibly indicates that the language of Amos was influenced by the wisdom tradition sufficiently to encourage later redactors among the sages to insert portions of a hymn to Yahweh as Creator (p. 49). But this is not consistent with his disregard of the supposed relationship between the book of Amos and the Wisdom tradition. On the other hand, R.E. Clements in Prophecy and Tradition, p. 78. attacked Crenshaw's above article because apparently he got the impression that Crenshaw regards the doxologies as authentic to Amos. Besides, he finds it difficult to see why theophany theme should have belonged primarily to Wisdom. The cultic contexts should be more appropriate. Surprisingly, in his dissertation Crenshaw is pointing at these contexts, which he seems to have overlooked in "The Influence of the Wise upon Amos" and taken up again in "Amos and the Theophanic Tradition".



above that the doxologies do not contain or even allude to theophany. The passages taken by Crenshaw as key to this understanding - 4:13d (the fourth phrase), 9:5b, 5:8c 9:6c - are not theophanic passages at all,<sup>74</sup> despite their apparent similarity with such passages as Job 5:9-16 and 9:5-10.

Crenshaw also mentions the  $\text{נִשְׁבַּח}$  as the key to the understanding of the doxologies.<sup>75</sup> In the prophetic lawsuit mountains are called upon to hear the controversy of the Lord (Mic 6:1-2). But reference to nature alone is not enough to include a passage within the framework of Creation. Moreover, the references to creation in the doxologies do not give any indication that the natural entities are witnesses to Yahweh's controversy with His people.

c) Philological considerations. The use of the verbs  $\text{נִשְׁבַּח}$  and  $\text{נִשְׁבַּח}$  as its parallel in 4:13 is regarded by some as product of the exile. According to Crenshaw, the problem is whether  $\text{נִשְׁבַּח}$  already has its soteriological meaning as in DI or is still to be regarded in its natural or cosmogonic meaning.<sup>76</sup> In our own examination<sup>77</sup> the word seems to occur in both judgement and soteriological contexts. As in the few cases where the context is neither,  $\text{נִשְׁבַּח}$  seems to have become a very common expression. This may imply that  $\text{נִשְׁבַּח}$  actually developed from a theological-cultic word to a common word.<sup>78</sup> In Amos 4:13 it

74. Story takes 4:13d in the light of Mic 1:3, which is pre-exilic. However, his translation is very similar to Crenshaw's op.cit., p.69

75. Crenshaw, Hymnic Affirmation and Divine Justice, pp. 121-122.

76. i b i d., pp.13-14

77. See below.

78. Our finding then, is the reverse of Crenshaw's. Wolff also thinks that it is possible to see a pre-exilic Canaanite cultic background behind  $\text{נִשְׁבַּח}$ , op.cit., p. 223.

occurs in a judgemental context. It could be that the word here has already become a common expression (in its natural-cosmogonic meaning), and the date of 4:13 can be decided by pursuing the implications of this possibility, namely that 4:13 is a post-exilic product. However, we think that  $\text{לְפָנָיו}$  in 4:13 cannot be regarded as a common expression as in Deut 4:32. On the other hand, the character of  $\text{לְפָנָיו}$  cannot be decided apart from the context of the creation passage. The difference of the context of 4:13 from the contexts of creation statements in the Psalms and Is 40-55 makes us think that here again the prophetic reversal plays a role. The insertion of the hymnic description of Yahweh's might as the Creator within the context of judgement shows a profound theological insight: Yahweh the Creator is a free God who could turn against His creatures when the latter take side with the forces of chaos. Story rightly emphasizes the inner connections between the doxologies and the rest of the book of Amos.<sup>79</sup> But although he mentions the difference between creation contexts in Amos and in Is 40-55, he is silent on the difference between the context of creation in Amos and in the cult as shown by several psalms.

d/ The use of the phrase  $\text{יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי זְכֹרֹת שְׁמוֹ}$ , which is thought to be exilic for the same reason as  $\text{לְפָנָיו}$ , namely that it was frequently used by DI. Also the phrase appears in the LXX less frequently than in the MT, as can be seen in the book of Jeremiah. But it is also clear that the phrase is used before and after Amos' time, and the scarcity of the phrase in the LXX of Jeremiah can hardly

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79. Here he is in total opposition to the view of von Rad concerning the doxologies in his article from 1936, "The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation", The Problem of Hexateuch and other Essays, p. 146.



be used as evidence for the lateness of its occurrences in Amos.

Here it is intact in both the LXX and the MT version. Crüsemann holds the possibility of a pre-exilic date of northern provenance.<sup>80</sup>

e/ The insertion of a doxology in the LXX of Hos 13:4:

ἔγω δε κυριος ὁ θεος σου	But I am the Lord your God who estab-
ὁ στερεων τον ουρανον, και κειξων την,	lishes heaven and creates the earth,
ου αι χειρες εκτισαν παντα την στρατιαν του ουρανου,	whose hands have founded the whole hosts of heaven;
και ου παρεδειξα σοι αυτα	But I showed them for you not that
του πορευεσθαι ὀπισω αυτων.	you shall go after them;
και ἐγω ἀνηγυγον σε εκ της Αιγυπτου,	And I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and you shall know no other
και θεον ἐμου ου γνωση, και σωζων ουκ ἐστι παρεξ ἐμου	God except me, and there is no (other) saviour beside me.

The fact that a doxology is inserted into the text of Hosea means that such an addition into the text of Amos is also possible. This possibility however is not sufficient in itself to explain the absence of this doxology in the MT of Hos 13:4 (except that perhaps Hos 12:3 (MT) originally belongs to the doxology) and the fact that there are both the MT and LXX versions of Amos 4:13. It might be possible that the insertion in the LXX of Hos 13:4 is a later addition due to its absence in the MT, but in no way can we decide from there that the same thing can be said of the doxologies in the book of Amos.

From all the five reasons there is actually little which could conclusively point to the secondary character of the hymns. Moreover,

80. Crüsemann, op.cit., p. 106



there is no apparent theological discontinuity between the content of the doxologies and the rest of the book of Amos. And both the doxologies and the book of Amos show evidence of the prophetic reversal of older traditions. That is why we can still hold to the pre-exilic date of the hymns.<sup>81</sup> However, we have seen that the awkwardness of the second hymn (Amos 5:8) in its formal relations with the context makes us think that the doxologies were not composed by Amos, although it is still possible that Amos could have inserted the hymns within his message as a conscious design.<sup>82</sup>

Are the doxologies components of one single hymn or do they come from several hymns? Although Wolff warns against assuming the latter, on the whole we can say that they are parts of a hymn, or at least portions taken from hymns with the same theme.

If the hand of Amos is recognised in the placement of the hymnic passages in his own book and not the hand of a later editor (either pre-exilic or exilic) then we need to focus our attention on the implications of this view. The guiding principles of a post-exilic date for the doxologies are apparently the late date of creation concept, the unrelatedness between the doxologies and the rest of the book of Amos and the necessity of having a reason for the praise of God within the context of judgement. By following other alternatives we have tried to show the possibility of an early date for creation

81. Quite a number of scholars also pointed to a pre-exilic date: Ward, *op.cit.*, p. 117; H. Ringgren, *Israelite Religion*, pp. 104, 265-226; A.S. van der Woude, "Genesis en Exodus", p. 9; both G.W. Anderson, *A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 149 and Hammershaimb, *op.cit.*, p. 133 hold that there is not sufficient ground to deny the authorship to Amos or that Amos quoted them.

82. Cf. Ward, *loc.cit.*

and the inner connections between the doxologies and the book of Amos. Horst and Crenshaw pointed to the event of the exile as the reason for the praise, which has its setting in life in the exilic or post-exilic community lament. Wolff on the other hand thinks of the ruins of Bethel.<sup>83</sup> However, we have shown that the praise can have its origin in the triumph of God in His creation against the foreign nations as the representative of chaos powers, and that Amos reversed the context so that now it is Israel who becomes the object of Yahweh's wrath. This reversal does not depend on concrete happenings such as the exile or the ruins of Bethel. The 'domain assumption' is strong enough to push some individuals or groups towards an utterly negative assessment of the larger group of people. Normally domain assumptions are not actual beliefs based on evidence but prior beliefs that govern one's outlook on and understanding of reality.<sup>84</sup> The pre-exilic prophets condemned injustice and immorality (which are offences against natural law), but as we have seen above, these are also the concern of the cultic prophets, and yet they did not condemn the people as a whole. Apparently the canonical prophets assume that only individuals within society, but the whole society is immoral and unjust. This prophetic domain assumption however is still to be placed within the prophetic understanding of the world order. It is not necessarily an indication that the prophets disconfirm the world order, although it must be said that part of Jeremiah's struggle involves this apparent disconfirmation of world order.<sup>85</sup>

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83. Wolff, op.cit., pp. 111-12, 217-18.

84. Carroll, When Prophecy Failed, p. 12. He concedes the possibility of the prophets having prejudices.

85. See Jer. 12. It is the great problem in the book of Job. But even in Job, "creation theology still functions to undergird the argument for divine justice despite strong and convincing evidence to the contrary", Crenshaw, Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom, p. 32.



Rudolf Smend's article<sup>86</sup> provides startling evidences for the right understanding of the message of Amos. In a sense he cuts right through the debate whether Amos was a revolutionary with new ideas or whether he merely followed former cultic traditions of judgement.<sup>87</sup> The "no" of Amos is directed to all the orthodox teachings in which the people of Israel base their feelings of security. The teachings are nullified through their reversals.<sup>88</sup> Thus the pride of Israel as the first among the nations is ridiculed to become the very reason of the judgement (Amos 9:7,8). She is only known to Yahweh among the other peoples, therefore she will be punished (Amos 3:2). The "no" even includes the denial of a continuous existence of the whole nation of Israel (Amos 8:2). However, Smend did not consider the doxologies at all and the reference to creation in them. Could it be that the context of creation here in its relation to the world order is reversed too? The reference to the feasts and solemn assemblies (5:21) might refer to the New Year Festival.<sup>89</sup> The constancy of God in preserving the order of the world was not denied, but it is the people of Israel who are considered as the disturber of the world order, and as such must be destroyed.<sup>90</sup> As seen above,

86. R. Smend, "Das Nein Des Amos", *EvTh* 23 (1963), pp. 404-23.

87. *ibid.*, pp. 419-20. Amos is a loner (*einzelner*). But as Robert R. Wilson has shown, ancient societies know two categories of prophets: the one who stands at the periphery and he or she who appears within the established power structure, see "Early Israelite Prophecy", *Int* 32 (1978), pp. 9-10.

88. This is also the conclusion of Barton in Amos's Oracles against the Nations, pp. 36-37, concerning Amos 3:2 and 9:7b.

89. Cf. E.C. Kingsbury, "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh", *JBL* 83 (1964), p. 283. This work is concerned with Amos 9:1-3. But his findings could be applied to the examination of the doxologies.

90. Cf. A.S. Kapelrud, "God as Destroyer in the Preaching of Amos and in the Ancient Near East", *JBL* 71(1952), pp. 33-38.



we have objected to Barton's distinction between a world order and natural law. In his recent book Barton still holds to this distinction. The oracles against foreign nations in Amos 1:3-2:6 do not have a cultic background. They are not salvation (for Israel) oracles.<sup>91</sup> Although he acknowledges that Amos is an intellectual, Barton does not support the affinity between Amos and the wisdom tradition either. The condemnation of foreign enemies has nothing to do with world order either in a cultic or wisdom context. The most that can be said of this 'customary law' is that it is almost part of the order of nature.<sup>92</sup> It is true that in the cult the oracles against foreign nations are intentionally salvation oracles. Yahweh is believed to have control over the foreign nations for the sake of Israel and they are regarded as agents of chaos without any reason except that they are Israel's traditional enemies. But Amos did give reasons for their punishment and so either we must say this shows something of Amos'originality or that in this case Amos was influenced by the wisdom all-embracing world order. Whatever we choose, it also implies that Yahweh has a relationship with foreign nations (9:7), although Amos made it clear that this relationship is not of the same level as that of Yahweh and Israel (3:2). However, after all these considerations, it must be said that Amos is still not a universalist.<sup>93</sup> His main interest is not the foreign nations, but the people of Yahweh. His view concerning creation still follows that of the cultic framework, where the foreign nations are condemned.

91. Barton, op.cit., pp. 12 and 63 fn 24.

92. i b i d., p. 37, our underline.

93. J. Morgenstern, "The Universalism of Amos", Essays Presented to Leo Baeck, London, 1954, pp. 206-26.

The new in Amos then is that the people of Yahweh too, have made themselves guilty to fall into the same condemnation.<sup>94</sup> Here Amos adapted the insight of both the wisdomic and cultic understanding of the ambiguous character of God the Creator as just and consistent, but also free and unpredictable from the context of His relationship to man or individuals in general to the context of His relationship with the nation Israel in particular. As against the cultic view, Amos hold that in this particular case too, Yahweh's freedom must be upheld. He cannot be 'forced' to be always on the side of Israel, no matter what happens. Our use of the term "Yahweh's freedom" is not without problem here. We have used the term in the wisdomic framework of universal world order to denote God's incomprehensibility. Related to this is the problem of the suffering of the innocent. However, there is no such a problem in the case of Israel as a nation. Prophetic tradition from Amos to DI agrees that Israel is guilty and deserves punishment. Can we then apply the term "free" to Yahweh's relationship with Israel as a nation? Is Yahweh's attachment to Israel a sign of His freedom or His limitedness? If we started from the assumption that the prophets rejected the popular cultic notion that God is always on the side of Israel then of course the act of divine punishment of Israel can be seen as an aspect of God's freedom. But if we started from the framework of universal world order in Israel then the act of God's punishment is to be seen

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94. This is also Barton's conclusion, op.cit., p. 49. Amos' "new" idea however is by no means novel in the ancient Near East. We have seen in our exegesis of DI that the idea of a deity judging and bringing disaster upon his own people is quite common in Israel's environment. Cf. Gese, "The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East and the Old Testament", pp. 61-64 and Roberts, "Myth versus History", p.5.



as Yahweh's consistency in following the laws of retribution. Amos then is not applying God's freedom to the relationship between Yahweh and the nation Israel, but God's constancy.....

Nevertheless, while being very much aware that the content of God's freedom in wisdom and in prophetic tradition is not exactly the same, we still decide to use the term "God's freedom" in the latter. Because Israel is guilty, Yahweh, although attached to Israel, is (still) free to punish her because of her sins.

This is why Amos reversed the context of salvation in creation to become that of judgement.

### 1.3. Other passages in Amos.

We have seen that there is a close connection between the 'doxologies' and their immediate context in the book of Amos. Is it possible to see whether other passages in the book of Amos may also be concerned with creation?

Amos 7:1-9 is in a series of visions with a judgemental background. Vv. 4-6 refer among others to the **תהום רבה**. The term **תהום** often appears in a context of creation. We shall examine whether here in 7:4 it is also the case.

**כֹּה הִרְאֵנִי אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה** Thus the Lord Yahweh showed me:

**וְהִנֵּה קָרָא לִרֵב בָּאֵשׁ אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה** The Lord Yahweh summons to contend by fire,

**וְתֵאֵכַל אֶת-תְּהוֹם רֵבָה** and it engulfed the great ocean.

**וְאָכְלָה אֶת-הָאָרֶץ** and was eating up the land.

"The Lord summons to contend by fire". The term **קָרָא** followed by **בָּאֵשׁ**



belongs to the language of legal controversy, where the accuser is facing the accused, as can be seen in Gen 31:36; Judg 6:32; Hos 2:4. However, the relation between  $\text{רִיב}$  and  $\text{שֹׁאֵף}$  is not clear. Cripps suggested that perhaps the proposal to emend  $\text{רִיב}$  to  $\text{לִהַב}$  (following Nowack and Riessler) should be adopted.<sup>95</sup> D. R. Hillers on the other hand revived the proposal of Krenkel to emend  $\text{רִיב}$  to  $\text{לִרְגִיב}$ .<sup>96</sup>  $\text{רִיב}$ , "rain", is a rare word. It is found in the OT only in the plural,  $\text{מִיָּרִיבִים}$ . Probably the last  $\text{ב}$  was misplaced in  $\text{שֹׁאֵף}$ . Hillers cited Gen 19:24 and Exek 38:22 as parallels, and referred to the Ugaritic rbb as the parallel of "dew" (cf. Deut 32:2; Mic 5:6 (7)). Wolff has accepted Hillers' proposal in his commentary.<sup>97</sup> He translated: "There was someone summoning a rain of fire".

Although both proposals look attractive they also have their weaknesses. It is difficult to see how  $\text{רִיב}$  could be changed into  $\text{לִהַב}$ . If it is true as held by Hillers that there may be a misplacement of a letter  $\text{ב}$  from  $\text{לִרְגִיב}$  in  $\text{שֹׁאֵף}$ , then it must also be explained that what has happened to the  $\text{ב}$ . Although the meaning of "to contend by fire" is not clear we tend to retain the MT.

Whatever is the case, it is obvious that the fire serves as God's agent of destruction. The passage probably refers to a severe drought.<sup>98</sup> in the same sense as the afflictions referred to in Amos 4:7.  $\text{פֶּלֶא}$ , "portion", in 7:4 may be regarded as "cultivated land"

95. Cripps, op.cit., p. 222.

96. D.R. Hillers, "Amos 7:4 and Ancient Parallels", CBQ 26 (1964), pp. 221-25. He reads  $\text{שֹׁאֵף לִרְגִיב}$ , "(calling) for a rain of fire".

97. Wolff, op.cit., p. 292.

98. Harper, op.cit., p. 163; Wolff, op.cit., pp. 289-90.

(Cripps) or "the portion of Yahweh", i.e. the land of Israel.

The term  $\text{הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל}$ , "the great ocean" (cf. Gen 7:11; Is 51:10; Ps 36:7) provides a contrast to  $\text{פֶּלֶא}$ . The former may refer to the subterranean ocean but also to the ocean as a whole. If this is so then  $\text{פֶּלֶא}$  is to be understood as part of the earth. The fire, the ocean and the land are to be seen in their cosmic proportions.<sup>99</sup> This visionary event (as the other visionary events in Amos 7:1-9) does not need to be correlated to actual happenings in Israel's history.<sup>100</sup>

There is little doubt that here the prophet was alluding to a severe drought of cosmic proportions in which the heat is so intense that it actually dries up the great ocean. His intention was to give a picture of threat to his audience.

The prophet certainly used mythical imagery here, but whether it is related to the concept of creation we are not sure at all. We can only say that the mythical imagery used in Amos 7:4 is later on used in the descriptions of apocalyptic eschatology.

Seen in close connection with Amos 9:5,6, the reference to the futile attempts by the people to escape from divine punishment in 9:1-3 could also be included as a creation passage. What we have in chapter 9 is the end of a list of visions which starts in chapter 7. The difference between the last vision and the others is that now the Lord Himself is seen standing near the altar, and not some object of picture which He makes Amos to see.

99. Ward, op.cit., p. 57. Cf. the NEB: ".....to devour the great abyss, and to devour all creation".

100. i b i d., p. 57; contra Harper, op.cit., p. 164.



רָאִיתִי אֶת-אֲדֹנָי I saw the Lord  
 נֹצַב עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ standing by<sup>101</sup> the altar,  
 וַיֹּאמֶר הֵךְ הַכִּפְתּוֹר and He said: strike the capitals  
 וַיִּרְעֹשׁוּ הַסָּפִים so that the thresholds shake,  
 וַיִּצְעַם בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל וַיִּצְעַם בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל and break them on the heads of all the  
 people; 102  
 וְאִחֲרֵיהֶם and what is left of them  
 בַּחֶרֶב אֶהְרֹג I will kill with a sword;  
 לֹא-יִנּוּס לָהֶם נֹס no one shall flee away,  
 וְלֹא-יִמָּלֵט לָהֶם פְּלִיטָה and no one among them shall escape.

By comparing the text of 9:1 with Is 6:1, Wolff thinks that what we have here is a picture of a towering figure beyond all human dimensions.<sup>103</sup> The כִּפְתּוֹר and סָפִים refer to the parts of the temple portal. The addresses may be Yahweh Himself, although it sounds rather odd to hear Yahweh giving orders to Himself.<sup>104</sup>

The effect of the strike is that of an earthquake which is intended to destroy the people as well as the sanctuary. If by any chance there are still survivors left אִחֲרֵיהֶם, "what is left of them") they will be stricken down by the sword, i.e. through the horrors of war. Judgement to Israel will be a total catastrophe involving the natural and the historical.

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101. לַע must be taken as idiomatic, cf. Num 23:3,6; 1 Kings 13:1; 1 Sam 25:24; Is 6:2.

102. וַיִּצְעַם. The meaning of צַעַם is "to injure", "to crush" (cf. Ezek 22:12; Job 6:9). The form is probably irregular imperative. The suffix, refers to the broken thresholds. The LXX has καὶ διακοψω εἰς κεφαλὰς πάντων, "and I will sever the heads of all".

103. Wolff, op.cit., p. 339.

104. E.C. Kingsbury suggested that the command is directed to the council or retinue of Yahweh, "The Prophet and the Council of Yahweh", JBL 83 (1964), p. 283.



אם-יחפרו בשאול If they dig into Sheol,  
 משם ידי תקחם from there may hand shall take them,  
 ואם-יעלו השמים if they climb up to the heavens,  
 משם אורידם from there I will bring them down,  
 אם-יחבאו ברמש הכרמל If they hid themselves on the top of  
 Mount Carmel,  
 משם אחפש ולקחתים from there I will search and catch them;  
 ואם-יסתרו מנגד If they hid themselves from the sight  
 עיני בקרקע הים of my eyes at the bottom of the sea,  
 משם אצוה את-הנחש from there I will command the serpent  
 ונשכו and it shall bite them.

The content of vv. 2-3 can help us in giving some idea about the depth and width of the universe in the ancient understanding of the world.

The heavens and Sheol form the farthest point of the universe. There is a similar picture in Ps 139:8-13, which also mentions the impossibility of fleeing from Yahweh's presence. However, there is a significant difference between Ps 139:8-13 and Amos 9:1-3. In the former the presence of God is unconnected with the problem of sin as in the latter.

The top of Mount Carmel and the bottom of the sea form another pair of the extreme ends of the world. The conceptual pairs may be taken as designations of "above" and "below".<sup>105</sup>

The נחש is not an ordinary sea-snake, but belongs to the kind of monsters who inhabit the sea (cf. Gen 1:21; Ps 104:26). Here the serpent serves Yahweh's purposes. The over-all picture of Amos

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105. O. Keel, The Symbolism of the Biblical World, p. 23.

9:1-3 is of Yahweh's awesome presence as the Creator of the world which encompasses the whole of His creation. This presence, which in the worship of the people is a reason for joy, now becomes a reason for total helplessness.

## 2. Hosea

Several passages in the book of Hosea have also been claimed as being concerned with the concept of creation either implicitly or explicitly. However they are usually regarded as secondary. This claim shall be examined here.

### 2.1. Hos 2:18-25.

This section is a promise of salvation within a context of judgement to the people. Because of this fact, Harper thinks that the whole section is a gloss. He points at the phrase "and it shall be on that day" as a very common form for introducing gloss.<sup>106</sup> Wolff agreed with this proposal, but his reasons are different.<sup>107</sup> According to him vv. 18-25 presuppose that the judgement threatened in 1:2-6f; 2:4-17 and 3:1-5 has already taken place. V.20 looks back to a desolation and ruin of the land (cf. v.14); vv.23f look back to a drought (cf. vv.5,11) or a capture of the fertile land of Palestine (cf. v.16). Vv21f and 25 mention only salvation without even suggesting that Yahweh's judgement is the way leading to salvation, while vv.4-17 show that salvation is to be brought only through the execution of the threats of judgement. On the other hand the inner connection of the material in every verse with the rest of Hosea's prophecy provides no reasonable basis for claiming that the sayings are his. At least we have to open to the possibility that a contemporary of Hosea may have added them.<sup>108</sup>

106. Harper op.cit., p. 234. He gave other reasons: 1/ the use of the terms "my husband" and "my Baal"; 2/ the fact that it is in part a repetition of the thought of v.19; 3/its metre differs from that of both preceding and following context; 4/ it is superfluous.

107. H.W. Wolff, Hosea, Hermeneia Series, Philadelphia, 1974, p. 48.

108. Cf. J.L. Mays, Hosea, OTL, London, 1969, p. 47.



וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם-הַהוּא      On that day, says the Lord,  
 נֶאֱמַר-יְהוָה      it shall be that you will call:<sup>109</sup>  
 תִּקְרָאֵנִי אִישׁוֹנִי      my husband!

וְלֹא-תִקְרָאֵנִי-לִי עוֹד      and you will no longer call me: my Baal;  
 בְּעַלִּי      I will remove the name of the Baals from  
 וְהִסַּדְתִּי אֶת-שְׁמוֹת      her mouth,  
 הַבְּעָלִים מִפִּי      and they will cease to be mentioned by  
 וְלֹא-יִזְכְּרוּ עוֹד בְּשֵׁמָם      their name.

V.18. "On that day". The day of salvation is intended here. Perhaps this expression echoes the old and popular expectation of the day of Yahweh as a day of salvation (cf. Amos 5:18).<sup>110</sup> The wife is provided with a new word in which she will address her husband, Yahweh. According to Wolff the primary sense of the saying "my husband" is of an endearing expression; "my Baal" on the other hand emphasizes the legal position of the husband as lord and owner of the wife.<sup>111</sup> Hence this saying announces that Israel will not just respect Yahweh out of obligation since He is her legal lord, but that Israel knows herself to be placed in a completely new, loving relationship with Him. In addition to this primary sense of the saying there is a punlike polemic against the cult. The word for "lord" in this parable is the same Hebrew word which is used to denote the Canaanite deity, Baal.

Wolff's opinion is contested by W. Rudolph.<sup>112</sup> According to Rudolph v. 18 describes through the image of the relationship between the husband and the wife, the right relationship between Yahweh and

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109. The ancient renderings (LXX, V, Syr.) read "I will call".

110. Wolff, op. cit., p. 49; Mays, op. cit., p. 47.

111. Wolff, loc. cit.

112. W. Rudolph, Hosea, KAT, Gütersloh, 1966, p. 78

Israel. Yahweh is never again to be called "Baal". Wolff's argument that  $\text{בַּל}$  or  $\text{בַּלִּי}$  instead of  $\text{יְהוָה}$  would be expected if the cult-polemical aspect was of main importance<sup>113</sup> is not strong. In 2 Sam 11:26 and Joel 1:8 both terms were used alternatively in everyday life.

The saying in v. 18 clearly presupposes that in Israel, Yahweh was called "Baal" (cf. 1 Chron 12:6 - the name of Bealiah, "Yahweh is Baal"). The term "Baal" is also found in the names of the children of those who are faithful to Yahweh (the names of the sons of Saul and David). Where Yahweh is called Baal, a constant and dangerous erosion of the distinctive understanding of Yahweh may have set in.

V.19 Although Wolff regarded v. 18 as only indirectly related to the polemic against Baal, he stated that v. 19 is clearly directed against the Canaanized cult. The plural  $\text{בָּלִים}$ , as in v. 15 and 11:2 means "pagan gods". In the Canaanite religion the name Baal is of a single figure. But of course he has many local representations comparable to the present day Marian worship in the Roman Catholic Church. Just as one can speak of Notre Dame of Paris or of Lourdes, or of the North, so can one also speak of the Lord of Sapān, or of Sidon, or of Ugarit, even though one has in mind merely variations of a single figure.<sup>114</sup> In the OT however we find the names of a number of Baals

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113. Wolff, op.cit., p.50.

114. See J. de Moor in TDOT, II pp. 184-85. But de Moor is also open to the possibility that when  $\text{בַּל}$  is not used in an absolute sense but connected with a genitive, it may indicate an appellative honorific title of another God. Frequently different Baals are mentioned side by side.



(Baal-Berith - Judg 8:33; Baal of Peor - Num 23:3; Baal of Samaria - Kings 16:32; Baal of Carmel - 1 Kings 18:19ff; Baal of Hermon - Judg 3:3). Hosea would have thought of them as representing distinctive individuals.

"and they will cease to be mentioned by their names". <sup>נִקְרָא</sup> is the niphal form corresponding to the use of the hiphil of <sup>קָרָא</sup>, meaning "to invoke, to mention". Combined with the word "name" it denotes the cultic occasion when the god is represented by the involving of his name (cf. Josh 23:7; Amos 6:10 Ps 20:8; Zech 13:2; also Is 48:1; Pss 38:1; 70:1).

וְכָרַתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית And I will make a covenant for them  
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא in that day

עִם-חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה with the wild beasts and the birds of  
וְעִם-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם the air

וְרֶמֶשׂ הָאָדָמָה and that which creeps on the ground;

וְקֶשֶׁת וְחֶרֶב וּמִלְחָמָה and the bow and the sword and war<sup>115</sup>

אֶשְׁבֹּר מִן-הָאָרֶץ I will break from the land,

וְהִשְׁכַּבְתִּים לַבָּטָח and I will make them lie down safely.

Hos 2:20 refers to the wild beasts and other natural entities. In section A we have stated that reference to nature does not necessarily mean that creation concept is involved. A similar covenant mentioned in Gen 9:8-17 is placed at the end of the Flood story, which forms part of the whole narrative of creation (Gen 1-11). Yet there is an important difference between Gen 9:8-17 and the text of Hos 2:20. In Gen 9:8-17 God makes a covenant between Himself and men together with the living creatures, while in Hos 2:20 Yahweh makes

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115. Or if מִלְחָמָה is taken as metonymy: "weapons of war".



His covenant with the living creatures on behalf or for the sake of Israel.<sup>116</sup> Wolff has shown that the connection of the phrase  $\text{אֶל־בְּרִית}$  with  $\text{אֲנִי־הָיִינוּ}$  specifies the function of a covenant mediator.<sup>117</sup> After the time of judgement the position of both sides has to be reconciled. Another similar covenant can be seen in Ezek 34:25-30, which also contains allusion to the fertility of the land as in Hos 2:20-25. In Ezek 34 25-30 it is explicitly said that the wild beasts will be banished from the land. It is not clear whether the same is meant there. The formula  $\text{אֶל־בְּרִית}$  recalls the ceremony of covenant-making of cutting animals in two.<sup>118</sup>

The covenant also involves the elimination of all threatened harm of war so that Israel can live in her land confidently. The "land" here denotes Israel, as in other places in the book of Hosea (1:2; 4:1,3; 9:3; 10:1). All weapons will be made useless in Israel.

"I will make them lie down in safety". According to Harper this is a naive and childlike designation of complete assurance.<sup>119</sup> It might be so, but what is intended here is to picture a complete situation of peace in the coming day of salvation.

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116. Cf. F.I. Andersen - D.N. Freedman, Hosea, AB, Garden City, 1980 p. 281.

117. H. W. Wolff, "Jahwe als Bundesvermittler", VT 6 (1956), pp. 316-20.

118. However, we must note J. Barr's observation that  $\text{אֶל־בְּרִית}$  does not mean "to cut a covenant", even in Gen 15 where the division of animals in pieces is described.  $\text{אֶל־בְּרִית}$  in the phrase  $\text{אֶל־בְּרִית}$  has an idiomatic sense, "to make", see his "Some Semantic Notes on the Covenant", Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie, pp. 27-28.

119 Harper, op.cit., p. 242.

וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי לְעוֹלָם I will make you my own forever;

וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי בְצֶדֶק  
(בְּמִשְׁפָּט) I will make you my own in righteousness and justice,

וּבְחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים in unfailing loyalty and in mercy.

וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי בְאֱמוּנָה I will make you my own in faithfulness;

וַיֵּדַעְתָּ אֶת-יְהוָה and you shall know the Lord.

Vv. 21-22. The addressed here is described in the second pers. sing. fem. Yahweh is described metaphorically as a man speaking directly to the woman he intends to marry.

"I will make you my own". וָקָן - in the customary practice of marriage in Israel וָקָן is the final step in concluding a marriage and includes the payment by the man of the bride-price which binds the arrangement and commits all concerned; it is the public legal act upon which the validity of the marriage rests as far as society is concerned.<sup>120</sup> The word "betroth" (as in the RSV) in Israel means more than what it understood as an engagement in the present day Western society.

V.21 indicates that the relationship between Yahweh and Israel is totally renewed. The old marriage is not to be reconstituted; a completely new marriage is to take its place.<sup>121</sup> This new marriage will endure forever.

פָּדָה. As in 10:12 it means the saving help of Yahweh for Israel. It is an act whole quality of rightness lies in the fact that it

120. Mays, op.cit., p. 50.

121. Wolff, op.cit., p. 52.

vindicates Yahweh's election of Israel.  $\text{לְשׂוֹמְרֵי}$  is a parallel to  $\text{פְּרִי$ . It indicates the order of rights and claims which belong to a given relation, and also the action to maintain a person in those rights.<sup>122</sup>

$\text{לְשׂוֹמְרֵי}$  is the conduct which acts in accordance with the obligations of a recognized relationship.  $\text{לְשׂוֹמְרֵי}$  is active sympathy towards one who is dependant or in need.

V.22.  $\text{וְיָדַעְתֶּם$ , "faithfulness". It indicates divine reliability and consistency of purpose and character with which Yahweh deals with Israel. "And you shall know Yahweh". Within the context of marriage,  $\text{יָדַע}$  could have a sexual tone. After all, "to know" is one of the biblical terms for the sexual act (Gen 4:1 24:16; 38:26). But in this context the meaning is probably that through the restored covenant between Yahweh and Israel, the people will respond accordingly to the words and deeds of Yahweh. It is also unlikely that the phrase refers to the problem of the absence of Yahweh as argued by Wolff.<sup>123</sup> "Knowledge of God" also appears in 4:1; 6:6. It is a formula for normative faith. "To know" means to recognise. The phrase "and you shall know Yahweh" then is the goal of the eschatological future.<sup>124</sup>

122. Mays, loc.cit. Harper again thinks that  $\text{לְשׂוֹמְרֵי פְּרִי}$  is a glass, op.cit., p. 242. According to him it is superfluous by the side of v. 22; inapplicable in the strictest sense to the figure of betrothal; presents a bizarre arrangement of thought; interferes with a smooth strophic structure; and expresses the thought of the later period. All of these reasons show how little is understood of the meaning of  $\text{לְשׂוֹמְרֵי}$  and  $\text{פְּרִי}$  during Harper's life-time.

123. Wolff, op.cit., p. 53.

124. Mays, op.cit., pp. 63-63.



וְהָיָה כִּי יִשָּׁאֵר הַהוּא אֶעֱנֶה On that day I shall answer says Yahweh;  
 נֶאֱמַר-יְהוָה I will answer the heavens,  
 וְהֵם יַעֲנוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ and they shall answer the land;  
 וְהָאָרֶץ תַּעֲנֶה אֶת-הַדָּגָן And the land shall answer the grain,  
 וְאֶת-הַתִּירוֹשׁ וְאֶת-הַיִּצְהָד the wine and the oil;  
 וְהֵם יַעֲנוּ אֶת-יִזְרְעֵאל They shall answer Jezreel

The formula "on that day" again re-appears in v.23. The period of salvation is observed further.

"I will answer" is an indication of an oracle of salvation expressing assurance of Yahweh's favourable response. So does the phrase נֶאֱמַר-יְהוָה. According to Wolff the list of items is an indication of wisdom influence. But it is also something more than just merely an enumeration of items. The background of these verses indicates a genuine scientific representation of relationships with nature. In this regard Israel had apparently accomplished something new in the ancient Orient since the period of Solomon.<sup>125</sup> Wolff's observation is incorrect. One of the features of primitive science in the tribal societies in the whole world is a highly developed classificatory system or taxonomy.<sup>126</sup> What we have in v. 24 is not much different from other lists of items. It contains genuine scientific interest as observed by Wolff, but so do the others. Wolff's further remark, "In the book of Hosea, it is instructive to note how Israel's liberation from the nature myths of the cult of Baal permitted the free study of nature to flourish (cf. Gen 1)" is also misleading. V. 24 is not a study of nature. Although it includes scientific

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125. Wolff, loc.cit.

126. C. Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind, Chicago, 1966, pp. 35-74.

interest Gen 1 is still very much a mythological product.<sup>127</sup> The list in v.24 is a circle of fertility. It starts from the deity - the heavens (rain) - the land (soil) - grain, wine oil (inclusive of crops, 2)8) - people. "Jezreel" is the name of Hosea's son from Gomer the harlot (1:4). Here the starving people of Israel is meant.

The new in Hos 2:18-25 is not of a scientific interest as contrasted with mythical view of nature, but of the claiming and disclaiming of who is behind the powers of fertility. Baal is disclaimed as god of fertility. His place is taken over by Yahweh. F.I. Andersen - D.N. Freedman tried to deny that the passage refers to Yahweh as a god of fertility by regarding v.24 as part of the formulations of the covenant in v.20. The items in the list act as "witnesses" to the covenant.<sup>128</sup> But we are not convinced.

וְזָרַעְתִּיהָ לִּי בָאֲדָמָה And I will sow for myself in the land,

וְרַחֲמֵתִי אֶת-לֹא רַחֲמָה and I will have pity on Not pitied,

וְאָמַרְתִּי לָלֹא-עַמִּי and I will say to Not my people,

עַמִּי-אַתָּה "you are my people",

וְהָיָא יְאֹמֵר אֱלֹהִי and he shall say: "you are my God".

The suffix of v.25a is feminine. It is not clear who is indicated by it. In the RSV (see also the prop. in the BHS) it is read as masculine "him" and related to Jezreel in v.24b. As noted by Wolff there is a change of theme here.<sup>129</sup> Vv23f speak of an answer to

127. Cf. R.P. Carroll, "The Sisyphean Task of Biblical Transformation", SJT 30 (1977), pp. 501-21, esp. pp. 510-12. As science Gen 1 may not need to be demythologized at all and as myth it may simply require exposition in mythological terms.

128. Andersen - Freedman, op.cit., p. 285f.

129. Wolff, op.cit., p. 54.



Jezreel in time of famine, but in v.25a Jezreel would in that case become the object of Yahweh's sowing. It is probable that v.25 should be regarded as a reinterpretation of the name Jezreel. "Her" points to Israel as wife or mother of Jezreel. The symbolic names of Hosea's daughter  $\text{לֵאָה גִּלְיָה}$  (1:6) and his son  $\text{יִזְרְעֵל}$  are reversed. In v. 25 the judgement is reversed to grace and renewal of the covenant. Both sides will again accept one another.

The over-all context of Hos 18-25 is of a marriage, or better, a re-marriage metaphor between Yahweh and Israel. However, the passage contains reference to the transformation of nature, a theme that later on will be frequently used by DI. It might be that 2:18-25 has a cosmic - eschatological dimension. According to Rudolph the picture here is about the paradisaical peace itself being restored.<sup>130</sup> The covenant described may be a covenant for the end time similar to that in Jer 31:31. Andersen-Freedman even argued that the section is alluding to creation.<sup>131</sup> They refer to the occurrences of  $\text{יְהוָה}$  in v.23. In the context of creation language and in correlation with "the heavens",  $\text{יְהוָה}$  can only mean "the world". However, elsewhere  $\text{יְהוָה}$  means "the land" in Hosea. It is because the passage is assumed to refer to creation that the suggestion to understand  $\text{יְהוָה}$  as "the world" is put forward. Here the coming peaceful atmosphere is still confined to Israel and not to all the nations of the earth as in Is 2:4 and Zech 9:10. Hos 2:18-25 is referring to Yahweh as a god of fertility. In section A we have stated that reference to Yahweh as the source of fertility is more concerned with His Lordship over nature than with His

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130. Rudolph, op.cit., p. 80

131. Andersen - Freedman, op.cit., p. 287



creatorship.<sup>132</sup>

2.2 Hos 4:1-3.

שמעו דבר-יהוה בני ישראל	Hear the world of Yahweh, Israelites!
כי ריב ליהוה עם-יושבי הארץ	Indeed, Yahweh has a contention with the inhabitants of the land;
כי אין-אמת ואין-חסד	for there is no faithfulness and no mercy,
ואין-דעת אלהים בארץ	and no knowledge of God in the land.
אלה וכחש ורצח וגנב	Swearing, lying, murdering,
ונאק פדצו	stealing, committing adultery;
ורמים בדמים וגעו	they break out - and blood deeds fol- low one after another.
על-כן תאבל הארץ	Therefore the land mourns,
ואמלל כל-יושב בה	and all who dwell in it shall wither away,
בחית השדה ובעוף השמים	Along with the wild animals and the birds of the sky,
וגם-דגי הים יאספו	and even the fish of the sea will be taken away.

The saying in vv. 1-3 is an example of the prophetic speech of judgement. V.1a is a proclamation formula which identifies the words as Yahweh's message to Israel. V1b (the first line) defines the subject of the herald's (here the prophet) proclamation; he is there to make an announcement concerning the legal suit which Yahweh has against the inhabitants of the land. The saying itself is formulated in the id iom of court-speech. Vv.1b (the second line)-2 furnish proof for the case by stating the offense negatively, while in v.2 they are cited in a positive way. The evidence is introduced by the particle 'כי and formulated in a nominative clause (v.1b the

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132. See above, p. 48.

second line) and a verbal clause in the perfect (v.2). V.3 announces the sentence of the divine court.  $\text{לִפְנֵי}$  introduces the judicial sentence (given in the imperfect tense). As in the cult, Yahweh plays the double role of the prosecutor (1b in the second line) and the judge (v.3).

V.1. As we have seen above  $\text{לִפְנֵי}$  is a technical word for a legal suit. The suit is against the inhabitants of the land, but the emphasis is on the land which the people have received as a salutary gift of Yahweh.

$\text{אֱמוּנָה}$ , "trustworthiness". It is related to  $\text{אֱמוּנָה}$  in 2:22.  $\text{אֱמוּנָה}$ , "loyalty" or "devotion". In Gen 47:29; Josh 2:14; Ps 85:11  $\text{אֱמוּנָה}$  and  $\text{אֱמוּנָה}$  are parallels to convey loyalty. V.1 indicates that there is no loyalty to the covenant found in Israel. "Knowledge of God" refers to the intimate knowledge of what is thought is the revealed law of God.

V.2 gives a list of five crimes which are prohibited by the normative tradition of Israel which summarizes the will of Yahweh under the covenant. Murdering, stealing and committing adultery are part of the prohibitions of the Decalogue (Ex 20:2-17; Deut 5:6-21).

$\text{שְׁבָעָה}$ , "swearing", a malediction invoking a divinely caused misfortune on another. It concerns the misused invocation of God's name (cf. Ex 20:7, "using God's name for evil").

$\text{שָׁדָד}$  concerns cheating of a neighbour or being a false witness (cf. Ex 20:16; 23:1,7).  $\text{רָצָח}$  refers to premeditated murder.  $\text{גְּזֵלָה}$

concerns kidnapping of free Israelite men.<sup>133</sup> For adultery see Ex 20:14; Lev 20:10. These are all crimes that concerns one's neighbour. In other words they are social violence. In Israel they are punishable by death.

"They break out".  $\text{שָׁרַף}$  denotes violent action, including murder.  $\text{דָּמָא}$  is innocent blood or blood-guilt of a murderer (Ex 22:1).

V.3. "the land" again denotes Israel. Andersen - Freedman's suggestion that it could also refer to the earth in this context<sup>134</sup> is incorrect.  $\text{לָאָה}$ , "to mourn". According to Andersen - Freedman it is the inhabitants and not the land that mourns. In the time of a severe drought the inhabitants perform the mourning rites.<sup>135</sup> But they also point to G.R. Driver's proposal to read  $\text{לָאָה}$  meaning "to dry up". In Akkadian abalu always mean "dry" when applied to canals, fields, plants etc. The parallel  $\text{לָאָה}$  also supports this proposal. Driver also cited Amos 1:2; Jer 12:4; 23:10 where  $\text{לָאָה}$  is paralleled to  $\text{שָׁבַע}$ , "to be dry".<sup>136</sup> We accept Driver's proposal.<sup>137</sup> "the land mourns" here means that the land has turned dry because of a severe drought.

"along with the wild animals and the birds of the sky". Both Wolff and Andersen - Freedman reject Th. Robinson's view that the  $\text{וְעִם}$

133. See J.J. Stamm - M.E. Andrew, The Ten Commandments in Recent Research, p. 104. The idea is originally of A. Alt.

134. Andersen - Freedman, op.cit., p. 339.

135. i b i d.

136. G.R. Driver, "Confused Hebrew Roots", Occident and Orient, Gaster Anniversary Volume, B. Schindler - A. Marmorstein (eds), London, 1936, pp. 73-83.

137. So Wolff, op.cit., p. 65 and Andersen - Freedman, op.cit., pp. 339-40.



here is of a beth essentiae which means "consisting of".<sup>138</sup> It does not correspond with the phrase "all who dwell in it", which refers to the people. ללן is the perfect pual of ללן, "to languish" (for people).

V.3 alludes to the drying-up of the land because of a severe drought. The drought is so severe that even the fish of the sea become victim to it. Reference to the fish of the sea may indicate the cosmic proportion of the drought. It is not merely a common drought but a total absence of life in a universal drought.<sup>139</sup> According to M. Deroche the word ללן from ללן, points to that direction.<sup>140</sup> In Zeph 1:2-3 ללן, "destruction", occurs in a context of the reversal of creation.<sup>141</sup> So here too, the occurrence of the word may indicate that in 4:3 Hosea reverses Yahweh's acts of creation in Gen 1. There the list of animals started from the fish (v.20), the birds (v.20b) and the beasts (v.24). In Gen 1:28 the same list appears. Andersen - Freedman also think that Hos 4:1-3 has overtones of a creation story. It resembles Jer 4:23-26. They also mentioned the list of animals in Gen 1.<sup>142</sup>

We think Deroche is right. Hos 4:1-3 is concerned with the reversal of creation. As observed by Deroche, the passage has a theological importance. The passage may reveal something of Hosea's understanding of the relationship between the covenant and creation. Since Israel's punishment for violating the covenant is the reversal of creation, it can be concluded that for Hosea the stability of

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138. Wolff, op.cit., p. 65; Andersen - Freedman, op.cit., p. 334

139. Mays, op.cit., p. 65; Wolff, op.cit., p. 68.

140. M. Deroche, "The Reversal of Creation in Hosea", VT 31(1981), pp. 400-409

141. i b i d., p. 403

142. Andersen - Freedman, op.cit., p. 340

Yahweh's created order is dependent upon Israel's faithfulness to the covenant. Hosea understood the intent of creation to be the establishment of a relationship between God and mankind.<sup>143</sup>

2.3. Hos 8:14.

וישכח ישראל את-עשהו For Israel has forgotten his Maker,  
 ויבן היכלות and built palaces;  
 ויהודה הרבה ערים and Judah has many fortified cities.  
 בשלחתי-אש בעריו But I will send fire upon his cities,  
 ואכלה ארמנותיה and it shall engulf his citadels.

This is the only passage in the book of Hosea which mention Yahweh as Maker. Harper again regards it as a later addition for these reasons:<sup>144</sup> 1/ the reference to Judah is uncalled for; 2/ the style resembles that of Amos rather than Hosea; 3/ the natural conclusion of the discourse is in v.13; 4/ the thought of Yahweh as Israel's creator is unexpected in Hosea's time; 5/ the verse is superfluous in the strophic system.

Wolff thinks that the passage shows traces of a secondary addition:<sup>145</sup> the imperfect consecutive verbs similar to those in 7:10 and 4:9 differ remarkably from the style of the entire scene. v. 14b is reminiscent of Amos 1f. This makes the connection of 8:14 with the Judean redaction of Amos (1:4f) worthy of consideration. On the other hand Wolff also noted that the correlation of forgetting the Creator with the building of palaces and fortunes is Hosean.

143. Deroche, op.cit., p. 405.

144. Harper, op.cit., p. 324.

145. Wolff, op.cit., p. 136.

The word  $\text{לַיְהוָה}$  also appears in 8:11; cf. 10:1; 4:7. Wolff did not decide whether 8:14 is secondary or not, but he drew attention to the following points:

1. Whether the traditionists later added v. 14 to a first sketch of this scene, and in doing so perhaps combined Hosea's thought with formulations found in Amos.
2. Whether, as the dispute ran its course, Hosea found it necessary to change his style.

Mays regarded v. 14 as a brief but complete announcement of judgement. V. 14a is an indictment, while v. 14b contains the verdict. According to Mays the oracle is probably a "floating piece" which the redactor thought would bring 8:1-13 to a good conclusion.<sup>146</sup>

Reference to Judah, v. 13 being the climax of the oracle and v. 14 as a complete entity make it probable that v. 14 is secondary. It may have been influenced by the repeated refrain in Amos 1:7, 10, 14. But the text is not identical with any of the passages in Amos.<sup>147</sup> Other occurrences of Yahweh as Maker of Israel appear in Is 44:2 and 51:3. However, this should not make us think that the title of Yahweh as the Maker of Israel came from a later period as stated by Harper. Whether it originally came from the vocabulary of cosmic creation and then applied to Israel or vice-versa can not be fully ascertained. It is the unspecific character of  $\text{לַיְהוָה}$  which enables it to be used for God's deed in every realm.<sup>148</sup> Having said this, we

146. Mays, op. cit., pp. 123-24.

147. Andersen - Freedman, op. cit., p. 511.

148. J. Vollmer in THAT II, p. 136.



still think that it is probable that the use of creation verbs in the context of Israel as in this passage could be taken over from their cosmic context.

In Hos 8:14 Yahweh as Maker is contrasted with Israel and Judah as builders. It indicates Hosea's aversion of the city-cultures as dangerous for Israel's faith.

We can conclude our examination of possible references to creation in the book of Hosea. Two passages can be regarded as creation passages, namely Hos 4:1-3 and 8:14. We have seen that the latter is secondary, although probably a contemporary of Hosea added the verse to act as a conclusion to vv. 1-13.

It appears that creation is not the only concept operating in the thought of the prophet. It can be asked why did he not use arguments based on creation in his polemic against the influence of Canaanite religion which centered on the powers that control the fertility of the land. It is because fertility is not necessarily concerned with creation.<sup>149</sup> Hosea's arguments in his polemic were placed in the same framework of thought as his hearers. He was not denying that the people should adhere to the idea of cyclic view of life. What he denied is the popular assumption that it is Baal who controls the cycle of life.

But Hosea's description of judgement to the nation in terms of a bouleversement in Hos 4:1-3 did show that his reflection of the judgement of God is based in the concept of creation.

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149. Kapelrud, "Creation in the Ras Shamra Texts", p. 10.

## 3. Isaiah

There are several passages in the book of Isaiah which indicate that they might be included as creation passages. The indications are the occurrence of the verb of creating **אָרַב**, the title of Yahweh as **הַסֵּלֵךְ צְבָאוֹת** and reference to Yahweh as Maker. These passages are also suspected as secondary. We shall examine them to see whether they are indeed creation passages and whether they can be connected with the message of Isaiah.

## 3.1 Is 4:2-6.

Is 4:2-6 appears to provide the conclusion to 2:1-4:1. God's last word concerning His people is not of judgement, but His purpose of salvation.<sup>150</sup> Because of its awkward connection with 4:1 (4:1 refers to women, while 4:2 speaks about the whole congregation) it may be that 4:2-6 is an editorial edition from the post-exilic period.<sup>151</sup> O. Kaiser, however, is uncertain. He thinks that the question of date and origin of this passage can no longer be answered with certainty.<sup>152</sup>

**בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה צֶמַח יְהוָה** In that day the branch of the Lord  
**לְצִבְיָה וּלְכַבֹּד** shall be beautiful and glorious,  
**וּפְרֵי הָאָרֶץ** and the fruit of the land  
**לְגִיאֹן וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת לְפָלִיטָה** shall be the pride and the glory of the  
**יִשְׂרָאֵל** survivors of Israel.

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150. O. Kaiser, Isaiah 1-12, London, reprinted, 1979, p. 53.

151. H. Wildberger, Jesaja 1-12, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1972, pp. 151-162, thinks that the whole tone of Is 4:2-6 is of the post-exilic period.

152. Kaiser, loc. cit.

וְהָיָה הַנִּשְׁאֵר בְּצִיּוֹן  
(הַנּוֹתָר בִּירוּשָׁלַם) And he who is left in Zion and remains  
in Jerusalem

קָדוֹשׁ יֵאמָר לוֹ will be called holy

כָּל-הַכְּתוּב לַחַיִּים everyone who has been recorded for life  
בִּירוּשָׁלַם in Jerusalem.

V. 2. "In that day" refers to the salvation era after the execution of judgement. "the branch of the Lord". The LXX has ἐπιλαμψεὶ ὁ θεός. Apparently it understood the word as הַנֶּחֱמָץ, meaning "light (Ger: Glanz)". So did the V and the Syr. The T on the other hand has מְשִׁיחַ אֵלֶּיךָ יְהוָה. The phrase is understood here as a messianic title.

In the OT נֶחֱמָץ, "branch", is often used as a title for the King of the future era of salvation, as can be seen in Jer 23:5 -

נֶחֱמָץ צִדִּיק; 33:15; Zech 3:8; 6:12; Ps 132:17. In Jeremiah it is not a messianic title but has the meaning of "descendant". In 4:2, however, נֶחֱמָץ is not related to David, but to Yahweh. "Fruit of the land" is the parallel to "branch of the Lord", so it may well be that together they indicate the products of the land.

לִי טָהוֹרָה means survivors from war. Together with its parallels וְשִׁמְךָ and וְנִתְּנָה (v. 3) it points to the remnant, the holy community who has been purified.

יָפִיָּה, "beautiful". In Jer 3:19 the land is called יְפִיָּה (cf. Ezek 20:6, 15; Dan 11:16, 41; 8:9; 11:45 - Zion). יָפִיָּה, "proud", can also be applied to land (Ps 47:5; Nahum 2:3; Jes 13:9 - the latter is concerning Babel as יָפִיָּה and יְפִיָּה נִתְּנָה).

V. 3 is concerned with Zion - Jerusalem as the cult centre for the holy community. "everyone who has been recorded for life". In



Ps 69:29 we find סֵפֶר הַיִּיִם, "book of life". That there exists a remnant after the execution of judgement is explained by referring to divine predestination.<sup>153</sup> The community survived the judgement because God sets them aside for a holy purpose.

V. 4.

אֵם לַחֲץ אֶרְנִי אֶת	When the Lord shall have washed away
צִאֵת בְּנוֹת-צִיּוֹן	the filth of the daughters of Zion
וְאֶת-דְּמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם יְדִיחַ מִקִּדְמָה	and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst
בְּרוּחַ מִשְׁפָּט וּבְרוּחַ בַּעַל	by a spirit of judgement and by a spirit of burning

V. 4. מִשְׁפָּט . בְּרוּחַ מִשְׁפָּט . The RSV rightly translated מִשְׁפָּט here as "judgement". Wildberger understood מִן as the spirit of God.<sup>154</sup> The community that is left after judgement is purified by the spirit of God. But we think the phrase "spirit of judgement" and "spirit of burning", while occurring in a context of a deed of God, may also refer to a state of mood. מִן מִשְׁפָּט can be translated as "judgemental spirit", and the same holds true for בְּרוּחַ בַּעַל, "burning spirit".

וַיִּבְרָא יְהוָה	and Yahweh shall create
עַל כָּל-מִכּוֹן הַר-צִיּוֹן	over the whole of the dwelling-site of Mount Zion
וְעַל-מִקְרָאָהּ	and over her assemblies,
עֹנָן יוֹמָם וְעָשָׁן	a cloud by day and smoke
וְנֹגַהּ אֵשׁ לְהִבָּה לַיְלָה	and a brightness of a fire flame by night,

153. Wildberger, op. cit., p. 158.

154. ibid., p. 159.

כִּי עַל-כָּל-כְּבוֹד      so that over the whole glory a  
חֹפֶה      covering,

וּסְכָה תִהְיֶה      and there shall be a tent

לְצֶל-יוֹמָם מִחֶרֶב      for a shadow of the day from heat

וּלְמַחֲסֵה וּלְמַסְתּוֹר      and refuge and shelter from storm and  
מִזֶּרֶם וּמִמָּטָר      rain.

The LXX translated the first phrase in v. 5 in a different way

from the MT: καὶ ἥξει, καὶ ἔσται πᾶς τόπος τοῦ ὄρους Σιών,

"and He shall come, and it shall be that every place of Mount Zion...".

It understood the Hebrew as וְכָל וְהָיָה. In the LXX the picture

is of a cultic theophany, in which Yahweh is thought of as coming

to the sanctuary. There is also a possibility that the LXX misread

the original text. וְכָל וְהָיָה can easily be misread as וְכָל וְהָיָה.

Only in the first phrase of the whole of 4:5, 6 does the LXX differ from the MT.

The meaning of עַל-כָּל-כְּבוֹד חֹפֶה is not clear. It could convey a sense of protection for the assembly gathered there<sup>155</sup>, as in v. 6. But probably Kaiser is right to think that a later reader makes a scholarly observation that a cover is drawn over every reflection of the divine presence as in Ex 34:33 and 1 Kings 8:12.<sup>156</sup>

Although the verb נָצַח occurs in this phrase, further examination is needed before we can decide whether it may be regarded as a creation passage. Clouds, smoke, fire and glory are signs of the presence of the Lord. Sometimes they are described as separate

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155. Ward, op. cit., p. 243.

156. Kaiser, op. cit., p. 57.

entities, sometimes identical with one and another.<sup>157</sup> All these symbols of presence are never described as created, except in Is 4:5. If this is so, then it may be that Isaiah was applying creation vocabulary to his message, without making creation theology the operative thought in his mind. The same application can also be seen in other passages of Isaiah. H. Wildberger has traced the occurrences of the words **לַעֲשֹׂה** and **מַעֲשֵׂה** in Is 5:12b, **מַעֲשֵׂה** and **לַעֲשֹׂה** in Is 5:19 back to the liturgical traditions of the Psalms.<sup>158</sup> In Ps 8:4, **מַעֲשֵׂה** occurs in the context of creation. The same context can be seen in Ps 19:12; 104:13 (although the text is uncertain); 139:14; **לַעֲשֹׂה** (the parallel of **מַעֲשֵׂה**) and **לֵל** are found in Ps 74:12; **לֵל** and **לַעֲשֹׂה** in Ps 74:13, **לֵל** and **מַעֲשֵׂה** in Ps 74:15.

However, the use of **מַעֲשֵׂה**, **לַעֲשֹׂה** and other references to the works of Yahweh in Isaiah are intended to indicate the rule of Yahweh in history. Wildberger concludes that the works of Yahweh in history stand in analogy to the works of Yahweh in creation. In Isaiah the universal Lord of creation has become the universal Lord of history. This statement clearly presupposes that Isaiah knew about creation concepts. As in the case of Is 4:5, in Is 5:12b, 19 too, creation vocabulary is applied to other concepts of thought.

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157. Clouds: Ex 13:21, 22; 19:9, 16; 25:15ff; 40:34-38; Num 9:15ff; 16:42; Deut 4:11; 1 Kings 8:10ff; Smoke: Ex 19:18; 20:18; Fire: Ex 13:21, 22; 19:18; 24:17; 40:38; Num 9:15ff; 16:35; Deut 4:11ff; Glory: Ex 24:16; 40:34, 35; Num 16:19b, 42; 1 Kings 8:11; Ezek 43:2ff; 44:4; Is 6:7; 40:5.

158. H. Wildberger, "Jesajas Verständnis der Geschichte", Congress Volume, SVT, IX, Leiden, 1962, pp. 83-117.



There is not much evidence of a theological concept of creation as the basis of God's actions in history. The most we can say is that there is an analogical relationship between creation and history in Isaiah.

Without denying Wildberger's conclusion we think that the analogical relationship between creation and history is only one aspect of the richness of Isaiah's thinking. Earlier we have defended the importance of the theology of Zion in Isaiah. Could not we say that there is also an analogical relationship between creation and Zion in Isaiah's thinking? On the whole Is 4:5 implies that after the cleansing of Zion from all injustice and unrighteousness, Yahweh will again create a new situation of protection, namely the restoration of the old picture of Zion as the protection of the people.

### 3.2 Is 6:1-3.

בשנת-מות המלך עזיהו

In the year of the death of king Uzziah,

ואראה את-אדני ישב  
על-כסא דם ונשא

I saw the Lord, sitting on a throne,  
high and exalted;

ושוליו מלאים את-ההיכל

and the flowings of His robe filled  
the temple.

שרפים עמדים סמועל לו

The seraphim stood around Him,

שש כנפים שש כנפים

each of which has six wings.

לאחד בשתיים יכסה פניו

Each used two wings to cover his face;

ובשתיים יכסה סרגליו

two wings to cover his feet;

ובשתיים יעופק

and two wings for flying.

וקרא זה אל-זה

And the one kept calling to another,

ואמר קדוש קדוש קדוש  
יהוה צבאות

saying: Holy, holy, holy Yahweh  
Zebaoth,

כל הארץ מלא כבודו      the fulness of all the earth (is)  
His glory! 159

Isaiah began the account of his vision by giving the date of this happening. According to E.C. Kingsbury "the death of king Uzziah" is concerned with the King being stricken with leprosy, which in ancient Israel is regarded in the same category as death. Based on a report by Josephus, who described Uzziah as being stricken by the coming light in the temple, Kingsbury thinks the light must be that of the morning sun at the autumnal equinox which shone through the doors of the temple and into the holy of the holies. This made possible the representation of the epiphany of Yahweh. This epiphany is connected with the Feast of the enthronement of Yahweh. He concludes that the occasion of Isaiah's vision may be the day of the enthronement of Yahweh.<sup>160</sup> Let us examine the rest of the passage to decide whether the background of Is 6:1-3 is the Enthronement Festival.

"I saw the Lord". This is a rather extraordinary statement, since no man can look at God and live (Ex 33:20-23). Only a few were given the privilege of seeing God in their life-time. But in another visionary experience reported in the OT (1 Kings 22:19), it is said that Micaiah also saw God sitting on a throne.

159. Or "the whole earth is full of His glory" (RSV).

160. Kingsbury, op. cit., pp. 281-82. J. Gray also thinks that the mention of the death of Uzziah (in 738) may point that the personal experience of the prophet occurred in the New Year's Festival, of which the epiphany of the divine King was an important element, see "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and the Psalms", p. 14.



Even if the description of the Lord is limited to the things that indirectly pointed to His features (the robe, the throne and the seraphim), the impression we get is of a powerful and gigantic figure whose presence fills the whole of the temple. It may be asked whether Isaiah got his vision inside the temple or whether his vision is about God in the temple, without necessarily being present in the temple when the vision occurs. Ward argued that the rituals of the sanctuary and the model of the temple were widely known to most men in the ancient world. We can not deduce from here that Isaiah has a special relationship with the temple.<sup>161</sup> Isaiah's familiarity with the parts of the temple (vv. 4 and 6) could imply that he was close to the cultic milieu, although it does not have to mean that he was a cultic functionary. On the other hand, the temple (בֵּית־יְהוָה) could refer, not to the earthly temple, but to the heavenly one, as it was understood in Ugarit and elsewhere in the OT (Pss 11:4; 29; 18:7; Mic 1:2f). But as the earthly temple was built according to the pattern of the heavenly abode of God probably the ancient worshipper made no sharp distinction between them. In any case, Isaiah's vision is concerned with the temple in Jerusalem.

Although the traditional rendering of v. 3, "the whole earth is full of His glory" is grammatically acceptable it gives a slight change to the meaning of the MT. There the earth is equated with Yahweh's glory. It is not a mere symbol of God's glory. It is itself His glory.<sup>162</sup> The whole created world is His glory (cf. Pss 19:2; 89:5; 145:10; Is 42:10-12).

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161. Ward, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-53. On the other hand Kaiser thinks it is most probable that Isaiah received his vision in the temple, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

162. Ward, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-51.



In v. 3 we find reference to Yahweh's title **צבאונ**, and in v. 5 He is said as **המלך יהוה צבאונ**. The title has always been connected with the name **יהוה** since the earliest times. **מלך** is an ancient title which could have been re-applied to refer to Yahweh's triumph over chaos.<sup>163</sup> If both **צבאונ** and **מלך** are ancient words then it is difficult to decide which in Is 6:5 was applied to which. We contend that **מלך** in its later context of creation was applied to **יהוה צבאונ**. Is 6:5 is one of the very few instances where the context of the epithet **יהוה צבאונ** is that of creation.<sup>164</sup>

The context of creation, the title of Yahweh as **מלך** and the description of the temple make us think that Kingsbury is probably right in seeing the Enthronement Festival as the background of Is 6:1-3. God's appearance in the vision of Isaiah is more or less similar to the description in Amos 9:1-3 where Yahweh is pictured as the Creator whose awesome presence goes beyond human proportions. Usually Is 6 is paralleled with 1 Kings 22.<sup>165</sup> Both Isaiah and Micaiah saw God sitting on a throne (Is 6:1; 1 Kings 22:19); both described the heavenly creatures (Is 6:2; 1 Kings 22:19); both heard the Lord voicing His attention (Is 6:8; 1 Kings 22:20) and in both passages someone responded to this voice (the prophet as part of the council of Yahweh, Is 6:8; the spirit of lying in 1 Kings 22:21, 22). Kingsbury assumed that Amos 9:1-3 has as its

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163. See below, appendix B<sub>2</sub>.

164. See below, appendix B<sub>1</sub>.

165. Wildberger, Jesaja 1-12, p. 235.

background also the council of Yahweh.<sup>166</sup> We have our doubts. The text is uncertain and the main impression we get is of Yahweh about to strike.

R. Fey has examined the possibility of Isaiah having affinities with Amos.<sup>167</sup> He found eight considerations in Isaiah which can also be seen in Amos, namely false easy-going attitude (Is 5:11-13; 22:13; Amos 6:4-6); false feeling of security (Is 28:14f; Amos 6:1f; 11-14); mishandling of law (Is 5:8-10; 20-23; Amos 2:6f 5:10-15); cultic practices (Is 1:10-17; Amos 10:21-24); haughtiness (Is 3:1-9; 28:1-4; Amos 6:8); the day of Yahweh (Is 2:6f, 11-12, 17, 19; Amos 5:18); the proud dames (Is 3:16f, 24; 4:1; Amos 4:1f); historical retrospectives (Is 9:7-10; 5:25-29; Amos 5:7-10; 6:7, 14).<sup>168</sup> Presumably because the doxologies are not regarded as an integral part of Amos' message, Fey made no effort to look for affinities in the use of creation concept by the two prophets. In our opinion there is an affinity between the picture of God in the vision of Amos (Amos 9:1-3) and the description of God in the vision of Isaiah (Is 6:1-3). Both depicted the Creator in His awesome presence. The overall context of Amos 9:1-10 is of total judgement towards the people of Israel. The same holds true for Is 6:1-13. Wildberger stated that Is 6:1-13 is a unity, and that the prophet's description of his visionary experience was meant as a legitimation-proof of his calling.<sup>169</sup> The difference between the Isaianic passage and Amos 9

166. See above, p. 343 fn 104.

167. R. Fey, Amos und Isaiah, WMANT 12, Neukirchen, 1963.

168. ibid., p. 145. Fey only refers to the Isaianic passages. We prepared their counterparts in Amos.

169. Wildberger, op. cit., p. 238.

lies in Isaiah's emphasis on the holiness of God, the very holiness which prepares him for his vocation.<sup>170</sup>

### 3.3 Other passages in Isaiah

So far our examination of some passages in Isaiah yields only indirect evidences of the concept of creation in his thinking. We have seen the use of the Chaoskampf image in 17:12-14 (see above, p.165f), the use of creation vocabulary in Is 4 and 5 and the holiness of Yahweh the Creator in Is 6 which indeed indicate the presupposedness of the concept of creation. Significant as they are, they still do not prove that creation theology is dominant in Isaiah's thought. However, there are some scattered passages (i.e. Is 17:7; 22:11b; 29:16; 37:16) which explicitly refer to creation. We shall start with Is 17:7:

בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יִשְׁעָה הָאָדָם	In that day men will regard their
עַל-עֲשָׂהוּ	Maker,
וְעֵינָיו אֶל-קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל	and their eyes will look at the Holy
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	one of Israel;

The passage refers to Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, as the Maker of men. The comparison between Yahweh as the Maker of men and the gods made by human hands proves the worthlessness of the latter, and causes the people to turn to Israel's God. Who is meant by "men" here? The people of Israel or the foreign nations? The context of Is 17:7-8 is one of repentance. The overall context, however, is about judgement against the foreign nations, and in this context there is no indication of their repentance. They were rebuked or

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170. Th.C. Vriezen, "Essentials of the theology of Isaiah", Israel's Prophetic Heritage, London, 1962, pp. 131-32.



cursed and vanished (17:12-14). The possibility of repentance is still open to Israel. Despite the message of total judgement (Is 22:14), Isaiah still believes that the people, or at least a remnant will return (Is 10:20-23). V. 7 probably was originally concerned with Israel, but later on was inserted into the present chapter, which in itself has no integral unity (17:4-6 is not the continuation of 17:1-3; 10-11 do not continue the thoughts of v. 9). The reason for this is perhaps the ambiguity of the word **עוֹלָם**, which could mean both an Israelite or man in general.<sup>171</sup> By pointing to Is 10:10-23 as having the same thoughts of repentance, we imply that there is no need to deny the Isaianic authority of 17:7.<sup>172</sup> Of course we do not know exactly where it originated from in the book of Isaiah (prob. Is 2:11, 17). But the term "Maker" could be pre-exilic and although passages concerning polemics against idols as product of human hands are mainly found in DI (40:19; 41:7; 40:20; 44:9-17), it does not mean that the setting of these polemics ought to be in the exile and that references to these polemics in pre-exilic writings must be later insertions. Besides, DI was not concerned with repentance, either of Israel or the foreign nations, but with their acknowledgement of Yahweh's saving power.

Verbs of creation appear again in Is 22:11b:

**וְלֹא הִבַּטְתֶּם אֶל-עוֹשֵׂיהָ** but you did not consider the Maker of it,

171. Against Wildberger, Jesaja 13-27, BKAT X/2, Neukirchen, 1978, p. 650, who thinks that only man in general is meant here.

172. Again against Wildberger, ibid., p. 651. He thinks that it is possible to place the date near the time of DI.

וְיִצְרָה מַלְחָמָה and you did not look at Him that  
 לֹא עָשָׂה לָאֵלֶיךָ fashioned it long ago.

What is meant by "it"? Wildberger argued that because *לֹא עָשָׂה* and *וְיִצְרָה* always appear in an historical context, there is no connection between 11b and 11a. The works of Yahweh in history are the approaches of the enemy.<sup>173</sup> But we have seen above that both *לֹא עָשָׂה* and *וְיִצְרָה* can be used in any context. It is dangerous to confine certain words to a certain fixed context. So we think that Is 22:11 may have an affinity with Hos 8:14. Both criticised the architectural buildings of man as a sign of rebellion against the Creator, or better, the Maker. We have earlier defended the pre-exilic date of Hos 8:14, so we do not see why there is no possibility of Is 22:11 having the same date.<sup>174</sup> The whole context of 22:1-14 is about the 'unforgivable' sin of the people, namely, that they can take care of themselves and make plans without taking account of Yahweh. The same context can also be seen in Is 29:16. Here too, men are acting on their own initiatives and behave as if Yahweh is a far away god. The idea that the people cannot hide their plans from God is widespread in the OT (Pss 44:22; 94:11; 139:1f; 1:6; 37:18; Job 34:21; Amos 5:3; Jer 23:24). Whatever the hidden plans are, it is clear from the use of the parable of the potter and the clay that they are regarded as an insult to the Maker of Israel as similar to its use by DI in Is 45:9-13. The picture of a potter's vessel appears again in Is 30:14, but here it is used as an illustration for the image of the crashing of the wall. In Is 37:16 God is mentioned

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173. *ibid.*, pp. 824-825.

174. Against Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39*, p. 138.



as the Creator who rules the kingdoms of the earth. This ruler of the kingdoms of the earth dwells in the temple in Jerusalem. Here creation serves as a basis for the divine action in world history. It may well be that this passage belongs to the legend of the siege of Sennacherib, which is derived from 2 Kings 18 and retold in the book of Isaiah with a certain theological direction at the post-Isaiah period (perhaps the time of Josiah or later).<sup>175</sup> So this passage cannot be used as evidence for the importance of creation in Isaiah. Without denying that this passage is later than Isaiah, we do not think that reference to God as Creator and Ruler of the nations must have been produced later than Isaiah. At least we have to be open to the possibility that the passage was a continuation of certain concepts which already existed beforehand. The idea of the God of Israel as King and Ruler over all the earth in the context of creation can be found in Ps 47:3, **כִּי־יְהוָה עֲלִיּוֹן מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל**, **כִּי מֶלֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים** v. 8, and v. 9 **מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל־גּוֹיִם**. On the other hand, although the title **מֶלֶךְ** is found in DI, the phrase such as in Is 37:16 is lacking. The comparison with passages from the Psalter and Second Isaiah shows that the thoughts behind Is 37:16 are probably closer to the former than to the latter.

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175. See R.E. Clements, Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem, Sheffield, 1980, chapter 3 (pp. 52-71). However, in his commentary Isaiah 1-39, NCB, London, 1980, pp. 284, Is 37:16 is regarded as an interpolation from a Deuteronomistic redactor.



We may say now that even these explicit passages of creation do not alter our previous conclusion concerning the other possible creation passages in Isaiah. They confirm the impression that Isaiah was quite familiar with the concept of creation. But even so, the fact remains that he did not use it to the full. There is indication of prophetic reversal in Isaiah, but it is concerned with Zion (8:10, 18). The use of the image of Chaoskampf in Is 17:12-14 is not a result of a prophetic reversal. The object of judgement in it is still the same foreign enemies as in the rituals of judgement of the New Year Festival, and not Israel as in Amos. Only in 6:1-13 can we find something similar to the phenomenon in Amos. Here Yahweh as Creator is pictured in a context of judgement towards His own people.

#### 4. Micah

The book of Micah contains few references to natural entities. The description of the mountains, the hills and the foundations of the earth in Mic 6:1-2 has no connection with the concept of creation. They function in the passage as witnesses to the Lord's controversy against His own people. We need to examine Mic 1:2-5 to decide whether they belong to creation passages or not.

שמעו עמים כלם	Hear, you peoples, all of you!
הקשיבי ארץ ומלאה	Hearken, O earth, and all that is in it,
ויהי אדני יהוה ככם לעד	then the Lord Yahweh will be a witness against you,
אדני מהיכל קדשו	the Lord from His holy temple.

V. 2. The call in the verse convenes a judicial process. The whole population of the earth is drawn into judgement. Yahweh here is pictured as the Ruler of the whole world. The universal tone of this passage might indicate that it is an insertion.<sup>176</sup> It is true that no universal theme is to re-appear till the eschatological sayings in chapters 4-5. But we have seen that DI's message has both universal and particular aspects, so the same may well hold true for Micah.

"The Lord Yahweh will be a witness against you". Yahweh is the giver of evidence and accuser (cf. Jer 29:33; Mal 3:5; Ps 50:7; I Sam 12:5). This is a different picture from the trial-speeches in the Psalms and in DI, where Yahweh takes the double role of that of the prosecutor and the judge.

"His holy temple". The temple could refer to the Jerusalem temple (cf. Pss 5:8; 65:5; 138:2; Jonah 2:5, 8) or His heavenly abode (Ps 11:4).

כִּי-הִנֵּה יְהוָה יֵצֵא מִמְּקוֹמוֹ	For look, the Lord is coming forth out of His place,
וְיֵרֵד וְרָדַךְ עַל-בְּמוֹתֵי-אָרֶץ	and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.
וְנִמְסוּ הַהָרִים תַּחְתָּיו	And the mountains will melt under Him,
וְהָעִמְקִים יִתְּבַקְעוּ	and the valleys will be cleft
כְּדֹנֶגַע מִפְּנֵי הָאֵשׁ	like wax before the fire,
כַּמַּיִם מִגְרִים בְּמִוֶּרֶד	like waters poured down a steep place.

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176. So H.W. Wolff, Dodekapropheton Micha, BKAT XIV<sub>12</sub>, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1980, p. 15; J.L. Mays, Micah, OTL, London, 1976, p.4.

V. 3. "the Lord is coming forth out of His place". In II Sam 22:7 = Ps 18:7 (cf. Is 18:4; 63:15; 66:1) we find parallels to the description in vv. 3-4. There Yahweh is pictured as coming from His abode to help His people. But here it is in the context of judgement.

"the high places of the earth". The Kethib has <sup>יְהוָה</sup> (sing. <sup>יְהוָה</sup>), while the Qere has <sup>יְהוָה</sup> (sing. <sup>יְהוָה</sup>). The other occurrences of the word in the same phrase in Deut 32:13 and Jes 58:14 is the same as in the Kethib, while in Jes 14:14; Job 9:8 and Amos 4:13 the form of the word is the same as in the Qere. <sup>יְהוָה</sup> is not the equivalent of <sup>יְהוָה</sup>.<sup>177</sup> <sup>יְהוָה</sup>, unlike <sup>יְהוָה</sup>, never occurs in any cultic context, and contains no idea of height at all. That is why we can render the phrase in Amos 4:13 as "and walks along the sides of the land". But here we should retain the MT.<sup>178</sup> In v. 5b a redactor understood <sup>יְהוָה</sup> as the cultic height (<sup>יְהוָה</sup>) in Jerusalem where the temple is located. "And the mountains will melt". We find similar phrases in Pss 97:5; 68:3, and we have regarded the reference to tottering mountains in Ps 75:4 as related to creation. But there the word is <sup>יְהוָה</sup>, not <sup>יְהוָה</sup> as in this passage. "And the valleys will be cleft". <sup>יְהוָה</sup> means "to split open". It appears in Ps 74:15 in the context of the drying up of the Noahite Flood. R.E. Wolfe regarded the mountains as subject and translated v. 4 as "Even the mountains.....and they shall flow down (be cleft) into the valleys".<sup>179</sup> Although this translation is grammatically possible, we opt for the valleys as subject. V. 4b

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177. See above, p. 63 fn 131.

178. P.H. Vaughan, The Meaning of 'bāmā in the Old Testament, p. 59, fn. 26, on the other hand thinks that in the case of Mic 1:3 we should follow the Qere.

179. R.E. Wolfe, The Book of Micah, IB, VI, 1956, p. 903.



could be a later addition which elaborated the picture of the melting of the mountains.<sup>180</sup> The whole picture in vv. 3-4 is of a violent upheaval of nature in an earthquake. This picture is part of the usual description of a theophany in the OT.

ב פשע יעקב כל-זאת All this is for the transgression of Jacob,  
 ובחטאות בית ישראל and for the sins of the houses of Israel,  
 מי-פשע יעקב Who is the transgression of Jacob?  
 הלא שמרון Is it not Samaria?  
 ומי במות הורה And who are the high place of Judah?  
 הלא ירושלם Is it not Jerusalem?

V. 5a explains the reason for this violence of God. It is the rebellion of "Jacob" i.e. Israel as it is in the parallel "the house of Israel". But elsewhere in Micah, the names of Jacob and Israel are applied to Jerusalem and Judah (3:1; 3:8; 3:9). Israel is the name for the whole unity of the people of God.

נשנ is rebellion against Yahweh's authority. נט is failure to maintain the norms set by Israel's relation to Yahweh. Both words appear again in pair in 1:13b (may be a redactional comment) and 3:8.

In the RSV the questions begin with "what". But the MT has 'נ and so has the LXX (sometimes, however, 'נ could mean "what", as in Ruth 3:16). We would expect "sin of" in v. 5b instead of "height

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180. See J.M.P. Smith - W.H. Ward - J.A. Bewer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel, ICC, Edinburgh, 1912, p. 36.

of", as it is rendered by the LXX: καὶ διὰ ἀμαρτιῶν.

Probably v. 5b is not from the language of Micah. By these reformulations the redactor prepares the audience for the understanding of the theophany as the event which brings about the fall of Samaria and the Assyrian intervention against Judah. The theophany becomes the theological interpretation of the crisis which came upon Israel and Judah in the latter part of the eighth century.<sup>181</sup>

From our examination on Mic 1:2-5 we can conclude that the passage is not related at all to any creation concept. This will confirm what we have already stated in section A in our description of a theophany, namely that theophany is not concerned with creation.

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181. Mays, op. cit., p. 45.

## 5. Nahum

Nahum 1:1-5 has been claimed as a creation passage.<sup>182</sup> We shall examine whether this claim can be justified.

משא נינוה An oracle concerning Niniveh.

ספר חזון נחום האלקשי The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

V. 1. משא. The word here means "oracle". In other contexts it can mean "burden", such as in Jer 23:33. The book is later than 663.<sup>183</sup> But the oracle must have been given before the fall of Niniveh, although it is difficult to say whether Nahum predicted shortly before the fall of the city in 612 or some decades earlier.<sup>184</sup>

אל קנוא ונקם יהוה A jealous and avenging God is Yahweh,  
נקם יהוה ובעל חמה avenging and a Lord of wrath is Yahweh,  
נקם יהוה לצדיו avenging is Yahweh on His adversaries,  
ונוטר הוא לאיכיו and He keeps His wrath against His enemies.

V. 2. קנא, "jealous". This form appears elsewhere in the OT in Josh 24:19. The usual form is קנא (Ex 20:5; 34:14; Deut 4:24; 5:9; 6:15). The word may have an overtone of "zeal" (as it is understood by the LXX) or "fury" (as in Zech 8:2; Ezek 5:13; 8:3, 5; 16:38, 42; 23:25; 24:8; 36:6; 38:18-19).

The LXX lacks קנא יהוה in the second half of v. 2a. ובעל חמה  
"and a Lord of wrath". In Prov 29:22 it is paralleled

182. By Smith - Ward - Bewer, op. cit., p. 289; J.H. Eaton, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, London, 1961, pp. 58-59 and in his Vision in Worship, London, 1981, pp. 14-20; J.D.W. Watts, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, Cambridge, 1975, p. 104.

183. G.W. Anderson, A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament, London, 1959, p. 158.

184. Eaton, Vision in Worship, p. 15.



by  $\text{אִישׁ - אַף}$ , "an angry man". In Prov 22:24  $\text{בַּעַל אַף}$  is a parallel to  $\text{אִישׁ חַטּוֹת}$ .

$\text{יְהוָה אֶרֶךְ אַפִּים וְגָדוֹל - כַּחַ$  Yahweh is slow to anger but great in power,  
 $\text{וְנִקָּה לֹא יִנְקָה יְהוָה}$  and Yahweh will by no means clear the guilty.  
 $\text{בְּסוּפָה וּכְשַׁעֲרָה דָּרָכּוֹ}$  His way is in whirlwind and storm,  
 $\text{וְעָנָן אֶבֶק רַגְלָיו}$  and the clouds are the dust of His feet.

V. 3. "slow to anger but great in power". In Ps 145:8 we find a slightly different formulation, "slow to anger and great in kindness" (cf. Ex 34:6; Num 14:18; Joel 2:13; Pss 86:15; 103:8; Neh 9:17). In the NEB Nahum 1:3a is regarded as a gloss(?) or an insertion. Because  $\text{בַּעַל חַמָּה}$  in 1:2 is translated as "quick to anger", it appears contradictory to  $\text{אֶרֶךְ אַפִּים}$ . But K.J. Cathcart has shown that the phrases are not contradictory to each other.<sup>185</sup> He compared the passage with lines from the Babylonian ludlul bel nemeqi, which describes Marduk as a wrathful god, but also as the one who tarries or slows down his anger. It is best to follow Cathcart in translating  $\text{בַּעַל חַמָּה}$  in v. 2 as "a Lord of wrath".

"in whirlwind and storm". The word pair appears again in Is 29:6 (cf. Ps 83:16). "And the clouds are the dust of His feet" (cf. Ps 18:10). These phrases indicate that what we have here is a description of a theophany in the phenomenon of a dry thunderstorm (sirocco).<sup>186</sup> Yahweh's appearance here is of a storm or weather-god.

185. K.J. Cathcart, Nahum in the light of Northwest Semitic, Rome, 1973, p. 46.

186. ibid., p. 47. H. Schulz, Das Buch Nahum, BZAW 129, Berlin-New York, 1973, p. 10.

גוער בים ויבשהו He rebukes the sea and dries it up,  
 וכל-הנהרות החריב He dries up all the rivers;  
 אמלל בשן וכרמל Bashan and Carmel wither,  
 ופרח לבנון אמלל the bloom of Lebanon fades.

V. 4. "He rebukes", as in Is 50:2; Ps 106:9. The word pair "sea and rivers" are frequent in the OT.<sup>187</sup> הנהרות can mean "sea-currents" as in Ps 24:2; Jon 2:4. V. 4a does not refer to the primordial event of the triumph of Yahweh over chaos in the creation of the world. The verbs are to be rendered in the present. The parallel of v. 4a, Is 50:2 is also not concerned with creation. Is 50:2 may be a reference to the Exodus. Schoors noted that reference to the fish that stink and die may allude to the tradition of the plagues of Egypt, and v. 3 may refer to the plague of darkness.<sup>188</sup> But we prefer to see in Is 50:2 and also here in Nahum 1:4 a picture of a severe drought.

הרים לעשו כמנו The mountains totter before Him,  
 והגבעות התמגגו the hills melt,  
 ותשא הארץ מפניו the earth is laid waste before Him,  
 ותכל the world and all that dwell therein.

V. 5. "The mountains totter". In Ps 75:4 Yahweh stabilises the tottering mountains. In Amos 9:5, 6 the earth totters because Yahweh touched it. In Mic 1:4 the mountains melt because of the impact of the theophany of Yahweh. Ps 75:4 and Amos 9:5, 6 are in the context of creation; Mic 1:4 is in the context of theophany.

The overall context of vv. 3-5 is of a theophany of judgement against the enemies of Israel. The rebuke of God is pictured as

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187. Is 48:18; 50:2; Ps 24:2; 66:6; 72:8; 80:12; 89:26; 98:7-8; Hab 3:8.

188. Schoors, I am God your Saviour, pp. 199-200.

thunder that shakes the mountains and the hills. The drought in vv. 4-5 may have a cosmic connotation. But we do not think that Nahum 1:1-5 is a creation passage. It belongs to the descriptions of a theophanic passage.

## 6. Zephaniah

Zeph 1:2-3 contains several allusions to Gen 6ff – the story of the Flood. The phrase **מַעַלְפָּנִי הָאֲדָמָה** occurs twice in vv. 2-3, and in Gen 6:7; 7:4 and 8:8. L. Sabottka also sees Gen 8:21 as being alluded to in this passage.<sup>189</sup> We shall examine Zeph 1:2-3 to see whether it can be regarded as a creative passage.

**כָּל אֲשֶׁר אֶסַּף** I will utterly sweep away everything  
**מִמֶּנִּי הָאֲדָמָה וְאִם-יְהוָה** from the face of the earth, says the Lord.  
**אֲשֶׁר אֶסַּף אָדָם וְכָבֶהֱמָה** I will sweep away humankind and beast;  
**אֲשֶׁר אֶסַּף עוֹף-הַשָּׁמַיִם** I will sweep away birds of the air  
**וְדָגֵי הַיָּם** and the fish of the sea.  
**וְהַחֲשָׁלוֹת אֶת-הַרְשָׁעִים** And the offenses of the wicked;  
**וְהַכְרַתִּי אֶת-הָאָדָם** I will cut off humankind  
**מִמֶּנִּי הָאֲדָמָה וְאִם-יְהוָה** from the face of the earth, says the Lord.

V. 2. **אֶסַּף אֶסַּף**. G. Gerleman thinks the construction here is rare, but makes enough sense.<sup>190</sup> **אֶסַּף** is gal inf. abs. of **אֶסַּף**, "to sweep", "to destroy". **אֶסַּף** is hiph. imperf. of **אֶסַּף**, "to destroy". There is a suggestion that **אֶסַּף** may originally be **אֶסַּף** as in Jer 8:13.<sup>191</sup> The RSV has **אֶסַּף אֶסַּף**, "I will utterly

189. L. Sabottka, Zephaniah, Rome, 1972, pp. 11-12.

190. G. Gerleman, Zephaniah. Textkritisch und literarisch untersucht, Lund, 1942, p. 5.

191. See KBH, p. 254; also in Gesenius-Kautzsch, 72aa.



sweep away". Apparently it assumes that an  $\aleph$  is missing through a scribal error (haplography). On the other hand Sabottka thinks that the construction may be a word play.  $\text{פִּוֹן}$  is probably a development from a different word:  $\text{פִּוֹ}$ , "to add". He proposed  $\text{פִּוֹן פִּוֹן}$ , "I shall again sweep away". According to him  $\text{פִּוֹן}$  is gal imperf. indic. first pers. sing. which means "again".<sup>192</sup> This meaning "again" (or better, "continue") could also be in the hiph. (see KBH, p. 137), but this alternative is rejected by Sabottka.

Besides Sabottka, J.D.W. Watts also thinks that Zephaniah's word in v. 2 is intended to replace the promise in Gen 8:21.<sup>193</sup> Th. Gaster pointed out that the term  $\text{פִּוֹן}$  is the name of the feast of the Ingathering (Ex 23:16).<sup>194</sup> The feast would not be the feast which the people expected; on the contrary, it was Yahweh who was going to 'gather in'. Again we see here an indication of a prophetic reversal.

V. 3. M. Deroche noted that the listing of creatures in v. 3 is the reverse from that which is listed in Gen 1. There fish is mentioned first (v. 20a), then birds (v. 20b), beasts (v. 24), man (v. 26). Gen1:26 also contains the list of creatures which is the reverse of that in Zeph 1:3.<sup>195</sup>

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192. Sabottka, op. cit., p. 7.

193. Watts, op. cit., p. 156.

194. Th.H. Gaster, Myth, Legend and Custom in the Old Testament, New York and Evanston, 1969, p. 679.

195. M. Deroche, "Zephaniah I 2-3; The 'Sweeping' of Creation", VT 30 (1980), pp. 104-109.

According to Deroche the prophet is not simply announcing judgement on mankind, nor is he only disqualifying Yahweh's promise of Gen 8:21. Zephaniah is proclaiming man's loss of dominion over the earth, and more importantly, the reversal of creation. Deroche's attempt to show the similarity of words between Zeph 1:2-3 and the Genesis creation account<sup>196</sup> fails to carry much conviction. But on the whole Deroche's insight is correct. It fits our view of the reversal of creation to chaos in Jer 4:23-26 and Hos 4:1-3. We can say now that beside reversing the context of creation, the prophets also reversed the account of creation.

"and the offenses of the wicked". In BHK and BHS we find the proposal (Oort) to emend  $\text{וְהַמְכַשְׁלֹת}$  into  $\text{וְהַכְשִׁילָהּ}$ , "I will cause to stumble". The MT is explained as an error for  $\text{וְהַכְשִׁילָהּ}$

and with an attempted solution by the addition of  $\text{וְ}$ . But as noted by Sabottka, the  $\text{ו}$  is left unexplained.<sup>197</sup>

On the other hand in Is 57:4 we find the word  $\text{מְכַשִּׁיל}$ , "offense, obstacle". Jer 6:21 has the plural  $\text{מְכַשִּׁילִים}$ . Is 3:6 has  $\text{מְכַשִּׁילָה}$ , "heap or rubble, ruins".<sup>198</sup> It is possible that  $\text{וְהַמְכַשְׁלֹת}$  has the same root. The whole phrase is missing in the LXX. In itself this fact is not an indication that the phrase is a later addition. But judgement on the wicked is out of place in a context of universal judgement such as in Zeph 1:2-3. So it is still probable that a later hand tried to limit the judgement to the wicked only, in an attempt to explain the passage.

196. He argued that  $\text{וְהַמְכַשְׁלֹת}$  has "obvious" assonance with  $\text{וְהַמְכַשְׁלֹת}$ ;  $\text{וְהַמְכַשְׁלֹת}$ ;  $\text{וְהַמְכַשְׁלֹת}$  (twice in Gen 2:4). But the supposed assonance is far from obvious, and it may be asked whether one can justify the use of assonance to trace the source of a tradition.

197. Sabottka, op. cit., p. 8.

198. See KBH, p. 195.

## 7. Habakkuk

Hab 3:2-15 contains descriptions that might fit the picture either of a Chaoskampf or a theophany. We shall examine the passage thoroughly to see whether it can be included as one of the evidences of creation in the prophetic tradition.

יְהוָה שָׁמַעְתִּי שְׁמֶךָ Lord, I have heard the report of you,

יְהוָה פָּעַלְתָּ לִּי Lord, I fear your work;

בְּקִרְבֵּי שָׁנִים חַיֵּיהֶם In the midst of the years give him life,

בְּקִרְבֵּי שָׁנִים תִּזְכְּרֵנִי in the midst of the years make known;

בְּגִלְגָּלִי רַחֵם בְּאַרְצִי in wrath remember mercy.

V. 2. J.H. Eaton regarded שָׁמַע as indicating "revelatory sound".<sup>199</sup> He translates: "I hear the sound of these". But probably it means "report", as in Gen 29:13.<sup>200</sup>

"I fear your work". Eaton, K. Elliger<sup>201</sup> and the NEB emended יִרְאֶתִּי to יִרְאֵתִּי, "I have seen", following the LXX, κατενόησα (see also the prop. in the BHS). The assumption behind this proposal is that the background is of a visual presentation. But apparently the prophet heard the recital of the deeds of Yahweh and this had an effect on him. So we decide to retain the MT.

"In the midst of the years" indicates the turn of the year, from the old to the new or the autumnal New Year Festival.

199. J.H. Eaton, "The Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3", ZAW 76 (1964), p. 168.

200. Cf. K. Elliger, Das Buch der zwölf kleinen Propheten, Göttingen, 1949, p. 4.

201. ibid.



"give him life". This could refer to the King, the people or nature in general.<sup>202</sup> "make known". The recital of the deeds of Yahweh was meant to produce an "actualisation". In this "actualisation" the audience will share the past experience of their fore-fathers.

"in wrath remember mercy". The prophet's plea is in accordance with Yahweh's character as described in Ex 34:6 and Nahum 1:3.

אלוה מתימן יבוא God comes from Teman,  
 וקדוש מהר-פארן סלה and the Holy One from Mount Paran,  
 כסה שמים הודו His glory covered the heavens,  
 ונתהלתר מלאה הארץ and the earth was full of His praise.

V. 3. אלוה is a variant name for אל (cf. Deut 32:17; Pss 18:32; 114:7; Is 44:8; Dan 11:38; 2 Chron 32:15; Neh 9:17; it is used 41x in the book of Job). "Teman" and "Paran". In Deut 33:2 Paran is a parallel of Sinai. They are regions which lie in the southern direction.

C. Westermann regarded vv. 3ff as an example of an "epiphany" (in which God comes to save His people) and compared the passage with Judg 5:4-5 and Ps 18:7-15.<sup>203</sup>

והיה כאור וגו His brightness is like the light,  
 וקדושים מידו לו Twin-rays flashes from his hand,  
 ושם חביון עזה and there is the hiding place of His power.

V. 4. "His brightness". The MT has only "brightness". But the LXX, the Syr. and the V have the "his". We follow the ancient

202. Watts, op. cit., p. 145.

203. C. Westermann, Praise and Lament in the Psalms, Edinburgh, 1981, pp. 94-95.

renderings. Then we need to change  $\text{ה'ה'ה}$  into  $\text{ה'ה'}$ , to harmonise it with "his". Possibly in this verse God is pictured as a storm-god, holding rays of lightning in His hand.

$\text{לפניו ילך דבר}$  Before Him goes Pestilence,  
 $\text{ויצא דשק לרגליו}$  and Plague follows closely behind;  
 $\text{עמד וימרד ארץ}$  He stands and shakes the earth,  
 $\text{ראה ויטר גוים}$  He looks and scatters the nations.  
 $\text{ויתפצצו ההרים-עד}$  And the eternal mountains crumble,  
 $\text{שחו גבעות עולם}$  and the everlasting hills subside,  
 $\text{הליכות עולם לו}$  His ways are as of old.  
 $\text{נחת און דאיתי}$  I have seen under wickedness  
 $\text{אהלי כושן ירגזון}$  the tents of Kushan shake,  
 $\text{יריעות ארץ מדין}$  and the tent-curtains of the land of Midian.

Vv. 5-7.  $\text{דשק}$ , "Plague". In Ugarit the god Rašap has an ambivalent character. On the one hand he is regarded as connected with the underworld, war and pestilence. But on the other hand he is also regarded as a god of healing and life.<sup>204</sup> The Hebrew version of his name occurred here together with  $\text{דב}$ , "pestilence" (cf. Ex 9:3; Ezek 33:27; Jer 27:13). Apparently  $\text{דב}$  was personified to make it distinct from  $\text{דשק}$ . In Hab 3:5 the status of  $\text{דשק}$  as god is clearly downgraded to become a member of Yahweh's entourage.<sup>205</sup>

$\text{דבר}$  is poel of  $\text{דבר}$  and means "convulsed, was agitated violently".<sup>206</sup>  $\text{דב}$  is hiph. imperf. from  $\text{דב}$ , "to drive

204. See Gese et al, Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer, 1970, pp. 141-142; Ringgren, Religions of the Ancient Near East, 1973, p. 137.

205. J. Day, "New light on the mythological background of the allusions to Resheph in Habakkuk III 5", VT 29 (1979), pp. 353-54.

206. G.R. Driver, "Hebrew Notes", ZAW 11 (1934), pp. 54-55.



assunder" (par. Akkad. nutturu).<sup>207</sup> The function and meaning of the phrase "I have seen under wickedness" is obscure. Following Stonehouse, Eaton translated  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  as "burdened, weighed down beneath" (cf. Jes 34:5; Prov 30:21f).<sup>208</sup> He rendered v. 7a as: "I see the tents of Kushan sore burdened", following the construction in Ex 5:19; Zech 4:10. However, this leaves  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  unexplained. Albright reads  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  as  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$ . According to him it is the tifta'el from the Ugaritic  $\aleph \aleph$ . The  $\aleph$  in the end of v. 6 should be  $\aleph$  and taken as an emphatic  $\aleph$ . The word (1) tht'n then means "shattered, disintegrated".<sup>209</sup> Albright's proposal is apparently followed by the NEB. The problem of explaining  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  is solved by emending it into  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$ , "his swift flight", and transposing it to v. 4. Here too  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  is left unexplained. We think the phrase could still be related albeit awkwardly to the tents of Kushan and the tent-curtains of Midian. Perhaps it was intended to convey how the wicked nations are feeling the impact of Yahweh's attack.

Vv. 5-7 is a picture of an earthquake as part of the description of a theophany. On the other hand Albright and Eaton think that vv. 3-7 is a description of sirocco storms from the south or east.<sup>210</sup>

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207. G.R. Driver, "Difficult words in the Hebrew Prophets", Rowley (ed.), Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, pp. 52-72.

208. Eaton, op. cit., p. 150.

209. W.F. Albright, "The Psalm of Habakkuk", Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, pp. 1-18.

210. According to Albright, op. cit., the picture in vv. 8ff is that of the westerly rainstorms and could only come from a Northwest Canaanite source. Eaton, op. cit., pp. 162-63, attempted to give a natural explanation. He stated that both contrasting pictures were experienced by the farmers in Palestine as one phenomenon. This natural explanation is not necessary. The picture of violent upheavals in nature is a conventional device used both in Canaan and Israel to describe a theophany.



But apparently here both kinds of natural upheavals are used to give a menacing picture of Israel's God.

הַכְּנָה לְיָם חֲרָה יְהוָה Is it against the rivers that your  
fury is directed, O Lord?

אִם בְּנְהָרִים אַפֶּךָ is it against the rivers that your  
anger is directed,

אִם-כִּי עַל-יָם אַפֶּךָ or is your wrath against the sea,  
כִּי תִרְכַּב עַל-סוּסֶיךָ when you ride upon your horses  
מִרְכַּבֶּיךָ יְשׁוּעָה upon your chariots of salvation?

v. 8. וְנָהָרִים. Together with נָהָרִים it is regarded as Yahweh's violent adversaries in the primeval Chaoskampf. The wicked nations are here seen as representatives of chaos.

v. 9. עֲרִיָּה תַעֲזוֹר קִשְׁתְּךָ. The word עֲרִיָּה means "bareness, nakedness". Eaton understood תַעֲזוֹר as niphal imperf. from עָזַר, "to be stirred up".<sup>211</sup> But it could also be niphal imperf. from the piel root עָרַה which means "to lay bare".

שִׁבְעָה מִטּוֹת אִשְׁפֶּתְךָ. In the BHK there is a proposal to emend the phrase into שִׁבְעָה מִטּוֹת אִשְׁפֶּתְךָ, "you sated your quiver with arrows", following the LXX<sup>Luc.</sup>. NEB followed the proposal. The MT could be translated as "sevenfold arrows" (Ewald). But recently J. Day objected to this. According to him שִׁבְעָה is only used in expressions of time.<sup>212</sup> He himself proposed "seven lightnings", from a comparison with an Ugaritic text from Ras Shamra concerning Baal: sb't. brqm (lh), "seven lightnings

211. Eaton, op. cit., p. 145.

212. J. Day, "Echoes of Baal's seven thunders and lightnings in Psalm XXIX and Habakkuk III 9 and identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah, VI," VT 29 (1979), pp. 143-151.

(he had)".  $\text{יָמֵי}$  could mean "rods" as in v. 14. Yahweh's arrows represent lightning.<sup>213</sup> Day's rendering is supported by the LXX:  $\text{ἐπὶ τα σκηντρεα}$ , which may be an internal corruption from  $\text{ἐπτα σκηντρεα}$  or  $\text{ἐπὶ ἐπτα σκηντρεα}$ . The word  $\text{יָמֵי}$  is supported by the ancient versions, so it should be retained. It may refer to Yahweh's word of command, as His commanding of the sword to go into action (Jer 25:29; 47:6-7; Zech 13:7). This then is our rendering of v. 9:

Utterly laid bare is your bow,  
seven lightnings/arrows with a word!

$\text{רִאיוֹךְ יַחֲלֹה הָרִים}$	The mountains see you and writhe,
$\text{וְרָגְזוּ מַיִם עֲבֹר}$	the waters rage and sweep on,
$\text{וְהַיָּם יִשְׁמַע קוֹלוֹ}$	the deep gives forth his voice,
$\text{וְרָם יָדֵיהֶן נִשְׂאָה}$	he lifts his hand on high.
$\text{וְשֶׁמֶשׁ יָרַח עָמְדוּ בְּבֵלָהֶם}$	The sun and moon stand (still) in their dwellings,
$\text{לְאֹרֶךְ חֲצִיךְ יֵהָלְכוּ}$	at the light of your arrows as they walk away,
$\text{לְנֹגַהּ בְּרָק חֲנִיתְךָ}$	at the flash of the glittering of your spear!

Vv. 10-11. The pictures of writhing mountains and raging seas can also be found in Ps 46:1-3; the reference to the  $\text{בְּבֵלָהֶם}$  occurs in the same situation in Ps 77:17-18. They are all pictures of a Chaoskampf.

$\text{עָמְדוּ בְּבֵלָהֶם}$ . The LXX has  $\text{ἐν τῇ ταξεί αὐτῆς}$ , "in her dwelling" ( $\text{בְּבֵלָהֶם}$ ). This fits the context better.

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213. Also noted by Eaton, op. cit., p. 152.

יָצַעְתָּ אֶת-הָאֲרֶץ בַּחֲמָהּ You tread the earth in fury,  
 בְּאַף תִּדְּלוּשׁ גּוֹיִם you trample the nations in rage,  
 יֵצֵאתָ לִישׁוּעַ עַמְּךָ you go forth for the salvation of  
 לִישׁוּעַ אֶת-חֲשִׁיחֶךָ for the salvation of your anointed.

In v. 12 the purpose of the theophany is given. Yahweh attacks the nations for the sake of His people and His anointed. Reference to the King as the anointed of Yahweh, the divine attack on the nations and the Chaoskampf make it probable that Habakkuk is a cultic prophet who preached salvation and that this passage originated in the pre-exilic period.

שָׁחַבְתָּ לְרֹאשׁ מִבֵּית רָשָׁע You crushed the head of the house of  
 the wicked,  
 וְעָרַבְתָּ מִלְּבַיִת עַד-צוּרָאָהּ laying him bare from bottom to neck.

In v. 13b we find again reference to the wicked. The RSV omitted the reference to the house: "You didst crush the head of the wicked". This rendering is more suited to the descriptions of Yahweh crushing the head of the wicked monster in the OT (Is 51; Ps 89; Job 26). The NEB, however, retains the reference to the house by making a slight emendation מִלְּבַיִת פִּי: "Thou dost shatter the wicked man's house from the roof down". "laying him bare from bottom to neck". This is the ultimate humiliation that can be inflicted upon an enemy. In the NEB, however, this phrase is emended to עֲרִיבֵת יְסוֹדָהּ, "uncovering its foundations to the bare rock". In the NEB it is not the wicked who was stripped down, but his house!

Reference to "the head of the house" seems indeed out of place in this passage which describes the nations as the enemies of Yahweh. But we retain it. Probably a later hand re-interpreted the passage to give meaning to history in the post-exilic internal struggle





V.15. In this verse we find again the familiar Chaoskampf. "many waters" has a cosmic connotation and frequently the expression appears as a reference to the threatening nations.<sup>217</sup>

What is the background of Hab 3:2-15?

According to Eaton the whole of Hab 3 is part of the materials used in a temple service, as a vehicle for the congregation's communion with God.<sup>218</sup> He gave several reasons for this cultic background:

1. The annotations: *למוצח בנגינות; סלה; על שגינות; תפלה* which usually indicate materials for a liturgical service.
2. Elements of lament, hymn and "certainty of hearing" are contained in this passage.
3. Hab 3 has affinity with other psalms.
4. It has as its context the Autumnal Festival worship.

The last is to Eaton the most important aspect of the Habakkuk passage. Only in this context can the passage be wholly understood.<sup>219</sup> It gives the picture of the renewal of creation, poetically presented as the drama of combat between God the Creator and King and the embodiment of chaos. The descriptions are not to be regarded as reference to a particular historical interpretation. *רָאִיתִי* (in v.7 and also ought to be in v.2) and *וַיִּשְׁמַע* (in v.2 and v.16) point to the present experience of a dramatic effect. V.16 refers to the prophet experiencing a kind of holy terror at the approach of Yahweh. The phrase

217. See H.G. May, "Some cosmic connotations of Mayyim Rabbim, 'Many Waters'", pp. 9-21.

218. Eaton, op.cit., p. 158.

219. i b i d., p. 161.

"make known" in v.2 must be understood as a plea to make Yahweh's presence an empirical manifestation.<sup>220</sup> Although it is a present event, the experience is also concerned with the renewal of ancient salvation and the promise of a future outworking of victory. Eaton concludes by stating that Habakkuk is a cultic prophet.

Recently P. Jöcken has contested the view that Habakkuk is a cultic prophet.<sup>221</sup> Hab 1:5-11 is not a salvation oracle but an oracle of woe. The book is concerned with internal enemies, and messages of judgement to internal enemies are not the task of a cultic prophet who is employed by the state (ein beamten Kultprophet). 1:5 is not about the nations but about the אֲשֵׁרֵינוּ, "the unfaithful" (fol. the LXX: ὁ καταφρονῶντας). The source of 2:1-3 is not from the pre-exilic temple. Hab 3:2-16 is the work of a post-exilic redactor and 3:3-15 is a picture of a theophany which is commonly used and not just restricted within the cultic milieu.

It seems that Eaton has exaggerated the dramatic aspect of this passage. Is v.16 (which according to Eaton refers to the prophet's "holy terror") an answer to the plea in v.2 (in which Yahweh is asked to make His presence "an empirical manifestation")?

We are not sure. V.2 indeed involves an "actualization".

220. i b i d, pp. 165-67

221. P. Jöcken, Das Buch Habakuk, BBB 48, Köln-Bonn, 1977; also in his article "War Habakuk ein Kultprophet?", Bausteine Biblischer Theologie, Festschrift G. Johannes Botterweck, BBB 50, Köln-Bonn, 1977, pp. 319-32.



But this is not necessarily connected with a dramatic performance, a certain ritual or any other outwardly expression. The recital of the myth of Yahweh's deeds is sufficient to make the audience share the past experience of their forefathers. V.16 may not be a reference to a prophetic "holy terror" or even a prophetic ecstasy.

D.R. Hillers has shown that a description such as can be found in v.16 is the usual convention in literature of the ancient Near East to describe a reaction to bad news.<sup>222</sup>

The convention is used even if the bad news is concerned with one's enemy and not with oneself.

Nevertheless, it must be said that the passage gives a strong impression of having a cultic background. Even if the present text has been through a post-exilic redaction, the core of the passage may still express a pre-exilic cultic background. There is every possibility that Habakkuk was a cultic prophet and that he preached salvation to the people and judgement to the enemies.

We have seen that in Hab 3:2-15 there is clear evidence of a combination of pictures of a theophany and of a Chaoskampf. J. Jeremias regarded this passage (together with Nahum 1:4; pss 104:7; 114:3,5; 18:7-15; 77:15-20) as "reminiszenzen" of a Chaoskampf.<sup>223</sup> We do not think so. The picture in Hab 3:2-15 is not just a reminiscence but is of a Chaoskampf. It seems

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222. D.R. Hillers, "A Convention in Hebrew Literature: The Reaction to Bad News", ZAW 77 (1963), pp. 86-90. He gives an example from the Baal Epic in the Ugaritic Manual (UM), III, pp. 29-32. Besides Hab 3:16, he also cites other examples in the OT (Jer 6:22-23; 49:23; 13:7-8; Is 21:3-4.)

223. J. Jeremias, Theophanie, pp. 90-95

that this passage is a border-line case. It shows that the two descriptions which originally have nothing to do with each other, later on could be combined to describe a threatening picture of God who is coming for judgement.

We can now conclude that Hab 3:2-15 is concerned with the concept of creation through the Chaoskampf picture. Yahweh the Creator is coming to judge the nations and to save His people.

## 8. Jeremiah.

Passages which refer to the concept of creation in the book of Jeremiah have been regarded as secondary, being products of DI and the Deuteronomistic redactor. The main reason for this view is the assumption of the lateness of the creation concept. We have stated in section A that this assumption is untenable. In this section we shall examine whether Jeremiah could have used the concept in his message and whether the passages which refer to creation could belong to him. We shall start with the hymnic passage in Jer 10:12-16 = 51:15-19, which explicitly refers to creation.

### 8.1 Jer 10:12-16 = 51:15-19.

a/Textual and exegetical problems.

Except in minor ways of spelling and with the omission of "Israel" (v. 16), Jer 10:12-16 appears again in Jer 51:15-19 within the oracles against Babylon.

עשה ארץ בכחו	He who makes the earth by His power,
מכין תבל בחכמתו	who establishes the world by His wisdom,
ובתבונתו נטה שמים	and stretches the heavens by His understanding;
לקול תתן	as He gives forth (His) voice,
הסון סים בשמים	the waters roar in the heavens,
ויעלה נשאים מקצה ארץ	and He makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth.



בְּרָקִים לַחֲטָר יַשֵּׁה He makes lightnings for the rain,  
וַיּוֹצֵא רוּחַ מֵאֲצִתָּיו and brings forth wind from His storages.

Vv. 12-13. בְּכֹחוֹ. Creation by Yahweh's power is also mentioned in Jer 32:17 and in the Psalms (29:3,4; 65:7; 147:5; 111:6). כֹּחַ in the context of creation also appears in Is 40:26. It is Yahweh's power which maintains the fixed appointment of the stars at night. Is 50:2 also refers to כֹּחַ, but there the context is of history.

As with the doxologies in the book of Amos, here we find again the use of participial verbs (vv. 12, 13, 16). The conjunction of כֹּחַ and תְּבִלָּה can also be seen in the Psalter (93:1; 96:10). תְּבִלָּה alone is frequently mentioned there (Pss 24:2; 110:90; 8:4) and in Proverbs (Prov 3:19; 8:26, 31). The closest parallel to the association of wisdom and God as Creator in v.12 is Ps 3:19. Creation and wisdom can also be found in Ps 104.24. The phrase נִטָּה שְׁמִי is frequently used in DI (40:22; 45:12; 51:13). And in Is 40:28 creation is related to תְּבוּנָה.

לְקוֹל תְּהִי. This phrase is generally regarded as corrupt. Weiser proposed (see BHK and BHS) לַתְּהִי קוֹל, "as He gives forth voice"; B. Duhm and W. Rudolph: לְקוֹלוֹ תְּהִי, "auf dessen Befehl sich ergiesst"<sup>224</sup>; the NEB omitted תְּהִי: לְקוֹלוֹ יִתְמָהוֹן, "at the thunder of His voice". The phrase is lacking in the LXX and even Jer 28:15 in the LXX does not help much: φωνῆς ἡχὸς ὕδατος ἐν οὐρανῷ "at (His) voice he makes a sound of water in the heavens".

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224. W. Rudolph, Jeremia, HAT 12, Tübingen, 1968, p. 72.



Crüsemann on the other hand noted that v.12 is similar to Pss 33:7 while v.13 is similar to Ps 29:3. He asked whether the phrase is related to v.12 or to the rest of v.13. V.12 is about creation; v.13 is about the elements of nature (clouds, rain, wind and thunder). It is impossible for **הַמִּוֶּן** to be related to **וַתִּבְרָא** (unless **הַמִּוֶּן** is emended, as in the NEB). According to Crüsemann one word in the original Hebrew text must be missing, and it should be **מִשְׁמִיעַ** (hiphil part.).<sup>225</sup> This connects the phrase smoothly with the rest of v.13a: "when He lets His voice heard, the waters roar in the heavens". As to why the word is missing, Crüsemann assumed that it was caused by haplography through its similarity with **שָׁמַע**.

Crüsemann's suggestion is attractive in the sense that it does not necessitate a change in **הַמִּוֶּן**. However, his explanation about the haplography of **מִשְׁמִיעַ** is weak. Although Weiser's suggestion must explain how the sequence of the words came to be reversed, it also makes possible the retention of **הַמִּוֶּן**. So it is more satisfactory than assuming that there should be a missing word within the phrase.

<b>וְכָל-אָדָם מִדְעָה</b>	Every man is stupid, without knowledge,
<b>וְכָל-צֹרֵךְ מִפֶּסֶל</b>	Every goldsmith is put to shame because of the idol,
<b>כִּי שֶׁקֶר וַסֵּכוּ</b>	for his image is false,
<b>וְלֹא-רוּחַ בָּם</b>	there is no breath in them.
<b>הֵבֶל הֵמָּה מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַיִם</b>	They are worthless, work of mockery;

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225. Crüsemann, op.cit., p. 11 fn 3.

בַּעַת פְּקֻדָּתָם יֵאָבְדוּ at the time of their punishment,  
they shall perish.

לֹא-כִאֲלֵה חֵלֶק יַעֲקֹב Not like this is He who is the portion  
of Jacob,

כִּי-יוֹצֵר הִכָּל הוּא For He is the one who forms all things,  
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁבֵט נַחֲלָתוֹ and Israel is the tribe He inherits,  
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ The Lord of hosts is His name!

Vv.14-16. Crüsemann doubted whether idol polemics are also components of participial hymns. The 'ו in v.14b does not belong to the style of the participial hymn.<sup>226</sup> On the other hand he admitted that in hymns of praise it is common to find idol polemics.<sup>227</sup> He argued that the inclusion of idol polemics within participial hymns is a later development, in which other religions were belittled with the aid of some sort of rationalism. Jer 10:12-16 then was a product of transition from power-claim polemics to rational polemics.<sup>228</sup> In our opinion the insistence of Crüsemann on the formgeschichtliche side of Jer 10:1-16 is too strong. Vv.12-16 have to be seen in the framework of Jer 10:1-16. Why could not vv.14-16 be a continuation of vv.1-10 (11)? R. Davidson has proved that the MT of Jer 10:1-16 has a coherent structure with a triple interweaving of two contrasting but interrelated themes: a/sature on idolatry; b/the hymnic celebration of the power and

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226. Crüsemann, loc.cit.

227. Following Gunkel, Pss. 115:4-8; 135:15-18; 96:5, Crüsemann, op.cit., p. 113 fn.1.

228. i b i d., pp. 113-114.



of Yahweh.<sup>229</sup>

Although idol parody (or other parts of an aniconic cult) may be regarded as an advance towards rationality in Israelite religion, it has to be said that the postulates behind the prohibition of images cannot be fully ascertained.<sup>230</sup> The theology behind the idol parodies is probably more a conscious and polemic negation of ascriptions of creative power to images and their gods. In a sense, it could be said that the parodies are negative participial hymns.<sup>231</sup>

From these considerations we may conclude that idol parody and hymnic celebration of Yahweh are two themes that belong together in Jer 10:12-16. Later on, in discussing the problems of date and authenticity of Jer 10:1-16 we shall return to these two themes. But let us now reflect on what we have said above in section A, that we do not consider convincing the attempt to prove a relationship between prohibition of images and reference to nature as creation.<sup>232</sup>

229. R. Davidson, "Jeremiah X 1-16", TGUOS 25 (1973-1974), pp. 41-58. Thus vv. 205, 8-9, 14-15 are satires on idolatry, while 6-7, 10, 12-13 and 16 are hymnic celebrations. M. Margalit presents a more elaborate scheme, "Jeremiah x 1-16: A Re-examination" VT 30 (1980), pp. 295-308:

- I. The weakness of idol-gods as against the power of Y.
  - II. The "dead" gods as against Y. the "living" god.
  - III. Non-creating gods as against Y. the creator-god.
  - IV. Worshippers of idol-gods as against worshippers of Y.
- The problem of the singular pronominal suffix in v.14 (יְהוָה) can be solved by following the proposal in BHK and BHS to change it into יְהוָה.

230. R.P. Carroll, "The aniconic God and the Cult of Images", pp.62,64.

231. W.M.W. Roth, "For Life, He appeals to death (Wis 13:18), A study of Old Testament idol parodies", CBQ 37, (1975), p. 31.

232. See p. 30 above.



In the OT Yahweh could not be pictured in images, but He could be seen in natural phenomena. Against von Rad,<sup>233</sup> we hold that the problem behind the prohibition of images is not different world-views. Although there is an impression that the "dead" gods (Margaliot) are regarded as mere objects,<sup>234</sup> the images are not prohibited because they are made of elements of nature and as such belong to the created world, while Yahweh is the Creator and as such not part of the created world, but because Yahweh is and must be kept incomparable. This principle of being different for its own sake leads to a failure of understanding and false hermeneutics of foreign ways of worship.<sup>235</sup>

b/ Problems of date and provenance of Jer 10:1-16.

Although a considerable number of scholars have begun to think differently, the main consensus on Jer 10:1-16 is still that it is not an authentic part of the messages of Jeremiah, and that its origin must be sought in the exilic-post exilic period. Several reasons are put forward:

1/ v.11 is in Aramaic, and as such must be late. Margaliot agrees with this, but nevertheless holds that Jeremiah could be the author of this passage. The lengthy period of Jeremiah's function as a prophet must be taken into account. It is possible that the Israelite exiles in Mesopotamia were speaking in Aramaic and that Jeremiah used this language to make sure that his message got through.<sup>236</sup> J.A. van Selms argued that the passage is concerned

233. See p. 30 fn 44 above.

234. But see also Jer 1-:15. If they are mere objects, why is it necessary to punish them?

235. Carroll, op.cit., p. 54.

236. Margaliot, op.cit., p. 307.

with exiles from the former northern kingdom in Judea. Jer 2:1-3:9 and 3:6-4:4 refer to the northern kingdom. In 2 Kings 17:6 and 2 Kings 18:26 there are references to Aramaic, and following D. Winton Thomas, van Selms thinks that people in the northern kingdom had begun to speak Aramaic even before the kingdom disappeared.<sup>237</sup> The verse itself is problematic. Who is mean by "them"? It could be the Aramaic speaking partners who were involved in polemics with the exiles. The verse is in Aramaic because whoever uttered this phrase intended it to be communicated to the Aramaic speaking partners.<sup>238</sup> It could also be that v.11 is a later addition.<sup>239</sup> On the other hand "them" could also be the idols. The verse then is intended for the idols, which are expected to understand Aramaic.<sup>240</sup> The problem here is that even the introduction is in Aramaic, a thing which we do not expect if the verse is intended to be redelivered to the Aramaic speaking people or idols. Snell suggested that "an over-enthusiastic" traditor may have put the beginning in Aramaic too. van Selms is not sure on this. That is why he does not want to defend the authenticity of this verse by tooth and claw. But even if v.11 is possibly a later addition, it does not necessarily mean that Jer 10:1-16 is also late. Besides, the context of v.11 is in total harmony with and relevant to the rest of this passage. We tend to accept that this passage is concerned with the exiles from the north in Judea.

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237. J.A. van Selms, Jeremia, deel I, Nijkerk, 1972, pp. 166-67.

238. Margaliot, op.cit., p. 302.

239. P. Ackroyd, "Jeremiah x.1-16", JTS (new series) XIV (1963), pp. 385-390.

240. D.C. Snell, "Why is there Aramaic in the Bible?", JSOT 18 (1980), pp. 32-51.



2/ Different and shorter arrangement of this passage in the LXX. Here the order of the verses are 1-4, 9, 5b with 6-8 and 10 of the MT omitted. The text from Qumran, 4QJer<sup>b</sup> supports in the main the LXX.<sup>241</sup> However, both the evidence of the LXX and 4QJer<sup>b</sup> could not be used to support the supposed inauthenticity of the MT passage. As we have seen above, the MT has a structural integrity. It is not always true that a shorter version is nearer to the original than a longer one. A shorter version can also imply that the translator had abridged or passed over a few verses because he regarded the original version as too long.

3/ The passage is reminiscent of DI. However, our examination of 10:12-16 has proved that it is close to the liturgical traditions in the Psalter. Davidson has done a very detailed study of the vocabulary of Jer 10:1-16.<sup>242</sup> We pick up a few examples he has shown from vv.1-16 to prove that actually the whole of Jer 10:1-16 is closer to the psalms than DI:

- The phrase **וְכָל הַגּוֹיִם** (v.2) appears only here in the OT. DI never used **וְכָל** in association with 'the nations' nor to describe the apostasy of his people. This is precisely the case in Jer 2:23; 18:15.
- The phrase **מְעַשֵּׂת הַשְּׁחִיָּה** (v.2) is never used in Is 40-55.
- The combination of 'work of the hands of....' (vv.3,9) is lacking in Is. 40-55 but frequent in the Psalms (115:4; 135:15).
- The phrase **לֹא יִבְרָכָה** (v.5) **וְכָל** is never used by DI in the context of idolatry, but again is found in that context in Ps. 115:5; 135:16.

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241. For this see Davidson, op.cit., p. 41

242. i b i d., pp. 43-52.



- The formula **מֵאֵין כְּמוֹךְ יְהוָה גְּדוֹל אֶתָּה** (v.6) is closer to that in Pss 86:8; 89:9 and 113:5 than DI.

- The title of God as **מֶלֶךְ הַגּוֹיִם** (v.7) is nowhere found in DI but its closest parallel can be seen in Ps 47:3, 8, 9.

Davidson also shows that the supposed connection between Jer 10:4 and Is 40:20 is more evident in traditional English versions (e.g. AV, RSV) than in the Hebrew text.<sup>243</sup> The hapax legomena in this passage are actually sufficient to doubt the consensus that Jer 10:1-16 is reminiscent of DI.<sup>244</sup>

4/ The appropriate background of the idol parodies must be sought in the exilic-post exilic period. Margaliot for instance, defended his view of Mesopotamia as background for this Jeremianic passage by arguing that idol polemics are specifically pointed against Mesopotamian (mainly Babylonian), but not Canaanite idolatry. Attacks against Canaanite worship and religion are rather of different character. They are not concerned with the claim of who is behind the powers which hold the creation.<sup>245</sup> As we have seen above Crüsemann holds for a transitional period. He does not specify which, but apparently he meant the period after Jeremiah but before DI. On the other hand van Selms, following Alt, opts for a pre-exilic Judean context. The act of pilgrimage to the central sanctuary included the ritual of casting out divine images. This is accompanied by fierce polemics against them. So it is possible that idol polemics could have a pre-exilic date. What shall we say to these considerations?

243. i b i d., p. 45.

244. They are **יְהוָה הַגִּיִם** (v.2), **יְהוָה הַגִּיִם** (v.4), **יְהוָה הַגִּיִם** (v.5), **יְהוָה הַגִּיִם** (v.8), **יְהוָה הַגִּיִם** (v.15)

245. Margaliot, op.cit., pp. 300-301.

There is something to be said in Margalio's argument that the object of the polemical attacks is not Canaanite idolatry because the latter have nothing to do with the notion of creation. However, beside fertility cults there are also Canaanite astral cults, which indeed are referred to in Jeremiah and the rest of the OT (Jer 7:17; 8:2; 44:16-19; 2 Kings 17-16). These astral cults do not have to imply astrological practices, but there are indications that they were connected with fertility.<sup>246</sup> Even if they were connected with fertility the problem is still not clear; the connection with fertility does not necessarily mean connection with creation. If so, what then is the reason for the reference to Yahweh as Creator and the idol parody in this passage? We are still considering a pre-exilic date for the phenomenon of idol parody. From our examination of Jer 5 it is clear that Jeremiah was familiar with a narrative of creation similar to that in Genesis. We have also seen that idol parody could be as early as in the time of Isaiah (Is 17:7), which makes van Selms' proposal more and more attractive. The employment of creation concept and idol parody then are not particularly connected with practices of fertility or astral cults (although they could form the side lines of the struggle as in Amos), but with the theme of Yahweh's incomparability (vv.6-8, 10) and the theme of judgement against the people (vv. 17-25). This connection is acknowledged by C.J. Labuschagne in his study

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246. J.W. McKay, Religion in Judah under the Assyrians, London, 1973, pp. 46-48. The Babylonian Ishtar is worshipped as the Queen of Heaven. On the whole she is an astral deity, but sometimes she is also regarded as a goddess of fertility. The Palestinian Anat on the other hand is a fertility goddess, but sometimes she is also regarded as an astral deity.



of references to Yahweh's incomparability in the OT.<sup>247</sup> But he regarded the incomparability of Yahweh as having to do with His activity in history and therefore as the primary motive in this passage. Yahweh's activity as Creator is only a secondary motive, an additional proof of Yahweh's miraculous intervention in history.<sup>248</sup> However, Labuschagne is not very consistent when later on he said that the emphasis on Yahweh as Creator of all things (v.16), which according to him is intended as a contrast with the idols. So he wrote: "Yahweh is not like these, 'created', but is Himself the Creator".<sup>249</sup> Earlier we have put forward our opinion that the contrasting of Yahweh as Creator and the parody of idols have nothing to do with the latter being part of creation (i.e. created). True, the comparison is between Yahweh as Creator and the idols as nothing (as not-creators), but it is not the same thing as saying that the comparison is between the Creator and creation. There is no apparent logical reason for the consideration of the idols as not-creators except as a possible practical mean to maintain the incomparability of Yahweh.

Against Labuschagne we hold that in Jer 10:1-16 there is no emphasis on history of Heilsgeschichte.<sup>250</sup> Yahweh's might as Creator can not be regarded as a secondary motive in the theme of His incomparability. What is the purpose and who is the author of this passage?

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247. C.J. Labuschagne, The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament, Leiden, 1966.

248. i b i d., pp. 108-109. 1 Sam 2:8; Ps 89:;Of and Is 40:18,25 are taken as parallels of this passage.

249. i b i d., p. 111.

250. Cf. Davidson, op.cit., p. 55.



In Jer 10:22 there is reference to the enemy of the north. Commentators agreed that the 'enemy from the north' (Jer 4:6; 6:1, 22), a nation from 'far-away land' (Jer 4:16 and 5:15) can not be identified.<sup>251</sup> Like many other predictions here too, it must be said that there is a certain vagueness left in Jeremiah's prediction. What is important is not the identification of the enemy, but that Jeremiah is sure of a coming destruction and that this destruction is the doing of no other but Israel's God Himself.<sup>252</sup>

If there are no strong reasons to regard Jer 10:12-16 as secondary to the whole chapter then its relationship with the rest of the passage must be clarified. In our opinion here we have something which is not very different from what we have discovered in Amos, namely, the prophetic reversal of creation in hymnic passages (here Jer 1-:12-16) from a context of salvation to that of judgement as a justification for Yahweh. Then the statement in v.16, "not like this is the portion of Jacob", which originally could imply something of an asset for the people of Israel, now has a different meaning; they have behaved not as they ought to behave. The main objection to this

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251. We do not follow the hypothesis of a Scythian invasion. There is a future element in the prediction, although it might be too far-fetched to suggest an eschatological destruction (A. Welch). B.S. Childs' opinion of "the enemy of the north" as having a mythological character, "The Enemy of the North and the Chaos Tradition", JBL 76 (1959), pp. 187-98, could be accepted only in the sense that 'the north' is the same as in the Zion tradition, namely the divine seat. It gives weight to the opinion that Jeremiah is thinking of a divine cause of destruction. However, we must be open to the possibility that Jeremiah or others who heard his message later on came to see the Chaldeans as fulfilling the prediction, see Rudolph, op.cit., pp. v, 41-43.

252. J.H. Gailey, jr., "The Sword and the Heart", Int IX,3 (1955) p. 299.

prophetic reversal of creation in Jer 10:12-16 could be the exhortatory language in the beginning of the chapter. The main intention of this chapter could be exhortation to the people not to disregard the exclusive claim of Yahweh upon them. It must be said that Jer 10:1-15 contains some exhortatory undertones. On the other hand, the idol parody could imply that Israel is punished precisely because of idolatry. There are many signs of the dialectic in a prophetic message of judgement in the book of Jeremiah (4:14; 6:8; 5:1, 10b), but the core of its message remains stronger: "The Lord has rejected them" (6:30). Vv. 17-21 refer to the impact and consequences of v.22, and v. 23-24 give a glimpse of the inner struggle inside the carrier of this catastrophic message. While acknowledging the divine justice, the messenger, who identified himself wholly with his people, pleads with God not to act outside the law of retribution. The style and language of 12-16 is close to the doxologies in the book of Amos, up to the closing refrain: "The Lord of Hosts is His name!" It is plausible that as with the doxologies, the source of Jer 10:12-16 is also the liturgical traditions. The fact that it is repeated in Jer 51:15-19 may prove that the passage was regarded as part of the Jeremiah tradition at the time of the writing of Jer 51.<sup>253</sup> But it may also be that later on the same liturgical tradition was used against the enemy of Israel (here Babylon), or that the repetition in Jer 51 is the result of a prophetic re-reversal of the object of judgement from the people to the enemy of the people, as against

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253. Labuschagne, op.cit., p. 67



the former phenomenon of reversing the object of judgement from the enemy of the people to the people themselves.<sup>254</sup> Probably this is not very different from what Labuschagne intended above, but in our opinion it is not clear whether "Jeremiah tradition" means Jeremiah's own original thinkings or writings which later on came to be used for other occasions or certain borrowings from tradition developed by Jeremiah for his purposes but later on was used for different purposes.

Could we say now that the author of Jer 10:1-25 is Jeremiah? As we have seen above, Margaliot opted for Jeremiah, but the date is placed by him at the exilic period. Labuschagne on the other hand carefully argued for the Jeremian authorship in the pre-exilic period.<sup>255</sup> According to him there is nothing in the pericope which is inconsistent with Jeremiah's line of thought. The gist of the passage must be traced back to Jeremiah. In its present form the pericope is a unit, so much that we may assume that Jeremiah himself uttered the prayer and the confession at some cultic occasion.<sup>256</sup> Labuschagne's argument is tempting, but there is one considerable factor which decides against the possibility of a Jeremian authorship. The hapax legomena in Jer 10:1-16 are more or less evenly distributed across verses which appear solely in the MT tradition and in the tradition common to both the MT and the LXX. This makes it unlikely that the passage comes from Jeremiah or even a close associate of him. Its origin

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254. Notice the omission of 'Israel' in Jer 51:19. The inclusion of this word in the modern English renderings (RSV, GNB and NEB) is unjustifiable.

255. Labuschagne, op.cit., p. 68.

256. loc.cit. van Selms and Ackroyd also referred to this cultic background.



may lie in the prophetic movement in Jeremiah's day.<sup>257</sup> This possibility however is not an answer to the question of who placed Jer 10:1-16 in the book of Jeremiah. But whoever he may be, he succeeded in making Jer 10:1-16 an integral part of Jeremiah's message.

## 8.2 Jeremiah and the order of nature.

In the book of Jeremiah there are several passages which contain references to creation and natural entities. They are Jer 5:20-29; 27:5-7; 31:35-37; 32:17-18, 33. There is evidence that Jeremiah knew about the order of nature (Jer 8:7; 18:14). So we shall examine whether the references to natural entities in these passages are related to the concept of creation through the order of nature.

### 8.2.1. Jer 5:20-29

הגידו זאת בביית יעקב	Declare this in the house of Jacob,
והשמיעוה ביהודה	proclaim it in Judah;
שמעו-נא זאת עם סכל ואין להם עינים	Listen (to) this, o, foolish and senseless people,
ולא יראו	who have eyes but see nothing,

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257. Davidson, *op.cit.*, pp. 55-56. The most recent work on Jer 10:1-16 by M.E. Andrew, "The Authorship of Jer 10:1-16", ZAW 94/1 (1982), pp. 128-30, still holds to an exilic date. According to Andrew the warning against the way of the nations in 10:2-3 and the exhortation in v.5 not to be afraid of their idols make more sense in the exilic situation where the Israelites were defeated by a people more powerful or more cultured than they were. This view can only stand if it can be proved that the Israelite religion in the pre-exilic period was such a cohesive and uniform entity that the dangers involved in encounter with other religions were only felt at the exile. But the strongest objection to Andrew is obviously the vocabulary of Jer 10:1-16.

אָזניִם לֵהֶם וְלֹא שִׁמְעוּ who have ears but hear nothing.

הֲאֵינִי לֹא-תִירָאוּ Should you not fear me?

יְהוָה - אָמַר says the Lord.

אִם מִפְּנֵי לֹא תִחִילוּ Should you not tremble before me,

אֲשֶׁר-שָׁמַתִּי חוּל גְּבוּל לֵים who set sand as a boundary to the sea,

חֶק-עוֹלָם fixed for all time,

וְלֹא יַעֲבֹרָהּ which it can not pass?

וַיִּתְּגַשֵּׁשׁ Though its waves toss,

וְלֹא יוֹכֵלוּ they can not prevail,

וְהֵמוּ גִלְיוֹ though they roar,

וְלֹא יַעֲבֹרָהּ they can not pass.

The emphasis here is on the might of Yahweh over the waters of the sea. The barrier of sand will hold forever as part of the order of nature. The same picture can also be found in Job 38:8-11. 'bars' and 'doors' have been set for the sea. Once for all the sea is confined to its limit by Yahweh's mighty command. In Ps 104:5-9 we are told how the sea came to be confined within its present limit. In the beginning the deep covered the earth like garment.<sup>258</sup> Then God attacked the waters. They went up the mountains, they went down the valleys.<sup>259</sup> It is not exactly clear why in v.8 the waters went up the mountains, while in v.6 they are said as standing above the mountains.<sup>260</sup> Nevertheless it is

258. MT: יְהִי; LXX: "his covering (יְהִי); T: "you covered it (fem.)". The context suggests יְהִי, see R.J. Clifford, "A note on Ps 104:5-9," JBL 100/1(1981), pp. 87-89.

259. The suffixes are in the plural, and they point to the waters as subject.

260. H-J. Kraus attempted a natural explanation, Psalmen II, BKAT XV/2, 1972, Neukirchen-Vluyn, p. 711. First the waters went over the mountain-summits, then they went down to the valleys. Clifford, op.cit., p.80 argued that the valleys point to the underworld (cf. Ps 107:26), where the waters are. This is of course according to the cosmology of the ancient Near East. As how to explain v.8, Clifford resorted to metaphor. The waters are to be regarded as warriors. Like an army in panic they flee over the hill and dale. Mountain and valley are merism showing the wide range of their flight



obvious that they are on their way to their eternal consignment. (v.9). The bounded sea was made to serve the order of nature, which is further described in vv.10ff. Other references in the OT to the limitation of the sea can be found in Gen 1:9, 10; Pss 148:4-6.

The parallel with Job and several traits in Jer 5:20ff, namely, the didactic introduction of the speech: "Listen (to) this.....", albeit adopted to prophetic form of speech **וְאִם-יְהוָה**, the address to the audience as 'foolish', 'senseless', 'rebellious' and 'stubborn', caused Hermisson to deny its Jeremianic context. He placed it within the context of wisdom (vv.20-25).<sup>261</sup> However it is also possible that the prophet himself borrowed elements from the wisdom tradition.<sup>262</sup> It is part of Israel's belief that the division between land and sea expresses the merciful powers of Yahweh. This, in the view of the prophet naturally leads to reverence or fear of the Creator. But the facts of everyday life are different. The people have no fear of Yahweh. This is why the people are blamed as those who have eyes but do not see and those who have ears but do not hear.

**וְלֹעַם הָזֶה הָיָה לֵב סוֹרֵר וְסוֹרֵרָה** But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart,

**סָרוּ וַיֵּלֶכוּ** they have turned aside and gone away.

**וְלֹא-אָמְרוּ בְּלִבָּם** They do not say in their hearts:

**נִירָא נָא אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ** Let us fear Yahweh our God, who gives

**הַנָּתַן גֶּשֶׁם וִירֵה וּמַלְקוֹשׁ כְּעֵתוֹ** who gives rain and early rain and late rain in season,

**שְׁבָעוֹת חֲקוֹת קִצִּיר יִשְׁמְרֵנוּ** fixed weeks for harvest He keeps for us.

**עוֹנוֹתֶיכֶם הָטוּ-אֵלַי** Your sins have turned this away,

261. Hermisson, "Creation Theology in Wisdom", Israelite Wisdom, p. 53. On the other hand only vv.26-28,29 were regarded by Morgan as belonging to Wisdom, see "Wisdom and the Prophets", Studia Biblica 1978:I, p. 230.

262. Cf. Rudolph, op.cit., p. 41. "Dass die Worte von Jeremia stammen, ist nicht zu bezweifeln".



וְהַטְּאוּ אֶת צְדִיקְךָ וְנִסְתַּחֲרֶנּוּ and your wrongdoings have kept the  
 מִטוֹב good from you!

Vv. 23-25. "They have turned aside and gone away". Ehrlich proposed to emend וַיִּלְכוּ to וַיִּכְלֹו, which occurs in v.22b. This proposal is supported by Rudolph.<sup>263</sup> According to them the translation ought to be: "they have turned aside and prevail". There is much to be said in favour of this proposal. The emendation creates a vivid comparison between the futile attempts of the sea to prevail over its limit and the successful attempt of man to prevail in his stubbornness. While even the raging sea, the enemy of man, is following the order of nature, man himself persists in defying the order of nature and contends to stay outside the mercy of the Creator. On the other hand the MT makes sense. Although Ehrlich's proposal is attractive we tend to retain the MT.

A second picture is given as a reason to fear Yahweh, namely the picture of Him as the One who controls the seasons and provides the harvest. In taking up the theme of Yahweh as a God of fertility, Jeremiah's message has affinity with both Amos and Hosea.

There is evidence that Jeremiah was dealing with problems of a long drought (Jer 14:1ff). V.25 then can be regarded as a kind of theodicy.<sup>264</sup> What caused the rupture in the order of nature? Why is there no rain? The answer is: your sins.

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263. i b i d., p. 40. According to him the MT of v.23b is "matt".

264. i b i d., p. 41.

$\text{אֵלֶּה}$  and  $\text{הַטּוֹב}$  are to be related to the understanding of the orderliness of creation (cf. Gen 1:31).

The affinities of this passage to the Genesis narrative are striking.

V.22 is reminiscent of Gen 1:9, 10; v.24 of Gen 8:22, v.1ff of Gen 18:16-33.<sup>265</sup>

Vv. 26-29 give an elaborate description of the sins and the consequences which have to be faced by the sinners.

V.26. The phrase  $\text{יְשׁוּרֵי כְּשֵׁף יְקוֹשִׁים}$  is problematic.  $\text{יְשׁוּרֵי}$  has been translated as "they watch", from  $\text{שׁוּר}$ , "to see" (Kimhi). But it is also understood as a derivation from  $\text{יָשָׁר}$ , "to be upright" (Jerome).  $\text{כְּשֵׁף}$  is inf. cons. gal with the prep.  $\text{כִּי}$  from  $\text{שָׁכַח}$ , "cease" or "set". It has also been argued that  $\text{כְּשֵׁף}$  ought to be  $\text{כֶּשֶׁף}$ , from  $\text{שֵׁף}$  which in Num 33:55 (plural) means "thorns".  $\text{יְקוֹשִׁים}$  is "fowlers", but also "snares". It goes without saying that the different meanings of the words have caused a wide variety of proposals for the rendering of the phrase. Rudolph proposed  $\text{יְשָׁרְכוּ שְׂבָכִים (ה)}$   $\text{יְקוֹשִׁים}$ , "die das Netz Knüpfen, wie Vogelsteller Fallen stellen".<sup>266</sup> He claimed that  $\text{יְשָׁרְכוּ שְׂבָכִים (ה)}$  is derived from Aquila and Symmachus while  $\text{כִּי יְקוֹשִׁים}$  followed the V. He put his suggestion in both BHK and BHS. . However it must be said that Rudolph's suggestion appears to be too extensive. van Selms reads  $\text{כְּשֵׁף}$ , "like a thorn".  $\text{יְשׁוּרֵי}$  is emended to  $\text{יָשָׁר}$ , which according to him could also mean "best". Mic 7:4 is taken as comparison.<sup>267</sup> But as J.A. Emerton rightly

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265. van Selms, op.cit., p. 110.

266. Rudolph, op.cit., p. 40.

267. van Selms, op.cit., p. 106.



noted, the passage in Mic 7:4 begins with <sup>268</sup> טוֹבִים . It is the context of Mic 7:4 which gives יִשָּׁר the meaning of "best". Emerton himself proposed to see שֹׁר as שֹׁר . In Lam 2:6 there is a word שֹׁר , which is third pers. masc. sing. with suffix from שוֹר , "booth, pavilion". It is presumably related to סוּר , "thicket, shelter" (Pss 10:9; 26:5; 76:3; Job 38:40 - the last verse has the fem. סִפָּה<sup>269</sup> . כִּשְׁר then can be translated as "as in a hide". יְקוֹשִׁים can be seen as cons., and it would go with יְשׁוֹר (or plural יְשׁוּרוֹ).

No proposal seems to be without an element of speculation. But compared with the others, Emerton's suggestion is the most satisfactory. We use his rendering here.

כִּי-נִמְצְאוּ בְּעַמִּי רָשָׁעִים For wicked men are found among my people,  
 יְשׁוֹר כִּשְׁר יְקוֹשִׁים they watch, as in a fowler's hide,  
 הִצִּיבוּ חֲשִׁית אֲנָשִׁים they set a trap, they catch men.  
 לִכְרוֹ

The object of blame is no longer the people as a whole, but a group of wicked men among the people who lured and trapped them. The term "this people" (v.23a) gives place to "my people" (v.26a). From the context of the following verses we can assume that these wicked men used cunning and deceit to make themselves prosper at the cost of others.

כְּכֹלֵב מְלֵא עוֹף Like a cage full of birds,  
 כֵּן בְּתֵיהֶם so are their houses,  
 מְלֵאִים חֲרִמָּה full of treachery.  
 עַל-כֵּן גָּדְלוּ וַיַּעֲשִׂירוּ Therefore they become great and rich,  
 שָׂמְנוּ וַיִּשְׂתִּנוּ they have become fat and well-fed.

268. J.A. Emerton, "Notes on some problems in Jeremiah v.26", Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles, A. Caquot - M. Delcor, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1981, pp. 125-33.

269. See also KBH, p. 255.



גם עברו דברי-גרע They even pass (beyond) the things of evil;

דין לא-דנו they judge with no justice,  
 דין יתום ויז ליחן the case of the orphan they disregard,  
 ומשפט אביונים and the rights of the poor they do not  
 לא משפט render.

Vv. 27-28. Such is the wickedness of the group of people that they knew no bounds in committing crime. They become prosperous and do not care about the orphans and the needy. In Pss 82:3; 146:9 the oppression of the orphans and the needy is against the wish of Yahweh, the judge of the earth. The context of these passages from the Psalter is of creation. Prov 14:31 and 17:5 refer to the mockery of the poor as an insult to the Maker. The question of the right of the orphans and the poor is really the question of God's justice and the order of the world.<sup>270</sup> The wicked among the people then are transgressing the order of the world.

העל-אלה לא-אפקר Shall I not punish them for these things?

יא - יהוה says the Lord;

אם כגוי אשר-הצח and shall I not give retribution  
 לא תתןקם ופשו on a nation such as this?

For this kind of transgression God as a just God cannot but react according to the law of retribution. But why retribution to the whole nation? Is it because this group of wicked men are the pillars of the nation (prophets and priests, vv.30-31; 6:13; the rulers - 2:8)? Or is this problem created by the possibility that the reference to the wicked among the people might be a redactional insertion? There is no clear answer to

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270. Cf. H.H. Schmid, Wesen und Geschichte der Weisheit, Berlin, 1966, pp. 156-64.

this because other passages point out that Jeremiah is on the whole sceptical about the possibility of finding a just man. From the least to the greatest, all are greedy (6:13). Jer 5:1-5 on the other hand contains Jeremiah's consideration of the poor:

Then I said, "These are only the poor, they have no sense" (v.4a).

They are 'merely' ignorant compared with their leaders. But in the end Jeremiah regarded the whole nation as transgressors.

## 8.2.2. Jer 27:5-7.

This passage is a theological interpretation of the history of the world at the time of Jeremiah. The prophet was asked by Yahweh to wear a symbolic yoke on his neck and send the word of God to the rulers of the world. Earlier in Is 37:16 we have seen how God was regarded as ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth because it is He who made heaven and earth. But there this conviction was used for the benefit of the people. Yahweh is the ruler of all nations, that is why He would help His people in breaking up the Assyrian threat. Here however there is no plea for God to help His people and nowhere else is there any mention of God's action against other nations for the sake of Israel. Nebuchadnezzar's triumph everywhere is recognized as God's will. Moreover he acts as Yahweh's servant. In this case his function is similar to Cyrus in DI. The difference between them is that Cyrus is called the anointed of Yahweh and that the character of his task is that of salvation. Here Nebuchadnezzar brings judgement to the people of God as Yahweh's own servant. Yahweh can do this incredible thing because He is the Creator of everything that is and to whom all power belongs. Because of this, every nation in the world (including Judah) should serve Him. In Jer 27:5-7 the concept of creation is used precisely to smother any hope Judah still has of the possibility of salvation. From now on the people have to consider, even to accept, that salvation would lie in one's ability to bear suffering, till the time comes, when God will uplift it from their shoulders. Jeremiah's insight on the course of history of the world later on proved to be true, in contrast to the optimistic prediction of Hananiah, who served at the court of Zedekiah (Jer 28). Here the concept of creation is operative within the context of judgement.



8.2.3 Jer 31:35-37.

כה אמר יהוה Thus says the Lord,  
 נתן שמש לאור יומם who gives the sun for light by day,  
 חקת ירח and the fixed order of the moon,  
 וכוכבים לאור לילה and the stars for light by night;  
 רגע הים ויהמו גליו who stirs the sea so its waves roar,  
 יהוה צבאות שמו The Lord of Hosts is His name!

V.35. This verse shows the characteristics of a participial hymn. There are participial verbs, reference to natural entities, and the refrain  
 יהוה צבאות שמו. V.35c is identical to Is 51:15, which we have discussed above.<sup>271</sup> The participial hymns were taken over before the exilic period, so there is no reason to think that v.35 is a later addition. There is also no reason to deny v.35 to Jeremiah. As we have seen in Jer 5:22ff, the prophet knew about the order of nature and could have been thinking with the framework of creation theology in his mind. Here God is emphasized as He who controls and regulates the orbit of the sun, the moon and the stars. He is also controlling the waves of the sea.

אם-ימשו החקים האלה If this fixed order departs from my  
 מלפני sight,  
 נאם-יהוה says the Lord,  
 גם זרע ישראל only then shall the seeds of Isreal  
 ישתו מהיות גוי cease to be a nation  
 לפני כל-הימים in my sight forever.  
 כה אמר יהוה Thus says the Lord,  
 אם-ימדו שמים מלמעלה if the heavens above can be measured,  
 ויחקרו מוסדי-ארץ and the foundations of the earth can  
 למטה be fathomed,

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271. See above, pp. 219-220.

גם-אני אמצא ככל- only then shall I reject all the seeds  
 זרע ישראל of Israel,  
 על-כל-אשר עשו for all that they have done;  
 נאם-יהוה says the Lord.

Vv.36-37. Rudolph called this passage "Die Unverbruchlichkeit des Heils".<sup>272</sup> Its content is similar to the promise of Yahweh to Noah in Gen 9 and the reference to this Noahite promise in Is 54. The permanent character of creation becomes the proof of Yahweh's faithfulness to Israel and her descendants. In v.37 the tone is similar to the rhetorical questions in Is 40. There the rhetorical questions function to emphasise the mysterious ways of Yahweh who had brought His people into exile and is about to bring them out again from their place of exile through the victories of an alien ruler. Here the same mysterious ways of Yahweh are expressed again. Nobody can possibly measure the width of the heavens and the depth of the foundations of the earth. So nobody has the right to question why Yahweh keeps His faithfulness to His people, no matter what they have done. As in DI, we can see that for Jeremiah too, creation is a Heilsbegriff.

Many commentators pass over this passage in silence. It may be that they do not see any difficulty in it and consider the passage as "self-explanatory".<sup>273</sup> But the occurrences of the term  $\text{יִקְוֶה}$ , especially with the seemingly deliberate intention in the MT to stress that the  $\text{יִקְוֶה}$  are that which has something to do with the moon and the stars,<sup>274</sup> indicate that we are dealing here with a vision of an autonomous articulated universe of the world order. von Rad has denied this in his book on wisdom in Israel. According to him one can in no sense speak of a world

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272. Rudolph, op.cit., p. 204.

273. As in E.W. Nicholson, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, chapters 26-52, Cambridge, 1975, p. 72.



order as really existing between God and man. There is a dialectic in the OT between valid rules and ad hoc divine action. The references to

אִפְּנ in Jer 31:35 and 33:25 are the only places where this dialectic is resolved: the orders actually appear as something inherent in creation.<sup>27</sup> Of course v.35 echoes the creation narrative concerning the moon and the stars in Gen 1 and there is a parallel between this passage and Gen 8:22. In a sense von Rad is right when he says that in Jer 31:35 and 33:25 the orders are something inherent in creation. But rather than an exception, they are evidences from which we can talk about world order in the OT. There is no dialectic between God's action and valid autonomous rules in the OT.

On the other hand, W. Eichrodt noticed that from the time of Jeremiah onwards, a remarkable openness to regularity in the order of nature is discernible. The prophet already saw the divine cosmic order as possessing such an autonomy that not only can he apply to it the same word as is used for the statutes of the Israelite covenant order (as in Jer 33:20), but he even contrasts it as a self-contained reality with the standards by which the world of man are governed and claims it as a guarantee that the divine sovereignty will also be implanted in history.<sup>276</sup> However, even Eichrodt was not totally free from the predominant view in the theology of the OT at his time, which drew a sharp distinction between the will of God as expressed in the laws of the OT and the 'natural laws' of its environment. So in the end, he made a comparison between the divine will in the Genesis story of the Flood and the "baseless action" of the gods in the Babylonian sagas of the Flood, which now we know is not baseless at all.<sup>277</sup>

274. V35c. Many regarded the אִפְּנ here as a superfluous addition.

275. G. von Rad, Wisdom in Israel, p. 107.

276. W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, II, p. 157.

277. See section A above, p. 49 fn 96.



And although he acknowledged that reference to the order of nature could be as early as Jeremiah, he did not ask whether this is Jeremiah's own thinking or whether there were sources of tradition upon which the prophet relied. Pss 89, 104, 136, 148 all have the same idea of regularity in nature, and it is possible that the liturgical tradition is also behind Jeremiah's thinking. The context of vv. 35-37 is about hope and so is that of the psalms above. In Jer 5 however we have seen that disregard of this orderliness of nature means disregard of the Creator. There Jeremiah pointed out that Israel is to be punished because of this. Without hesitation Jeremiah did what Amos has done before: he reversed the traditional understanding of creation as a source of hope for Israel to become the very reason for her judgement. Chaos has taken hold, and as such must be destroyed. On the other hand the execution of divine judgement does not mean that the world order has ended. It must continue. The punishment of Israel does not mean the end of creation. Indeed, the punishment cannot take place without the continuation of creation. To be sure Jeremiah described pictures of devastation in chaos vocabulary as in Jer 4:23f. But as we have seen above, the tension between creation and chaos never lapses. Chaos is never fully triumphant. God is a just God and follows the law of retribution. But even when in His freedom He acts outside the orders of the world He never disposes of His creation. It is against His nature as Creator. This is why the fact of creation is so important to the ancient Israelites. The constancy of nature reflects the faithfulness of their just God (vv.35-36). This is not the result of a casual observation of the laws of nature in a more or less scientific-objective way, although it must be said that the ancient Israelite's understanding of natural entities (e.g. mountains, rivers, clouds) is not categorically different from ours nowadays. People are urged to discern some orderliness in creation, but at the same time it is beyond the

grasp of human understanding (v.37). Because God is a just God, His people must accept His punishment (cf. Jer 10:24), but precisely because He is a just God, the punishment shall not last forever. The fact of creation will last longer than the time of punishment.

8.2.4. Jer 32:17-18.

אֵלֹהֵי אֲדָנִי יְהוָה	Ah, Lord God,
אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ	it is you who has made the heavens and the earth
בְּכֹחַךְ הַגָּדוֹל וּבִזְרְעֶךָ הַנְּטוּיָה	by your great power and by your outstretched arm;
לֹא יִפְלֹא מִמֶּךָ כָּל-דָּבָר עָשָׂה חֶסֶד לְאַלְפִים	nothing is too miraculous to you; who has shown steadfast love to thousands,
וּמִשְׁלָם עוֹן אֲבוֹתַי	but visit the guilt of the fathers
אֵל-חֵיק בְּנֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם	to their children after them;
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר	o great and might God,
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ	the Lord of Hosts is His name!

בְּכֹחַךְ הַגָּדוֹל. Jeremiah often used the theme of Yahweh's power

within the context of creation. In addition to this passage also occurs in Jer 10:12ff and 27:5-6 (in the latter it appears in the same formulation as in Jer 32:17, "by your great power and by your outstretched arm").

"by your outstretched arm". Jer 32:31 refers to the historical event of the deliverance from Egypt which was caused by Yahweh's "strong hand and outstretched arm". Indeed, **יָמִינוֹ** is usually applied to God's arm in His act of blessing (mostly in Deuteronomy, 15x) and punishing (Is 5:25; 23:11; 7x in Ezekiel; Ex 7:5). On the other hand Ps 89 refers to the arm of God which defeated Rahab in the primeval battle for creation (cf. Is 51). Crusemann holds that the context of vv. 17-23 belongs to a Deuteronomistic prayer. V.18 has to be dealt



with independently as a participial hymn.<sup>278</sup> The verse contains the refrain **יְהוָה יִבְרָא וְשָׁמַיָּא** as one component of the participial hymn. Its content is about creation. On the other hand the usual participial verbs are lacking, and there is a difference in character between this passage and the participial hymn. The latter is concerned with the general and universal deeds of Yahweh in creating and upholding the world. So how is v.18 to be reconciled with its close parallel in Ex 35:6f, which clearly has to do with Israel? Crusemann tried to solve this problem by attempting to link Ex 34:6f with hymnic portions in several psalms through the phrase **יְהוָה יִבְרָא וְשָׁמַיָּא** (Pss 86:15, 103:8; 145:8, 111:4b). It means that even the formulation in Ex 34:6f was not originally connected with Israel. But there is no reference to the vengeful God who will visit the guilt of the fathers to their children in the above psalms, and we do not think that v.18 has to be dealt with separately from the prayer of Jeremiah.

V.18 is different from Jer 31:30. This does not necessarily mean that v.18 is non-Jeremianic because the context in Jer 31:30 is future hope. Jeremiah could be uncomfortable with the idea of children suffering the sins of their fathers, but for what is happening to Israel at the moment only this kind of theology can be offered. Whatever is the background of Ex 34:6f, its parallel in Jer 32:18 suits the context of Jer 32. In a sense this pericope is close to what Crenshaw referred to as the "hymnic affirmation of divine justice". It includes creation, the character of God as a judge and the praise of His name, the elements of the community's penitential prayer at the exilic and post-exilic period. Does it mean that we should regard

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278. Crusemann, op.cit., pp.109-110.



this passage as coming from the same period? Although probably the passage has gone through the hands of a Deuteronomistic redactor<sup>279</sup> we still hold that originally it is a Jeremianic product or at least a product of his day. The working concept behind it may again be the world order. R.C. Dentan has convincingly proved that contrary to what was widely affirmed, the occurrence of the word  $\text{אֱלֹהִים}$  is rare in Deuteronomistic literature.<sup>280</sup> The typical Deuteronomistic word is  $\text{יְהוָה}$  not  $\text{אֱלֹהִים}$ .

$\text{יְהוָה}$  is also not Deuteronomistic but belongs to Wisdom, and so are the other phrases in Ex 34:6f.

What is the function of creation faith in this passage?

In the prayer of Jeremiah there is a feeling of certainty that Judah will soon be defeated by Babylon. In vv.28-35 (which may be an insertion by a Deuteronomistic redactor) the reason for this defeat is described. It is because Judah has indulged herself in idolatry. Although Jeremiah saw the imminent defeat of Judah as the expression of the will of God he did not lose hope. He expressed this hope in the symbolic act of buying a piece of land (vv.6-16). Vv.36-44 described the salvation after the time of judgement. A new covenant which will last forever will be made between Yahweh and His people. This time God will take care that His people will never again do evil. The fear of God shall always be in their hearts. V.24 summed up the meaning of chapter 32; It is Yahweh who brought this great evil (  $\text{כָּל-הַרְעָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַזֹּאת}$  ; "this" can only refer to the approaching defeat) is also the God

279. Most commentators regard the whole of "the prayer of Jeremiah" as a Deuteronomistic product. For the Deuteronomistic redaction of the book of Jeremiah see E.W. Nicholson, Preaching to the Exiles: A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah, New York, 1971.

280. R.C. Dentan, "The Literary Affinities of Exodus XXXIV 6f", VT 13 (1963), pp. 34-51.

who will restore the fortunes of His people. He is Creator, He can do anything He likes. He can bring evil, but he can also bring salvation. The concept of creation enabled Jeremiah to see hope beyond despair. Just as he had recently bought a piece of land, so later on lands will be bought by others.

#### 8.2.5. Jer 33

The context of Jer 33 is hope and salvation after the period of judgement. Jeremiah's attitude towards the kings of Judah was negative. But this does not necessarily mean that Jeremiah saw no future in the monarchy as in DI. In the description of the future King in Jer 23: 5-6 we can find his view on how a King should reign. This view is the opposite of the picture of the reigning monarch of his time:<sup>281</sup>

a. "He shall reign as king and deal wisely". This is contrasted with the kingship of Zedekiah.

b. "He shall execute justice and righteousness in the land". This is meant to be contrasted with the injustice of Jehoiakim.

c. "Judah and Israel will be safe in his days". This contrasts with the siege and defeat of Jerusalem in the time of Zedekiah. In Jer 33 the continuity of the house of David and the cultic officials attached to the King is guaranteed through an appeal to creation, as can be seen in vv. 1-2:

וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-יֵרֵמְיָהוּ    The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah  
שֵׁנִית וְהוּא עוֹדֵנוּ עֶצוּר    for the second time, while he was still  
בְּחֹצֵר הַמִּטְרָה לְאֹמֶר    confined in the court of the guard-house:

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281. We based our description on R.W. Klein, Israel in Exile, Philadelphia, 1979, p. 55. Although vv. 1-4 and 7-8 are filled with Deuteronomistic language, vv. 5-6 are part of the pre-Deuteronomistic tradition. The principal positive argument for the authenticity of 23:5-6 is the possible play of words in v.6: וְהוּא עוֹדֵנוּ עֶצוּר can be seen as a pun on the name Zedekiah, צִדְקִיָּהוּ.



כה-אמר יהוה "Thus says the Lord,  
 עשה יהוה יוצר the Lord who makes and forms  
 (the earth)  
 אותה להכינה to establish it,  
 יהוה שמו the Lord is His name!"

The MT has "he who makes it, Yahweh who forms it". We follow the LXX. Rudolph proposed to change עֲשֵׂה יְהוָה to עֲשֵׂה וְהָיָה and אֹתָהּ to אֹתֶיהָ (cf. Is 41:23; 44:7).<sup>282</sup> The rendering of vv. 1-2 then should be: "so hat Jahwe gesprochen, der wirkt was geschieht, der das Kommende formt, es auszurichten - Jahwe ist sein Name!" But although the context of chapter 33 is concerned with the future, Yahweh is not explicitly stated as the Creator of the future. But it is true that creation faith or the belief in Yahweh as Creator provides the conviction that there is a future for the monarchy.

כה-אמר יהוה Thus says the Lord,  
 אם-תפרו את-בריתי If you can break my covenant with  
 the day,  
 ואת-בריתי הלילה and my covenant with the night,  
 ולכלתי היות יומם-ולילה so that the night will not appear  
 בעתם at their fixed time,  
 גם-בריתי תפר את-דוד only then my covenant may be broken  
 עבדי with David my servant,  
 מהיות-לו בן מלך על-כסאו so that he shall have no son to  
 rule at his throne,  
 ואת-הלויים הכהנים and the Levites, the priests who  
 משרתי are my ministers.  
 אשר לא-יספר טבא השמים As the hosts of heaven cannot be  
 numbered,  
 ולא ימד חול הים and the sands of the sea cannot be  
 measured,  
 כן ארבה את-זרע דוד so I will make great the seed of  
 עבדי David my servant,

282. Rudolph, op.cit., p. 214.



וְאֵת-הַלְוִיִּם מְשָׁרְתַי אֲתִי and the Levites, the priests who  
are my ministers.

Vv.20-22. Yahweh is Creator, this is why the Chaldeans are permitted to play havoc in the midst of His own people. But there is an end to this period of judgement. Israel shall be united and be prosperous again under the descendants of David. Yahwey's covenant with David is compared with His covenant with the day and the night. Their appearance at their fixed time become a guarantee that the covenant between Yahweh and David is still going on. Ps 89:1-5 also speaks about this comparison. There too, Yahweh calls David "my servant" (vv.4,21). When it is the turn of the cultic prophet to speak he calls God to remember David, "your servant" (v.51). The plea to God to remember His promise to David is meant to relieve the intense suffering being endured by the King and his people. There is apparently a common liturgical tradition shared by both Ps 89 and Jer 33. The promise in vv. 20-22 is repeated again in vv. 25-26. To answer the view that the divided people indicated the annulment of the chosenness of Israel, the prophet again referred to the covenant of God with the day and the night and with the  $\text{נֶקֶן}$ . The future Davidic King will rule over the whole nation, over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The election of Israel will last forever.

### 8.3. Other passages in Jeremiah.

There are other passages in Jeremiah which might possibly refer to creation. They are Jer. 8:13; 18:1-5; 23:23-24.

Jer 8:13 has been compared with Zeph 1:2-3 by M. Deroche.<sup>283</sup>

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283. M. Deroche, "Contra Creation, Covenant and Conquest (Jer. viii 13)", VT 30 (1980), pp.280-90.

Zeph 1: 2-3 refers to the reversal of creation. Based on his finding of this notion in the passage in Zephaniah, Deroche tried to prove that the same holds true for Jer 8:13. The fig tree and the grape vine are symbols of God's presence and favour (1 Kings 4:25). The feast of Ingathering in which the figs and grapes are gathered is also the time when Yahweh's kingship over creation is celebrated. So the absence of grapes and figs and the withering of the leaves means the reverse: the feast of Ingathering will not be a celebration of God's care over the creation, but will be the end of creation.

But there is a significant difference between Jer 8:13 and Zeph 1:2-3, which Deroche seems to have overlooked. We agree with him that Zeph 1:2-3 (and Hos 4:1-3) is connected with the concept of creation as it contains the list (or better, the reverse) of the list of animals as in Gen 1. However, this is lacking in Jer 8:13. Deroche tried to strengthen his argument by referring to Gen 1:29, but again it is only a general reference about plants and trees. Apart from the occurrence of  $\text{?ON}$ , there is little resemblance between Jer 8:13 and Zeph 1:2-3. We do not think that Jer 8:13 is concerned with creation.

Jer 18:5 refers to the parable of the potter and his vessel - a frequent item in prophetic literature. As in Is 30:4, we can say that the parable indicates thinking within the framework of creation belief. It is difficult to determine whether Jeremiah originally employed the parable to give a message of hope to the people or whether he used it as a threat of the coming disaster as implied in vv.11-12. The emphasis on "of clay" in v.4 is probably meant to make clear that it has to do with misformed vessels, not mistakes in



baking-methods. Probably both notions are involved in the parable. It is used to show that God is prepared to destroy His own people in order to remake them.

Does the phrase "Do not I fill the heavens and the earth?" in Jer 23:23-24 indicate that it is related to creation? The context of the passage is about the unrestrictedness of God. Amos 9:1-3 and Is 6:1-3 which we regard as creation passages also have the same context. It is however difficult to decide the over-all context of Jer 23. So we hesitate to see it as a creation passage.

נְכִיחַ appears in Jer 31:22. The new thing that Yahweh will create is indicated in the somewhat obscure phrase נִקְבָּה תְּסוּבָּה

נְכִיחַ . Its meaning is still discussed, but probably it means that the bereaved virgin Israel will have a son, posterity, and therefore, a future.<sup>284</sup>

Our examination shows that creation concept plays a considerable role in Jeremiah. The concept has more or less the same function as in DI. Because Yahweh is Creator, He can let His people be conquered by their enemy. But the same concept enabled the prophet to see hope beyond despair. Both Jeremiah and the Deuteronomistic redactor are also concerned with the problem of theodicy. It is the sin of the people which caused the defeat, not the carelessness of Yahweh. He used the Chaldeans as His agents to punish his people.

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284. See the stylistic study of Jer 31:22 by B.W. Anderson, "The Lord has created something new", CBQ 40/4 (1978), pp. 477-78.



## 9. Ezekiel.

The verb **שׁוּב** appears in Ezek 21:35, 28:13 and 28:15. We shall examine whether the context of their occurrences in the book of Ezekiel is concerned with creation. Ezek 47:1-12 refers to the river which flows out from the temple to provide life for the land. But as we have stated in section A, Ezek 47:1-12 belongs to the Zion tradition in the same way as Ps 46:5 and Zech 14:8.<sup>285</sup>

## 9.1 Ezek 21:35

The context of this passage is of the theme of 'the sword of Yahweh'. Reference to the sword of Yahweh had already gained a place in the language of earlier prophetic writings, particularly in the image of the sword functioning on its own. In Amos for instance, beside the direct statements that Yahweh executes judgement with the sword (4:10; 7:9; 9:1), we find the other similar concept according to which Yahweh commands the sword for judgement (Amos 9:4; Jer 47:7; 9:15; 49:37; 25:29; Ezek 38:21).<sup>286</sup> The arrangement of chapter 21 is as follows: the sword of Yahweh, vv. 1-12; the sword song, vv. 13-22; the sword of the King of Babylon, vv. 23-32; the sword against the Ammonites, vv. 33-37. Probably it is the product of the school of Ezekiel and not of Ezekiel himself.<sup>287</sup>

הָשִׁב אֶל-תַּעֲרָהּ	Return (it) to its sheath;
בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-נִבְרָאתָ	In the place where you were created,
בְּאֶרֶץ מִכְרֹתֶיךָ	in the land of your origin,
אֲשַׁפֵּט אֶתְךָ	I will judge you.

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285. See above, p. 160.

286. W. Zimmerli, Ezekiel I, Hermeneia Series, Philadelphia, 1979, p.432.

287. J.W. Wevers, Ezekiel, CB, London, 1969, p. 169

הָשִׁב is high imperative. W. Zimmerli proposed to change it into high inf. cons. הָשִׁב : "put it back ....!"<sup>288</sup>

Who is the addressee?

According to J.W. Wevers it must be the Ammonites. This passage is a reflection on the malice and exaltation of the Ammonites on the occasion of Jerusalem's fall (cf. Ezek 25:1-7). "In the place where you were created" means "in your native land" or "in the place where you were born". The ending of sec. fem. sing. may point to the Ammonites (the city of Rabbah, v. 25) but may equally point to the sword. Probably the text as it now stands intended the sword of Babylon as the addressee.<sup>289</sup> Zimmerli tried to confirm this by referring to the fact that the text emphasized the createdness of the addressee, which indeed fits the picture of an arrogant superpower.<sup>290</sup> However, there is no emphasis on creation here. Although the word is used, its occurrence here is idiomatic, which in turn may point to its early usage in Israel. The meaning of the passage is probably that Yahweh will bring judgement upon the instrument of judgement which has fulfilled its function, in its own homeland.

9.2. Ezek 28:11-19.

וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי	Then the word of the Lord came to me,
לֵאמֹר בֶּן-אָדָם שֵׂא קִינָה	saying, son of man, raise a lamentation
עַל-מֶלֶךְ צוּר	over the king of Tyre,
וְאָמַרְתָּ לּוֹ	and you will say to him,
כֹּה אָמַר אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה	thus says the Lord God:
אַתָּה חֹתֶם תְּכֻנִּית	you were a seal of perfection,

288. Zimmerli, op.cit., p. 440

289. Wevers, op.cit., p. 170.

290. Zimmerli, op.cit., p. 449.



מלא חכמה      full of wisdom,  
 וכליל יפי      and perfect in beauty.

Vv. 11-12. חֹתֶם, "sealing". The ancient renderings have חֹתֶם, which is the cons. of חֹתֶם. We followed their reading. תִּכְן is from the word תִּכְן, "measure" which appears also in Jes 40:12; Job 28:15. In the context of Ezek 43:10 the word probably means "pattern, model".<sup>291</sup> G.R. Driver and G. Widengren compared it with the Akkad. taknū, taknitu, "complete, perfect (Vollendung)". "Seal" however is never used in a metaphorical sense, so this line is probably corrupt.<sup>292</sup> But its meaning is clear enough: the King was a perfect creature, both in wisdom and in beauty.

בעדן גן-אלהים היית	You were in Eden, the garden of God,
כל-אבן יקרה מסכתך	every precious stone was your covering,
אדם פטודה ויהלם	cornelian, topaz and jasper,
תרשיש שהם ויטפה	chrysolite, beryl and onyx,
ספיר נפק וברקת	sapphire, carbuncle and emerald.
וזהב מלאכת תפוך	and in gold was the seal wrought,
ונקבך כן	your tambourins and your earrings on you;
ביום הבראך כונונו	in the day you were created they were prepared.

v.13 מִסְכָּתְךָ. The V understood it as "your covering". The LXX and the Syr. similarly have מִסְכָּה, from the root סִכַּךְ, "to cover". K. Yaron on the other hand suggested that it came from the root כִּסָּה, "clothing (of the high priest)".<sup>293</sup> His suggestion is partly based on the fact that the list of the precious stones in Ezek 28 is almost identical with the list of

291. G.A. Cooke, The Book of Ezekiel, ICC, Edinburgh, 1936, p. 315.

292. i b i d.

293. K. Yaron, "The Dirge over the King of Tyre, ASTI III (1964), p. 38.



stones on the breast plate of the high priest in Ex 28:17-20 (and in Ex 39:10-13), the difference being only a crossing-over of a stone from each. The list in Ezek 28 in the LXX is in fact identical with the list in Ex 28. He also assumed that there should be a dagesh in the **ו** of **מסכת**. Either the word is incorrect or the original word is probably **מסכת**, "on your clothing".<sup>294</sup>

Whether a description of the figure of a King should be identical with that of a high priest as argued by Yaron<sup>295</sup> cannot be ascertained. The King certainly fulfils cultic duties, but this does not necessarily indicate that he is a priest.

It is also difficult to see how **מסכת** could become **מסכת**. We think it is more probably that **מסכת** came from the same root as **מסכה**.

**מלאכה**, "work, creation (of a craftsman)". Is it to be related to **זהב** or **תפ"ף**?

The LXX<sup>Luc.</sup> has **καὶ χρυσίου ἐνεπλησας τοὺς θησαυροὺς σου**, "with gold have you filled your treasures". So similarly the Syr. They read **מלאכה** as **מלאה**. Zimmerli saw **מלאכה** as a parallel to **מסכת**.<sup>296</sup> He proposed **מלאכה** and translated the line: "and from gold is it worked out", relating **מלאכה** to **זהב**. We follow his rendering. **תפ"ף**

is from **תפ"ף**, "tambourine", following V and Symmachus. According to G.A. Cooke **תפ"ף** is an ornament shaped like a tambourine (cf. Jer 31:4).<sup>297</sup>

294. i b i d

295. i b i d., pp. 39-40

296. W. Zimmerli, Ezechiel 25-48, BKAT XIII/2, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969, p. 675.

297. Cooke, op.cit., p. 317

נִקְבִּי. According to G.R. Driver it is derived from נִקְבִּי, which denotes an earring, or in any case a metalwork for holding gems or pearls. Although the precise meanings of תִּפְיָךְ and נִקְבִּי are not yet clear, they are probably technical terms used by goldsmiths.<sup>298</sup> Already in the ancient times their precise meaning was lost, and this probably was one reason why the ancient versions vary in their renderings. In Zimmerli's commentary the words are left untranslated.

נִקְבִּי has a fem. suffix. In v.14 תִּפְיָךְ is also fem. and so is the suffix of נִקְבִּי in v.15. Although they stand very awkward in relation with the subject (the King of Tyre) we retain the MT.

כִּוְנָן. This word is lacking in the LXX. But we retain the MT. It is probably intended to emphasize that the stones were cut and prepared at the day of the birth or creation of the King.

The King was created as the First Man on earth.<sup>299</sup> Other references to the First Man can be found in Job 15:7,8 and 38:4,7.

v.14. חֲשִׁיךָ probably means "anointing". הַסִּוְכָה could be derived from the root כֹּסַח, "cover". It means "the one covering". But it could also come from the root סִוַּח, "to anoint". וְנִתַּנְתִּיךָ, "and I will place you".

G. Widengren tried to retain the MT. הַסִּוְכָה is translated as "the Shadower". God is regarded as a shadow for shelter in Hos 14:9. Ps 17:8; Pss 57:2, 59:5, 73:8 refer to the godhead who overshadows the King with wings; Ezek 31:2-9 refers to

298. Wevers, *op.cit.*, p. 217.

299. See H.G. May, "The King in the Garden of Eden: A Study of Ezekiel 28:12-19", *Israel's Prophetic Heritage*, p. 168; D.E. Gowan, *When Man becomes God*, Pittsburgh, 1975, pp. 75-76.



the King as the shadow for his people to shelter. Widengren's translation of v.14 is as follows:<sup>300</sup>

Thou wast a cherub,  
oh, what an anointed of the Shadower,  
and I placed thee on the holy mountain;  
a god thou wast,  
in the midst of stones of fire thou walked.

It appears that in the MT the King is identified with the cherub. On the other hand the LXX has  $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \chi\epsilon\rho\upsilon\beta\ \epsilon\acute{\nu}\eta\kappa\epsilon\ \epsilon\varsigma$  , "with the cherub I place you". It obviously read  $\text{אִתְּךָ}$  , "with" or "together with".<sup>301</sup> It also read  $\text{וְיָתִיתָ}$  instead of  $\text{וְיָתִיתָ}$  . The rendering of the LXX is less complicated than the MT, but throws no light on the explanation of  $\text{מִכְשֶׁח}$  and  $\text{הַסֹּכֶךְ}$  , which are lacking in it.

We tend to retain  $\text{מִכְשֶׁח}$  and  $\text{הַסֹּכֶךְ}$  , but changed  $\text{אִתְּךָ}$  into  $\text{אִתְּךָ}$  and  $\text{וְיָתִיתָ}$  into  $\text{וְיָתִיתָ}$  as in the LXX:

Together with the anointing cherub,  
the one covering, I placed you;  
you were on the holy mountain of God,  
in the midst of the stones of fire  
you walked to and fro.

"The holy mountain of God". In Ps 48:3 we find reference to Mount Zion in the far north (  $\text{צִיּוֹן}$  ). The word spn in Ugaritic also denotes the divine abode.<sup>302</sup> In Is 14:13 we read about the mount of assembly in the far north, which apparently denotes the divine abode. The idea that a mortal had access to the mountain of God is unusual, unless we follow

300. G. Widengren, "Early Hebrew Myths and their Interpretation", in Myth, Ritual and Kingship, S.H. Hooke (ed), Oxford, 1958, p. 166.

301. On the other hand Zimmerli thought the LXX has  $\text{אִתְּךָ}$  , op.cit., 675.

302. A.S. Kapelrud, Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts, p. 132.



Widengren's rendering, "a god thou wast". In this passage the holy mountain of God is identified with "Eden, the garden of God" (v.13). For Ezekiel to locate the garden of God in which the First Man dwells on the mountain of God is to give the Man a place unequalled elsewhere in the OT.<sup>303</sup>

"Stones of fire". Probably they refer to the glittering of the gem-stones which gave splendour and brilliance to the garden.<sup>304</sup> Yaron points to Ezek 1:13, where the cherubs are referred to as "burning coals of fire". The same passage mentions that "out of the fire went forth lightning".<sup>305</sup> F.C. Fensham on the other hand argued that אֲבָנֵי-אֵשׁ should be understood as "thunderstones". He compared the term with the Akkad. aban išāti and the Ugaritic abn brq, "stones of lightning". In the ancient times flints were called thunderstones because they produced fire and because men believed the flint artifacts they found to have been projectiles hurled by the gods in lightning.<sup>306</sup>

תָּמִים אֵתָה כִּדְרֵכֶיךָ You were blameless in your ways,  
מִיוֹם הַבְּרָאָה עַד-וָנִמְצָא from the day you were created,  
עוֹלָתָה כִּךְ till iniquity was found in you.

v.15. תָּמִים is to be connected to הֵלֵךְ in v.14. In Gen 6:9 Noah is said as blameless and walked with God. So is Henoch in Ge 5:22,24 and Abraham in Gen 17:1.

According to Cooke אֲנִי-נִמְצָא in v.16 originally belonged to the end of v.15. The one who was created so lofty was suddenly

303. Gowan, op.cit., p. 82

304. Cooke, op.cit., p. 318. He noted that this interpretation is not new. It was among others mentioned by Kimhi.

305. Yaron, op.cit., p. 38

306. F.C. Fensham, "Thunder-Stones in Ugaritic", JNES 18(1959), pp.273-74.

described as a sinner. What his sins are was not described.  
A later hand apparently concretized them as violence exercised  
in trade.

ברב רכלתך מלו תוכך חמס ותחטא ואחללך מהר אלהים ואבדך כרוב הסכך מתוך אבני-אש

In the abundance of your trade,  
they filled the midst of you with  
violence,  
and you sinned.  
I profaned you from the mountain  
of God,  
and the cherub, the one covering,  
banished you,  
from the midst of the stones of fire.

v.16. מלו. The suffix is to be understood as plural.  
The LXX has ἐπὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ, the Syr. מלית. Both understood the word  
as מלאת.

וַאֲבַדְךָ כְּרוּב הַסִּכָּךְ. The MT has the cherub as object.  
וַאֲבַדְךָ is a shortened form of וַאֲבַדְךָ, which is piel perf.  
first. pers. sing. (Bauer-Leander). The LXX on the other hand  
has καὶ ἁγιάσας. Because of his sins the King was made profane.  
This may indicate that his sins are that of a cultic nature,  
Seen in this light, the reading of the MT makes sense. The  
King who was formerly a cherub, was demoted to become a mortal  
human being. However, we have accepted that the King in this  
passage is a mortal First Man, no matter how lofty he was  
described. We decide to follow the LXX reading, which regards  
the cherub as subject. The MT וַאֲבַדְךָ then needs to be emended  
into וַאֲבַדְךָ (piel imperf. - Zimmerli) or וַאֲבַדְךָ  
(piel perf. - Cornill), "to let you be banished".

גבה לבך ביפּיך שחת חכמתך על-יפעתך

Your heart was proud because of  
your beauty;  
you corrupted your wisdom for the  
sake of your splendour;







Vv. 18-19. The sin of the King is identified again as misconduct in trade. The image here however has shifted from the figure of the King of Tyre as the First Man to the description of the city of Tyre itself. "You profaned your sanctuaries". The reference to the sanctuaries in this passage sounds odd. D.E. Gowan thought that its occurrence here is purely coincidental.<sup>308</sup> Zimmerli referred to the defilement of the temple because its treasures have been taken with violence by men or a similar event in the history of the city.<sup>309</sup> Yaron argued that since the mountain of God is identical with the temple, the defiling of the mountain of God is identical with the defiling of the temple.<sup>310</sup>

In v.18b the punishment of the city is described. It was burned to ashes and wiped out from the face of the earth. V.19 is probably an editorial. It is similar to Ezek 27:36, the difference being only that "all who know you" is used in place of "merchants", and "are appalled" in place of "hiss". The description of punishment by fire is one of the stereotyped formulations in the OT and which is often related to sayings against the foreign nations. The editorial hand who described the punishment of the city in vv. 18-19 apparently understood the passage as an oracle of judgement to Tyre. But Ezekiel's intention was probably different. He used the concept of creation within the story of the King of Tyre in this passage to describe the tragic fate of man. According to Ezekiel man is a lofty creature, but his very loftiness contains the seeds

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308. Gowan, op.cit., p. 90

309. Zimmerli, op.cit., p. 688

310. Yaron, op.cit., p. 45. In Yaron's opinion the garden of God, Eden, mountain of God, the far North, Heaven, temple are all related concepts.

of his degradation.<sup>311</sup> But as it now stands, vv. 11-19 are clearly intended to be related to vv. 1-10. Seen as a unity, Ezek 28:1-19 expresses the hubris of man. As long as man realises his nature as a created being, he can enjoy himself to the full. But as soon as he starts to regard himself as being equal to God, he falls.

We can conclude our examination of this passage by confirming that the concept of creation is operative in it to point to the glory and limitation of man. But apparently creation is only one among many concepts used in the book of Ezekiel. So we can not say that the concept of creation is a dominant theme in Ezekiel's thinking. This is not very surprising since Ezekiel came from a priestly family with the cultic milieu of Jerusalem as his background. In this Jerusalem tradition there are two concepts which were connected to each other but maintained their own distinctiveness, namely the concepts of creation and Zion as the dwelling-place of God. As with Isaiah, apparently Ezekiel opted to base his reflections of God's judgement towards the nation (Ezek 1-24) and the future rebuilding of the community (Ezek 40-48) on the theology of Zion.

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311. Gowan, op.cit., pp. 90-92



## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

From our examination of the passages in Is 40-55 it is clear that the concept of creation is an important and integral part of DI's message. Reference to creation in DI can be found not only in the disputations, but also in the salvation oracles. For DI then, creation is a Heilsbegriff.

Our further examination on the pre-exilic and exilic prophetic tradition provides these results: Micah and Nahum contain no reference to creation; creation is an important if not a dominant factor in Amos, Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Jeremiah; it is referred to in Hosea, Isaiah and Ezekiel, but only as one among other concepts in the thinking of these three prophets.

There is, however, a significant difference between DI and the pre-exilic prophets and the other exilic prophets with the exception of Habakkuk and Jeremiah. The context of creation in DI and Habakkuk is of salvation. In Jeremiah creation occurs in both the contexts of salvation and judgement. But in the other prophets the context of creation is of judgement. This difference in context may serve as one of the proofs (beside the difference in vocabulary, the inner connection between reference to creation and its immediate context in the prophetic books, the relevance of the concept of creation in facing the challenge of the situation and the early date of the concept itself) that reference to creation in the pre-exilic prophetic tradition is not necessarily a later addition.

We can conclude that not only DI, but also the pre-exilic prophets could think or reflect with the concept of creation in mind. The existence of some of the creation passages which contain hymnic



styles or liturgical forms is not due to later exilic or post-exilic redactional insertions or additions. The prophets could have imitated the style of hymnic materials or liturgical forms from the cult. Even if the authenticity of some of these passages may be doubted as coming from the same source of authorship as the rest of the prophetic writ, it can still be said that the same prophetic hand or his disciples could have incorporated portions of these hymnic materials to form an integral part of his message.

Why is it that the concept of creation occurs in different contexts in the prophetic tradition?

We have seen that hymnic materials from the cult contain praise to Yahweh as the Creator whose power is acknowledged over all. Creation of the universe is the result of Yahweh being triumphant over chaos in the primordial times. The cult celebrates this fact in its annual "Enthronement" Festival. There the triumph of Yahweh is commemorated and to a certain extent actualised so that the people of Israel may share in the triumph of their Lord. This actualisation can only succeed if the contents of the celebration are related to the everyday reality of the life of the people and their expectations. Chaos is not only a threat of the past, but is still threatening to overcome creation at present.

In the cultic understanding of existence there is tension between creation and chaos. However, Yahweh's triumph in the past over chaos provides a guarantee that chaos shall never cross the boundary of its appointed place. Although there is real tension between creation and chaos, the tension is not balanced equally,

and the tendency is to go to the side of creation. Yahweh was fighting the forces of chaos in the past so that man in the present could enjoy the fruits of His triumph, i.e. the benefits of the created world (a happy family life, justice in society, good harvest etc.). This expectation also includes in a narrower way the continuity of Israel as a nation. Without losing its cosmic aspect the Chaoskampf imagery is also understood historically: the created world has to do with Israel as a nation and chaos has to do with the foreign nations as the traditional enemies of Israel. Yahweh then was not only fighting chaos in the past, but also at present He is judging the foreign nations as the representatives or agents of chaos (although not in a cultic trial) and renders them powerless as they are being wiped out from the earth.

It is the cultic prophets who emphasised these saving acts of Yahweh the Creator. Habakkuk is the prime example of this kind of prophet. Although sometimes Yahweh as Creator is praised in a 'neutral' sense, it must be said that creation in the cult is commonly placed in a context of salvation. This theological stance gives a sense of security to the people, and tends to become so strong that people continue to feel secure even if in reality the situation is not so. Recurrent droughts, failure of the crops, injustice in society, the threatening superpowers in the surroundings of Israel, all lead to an awareness of this false feeling of security or this gap between cultic reality and actual reality on the side of the canonical prophets. All these grim facts have to be explained in relation to the belief that Yahweh has triumphed. This is not to deny that there is no concern for ethical standards in the cult. The cultic prophets repeatedly warned transgressing



individuals within the nation of the possibility of God taking action against them in anger. But the framework of the cultic understanding of creation in the context of salvation makes the judgement of Yahweh against His own people (Israel as a whole) simply not possible. Creation is the sign of Yahweh's triumph and the guarantee of the survival of the nation.

Amos did a fundamental change in this understanding. In his opinion the people were wrong in regarding the security given to them by Yahweh as granted. So Amos reversed the context of creation from salvation to judgement. The foreign nations are still under judgement, but this does not mean salvation for Israel, for she too, falls into the same judgement. Yahweh is still the triumphant Creator and will always be so, but now the Lord of creation is praised because of His judgement on Israel. There are other possibilities as to how a prophet could reach the conclusion that Israel as a whole is condemned. The idea of individual punishment could give way to that of a collective one. The concept of "corporate personality" may also play a part here.<sup>1</sup> But we opted for the "domain assumption" as the main factor behind the prophetic condemnation of Israel as a whole.<sup>2</sup> The praise of the Creator in the context of judgement does not need to be placed in the exile

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1. But this idea in itself needs re-examination; see J.W. Rogerson, "The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality: A Re-examination", JTS 21 (1970), pp. 1-16.
  2. This term is popularised in the OT scholarship by N.K. Gottwald, "Domain assumptions and societal models in the study of pre-monarchic Israel", Congress Volume, SVT XXVIII, Leiden, 1975, pp. 89-100.



or after. The prophetic reversal of the context of creation from salvation to judgement does not depend on concrete happenings such as the exile or even the ruins of a northern sanctuary. The "domain assumption" is strong enough to push some individuals or groups toward an utterly negative assessment of the larger group of people. That the judgemental context of creation in the book of Amos is provided by the reversal of the context is confirmed by other instances in the same book where this reversal is also applied (see Amos 3:2; 5:18; 8:2; 9:7, 8). Through these reversals all the orthodox teachings in which the people of Israel base their feelings of security are nullified. Other prophets also tend to make this kind of reversal (Is 8:10, 14, 18; Jer 14:1-10; 14:17 - 15:2). It might be objected that there is nothing to suggest in the book of Amos (except Amos 4:13; 5:8(9); 9:5, 6) that Amos based his thinking on the concept of creation. But the inner connection between the doxologies and their immediate context is sufficient enough to prove that the concept of creation has an important if not primary role in the thinking of Amos.

The hymnic passage in Jer 10:12-16 is perhaps not Jeremianic, but is still to be placed in the pre-exilic period at the days of Jeremiah. Just as in the doxologies in the book of Amos here too participial hymnic materials from the cult were used or their style imitated but the contexts reversed to justify Yahweh's act of judgement towards His people. Later the same material is re-used in Jer 51:15-19 in the context of judgement against Babylon, the enemy of Israel. This repetition in Jer 51 is the result of a prophetic re-reversal of the object of judgement from the people to the enemy of the people, as against the former phenomenon of

reversing the object of judgement from the enemy of the people to the people themselves. In regard to the foreign enemy Jeremiah went further than Amos. At least for a temporary period the enemy (Nebuchadnezzar) becomes the agent or even the servant of Yahweh in punishing Israel. In other words Jeremiah wanted to say that Yahweh now is the enemy of Israel. To explain this turning over of Yahweh from protector to oppressor Jeremiah resorted to creation theology. Yahweh can do anything because He is Creator.

The influence of wisdom in the prophetic tradition makes it necessary for us to reflect on the relationship between creation as it is understood in the cult and creation in the context of wisdom. That the cult and wisdom each have their own differing world views is difficult to prove. However, we have seen that creation in wisdom is related to the all-embracing, universal world order. Although world order in this sense also fits the description of world order in the cult, the interest in historical aspects of the political survival of the nation tends to undermine or even disregard this universal aspect of creation. The prophetic tradition from Amos to DI cannot be described as containing aspects of universalism. The degree in which the prophets relate Yahweh to the foreign nations differ. To Amos they are still under judgement as in the cult. The difference between Amos and the cult is that he gave reasons (taken from the understanding of world order or natural law) why they are judged. In Jeremiah they are agents of Yahweh. In DI for the first time there is evidence of concern for the salvation of the foreign nations. But even in DI there is tension between concern and hate, between broad and narrow particularism. In the end it is clear that there is no real concern



of Yahweh for the foreign nations for their own sake. Yahweh is the Creator of the whole world and the Ruler of the foreign nations for the sake of Israel.

Seen from this angle the prophetic interpretation of creation still follows that of the cultic framework. But apart from this significant difference, it cannot be said that there are two world views in Israel which were antagonistic to each other. In wisdom too, the threat of chaos is real and acknowledged. The difference between the cultic world view and that of wisdom probably does not lie in the absence of threatening chaos in the latter as held by Hermission. Both wisdom and cult have the same insight on the relationship between Yahweh as Creator and the world order, namely that Yahweh has an ambiguous character in His dealings with individuals (man in general). He is a just God, but at the same time He is free and does unpredictable things. The difference is that in regard to the nation Israel, the cult holds that Yahweh is the saviour of Israel and destroyer of the foreign nations. The prophets beginning from Amos onwards insisted that in this particular aspect too Yahweh's freedom must be upheld. Thus while the constancy of God in preserving the order of the world is not denied, it is the people of Israel who were blamed as the disturber of the world order, and such must be destroyed. Jeremiah in particular emphasised this picture of world order or the order of nature in his message of judgement. Israel has transgressed the laws of nature.

A curious picture emerges. The people, who trust that Yahweh will help them against the threats of chaos are now to realise that they themselves have become agents of chaos. For them the picture



of creation now becomes threatening. On the other hand, Israel has to realise that Yahweh now is on the side of the chaos powers. They are His agents, and that He is intending to destroy His own people. For the prophets it looks as if chaos is getting the upper hand. This is why beside reversing the context of creation, the pre-exilic prophets sometimes reversed the account of a creation narrative, to emphasise that chaos is returning. We can see the examples of this bouleversement (M. Fishbane) in Hos 4:1-3; Zeph 2:1-3 and Jer 4:32f. For the prophets, creation is also a Unheilsbegriff.

However, even if the prophets came to the conclusion that Israel deserves punishment, they did not detach themselves from the people's plight. They did not hesitate to intercede or to ask why He as a compassionate God is prepared to destroy His people. The "domain assumption" in the prophetic tradition did not lead to a breach in the prophet's solidarity with the people. To the prophets the "no" of God is the other side of His "yes", or better, the "no" of the prophets is the reverse side of their "yes" to the people. They are not revolutionary nihilists who reject the entire heritage of pious Israel.<sup>3</sup> DI in particular could be described as the prophet of "yes". He realised the destructive aspect of a prolonged "no" towards the people. Based on the same view that Yahweh is Creator and free he interpreted the historical events around him as signs of Yahweh turning back towards His people, and so He aroused the people from their former apathy in the exile and

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3. W. Zimmerli, "Prophetic Proclamation and Reinterpretation", in Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament, p. 70.

exhorted them to return to the promised land. The old cultic materials of tradition which for a long time were discarded as relics of a poor theology were relived and used to underscore his message. So we find again the familiar feature of the cult in DI, namely the Chaoskampf imagery (Is 51:9-16) and the participial hymnic passages familiar to Amos and Jeremiah. But the context is re-reversed from judgement to salvation, just as it is in the original context. But DI also had his own reflections based on the concept of creation. Just as in Jeremiah, DI regarded a foreign King (Cyrus) as the agent of Yahweh. The Creator can do what He wants. But while in Jeremiah the foreign King was used as an instrument to punish Israel, here the foreign King is to prepare salvation for Israel.

DI also stressed the fact of creation as a source of hope. Creation conveys to man the grace of God, but at the same time also the infinite power of Yahweh, which had indeed been used to destroy Israel, but now is going to be provided as a source of strength to the weary people. Actually the pre-exilic prophets too never acknowledged that chaos has ever been fully triumphant. Even if they acknowledged that chaos has taken hold, the tension between creation and chaos never lapses, although the tendency is to go to the side of chaos. The execution of divine judgement does not mean that the world order has ended. The punishment of Israel does not mean the end of creation. God is free but His constancy is still with Him. This is why in the midst of a message of total destruction there could linger a longing for peace and hope in the prophets such as Amos and Jeremiah.



Although DI was influenced by cultic materials in his proclamation he did not exactly follow the patterns of the cult. Although Babylon falls under judgement, Persia does not. Israel is saved, but comes under prophetic fire because of the reluctant and sceptical reaction of the nation towards the prophetic message. Even if Israel is saved never again shall she regard this salvation as granted. Concerning the foreign nations there is indeed a fundamental change in DI's thinking of the relationship between Israel and the nations. How they are not automatically regarded as enemies. Israel has a mission to be a light to them in a discreet and humble way. This is still far from saying that the nations are now receiving the same treatment as Israel in the presence of Yahweh. Israel is still the eigentum of Yahweh and they are not. But at least they are not pictured as being wiped out from the face of the earth as in the cult.

We may then conclude that there is a certain pattern followed by the prophetic tradition in the way the creation concept is interpreted from Amos to DI. However, this is not a fixed or established pattern, for Isaiah, Micah and Ezekiel did not base their reflections on the concept of creation although they too, spoke of judgement towards the nation (which imply that they also have the same "domain assumption" as the others) and could also be brought to reverse the context of certain traditional themes from salvation to judgement.<sup>4</sup> Isaiah referred to the concept of

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4. Nahum is neither concerned with creation nor with judgement to the nation and so is not germane to our discussion.



Zion's inviolability. In this case he is ambivalent. We have seen above that probably Isaiah did not regard Zion's inviolability as granted. Zion is inviolable as long as the people maintain their purity. It could, however, mean that Isaiah still held high regard for Zion. This is why we have the picture of the glory of the restored Zion in Is 2:2-5 and 4:2-6. Like Amos's reversal of the notion of Israel's election, Isaiah reversed the popular view of Zion's inviolability (Is 8:10, 18) to make Yahweh's judgement on Jerusalem possible. But still, the ideals contained in this view live on and continue to provide the prophet with hope for the future. What about Micah? According to A.S. van der Woude, Micah's thinking is directed against the theology of Zion.<sup>5</sup> Zion is not inviolable at all. She shall be flattened to the earth and Jerusalem shall be turned into rabble (Mic 3:2). All the optimistic sayings in Micah are from his opponents who tried to defend the theology of Zion. There is no salvation for the people, except after they have been driven into exile (Mic 4:10, "There you shall be rescued, there the Lord will redeem you..."). The picture of the glory of the restored Zion in Mic 4:1-5 according to van der Woude is actually a quotation from Is 2:2-5 by the opponents of Micah!<sup>6</sup> In our opinion, however, Micah's thinking is still within the framework of Zion's tradition. Like Isaiah, here too Micah reversed the popular meaning of Zion as the dwelling place of God which is immune from evil

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5. A.S. van der Woude, "Micah in dispute with the pseudo-prophets", VT 19 (1969), pp. 244-60.

6. van der Woude, "Micah IV:1-5: an instance of the pseudo-prophets quoting Isaiah", Symbolae Biblicae et Mesopotamicae...., Leiden, 1973.

(Mic 3:11b) to become the very reason of its doom (Mic 3:12).

Although it is possible that the reference to the glory of Zion came from Micah's opponents, we think probably they also originated from the prophet. The same phenomenon is also evident in Ezekiel, Ezek 40-48 which contains the programme of the restoration of the temple (and its cultus) and of the land has as one of its backgrounds the tradition of Zion.<sup>7</sup>

It is apparent that both the concepts of creation and Zion the city of God were used alternatively in the prophetic reflection on divine judgement and salvation to the nation. But, if we may be allowed to make an evaluation, in our opinion the concept of creation is more adequate in dealing with this kind of reflection. We can discern the reasons of the 'prophetic reversals' in Amos and Jeremiah. It is because Yahweh is Creator and free. This emphasis is lacking in Isaiah, Micah and Ezekiel. We do not mean that the notion of God's freedom is unknown to them, but that this notion is not given a concrete expression in their reflections. The fullest expression of the subject of divine justice in terms of creation theology, as we have seen above, is given in DI.

We can now give a general conclusion to our work. The prophetic interpretation of creation conveys to us the conviction that Yahweh is the One who is free and transcends all concepts that human mind can

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7. Cf. J.D. Levenson, Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40-48, Scholars Press, Missoula, 1976. Ezek 40-48 is redacted by the Zadokite priestly theologians, but its core is probably from Ezekiel's own hand, see Levenson, op. cit., p. 112, or at least has an authentic basis in the prophet's message, see R.E. Clements, "The Ezekiel tradition", Israel's Prophetic Tradition, R. Coggins, et al., (eds.), Cambridge-Sydney, 1982, p. 129.

ever think about Him. Yahweh cannot be domesticated by knowledge oriented towards the past, nor can He be attached to a pious view of existence. The traditional materials are not regarded as simple elements of tradition, but always attached to the freedom of Yahweh.<sup>8</sup>

The lawsuit form taken from the Hittite vassal treaties, in which the prosecutor and the judge is the one and the same person suits this aspect of the freedom of God in relation to the order of the world. But at the same time, while upholding the transcendence of Yahweh as Creator, the prophets also paid attention to the fact of creation. Creation in the prophet tradition can never be disposed by Yahweh, even if He is acknowledged as destroyer, because creation is the sign of the grace of this free God. In life, both as individuals or as a nation, Israel will face many difficulties and catastrophes natural and historical, but creation stands as a guarantee that all shall become right again because of Yahweh's triumph in the past once and for all. So it could be asked whether it is still valid to hold that creation and history do not belong together. The prophets proved that they are able to relate the creatorship of God in the cult with His dealings in the realities of history. The only difficulty that needs clarification seems to be the insistence that Yahweh as a free God remains attached to one nation specifically, even if He is at the same time the Creator of all. On this contradiction the prophetic tradition, and even the whole of the OT is silent. Apparently there is tension

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8. Here we are borrowing Zimmerli's words, op. cit., p. 74.



between creation theology and election theology in the OT.<sup>9</sup> Despite this, the dynamic inter-action between the cultic and the prophetic interpretations of faith could inspire us today to re-define the relationship between worship and work, contemplation and struggle, which all too often stand polarised from each other.

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9. Only in this sense can we agree with K.H. Bernhardt's suggestion in *N72*, TDOT I, pp. 245-49, that creation in the OT is related to election. This tension in the relationship between creation theology and election make us view with reservation the statement of H.H. Schmid in "Schöpfung, Gerechtigkeit und Heil: Schöpfungstheologie als Gesamthorizont biblischer Theologie", ZThK 70 (1973), pp. 1-19, that creation theology is the Gesamthorizont of the OT.

APPENDICESAppendix A    Terminologies for Creation

## 1. Verbs of creating.

a.  $\text{לשׁוּ}$ .

The most common verb used in the OT to denote God's activity in creating is  $\text{לשׁוּ}$ .<sup>1</sup> Concerning the object of  $\text{לשׁוּ}$  with God as its subject, it is interesting to note that except in relation to creation of man and the world, it is rarely applied to concrete objects. We read that God made garments for man and his wife (Gen. 3:21); the tablets were described as  $\text{לשׁוּעַן}$  of God (Ex. 32:16). Other less concrete objects are Israel as a nation (Deut. 32:6, 15; in the last verse it is in parallel with  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  and  $\text{בְּנֵי}$ ; Is. 51:13; 54:5; Ps. 95:6; Hos. 8:14), and the nations (Deut. 26:19; Is. 17:7 - men, but in the context of the nations). But the word is almost always used for cosmic entities, such as for "heaven and earth";<sup>2</sup> the sea (Ex. 20:11; Pss. 95:5; 146:6; Neh. 9:6); heaven as  $\text{לשׁוּעַן}$  of Yahweh's hands (Ps. 102:26); connected with the word of Yahweh concerning the heavens (Ps. 33:6); day (Ps. 118:24); 10x in the P narrative of creation (Gen. 1:1-2:4a); almost

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1. See J. Vollmer in THAT II, p.367.

2. Ex. 20:11; 31:17; 2 Kings 19:15; Pss. 115:14; 121:2; 124:8; Is. 37:16; Jer. 32:17; 2 Chron. 2:12. In Neh. 9:6 it was used not to "heaven and earth" as an expression, but there  $\text{לשׁוּ}$  was used once to refer to "heaven, the heaven of the heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is in them, the seas and all that is in them". In fact, only in Gen. 1:1 is "heaven and earth" not related to  $\text{לשׁוּ}$ . There  $\text{אֶרֶץ}$  is used instead. In Jer. 33:2  $\text{לשׁוּ}$  was used for the earth in parallel with  $\text{בְּנֵי}$  and  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$ .

always in the J narrative (Gen. 2:4b-25, except three occurrences of  $\text{לָּבַד}$  ), in Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.<sup>3</sup>

When was  $\text{לָּבַד}$  with God as subject applied to these cosmic entities? The use of analogy of human 'creative' activity for God logically implies a belief in God as a 'creative' being. This implication does not necessarily mean that He is also the Creator of the world. There is a categorical difference between God as maker of garments and tablets and God as maker of heaven and earth. The passages in Exodus, 2 Kings, the Psalms and Jeremiah are pre-exilic; the rest are late, but could have used older materials. As we know, the J narrative came from the 10th Century BC. It seems that the application of

$\text{לָּבַד}$  to cosmic creation is early. J. P. Hyatt asked whether Yahweh was originally a creator deity. He rightly refuted Albright's opinion that the name of Yahweh means "he that causes to be" on philological grounds.<sup>4</sup> But even if the name of a deity does not imply that He is Creator, He could still be regarded as Creator since the earliest times. So the title of Hyatt's article is somewhat misleading.

#### b. $\text{לָּבַד}$ .

It has been claimed that  $\text{לָּבַד}$  is an older, concrete synonym of  $\text{לָּבַד}$ .<sup>5</sup> But this claim is not conclusive. Both  $\text{לָּבַד}$  and  $\text{לָּבַד}$  are used for concrete and less

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3.  $\text{לָּבַד}$  appears once in Ecclesiastes (12:1). It could be spurious, because it is not found in any other wisdom literature. But could it also be that something special is conveyed in its use there?

4. J. P. Hyatt, "Was Yahweh originally a creator deity?", JBL LXXXVI (1967), pp.369-77; Cf. R. de Vaux, "The Revelation of the divine name YHWH" in Proclamation and Presence pp. 48-75.

5. In KBH, p.141.



concrete objects. As verbs of creating, both could possibly have originated in the pre-exilic period.  $\text{קָצַץ}$  is apparently derived from the vocabulary of the language of pottery. This fact is usually employed to stress the way something that was carefully made, to distinguish it from

$\text{קָצַץ}$ . Thus in the J narrative of creation  $\text{קָצַץ}$  appears three times to refer to the creation of man, while  $\text{קָצַץ}$  is used for other objects. But we should not make too much of this, because in other instances such as in Is. 29:16; 64:7; Job 10:9  $\text{קָצַץ}$  appears in parallel with  $\text{קָצַץ}$ .

$\text{קָצַץ}$  could be used in a metaphorical sense, either for man or for God (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; 2 Kings 19:25; Is. 46:11). Most of the occurrences of  $\text{קָצַץ}$  with God as subject refer to man. In DI it is used on many occasions in relation with Israel. Only in Pss. 74:17; 95:5 and 90:2; Jer. 33:2; Is. 45:7 and 45:18 does it refer to cosmic entities. In Ps. 104:26 it is connected with Leviathan.

### c. $\text{קָצַץ}$ .

$\text{קָצַץ}$  is the least used word. In fact, it is a rare word in the OT.<sup>6</sup> Apparently it does not originally belong to human 'creative' vocabulary of verbs. In all instances of its occurrences God is its subject. Although the use of the other verbs with God as subject implied the distinctiveness of God's activity,  $\text{קָצַץ}$  seems to stress

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6. 48x (16 of them in DI, 10 in Genesis).

special word for God's activity and whether this has any particular significance besides its exclusive use for God. Its usage in the exilic period as in DI by no means provides satisfactory information about its importance. There it is frequently used with  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  and  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  as parallel. These three verbs with the same subject are used for interchangeable objects, and even the same object with the same subject is used with the three verbs interchangeably! This makes it difficult to see from the objects alone the significance of  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$ . But at least it shows us the possibility that in DI  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  might be already a common word used alternatively with the other verbs and that God has been permanently the subject of  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  since the pre-exilic period.

Then the problem whether  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  belongs first to the vocabulary of cosmic creation words and then applied to history or should it be the other way round; from the vocabulary of words in a context of history to its application to a context of cosmic creation, as e.g. in Ex. 34:10 seems to be a secondary matter. As with  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  and  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$ , it is used in historical descriptions as well as in reference to cosmic entities. The overall context of the occurrences of  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  has also been put forward as signifying the intention of its usage. J. L. Crenshaw has concluded from his analysis of the context of the word that all the occurrences of  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  outside DI

this specifically. The references to  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  in Josh. 17:15, 18;  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  in Ezek. 21:24(2x) and 23:47 have been put forward as having a possible etymology for the usage of this word to human activity.<sup>7</sup> But this is not convincing. Even if they have the same three consonants it is not clear that they come from the same root as  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$ .

Because of the many supposed connotations of this word, we need to examine its occurrences more thoroughly than  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  and  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$ . From the objects of  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  we can see that it is used for various things. In DI it is used for Jacob-Israel, mankind, craftsmen, cosmic entities, new things in a historical context. It is interesting that here what was usually in the context of the occurrence of  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  can also be said in direct relation with it. Thus we see in Is. 45:8 that salvation/deliverance is the object of  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$ .

Some have argued that the use of  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  with God as subject occurred in the exilic period and consequently, all the occurrences of  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  in the pre-exilic writings has to be considered as redactional work in later or post-exilic period.<sup>8</sup> But how can they come to that conclusion? The sparseness of this word in the pre-exilic writings cannot be put forward as evidence of its spuriousness, because it is precisely the rarity of  $\text{לְעֹלָם}$  that makes it difficult to decide the date of its employment as a

7. BDB, p.135.

8. In Foerster, TDNT III, pp.1000-5; Bernhardt, TDOT I, pp.245-49 (with the possible exception of a pre-exilic date for Num. 16:30 and Ps. 89:13,48); W. H. Schmidt, Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift, p.165 fn 2.



point to a context of judgement.<sup>9</sup> But this is not always so. If the contexts of  $\text{N}72$  in DI are of salvation (even in Is. 45:7 where God is said as  $\text{N}712$ ), then we ought to ask whether  $\text{N}72$  can be used in either salvific or judgemental context. In other words,  $\text{N}72$  in itself does not convey a special meaning, in the sense that it conveys judgement or salvation. For instance, can we hold that the occurrence of  $\text{N}72$  in Deut. 4:32 says anything? Actually it has nothing to do with the content of the narrative. Apart from that we also do not think that the narrative has a judgemental character. Here it seems that the word was already used as a common expression. We have strong reservations about what Crenshaw has done in assuming the judgemental context of  $\text{N}72$  in Gen. 1-11 by regarding its occurrences before the story of the Flood. We hold to the principle of cumulative narrative, that a story which is told first has its own independence, even when it is clear that it is subsequently followed by a second story with a different context from the first. Crenshaw dismisses the context of  $\text{N}72$  in DI in his article because its connection there is concerned with imminent deliverance and so irrelevant to his problem. Actually he should ask why is the context of  $\text{N}72$  in DI salvific and why not so outside DI, such as in the 'doxologies' in the book of Amos. Is it not possible that DI was only continuing certain traditions, with some modifications?

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9. J. L. Crenshaw, "YHWH Seba'ôt Šemô: a form critical analysis", pp.156-75; and in his Hymnic Affirmation of Divine Justice, pp.60-64.

The different renderings of  $\aleph 72$  in the LXX could be interpreted as an indication that the translators lack an understanding of creation in the Hebrew sense (which is supposed to be creatio ex nihilo) and used instead terminologies which belong to creation by a demiurge.<sup>10</sup> But if the MT itself nowhere implies that  $\aleph 72$  is concerned with creatio ex nihilo then the LXX renderings of  $\aleph 72$  could not be used to accuse the LXX translators as lacking an understanding of the meaning of creation in the Hebrew sense.

We may conclude our discussion on  $\aleph 72$ . Both the MT and the LXX give no indication that  $\aleph 72$  must be seen as implying the principle of creation out of nothing. Of course it is a special word because it only has God as subject. And it may be that there is an emphasis on the createdness of the object or the transcendentness of the subject whenever  $\aleph 72$  is used. But apart from that  $\aleph 72$  is not pregnant with a special meaning or specifically related to a certain context.

## 2. Other words

### a. $\eta 1 p$ .

$\eta 1 p$  is usually translated as 'to get', 'to acquire'.

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10. While translating  $\aleph 72$  consistently in Genesis with  $\pi o i \epsilon \omega$  and in the Psalms with  $\kappa \tau i \xi \omega$ , the LXX rendered  $\aleph 72$  in DI as  $\kappa \tau i \xi \omega$  (Is. 45:7, 8),  $\kappa \alpha \tau \alpha \delta \epsilon i \kappa \nu \sigma \mu i$  (Is. 40:26; 41:20; 43:15),  $\kappa \alpha \tau \alpha \sigma \kappa \epsilon \upsilon \alpha \lambda \omega$  (Is. 40:28; 43:7; 45:7),  $\pi o i \epsilon \omega$  (Is. 42:5; 43:1; 45:7, 12, 18),  $\gamma i \nu \epsilon \tau \alpha i$  (Is. 48:7). Outside Genesis, DI and the Psalms,  $\aleph 72$  is translated with  $\kappa \tau i \xi \omega$  (Ecc. 12:1; Jer. 38:22; Deut. 4:32; Mal. 2:10; Amos 4:13; Ezek. 28:14, 15). Ezek. 21:30 has  $\gamma \epsilon \gamma \epsilon \nu \nu \epsilon \sigma \alpha i$ ; Num. 16:30  $\delta \epsilon i \xi \alpha i$ ; Ex. 34:10,  $\gamma \epsilon \gamma \omicron \nu \epsilon \nu$ ; Is. 65:17, 18,  $\epsilon \sigma \tau i \gamma \alpha \rho$  and  $\pi o i \epsilon \omega$ . Most of the translation of  $\aleph 72$  in the LXX then is  $\kappa \tau i \xi \omega$  (17x), compared with  $\pi o i \epsilon \omega$  (13x).



But frequently it is also used for God in a creating sense as in Gen. 14:19, 22. This passage is commonly regarded as ancient and belongs to an El tradition which was associated with the cult at Jerusalem.<sup>11</sup> Later on there was an identification of El and Yahweh (Deut. 32:4-6; 8:9; Num. 23:22:24:8; explicit identification - Num. 23:8; later explanation - Ex. 6:2-4). There is a connection between Gen. 14:19 and the title "Yahweh, Maker of heaven and earth" (Pss. 115:15; 124:8; 134:4; 146:6; 121:2). They all occurred in a context of blessing. The reason of the shift from  $\text{אל}$  to  $\text{אלהים}$  is probably the procreative associations of  $\text{אל}$  in Canaanite and early Israelite usage.<sup>12</sup> The association still shows in Deut. 32:6. In Gen. 4:1  $\text{אל}$  was used for giving birth. In Ex. 15:16, which was translated as "purchase" by the RSV might also be translated as "create".<sup>13</sup> In a recent examination on the occurrences of  $\text{אל}$  in the OT,

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11. N. C. Habel, "Yahweh, Maker of Heaven and Earth: a study in tradition criticism", JBL 91 (1972), pp.321-37; Ringgren, Israelite Religion, pp.104-5; Emerton, "The Riddle of Genesis XIV", VT 21 (1971), pp.401-39. Habel thinks that  $\text{אל}$  in Gen. 14:19, 22 has some associations with the title of El, 'l qn 'rs. This is not without problem because qn 'rs is not an Ugaritic, but a Phoenician title. The same title was found in a late Punic writing which in the form of El Kunirsa was probably put in a Canaanite myth that has been translated into the Hittite language, cf. Ringgren, Religions of the Ancient Near East, p.130. While admitting this M. Pope in El in the Ugaritic Texts, SVT II, (1955), p.52f, still asks: how could the  $\text{ש}$  become  $\text{ל}$ ? M. Wakeman on the other hand thinks that the same word might be spelled with  $\text{ש}$  or  $\text{ל}$  at different times, God's Battle with the Monster, pp.71-72, esp. fn 2.

12. Habel, op.cit., pp.324-25.

13. B. Vawter, "Wisdom and Creation", JBL 99/2 (1980), pp.205-16.



B. Vawter denies that  $\text{נָסַח}$  could be translated as "create". Prov. 8:22 and Job 28 are used as the basis for his argument. Although he admitted that "create" as the translation for  $\text{נָסַח}$  is ancient, he thinks that there might be a possibility of the ancient versions, e.g. the LXX misreading it. In Prov. 8:22  $\epsilon\kappa\tau\iota\varsigma\epsilon$  is probably a misreading of  $\epsilon\kappa\tau\eta\varsigma\alpha\tau\omicron$  (p.207). But as we have seen above, the use of  $\text{נָסַח}$  in the sense of giving birth is not denied in several cases as in Gen. 4:1 and Pos. 139:13. On the other hand the occurrences of  $\text{נָסַח}$  could also have associations with procreation as we can see in Ps. 89:48 and Ezek. 21:30 (the LXX in fact translated  $\text{נָסַח}$  in the latter with  $\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\nu\nu\epsilon\varsigma\alpha\iota$ ). Although it is important to keep the distinction between creation and procreation in the OT we must not make too much of this. Prov. 8:22 and Job 28 are difficult passages, but they too, in our opinion, must be connected with creation, whatever ambiguous this connection seems to us.

b.  $\text{בָּנָה}$  and  $\text{בָּנוּ}$ .

$\text{בָּנָה}$  and  $\text{בָּנוּ}$  came from the language of architecture. They are applied to God from the early times.<sup>14</sup> God as subject of  $\text{בָּנָה}$  can be used for diverse subjects. He builds a house (Ps. 127:1, but in a figurative context); Jerusalem (Ps. 147:2); the woman (Gen. 2:22); Israel (Ps. 28:5; Jer. 24:6; 31:4; 33:7; 42:10; 45:4); earth (Pss. 8:3; 119:90; Jer. 33:2 -

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14. Habel, op.cit., p.323, associates this with the title of El in Ugaritic: bny bnwt, "builder of things" or "creator of the things created".

parallels  $\eta\psi\gamma$  and  $\eta\psi'$  ); heavenly bodies (Ps. 74:16). In Ps. 78:69 Yahweh is described as building His sanctuary like the high heavens, and founded it in the same way He founded ( $\eta\psi'$ ) the earth. The same combination of the two words is found again in Amos 9:6. Other occurrences of  $\eta\psi'$  are found in the pre-exilic psalms (Pss. 24:3; 104:5; 102:26; 89:12).

c.  $\eta\psi$  and  $\eta\psi\psi$ .

$\eta\psi$  and its polel form  $\eta\psi\psi$  are also used to denote God's activity. It is used in Deut. 32:6 in parallel with  $\eta\psi\gamma$  and  $\eta\psi\psi$ . In Ps. 119:73 and Job 31:15 it is in parallel with  $\eta\psi\gamma$ . Both refer to the fashioning of men. Other occurrences: Pss. 93:1; 96:10, which is identical with 1 Chron. 16:30; 24:2; 119:90; 8:4; Prov. 31:9.

d.  $\psi\psi\gamma$ .

If used in a cosmic creation sense  $\psi\psi\gamma$  is related to both heaven/sky (Job 37:18; cf. Gen. 1; Pss. 19:2; 150:1; Ezek. 1:22, 23, 25, 26; Os. 136:6 - preserving old cultic tradition) and earth (Is. 42.5). The use of  $\psi\psi\gamma$  in DI shows that he used the old cultic tradition of the subduing of chaos.<sup>15</sup>

Our examinations of the words in a, b, c and d all seem to point that they were used earlier than the verbs of creating, but continued to be used till the post-exilic period.

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15. Ludwig, "The Tradition of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah", pp.347-49.

e.  $\text{לַעֲשׂוֹת}$  and  $\text{לָמַד}$ .

Unlike  $\text{לָמַד}$ ,  $\text{לַעֲשׂוֹת}$  with God as subject rarely refers to cosmic entities. It is used in reference to God's work in providence (Deut. 32:4; Is. 5:12; Job 36:24); deliverance (Ps. 44:2; 77:13); His work in judgement (Pss. 64:10; 95:9; Job 1:5).<sup>16</sup>

$\text{לָמַד}$ , "to stretch out", was usually applied to God's arm in His act of blessing (mostly in Deuteronomy, 15x) and punishing (Is. 5:25; 23:11; 7x in Ezek; Ex. 7:5). This usage is most probably from Israel's wandering traditions, where Yahweh was believed to dwell in a tent (tabernacle). Later on it is used in a cosmic sense like stretching out or bending the heavens (Pss. 18:10; 144:5; 2 Sam. 22:10). Here it is still difficult to decide whether  $\text{לָמַד}$  is a word belonging to the words used in a context of creation. It seems more at home in a theophany context. Not until in Jer 27:5-6 did we read about a combination of  $\text{לָמַד}$  referring to God's arm and  $\text{לָשׁוּב}$  referring to the earth. But even in this passage  $\text{לָמַד}$  is not directly related to creation.

The phrase  $\text{לָמַדְתָּ שְׁמִי}$  is more clearly in the framework of creation, as can be seen from its occurrences in DI. Does it mean that  $\text{לָמַד}$  first come to be applied to cosmic objects in the exilic period? Its usage in Job (9:8; 26:7), Zech. 12:1 are certainly later than in DI, but what about Ps. 104:2 and Jer. 10:12 51:15 which

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16. See BDB, p.821.



we hold as pre-exilic? It seems that **לָמַד** from the theophanic vocabulary later (but still before the exile) came to be used in a creation context.<sup>17</sup> But, as we have seen above, it does not have to mean that theophany belongs to creation. All the occurrences of **לָמַד** in the creation passages in the OT do not give the impression of violence as they do in its occurrences in the theophanic passages.

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17. Contra StuhlmueLLer, Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah, p.221.

Appendix B Titles for God

1. צבאות יהוה

The epithet צבאות יהוה appears 240 times in the OT.<sup>17</sup> The meaning is not fully clear. Cross tried to translate it as "Creator of the heavenly armies", which relates the epithet with the concept of creation.<sup>18</sup> But is this really so?

We can distinguish three attempts to understand the meaning of צבאות יהוה from scholarly discussions.<sup>19</sup>

- a. it is a reference to the military hosts of Israel or the combined militias of Judah and Israel.
- b. the epithet is used to refer to the hosts of heaven (whether the stars, the angels or other heavenly beings), the degraded Canaanite pantheon, or subjugated demons.
- c. it stands for "powers" in a non-concrete sense, by regarding it as an abstract plural "Sabaothness", which means omnipotence.

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17. In all, the occurrences of צבאות in relation with the God of Israel appear 285 times. Besides יהוה צבאות, there are other variations: האדון יהוה צבאות (5x); אדני יהוה צבאות (15x); יהוה אלהי הצבאות (2x); יהוה אלהי צבאות (1x); אדני יהוה אלהי הצבאות (1x); יהוה אלהי צבאות (14x); יהוה אלהים צבאות (4x); אלהי צבאות (2x); see A.S. van der Woude in THAT, II, pp.498-507.

18. See p.41 above.

19. Besides van der Woude's article above: B.W. Anderson in IDB, E-G and K-Q; Koehler, Old Testament Theology, pp.49-50; Fohrer, History of the Israelite Religion, pp.164-5; Crenshaw, Hymnic Affirmation and Divine Justice, pp.15-23.

The LXX interprets the phrase in the following ways.<sup>20</sup>

a. as having a genitive relationship to Yahweh. This in turn could be seen in a concrete sense: Yahweh of hosts (LXX: *ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΩΝ*); or in an abstract sense: Yahweh of Hosts (LXX: *ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ* ).

b. the epithet has to be seen as an apposition to Yahweh. Here *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* has almost come to be regarded as a proper name (LXX: *ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΣΑΒΑΩΘ* ). Probably a and b in the first description and a in the second one come closer to the meaning of the epithet in its development. The epithet is probably derived from the armies of Israel, and has a connection with the Ark at Shiloh (see 1 Sam 17:45; 2 Sam 6:2), where Yahweh is conceived as fighting for His people.<sup>21</sup>

20. See Crenshaw, *op.cit.*, p.15-16

21. Cf. Zimmerli, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*, p.75. For opposite opinions see Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, I, pp.192-3 and Crenshaw, *op.cit.*, pp.20-1, fn.57, 58. According to Eichrodt 1 Sam 17:45 is late; the phrase *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת*, which is common in Deuteronomistic writings, P and the Psalms refers to people in general and not soldiers in particular. According to him the epithet means the whole universe. The weak point in Eichrodt's argument is that in 1 Sam 17:45 *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* is connected with *יְהוָה*, while *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* directly comes after *יְהוָה*. Maybe later it is common to use the phrase *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת*, but this cannot be said of 1 Sam 17:45! Crenshaw accepts V. Maag's thesis, which regard *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* as numerous Canaanite spirits of the sky, earth and underworld that have been depotentialized and made servants of Yahweh. Our difference from Crenshaw is that while he regards *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* as later becoming attached to the palladium at Shiloh, we think it should be the other way round: that which is connected with Shiloh later was expanded to include either the degraded Canaanite spirits or the hosts of heaven.



Later it developed to become a title (with its various formulations) which accompanied supplications of salvation to Yahweh, to emphasize Him as a concerned and living God. This can be seen in the liturgical traditions (Pss 59:6; 80:5, 8, 15; 84:1-3, 8, 12). Ps 80 is a community lament; Ps 84 one of the Zion songs.<sup>22</sup> Ps 80 is of northern provenance.<sup>23</sup> Could it be that the epithet in Ps 84 too is an indication of elements from the north incorporated in the Jerusalem cult? There is also a possibility that these psalms are related to the 'doxologies' in the book of Amos.

The use of אלהים חי with respect to Yahweh as a living God also appears in the pre-exilic prophets, in Isaiah and Jeremiah, either in the context of trust in Yahweh or as a reaction to the mockers of Him. Is 3:15 and 5:24 is in the context of judgement to a group of oppressors within the nation; 6:3, 5 and 8:13, judgement to the people; 9:6 refers to a context of hope, but from v.8 it is again judgement. Contrary to the opinion of Cross, we see no sufficient evidence to prove that the epithet generally implies a creation background. Most of the occurrences of אלהים חי are related to historical situations, in which Yahweh as a living God is asked to save and to judge. Interestingly, now it is not only foreign nations that come into judgement, but also people or groups of people within the nation. Only four or five passages are related to

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22. Many regard this psalm as pre-exilic; Fohrer, however, holds to a post-exilic date, see his Introduction to the Old Testament, pp.256-66.

23. A.A. Anderson, Psalms, II, p.581.

creation.<sup>24</sup> The case is somewhat different if we look at the occurrences of the phrase יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שָׁמַיִם.<sup>25</sup> Its background in Is 47:4 and 48:2 is historical. The context of the former is salvation to Israel, judgement to Babylon. The latter refers to the name of יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת as the protection of Jacob, but at once stressed that Jacob misunderstood or misuses this protection as something that can be taken for granted. Although the background is historical, in vv. 12-13 there is a reflection on creation. The background of Is 51:15 is of a Chaoskampf, which in turn is related to creation. The same context appears in Jeremiah<sup>26</sup> and Amos 4:13. Amos 5:27

24. Ps 89:9; Is 37:16; Amos 9:5; Jer 27:4-6; Is 6:3, 5 (but not explicit). Ps 89 is a reflection in history which refers to creation. So is Is 37:16. See here one of the fallacies of contrasting creation with history.
25. This is rightly proposed by Crenshaw in "YHWH Seba 'ôl Semô: A form critical analysis". However, we disagree with him on the question of date. It is not necessary that this phrase should belong to post-exilic period.
26. Jer 10:16; 51:19; 31:35; 32:18; 46:18; 48:15; 50:34; 51:57. All of them are in a context of judgement, mostly concerning foreign nations, except 31:35 which is of salvation. The occurrences of יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת in Jeremiah have been suspected as exilic additions. The LXX has fewer uses of them. The same suspicion holds for the form יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שָׁמַיִם. But if Is 51:15 could be proved as pre-exilic or has pre-exilic roots, then there is not reason to doubt their authenticity in Jeremiah. In BHS most of the usages of יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת and its various formulations are retained except proposals for deletion in Jer 2:19; 9:6; 16; 11:22.



however, has a historical background. The overwhelming impression of the context of יהוה צבאות שמו, except in DI, is of judgement. F. Crüsemann observes the close connection between יהוה צבאות שמו and the form יהוה.....שמו.<sup>27</sup> From examinations of the contexts of יהוה צבאות שמו he concludes that it is connected to participial predicates. Now participial predicates belong to participial hymns, which are characterized by common constitutive elements of ancient Near Eastern religions. By using Is 51:15 as a starting point (he regards it as pre-exilic, or has pre-exilic roots), Crüsemann thinks that the form יהוה.....שמו was used in Israel to take over these hymns and apply them to Yahweh.

It is true that the appearances of יהוה צבאות שמו in many cases imply the claim of the creatorship of Yahweh over the whole universe, but this could be from the development of יהוה צבאות as He who is fighting for His people to Yahweh as a living God, who reacts against the enemies of His people, but who can also react against His own people if they transgress against Him, to יהוה צבאות שמו where the idea of the living God was expanded to the realm of the universe. In other words, it is not that יהוה צבאות was later added or inserted in the form יהוה.....שמו, but that שמו was later added to יהוה צבאות. This development to יהוה צבאות שמו might be influenced by the usage of the cry יהוה שמו.

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27. F. Crüsemann, Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel, pp.86-153, esp. pp.86-97.



as can be seen in Ex 15:3; Ps 68:4; Jer 33:2; Amos 5:8 and 9:6.<sup>28</sup>

## 2. Yahweh as King

When Isaiah of Jerusalem experienced a vision of God (Is 6:5), he saw Him as **המלך יהוה צבאות**. The parallel mention of the epithet with Yahweh's title as King in this and other passages (Pss 24:10; 84:1, 3; Jer 46:18; 48:15) raises the problem whether they originally belong together, or whether the title **מלך** becomes attached to the other at a later time. This in turn brought out the question of the origin of the idea of the kingship of Yahweh, whether it is caused by Canaanite influences during the establishment of the monarchy, in which the monarchical pattern of rule was applied to Yahweh's rule in the cult, or whether it has always been known as such in Israel. If the epithet **צבאות** has always been connected with the name of Yahweh as we maintain above, then the problem in Ps 24:7ff and Is 6:5 is to decide whether the titles **מלך** and **הכבוד** and **מלך** were added later. It is known that Ps 29 was originally an ancient Canaanite hymn to Baal, which was adapted to suit Israelite worship.<sup>29</sup> The Leitwort there is **גורל**. From this Westermann concludes that the occurrences of **גורל** in Ps 24 are also from the same hymnic sources.<sup>30</sup>

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28. However, we should not make too much of them. Ex 15:3 is suspected as late, and it is clear that its background is not of creation. Jer 33:2 is usually suspected (the text is somewhat unclear), but nevertheless we included it within creation, as well as Amos 5:8 and 9:6.

29. A.A. Anderson, op.cit., I, p.233.

30. Westermann in THAT, I, p.794f. According to him the psalm belongs to Jerusalem cult. He translated **מלך** **גורל** as "König der Herrlichkeit".

What about 74n?

In Judg 8:22, 23 we read that when the men of Israel asked Gideon to rule over them he refused with an answer: "Yahweh will rule over you." We get the impression that he meant to say that it is Yahweh who is the King of Israel.<sup>31</sup> This impression, however, was shattered when we continue to read the next chapter (9:6ff), where Abimelech was made King of Shechem after Gideon died. Was Gideon's answer an acknowledgment of Yahweh's kingship, or was it just a kind of diplomatic answer,<sup>32</sup> to hold to his role as a sort of caudillo? Was Abimelech's fruitless attempt a proof of the people's determination not to have human kings, or the failure of a much too advanced idea?

Anyway, Judg 8:22, 23 is rather weak to be held as confirming the antiquity of Yahweh's kingship, but not too weak to show that at least there was a mention about Yahweh's rule.

The so-called 'anti-monarchy' passages also seem to presuppose Yahweh as King.<sup>33</sup>

While most of the problems surrounding Yahweh's kingship are dealt with in chapter 3, a broad sketch is needed to give a picture of the present situation of scholarship.

31. The same impression holds for Num 23:21; Deut 33:5; Ps 74:12.

32. This possibility was put forward by S. Szikszai in IDB, K-Q.

33. 1 Sam 8:4-7, esp. v.7; Hos 8:4ff; 10:3; 13:9-11. On the other hand there are also 'pro-monarchy' passages in Judges with the formulation "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes" (see for instance Jdg 21:25).



Some scholars assume that Israel was originally theocratic and believed in Yahweh's kingship from the beginning.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, by pointing to the kingship of the gods as a major emphasis of the ancient Near Eastern mythological literature, in which the kingship is connected with the temple, other scholars hold that the idea was derived from outside Israel (Canaan) at the beginning of the reign of David and achieved its peak during the construction of Solomon's temple and after.<sup>35</sup> However, this thesis is ambiguous in itself. If kingship of the gods was a major emphasis in the neighbourhood of Israel, one ought to hesitate before ascribing such a reference to Yahweh in biblical literature as necessarily late.<sup>36</sup> It seems that another factor has to be considered too: the nature or character of the kingship of Yahweh and of the gods. Is there a difference between these two, and is the difference caused by the originality of the Israelite concept or is it caused by the working-over of foreign concepts? Is Yahweh King over Israel, over the whole

34. A. Alt, "Gedanken Über das Königtum Yahwes", Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel, II, München, 1953, pp.354-5. Alt sees Yahweh's kingship in the concept of His enthronement in the midst of the אֱלֹהִים. To him אֱלֹהִים means subordinate divine beings; M. Buber, Kingship of God, London, 1967. He traces the title of Yahweh as יהוה to the desert period; M.C. Lind, "The concept of political power in Ancient Israel", ASTI III (1970), pp.41-52.
35. J. Gray, "The Hebrew conception of the kingship of God", pp.268-285; "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and the Psalms", pp.1-29; W. Schmidt, Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel, BZAW 80, Berlin 1961. Von Rad, Old Testament Theology, I, pp.59-62; H.J. Kraus, Worship in Israel, p.204. He relates kingship of God with the temple. However he also admits that this kingship may have a source in the early tradition of the mountain as dwelling place of a high god.
36. Lind, op.cit.



world or over the other gods (in the heavenly realms)?

What is the nature of His relationship with human kings compared with this kind of relationship outside Israel?<sup>37</sup>

All these questions led to a compromising position: the use of the title  $\text{לְהוָה}$  for Yahweh is undoubtedly earlier (this maybe indigenous or early adaptation of Canaanite El worship), but received an impetus later at the monarchial period which combined the existing idea with the other more dynamic idea of kingship taken over from the Baalistic type of worship, where the deity achieved kingship through a victorious battle (which may or may not have a connection with creation).<sup>38</sup> Many passages in the Psalms suggested this type of Yahweh's kingship, as can be seen in Pss 47, 93, 96-99. These are the so-called "enthronement psalms" in which the particular feature is the phrase  $\text{לְהוָה יְהוָה}$

. The important thing in our study is to see in the light of the above problems whether the use of  $\text{לְהוָה}$  in the prophetic tradition is related to creation and in what kind of context is it used.

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37. Lind tried to emphasize (in our opinion too strongly) the exclusion of human kingship in the concept of the kingship of Yahweh.

38. Fohrer, History of Israelite Religion, pp.166-7; Ringgren, Israelite Religion, p.48.

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