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The Waves of the Deluge Breaking on Jonah the Intertextual Use of the Noachic Narrative in Jonah

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THE WAVES OF THE DELUGE BREAKING ON JONAH
THE INTERTEXTUAL USE OF THE NOACHIC NARRATIVE IN JONAH

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For Joy

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CONTENTS

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ABSTRACT

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Two overarching matters are considered: intertextual methodology and its application to the use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah. The intertextual methodology, the lesser of the two foci, employed within this study seeks a symbiotic relationship between the text and the reader. Textual evidence establishes the existence of the link while the reader's interaction with the texts explores the subtleties of the intertextual relationship based upon the textual evidence. The greater focus of the study is the application of that methodology to the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah. The link is textually established by various elements including, but not limited to, the unique setting of both narratives and the reflection of Noah's three sons in the three principal human characters of the book of Jonah. On the basis of such textual links, the reader explores various matters including, but not limited to, the gracious character of Yahweh, the role of human repentance, and the influence of the Noachic covenant upon all creation.

CHAPTER ONE

THESIS AND METHODOLOGY

The book of Jonah can and should be read intertextually with the Noachic narrative (Gen 6–9); that is the contention of this study. Justifying such a proposal demands the recognition of the central observation of intertextuality: readers do not exist *tabula rasa*; they approach texts having been formed and informed by other texts. Thus, the reading process prompts readers to recall related ideas encountered during the reading of previous texts. This phenomenon is not isolated to readers. Texts themselves are formed and informed by preceding texts. In other words, "[t]exts do not exist without other texts. During the reading of a text, the 'dejà-lu' of other texts interferes constantly."[1] Yet there is a debate both within literary and biblical scholarship regarding how the reader determines which preceding texts are to form and inform a given text. And so arises a cardinal issue within the field of intertextuality: does a text propose its own set of intertexts or does the reader establish the intertexts that will have a significant impact upon the meaning of the text? Or is this a false dichotomy?

This study contends that intertexts are to be determined by a symbiotic process involving both text and reader. The application of that methodology will focus upon the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative (Gen 6–9)[2] within the Jonah narrative (Jonah 1–4). The thesis for the study

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[1] Sjef van Tilborg et al., "Introduction," in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (ed. Sipke Draisma; Uitgeversmaatschappij: J. J. Kok-Kampen, 1989), 7.

[2] Though not specifically part of the Noachic narrative, Gen 10 also plays a significant role in the intertextual relationship as it sets forth the unfolding generations from Noah's three sons.

is: the book of Jonah purposefully borrows from the Noachic narrative as a means to deepen and enrich itself; a careful reading of the book of Jonah that recognizes this intertextual relationship will yield a correspondingly deeper and richer exposition of its meaning.

This chapter will serve as an entrée into the investigation of the intertextual relationship between the Jonah and Noachic narratives by establishing the methodology of the study. To achieve that end, attention is first given to the arguments for reader-based and textually-based intertextuality. Then, a symbiotic union of the two approaches is offered. Finally, a brief description of the ensuing chapters of the study, based upon the methodology established in this chapter, is given.

The Discipline(s) of Intertextuality

Both within the literary guild and within biblical scholarship, there are many persuasive voices arguing for the preeminence of the text or the reader. Both sets of voices are persuasive because each set recognizes a basic truth of the interpretive process. Self-reflective readers recognize the legitimate observation of reader-based intertextuality: a reader's presuppositions, formed and informed in part by previous texts, drive the interpretive work, including the identification (both consciously and unconsciously) of intertexts. So also, self-reflective readers recognize the legitimate concerns voiced by proponents of text-based intertextuality: interpretation driven solely by a reader's presuppositions, apart from the text itself, leads not to a reading of the text, but a reading of the reader as the sole text. Hence, this study strives to keep text and reader in dramatic tension as their symbiotic relationship allows a text's intertextuality to be mined. Before addressing the Jonah-Noachic intertextuality, these understandings need to be examined and evaluated in order to ascertain their respective strengths, shortcomings, and overall contributions to intertextual methodology.

The rival conceptions of the discipline are evident in the following definition:

Intertextuality—term coined by Julia Kristeva to refer to the systematic relationships and processes that govern the dynamic affiliation of texts with one another. Shaped by psychoanalytic and Marxist interests, Kristeva's intertextuality is a cultural phenomenon in which literature and other signifying systems are engaged. Texts within a given culture are (often unconsciously) read in light of one another; they "intersect" to form a "mosaic" in an ongoing process of absorption, transformation, and permutation of one another. Kristeva's social-semiotic orientation (shared by Barthes) contrasts with a restrictive literary view of intertextuality that concentrates on the "influence" of one text or narrator upon another (cf. Bloom, Hartman).[3]

The contrast is apparent and stark as the "social-semiotic orientation" of Kristeva and Barthes is contrasted with the "restrictive literary view" of Bloom and Hartman. A closer investigation of the arguments for these two rival understandings of intertextuality is indispensible for establishing a sound methodology for this study.

Reader-Oriented Intertextuality

That which was termed the "social-semiotic orientation" of intertextuality will be described as "reader-oriented intertextuality" within this study. This change in nomenclature is not only occasioned by the comparative simplicity of its description, but also by its focus upon the identity of the supposed key for identifying and interpreting intertextual links, namely the reader. The reader's central role within this understanding of intertextuality is highlighted by George Aichele and Gary Philips:

> On this view, meaning can no longer be thought of as an objective relation between text and extratextual reality, but instead it arises from the subjective, or ideological, juxtaposing of text with text *on behalf of* specific readers in specific historical/ material situations in order to produce new constellations of texts/ readers/ readings. Intertextual readings in turn cannot finally be justified except in terms of the readers' interests or desires to find or give meaning and the impossibility of doing this in any other way. What this suggests is that every interpretive method, no matter how rational, systematic, and scientific, is in an important way the expression of desire and of broader socio-cultural interests.[4]

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[3] George Aichele and Gary Philips, eds., "Glossary," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 300.

[4] George Aichele and Gary Philips, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisigesis, Intergesis," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 15.

Such an approach places the reader in a position of lordship over the text as all intertextual readings are justified solely in terms of the readers' interests and desires. This is offered as an exclusive means for studying intertextuality as it is deemed that intertextual interpretation by any other means is impossible! The significance of this facet of reader-oriented intertextuality cannot be overstated.

Nor can this description be described as an aberration within reader-oriented intertextuality. Timothy Beal is equally bold in his assessment of the reader's primacy in the exploration of intertextuality. He writes, "But what determines which intertextual relationships are legitimate and which are not? And what determines how "rightly" to negotiate those relationships once they are established? I suggest that the answer to these questions is: the reader's ideology."[5] Inasmuch as Beal places the reader's ideology in magisterial position over the text, it is not surprising that he refers to "biblical interpretation as *production* of meaning."[6] Thus, the text is described as being devoid of meaning apart from the reader's production and imposition of meaning upon the text.

Beth Laneel Tanner echoes such sentiments as she writes, "Intertextuality is not an innocent or objective enterprise. It is fraught with the ideology of the reader-writer or reader-editor."[7] Tanner is quite helpful in acknowledging the subjectivity involved in reader-oriented intertextuality. All readings are subject to the reader's own presuppositions, but what is a cause

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Emphasis theirs.

[5] Timothy K. Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality: Surplus of Meaning and Controlling the Means of Production," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Danna Nolan Fewell; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 28.

[6] Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality," 28. Emphasis his.

[7] Beth Laneel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms Through the Lens of Intertextuality* (Studies in Biblical Literature 26; New York, N.Y.: Peter Lang, 2001), 31.

for concern is when such subjective readings are given sole and final say over the text as if the text is void of communicative value itself.

The common usage of reader-oriented intertextuality within biblical studies ought not be surprising. A glance at various intertextual studies finds that as biblical scholars take hold of literary scholarship, they regularly lean upon those scholars who are given to reader-oriented intertextuality. For example, Yohan Pyeon's study of intertextuality within the book of Job draws upon literary critics who orient all intertextual reading and meaning solely to the reader. Pyeon writes:

> According to these literary critics [Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, and Howard Bloom], it is no longer the writer who is determinative of the intertext, but the reader… everything is text and everything has become intertext: the intertextual space shows the impossibility of living outside the unending text. Within this unending universe only the reader can make distinctions and give meaning.[8]

The empowering of the reader as the sole means of determining meaning is not an aberration in terms of description; Pyeon and others are bold to use phrases such as "only the reader" or "the reader alone" can determine meaning. Likewise, the scope of such reader-oriented intertextuality is not limited to a few works within biblical scholarship. In fact, there is a prevalence of reader-oriented intertextuality within biblical scholarship.[9]

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[8] Yohan Pyeon, *You Have Not Spoken What Is Right About Me: Intertextuality and the Book of Job* (Studies in Biblical Literature 45; New York, N.Y.: Peter Lang, 2003), 50.

[9] Timothy K. Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality: Surplus of Meaning and Controlling the Means of Production," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Danna Nolan Fewell; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 27–39; Danna Nolan Fewell, "Introduction" in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Danna Nolan Fewell; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 11–20; Beth Laneel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms Through the Lens of Intertextuality* (Studies in Biblical Literature 26; New York, N.Y.: Peter Lang, 2001); Sjef van Tilborg et al., "Introduction" in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (ed. Sipke Draisma; Uitgeversmaatschappij: J. J. Kok-Kampen, 1989), 7; Willem Vorster, "Intertextuality and Redaktionsgeschichte" in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (ed. Sipke Draisma; Uitgeversmaatschappij: J. J. Kok-Kampen, 1989), 15–26; Ellen van Wolde, "Trendy Intertextuality" in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (ed. Sipke Draisma; Uitgeversmaatschappij: J. J. Kok-Kampen, 1989), 43–9; et al.

Text-Oriented Intertextuality

Though the presence of reader-oriented intertextuality within biblical studies is predominant, there is a growing symphony of voices which has raised concern about the exclusive authority of the reader within intertextual interpretation. Though such voices arose out of a concern that the value of the text was being ignored, the voices have cascaded into a full-born argument in favor of the primacy of the text in the determination of meaning within the intertextual enterprise. One such voice is that of Brevard Childs, who writes:

> When Steins' theory of intertextuality eliminates the privileged status of the canonical context and removes all hermeneutical value from any form of authorial intent, an interpretive style emerges that runs directly contrary to the function of an authoritative canon which continues to serve a confessing community of faith and practice.[10]

Childs' dedication to canonical criticism prompts his concerns.[11] Yet, he is not alone. Ellen van Wolde, who employs reader-oriented intertextuality, also finds cause for concern in its current practice. Her description of reader-oriented intertextuality prompts a call for a textual foundation:

> Within this unending universe only the reader can make distinctions and give meaning… From this I would like to draw the conclusion that the concept of intertextuality as introduced by Kristeva is useful in clarifying the fact that a text is not only a self-contained structure but a differential one as well, and it can be meaningful when its later conceptual vagueness and universalism is limited. For a fruitful use a more limited notion of intertextuality is necessary… Intertextuality in a limited sense is confined to demonstrable relationships between texts.[12]

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[10] Brevard S. Childs, "Critique of Recent Intertextual Canonical Interpretation," *ZAW* 115 (2003): 177.

[11] Consider Childs' statement in his establishment of canonical criticism, "Because this literature has had a special history as the religious literature of ancient Israel, its peculiar features must be handled in a manner compatible to the material itself." Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress, 1978), 73.

[12] Ellen van Wolde, "Intertextuality: Ruth in Dialogue with Tamar," in *A Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods, and Strategies* (ed. Athalya Brenner and Carole Fontaine; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 428–9.

Thus, van Wolde recognizes not only that the reader plays a critical role within intertextuality, but also that the reader needs to limit such intertextual readings. Yet limitations call for criteria upon which the limitations can be drawn. The limiting criteria are found within the text itself, rather than the reader. While van Wolde takes stock of the importance of limiting intertextuality to demonstrable relationship between texts, she does not abandon the reader's role. Instead, she proposes to study intertextuality as "the interaction between texts and reader."[13] Yet she does not propose the needed textually-based criteria for limiting the otherwise boundless intertextuality. In order to fill that void, this study will propose such a criteria in chapter three.

Still other scholars join in the textual symphony. Susan Handelman describes the reader's interpretive work in terms of the text's revelation as she writes:

> … interpretation is not essentially separate from the text itself—an external act intruded upon it—but rather the extension of the text, the uncovering of the connective network of relations, a part of the continuous revelation of the text itself, at bottom, another aspect of the text.[14]

Just as biblical scholars who promoted reader-oriented intertextuality were influenced by literary critics supporting such a view (e.g., Julia Kristeva), there are literary scholars whose voices resonate with those biblical scholars who advocate a respect for the text's role within intertextual practice. One such literary scholar, Udo Hebel, argues that "the verification of a textual element as intertextually related allusion is the prerequisite for actualizing an evocative potential that is independent from the interpreter's individual disposition."[15] Hebel thus posits the importance of intertextual allusions being more than a product of the interpreter's (reader') own disposition (presuppositions), but that such allusions be ground upon the text itself. His position

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[13] Wolde, "Intertextuality," 432.

[14] Susan Handelman quoted in Jacob Neusner, *Canon and Connection: Intertextuality in Judaism* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1987), xi.

[15] Udo J. Hebel, "Toward a Descriptive Poetics of *Allusion*," in *Intertextuality* (ed. Heinrich F. Plett; Berlin: de

takes on an even stronger orientation as he goes on to describe those occasions in which "neither a verifiable referent nor any definite attribute guides the text's play with the reader" as "pseudo intertextuality."[16]

One of the more thorough arguments in favor of text-oriented intertextuality within biblical scholarship comes from Richard Schultz. He argues that "focusing on verbal parallels that offer a more extensive textual basis for positing an *intentional* interrelationship is a more viable approach to the 'ties that bind.'"[17] Schultz's concern for intentionality based upon textual evidence is a notable rejection of reader-oriented intertextuality. He goes even further by describing intertextuality as a text-based matter, yet even as he does so he does not lose sight of the role of the reader. He writes, "As a *text-based* phenomenon, intertextuality demands that the interpreter give attention both to author- and reader-related issues."[18] The recognition of such reader-related issues is critical as it eschews a modernistic naïveté which denies the subjectivity of each reader.

Of some concern, however, in Schultz's statement is his concern for "author-related issues." To this point, attention has been given to the role of the reader and the text within intertextuality, while the author has not been addressed. The rationale for such an approach is rather simple. The reader and text are both present and approachable for studying their contributions to the interpretive enterprise. The author, on the other hand, is not present and is often not identified. Interpretation is dependent upon that which can be accessed and discussed.

Gruyter, 1991), 141.

[16] Hebel, "Toward a Descriptive Poetics of *Allusion*," 141.

[17] Richard L. Schultz, "The Ties that Bind: Intertextuality, the Identification of Verbal Parallels, and Reading Strategies in the Book of the Twelve," in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 325; ed. Paul L. Reditt and Aaron Schart; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 28. Emphasis his.

[18] Schultz, "The Ties that Bind," 31. Emphasis his.

The elements which are most easily accessed and mined are the text and the reader. Hence, this study will focus upon the present reader as well as the text itself.

Schultz is not content to simply note the importance of grounding intertextual connections upon textual evidence, he proceeds to offer some initial criteria for identifying such textual data.

> In seeking significant verbal parallels, one should look for *verbal and syntactical correspondence* that goes beyond one key or uncommon term or even a series of commonly occurring terms, also evaluating whether the expression is simply formulaic or idiomatic. Thus one also should look for indications of *contextual awareness*, including *interpretive re-use*, which indicates verbal *dependence* which is conscious and purposeful, even though one may not be able to determine the direction of borrowing with any certainty. If such dependence can be posited, one's knowledge of the *quoted* text will facilitate the proper interpretation of the *quoting* text.[19]

Not only does Schultz recognize the importance of textual connections ("verbal and syntactic correspondence" in his words), but he also speaks to the matter of "interpretive re-use." Within that term lies a recognition of intertextuality's transformative impact. When a text borrows from another text, it does so as a means to make use of the authority of the borrowed text and then use that authority to further the message of the borrowing text that in some way transforms and builds upon the meaning of the borrowed text. This element of intertextuality takes the enterprise from a dry, static exercise of stockpiling quotations and allusions to a dynamic mining of the text's riches.

The contribution of two other scholars will suffice to demonstrate the extensive concern among biblical scholars for upholding the text's integrity within and contribution to the intertextual enterprise. Ehud ben Zvi's study of Jonah illustrates the integrity of the text in two key areas: his description of "meta-narratives" and his discussion of the process of "re-reading."[20] Ben Zvi's contributions are also seen in his recognition that the reader does not exist

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[19] Schultz, "The Ties that Bind," 32. Emphasis his.

[20] Ehud ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah: Reading and Rereading in Ancient Yehud* (JSOTSup 367; Sheffield: Sheffield

independent of the text, but is led by and subject to the text. While not specifically addressing intertextuality, his methodology regarding interpretive practice exhibits a basic hermeneutical principle that the reader is servant to the text, not vice-versa. He writes, "methodologically, I will focus on textually inscribed markers that can be reasonably assumed to have led the intended readership to prefer certain reading strategies over others."[21] In short, it is the text that informs the reader how he ought to read.

One final biblical scholar whose work promotes text-oriented intertextuality is James Nogalski who investigates intertextuality in the Book of the Twelve. Nogalski states, "The Book of the Twelve exhibits at least five different types of intertextuality: quotations, allusions, catchwords, motifs, and framing devices."[22] These five types focus upon textual elements, not the reader's presuppositions. Thus it is not surprising to hear Nogalski speak of the texts relating to one another rather than describing how readers relate to the texts.

The arguments of both literary and biblical scholars demonstrate the divide between the reader-oriented and text-oriented intertextuality. Likewise, scholars from both approaches to the discipline have pointed toward the need to balance reader and text within the practice of intertextuality. That is the position of this study and to that matter we now turn.

Text-Reader Symbiotic Intertextuality

Among the many articles and volumes written regarding biblical intertextuality, special significance is given to Michael Fishbane's *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*. His work

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Academic Press, 2003), 1–13. Ben Zvi's discussion of "meta-narratives" and the re-reading process will receive greater attention in chapter three of this study.

[21] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 5.

[22] James D. Nogalski, "Intertextuality and the Twelve" in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts* (ed. James W. Watts and Paul R. House; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 103.

has even been described as the "single most important contribution to the study of intertextuality in scripture."[23] Richard Hays' summary of Fishbane's work is especially applicable to the present study as he states, "the force of Fishbane's work is to suggest… within Israel as a reading community, 'all significant speech is Scriptural or Scripturally-oriented speech.'"[24] Notice the two elements found within Israel's significant speech—Israel as a reading community and a scriptural orientation. Fishbane's exhaustive study articulated the integral relationship between the text and its reader. The two are not to be divorced of each other, but allowed to exist in symbiotic harmony.[25]

This text-reader harmony finds further description within the hermeneutical work of James W. Voelz, who describes the role of the reader in the interpretive process, stating:

> the reader's beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, ideas, experiences, etc., become part of the matrix for textual interpretation, so that nothing interpreted in a text, unless it is part of a matrix with what she is as a person. **She is, as it were, a "text" to herself**—a complementary **"second text"** which is always a factor in textual interpretation. Therefore—and this is the basic point—**the interpretation of any given text involves, in actual fact, two texts**—the given or "target" text (e.g., the book of Galatians), and, as part of the matrix for understanding the target text (as a whole or focused on any of its parts), the so-called "second text of the interpreter. And it is "against" the features of the "second text" that the target is, in fact, interpreted.[26]

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[23] Gail R. O'Day. "Jeremiah 9:22–3 and I Corinthians 1:26–31. A Study in Intertextuality." *JBL* 109 (1990): 259–260.

[24] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), 21.

[25] Such an approach to intertextuality of holding text and reader in symbiotic tension, which is the methodology of this study, can be seen as a partial answer to the challenge set forth in George Aichele, Peter Miscall, and Richard Walsh, "An Elephant in the Room: Historical-Critical and Postmodern Interpretation of the Bible," *JBL* 128 (2009), 383–404. Though not written for such a purpose, this study addresses their desire to see the historical-critical focus upon the text and the postmodern focus upon the reader to exist in symbiosis within various fields of biblical studies, including intertextuality.

[26] James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia, 1995), 208–209. Emphasis his.

The reader[27] does not read and interpret a text objectively, but brings her own presuppositions, experiences, and such to the reading. Thus, the reader is not a passive agent, but an active participant in the interpretive process. Voelz notes that the recognition of the reader's active role in the interpretive process will lead some to question whether the text has any meaning in and of itself or is all interpretation actually "meaning manufacture."[28] His answer to this query includes, but is not limited to, the following two key points.

> Texts are not arbitrary collocations of signifiers, with no preconceived intentionality… **We know this from being producers of various kinds of texts. Text production—**our text production—**is not aimless**. Intended meaning is a goal. Which means that the radical subjectivity of many who embrace post-modernism—specifically, the radically perspectival understanding of all interpretation which they embrace—is an inadequate approach.[29]

Thus, while Voelz rightly recognizes and affirms the reader's involvement in the interpretive process, he also de-centers the reader from the privileged status of dictating meaning without the consent of the text. The text has an intended meaning, given to it by its author. Yet, as previously stated, the author is often inaccessible, but the text itself is accessible. Hence, the reader's interpretation is dependent upon and subject to the parameters of the text.

How does the reader gain access to the intentional meaning of the text? Among the various factors which Voelz identifies as aids in that task is the written text's genre.[30] His discussion of

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[27] This study focuses upon the current reader rather than an intended reader for two reasons. First, it is the current reader who is truly accessible, whose presuppositions are readily identifiable so that their role within an intertextual reading can be weighed. Second, an intended reader is a construction of the author. The means by which one can isolate such an intended reader is only through the text. Thus, when the methodology of this study holds text and reader in symbiotic union, the very means of identifying an intended reader is in consideration.

[28] Recall the statement of Timothy Beal referenced earlier that described "all biblical interpretation as *production* of meaning." Timothy K. Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality: Surplus of Meaning and Controlling the Means of Production," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Danna Nolan Fewell; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 28. Emphasis his. It is this radical element of reader-oriented intertextuality that gave rise to a concern for the text's role. Some are quite comfortable with the idea of meaning being fully derived from the reader. The text, however, is lost in such an approach, but the text is not a silent entity.

[29] Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 213.

[30] Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 214.

this factor focuses upon the distinction between genres that are given to intentional, literal renderings and those genres that are given to ambiguity.

While such distinctions are, of course, quite helpful, the discussion of genre within this study will focus upon what Ehud ben Zvi has defined as "meta-narratives."[31] "Meta-narrative" is not specifically a genre, yet its function is akin to that of a genre. It offers a means to wed text and reader as it recognizes the significant role that a preceding text can play within both a later text and the reader. The matter of meta-narratives will be discussed in further detail in chapter three.

Voelz's discussion of the interpretive process as a balance between the target text and the reader as text is further clarified by the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Voelz makes use of Gadamer's concept of the "fusion" of "two horizons." For Gadamer, the horizon of the text and the horizon of the interpreter are distant from and in tension with one another, yet the horizon of each can only be recognized and defined against the horizon of the other. Voelz summarizes the implications of Gadamer's approach:

> **[I]nterpretation involves awareness of the distance of the two "horizons" but then a "fusion" (*Verschmelzung*) of the two "horizons"**—a dialog, as it were, between the perspective of the text and that of the interpreter of that text, a dialog in which understanding takes place, in particular, the broadening and modification of the interpreter's present understanding of himself.[32]

Employing the terms of Gadamer, when intertextuality is driven wholly by the concerns of the reader with no recourse to the world of the text, there is no fusion of the horizons, nor is there dialog. Furthermore, the interpreter is unable to broaden and modify his own understanding of himself because he remains wholly in his own horizon.

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[31] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 2–3.

[32] Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 344. Emphasis his. Voelz's discussion of Gadamer is drawn from Gadamer's *Text and Truth*.

Voelz summarizes these two horizons of interpretation stating that "**the interpretation of any given text involves the simultaneous interpretation of two texts**, with each having an effect upon the other."[33] In describing the written text's role in this dual interpretive process, Voelz translates Oswald Bayer's *Autorität und Kritik*, where he states, "The interpreter does not interpret the Scriptures, but the Scriptures interpret the interpreter."[34] Herein, Bayer strongly de-centers the reader as it is the text that is given authority over the reader, not vice-versa. Nevertheless, the reader's role is not denied, but it is placed in service to the text.

Lest Voelz's recourse to Bayer leave one with the impression that the reader is nearly silenced in the interpretive process, further investigation of Voelz's hermeneutical work (especially in the realm of intertextuality) finds him clearly upholding the reader's role in the interpretive process. He notes, "several types of sign sets or texts are particularly important in/for the interpretive task," namely, explicit explanation by an authority, the interpreter's own life-experience and the interpreter's own set of beliefs.[35] Once again, the reader's own presuppositions are recognized as an element within the interpretive matrix. In addition, the text is also recognized as an element within the interpretive matrix, namely as the "explicit explanation of an authority."

A rationale for balancing text and reader in the interpretive process has been set forth. But just what does that look like? And how does it operate? I propose a rather straight-forward, simple manner of handling both text and reader. First, an exposition of the textual evidence for an intertextual relationship ought to be set forth. What reasons are present within the texts of the

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[33] Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 325. Emphasis his.

[34] Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 325. *Nicht der Interpret legt die Schrift, sondern die Schrift legt den Interpreten aus.*

[35] James W. Voelz, "Multiple Signs and Double Texts: Elements of Intertextuality" in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (ed. Sipke Draisma; Uitgeversmaatschappij: J. J. Kok-

Jonah narrative and the Noachic narrative that would suggest their intertextual tie? Once that matter has been addressed, then attention ought to be given to the reader's contribution. What does the present reader bring to the intertextual reading in the way of his own presuppositions that would impact an intertextual reading of the Jonah and Noachic narratives? These two matters will be the focus of chapter three of this study. A brief description of not only that chapter, but all the remaining chapters of this study, is offered below.

The Plan of the Study

Chapter two will investigate "Intertextuality and the Jonah Narrative." A cursory discussion of the proclivity of the Jonah narrative toward intertextual usage begins the chapter. The chapter gives greater attention to those scholars who have examined the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative in the Jonah narrative. The respective contributions of Timothy Koch, Albert Kamp, Ehud ben Zvi, and Hyun Chul Paul Kim are discussed. Furthermore, an analysis of their shortcomings provides a clear rationale for this study to focus upon the application of a text-reader symbiotic methodology for intertextuality.

Chapter three answers that methodological need by considering both the text's and the reader's contribution to the intertextual relationship of the Jonah and Noachic narratives. First, the textual evidence for the use of the Noachic narrative within the Jonah narrative is addressed by establishing the historical relationship between the two narratives (thus addressing the plausibility of such an intertextual relationship), examining the "meta-narrative" character of the Noachic narrative that would cause it to be a likely candidate for intertextual usage, and then setting forth the raw textual data that illustrates the intertextual relationship. Such textual evidence is combined with a discussion of the reader's contribution to the intertextual reading.

Kampen, 1989), 32.

While Ehud ben Zvi's discussion of the original re-readership of the Jonah narrative introduces this portion of the chapter, the focus will be upon the current reader's (the author of this study) presuppositions as a member of both and ecclesial and an academic reading community.

Chapter four begins the application of the established methodology by exploring the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within chapter one of the book of Jonah. Affinities, as well as distinctive differences, between the two narratives are discussed, including the relationship between Noah and the sailors aboard the Tarshish-bound ship as well as between Noah and Jonah. An analysis and synthesis of the insights from the chapter highlights the distinctive benefits of the intertextual reading. A key scholar in the discussion is Jack Sasson whose commentary on the book of Jonah is the standard in the field. So also, Marvin Sweeney is given a voice with his commentary also offering significant scholarly insight.

Chapter five continues the intertextual reading of the two texts with a focus upon the second chapter of the book of Jonah. Affinities and distinctive differences will again frame the discussion. Such comparisons include Jonah's great fish and the ark, Jonah and the condemned world of the flood, and Jonah and Noah. The value of the intertextual reading is seen through analysis and synthesis of the chapter's insights. Scholarly insight from the highly respected Hans Wolff joins the discussion in the chapter.

Chapter six gives attention to the use of the Noachic narrative within chapter three of the book of Jonah. Key comparisons are between the actions of the condemned world of the flood and Nineveh, Yahweh's attitude toward the condemned world of the flood and Nineveh, and between the actions of Noah and Jonah. Once again, synthesis and analysis of the chapter's insights illustrate the value of the intertextual reading. Among further voices joining the discussion in chapter six is form-critical scholar Ronald Clements.

Chapter seven addresses the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within chapter four of the book of Jonah. The chapter focuses upon the tension between Yahweh's justice and mercy that is found in both narratives. As that tension is analyzed the significance of the intertextual reading is brought to the fore.

Chapter eight presents a summation of the study. Attention is given to the values of the text-reader symbiotic methodology employed in the study. Furthermore, the enriched reading of the Jonah narrative that results from that methodology is held forth as five key theological themes arising from the intertextual reading are discussed.

Conclusions

The methodology set forth in this chapter offers various points of application that will prove invaluable for this study. First, the common usage of intertextuality within biblical studies has subjected the text to the whims of the reader. A number of biblical scholars, however, have voiced their disapproval of such a trumping of the text by the reader. This study joins in that chorus of voices, yet the methodology set forth still recognizes the reader's subjectivity and its role in the intertextual reading process. Hence, this study strives to keep text and reader in dramatic tension as their symbiotic relationship allows a text's intertextuality to be mined.

Second, this study is not alone in its recognition of the indispensible symbiotic union of text and reader within intertextual methodology. For example, Ellen van Wolde's proposal to study intertextuality as "the interaction between texts and readers"[36] displays the desire to wed the two, although a thoroughly explained methodology for such is not offered in her work.

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[36] Wolde, "Intertextuality," 432.

Third, Richard Schultz's concern for "author-related issues"[37] provides significant methodological challenges. Interpretation is the meeting of text and reader. The author of a text is not to be denied, yet the author cannot be accessed in the reading process. Such is the case, all the more evidently, for the book of Jonah. No author is claimed by the text and no historical evidence exists to identify the author. Thus, this study will not focus upon the author, but the text and its present reader.

Fourth, Schultz's work, nevertheless, is helpful and healthy as he moves beyond simply illustrating an intertextual relationship to the critical matter of "interpretive re-use,"[38] thus revealing the transformative nature of intertextual readings. Yet greater specificity is desired regarding the identification and explanation of transformative intertextual readings. Such precision is available from two other scholarly works (one by Thomas Brodie, Dennis MacDonald, and Stanley Porter and another by Jeffery Leonard) which will be discussed in chapter three.

Fifth, Ehud ben Zvi's[39] discussion of meta-narratives and re-reading are of great importance to this study. Chapter three will describe how the Noachic narrative served as a meta-narrative and thus would not only have been a significant part of the worldview of the original readership of the book of Jonah, but remains so today for members of an ecclesial reading community (of which the author of this study is a member). So also, ben Zvi's treatment of re-reading will also receive attention in chapter three in order to illustrate why and how texts are re-read, thus unveiling their meaning more fully.

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[37] Schultz, "The Ties that Bind," 28.

[38] Schultz, "The Ties that Bind," 32.

[39] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 1–13.

Finally, the importance of keeping text and reader in symbiotic tension cannot be understated. The naïve approach that refuses to recognize the reader's involvement in the interpretive process (including intertextual readings) will handicap the interpretive work as only one horizon (text) is consciously engaged. Yet even though a reader's involvement in the interpretive process may be denied, the reader is involved. Thus, the denial of a reader's involvement muddies readings so that the unreflective reader will believe that the written text is being read when it is actually the reader who is being unconsciously read. The same can be said for the reader who refuses to recognize the text's critical role in the reading process. A refusal to engage the text on its own terms, but only on the level of the reader's presuppositions leads to the reader being read as the only text. Due to the peril that such conditions present to sound readings, it behooves the reader to be cognizant of both horizons (reader and text) and seek a fusion of the two.

CHAPTER TWO

INTERTEXTUALITY AND THE BOOK OF JONAH

This study contends that reading the book of Jonah intertextually with the Noachic narrative deepens and enriches the meaning of the former. Such an intertextual reading requires that attention be given to both the text and the reader. The contributions of these two elements, the written text at hand (the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative) and the present reader, are discussed in the next chapter. This chapter serves as an entree for chapter three's discussion of the respective role played by the text and the current reader within the intertextual reading. To that end, three topics are addressed within this chapter. First, a brief discussion of the predisposition of the book of Jonah toward intertextuality in general reveals the plausibility for finding other intertextual ties for the book of Jonah (including a tie with the Noachic narrative). Second, a review of four recent scholarly treatments of the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah is offered as a means to identify their contributions to the topic, while also identifying issues remaining to be addressed. Third, a summary of the chapter's insights directs the study toward those issues that need to be addressed in order for the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah to be more fully understood. Thus, this chapter accomplishes two tasks. First it sets forth an initial plausibility for an intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. Second, it provides the study with specific direction by noting the existing voids that currently exist within the scholarly treatments of the intertextual relationship of the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative.

Proclivity Toward Intertextuality within the Book of Jonah

It is commonplace within scholarly treatments of the book of Jonah to find intertextual

links between it and other Old Testament passages. Marvin Sweeney summarizes the use of

intertextuality within the book of Jonah.

> [I]n drawing upon other biblical traditions, such as the creation narratives in Genesis,
> the Exodus narratives concerning Yahweh's confrontation with Pharaoh and Moses'
> confrontation with Yahweh, the Elijah narratives concerning his distress and
> revelation from Yahweh, etc., the book of Jonah engages in a dialogue with earlier
> biblical traditions concerning the character of Yahweh and Yahweh's relationship
> with Israel.[1]

In similar fashion, William J. Whedbee describes the extensive presence of intertextuality

within the book of Jonah. He also notes the significant role that such intertextual links play in the

reading of the book of Jonah. The unique characters, setting and events found within the book of

Jonah set it apart from many other Old Testament texts. Nevertheless, Whedbee argues that the

book of Jonah remains in the mainstream of biblical literature as he finds it "linking up

intertextually with such obviously central books as Genesis and Exodus, on the one side, and

Psalms and Job, on the other, with significant prophets like Elijah, Joel, and Jeremiah coming in

between."[2]

Whedbee's contention that the book of Jonah has intertextual ties to the Pentateuch,

biblical wisdom literature, and the prophets is buttressed by the finding of other scholars. Its tie

to Genesis has been noted by scholars who find a parallel between the abrupt conclusion of

Jonah and that found in Gen 18:32–33.[3] Such a link to Gen 18 is also affirmed by Ehud ben Zvi

who contends that the Jonah narrative points to and draws from Genesis' account of Sodom and

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[1] Marvin Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets, Volume I* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 2000), 306–7.

[2] William J. Whedbee, *The Bible and the Comic Vision* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 192.

[3] André Lacocque and Pierre-Emmanuel Lacocque, *Jonah: A Psycho-Religious Approach to the Prophet* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1990), 33.

Gomorrah.[4] Jonah's intertextual relationship with the book of Genesis elicits the argument that the central theme of the sea in Jonah 1 hearkens the reader back to "natural theology" and the "Noachian covenant."[5] "Natural theology" refers to the act of creation (Gen 1–2) as well as Yahweh's ongoing relationship to all of creation, based upon his role as creator. Thus, "natural theology" recognizes that Yahweh's role as creator does not end at the moment of creation, but extends into his ongoing care for his creation as is exhibited in his use of the sea in Jonah 1 as well as his concern for the sailors (part of creation, though not Hebrews, like Jonah).

Yet another intertextual link arises based upon the specific textual data found in Jonah 4:2. Thomas Dozeman explores the near identical descriptions of Yahweh's gracious and compassionate character in Jonah 4:2 and Joel 2:13.[6] Both texts describe Yahweh as חנון ורחום ארך אפמים ורב חסד ונחם על־הרעה, "gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in covenantal love and repenting from evil." Similarly, the reader notices the tie between Jonah 4:2 and Nah 1:3, which abbreviates the gracious depiction of Yahweh to simply ארך אפמים, "slow to anger". More pronounced that such a brief description of Yahweh is the intertextual tie to Exod 34:6, which describes Yahweh as חנון ורחום ארך אפמים ורב חסד, "gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in covenantal love." While Exodus most likely stands as the origin of this phrase that was later taken up by the minor prophets Jonah, Joel and Nahum and while there is a closer correlation between Jonah and Joel than the other texts, the proclivity of the book of Jonah toward intertextuality is demonstrated by its use

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[4] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 16. So also, Jack Sasson contends "for the cry of its wickedness is come up to me" betrays an obvious connection with Gen 18:20; Sasson, *Jonah*, 87.

[5] Lacocque and Lacocque, *Jonah*, 78. Not only does this speak to a general predisposition to intertextuality within the book of Jonah, but it also bespeaks such a connection with the Noachic narrative, which will be discussed on pages 22–39 and again in chapter three.

[6] Thomas B. Dozeman, "Inner-Biblical Interpretations of Yahweh's Gracious and Compassionate Character," *JBL* 108 (1989): 207–223.

of such a phrase that would tie it to various other texts not only by means of a significant theme (Yahweh's grace), but also by means of specific shared language. This matter of Yahweh's gracious character, while surfacing throughout this study, receives significant attention in chapter seven, which discusses the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within the fourth chapter of the book of Jonah.

Even more intertextual ties have been offered. Those engaged in Book of the Twelve scholarship suggest various intertextual readings between Jonah and specific books within the Book of the Twelve or between Jonah and the Book of the Twelve as single entity.[7] The intertextual relationship of the Jonahpsalm with the Psalms is also possible.[8] Intertextual connections between the book of Jonah and the Elijah narrative within Kings have been suggested on the basis of both appearing as third-person prophetic narratives.[9] An intertextual relationship between Jonah 1:1 and the narrative of Jeroboam II in 2 Kgs 14:25 has been argued on the basis of the unique use of "Jonah, son of Amittai" in both texts.[10]

While there is ample evidence of the intertextual tendency of the book of Jonah, what of the specific intertextual tie to the Noachic narrative? Arguments for such an intertextual link are

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[7] Beate Ego, "The Repentance of Nineveh in the Story of Jonah and Nahum's Prophecy of the City's Destruction: Aggadic Solutions for an Exegetical Problem in the Book of the Twelve," in *SBL 2000 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 2000), 249–50; James Nogalski, "Intertextuality and the Twelve," in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts*. (ed. James W. Watts and Paul R. House; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 102–24; Burkard Zapff, "The Perspective of the Nations in the Book of Micah as a Systemization of the Nations' Role in Joel, Jonah, and Nahum: Reflections on a Context-Oriented Exegesis in the Book of the Twelve," in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve* (BZAW 325; ed. Paul L. Reditt and Aaron Schart; Berlin: de Gruyter; 2003), 292–312.

[8] Erhard S. Gerstenberger, "Psalms in the Book of the Twelve: How Misplaced Are They?" in *SBL 2000 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 2000), 254–62.

[9] R. Reed Lessing, *Jonah* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia, 2007), 38–48.

[10] Hyun Chul Paul Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually," *JBL* 126 (2007): 497–528. Kim also discusses intertextual readings between the book of Jonah and Nahum, Joel, the Book of the Twelve, and the Noachic narrative. His discussion of the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative will be more fully discussed later in this chapter.

not commonplace. An examination of commentaries will find the book of Jonah only connected to the Noachic narrative by brief notes of idiomatic expressions employed in both texts.[11] Even when an argument for an intertextual link between Jonah and the Noachic narrative is made, it is often quite limited in scope and non-specific in focus, such as the proposition that since the sea has a central theme in Jonah, it is appropriate to go back to "natural theology" and the "Noachian covenant".[12] Yet there are four scholars who give greater attention to the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah.

Scholarship on the Intertextual Use of the Noachic Narrative within the Book of Jonah

The case for an intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative was apparently first made by André Feuillet.[13] Similarly, Eric Hesse and Isaac Kikawada have argued for such a connection.[14] In each of these early arguments for the intertextual link between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative, the potential intertextual reference is not developed, but made on a limited scale.

More recent scholarship has taken notice of this intertextual relationship and offered it greater attention. One such scholar is R. Reed Lessing[15] who offers an introduction to the

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[11] For example, Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah* AB 24B. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1990 notes the use of the verb נחם ("repent") in Jonah and Genesis 6:6–7 (p. 262), the use of חמס ("violence") in Genesis 6:11–13 and Jonah (p. 259), and the use of the word בעדי ("upon me") in Jonah 2:7 as an abbreviated form of ויסגר יהוה בעדו ("Yahweh shut upon him") in Genesis 7:16 (p.190). Yet in each of these cases, the parallel is described as common and various citations of corresponding usage of these terms and phrases in other texts are offered, illustrating that these are not "exclusive connections" and thus the case of a Jonah – Noah intertextual link has not been established.

[12] André Lacocque and Pierre-Emmanuel Lacocque, *Jonah: A Psycho-Religious Approach to the Prophet.* Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1990.

[13] André Feuillet, "Les sources du livre de Jonas" *RB* 54 (1947), 161–186. His case for the intertextual relationship is made on a limited scale and not in the terms of "intertextuality" as the term had yet to be coined by Julia Kristeva.

[14] Eric W. Hesse and Isaac M. Kikawada "Jonah and Genesis 11–1" *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 10 (1984), 3–19. As the title of their work indicates, the specific relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative is not the focus of this brief article, thus the case for such a relationship remains undeveloped.

[15] Lessing, *Jonah*, 38–48. Inasmuch as Lessing serves as the *Doktervater* for the author of the present study,

discussion of the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative in the book of Jonah. His treatment of the topic moves beyond simply identifying the link to the matter of explicating the interpretive impact of the link.

While various scholars provide limited treatments of the Jonah-Noah intertextuality, four scholars offer a more thorough argument for the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. The analysis of the work of these four scholars is helpful as a significant quantity of potential links between the texts are identified. Yet their work also reveals the need for more work as each fails to identify a methodology for the establishment of intertextual links. Therefore, little attention is paid either to their own presuppositions, which factor into the intertextual reading, or to the specific textual data, which prompts such a reading. Furthermore, minimal consideration is given to how the intertextual relationship impacts the interpretation of the book of Jonah. While such shortcomings are apparent, these scholars deserve greater attention so that their specific contributions and shortcomings can provide helpful direction to the current study.

The Work of Timothy R. Koch

Timothy R. Koch grapples with the Jonah-Noah intertextuality within his doctoral dissertation.[16] He identifies sixteen examples of intertextual links between Jonah and Noah. Those links are:

1. **One hundred twenty**—Humankind is allotted 120 years (Gen 6:3) while there are 120,000 people inhabiting Nineveh (Jonah 4:11).
2. **Wickedness of humankind**—Both stories bring this human flaw to Yahweh's attention

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many of his insights and conclusions will be built upon in this study. Lessing's work on the Jonah-Noah intertextuality comprises roughly ten pages of his commentary on Jonah. This study seeks to carry his work forward in greater detail.

[16] Timothy R. Koch, "The Book of Jonah and a Reframing of Israelite Theology: A Reader-Response Approach" (Ph.D. diss, Boston University, 2003), 286–91.

(Gen 6:5; Jonah 1:2).

3. **Yahweh was sorry/repented**—Yahweh's regret over his planned course of action is found in both texts (Gen 6:6; Jonah 3:10).

4. **People together with animals**—Both humans and animals are to be blotted from the face of the earth (Gen 6:7); both are to loaded onto the ark (Gen 6:18–20); both are made to be part of Yahweh's covenant (Gen 9:15); both are found in sackcloth and ashes (Jonah 3:7–8); both are objects of Yahweh's concern (Jonah 4:11).

5. **Violence**—חמס is the reason for God's destruction of earth (Gen 6:11), while it is also the sin that the Ninevites recognize as their own (Jonah 3:8).

6. **Ark and the Ship of Tarshish/Fish**—The ark is a vessel of protection for Noah (Gen 6:14) while the ship of Tarshish and the great fish are vessels of protection for Jonah (Jonah 1:3; 1:17).

7. **Forty days (and forty nights)**—The period of judgment via rain (Gen 7:4) is the same as the time given to the Ninevites before the city is "turned upside-down" (Jonah 3:4).

8. **Flood of waters… the great deep**—Such phrases are not only used to describe the downpour (Gen 7:6, 11), but the phrases are also used in the Jonah psalm (Jonah 2:3).

9. **The waters… dry land**—The distinction between waters and dry land is critical for both Noah (Gen 7:20–22) and Jonah (Jonah 2:10).

10. **God made a wind blow**—Such a divine wind causes the flood waters to subside (Gen 8:1) while it also prompts the storm on the sea (Jonah 1:4) and the searing east wind of Jonah's misery (Jonah 4:8).

11. **Then he sent out the dove… the dove found no place to set its foot… it returned to him… again he sent out the dove from the ark.**—Not only is "Jonah" Hebrew for "dove", but the prophet Jonah is sent out (Jonah 1:2), returns (Jonah 2), and is sent out again (Jonah 3:2) as was Noah's dove (Gen 8:8–10).

12. **Offered burnt offerings on the altar**—Noah (Gen 8:20) and Jonah's mariners (Jonah 1:16) respond in the same manner following deliverance from deadly waters. Jonah pledges to do the same as well upon his deliverance from deadly waters (Jonah 2:9).

13. **"Nor will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done"**—God's pledge to Noah (Gen 8:21) is motivation for Jonah's refusal to go to Nineveh (Jonah 4:2).

14. **"Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed."**—This statute laid down for all humanity in Gen 9:5,6 is known by Jonah's mariners as they refuse to throw him overboard (Jonah 1:12–14).

15. **"I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature… my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh."**—The Noachic covenant includes animals (Gen 9:8–17), thus the donning of sackcloth by the animals in Jonah 3:8. Koch even suggests that the Ninevite king's command that the Ninevites were to call out to God (Jonah 3:8) would include the bleating of the animals, thus reminding God of this eternal promise.

16. **Ham… Nimrod… he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh… the great city**—The covenant with Noah goes through Ham to Nimrod to Nineveh (Gen 9:18–19, 10:6–12), thus Jonah knows the Noachic covenant is operative for God's dealings with the

Ninevites.[17]

Koch's Contributions

Koch is at the chronological forefront of the heightened recognition of the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah. Prior to his work, the discussion was limited to a few brief suggestions. Not only is Koch a pioneer on this topic, his analysis is also the most thorough to date. No other scholar devotes as much attention to the identification and analysis of the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative in the book of Jonah.

Furthermore, the high number of parallels identified by Koch is noteworthy. Indeed, intertextual methodology does given attention to quantitative criteria, specifically in regard to the density and frequency of intertextual references as well as the number of times and the breadth-of-scattering of the pre-text within the later text.[18] The sheer number of thematic connections identified by Koch elicits the attention of the careful reader. In short, Koch meets the need for quantitative correspondence between purported intertexts.

Koch's Shortcomings

While Koch's analysis is groundbreaking, it has significant shortcomings. The methodology discussed in chapter one of this study demonstrates the importance of balancing

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[17] Koch, "The Book of Jonah and a Reframing of Israelite Theology", 286–291.

[18] The importance of such quantitative criteria is discussed, along with other criteria, in Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, "Intertextuality: Between Literary Theory and Text Analysis" in *The Intertextuality of the Epistles: Explorations of Theory and Practice* (eds. Thomas L. Brodie, Dennis R. MacDonald, and Stanley E. Porter; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006), 21–22 and Dominik Markl, "Hab 3 in intertextueller und kontextueller Sicht" *Bib* 85 (2004), 100. Both Gillmayr-Bucher and Markl build upon the work of Manfred Pfister, "Konzepte der Intertextualität," in *Intertextualität: Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien.* (Tübingen: Broich, 1985), 1–30. The principles of intertextual identification and analysis presented by Pfister as discussed by Gillmayr-Bucher receive attention in chapter three of this study.

text and reader. Thus, the shortcomings of Koch's work can be found by asking two complementary questions. How does he treat the reader? How does he treat the text?

Koch gives attention to identifying the original readership of the book of Jonah (post-exilic Judah).[19] Sufficient attention, however, is not given to Koch's own role as a reader. His own presuppositions are not set forth. While Koch's argument for the original readership of Jonah has interest for the scholar considering the history of the book, it does not address the role of the current reader in the interpretation of the text. The methodology presented in chapter one of this study demonstrates the undeniable role of the reader within any reading. For that role to be balanced with the text, the reader's presuppositions must be acknowledged.

While Koch fails to discuss himself as a reader, he gives a great deal of attention to the interplay of the texts of the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. Yet his attention to such is undermined by the lack of a clear methodology for the identification of intertexts. The methodological void leads to further shortcomings as well. First, many of the connections noted by Koch are not exclusive connections, but readily fall into the realm of formulaic/idiomatic terms or simple common usage.[20] Any intertextual links used in defense of the Noah-Jonah intertextuality that are either idiomatic/formulaic expressions or non-exclusive intertextual references demand a closer examination to legitimate the textual foundation of an intertextual relationship.

The following intertextual references cited by Koch are based upon idiomatic/formulaic expressions, non-exclusive references, or, in some cases, lack a defendable verbal connection:

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[19] Koch, "The Book of Jonah and a Reframing of Israelite Theology," 38–49. The historical task of reconstructing a suggested ancient reader plays a critical role in Koch's work as the second chapter of his dissertation, comprising pages 13–63, is entitled "Constructing an Ancient Reader."

[20] The methodology for this study gives priority to the identification of exclusive connections between a text and its intertext. Likewise, it is critical that purported intertextual connections move beyond the use of formulaic/idiomatic terms to intertextual ties based upon verbal parallels. Such matters are discussed in greater

the number one hundred twenty,[21] the wickedness of humankind,[22] Yahweh repenting,[23] human

and beast together,[24] חמס, "violence," as the reason for God's judgment,[25] the time period of

forty days (and nights),[26] the flood of waters… the great deep,[27] the juxtaposition of the waters

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detail in chapters one and three.

[21] Koch identifies one hundred twenty as an intertext based on its use in Gen 6:3 as the length of years for man's life and the number of thousands of inhabitants of Nineveh in Jonah. However, both uses of one hundred twenty are found elsewhere in the Old Testament. One hundred twenty years is identified as the length of Moses' days (Deut 31:2; 34:7). One hundred twenty thousand is the number of warriors who fell to Gideon (Judg 8:10), the number of warriors from Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh (1 Chr 12:38—MT, 12:37—English), and the number of those who forsook Yahweh and thus fell to Pekah (2 Chr 28:6). So also, the brothers of Uriel, the chief Levite, are numbered as one hundred twenty (1 Chr 15:5). One hundred twenty is used in other contexts as well. One hundred twenty thousand is the number of sheep sacrificed by Solomon at the dedication of the temple (1 Kgs 8:63; 2 Chr 7:5). Both Hiram and the Queen of Sheba give Solomon one hundred twenty talents of gold (1 Kgs 9:14; 10:10/ 2 Chr 9:9). One hundred twenty cubits is the height of the vestibule of the temple (2 Chr 3:4).

[22] See P.D. Miller, *Sin and Judgment in the Prophets.* SBLMS 27. Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982 for a consideration of the Old Testament homily on רעע in 2 Sam 12: 7–15; 1 Kgs 21: 17–19, 20–24; Isa 31: 1–3 and Mic 2: 1–5. See also Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah* AB 24B. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1990, 76 which also places Lam 1: 21, 22 in this category.

[23] The most thorough exposition of this Biblical theme is found is an excursus entitled "When God Repents" in Francis I. Anderson and David Noel Freedman, *Amos* AB 24A. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1989, 638–679. Anderson and Freedman note the theme of God's repentance in the following texts: Gen 6:6–7; Exod 32:10–14; 1 Sam 15:11, 29, 35; 2 Sam 24:16/ 1 Chr 21:15; Jer 26:3, 13, 19; Joel 2: 12–14; Jonah 3: 9–10, 4: 1–2; Zech 8: 14–15; Judg 2:18; Ezek 24:14; Ps 106:45; Ps 110:4; Num 23:19; Deut 32:26; and Ps 135:14.

[24] Exodus is replete with the combination of people and beasts together. Exod 8:17 mentions the plague of gnats coming upon people and beasts; Exodus 9:10 mentions the plague of boils coming upon people and beasts; Exod 9:19 mentions the plague of hail as coming upon people and beasts alike; Exod 11:5, 12:12 and 12:29 mention the death of the first-born shall extend to the cattle as well as humans. So also, Yahweh's wrath is poured out specifically upon Egypt's animals within the fifth plague of the death of the livestock. It is also interesting to note that while Jonah mentions the fasting of animals along with humans leading to deliverance from God's wrath, Moses declares that the Egyptians could be delivered from the plagues by the feasting (antithesis of fasting) of Yahweh's people, with their beasts attending them in the feast (Exod 10:9). Furthermore, when Israel is to depart in order to avert the plague of the death of the first-born, not even a dog is to growl against Israelite man or beast (Exod 11:7). The deliverance of Israel and entrance into Canaan leads to the call for the firstborn of both man and beast to be set aside (Exod 13:12, 15). Either man or beast who touches Mount Sinai is to be stoned (Exod 19:13).

[25] חמס is condemned throughout the Old Testament and often prompts God's people to cry for deliverance, but it is specifically named as the reason for a person or people being condemned by God in Judg 9:24, Ps 7:17 (MT), Ps 55:10 (MT), Ps 140:12, Jer 6:6–7, Jer 51:35, Ezek 7:10–11, 23–24, Ezek 8:17, Ezek 12:19, Ezek 28:16, Joel 3:19, Obad 10, Mic 6:12, Hab 2:8, 17, and Zeph 1:9.

[26] The idiomatic use of the number forty, especially as a time-frame, is well known and apparent. Forty days occurs throughout the Noachic narrative (Gen 7:4, 12, 17; 8:6) and in Jonah 3:4. The specific timeframe of forty days is found also in Gen 50:3 (duration of Jacob's embalming), Exod 24:18; 34:28; Deut 9:9, 11; 10:10 (duration of Moses' stays on Sinai), Num 13:25; 14:34 (duration of the spying out of the promised land), Deut 9:18 (days of Moses' prostration and fast due to the sin of the Golden Calf), 1 Sam 17:16 (number of days Goliath presented himself uncontested prior to David's appearance), 1 Kgs 19:8 (time of Elijah's travel to Horeb following angelic ministration), and Ezek 4:6 (time spent by Ezekiel lying on his right side in punishment for the sins of Judah). Koch argues that the Noachic narrative and Jonah are unique in tying forty days to a period of destruction, though he notes that Ezekiel uses forty days in the context of punishment/destruction (288). Koch fails to notice the same connection

and the dry land,[28] and God made a wind blow.[29] The remaining parallels identified by Koch are unique to Jonah and Noah, yet they are thematically based rather than grounded upon verbal and syntactical parallels.[30]

Koch's insights are helpful, but they are unable to substantiate an intertextual connection between Jonah and Noah on their own.[31] The critical issue of exclusivity, as discussed in chapter one, is not broached in Koch's work. Hence, Koch's work calls for a closer examination of the potential for an intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative to be verified by the criteria of the methodology offered in this study.

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regarding Moses' prostration and fast in Deut 9:18 as well as the forty years of desert wanderings being deliberately derived from the forty days of spying in Num 14:34. One should also note the prevalence of the time-frame of forty *years* in various texts.

[27] Koch refers to "flood of waters" and "the great deep" as equivalent terms (288). Yet תהום רבה, "the great deep," which occurs in Gen 7:11 does not appear at all in Jonah, but does occur in Ps 36:7, Isa 51:10, and Amos 7:4. The Hebrew מבול occurs only in Ps 29:10 outside of Gen 6–10.

[28] Koch notes that the combination of the waters and dry land is common in Hebrew, even operating as a hendiadys. Yet he argues that the juxtaposition of such in the Noachic narrative and in Jonah offers a key intertextual link due to the critical matter in both texts for the waters meaning death and the dry land meaning life (288). A key distinction is found in the use of חרבה in the Noachic narrative for "dry land" while Jonah employs יבשה. Furthermore, the critical life and death combination of חרבה and מים is also found in Exod 14:21 (the crossing of the *Yam Suph*), Josh 3:17, 4:18 (the crossing of the Jordan), 2 Kgs 2:8 (Elijah and Elisha crossing the Jordan), and Isa 48:21 (the prophet reverses the life and death implication of the combination as the dry land refers to the desert where Yahweh provided life-giving water from the rock, similarly in Isa 58: 11, 12). It is also worth noting that Ezekiel uses the related word חרבה (destruction) in tandem with waters to describe Yahweh's judgment (Ezek 26:20, 29:10, 30:12).

[29] While great similarity is found between Jonah and Noah in this point, a key distinction resides in the verb that describes God's sending of the wind. Both texts use the terms אלהים and רוח, yet Gen 8:1 employs the *hipʿil* of עבר while Jonah 4:8 substitutes מנה. Furthermore, these are not the only Biblical texts to speak of God sending a wind. Exod 14:21 speaks of God parting the sea by sending a wind. This passage is more tightly tied to both Gen 8:1 and Jonah 4:8 than they are to one another as it describes the wind driving back the waters as in Gen 8:1 and it is an "east (קדים) wind" as in Jonah 4:8.

[30] The foundation for some of the remaining links might also be questioned. For example, Koch equates the name Jonah with "dove". Yet this is a long-standing question in the scholarship of Jonah. The identity of "Jonah" with the Hebrew for "dove" is not a given, but requires a vigorous defense, which Koch does not offer.

[31] The analysis of Koch's purported links offered above suggests there is also evidence suggesting a potential intertextual link of Exodus with the Noachic story (Gen 6–9) and/or Jonah. In fact, as previously noted, Exodus at times appears to be the missing verbal link between the Noachic story and Jonah (see discussion in footnotes above regarding the combination of man and beast, the juxtaposition of water and dry land, and the use of forty in the context of judgment). While an investigation of such a link holds the potential of significant insights, it is beyond the scope of this paper.

Furthermore, Koch does not identify his own presupposition. Thus, the reader's contribution to the intertextual reading, a critical element in the interpretive process, is not given the overt attention that the methodology established in chapter one requires. Combining this shortcoming with a similar methodological void regarding the identification of textual connections fosters yet another challenge in Koch's work, namely, neglecting the explication of the interpretive re-use and transformation of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah. This is the realm where text and reader converge as the stated presuppositions of the reader interact with the established textual data to arrive at specific conclusions regarding the rhetorical impact of the intertextual connection. This is a crucial issue in preventing intertextuality from becoming "banal source-hunting and allusion counting,"[32] a natural repercussion of meeting quantitative demands for textual connection yet neither addressing the issue of exclusivity nor the role of the reader's presuppositions in the process.

Koch simply offers a cursory consideration of how the Jonah-Noah tie bolsters the overall thesis of his study without thoroughly exploring the specific implications of this intertextual connection. While such an approach holds apparent shortcomings, Koch does make significant contributions. Yet his work is not complete due to the lack of methodological clarity.

The Work of Albert Kamp

Limited progress in overcoming the methodological shortcomings in Koch's work (namely, precise attention to textual evidence for intertextual links between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative) is found in Albert Kamp's study of Jonah in which he states, "with the *same lexemes* the flood story presents topics of wickedness, wrong paths and violence, to which

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[32] Such is the pejorative description of intertextuality that considers textual issues, rather than simply chronicling the reader's experience. See George Aichele and Gary Philips, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisigesis, Intergesis" *Semeia* 69/70 (1995), 9.

YHWH reacts with change."[33] Unfortunately, although his analysis is based upon textual data, Kamp does not offer an extensive methodology for the identification and analysis of the intertextual relationship between Jonah and the Noachic narrative.[34]

Kamp's Contributions

As the sub-title of his work indicates, the overall focus of Kamp's work is the cognitive-linguistic study of Jonah. Within that study Kamp discusses the Jonah-Noah intertextual relationship within one section of one chapter. It is not a central issue of his work but, nevertheless, his attention to grounding intertextual connections upon precise textual evidence is a positive contribution that further invites closer investigation of the Jonah-Noah intertextual relationship based upon a sound methodology. Specifically, Kamp states:

> As the number of related textual signals from the text increases, the knowledge evoked from another text will have a growing influence on the process of ascription of meaning. In this way, the inner world of a reader influences the ultimate conceptual structures that he or she makes on the basis of the data of the text.[35]

It is noteworthy that Kamp's concern for the "inner world" *of the reader* is governed by "related textual signals" and the "data of the text". Even with Kamp's focus upon the reader, he identifies the text as the governing body, thus pointing toward the importance of the symbiotic relationship between text and reader.

Also noteworthy is Kamp's discussion of how "the knowledge evoked from another text" has an influence upon "the ascription of meaning." This is parallel to the insights of Ehud ben

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[33] Albert Kamp, *Inner Worlds: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach to the Book of Jonah*. Translated by D. Orton. Boston, Mass.: Brill Academic, 2004, 209. Emphasis mine.

[34] Kamp (p. 86) does cite Ellen van Wolde, "Texts in Dialogue with Texts: Intertextuality in the Ruth and Tamar Narratives" *BibInt* 5 (1997), 1–28. On such a basis, Kamp argues that, in order to identify intertextual references, the reader is to pay attention to: 1) the repetition of words and semantic fields, 2) the repetition of large text-units or structures, 3) agreements in theme or genre, 4) analogy in character descriptions, 5) agreements in plot, and 6) agreeing narratological representations.

Zvi regarding the role of communal meta-narratives.[36] Ben Zvi's work in this area will be discussed in chapter three. At this point in the study, it is sufficient to note that the Noachic narrative, functioning as a communal meta-narrative, would be evoked by the reader of the book of Jonah so that the worldview established by the Noachic narrative would have a "growing influence on the process of ascription of meaning" within the reading of the book of Jonah.

Kamp's work also enters into a discussion of not only the presence of the same words/phrases in the two texts, but the comparative use of the words/phrases in the two texts. For example, he observes that both the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative use the same lexemes in "a dynamic network of reversal and change."[37] More specifically, Kamp describes how both texts describe humans as doing רעע, "evil" and חמס, "wickedness," which is then ראה, "seen" by God who then נחם, "changes his mind" about the people whom he has עשה, "made."[38]

Furthermore, Kamp addresses the rhetorical impact of the interpretive re-use of textual elements borrowed from the Noachic narrative by the book of Jonah. Such can be seen in his analysis of the tension between the two texts. Kamp identifies four points of tension between the two texts.

1. The flood story does not lead to a change within the offending humans, but the book of Jonah does find such a change taking place among the Ninevites.
2. In the book of Jonah, God regrets what he was going לעשות, "to do" (Jonah 3:10)—his future plan to destroy Nineveh, while in the Noachic narrative, God regrets what He has עשה, "done" (Gen 6:6,7) in the past by creating mankind.
3. The main characters of the respective texts are distinct as Noah stands as a protagonist, walking with God and sharing His characteristics of inner change and compassion while Jonah stands as an antagonist, who does not walk with God and is lacking God's gracious characteristics.

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[35] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 86.

[36] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 2.

[37] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 209.

[38] It is apparent that these verbal parallels, like those identified by Koch, are not exclusive and are largely examples of common and/or idiomatic usage.

4. The tension between Noah and Jonah is also seen in their names as "נחם resonates in [Noah's] name and he finds grace in YHWH's eyes (חן in Gen 6.8)" while Jonah's actions make "his introduction as the son of Amittai, 'son of a faithful one', rather ironic. For unlike Noah, Jonah does not live up to his name."[39]

Kamp also finds further textually-based connections between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative, including a connection involving the three sons of Noah (Ham, Shem, and Japheth) within both texts.[40] Not only do these three stand as the basis of the world population, but their relationship with Noah determines how their descendents will operate in the narrative of Jonah. Specifically, the events of Gen 9 place Shem in a positive relationship with Yahweh (Gen 9:26), Japheth in a positive relationship with Shem (Gen 9:27), and Ham in a negative relationship with his two brothers as seen in the relationship of Canaan (Ham's son) to Shem and Japheth (Gen 9:24–27). So also, Noah gives יהוה אלהים, "Yahweh Elohim" as the name of Shem's God (Gen 9:26) and אלהים, "Elohim" as the name of Japheth's God (Gen 9:27), while no name is given for the God of Ham's son Canaan. Jonah, of course, descends from Shem, who is described as a tent-dweller in Gen 9:27, which Kamp points out is descriptive of the nomadic, wandering lifestyle of Shem and his descendents. Hence, it is not surprising when Jonah identifies himself as a Hebrew (Jonah 1:9; from Eber, the third generation from Shem) who fears יהוה (identified by Noah as Shem's God, Gen 9:26) as he wanders onto the ship bound for Tarshish. So also Nimrod establishes the city of Nineveh (Gen 10:11), which then stands as the third generation from Ham. Thus the Ninevites, as descendents of Ham, do not call out to יהוה but an unnamed God in Jonah 3. Yet their calls are heard because they are still under the Noachic covenant. Finally, the second generation from Japheth included Tarshish from whom, in part, came the coastland peoples (Gen 10:2–5), making the coastland peoples the third generation

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[39] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 210.

from Japheth. Thus the sailors on Jonah's ship of Tarshish do not know the name of יהוה but, as

descendants of Noah, they do recognize the prohibition against the spilling of innocent blood, so

they are careful in their handling of Jonah.[41]

Kamp also notes the potential intertextual tie of another name—Joppa. Drawing from W.J.

Barnard and P. van 't Riet, he suggests the possibility that יפו, "Joppa" and יפת, "Japheth" are

based on the same verbal root יפה.[42] He also explores further intertextual connections revolving

around the role of water.[43] Water is destructive of life in the Noachic narrative, yet Jonah is

preserved in the midst of the water just as the Ninevites are spared in the face of their evil and

violence whereas Noah's contemporaries are destroyed. Thus, parallel issues arise, but the

"unfolding or denouement takes place in quite a different way."[44] Once again, this observation is

an example of Kamp's concern for the rhetorical shape of the intertextual connection. Similarly,

chapters four through seven give attention to the rhetorical impact of intertextuality as a tool

used to heighten and mold a text's impact upon a reader.

Kamp's Shortcomings

As was the case with the work of Timothy Koch, so also with Albert Kamp, significant

insights are made, but noteworthy methodological shortcomings remain regarding both the

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[40] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 210–213.

[41] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 210–3. Notice how Kamp's description of the interplay between the two narratives, in this matter, goes beyond a common, formulaic usage found throughout the text of the Old Testament to one that is specific to this intertextual connection.

[42] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 213–4. See also W.J. Barnard, & P. van 't Riet Al seen duif naar het land Assur: het boek Jona verklaard vanuit Tenach en Rabbijnse Traditie tegen de achtergrond van de tijd. Kampen: Kok, 1988, 38.

[43] The prominent role of water (including drowning or near-drowning) in the narratives of Noah and Jonah leads to many who have identified this connection. In line with such an identification is the recent work of Barbara Green who sees Jonah as "cousin to many biblical water motifs." Barbara Green, *Jonah's Journeys.* Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2005, 133. Once again, it ought to be noted that such a water-based connection is hardly exclusive to Jonah and Noah.

[44] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 214–5.

treatment of the reader as well as the text. The focus upon cognitive linguistics in Kamp's work illustrates his interest in the reader's role within the interpretive process. Specifically, he describes how linguistics are simply a means for a speaker to express his cognition of the world about him.[45] Thus, the reality is not found in the communication itself (the text) but in the one perceiving the communication (the reader). This methodology is applied to the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative within a mere eight pages. Yet Kamp's treatment of the reader's role as a matter of cognitive linguistics never addresses the critical issue of identifying the present reader's own presuppositions, which invariably impact the interpretation of the text.

Kamp's work possesses methodological merit regarding the treatment of the text as he gives attention to explicating the interpretive re-use of the Noachic narrative within the narrative of Jonah. Yet his textual work, like that of Timothy Koch, lacks a clear argument for the connection between the two texts. While Kamp's discussion of the role played by Ham, Shem, and Japheth in the book of Jonah ties it to the Noachic narrative, he does not offer a standard by which to gauge the strength of that very connection. Is the evidence presented by Kamp sufficient for proving the intertextual relationship? Is more textual evidence needed? Kamp offers no rationale for answering such questions on a textual basis. Thus, he neither establishes a means for weighing textual evidence nor offers a consideration of his own presuppositions as a reader.

The Work of Ehud ben Zvi

Ehud ben Zvi is mentioned briefly earlier in this chapter, as well as chapter one, due to his work regarding the process of re-reading and the role of meta-narratives, both of which are

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[45] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 8–9.

discussed in greater detail in chapter three's discussion of the text's contribution to the

intertextual relationship. He enters into the study at this point because a brief portion of his work

on the book of Jonah deals with the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative.

Ben Zvi's Contributions

While the discussion of the intentional borrowing and transformation of material from the

Noachic narrative by the book of Jonah is not a major focus of ben Zvi's contribution to the

scholarship on the book of Jonah, he does note significant parallels between the two texts. He

discusses four intertextual ties between the texts in question.

1. Genesis 6:7 stands as an example of divine repentance alongside Jonah 3:10.[46]
2. חמס, "violence" is present among Noah's contemporaries (Gen 6:11, 13), as well as the Ninevites (Jonah 3:8) as a key element of their sinfulness.[47]
3. Jonah's name is reminiscent of the dove used by Noah (Gen 8:11–12) in that both involve "good tidings followed by the disappearance of the messenger."[48]
4. Both Jonah and Noah involve the offering of sacrifices to Yahweh following their deliverance from the waters, yet there is a distinct difference between Jonah and Noah in this very matter. Noah offers the sacrifice (Gen 8:20) while Jonah only pledges such a sacrifice (Jonah 2:9).[49]

Ben Zvi's first two observations are noted by others and discussed in this chapter within

the consideration of Koch's work. The third observation regarding Jonah's name and its

relationship to the dove sent forth by Noah is present among others,[50] but ben Zvi offers a unique

insight. Whereas Koch gave attention to both Jonah and Noah's dove acting as messengers who

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[46] ben Zvi, *The Signs of Jonah*, 36.

[47] ben Zvi, *The Signs of Jonah*, 53.

[48] ben Zvi, *The Signs of Jonah*, 41.

[49] ben Zvi, *The Signs of Jonah*, 122. "Unlike the story of Noah (see Gen 8.20), Jonah does not and cannot offer sacrifices once he reaches dry land. Instead, he hopes to fulfill his vows at the temple of Yahweh (2.10)."

[50] See the work of Timothy Koch earlier in this chapter.

were sent out, returned and then were sent a second time,[51] ben Zvi considers how the both the dove and Jonah bring forth good tidings before disappearing. Such a recognition of further parallel usage between Jonah and the dove strengthens the case of the intertextual relationship.

The fourth observation made by ben Zvi also bears significance. The place of sacrifices within both texts is also taken up by Koch,[52] yet it is ben Zvi's focus upon the distinct difference between the two that merits comment. The acknowledgment of parallel usage of terms between two texts is only the first step within intertextual reading. Noting the distinctive difference between the use of the parallel material in the two texts allows for the discussion of the rhetorical impact of the intertextual relationship. While ben Zvi's observation of this intertextual relationship is helpful, he does not unpack its rhetorical effect.

Ben Zvi's Shortcomings

As set forth in chapter one, intertextuality is the convergence of both text and reader. To fully appreciate the phenomenon of intertextuality, the reader is to be aware of his own presuppositions as well as the text. Does ben Zvi offer such an analysis? It is apparent that his treatment of the reader of the book of Jonah does not give attention to the current reader. He is interested in the historical task of identifying the original readership of the text. Specifically, he states, "I do not propose to focus on the historical author/s or editor/s of the book of Jonah… Instead I propose to focus first upon the reception of the text, that is, to focus on the *readers* and their *readings*."[53] He goes on to identify those readers to be the literati of Persian Yehud.[54] The merits of ben Zvi's dating of the original readership are significant, yet they are not the issue. It

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[51] Koch, "The Book of Jonah and a Reframing of Israelite Theology," 288.

[52] Koch, "The Book of Jonah and a Reframing of Israelite Theology," 288.

[53] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 3–4. Emphasis his.

is the current reader's presuppositions that are to be considered within the current intertextual reading. Ben Zvi does not address the current reader's presuppositions.

Much of what he offers regarding the original readership is a reflection upon the text, thus being of value for understanding the text's contribution to the intertextual reading. Ben Zvi goes so far as to identify the text as the means by which to determine the characteristics of the original readership of the text.[55] While that assists in the exploration of the text's contribution to the intertextual relationship, ben Zvi's specific observations regarding the parallel portions of the two texts call for greater scrutiny due to his lack of a clear methodology for weighing such textual data.

His observations are helpful, reinforcing and extending the insights of others. Nevertheless, ben Zvi does not offer a clear methodology for identifying and weighing the strength of the proposed connections. Likewise, he does not present a standard for judgment for exploring the rhetorical effect of the intertextual relationship. The absence of such a methodology or standard is not surprising inasmuch as the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative is a tangential matter of ben Zvi's study of the book of Jonah. Since intertextuality is not the focus of his work, such methodological concerns are not addressed.

The Work of Hyun Chul Paul Kim

The fourth and final scholar who has given attention to the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative in the book of Jonah is Hyun Chul Paul Kim.[56] The intertextual relationship between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah does not receive extensive treatment as it is but one of various intertextual connections for the book of Jonah mentioned, rather than an extensive,

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[54] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 6–8.

[55] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 4–5.

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focused treatment in a larger study. His discussion of the intertextual link between the book of

Jonah and various other texts includes Jonah and Noah, Jonah and Jeroboam II, Jonah and

Nahum, Jonah and Joel, and Jonah and the Twelve.[57] Although Kim's treatment is brief, it is

included here due to it being the most recent scholarly treatment of the topic.

Kim's Contributions

Kim summarizes the use of the Noachic narrative in the book of Jonah, "the intertextual

echoes in the book of Jonah of the account of Noah in Genesis offer symbolic and figurative

signals so that readers of Jonah are reminded of the flood episode in Genesis."[58] Such a recourse

to "echoes" rather than to specific textual correspondence relates to the role of meta-narratives,

which are discussed in detail in chapter three. Meta-narratives, of which the Noachic narrative is

an example, shape and funnel the worldview of a community. A narrative that holds such weight

in a people's mind is easily prompted by "echoes."

Kim gives attention to four echoes of the Noachic narrative found in the book of Jonah.

1. God is in control of all nature, nations, and people.
2. The presence of key words, such as "wind," "forty," and "dry land."
3. Shared key motifs, such as Yahweh's changing perspective, the participation of animals, and the ark/ship.
4. The relationship between the name of Jonah and the dove sent forth by Noah from the ark.[59]

One of the greatest strengths of Kim's work is its recognition of the various facets of the

relationship between the two texts, from shared terms to motifs to the contextual analysis of the

portrayal of God's control. The latter observation (parallel portrayal of God's universal control)

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[56] Hyun Chul Paul Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually" *JBL* 126 (2007), 497–528.

[57] Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually," 497–528.

[58] Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually", 504.

[59] Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually," 504.

is an addition to the study of the use of the Noachic narrative in the book of Jonah. Kim also adds to the study of the intertextual relationship of the two texts by proposing that the ark and the ship found in the first chapter of Jonah operate as related key motifs. Also noteworthy is Kim's suggestion of a rhetorical purpose for the intertextual relationship. He contends that the book of Jonah's use of the Noachic narrative "highlights irony/pun"[60] within the book of the Jonah. Kim does not discuss this contention, but leaves it undeveloped.

Kim's Shortcomings

Therein lies the chief challenge of Kim's work. His work is a survey of possible intertextual readings for the book of Jonah, which is limited to the length of a journal article. As a result, his observations are made in passing without extended discussion or substantiation. Thus, the text's contribution to the intertextual relationship is not handled thoroughly enough to contribute sufficiently to the study. Furthermore, the shared terms that he mentions are limited to common terms. Nor is there a rationale for the gauging the relative strength of the shared motifs or the contextual portrayal of God's control.

Similarly, the other component of intertextuality—the reader—is not addressed. Without such a consideration, the undeveloped textual data offered by Kim is placed upon a blank slate. While such an approach is a theoretical possibility, intertextual readings are undertaken by readers who have their own presuppositions, which are an integral part of any reading process, including that of intertextuality.

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[60] Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually," 504.

The Status of the Intertextual Use of the Noachic Narrative in the Book of Jonah

While various scholars make passing comments regarding the use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah, the four scholars who are discussed in this chapter offer heightened attention. Reflecting upon their insights and shortcomings accomplishes two key objectives. First, their insights reveal the relative strength that already exists for understanding the intertextual relationship between the texts. Second, weighing their discussion against the methodology discussed in chapter one exposes those matters that still need to be addressed to fully substantiate and explicate the intertextual relationship.

Positive Insights

A strong case is made for the existence of the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative within the book of Jonah by the sheer quantity of scholars and evidence involved. The work of these four scholars stands in concert with the observations of others who are mentioned in the chapter, but not given as close attention. Such a breadth of scholarship offers a certain level of confidence that the intertextual relationship is not the passing fancy of a single person, but the common observation of several within the scholarly community of readers.

The breadth and quantity of the proposed connections between the texts also bespeaks the strength of the intertextual connection. Some intertextual arguments are based upon a single word in a single verse.[61] The scholars contending for an intertextual relationship between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah are not restricted to such limiting parameters. The connections noted are of high quantity and of varied type. Some connections are made on the basis of words (נחם, רוח, etc.). Other connections are set forth due to shared themes, such as the

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[61] An example is Dominik Markl, "Hab 3 in intertextueller und kontextueller Sicht," *Bib* (2004): 99–108. Markl contends for an intertextual relationship between Hab 3 and Jeremiah on the basis of single words used within single verses.

dove that is sent, returns and is sent again as is Jonah. So also, connections are made upon the characterization of the chief human characters, Jonah and Noah, as antagonist and protagonist respectively. The breadth and depth of such connections presents a critical mass that elicits the reader's attention.

Attention is also given to the matter of the rhetorical effect of the intertextual relationship. This is especially evident in the work of Albert Kamp and Ehud ben Zvi. Kamp notes the rhetorical impact of the characterization of Jonah and Noah.[62] Similarly, ben Zvi describes the difference between the two texts' handling of sacrifices to Yahweh following rescue from the water.[63] Thus, Kamp and ben Zvi help focus attention upon the need to move beyond simply noting the presence of an intertextual relationship to the task of explicating its interpretive significance.

While critical analysis is offered in this chapter for many of the proposed connections due to a reliance upon non-exclusive usage of common terms, the observations noted by each of these scholars provide a starting point for the ongoing discussion. From that starting point, progress can and should be made to substantiate the relationship. Once that task has been completed, then the long list of connections noted by various scholars can be addressed.

Needed Correctives

Thus, of critical importance is establishing the legitimacy of the intertextual relationship between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah. That is accomplished through two matters addressed in chapter three. First, the textual basis for the intertextual connection is set forth. Second, the current reader's role in the reading process is acknowledged by noting the reader's

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[62] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 210.

[63] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 122.

presuppositions. With the textual data and an assessment of the reader's disposition in hand, the intertextual relationship is firmly grounded, thus allowing the further exploration of the bond.

It is this need for establishing the text's and the reader's role within intertextual readings that is lacking from the current scholarship upon the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative in the book of Jonah. None of the scholars set forth a methodology for weighing suggested textual connections. Likewise, none of the scholars assesses their own presuppositions, which inform the reading process. Furthermore, chapter one establishes the importance of wedding the text and reader in a symbiotic union. Until the text's and reader's contributions are handled, they cannot be combined to facilitate the intertextual reading.

While two scholars, Kamp and ben Zvi, give limited attention to the rhetorical effect of the intertextual relationship, it is not an emphasis of their work, much less of the scholarship on this intertextual relationship as a whole. Hence, there is a further need to focus upon describing how the use of the Noachic narrative impacts the interpretation of the book of Jonah.

Therefore, four matters need to be addressed. Attention is to be given in turn to: first, the textual data that links the Noachic narrative to the book of Jonah, second, the current reader's presuppositions, third, the union of the textual data and the reader's presuppositions as the context for the intertextual reading, and, finally, the intertextual reading itself with emphasis upon the explication of the rhetorical effect of the relationship. The first three of these matters are discussed in the chapter three. The fourth matter gives direction to chapters four through seven as the book of Jonah is read intertextually chapter by chapter with the Noachic narrative, focused upon the rhetorical impact of the intertextual relationship.

CHAPTER THREE

TEXT AND READER WITHIN THE JONAH-NOACHIC INTERTEXTUALITY

This study argues that reading the book of Jonah intertextually with the Noachic narrative deepens and enriches the reading of the former. To that end, chapter two discusses the existing scholarship that handles the intertextual relationship between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah. That discussion concludes by identifying those matters that need further attention. One of those matters, the rhetorical effect of the intertextual relationship, is taken up in chapters four through seven. This chapter focuses upon the other matter needing attention, namely establishing the legitimate existence of an intertextual relationship between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah. That task is accomplished by detailing the text's evidence for such an intertextual relationship, the current reader's role in the intertextual reading, and a symbiotic union of that textual evidence and the reader's presuppositions, which serves as a justifiable foundation for the ensuing discussion of the rhetorical shape of the intertextual relationship.

The Text's Contribution

The textual evidence for the intertextual relationship between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah begins with the basic predisposition toward intertextuality found within the book of Jonah. This aspect of the book of Jonah is discussed in chapter two, but its significant role for the present discussion warrants a summary description again. Examples of the proclivity toward intertextuality within the book of Jonah include:

1. André and Pierre-Emanuel Lacocque suggest that the central theme of the sea in Jonah 1 hearkens the reader back to "natural theology" and the "Noachian covenant."[1]
2. Intertextual connections between the book of Jonah and the Elijah narrative within Kings are asserted on the basis of both texts appearing as third-person prophetic narratives.[2]
3. Those scholars engaged in Book of the Twelve scholarship contend for various intertextual readings between Jonah and specific books within the Book of the Twelve or between Jonah and the Book of the Twelve as single entity.[3]
4. An intertextual relationship between Jonah 1:1 and the narrative of Jeroboam II in 2 Kgs 14:25 is argued on the basis of the unique use of "Jonah, son of Amittai" in both texts.[4]
5. The intertextual relationship of the Jonahpsalm with the Psalms is also claimed.[5]
6. Thomas Dozeman explores the near identical descriptions of Yahweh's gracious and compassionate character in Jonah 4:2 and Joel 2:13.[6]
7. There is also a tie between Jonah 4:2 and Nah 1:3, as well as a larger tie to Exod 34:6–7 regarding Yahweh's gracious and compassionate character.
8. Lacocque and Lacocque also note that the abrupt conclusion of Jonah is paralleled by Gen 18:32–33.[7]

Such a broad intersection of intertextual readings for the book of Jonah presents the plausibility of other intertextual readings for the book. Moving from plausibility to confirmation requires a reasoned methodology for weighing the textual evidence. The need for a reasoned

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[1] Lacocque and Lacocque, *Jonah*, 78. Not only does this speak to a general predisposition to intertextuality by the Jonah narrative, but it also bespeaks such a connection with the Noachic narrative.

[2] Lessing, *Jonah*, 38–48.

[3] Beate Ego, "The Repentance of Nineveh in the Story of Jonah and Nahum's Prophecy of the City's Destruction: Aggadic Solutions for an Exegetical Problem in the Book of the Twelve," in *SBL 2000 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 2000), 249–50; James Nogalski, "Intertextuality and the Twelve," in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts.* (ed. James W. Watts and Paul R. House; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 102–24; Burkard Zapff, "The Perspective of the Nations in the Book of Micah as a Systemization of the Nations' Role in Joel, Jonah, and Nahum: Reflections on a Context-Oriented Exegesis in the Book of the Twelve," in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve* (BZAW 325; ed. Paul L. Reditt and Aaron Schart; Berlin: de Gruyter; 2003), 292–312.

[4] Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually," 497–528. Kim also discusses intertextual readings between the Jonah narrative and Nahum, Joel, the Book of the Twelve, and the Noachic narrative. Kim is helpful in noting the use of common terms (רוח, נחם, etc.) within Jonah and the suggested intertext. His argument is not conclusive, however, as the article is of sufficient size for introducing the handful of intertextual links suggested by Kim, yet it is not of sufficient size to conclusively demonstrate and discuss such links.

[5] Gerstenberger, "Psalms in the Book of the Twelve: How Misplaced Are They?," 254–262.

[6] Dozeman, "Inner-Biblical Interpretations of Yahweh's Gracious and Compassionate Character," 207–223.

[7] Lacocque and Lacocque, *Jonah*, 33.

methodology for weighing the textual evidence of an intertextual relationship finds an answer in the joint work of Thomas Brodie, Dennis MacDonald, and Stanley Porter.[8]

Weighing Textual Evidence of Intertextuality—Brodie, MacDonald, and Porter

Brodie, MacDonald and Porter argue that the first step in establishing a legitimate intertextual connection is the matter of "initial external plausibility," an issue that grapples with the overarching issue of context by asking two questions. Would the purported borrowing text (the book of Jonah) have had access to the borrowed text (Noachic narrative?) Is there any apparent initial explanation for choosing these two texts and suggesting some form of literary dependence?[9]

Dating and Vector of Influence

The first of these two questions revolves around the dating these two texts. Did the Noachic narrative exist prior to the book of Jonah? If so, then is there a plausible explanation for the Noachic narrative not only existing at the time of the writing of the book of Jonah, but the Noachic narrative also holding such a position of influence that the book of Jonah and its readers would readily refer to it and recognize such references?

Various arguments can be made for seeing the vector of influence moving from the Noachic narrative (borrowed text) to the Jonah narrative (borrowing text). First, Lyle Eslinger argues that literary reasons ought to be used in determining the vector of dependence. To that end, he notes that both Michael Fishbane and John Day "rely predominately on the implications

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[8] Thomas L. Brodie, Dennis R. MacDonald, and Stanley E. Porter, "Conclusion: Problems of Method – Suggested Guidelines," in *The Intertextuality of the Epistles: Explorations of Theory and Practice* (ed. Thomas L Brodie, Dennis R. MacDonald, and Stanley E. Porter; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006), 284–296.

[9] Brodie, MacDonald, and Porter, "Conclusion," 292.

supplied by the biblical plot."[10] In short, just as the biblical plot presupposes Exodus occurring before the Exile, so also the narrative of the great deluge naturally comes before that of the prophet Jonah, thus dictating a vector of influence from the Noachic narrative to the book of Jonah.

While such an argument is satisfying to one seeking strictly a literary reading or one holding to a traditional view for the dating of biblical texts, those with concerns for matters of historical reconstruction will not be satisfied. To that end, a second reason for establishing the vector of influence from the Noachic narrative to the book of Jonah (rather than vice-versa) is the work of Kenneth Kitchen[11] and Jack Sasson[12].

The latter sets forth what is common place in biblical scholarship: a late date for Jonah. Sasson is influenced by "literary and linguistic features" to conclude that "a final editing or composing of Jonah took place during the exilic, but more likely during the postexilic, period."[13] One accepting a traditional dating of biblical texts (especially one identifying the namesake of the book of Jonah with the prophet identified in 2 Kgs 14:25 and believing that the same Jonah or his contemporary penned the book bearing his name) could date Jonah's composition much earlier (roughly the mid eighth century), though a later date is certainly plausible as the text does not claim authorship by Jonah, thus allowing for the possibility that the events of the book were known and communicated orally or in other written form before being preserved in the form of the book of Jonah. In either case, a traditional dating will place the primeval history (including

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[10] Lyle M. Eslinger, "Inner-biblical Exegesis and Inner-biblical Allusion: The Question of Category." *VT* 42 (1992): 56–7.

[11] Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003), 426–7.

[12] Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah* (Anchor Bible 24B; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1990).

[13] Sasson, *Jonah* , 27.

the Noachic narrative) much earlier than that. Hence, the crux of the argument is the question of whether there are reasons, outside of a traditional means of dating, for dating the Noachic narrative prior to the exile to accord with the critical view that the Jonah narrative is exilic or post-exilic, thus allowing for the vector of influence to run from the Noachic narrative to the book of Jonah.

Herein lays the contribution of Kenneth Kitchen. In discussing the primeval history, Kitchen notes the five-fold structure of Gen 1–11 (Creation; First Succession of Generations; Crisis and Judgment; Second Succession of Generations; and "Modern Times"), which is a particular schema shared with related compositions in Mesopotamia, which were in vogue in the early second millennium and never composed afresh after 1500 B.C. Hence, Gen 1–11 falls into the mold of early second millennium Mesopotamian writing. Kitchen further argues that it then stands to reason that as the patriarchs moved west and south, the story would have come with them along with the westward spread of "cuneiform culture" in the early second millennium. Kitchen also notes that Gen 1–11 stands in stark contrast with the only other extensive Hebrew account of origins, "that indubitably postexilic writer, the Chronicler".[14] Kitchen contends that such a contrast is due to the stark change in literary conventions from the nineteenth to the fifth century, thus further bolstering an early date for Gen 1–11.[15]

Kitchen's contention for such an early date for the Noachic narrative (as part of the primeval history) is supplemented by a consideration of the scholarly dating of the Noachic narrative. Recall, the scholarly, critical consensus is that the Jonah narrative is exilic, if not post-exilic, hence a plausible dating for the Noachic narrative that is pre-exilic satisfies the critical

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[14] Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 427.

[15] Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 427.

case. Those holding to the documentary hypothesis consistently describe the Noachic narrative

as a compilation of J and P. Walter Brueggemann states the critical view succinctly, "It is

beyond dispute that this text conflates the two strands of tradition, commonly designated J and

P."[16] While Brueggemann may reckon such a view as being "beyond dispute", it is a rather

unique view for there to be such little dispute. Claus Westermann notes the uniqueness as he

states, "The story of the Flood is the only narrative where J and P are mingled together."[17] So

also, E.A. Speiser describes the complexity of this unique conflation of J and P, "The account of

the Flood… was fused in the compilation to such a degree that it can no longer be reassembled

without surgery at a number of joints."[18] Such comments highlight just how tenuous is the case

for the undisputed conflation of J and P in the flood narrative.

　　Nevertheless, the scholarly consensus is that the Noachic narrative had a dual source. What

are the proposed dates for J and P? Gerhard von Rad contends for J being dated in the middle of

the tenth century B.C. (well before the exile) while P is post-exilic. Both Brueggemann[19] and

Westermann[20] agree with von Rad, bringing his contentions from a former era of biblical

scholarship into present scholarship. Von Rad qualifies the dating of P's material as he states:

> The importance of these must not be overestimated, both because they are in every
> instance only guesses and, above all, because they refer only to the completed literary
> composition. The question of the age of a single tradition within any one of the

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[16] Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis* (Interpretation Commentary; Atlanta, Ga.: John Knox, 1982), 75. For further examples of scholarly assessment of the intermingling of J and P in the Noachic narrative, see Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (trans. John H. Marks; Philadelphia, Pa.: Westminster, 1972), 116–47; Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary* (trans. John J. Scullion, S.J.; Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1984), 9–12, 368, 395–6, 483, 499; E.A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB1; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964), xxv–xxvi; George W. Coats, *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature* (FOTL, Volume I; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1983).

[17] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 3.

[18] Speier. *Genesis,* xxix.

[19] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 75.

[20] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 368, 395–6, 461, 483, 499.

source documents is an entirely different matter. The youngest document (P), for example, contains an abundance of ancient and very ancient material.[21]

In similar manner, E.A. Speiser weighs in, noting:

The question of P's date is difficult to solve… Of late, however, there has been a growing sentiment—backed by a substantial amount of internal evidence—in favor of dating various portions of P to pre-Exilic times, and in some cases to the premonarchic period… The assumption that commends itself in these circumstances is that P was not an individual, or even a group of like-minded contemporaries, but a school with an unbroken history reaching back to early Israelite times, and continuing until the Exile and beyond.[22]

The theoretical challenges underlying the supposed conflation of J and P within the Noachic narrative have led some to question its plausibility. Thomas Brodie argues for a literary reading of Genesis (including the Noachic narrative), which takes the text as whole rather than dividing it between J and P. He argues literary phenomena that were formerly (mis)understood to be two sources are actually diptychs, displaying the literary art of the narrative.[23] Brodie's insights offer a sound rationale for the handling of the Noachic narrative as a single unit within this study.

Not only does the supposed conflation of J and P in the Noachic narrative present significant theoretical challenges, but the dating of P is likewise problematic. What can be said of the critical dating of the Noachic narrative with any degree of confidence? First, significant portions of the narrative (those attributed to J) are pre-exilic. Second, those portions that are reckoned as from P can also be dated from pre-exilic times and still remain in accord with the principles of the documentary hypothesis. The arguments of Kenneth Kitchen, detailed above, buttress the case for arguing that the content of the Noachic narrative is pre-exilic (even pre-

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[21] von Rad, *Genesis*, 25.

[22] Speiser, *Genesis*, xxv–xxvi.

[23] Thomas L. Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue: A Literary, Historical and Theological Commentary* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2001), 5–25.

monarchic or, better yet, patriarchal in time). Furthermore, Kitchen is not alone in his argument

for an early dating of the primeval history that views Gen 1–11 as a cohesive literary unit. Isaac

Kikawada and Arthur Quinn, after noting that there is no extra-biblical evidence for the kind of

editorial work presupposed by the documentary hypothesis, bluntly assert, "The evidence

commonly used to show that Genesis 1–11 is a literary patchwork does in our opinion—when

closely examined and put in its proper context—support the view that Genesis 1–11 is a literary

masterpiece by an author of extraordinary skill and subtlety."[24] They come to the same

conclusion when they consider the Noachic narrative specifically.

> Whether we look at the chiastic structure as a whole, or specific repetitions like the
> boardings of the ark or alleged seams like 6:8–9, the result is the same. There is no
> good reason for a documentary interpretation, many reasons for the story as a
> coherent whole.[25]

Hence, there is strong reason to view the scholarly dating as placing the content of the

Noachic narrative well before the book of Jonah. This leaves the question of the dating of the

compilation of the Noachic narrative. Once again, Kitchen's insights regarding the structure of

the flood narrative coinciding with the conventions of the first half of the second millennium

B.C. and unknown after 1500 B.C. offers the critical scholar sound reason to hold that P

constructed its material in early Israelite times (as described by von Rad above).

As a result, one may conclude that on the levels of literary style, traditional dating, and

critical scholarship, there is substantial reason to place the Noachic narrative significantly earlier

in time than the Jonah narrative. While that satisfies the first question elicited by the issue of

"initial external plausibility" as described by Brodie, MacDonald and Porter, there is another

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[24] Isaac M. Kikawada and Arthur Quinn, *Before Abraham Was: The Unity of Genesis 1–11* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1985), 83.

[25] Kikawada and Quinn, *Before Abraham Was*, 103.

matter to be addressed for that criterion to be satisfied. The second matter calls for the

identification of an apparent initial reason for choosing these two texts and suggesting a literary

dependence of one upon another. The Noachic narrative preceded the Jonah narrative in time, but

why would the Jonah narrative have borrowed from the Noachic narrative?

The Noachic Narrative as a Communal Meta-Narrative

Ehud ben Zvi offers an answer with his discussion of communal meta-narratives[26], a

designation that is applicable to the Noachic narrative. Ben Zvi's discussion focuses upon

prophetic texts serving as meta-narratives. In fact, he identifies the Jonah narrative as such a

meta-narrative. While such a position is integral to ben Zvi's argument regarding the existence of

a (re)readership of Jonah, the critical issue for this study is that the Noachic narrative, though not

part of the prophetic corpus, possesses the characteristics of and fulfills the functions of a

communal meta-narrative. What exactly is a communal meta-narrative? Ben Zvi explains:

> Prophetic books were used to educate or better socialize the communities that
> accepted them as authoritative texts. They encouraged particular sets of theological
> outlooks, norms, constructions of the past, and discouraged others. Memorable
> imagery and a good plot served these socializing purposes. Jonah, more than many
> other prophetic books, has been associated with a great variety of basic communal
> meta-narratives, such as those involving sin and repentance, divine judgment and
> compassion, death and resurrection, rejection and acceptance of divine will, God's
> power over all creation, universalism and nationalistic particularism.[27]

Thus, communal meta-narratives are those stories that define a community. Every society

has them. American society is defined by stories of the founding fathers and key historic events

and leaders. So also, the biblical texts offer stories of patriarchs, kings, prophets, and key leaders,

some of which become normative for defining the community. King David becomes normative

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[26] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 2–5.

[27] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 2.

for the ideal king, while others are not afforded such attention. Creation, the exodus from Egypt, and the exile to Babylon would also serve to shape and mold communal identity. So also, the Noachic narrative possesses the characteristics, as described by ben Zvi, of a narrative that can define a community.

Communal meta-narratives are not expected to employ all the themes described by ben Zvi. Yet the Noachic narrative does make all of the themes an integral part of the text, a fact that not only bolsters its claim as a meta-narrative, but even offers it a heightened presence within the community (by virtue of its employment of each of those basic elements of meta-narratives) as a meta-narrative *par excellence* that channeled the community's worldview.

The Noachic narrative immediately addresses the issue of ***sin and repentance*** with the discussion of the evil of people's hearts and Yahweh's decision to repent of having made them (Gen 6:5–6). Likewise, ***divine judgment and compassion*** are found in the flood, while Noah finds חן, "mercy" in the eyes of Yahweh (Gen 6:8). So also, ***death and resurrection*** arises as the death of all the earth, save only those on the ark, effectively causes their safe arrival on dry ground to serve as a resurrection due to their deliverance from the deadly waters of condemnation. Noah is also emblematic of the ***acceptance of the divine will*** as he offers no objection to the monumental building project set before him nor does he object to Yahweh's decision to bring such cataclysmic judgment.[28] Noah's acceptance of the divine will is made all the more distinctive by the description of the thoughts of humanity's heart being only evil all the time (Gen 6:5), thus describing mankind as living in ***rejection of divine will***. The Noachic narrative also includes the character of a meta-narrative as it demonstrates ***God's power over all***

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[28] Noah's silent acceptance of divine will stands in stark contrast with Abraham interceding on behalf of Sodom in Gen 18:23–32, another communal meta-narrative. It is this persistent use of each potential device of a communal-narrative, which makes the meta-narrative nature of the Noachic narrative stand out even when set next to other meta-narratives.

creation as seen both in the flooding of the earth as well as Yahweh's knowledge of the thoughts of humanity's hearts. *Universalism* is also present as Yahweh makes his covenant with Noah, the progenitor of all peoples, along with the animals. Yet, at the same time, *nationalistic particularism* can be seen in the blessing of Shem (progenitor of the Hebrew people) and the cursing of Canaan (progenitor of the Ninevites).[29] Likewise, the Noachic narrative prepares the reader for Gen 12:1–3 with the call of Abram, a text that can be read as an example of nationalistic particularism.

Not only is the identity of the Noachic narrative as a communal meta-narrative *par excellence* grounded upon its use of each basic element of communal meta-narratives, but also upon its inclusion of the first of the biblical covenants. While critical scholarship identifies the narrative of the Noachic covenant (Gen 9:1–17) as P[30] and thus potentially later in time than the narratives of other covenants, the Noachic covenant nevertheless would have served the community as a foundational understanding of the covenants and who they were in relation to Yahweh.

Furthermore, the case for the Noachic narrative standing as a meta-narrative is bolstered by Noah being employed as a meta-character within the biblical world. Noah held such a position within post-monarchic Israel—the time-period of Jonah's (re)readership identified by ben Zvi. Ezekiel places Noah alongside Daniel and Job as the paragons of righteousness, meta-characters to be recognized and emulated by those who followed them (Ezek 14:14, 20). So also, Isaiah

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[29] It is noteworthy that these two matters, universalism and nationalistic particularism, would be held in dramatic tension by the ancient (re)readers of Yehud as described by Ehud ben Zvi. On one hand, they would hear Yahweh's concern for the penitent Ninevites for He is gracious and compassionate not only to Israel/Judah, but to all peoples. Yet the (re)readers would also be aware that Nineveh had fallen to the Babylonians, thus making their penitence short-lived, eventually giving way to Yahweh's condemnation. The recognition of that historical reality could undergird nationalistic particularism.

[30] See von Rad, *Genesis*, 130, Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 395–396, and Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 75. The implications of divine love for all creation exhibited by a covenant with all creation naturally drives critical

hearkens to the Noachic narrative as a meta-narrative as Yahweh swears that He would no longer

be angry with His people even as He swore in the days of Noah that the waters would no more

go over the earth (Isa 54:9).

There is substantial, if not overwhelming, evidence that the Noachic narrative is a

communal meta-narrative. But what does it mean that the Noachic narrative is a meta-narrative?

Ben Zvi explains that such meta-narratives "channel and socialize the people's imagination."[31]

Such narratives order the world-view of the community.

> The creation of a (partially shared) space of imagination among the readership
> community, and the reaffirmation of the basic meta-narratives held by the group
> contributed to an ongoing positive self-identification of its members, to the creation
> of borders around it, and contributed to the constant shaping of its worldview and
> world of knowledge.[32]

With the Noachic narrative serving as a communal meta-narrative *par excellence* that

offered the community's members self-identification and shaped the worldview of that

community and its members, it would be natural for the book of Jonah not only to have the

Noachic narrative within its basic worldview, but even to view the Noachic narrative as a prime

candidate to be used in legitimating its own message. Furthermore, the readers of the Jonah

narrative could reasonably be assumed to recognize and appreciate the intertextual presence of

the Noachic communal meta-narrative.

Such a use of the Noachic meta-narrative by the Jonah narrative can also be seen as an

example of "elite emulation." Kenton L. Sparks describes this phenomenon.

> Human development depends on our tacit inclination to imitate the cultural patterns
> modeled by others. Though this mimetic behavior is obvious when we are young, the
> tendency to replicate our neighbor's conduct is very strong and continues throughout

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scholarship to view the Noachic covenant as late in time due to its "universalism."

[31] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 2.

[32] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 3.

our lifetime. In fact, we could accurately say that mimesis is an essential ingredient in the human experience. Given that tacit imitation plays such a vital role in the development of human persons, it cannot be a surprise that more explicit, intentional acts of imitation are also important factors in the development and perpetuation of human culture. I have in mind a phenomenon known in the technical literature as elite emulation.[33]

The powerful position held by the Noachic narrative within the culture in which the book of Jonah arose would have made it a natural target for elite emulation. Such emulation was not only natural as the various elements of the Noachic meta-narrative would have been engrained in the worldview of the book of Jonah so that unconscious incorporation of the Noachic meta-narrative would be probable, but even more the conscious borrowing from the Noachic meta-narrative would be a preferable strategy of the book of Jonah to substantiate its message in the minds of its readership, while also giving its message a greater gravity in the community.

Not only was it natural for the Noachic narrative to be used to legitimate the message of the book of Jonah and, in the process, channel the people's imagination, ben Zvi points out that the uniqueness of the book of Jonah[34] lends it to needing a text (even a meta-narrative) upon which to ground itself. Ben Zvi states, "the book is written so as to lead its intended rereaders to expect (or even to look for) a preceding text or perhaps 'intertext.'"[35]

The recognition of the Noachic narrative as a communal meta-narrative *par excellence* satisfies the question of initial external plausibility, as described by Brodie, MacDonald and

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[33] Kenton L. Sparks, "*Enūma Elish* and Priestly Mimesis: Elite Emulation in Nascent Judaism," *JBL* 126 (2007): 625.

[34] E.g., its lack of a standard prophetic opening, its use of third-person narrative rather than first-person prophetic utterance, and an overall sense of the "foreignness" of the Jonah narrative as described in ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 90–6.

[35] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 90.

Porter, for the intertextual use the Noachic narrative within the Jonah narrative. Adding this

meta-narrative character of the Noachic narrative to the general proclivity of the Jonah narrative

toward intertextuality, the evidence for the intertextual connection is mounting. Yet, specific

textual evidence connecting the two narratives has not yet been discussed. Before setting forth

such textual evidence, it would be helpful to have a means by which to evaluate the comparative

strength of the textual evidence. Such an evaluative means is offered by Jeffery Leonard.[36]

Jeffery Leonard—Weighing Textual Evidence of Intertextuality

Leonard recognizes that there are times when the connection between texts is exceedingly

obvious (i.e., when there is an extended quotation with citation). For those times when the

connection is not so obvious, Leonard offers eight principles for evaluating whether one text

alludes to another.

> (1) Shared language is the single most important factor in establishing a textual
> connection. (2) Shared language is more important than non-shared language. (3)
> Shared language that is rare or distinctive suggests a stronger connection than does
> language that is widely used. (4) Shared phrases suggest a stronger connection than
> do individual shared terms. (5) The accumulation of shared language suggests a
> stronger connection than does a single shared term or phrase. (6) Shared language in
> similar contexts suggests a stronger connection than does shared language alone. (7)
> Shared language need not be accompanied by shared ideology to establish a
> connection. (8) Shared language need not be accompanied by shared form to establish
> a connection.[37]

Several comments should be made regarding these principles. As Leonard admits,

establishing such connections is not an exact science in which one seeks a critical mass of shared

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[36] Jeffery Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case," *JBL* 127 (2008).

[37] Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 246. Leonard describes principle two by recourse to two well-known phrases in American parlance, "That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind" and "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." Principle two holds that when someone now says, "one small… for…; one giant… for…" or "It was the best of…; it was the worst of…", it matters not what fills in the blanks. The connection is established based upon the partial use of a very well-known, recognizable phrase – the shared language. The connection is not undone by the unique, unshared language.

terms and/or phrases, while assigning a multiplier based on the relative commonality of the

shared term and/or phrase within the corpus of the Old Testament. Things are not that cut and

dry. In fact, it is fair to say that "in the context of research, particularly research concerning art,

an element of the quixotic is appropriate, if not inevitable."[38]

Nevertheless, with Leonard's principles in mind, an initial examination of the textual

evidence of the intertextual link between the Jonah and Noachic narratives can be properly

discussed. In the following paragraphs, Leonard's principles will be utilized to assess the

legitimacy of the intertextual connection between the Jonah and Noachic narratives. In chapters

four through seven, Leonard's principles will not be showcased as they are here, but will

underlie the discussion which takes place.

The first intertextual connection that may be noted is the wealth of idioms/common phrases

used in both narratives, such as רוח, "wind" as a divine agent (Jon 1:4; 4:8; Gen 8:1); נחם,

"change of judgment," specifically that attending to Yahweh (Jon 3:9,10; 4:2; Gen 6:6); the use

of numbers 120 (Jon 4:11; Gen 6:3) and forty (Jon 3:4; Gen 7:12; 8:6); חמס, "violence" as the

reason for Yahweh's judgment/destruction (Jon 3:8; Gen 6:11); the dove (Jonah's name; Gen

8:8–12); burnt offering upon deliverance from perilous seas (Jon 1:16; Gen 8:20); the sailor's

recognition of the Noachic covenant's prohibition against murder (Jon 1:14; Gen 9:6). The sheer

quantity of shared usages ought to draw the reader's attention, but how well does it stand up

against Leonard's principles? Principle one is addressed by a significant amount of shared terms

between the two texts. Likewise, principle five receives attention from the large quantity of

connections between the two texts. It is principle three (rare or distinctive language) that is most

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[38] Brodie, MacDonald, and Porter, "Conclusion: Problems of Method – Suggested Guidelines," 287.

59

glaringly in need of attention. The textual connections listed above are hardly examples of exclusive connection between the texts.

Specific Textual Evidence of the Intertextual Relationship

What rare or distinctive connections exist between the two texts? Four examples are offered with Leonard's work serving as a template for understanding their contribution. These four are not exhaustive of the intertextual ties; they are illustrative of the link that will be further discussed in chapters four through seven.

Animals Alongside People

The first unique connection between two texts is the inclusion of animals along with people in Yahweh's relationship with Nineveh. Jonah 3:7–8 records the king's proclamation that beasts as well as people were to fast that their penitence might lead to God's repentance. Likewise, Yahweh's closing question to Jonah (4:11) cites the value of Nineveh not only in terms of its 120,000 residents, but also the city's numerous cattle. So also, Yahweh's appointing (מנה) of the great fish (Jonah 2:1, MT) and the worm (Jonah 4:7) as means to communicate his purpose to Jonah, even as Jonah is Yahweh's chosen means to communicate to the Ninevites, highlights the book of Jonah placing animals alongside people.

Such inclusion of animals alongside people hearkens back to the Noachic narrative. Genesis 6:7 records that Yahweh's judgment upon the great sin of the world was to destroy not only people, but also the animals. While the description of the animals in Gen 6:7 (בהמה, "livestock," רמש, "creeping things," עוף, "birds") is reminiscent of Gen 1:20, 24, there is a distinct difference maintained between humanity and beast throughout Gen 1 by virtue of humankind being given authority over the rest of creation. This distinction continues into Gen 2:19–20 with Adam's naming of the animals. The union of two is seen, however, not only in Gen

6:7, but also in Gen 9:10, 17 where the Noachic covenant is made not only between Yahweh and humanity, but also all living animals so that it is not only mankind that Yahweh pledges to never again completely destroy by a flood, but animals as well. While this is not an exclusive connection (though it is nearly exclusive) between the Noachic and Jonah narratives, it certainly stands as a unique, rare usage shared by the two.[39] It is also worth noting that this unique connection between the Jonah and Noachic narratives goes beyond shared terms, even beyond shared phrases, to a shared major theme.

The Lines of Ham, Shem, and Japheth

A second distinctive connection between to the two texts centers upon the generations descending from Noah's three sons.[40] Not only do Ham, Shem and Japheth stand as the basis of the world population, but their relationship with Noah determines how their descendents will operate in the book of Jonah. Furthermore, the combined presence of Hebrew Jonah, Tarshish and Nineveh is unique to the book of Jonah as an extension of their respective forefathers, Shem, Japheth, and Ham within the Table of Nations (Gen 10:4, 11, 21). The relationship of the three

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[39] The only other narrative that links humanity with beast in their accountability before the divine is the Exodus narrative. Animals are often made to suffer the consequences of divine judgment in that narrative. The gnats (Exod 8:17), boils (Exod 9:10), and hail (Exod 9:19) are said to come upon humans and beasts. So also, Yahweh's wrath is poured out specifically upon Egypt's animals within the fifth plague of the death of the livestock. Exodus 11:5, 12:12 and 12:29 mention the death of the first-born shall extend to the cattle as well as humans. The matter of accountability by human and beast before the divine comes into play when, just as Jonah mentions the fasting of animals along with humans leading to deliverance from God's wrath, Moses declares that the Egyptians could be delivered from the plagues by the feasting (antithesis of fasting) of Yahweh's people, with their beasts attending them in the feast (Exod 10:9). Furthermore, when Israel is to depart in order to avert the plague of the death of the first-born, not even a dog is to growl against Israelite man or beast (Exod 11:7). The deliverance of Israel and entrance into Canaan leads to the call for the firstborn of both man and beast to be set aside (Exod 13:12, 15). Either human or beast who touches Mount Sinai is to be stoned (Exod 19:13). These incidents from Exodus place animal alongside human as having a moral responsibility before Yahweh, subject to his commands and the object of his punishment if such commands are not honored. Exodus contains this element, which is otherwise unique to the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. The methodology of this study recognizes that such unique, nearly exclusive connections to bear significant weight in judging the textual evidence for the intertextual connection.

[40] This insight has been noted by Albert Kamp, *Inner Worlds: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach to the Book of Jonah* (trans. D. Orton; Boston, Mass.: Brill Academic, 2004), 210–13.

principal human characters of the book of Jonah play out precisely in line with the blessing

spoken by Noah upon his three sons and their progeny (Gen 9:25–27).

The Jonah narrative offers only three human characters—Jonah, the Tarshish-bound sailors

who operate as a whole, and the Ninevites who also act as a whole. While mention is made of the

ship's captain (Jonah 1:6) and the king of Nineveh (Jonah 3:6–8), even their mention leaves them

in a representative role. The captain expresses the sentiment of the entire crew when he

exhorts Jonah to rise and call upon his god as they had all been doing. The king is only

mentioned as he declares a fast that not only applies to Nineveh as a whole, but which the people

had already begun prior to his appearance (Jonah 3:5). The representative function of the captain

and the king is also underlined by the fact that they are not named in the Jonah narrative, an

omission that is all the more glaring for the king of Assyria. Both captain and king are unnamed

that they might simply be identified by their association, along with the rest of their respective

group, with Tarshish and Nineveh respectively.

The words of Jonah in the first chapter of the Jonah narrative also give him an identity

beyond "Jonah, son of Amittai." After the lots fall upon Jonah, indicating him to be the cause of

the storm that threatens their lives, the sailors request five pieces of information from him: why

has this evil come upon them; what is Jonah's occupation; where does Jonah come from; what is

Jonah's country; and from what people does Jonah come (Jonah 1:8). Jonah's reply to their

request offers a two-fold significance. First, rather than answering each of the sailors' requests

for information in turn, Jonah simply says, עברי אנכי,"A Hebrew am I". The fronting of the

predicate emphasizes Jonah's identification as a Hebrew. That emphasis is underlined by Jonah's

terse, two-word response. Jonah has expressly identified himself as a Hebrew, which places him

in a particular relationship with the sailors whose identity is tied to Tarshish and the Ninevites.

Yet their specific identities are kept in a universal framework. Having identified himself as a

Hebrew, Jonah states that he fears Yahweh, the God of the heavens, who made the sea and the dry ground. Thus, Jonah is clear that Yahweh's dominion is over all creation.[41]

That universal character of Yahweh's dominion drives the reader back to the Noachic narrative where Yahweh's universal dominion is not only found, but His universal grace as well. The creation narrative of Gen 1–2 could be argued to also hold Yahweh's dominion and grace together, yet it is the Noachic narrative with its establishment of God's covenantal relationship with all creation (Gen 9:8–11), following on the heels of his punishment of all creation (Gen 6:7, 12), which brings universal, divine dominion and grace to the fore. Divine grace for all creation is further highlighted by Yahweh's remembrance of not just Noah, but the animals as well, which prompts him to send a wind to cause the waters to recede (Genesis 8:1).

All the more significant, Yahweh's relationship with Hebrew Jonah, the Tarshish sailors, and the Ninevites is defined in the Noachic narrative.[42] Genesis 10:21–24 records the genealogy of Shem as including the following line: Shem—Arpachshad—Shelah—Eber. While various other offspring of Shem are mentioned, this line takes prominence as Shem is identified as אבי כל־בני־עבר, "the father of all the children of Eber" (Gen 10:21). עבר, "Eber", when given its gentilic form, offers the source of the title עברי, "Hebrew"—the very identification that Jonah explicitly attributes to himself. Similarly, Tarshish takes prominence in Gen 10 as Japheth's genealogy includes the line: Japheth—Javan—Tarshish (Gen 10:2–4). So also, Nineveh comes to the fore in Gen 10 as Ham's genealogy includes the line: Ham—Cush—Nimrod, with Nimrod having established the city of Nineveh (Gen 10:6–11).

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[41] For a discussion of how Jonah's identification of Yahweh as the "God of the heavens" grants a universal character to Him, see Jonathan Magonet, *Form and Meaning: Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1983), 38.

[42] This connection was first pointed out in Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 210–3.

With so many names being mentioned within Gen 10, why give heed to just three? It is their confluence of both familiarity and exclusivity. The familiarity of the terms Hebrew, Tarshish, and Nineveh is grounded upon their frequent usage within Hebrew scripture. A significant number of the names found in Gen 10 are limited to genealogical lists. Yet, the inclusion of Nineveh in Gen 10 is unique as it is not found in the primeval genealogy of 1 Chr 1. Furthermore, the inclusion of these three designations—Hebrew, Tarshish, and Nineveh—in the same text is unknown throughout the rest of Hebrew scripture, save only the book of Jonah. And since that text has a self-confessed Hebrew and two collective entities identified by Tarshish and Nineveh as its only human characters, the three become prominent when the two narratives are brought together.

This connection gains more prominence with the consideration of the place of Nineveh in the Jonah narrative. Nineveh's choice as the object of Jonah's prophetic work is first justified by its presence as an ancient super-power. Yet there were other super-powers—Egypt, Babylon— that could have been chosen for Jonah's work.[43] Even more, since Jonah was fleeing toward Tarshish, why not have him preach to them as a non-Hebrew people? One explanation would be the notoriety of the Assyrians for cruelty, which would make them the paragon of ungodly behavior. Yet, Egypt could have filled that same role due to its prominence in another meta-narrative, namely Exodus. The choice of Nineveh also presents a jolt to the Jonah narrative due to its historic relationship with Israel. Hence, Marvin Sweeney argues that the inclusion of Nineveh is an example of heavy irony and parody since Assyria, who would topple Israel, is said to repent at the message of Yahweh's displeasure.[44]

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[43] Jack Sasson raises this same question in Sasson, *Jonah*, 86.

[44] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 304.

When the Jonah narrative is read intertextually with the Noachic narrative, however, a different explanation for Nineveh's place in the Jonah narrative is found. With Nineveh originating from cursed Ham, Nineveh brings to prominence Yahweh's concern for all people, even those descended from an accursed forefather, thus including all gentile people, and so underscoring a critical element of the narrative of Jonah—the universal scope of Yahweh's gracious character. As J. H. Stek has pointed out:

> One large element in this message is the emphatic proclamation of Yahweh's vital interest in the Gentile peoples for their own sake, and the reminder that His work in Israel was, in the larger scopes of His purposes, with a view to the blessing of the Gentiles also. In the history of salvation which He is working out in Israel in the midst of the nations, He is making His redemptive approach to all nations. God is saving a people, but what He does in and for His people in history is with a view to channeling His grace to the nations. The extension of the blessing of Abraham to the nations is one of the eschatological goals of salvation history."[45]

The unique combination of Hebrew, Tarshish and Nineveh within the book of Jonah has been intertextually linked to the Noachic narrative based upon the presence of those same three designations being found in the genealogies of Gen 10. That connection, and its significance, is further illustrated by Noah's blessing upon the respective forefathers of Hebrew, Tarshish, and Nineveh, namely, Shem, Japheth, and Ham. Noah names Yahweh as the God of Shem (Gen 9:26). Hebrew Jonah, as a descendent of Shem, thus identifies himself as one who fears Yahweh. Japheth is not specifically tied to Yahweh, but only to Elohim. Thus, the Tarshish sailors, from the line of Japheth, each call upon אלהיו, "his god" (Jonah 1:5). They make the remarkable turn to call upon Yahweh, but that surprise is explicable because Noah's blessing upon Japheth places him in a positive relationship with Shem, whom Noah placed in positive relationship with Yahweh. Ham is uniquely unconnected to Yahweh or even Elohim in Noah's blessing, but his son, Canaan, is placed in an adversarial relationship with Shem and Japheth. Thus, the book of

Jonah records the Ninevites believing Elohim (Jonah 3:5), but never Yahweh. It is even Elohim who repents of the evil, which he planned to bring upon them (Jonah 3:10) and then Yahweh immediately reappears to converse with Jonah in the fourth chapter of the book of Jonah.

The relationship of each of the three human characters of the book of Jonah with the divine is explained by the Noachic narrative. Jonah, as a descendent of Shem, knows Yahweh from the beginning. The Tarshish sailors, descended from Japheth, first only know Elohim (an impersonal step removed from his personal identification as Yahweh), but are brought to know Yahweh by Jonah's testimony. The Ninevites, descended from Ham, have no apparent relationship with the divine prior to Jonah's arrival. An initial, first step toward the divine is made as they believe Elohim, but have yet to come to confess Yahweh. Recognizing this connection helps answer questions within the Jonah narrative about the use of Yahweh versus Elohim.[46]

These descriptions of Noah's three sons shape the role played by their respective descendents in the book of Jonah, who are each related to the third generation from Ham, Shem, and Japheth. Jonah, of course, descends from Shem and identifies himself as a Hebrew (Jonah 1:9; gentilic form of Eber, the third generation from Shem; Gen 10:21–23) who fears יהוה, "Yahweh" as he wanders onto the ship bound for Tarshish.

Nimrod establishes the city of Nineveh, which then stands as the third generation from Ham (Gen 10:6–11). The Ninevites do not call out to יהוה, "Yahweh," but an unnamed God in Jonah 3:5, 8–10 in accord with Noah not having offered a name for the god of Ham's son Canaan. Yet their calls are heard because they are still under the Noachic covenant.

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[45] J. H. Stek, "The Message of the Book of Jonah," *CTJ* 4 (1969): 40.

[46] See Sasson, *Jonah*, 93 for an example of the challenges in understanding how these terms are being used in the Jonah narrative.

Finally, the second generation from Japheth included Tarshish from whom, in part, came the coastland peoples (Gen 10:2–5), making the coastland peoples the third generation from Japheth. Thus the sailors on Jonah's ship of Tarshish do not know the name of יהוה, "Yahweh," but, as descendants of Noah, they do recognize the prohibition against the spilling of innocent blood, so they are careful in their handling of Jonah (Jonah 1:14).

The force of this unique connection between the two narratives is two-fold. First, the connection is exclusive. No other biblical narrative makes use of the successive generations from Ham, Shem and Japheth as does Jonah. Second, the intricacy and specificity of this connection goes well beyond simple repetition of a phrase to a consideration of the unique structure for humanity and their relationship with God and one another, which flowed from the relationship between Ham, Shem and Japheth. The sophisticated use of this relationship cannot be explained as coincidence.

Waters Covering the Mountains

A third unique and rare connection between the two narratives is their description of waters covering the mountains. Genesis 7:19, 20 records the flood waters covering the mountains. Likewise the Jonahpsalm describes Jonah's descent in the waters as going down to the קצב, "bottoms"[47] of the mountains (Jonah 2:7). While many texts (i.e., Deut 8:7; Isa 30:25) describe water flowing in the mountains as an indication of God's gracious provision, the Noachic narrative (Gen 7:20) and Jonah 2:7 (MT; Jonah 2:6—ET), along with Ps 104:6 (which describes

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[47] The translation of "bottoms" for קצב is based upon the contextual location of the mountains in the psalm of Jonah 2. As Jonah is descending in the water, the force of the poem prompts the "extremities" of the mountains to be understood as "bottoms" as a means to intensify the depths to which he descends. Cf. BDB 2.

Yahweh's creative work, which caused the waters to no longer cover the mountains), are unique in describing the waters covering the mountains.

Setting Upon the Waters

A fourth unique connection between the Noachic and Jonah narratives focuses upon the distinctive setting of both narratives with significant action taking place upon the waters. Certainly other Hebrew narratives involve Yahweh's salvation in the midst of water (i.e., the parting of the sea in Exod 14:16 and the parting of the Jordan at the beginning of the conquest in Josh 3:17), yet those texts distinctly keep the saved apart from the water. The Noachic and Jonah narratives are unique in that they take place in the midst of the water with specific vessels (ark, ship of Tarshish, great fish) being used.

Weighing Textual Evidence—From Leonard back to Brodie, MacDonald and Porter

These four unique connections between the two narratives—animals alongside people; the lines of Ham, Shem and Japheth; waters covering the mountains; setting upon the waters—work in accord with Leonard's principles. Principles three (priority upon unique and rare connections) and six (similar contexts—in/on the water—make the connections all the more strong) are most specifically addressed by these four connections.

Considering the strength of the intertextual connection by means of Leonard's principles also offers the opportunity to revisit the collaborative work of Brodie, MacDonald and Porter. Attention has already been given to their concern for initial external plausibility for the existence of an intertextual connection. Yet that was only the first of three criteria. Just as Leonard's principles focused upon the uniqueness of the intertextual connections, so also Brodie,

MacDonald and Porter's second criteria focuses upon "significant similarities"[48] found between the two texts in question, similarities that include genre, theme (including theology or ideology), style, plot, motifs, structure, order, wording (linguistic details), and volume (number and density of connections). There are many such similarities between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah.

A significant similarity in *style* exists in that both texts in question are third person narratives. While that may hardly seem significant as the Old Testament is replete with third person narratives, the prophetic corpus is not.[49] Jonah's unique shape as a third person narrative is distinctive amongst the prophets, making its parallel style with the Noachic narrative noteworthy.

Another significant similarity is the *theme* of universalism found in both texts. Non-Hebrews exist under Yahweh's grace in both texts as his covenant with Noah stands over all mankind (Gen 9:9), allowing for his gracious disposition toward Nineveh (Jonah 3:10), the Tarshish-bound sailors (Jonah1:15–16), and even Jonah himself (Jonah 2:1, 11 MT). Since these three human characters flow from the three sons of Noah (Jonah from Shem, the Tarshish-bound sailors from Japheth, and the Ninevites from Ham), the universalism is underlined. That universalism is inherent in Yahweh's gracious identity (Jonah 4:2), which explains his decision to spare the Ninevites.

The unique setting of both narratives with action taking place upon the waters presents a prominent similarity in *motif*. Likewise, another parallel motif within both narratives is the matter of repentance. The integral role of repentance within both narratives bespeaks each text

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[48] Brodie, MacDonald, and Porter, "Conclusion: Problems of Method – Suggested Guidelines", 292.

[49] While Isa 36–39 and Amos 7:10–17 are examples of third person narratives within the prophetic corpus, such examples comprise a small portion of the respective documents while the majority of the book of Jonah (less only the Jonahpsalm) is set forth as third person narrative.

serving as a communal meta-narrative. That very function of both texts stands as yet another example of what Brodie, MacDonald and Porter describe as "significant similarities."

Brodie, MacDonald and Porter's third criteria builds upon the identification of the intertextual link, by determining how such borrowing impacts the meaning of the borrowing text. Such explication gives attention to "classifiable and interpretable similarities and differences"[50] as a means to describe what is happening in the texts and how adaptation has taken place as the borrowing text transforms the borrowed text. This third criterion ultimately leads to a discussion of the rhetorical purpose of the link. As the intertextual links are classified and interpreted, not only are the rhetorical purposes of the links seen, but also the strategies for achieving those purposes are made manifest. Such an analysis of the impact of the intertextual links upon the meaning of the Jonah narrative is taken up in the chapters four through seven of this study.

The Reader's Contribution

To this point of the discussion, this chapter has focused upon the specific textual evidence for the existence of an intertextual connection between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. The proclivity of the book of Jonah toward intertextuality sets the stage for expecting further intertextual connections. With recourse to the methodology established by Brodie, MacDonald, and Porter, the initial plausibility of the intertextual connection between the book of Jonah and the Noahic narrative is substantiated on the basis of the dating of the texts and the vector of influence. Likewise, the identification of the Noachic narrative as a communal meta-narrative, which would be part of the basic worldview of the book of Jonah, strengthens the case for the intertextual re-use of the Noachic narrative in the book of Jonah. Leonard's principles for weighing the textual evidence of intertextuality finds strong evidence of the intertextual

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[50] Brodie, MacDonald, and Porter, "Conclusion: Problems of Method – Suggested Guidelines", 292.

relationship, the weightiest evidence being the four unique connections between the texts (animals alongside people; the lines of Ham, Shem and Japheth; water covering the mountains; setting upon the water).

Such attention to the textual evidence is integral to establishing the intertextual relationship. Yet such textual evidence does stand by itself. The other partner in the intertextual task, the reader, must also be given due attention.

Ehud ben Zvi and Re-reading

Ehud ben Zvi's study of the Jonah narrative gives significant attention to the matter of the original readership of that narrative due to his focus upon the reception of the Jonah narrative. Hence, his concern is not to offer a date for Jonah's composition, but its original reception. The dating he offers for that reception is in accord with the date that the majority of scholars suggest for the text of Jonah, namely a post-exilic date. Ben Zvi argues specifically for the original readership being the Hebrew literati residing in Persian Yehud.[51]

The specific identity and time-frame of Jonah's original readership is not a critical issue for this study. What is particularly helpful is ben Zvi's discussion of how the literati would have read Jonah. He argues that Jonah would not only have been read by the literati, but it would have been reread. Ben Zvi is not alone in contending that the book of Jonah was the object of rereading. Thomas Bolin contends that the book of Jonah begins in way that presupposes the reader's preceding knowledge of the text.[52]

The matter of rereading is critical for a reader's ability to find intertextual connections. The significance of rereading is discussed by ben Zvi:

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[51] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 6–8, 109.

[52] Thomas M. Bolin, *Freedom Beyond Forgiveness: The Book of Jonah Re-Examined* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 75.

The concept of rereading is of major importance, because there are significant differences in the way people *reread* texts as opposed to their *first* reading of the same text… texts that are suitable for continuous rereading show at least some degree of double meaning, ambiguity and literary sophistication.[53]

All readers will recognize the distinction between reading and rereading a text. Subsequent rereadings take place with full knowledge of how the text will end and the path that must be trod to arrive at that ending. So why reread the text? As ben Zvi points out, texts with double meaning, ambiguity and literary sophistication elicit rereading as a means to better understand the message of the text. The book of Jonah with its classic interpretive challenges certainly fits such a description. As the reader engages the text over and over again, its subtle discontinuities first come to light and then eventually become resolved. As the original rereaders of Jonah grappled with its intricacies, various readings would present themselves to the readers, including the recognition of its intertextual tie to the Noachic narrative. But which of these various readings would stand forth as most prominent? Ben Zvi explains:

Not surprisingly, then, the multiplicity of meanings was not, and could not be, without limitations. Within a sea of multivocality, the few 'islands' of univocality are salient.[54]

Certain readings would be preferred by the nature of the reading and its employment of themes and devices that would be trusted by the readership. The recognition of the intertextual connection with the Noachic narrative would have been such a preferred reading due to the Noachic narrative serving as a communal meta-narrative. The intertextual use of the Noachic narrative would not only have been recognizable because of its place of prominence in the reading community, its ability to ground the book of Jonah in the basic worldview of the community would have made it a preferred reading.

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[53] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 9–10.

[54] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 11.

Like the original re-readership identified and discussed by ben Zvi, the current re-readership (namely, the author of this study) has reason to prefer a reading of the book of Jonah based upon the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative. To understand why the current re-readership prefers such an intertextual reading, two facets of the re-readership need to be kept in mind: the reading communities to which the current re-readership belongs and the presuppositions of the current re-readership.

The Reading Communities of the Current Re-Reader

The author of this study belongs to two reading communities. First, he belongs to the reading community of biblical scholarship. As a member of that community, the current re-reader places high priority upon the raw data of the text. Those matters discussed earlier in this chapter regarding the text's contribution receive significant weight due to the current re-reader's scholarly interests in the text.

Second, the current re-reader is a member of an ecclesiastical reading community. Within such a community, the biblical text is not only an object for scholarly analysis, but a document that informs the faith community to which the re-reader belongs. Specifically, the biblical text has authority within that community for defining the faith of the community. With the text (including both the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative) holding such authority, the current re-reader is obliged to respect the integrity of the text without either wantonly undermining its credibility or callously hoisting a reading upon it without textual cause. Such an approach to the text hearkens back to the Christian hermeneutical approach that called for all interpretation to respect the *regula fide*. This concern for the "rule of faith" has found renewed interest in recent years among various biblical scholars.[55] A concern for the "rule of faith" will be evident both

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[55] A survey of the matter can be found in Craig G. Bartholomew et al. eds., *Canon and Biblical Interpretation*

within the description of the current re-reader's presuppositions (found below) as well as in the discussion of the rhetorical impact of the intertextual connection set forth in chapters four through seven of the study.

The Presuppositions of the Current Re-Reader

The presuppositions of the current re-reader, largely informed by the reading communities to which he belongs, also impact the intertextual reading of these two texts. The first of those presuppositions affects the dating of the texts. Significant attention is given earlier in this chapter to the scholarly reasons for dating the Noachic narrative earlier than the Jonah narrative. That satisfies the re-reader's needs as a member of the scholarly reading community. As a member of an ecclesial reading community, he also posits the historic precedence of the Noachic narrative before that of Jonah as a respect for the integrity of the text, most notably the integrity of the Noachic narrative.

A second presupposition regards the literary relationship between the two texts. The earlier discussion of meta-narratives highlights the scholarly reason for acknowledging the recourse that the book of Jonah would have naturally made to the Noachic narrative, thus satisfying the re-reader's needs as a member of the scholarly reading community. So also, as a member of an ecclesial reading community, the literary relationship between the two texts is also affirmed. That relationship is based both upon the character of the Noachic narrative, including the Noachic covenant, as it shapes and defines the worldview of later portions of the overall biblical narrative. The literary relationship is also affirmed by the ecclesial reading community's investment of authority in earlier texts, an authority that would lead the community to hold that

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(Scripture and Hermeneutics Series, Volume 7; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006). Also of great help are Christopher R. Seitz, *Figured Out: Typology and Providence in Christian Scripture* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001) and Ephraim Radner and George R. Sumner, *The Rule of Faith: Scripture, Canon, and Creed in a*

the book of Jonah would have seen the Noachic narrative as authoritative and thus subject to its worldview.

A third presupposition held by the current re-reader relates to the canonical/scriptural relationship between the two narratives. Such a relationship is natural to the ecclesial reading community and it has been touched upon while describing the current re-reader's other presuppositions. Yet it can still be expanded upon regarding the overall integrity of the canonical/scriptural message from Genesis to Jonah and each point in between and beyond.[56] A coherent message ties each narrative into the whole narrative, a message of the relationship between Yahweh and His people, all people, and even all creation.

As a member of the reading community of biblical scholarship, the current re-reader also recognizes the relation of this coherent message to the scholarly description of biblical *Heilsgeschichte*.[57] The Noachic narrative is an integral part of that salvation narrative as it not only sees the preservation of life, but also the renewal of the blessing upon creation to be fruitful, while also immediately leading into the genealogy from Noah through Shem to Abram, a central figure in *Heilsgeschichte*.

Critical Age (Harrisburg, Pa.:Morehouse Publishers, 1998).

[56] This matter relates to the matter of canonical criticism as described by Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress, 1979). That relationship was previously seen in Childs' critique of reader-based intertextuality as seen in Childs, "Critique of Recent Intertextual Canonical Interpretation," 177. While Childs' canonical criticism is not the operating principle for this study, similar affinities are present. Like Childs, the current re-reader recognizes the scriptural text as primarily an authoritative document for a faith community. The chief distinction between Childs' approach and that of the current re-reader relates to the historicity of the text. Childs' canonical criticism does not place a priority upon the historical veracity of the text, but only its canonical authority. The current re-reader holds forth both the canonical authority and historical relevance of the text.

[57] The prevalence of *Heilsgeschichte* within twentieth century biblical scholarship can be seen in the discussion of Walter Kaiser's work found in Ben C. Ollenburger, Elmer A. Martens, and Gerhard F. Hasel, eds. *The Flowering of the Old Testament: A Reader in Twentieth Century Old Testament Theology, 1930–1990.* (Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 1; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 233–234. The ongoing presence of *Heilsgeschichte* within biblical theology may be seen in Robert Gnuse, *Heilsgeschichte as a Model for Biblical Theology: The Debate Concerning the Uniqueness and Significance of Israel's Worldview* (College Theology Society Studies in Religion 4; Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1989).

The book of Jonah is also recognized as part of this salvation narrative in the three-fold salvation of the book—sailors in chapter one, Jonah in chapter two, the Ninevites in chapter three—followed by a debate between Yahweh and Jonah regarding the appropriateness of the full extent of Yahweh's grace, a central component of *Heilsgeschichte*.

It may be further noted that the current re-reader is not alone in reading the book of Jonah in light of *Heilsgeschichte*, as J. H. Stek argues:

> The present writer recognizes the validity of the principle of historical analogy, but insists that the only appropriate historical analogies for the marvelous events recorded in the book of Jonah are the similarly marvelous events belonging to that history of salvation to which the Biblical writers bear witness, viz., the history of the mighty acts of God. This is the only context for the reading of the Book of Jonah. Within this context, historical narrative takes historicity seriously, even when narrating most unusual events—precisely because there are unusual events to narrate. And within Biblical literature, the Book of Jonah finds its nearest analogy as literature in prophetic historical narrative, as most scholars will admit.[58]

Text and Reader in Symbiosis

Having established the textual foundation for the Noachic-Jonah intertextuality and having identified the current reader's contributions to such a reading, these two facets of the reading can be united as the context within which the exploration of the rhetorical effect of the intertextual relationship can take place. The union of the textual data and the reader's presuppositions reveals six items of agreement between the two.

First, both text and reader offer independent justification for the intertextual reading. The text substantiates such a reading by means of a high quantity of parallel usage of terms combined with numerous connections, which are exclusive to the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative (e.g., the third generation from Ham, Shem and Japheth in the Table of Nations determining the role of the Ninevites, Jonah, and the Tarshish-bound sailors) or near-exclusive (e.g., the

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[58] J. H. Stek, "The Message of the Book of Jonah," *CTJ* 4 (1969), 23–24.

combination of animals along with people in the realm of condemnation and repentance). The current reader corroborates the reading by virtue of presuppositions derived from his membership in both a scholarly reading community as well as an ecclesiastical reading community. The former leads to a high respect for the textual data. The latter not only prompts respect for the textual data, but also presupposes the foundational role that the Noachic narrative serves in the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Second, both text and reader place high importance upon re-reading. This chapter's discussion of re-reading includes the insight that the book of Jonah presents itself as expecting its reader to have a pre-existing knowledge of the text. Not only does the text thus invite re-reading, but the current reader practices re-reading as a member of both a scholarly reading community as well as an ecclesiastical reading community. The former appreciates re-reading as a means to grasp the text's data. The latter invites re-reading as a means to uphold the text's authority over the reader.

Third, both text and reader verify the vector of influence. The textual data suggests a second millennium composing of the primeval history, including the Noachic narrative, while the book of Jonah can be argued to have been written during monarchic times or as late as the post-exilic period. In either case, the Noachic narrative precedes the book of Jonah. Furthermore, the text suggests that the Noachic narrative stands as a meta-narrative that would naturally lend it to be in the basic worldview of the book of Jonah. So also, the reader acknowledges the vector of influence as moving from the Noachic narrative to the book of Jonah. The reader's scholarly reading community bases such a vector upon the textual data just mentioned. The reader's ecclesiastical reading community bases such a vector based upon the progression of the biblical narrative.

Fourth, both text and reader focus upon Yahweh's universal grace. While both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah involve condemnation, both give higher priority to Yahweh's gracious provision. Noah and his family along with the human characters in the book of Jonah—Jonah, the Tarshish-bound sailors, and the Ninevites—are spared due to Yahweh's grace. The current reader also holds that Yahweh's grace is central. Such is borne out by means of a focus upon *Heilsgeschichte* in the scholarly reading community as well as repeated acknowledgement that Yahweh is gracious and compassionate within the ecclesiastical reading community.

Fifth, both text and reader affirm the importance of parallel usage. The discussion of the textual contribution to the intertextual relationship was driven by examples of parallel usage within the two texts. The reader recognizes the relationship between the texts because of such parallel usage. Furthermore, the conventions of the scholarly reading community focus upon parallel textual usage, as seen in the principles described by Brodie, MacDonald, and Porter as well as Leonard and others. So also, the ecclesiastical reading community gives attention to parallel usage so as to prevent the reader from usurping the authority of the text.

Sixth, both text and reader work together to move beyond simply noting the existence of an intertextual relationship to explicating its rhetorical impact. The text's insistence upon rhetorical impact is seen in the means by which the earlier text is re-used in the later text. Were the later text only interested in repeating the earlier text without interpretive transformation, then it would simply copy the text verbatim. Yet this is not what happens. The text is transformed for rhetorical impact. The reader is also interested in understanding that rhetorical impact. The ecclesiastical reading community seeks knowledge of that impact to better understand Yahweh and his purposes. The scholarly reading community utilizes the rhetoric to better understand the setting and purpose of the borrowing text.

These six points of agreement between the text and the reader are a testament that intertextuality weds not only two written texts together, but also joins those written texts to the text of the reader. The symbiosis of text and reader also testifies that these two elements of intertextuality are to complement, not override or undermine one another. While the union of these texts with the current reader has been described, the benefit of such a symbiosis is found in the implementation of the relationship. The next four chapters—Chapter Four: Jonah 1 Read Intertextually with the Noachic Narrative; Chapter Five: Jonah 2 Read Intertextually with the Noachic Narrative; Chapter Six: Jonah 3 Read Intertextually with the Noachic Narrative; Chapter Seven: Jonah 4 Read Intertextually with the Noachic Narrative—and their exploration of the intertextuality of the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative stand as testament to the value of the text-reader symbiotic relationship within intertextuality.

CHAPTER FOUR

JONAH 1 READ INTERTEXTUALLY WITH THE NOACHIC NARRATIVE

This study addresses the thesis that the book of Jonah purposefully borrows from the Noachic narrative (Gen 6–9) as a means to deepen and enrich itself. A careful reading of the book of Jonah that recognizes this intertextual relationship will yield a correspondingly deeper and richer exposition of its meaning. Chapters one through three prepare the reader to explore that deepened and enriched exposition of the meaning of the book of Jonah. Chapter one establishes the methodology of the study, arguing that sound intertextual readings recognize the role of the reader's own presuppositions, yet also respecting the indispensible role that the text itself plays in such readings. Thus, text and reader are to be held in symbiotic union for sound intertextual readings. Chapter two explores the current scholarship regarding the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. That exploration finds that the book of Jonah has a tendency toward intertextuality in general, as well as a growing scholarly recognition of its intertextual relationship to the Noachic narrative in particular. Yet the scholarly treatments of that relationship lack methodological clarity, thus calling for a closer examination of the relationship based upon the methodology set forth in chapter one. Chapter three begins that closer examination by considering the role played by the text and the current reader within the intertextual reading of the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah. The consideration of the role of text and reader not only establishes the legitimacy of the intertextual reading, but it leads the study into the topic at hand: the interpretive impact of the re-use of the Noachic narrative in the first chapter of the book of Jonah.

This study seeks to describe the positive impact that intertextuality has upon the interpretive process. Thus, this chapter, as well as chapters five through seven, describe how the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative clarifies issues that arise in the reading of the book of Jonah. Such clarification then gives rise to chapter eight's discussion of the deepened and enriched reading of the book of Jonah resulting from its intertextual relationship to the Noachic narrative. This chapter reveals how the intertextual reading enriches the book of Jonah by giving attention both to the text's and the reader's role. Specifically, the intertextual link is established by means of the textual elements. The reader also plays into the discussion by considering other links between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah that arise as the reader takes note of the textual links.

Foundation for the Intertextual Link

As the reader engages the first chapter of the book of Jonah, the Noachic narrative arises by means of the chapter's setting. The bulk of Jonah's first chapter takes place upon the waters, a location, which not only will continue into Jonah's second chapter, but also a location that is unique to the narratives of Jonah and Noah. Two other Old Testament texts involve action *adjacent* to water—the crossing of the Yam Suph and the Jordan River in Exod 14 and Josh 3 respectively. Yet those texts explicitly point out how the individuals involved are kept from the waters, whereas the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative find the individuals in the midst of the water.

There are also two other Old Testament texts that find action taking place upon the waters: Ezek 27:25–36 and Ps 107:23–32. Yet the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah remain unique as the sole biblical narratives that unfold upon the waters. Ezekiel sends forth his lament for Tyre in standard prophetic form. His is not a narrative unfolding upon the waters, but a prophecy of Tyre's destruction that makes use of maritime language due to Tyre's historic

involvement in such. Likewise, the psalmist does not offer a specific narrative unfolding upon the waters. Psalm 107:23–32, like Ezek 27, makes use of maritime language, but, in contrast to Ezekiel, for the purpose of describing Yahweh's faithful deliverance of those who were in peril upon the sea. More importantly for our purposes, Psalm 107 is parallel to Ezek 27 in that it is not in narrative form, but that of a poetic description of Yahweh's dealings with people. Thus, the unfolding of action upon the waters within a narrative is unique to the Jonah and Noachic narratives.

Continuities Between the Texts

Sailors and Noah

The unique setting *upon the water* of the Noachic narrative and the first chapter of Jonah prompts an intertextual relationship between the individuals who are traveling upon those very waters—Noah and the Tarshish-bound sailors of Jonah 1.[1] The relationship between these characters is fertile ground for the reader to discover the interpretive value of the intertextual relationship.

Dangerous Waters, Frantic Sailors and Passive Noah—Offerings

Noah and the Tarshish-bound sailors stand in parallel position as their respective vessels ride upon tumultuous waters. Their respective reaction to such conditions, however, presents a significant point of comparison. The sailors attempt to gain control over their vessel as it is tossed about on the sea by removing the cargo (Jonah 1:5). Their actions can be read as simply

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[1] Such a setting also prompts the intertextual relationship between Noah and Jonah. That relationship will be discussed later in this chapter.

an attempt to lighten the ship's load that it might be a more controllable vessel. A closer reading suggests that their actions are motivated by a pagan attempt to placate the sea.

First, the reader takes note of the repeated use of the verb טול, "cast" in the first chapter of Jonah. It appears in the *hipîl* throughout the chapter with the basic meaning of "hurl, cast."[2] The verb is used for Yahweh's sending of a great wind in verse four. It occurs three other times in Jonah 1, with each occurrence referring to the action of the sailors. In verse five, they hurl their gear overboard. Later, it will be Jonah who tells the sailors in verse twelve to hurl him overboard so that the sea might calm down. Eventually, they heed Jonah's advice, when, in verse fifteen, they hurl Jonah into the sea, which then calms.

Set into this context, the hurling of the gear into the sea gains the same focus and purpose as the hurling of Jonah into the sea—placating divine anger. However, it is not until Jonah reveals to the sailors that it is Yahweh who is angry with him that they seek to placate Yahweh. In verse five they are seeking to placate the sea itself. Such a reading is attested by verse five explaining their purpose. The gear is hurled into the sea להקל,[3] "to lighten." If the gear is being removed in order to lighten the ship that it might be a more easily controlled vessel, the infinitive construct would be expected to have the feminine singular suffix, referring to the feminine singular אניה, "ship." Not only is such a suffix not present, but the immediate noun to which the purpose clause is related is the sea, not the ship.

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[2] Cf. *HALOT* 1 which offers "to throw far" for the *hipîl* of the verb. So also, BDB 1 highlights the judgment that attends the verb as it is used of Pharaoh in Exod 32:4 and the hurling of the king of Judah into exile in Jer 16:3. Other occurrences in the *hipîl* are in 1 Sam 18:11, 20:3, and Jer 22:26.

[3] Cf. *HALOT* 1 where the *hipîl* of the verb is rendered as "to lighten; to make lighter." Other instances of such a usage are Exod 18:22; 1Sam 6:5; 1Kgs 12:10/2Chr 10:10; 1Kgs 12:4,9/ 2Chr 10:4,9. N.B. 1 Sam 6:5 where the *hipîl* of קלל refers to the Philistine plan to lighten the hand of Yahweh that is upon them. Similarly, the sailors are seeking to lighten the divine hand that is upon them.

Furthermore, the infinitive construct is followed by the prepositional phrase מֵעֲלֵיהֶם, "from upon them." Thus, the removal of the gear is not done to lighten the weight from upon the ship, but to lighten something from upon the sailors. It is not the weight that is upon them, but the sea. Hence, their hurling of the gear to the sea is an attempt to placate the sea by means of offerings. The text further leads the reader to such a conclusion by the sailors' concern for יָם, "sea."[4] The sailors are not simply offering cargo to the sea in order to lighten the ship, but as an offering to the Canaanite god Yamm. Such a reading stands in line with the sailors' prayers to their own gods (Jonah 1:5).

This argument is further strengthened as the matter of re-reading is recalled. Subsequent readings of the Jonah narrative would have prompted the reader to recall that these same sailors who, in Jonah 1:5, are seeking to placate the sea by means of offerings, will be offering sacrifices and making vows to Yahweh upon their deliverance in Jonah 1:16. The sailors' offerings to Yahweh will elicit greater attention below, yet the importance of their action is seen here as it highlights the conversion that will take place upon the sea—pagan sailors who had been offering sacrifices to the sea will soon be paying homage to Yahweh. This hearkens the reader back to the Noachic covenant, which bespeaks the relationship between all creation (including the non-Hebrew sailors) and Yahweh (Gen 9:9–10).

Recognizing the sailors' initial plan to placate the sea by means of an offering also leads the reader to note the distinct difference between their actions upon the sea and those of Noah. Genesis 7 and 8 record the passive state of Noah throughout his experience upon the sea. While the Noachic narrative records Noah being busy in the building and stocking of the ark, as well as

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[4] *HALOT* 7 points out that יָם is associated with the Ugaritic *Yammu* in Ps 74:13; Job 7:12; 26:12; Is 51:10 (though this instance is seen as questionable for *HALOT*); 57:20; Job 3:8. Furthermore, *HALOT* 6 contends that Amos 9:3, Job 36:30, and Prov 23:34 are instances of יָם being used in a cosmic sense as power that is hostile to

the herding of animals into the ark (Gen 6:22; 7:5), once Yahweh shuts Noah in the ark (Gen 7:16) he becomes utterly passive until he sends forth a raven to find dry land (Gen 8:6,7). Noah's passive acceptance stands in stark contrast to the frantic action of the sailors.

It should be noted that the sailors' action to placate the divine force behind the storm places highlights their nobility next to Jonah. Though they began believing that the storm was caused by a divine source other than Yahweh, by the end of the chapter they have come to know Yahweh as the cause of the storm and the one who has saved them. Consistent to their actions is a sense of responsibility toward the divinity. Jonah, on the other hand, shows no such responsibility. He is determined to act in the manner he decides is best. The sailors are progressing from faith in their own gods to faith in Yahweh; Jonah refuses to progress.

Dangerous Waters, Frantic Sailors and Passive Noah—Rowing

The contrast between passive Noah and the frantic sailors is further highlighted by the description of the sailors' attempt to row back to shore. Jonah 1:13 describes the sailors חתר, "rowing." [5] Often translated as "rowing hard", a closer examination reveals a bit more precision for the word's impact upon the meaning of the text. The book of Jonah is unique in using the word in reference to rowing. Other occurrences of חתר (Job 24:16—digging into a house; Ezek 8:8; 12:5, 7, 12—digging holes into a wall; Amos 9:2—digging into Sheol to escape divine wrath) refer to the digging into and breaking through a wall or other obstacle. Such texts describe

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God. Thus, the reader who is familiar with ים readily reads it in relation to the Canaanite deity Yamm.

[5] The rendering of the *qal* of חתר in *HALOT* 2 attempts to capture the unique use of the verb in a maritime context within Jonah 1:13 as "to work one's way through by rowing." Cf. BDB 2 where Jonah 1:13's usage is rendered as "*row* (as *digging* into the water)." The verb only occurs only seven other times in the Old Testament, each in a context suggesting excited digging—Job 24:16; Ezek 8:8 (twice); 12:5, 7, 12; Amos 9:2.

excited, even desperate, digging. Thus, the book of Jonah describes the panic of the sailors as they try not simply to row, but to break through the waves.

Once again, the reader is drawn to the distinctive difference between the sailors who dig their oars into the waters in a vain attempt to return to land and the passive description of Noah. Genesis 7 and 8 record no rowing at all, much less the anxious connotations of חתר. Instead, the flood is said to נשא, "lift up"[6] (Gen 7:17) the ark so that it הלך, "walks"[7] (Gen 7:18) upon the waters, all while Noah remains passive. The use of נשא communicates not only a directional element (rising up rather than sinking down) but also that the waters are bearing the ark.[8] The water's work of bearing the ark places it in the role of active agent in comparison to passive Noah.

Similarly, the "walking" of the ark upon the water denotes the reason for Noah's passivity. The verb הלך is often used to describe the sailing of a ship upon the water (2 Chr 9:21; 20:36; Isa 33:21). Yet it is 1 Kgs 22:49 (MT) that dramatically describes the significance of the term. Jehoshaphat builds ships of Tarshish[9] to הלך, "go" to Ophir, but they are not able to הלך, "go" because they were destroyed at Ezion-Geber. Thus, הלך is not limited to the simple meaning of traveling upon the water, but successful, safe voyage upon such. The ark thus "walks" on the water as it safely travels, allowing Noah to remain passive. The Tarshish-bound vessel of Jonah 1, however, does not "walk" upon the water, prompting the frantic reaction of the sailors.

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[6] Cf. BDB 1.a where the use of the *qal* of נשא is described as lifting in order to hold or carry away, such as Cherubim being lifted up by their wings (Ezek 10:16, 29; 11:22). Other instances of נשא denoting lifting for the purpose of holding or carrying away are in Gen 21:18; Judg 9:48; Amos 6:10; 2 Sam 2:32; 4:4; 1 Kgs 13:29; 2 Kgs 9:25, 26; Ezek 3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:24.

[7] Cf. BDB *qal* I.3 which notes the maritime use of הלך in 1 Kgs 22:49; 2 Chr 9:21; 20:36, 37; Isa 33:21. It should be noted that each of these texts uses הלך as a description of safe, successful passage upon the waters.

[8] F. Stolz, "נשא," *TLOT* 2:769–774.

[9] Ships of Tarshish were known for being destroyed, a matter that has significant impact upon the reading of

Sailors and Noah—From Distinctive Characters to Shared Affinities

This repeated emphasis upon the reaction of Noah and the sailors to the deadly waters surrounding them prompts the reader to question why the difference exists between the two. The difference is in Noah's trust in Yahweh, which then calls for the intertextual reader to see the need for a conversion to take place within Jonah's pagan sailors (who are worshipping Yamm), a conversion that will soon be evidenced by the sailors' prayer to Yahweh (Jonah 1:14). With that conversion, the distinctive difference between Noah and the sailors subsides and the similarities between the characters come to the fore.

Before turning to those similarities, a reconsideration of the role of meta-narratives is needed to assist in the reader's understanding of the tension between trusting Noah and the pagan sailors who are in need of conversion. Communal meta-narratives socialize a community in particular values and outlooks. Such meta-narratives grapple with key issues such as sin and repentance, divine judgment and compassion, death and resurrection, rejection and acceptance of divine will, God's power over all creation, universalism and nationalistic particularism.[10] While the Noachic narrative stands as a communal meta-narrative *par excellence* because it grapples with all of these issues, it is the matter of universalism and nationalistic particularism that are most salient at this point. Noah stands as the forefather of all future peoples in the Noachic narrative (Gen 9:18, 19). Hence, he is emblematic of the Tarshish-bound sailors of the Jonah narrative. This prepares the reader for the universal compassion of Yahweh, shown to the sailors, in the latter part of chapter one. Yet it is specifically Shem upon whom Noah accords the greatest blessing (Gen 9:26). It is Jonah, not the Tarshish-bound sailors, who is the descendent of Shem,

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the book of Jonah. That impact is discussed later in this chapter.

[10] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 2.

hence it is Jonah who first confesses his fear of Yahweh (Jonah 1:9). Thus, nationalistic particularism is within the Jonah narrative as well. This tension between Yahweh's universal mercy and His particular presence within Shem's line will resurface throughout the Jonah narrative, all the while hearkening back to Noah and the diverse blessings that he speaks upon his sons.

The Conversion of the Sailors

While there are distinct differences between the actions (which also betray the attitudes) of Noah and the sailors of Jonah 1, following the sailors' "conversion" to fear of Yahweh there are also similarities between the sailors and Noah. The significance of the sailors' "conversion" within the Jonah narratives is described by Sasson:

> [t]his verse is the heart of Jonah's first chapter, for it catches the moment in which illumination finally strikes the sailors. The sailors utter the name of the Hebrew God for the first time, recognizing—as they did not in v 11—that mercy must be obtained not from the sea, but from that very God.[11]

This sudden conversion of the sailors hearkens the reader to Jonah's proclamation at the close of the Jonahpsalm, "Salvation belongs to Yahweh!" (Jonah 2:10, MT) A significant incongruity marks both confessions of faith. On the one hand, recently converted pagans call upon Yahweh, recognizing that mercy can only be had from Him. With their minutes-old conversion, the reader questions their sincerity. On the other hand, a prophet on the lam, whose decision to flee from his divinely appointed task is an affront to Yahweh, makes a grand confession of Yahweh's salvific power. Once again, the reader is tempted to question his sincerity. Yet a case can be made for the legitimacy of their sincerity. So also, the prayer of the sailors can be seen as sincere when the reader considers the futility of their previous actions (thus

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[11] Sasson, *Jonah*, 131.

prompting them to see that the true answer must be elsewhere), their pious concern for not taking innocent life (Jonah 1:13, 14), their trust that lots would reveal the source of their predicament (Jonah 1:7) and, therefore, also the solution, and their ultimate sacrifice unto Yahweh (Jonah 1:16). Furthermore, the sincerity of both Jonah and the sailors brings them into the line of their intertextual equal—Noah. His obedient faith upon the waters is mirrored in the Jonah narrative.

Sailors Who Fear Blood-Guilt and the Noachic Covenant

The sailors' intertextual reflection of Noah is quite evident in Jonah 1:14. With their attempts to row safely to shore having been unsuccessful (Jonah 1:13), the sailors are left only the option of following Jonah's instruction that they throw him overboard. When Jonah first suggested this course of action, the sailors were quite hesitant, choosing instead to dig their oars into the waves. Though they had been quite willing to throw their cargo overboard to appease the sea, resigning Jonah to certain death is not option. It is only when all other avenues have been exhausted that the sailors accept Jonah's solution. As they prepare to throw Jonah overboard, the reader learns why they had been so reticent to follow his advice in the first place. The formerly pagan sailors now cry out to Yahweh, "O Yahweh, let us not perish for this man's life and do not put upon us innocent blood, for you, O Yahweh, according to what pleased you, you have done." The reader is amazed to hear such sentiment come forth from non-Hebrews.

Consider the infrequency throughout the rest of Hebrew scripture of non-Hebrews showing such concern that they end the life of an innocent person. There are two occasions when Abram fails to attest that Sarai is his wife, eventually leading Pharaoh (Gen 12:10–20) and Abimelech (Gen 20:1–18) to suffer for marrying her and thus ask Abram why he would bring such guilt upon them. Yet neither circumstance involves concern for bloodguilt. Nor does Abimelech call upon Yahweh, though אלהים, "God" (Gen 20:3, 6–7) speaks to him in a dream leading Abimelech to respond to him as עדני, "lord" (Gen 20:4). Pharaoh, on the other hand, has no

conversation with God at all. So also, when Balaam refuses to curse Israel, but insists upon blessing them, his actions are not prompted by his concern for Israel, but a prophetic duty to only speak those words given him by Yahweh (Num 23:12, 26; 24:13).

There are two other incidents in which a non-Hebrew shows concern for a Hebrew, yet each of those incidents indicates that the non-Hebrew becomes a member of Israel. In Josh 2, Rahab shelters the Israelite spies and then helps them escape. Though she is a resident of Jericho, she confesses faith in Yahweh (Josh 2:11). So also, Ruth remains with Naomi. There also, she is incorporated into Israel. Not only does she state that Naomi's God will be her God (Ruth 1:16), whom she names specifically as Yahweh (Ruth 1:17), but she is also incorporated into Israel by virtue of her marriage to Boaz (Ruth 4:13), a marriage that even provides the lineage for David (Ruth 4:13–17).

Thus, the concern for Hebrews by non-Hebrews is not only rare in the Old Testament, its occurrence is occasioned by the non-Hebrews' confession of faith in Yahweh. Those rare incidents occur with the early history of Israel. Such incidents do not occur within the Minor Prophets, in which the book of Jonah is found. Thus, the reader does not expect to find the sailors praying to Yahweh. The reader's surprise is heightened all the more by the knowledge that Yahweh had called Jonah to preach to the capital of Assyria. While the sailors are not Assyrian, the reader has Assyria in his mind as the prototypical non-Hebrew nation. The reader recalls their prototypical lack of respect for Yahweh in the story of Sennacherib's taunting of Jerusalem, including his belittling of Yahweh (2 Kgs 18, 2 Chr 32, Isa 36). Furthermore, the reader knows of the portrayal of Assyria throughout the rest of the Book of the Twelve. Hosea speaks strong words against Israel's desire to ally with Assyria (Hos 7:11; 8:9; 12:1), stating that its king could not help them (Hos 5:13). All the more significant is Hosea's depiction of Israel's suffering at the hands of the Assyrians, eating their unclean food (Hos 9:3) and their shame while

there (Hos 10:6). Later in the Book of the Twelve, Micah will similarly speak of the plight of the Assyrians upon Israel as they will tread in Israel's palaces (Mic 5:5).

The reader's awareness of the disrespectful attitude of the Assyrian toward Israel and Yahweh himself, an attitude that could be expected should Jonah arrive in Nineveh, makes the piety of the pagan sailors surprising. The words prayed by the non-Hebrew sailors are so unexpected that Sasson has commented, "we appreciate the cleverness of the storyteller in allotting so Hebraic an expression to the sailors."[12]

What can account for such an unexpected sentiment among the non-Hebrew sailors? The answer is in the Noachic narrative, more specifically, the Noachic covenant. The covenant, cut not only with Noah but with all creation (Gen 9:9, 10), including the non-Hebrew sailors, prohibits the shedding of human blood, except when it is just punishment upon the one who unjustly shed the blood of another (Gen 9:5, 6). As descendents of Noah, the sailors recognize and respect this covenantal stipulation. The universal scope of Yahweh's justice is known to the sailors by means of the Noachic covenant. This specifically underlines the value of the intertextual reading as the Noachic covenant explains the sailors' actions.

Sacrifice Upon Deliverance—Noah and the Sailors

The close tie between the sailors and Noah continues upon the stilling of the storm when they offer sacrifice unto Yahweh (Jonah 1:16). It is noteworthy that the Jonah narrative records their sacrifice by means of *qal* of זבח, "sacrifice," which refers to sacrifices offered to Yahweh,

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[12] Sasson, *Jonah*, 136.

while the *piᵊel* is typically used for sacrifices offered to an idol.[13] So also, upon his deliverance from the deluge, Noah offers a sacrifice of animals, specifically to Yahweh (Gen 8:20).

The sailors' sacrifice also surprises the reader in that it is offered onboard. Such onboard sacrifices are well-attested in the ancient world,[14] but it is shocking to hear of those who profess faith in Yahweh offering sacrifices apart from the Temple. The current reader knows that Yahweh has commanded such sacrifices be offered in the Temple and, as a re-reader of the book of Jonah, knows that Jonah pledges not to offer sacrifice to Yahweh immediately upon deliverance so that he might look upon the Temple (Jonah 2:5, MT). Thus, the current reader seeks an answer as to why such a sacrifice could be offered onboard, apart from the Temple, by those who profess faith in Yahweh. The Noachic intertextuality offers that answer. The sailors were simply following in the footsteps of their genetic and nautical forefather Noah, who himself sacrifices upon deliverance apart from the Temple. Yet, the reader cannot quickly dismiss the improper location of the animal sacrifice. The reader's concern is partially satiated by the tie to Noah; it is more fully answered in chapter two when Jonah refers respectfully to and longingly for the Temple (Jonah 2:5, 8; MT). The reader's knowledge of the centrality of the Temple within the Old Testament sacrificial system would be honored by Jonah's sentiments, yet the actions of the sailors are granted a level of legitimacy by means of the intertextual tie to Noah.

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[13] Herbert Wolf, "זבח," *TWOT*, 1: 233–235. The *piᵊel* is used nineteen times for idolatrous sacrifice (1 Kgs 3:2,3; 11:8; 12:32; 22:44; 2 Kgs 12:4; 14:4; 15:4, 35; 16:4; 2 Chr 28:4, 23; 33:22; Ps 106:38; Hos 4:13, 14; 11:2; 12:12; Hab 1:16). Three times the *piᵊel* is used for legitimate sacrifices, referring to the prolific sacrifices of Solomon (1 Kgs 8:5; 2 Chr 5:6) and Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:22). The *qal* can be used in reference to idolatrous sacrifices (Exod 34:15; Lev 17:7; Deut 32:17; Judg 16:23: Ps 106:37). But usually the *qal* is used for sacrifices to Yahweh (Exod 3:18; Lev 17:5; 19:5; 22:9; Deut 15:21; 16:2; 17:1; 1 Sam 1:3), the "God of your fathers" (Gen 45:1), or Elohim in a context where it is apparent that the Israel's true God is in mind (Ps 50:14; cf. Mal 1:14). Cf. *BDB* 2076.I.3.

[14] J. Rougé, *Ships and Fleets of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Middleton, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1980), 199–200.

The Sailors' Conversion—Sincere or Ploy?

The value of recognizing the intertextual relationship between the Jonah and Noachic narratives is underscored by the lengths to which some will go to explain the surprising conversion of the sailors to reverent fear of Yahweh. For example, Sweeney regards the sailors' conversion as overt irony and parody.[15] While scholarship over the past thirty years has explored the role of irony and parody within the Jonah narrative,[16] Sweeney is unique in applying such descriptors to the role of the sailors. His unique description of the sailors' conversion as parody is questionable. The argument is largely prompted by a desire to explain away what would have surprised the reader. Yet the reader's surprise drives them not cynically to run to parody, but to find an answer in those texts that formed and informed their worldview—their meta-narratives. The Noachic meta-narrative, specifically, offers the needed answer.

Even more, recourse to parody to explain the sailors' conversion is unneeded as the text of the Jonah narrative had been preparing the reader for the sailors' conversion already in verse thirteen. The sailors' vain attempt to return to shore makes us of the *hip□il* of שוב, "turn." Rarely is the *hip□il* of the verb used to describe a change in physical orientation. Instead, the common usage of שוב in the *hip□il* focuses upon a theological import.[17] The Jonah narrative skillfully

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[15] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 304.

[16] James S. Ackerman, "Satire and Symbolism in the Song of Jonah" in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith* (ed. Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1981, 213–46; A.J. Band, "Swallowing Jonah: The Eclipse of Parody" *Proof* 10 (1990), 177–195; L.L. Eubanks, "The Cathartic Effects of Irony in Jonah" Ph.D. diss, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1988; Thomas Jemielty, *Satire and the Hebrew Prophets*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992; D Marcus, *From Balaam to Jonah: Anti-Prophetic Satire in the Hebrew Bible*; BJS 301. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1995; Judson Mather, "The Comic Art of the Book of Jonah" *Soundings* 65 (1982), 280–91; J.A. Miles, Jr., "Laughing at the Bible: Jonah as Parody" *JQR* 65 (1974–75), 168–81; M Orth, "Genre in Jonah: The Effects of Parody in the Book of Jonah" in *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature;* Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies 8 (ed. W. Hallo; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1990), 257–81; Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah* AB 24B. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1990, 331–4.

[17] J. A. Soggin, "שוב," *TLOT*, 3:1312–7; Victor P. Hamilton, "שוב," *TWOT*, 2:909–10. *BDB* 7725.H.10 lists

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brings in a verb that would prompt the reader to anticipate that there is more taking place within the decisions of the sailors than simply rowing back to shore. A significant theological change is taking place—namely, the conversion of the sailors, a conversion that places them in line with Noah.

The Ark and the Ship of Tarshish

Inasmuch as attention has already been drawn to the unique setting of the Noachic narrative and the first chapter of Jonah upon the waters, it would be shortsighted not to give some attention to the relationship between the Tarshish-bound ship of Jonah and the ark of the Noachic narrative. Their parallel use in the narratives is equally as exclusive as the water-bound setting of the two narratives. The most glaring comparison between the two vessels is a distinctive difference in their reputation for success. Noah's ark, on the one hand, defines maritime success, being the sole repository of life in the midst of the deadly waters of the flood. The ark is successful in its task, losing none of its passengers. On the other hand, the Tarshish-bound ship is the definition of failure at sea. Yvonne Sherwood argues on the basis of 1 Kgs 22:2, 2 Chr 20:35–37, Ps 48:8, Isa 23:1,14, and Ezek 27:25–26 that a "ship going to Tarshish" roughly translates as "the Titanic going out on her maiden voyage" as both are proud vessels carrying precious cargo that are shattered and sink into the heart of the sea.[18]

Yet recognizing the doomed status of a Tarshish-bound ship offers another surprise. As soon as the storm begins to come down upon the ship, the reader expects nothing less than complete destruction, but that is not what occurs. Instead of expected destruction, all of the

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only Jon 1:13 for the *hip☐il* form being used in a physical sense. The standard usage of the *hip☐il* is in a non-physical, theological sense, e.g. 2 Sam 11:1; 1 Kgs 20:22, 26; 1 Chr 20:1; 2 Chr 36:10; Job 13:22; Isa 47:10; Jer 3:6, 8; et al.

[18] Yvonne Sherwood, *A Biblical Text and Its Afterlife: The Survival of Jonah in Western Culture* (Cambridge:

vessel's passengers survive (even the fleeing prophet after three days and nights in the sea). Why would a doomed ship be saved? The incongruity drives the reader back to the Noachic narrative to find the only other narrative in which a significant portion of the plot unfolds upon the water. In that narrative, the sea-going vessel is successful, not destroyed, as it rises high above the earth (Gen 7:17) rather than sinking. It holds the only lives that were not blotted from the earth (Gen 7:23), its inhabitants are those remembered by God (Gen 8:1), and eventually it lands safely upon Ararat (Gen 8:4).

The origin of the two vessels in the respective texts is distinct. Noah builds the ark purely upon the command and according to the specifications of Yahweh. Jonah, on the other hand, embarks upon the Tarshish-bound ship in rebellion against Yahweh's command as he flees in the opposite direction as Nineveh. This distinctive difference in their origin does not undo their parallel usage in the two texts. In both texts, Yahweh makes use of the vessels for deliverance from the raging seas. Thus, the intertextual reading highlights not only the sovereignty of Yahweh, but his end-goal of preserving life.

Sailors and Flooded World

As the reader of Jonah 1 is driven back time and time again to the Noachic narrative, a connection is seen between the sailors and the flooded world. First, both are bearing the effects of a divinely ordained wind. For Noah, God causes a wind to blow that the waters might abate (Gen 8:1). Within the Jonah narrative, on the other hand, Yahweh sends the wind in order to cause a storm. While the purpose of the divinely-mandated wind is distinctly different within the two narratives (to abate versus prompt the storm), the role of the storm is identical in the two

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Cambridge University Press, 2000), 250.

narratives. Within the Noachic narrative, the flood is in direct response to the רעע, "evil"[19] of

humanity (Gen 6:5–7). Within the narrative of Jonah 1, the storm is recognized as רעע, "evil"

brought on specifically by Jonah (Jonah 1:8). This places Jonah in line with the condemned

world of the flood. Yet Jonah is not destroyed as they were. The reader following the intertextual

interplay of the two narratives is given a first glimpse of the grace that will spare Nineveh later in

the book of Jonah. Jonah should have been destroyed as were Noah's contemporaries, yet he was

not. So it will be with Nineveh.

This consideration of the place of the storm within the two narratives was prompted by the

intertextual interplay of the sailors and Noah. Closer attention, however, ought to be given to the

specific intertextual relationship between the flooded world and the raging sea that surrounds

Jonah and the Tarshish-bound sailors.

The Waters of Jonah and Noah

The setting of both chapter one of Jonah and the Noachic narrative upon the sea is unique

to these two narratives within the corpus of the Hebrew Scriptures, yet it is well-known within

ancient literature. Furthermore, ancient literature appears to revel in accounts of those who have

survived storms on the sea. Within the New Testament there is the familiar story of Paul's

shipwreck in Acts 27. The most elaborate and famous story of a harrowing experience upon the

seas is that of Odysseus and his men as told by Homer. Josephus, like Paul, encountered a severe

storm during a trip to Rome. Josephus recounts that he was one of eighty survivors out of six

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[19] D. Rick, "רעע," *TDOT* 13: 581 quotes from Waschke (141, building upon work of H. Cohen) regarding Gen 6:5 and 8:21, stating that "human 'evil' has no ontic valence, but in fact denotes only a kind of behavior. It is not the heart itself that is called evil, but what it can devise." Such an insight sets the stage of the book of Jonah, which holds that the Ninevites can too be saved since it their hearts are not the true evil, but the thoughts generated by their hearts that are evil.

hundred passengers.[20] This was to become a turning moment in the life of Josephus as ancient

survivors of storms at sea typically viewed their survival as a sign that the individual had been

graced by the gods and received a divine election to a higher call, while those who perish were

seen as paying for sins committed prior to embarking upon the ship. The fifth century BC Greek

historian and statesman Antiphon even records the story of a man accused of murder who argues

for his innocence on the basis that he had recently survived a storm at sea that certainly could not

have occurred were he guilty.[21] The occurrence of such maritime stories within ancient literature

makes its absence from the Hebrew Scriptures all the more pronounced. Thus the unique

employment of a maritime setting within the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah is all the

more pronounced as well.

While maritime narratives are rare in the Hebrew Scriptures, Antiphon's view of the sea

being a location for divine revelation of guilt (by destruction) or innocence (by survival) is

strikingly similar to the Hebrew view of storms at sea as revealed in 1 Kgs 22:49-50 and 2 Chr

20:35–37, both of which refer to Jehoshaphat constructing Tarshish-style ships, which Yahweh

dooms to destruction because of Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahaziah. While the specific record

of what became of the crews of these ships is not included, the wreck of the ships is taken as

indication of Yahweh's displeasure. Such a view of maritime fortune or misfortune is implicit in

the Noachic narrative. The violent waters of the deluge consume a condemned world, thus

displaying Yahweh's wrath against humanity's evil. Noah and the rest of the ark's passengers

come forth as those bearing Yahweh's pleasure. More specifically, Noah is the recipient of

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[20] Flavius Josephus, *Vita*, 14–16.

[21] Antiphon's account and a hearty discussion of the ancient view of storms at sea is taken up by Sasson, *Jonah*, 90–92.

Yahweh's חֵן, "grace" (Gen 6:8).[22] Not only is Noah graced by Yahweh, but he and the rest of the ark's passengers receive a divine calling—a renewal of the blessing upon Adam and Even to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth (Gen 1:28; 9:7).

The first chapter of Jonah also draws the current reader Yahweh's attitude revealed within the sea. One means by which this is done is the personification of the sea. The sailors initially offer sacrifices to the sea as if it were a sentient, willing being that could choose to have its storm subside.[23] The sailors ask Jonah what they must do so that the sea would calm itself (Jonah 1:11). Jonah makes use of the sailors' language by saying that the sea will calm its storm if they toss him overboard (Jonah 1:12). Once the sailors do toss Jonah overboard, the sea does grow calm, yet there is a significant change that has taken place in the language. That change reinforces in the reader's mind that Yahweh's disposition is revealed by the sea's activity within the Jonah narrative, just as it was in the Noachic narrative. Jonah 1:15 describes the quelling of the sea's זַעַף, "rage"[24] upon the sailors hurling Jonah into the sea. This is the only biblical location where זַעַף is used to describe an inanimate object; all other occurrences (Gen 40:6; 2 Chr 26:19; 2 Chr 28:9 Prov 19:3; Isa 30:30; Dan 1:10; Micah 7:9) refer to the rage of a person. Yet the text clearly communicates that the sailors recognize that it is not the sea, but Yahweh whose disposition has changed for it is to him that they offer sacrifice (Jonah 1:16).

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[22] Specifically, וַנֹּח מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יהוה, "Noah finds grace in the eyes of Yahweh." This Hebrew phrase involves a lesser individual finding favor in the eyes of a greater individual, often in a vassal-suzerain relationship or in a courtroom setting. It is furthermore noteworthy that the phrase that the favor is occasioned not by the acts of the lesser individual, but by the attitude of the greater individual. Likewise, the phrase presupposes an interpersonal relationship. For a discussion of these and further aspects of this phrase, see H. J. Stoebe, "חנן," TLOT, 439–47. Other occurrences of the phrase are in Gen 18:3; 19:19; 32:6; 34:11; 39:4, 21; 47:25; Num 32:5; Judg 6:17; Ruth 2:2, 10, 13; 1 Sam 16:22; 20:3, 29; 25:8; 27:5; 2 Sam 14:22; 16:4; 1 Kgs 11:19; Esth 5:2, 8; 7:3)

[23] See discussion of Jonah 1:5 above wherein the pagan view of the sea being a divine entity is discussed by means of the sailors' offerings being made אֶל, "to" the sea, rather than עַל, "unto" the sea, thus suggesting the sailors' worship of Yamm.

[24] Gerard van Groningen, "זַעַף," TWOT, 569; HALOT I.

Thus, the description of the sea-storm within Jonah 1 elicits the Noachic distinction of God's wrath and pleasure as revealed through the events of the storm. The survival of the sailors leads the reader to recognize that they have been graced by Yahweh and that He has set them apart for a higher purpose. That purpose is seen, at least in part, as they respond to their salvation by offering sacrifices and making vows to Yahweh. Jonah, on the other hand, appears to be doomed, ready to follow in the line of those who died in the flood as well as the storied list of the ancients whose condemnation was sealed in their contemporaries mind by the sea having not spared them. Jonah 1 points the reader in this direction: the storm is clearly revealed to have been sent because of Jonah's disobedience; Jonah calls upon the sailors to throw him oversea as the sole solution to the storm; all the sailors' efforts to avoid this solution are in vain; Jonah's entrance into the waters brings the storm to a close.

Jonah 1, when read intertextually with the Noachic narrative, leaves the reader to see Jonah as a condemned man. The reader of the narrative, aware of Jonah's survival, recognizes that Jonah is all the more a recipient of Yahweh's grace and a divine calling for a higher purpose. As a reader of the Noachic narrative, Jonah himself (as well as the reader of the Jonah narrative) would recognize that his salvation by the incredible means of a great fish is a clear sign of Yahweh's favor. This becomes all the more apparent within the reading of Jonah 2:10 where Jonah confesses that salvation belongs to Yahweh—Jonah's deliverance is a sign of Yahweh's disposition. Furthermore, Jonah 3:1–2 reveals the divine calling implicit in his salvation from the sea—a renewal of Yahweh's call for him to preach to Nineveh.

Discontinuities Between the Texts

The discussion of the continuities between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative have already naturally led to the discussion of differences between the texts. There are also distinct differences between the texts that arise naturally without being occasioned by the

discussion of their continuities. Some of those distinctive differences are made apparent by the current reader's own presuppositions. Specifically, the writer of this study is a member of two distinct reading communities, a community of biblical scholarship and an ecclesial reading community. While each reading community approaches the narrative of Jonah with its own presuppositions that form and inform its reading of the text, the unique opening of Jonah grabs the attention of the reader no matter the reading community to which he belongs. The third person narrative of Jonah stands in stark contrast to the expected first person prophetic form. Members of an ecclesial reading community anticipate a record of the content of Yahweh's word that came to Jonah. While the reader of an ecclesial reading community does hear Yahweh's command to Jonah to rise and go to Nineveh, the reader also hears Yahweh's command to Jonah to cry out against Nineveh, but to the reader's surprise the specific content of what Jonah is to cry out is absent.

The reading community of biblical scholarship similarly expects to be greeted by a familiar formulation of דבר יהוה, "Yahweh said," yet then is surprised by that phrase being immediately preceded with the standard introduction of a narrative—ויהי, "And it occurred." Such a departure from the norm of the prophetic corpus grabs the reader's attention. Furthermore, the *wāw*-consecutive calls upon the reader to connect the story back to something that preceded it. This observation falls in line with the work of Ehud ben Zvi who argues that the text of Jonah "is written so as to lead its intended rereaders to expect (or even to look for) a preceding text or perhaps 'intertext.'"[25] One option for satisfying this expectation of a preceding text by the intended readers would be to recall the mention of Jonah, son of Amittai in 2 Kgs 14:25. Or the reader can follow ben Zvi's suggestion of an intertext offering the proper grounding for the

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[25] ben Zvi, *Signs of Jonah*, 90.

Jonah narrative. As has been previously argued, there exist strong reasons for reading the Noachic narrative as that intertext for the Jonah narrative. Further reasons are within the opening verses of the Jonah narrative as is discussed later in this chapter.

Nineveh's Evil and the Evil of the Flooded World

In the book of Jonah, Nineveh is immediately identified as being subject to Yahweh's condemnation because of its רעע, "evil" (Jonah 1:2). So also, the condemnation of Noah's contemporaries is due to the thoughts of their hearts being רעע all the time (Gen 6:5). Yet this is hardly a unique usage of an uncommon term. Yahweh's condemnation of humanity's רעע[26] occurs throughout the Old Testament.[27] Both texts, however, offer further specification of the nature of the evil that has caught Yahweh's attention, which offers a tighter bond between the Jonah and Noachic narratives.

Genesis 6:11 describes the חמס, "violence"[28] for which the world stands condemned. The book of Jonah describes the Ninevites sin with the same words. While רעע and its specified form of חמס occur within a few verses for the Noachic narrative (Gen 6:8, 11), only רעע is mentioned in the opening of the Jonah narrative. Then, in chapter three, it is brought up again by the king of Nineveh who recognizes that the רע of his people specifically includes חמס (Jonah 3:8). The

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[26] D. Rick, "רעע," *TDOT* 14: 581 draws upon the work of Waschke (who is building upon H. Cohen), commenting specifically upon Gen 6:5; 8:1 to see that רעע has no "ontic value," but describes a type of behavior. Hence, it is not the heart that is evil, but its actions. This leaves open the possibility for the repentance of the Ninevites, yet it prompts the question as to why Noah's contemporaries were not given the same opportunity to be saved. This issue is discussed in chapter eight.

[27] See PatrickD. Miller, *Sin and Judgment in the Prophets.* SBLMS 27. Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982 for a consideration of the Old Testament homily on רעה in 2 Sam 12: 7–15; 1 Kgs 21: 17–19, 20–24; Isa 31: 1–3 and Mic 2: 1–5.

[28] H. J. Stoebe, "חמס," *TLOT* 1:437–9 points out von Rad's assertion that there is no distinction between the religious and profane usage of this term because even if the violence is interpersonal, it violates an order established and/or guaranteed by God. This observation thus makes חמס a term to be naturally applied to Noah's contemporaries outside of a covenantal relationship with Yahweh or the Ninevites who also are without such a

textual bond in this matter is further strengthened by the scope of the evil violence. Genesis 6:12 speaks of the guilt of such sin clinging not just to humankind but to all בשר, "flesh,"[29] hence Yahweh's decision to flood all the earth, bringing death not just to humankind but to animals as well. Similarly, the proclamation of the Ninevite king in Jonah 3:8 does not leave the concern for guilt only in the human realm, but humans and animals join together in repentance.

But just how unique of a tie is this between the two narratives? Just as רעע[30] commonly appears as reason for Yahweh's anger, so does חמס.[31] The unique bond between the Jonah and Noachic narratives is in their contextual usage of these two terms in combination. Contextual usage is key as twelve other texts wed רעע and חמס. An examination of those passages, however, will reveal that the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative remain distinct in their usage of the terms in narrative tandem.

1. Exod 23:1,2

אל־תשת ידך עם־רשע להית עד חמס לא־תהיה אחרי־רבים לרעת

"Do not raise your hand with a wicked one to be a malicious witness. Do not go after the multitude to do evil." This is not a narrative description of divine condemnation of the violent, evil actions of a specific people, but one item in a legal list of actions prohibited by Yahweh.

2. Deut 19:16, 19

כי־יקום עד־חמס ...ועשיתם לו כאשר זמם לעשות לאציו ובערת הרע מקרבך

"If a malicious witness should arise… you will do to him as he intended to do to his brother and you will purge the evil from your midst." As was the case with Exod 23, so also Deut 19 only makes use of the terms רעע and חמס in the context of a prohibitive list.

3. Isa 59:6, 7

ופעל חמס בכפיהם רגליהם לרע ירצו

"Violent deeds are in their hands; their feet rush into evil." Once again, the terms are not

covenantal relationship.

[29] G. Gerleman, "בשר," *TLOT* 1:283–5 notes that the use of כל בשר in Gen 6:17; 9:16 ff. is to be understood as all creatures, both human and animals. Such is also the case in Job 34:15. Similary, BDB 6.a notes that Gen 6:17, 19; 7:21; 9:11, 15, 16, 17; Lev 17:14; Num 18:15; Job 34:15; and Ps 136:25 all use כל בשר to mean "all living beings."

[30] E.g., 2 Sam 12: 7–15; 1 Kgs 21: 17–19, 20–24; Isa 31: 1–3; Mic 2: 1–5.

[31] E.g., Ps 11:5; Ezek 7:23; 8:17; 12:19; 28:16; Zeph 1:9.

set within a narrative, but, in this incident, within a prophetic denunciation of sinful activity. While Israel is within view of this prophecy, their condemnation is not clearly set forth as it is for humankind and the Ninevites within the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah.

4. Jer 6:7

כן הקרה רעתה חמס ושד ישמע בה

"Thus she pours out her evil things; violence and destruction are heard in her." Not surprisingly, Jeremiah follows Isaiah in using the terms in prophetic utterance against Yahweh's people, this time Jerusalem. Yet again, however, the terms are used neither in a narrative nor in a manner that specifically names its object as in the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

5. Mal 2:16, 17

וכסה חמס על־לבושו... באמרצם כל־עשה רע טוב בעיני יהוה

Yahweh hates "the one covering violence upon his cloak…the one saying all who do evil are good in the eyes of Yahweh." Malachi stands in the same vein as Isaiah and Jeremiah: not only is Malachi a prophetic text rather than a narrative, but Malachi also mentions Judah as the guilty party, but without the specific condemnation involving specific punishment as in the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

6. Ps 35:11, 12

יקומון עדי חמס... ישלמוני רעה תחת טובה

"Malicious witnesses will arise… they repay me evil for good." Not only is this a poetic text rather than a narrative, it does not speak of condemnation at all. Rather, the psalmist describes the evil (רע) ways of the malicious (חמס) witness.

7. Ps 55:10, 16 (MT)

כי־ראיתי צמס... כי־רעות במגורם בקרבם

"For I see violence… for evil dwells in their midst." As would be expected, this text is not a narrative, but poetic. Furthermore, it does not offer divine condemnation, but the prayer of the psalmist, asking Yahweh to punish those who would act with רע or חמס. (Notice the lack of a specific target once again.)

8. Ps 140:12 (MT)

איש־חמס רע יצודנו

"The violent man, let evil hunt them." The psalmist makes use of poetry (not narrative) in his prayer that Yahweh would cause רע to come upon the unspecified practitioners of חמס.

9. Prov 16:27, 29

איש בליעל כרה רעה... איש חמס יפתה רעהו

"A worthless man plots evil… A violent man deceives his neighbor." This text does not truly hold the two terms together as they are used in separate proverbs, which happen to occur in adjacent verses.

10. Ps 7:15–17 (MT)

הנה יחבל־און והרה... ועל קדקדו חמסו ירד

"Behold, he who is full of trouble and evil… upon his head his violence descends." This text stands as a proverb regarding how the one who does רע finds his חמס coming back upon his own head. The lack of a specified target, the absence of divine condemnation, and the poetic form once again sets the text apart from the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

11. Ps 140:2 (MT)

חלצני יהוה מאדם רע מאיש חמסים תנצרני

"Rescue me, O Yahweh, from evil men; from violent men protect me." The psalmist prays that Yahweh would preserve him from men who are רעע or חמס. Yet again, the distinctive features of the Noachic and Jonah narratives are absent.

12. Prov 4:14, 17

ואל־תאשר בדרך רעים... וויין חמסים ישתו

"Do not go on the path of evil men… The wine of violence they drink." A father offers his son wise counsel to steer clear of those who walk in the path of רעע or drink the wine of חמס. In consistent fashion, the text lacks the narrative form, divine condemnation, and specific target as in the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

Not only are the Noachic and Jonah narratives unique as they bring חמס and רעע together within their narrative description of Yahweh's condemnation of a specific people, their distinctive connection is illustrated all the more by the fact that there is only one other narrative (Judg 9:24) that brings condemnation specifically for חמס, and that without the mention of רעע! The uniqueness of the Jonah and Noachic narratives in their use of רעע and חמס in tandem as the cause for divine condemnation is further highlighted by the setting in which each takes place, namely, the immediate context of the narrative unfolding upon the waters.

While there is a pronounced tie between the texts, the narratives do contain distinctive points of view. Such distinctive elements are not only to be expected (inasmuch as no text is a complete retelling of a previous text), but the distinctive elements offer an initial means to take note of the interpretive impact of the intertextual connection. Before discussing that interpretive impact, the differences between the texts must be noted.

Reaction of Noah and Jonah to the Announced Divine Judgment

There is a distinct difference between Noah's and Jonah's reaction to the condemnation of the practitioners of רעע, "evil" in their respective ages. Noah's actions demonstrate that he has no doubt that Yahweh's stated condemnation will come to fruition. He does not hesitate to honor Yahweh's instructions regarding the construction of the ark (Gen 6:22). Jonah's uncertainty, on the other hand, is prominent as he flees down to Joppa that he might set sail for Tarshish—both

in opposite direction to Nineveh. Why does Jonah doubt that the Ninevites will truly be condemned?

Various explanations could be offered. The reader is aware that the historic timeframe of the narrative would place Jonah's ministry (2 Kgs 14:25–28) not long after that of Elijah (1 Kgs 17–2 Kgs 2) and Elisha (2 Kgs 2–8). Thus, the reader reads of Jonah's reticence while remembering what Yahweh did for another pagan nation, Syria, through Elijah and Elisha as Hazael is anointed as king in Syria with the promise that Syria would afflict Israel under Hazael's leadership, a divine promise that did come to pass, much to Israel's detriment (1 Kgs 19; 2 Kgs 8). Likewise, the reader recalls Elisha's sparing of a large Syrian force that had been delivered into the hands of Israel (2 Kgs 6), which also serves as an explanation for why Jonah would give pause about Yahweh's true attitude toward Nineveh. A challenge for this explanation is that the content of Yahweh's message given to Jonah that he might speak it to Nineveh is not present in chapter one. It is only in chapter three that the reader receives an initial glimpse of it. Even then, the content is rather brief.

Similarly, as the reader confronts the book of Jonah within its context in the Book of the Twelve, Jonah's doubt regarding whether Yahweh's condemnation of Nineveh would come to fruition before his eyes receives a level of explicability. Following the timeline of the Jonah narrative, the reader is aware that Jonah's ministry would have followed not long after that of Amos. Thus, the reader considers the possibility that Jonah's hesitance is prompted by Amos' prophecy (especially chapter nine) that proclaims that Israel will be judged for its sin. Thus, Jonah is anticipating Israel's condemnation, not Nineveh's.

Likewise, the reader is aware of Amos' prophetic condemnation of Israel (Amos 9:1–14), which is followed by a prophetic promise of Israel's restoration (Amos 9:11–15). The reader thus knows how Yahweh would deal not only with Israel but other peoples as well, including

Nineveh. Each of these potential intertextual readings (with the ministries of Elijah and Elisha and with Amos) to explain Jonah's reaction are possible, yet each lacks textual evidence for such a connection. Furthermore, each explanation still leaves open the question of why Jonah would expect Nineveh to receive the same favor as Israel.

Furthermore, the reader is aware of Nahum's announcement of Yahweh's condemnation of Nineveh. Nahum proclaims that Yahweh will make an end of Nineveh (Nah 1:8), that Nineveh will have no descendents to bear its name (Nah 1:14), that he will shame Nineveh by exposing its nakedness to the nations (Nah 3:5), and that the wound that Yahweh brings upon Nineveh is fatal (Nah 3:19). Alongside such condemnation of Nineveh, Nahum promises the restoration of Israel (Nah 2:2). Similarly, Zephaniah proclaims the coming destruction of Nineveh (Zeph 2:13) alongside the promised restoration of Yahweh's people (Zeph 3). Thus, the reader finds Jonah's attitude all the more inexplicable. A satisfactory explanation of Jonah's concern that Nineveh will escape the judgment he pronounces must come from elsewhere.

The Noachic Narrative—Explaining Jonah's Reaction

That explanation is given by what the reader[32] of the book of Jonah does know about Jonah's reason for believing that Nineveh would be spared. The reader does know that Jonah objects because of Yahweh's grace, which he knew would be present (Jonah 4:2). How does Jonah know that Yahweh would be gracious toward a people other than Israel? There is no specific content of Yahweh's initial call of Jonah to indicate that His universal grace (beyond Israel to other nations) had been revealed to Jonah then and there. Since the reader is limited to what occurs in the text, the reader seeks an answer for Jonah's knowledge of Yahweh's universal

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[32] Recall from chapter one that the current reader is a re-reader of the book of Jonah who is aware of Jonah's conversation with Yahweh in chapter four of the book of Jonah while re-reading chapter one.

grace from within the text. That answer is in the intertextual connection that has already been established in this study, a connection that takes the reader beyond the limits of the book of Jonah. The answer is in the Noachic narrative.

At first, the Noachic narrative does not give the needed answer. It begins with the condemnation of Noah's contemporaries. That condemnation bears a unique intertextual tie to the condemnation of the Ninevites based upon the use of רעע, "evil" and חמס, "violence" within the two narratives.[33] The condemnation of Noah's contemporaries is not an idle threat, but results in the death of all life on earth save only those kept safe within the ark. Thus, as the reader recalls the Noachic narrative, Jonah's reluctance to preach to Nineveh lacks sound reason as his desire that their condemnation come to consummation would seem to be assured by the destruction of the flooded world. Yet that is not where the Noachic narrative ends. It continues and then climaxes with the Noachic covenant of Gen 9.[34] There the narrative employs six phrases to underline and emphasize the universal scope of this covenant, reaching to all who dwell upon earth. Furthermore, the universal time frame of the covenant is also underlined with the declaration that the covenant is: לדרת עולם, "for future generations" (Gen 9:12) and ברית עולם, "an everlasting covenant" (Gen 9:16). The six phrases that emphasize the universal scope of Yahweh's concern[35] employed within the Noachic narrative are:

1) Gen 9:9,10

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[33] For a discussion of the unique usage of חמס and רעע in the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative, see the discussion above.

[34] Genesis 9:7 brings the initial blessing upon creation (Gen 1:22, 28) to those saved in the ark as they are called to be fruitful and multiply. The Noachic narrative is driven to this re-establishment of Yahweh's blessing upon creation. For a discussion of the relationship of Gen 1 to Gen 9, see Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Word Biblical Commentary 1; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1987), 192. So also, a discussion of how Gen 9 offers discontinuity, as well as continuity, with Gen 1 occurs in Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990), 313–314.

[35] A brief discussion of the five of these six phrases operating as a collective unit occurs in Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 195.

אתכם ואת־זרעכם אחריכם ואת כל־נפש החיה אשר אתכם ... לכל חית הארץ

"with you and with your offspring[36] after you and with every living being with you… to every beast of the earth"

2) Gen 9:12

ביני וביניכם ובין כל־נפש חיה אשר אתכם

"between me and you and every living being which was with you"

3) Gen 9:13

ביני ובין הארץ

"between me and the earth"

4) Gen 9:15

ביני לביניכם לבין כל־נפש חיה בכל־בשר

"between me and you and every living being among all flesh"

5) Gen 9:16

בין אלהים ובין כל־נפש חיה בכל־בשר אשר על־הארץ

"between God and every living being among all flesh which is on the earth"

6) Gen 9:17

ביני ובין כל־בשר אשר על־הארץ

"between me and all flesh which is on the earth"

The cumulative effect of this stockpiling of phrases describing the party with which Yahweh establishes His covenant draws the reader to recognize Yahweh's grace extended toward all creation. For the reader of the book of Jonah, this would include the Ninevites. While the Noachic covenant[37] does not preclude Yahweh's judgment from being meted out through other means, it does signal Yahweh's basic predisposition of grace toward all living beings as bespoken in this covenant. Thus, those who know Yahweh's condemnation of another people (other than Israel) know that He is predisposed to be gracious toward them. Hence, Jonah's

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[36] The specific mention of Noah's offspring prepares the reader for the account of the lineage that will come from Ham, Shem and Japheth. The account becomes a critical tie between the Noachic narrative and the Jonah narrative as each line takes a specific role in the Jonah narrative in accordance with the blessing that Noah speaks upon them in Gen 9:25–27. This matter receives greater attention in chapter three. At this point, it is noteworthy that the readership of the book of Jonah, also being readers of the Noachic meta–narrative, would understand Nineveh as participants in the eternal Noachic covenant and, thus, among those to whom Yahweh desires to extend His grace rather than His condemnation.

[37] The impact of the Noachic covenant will reverberate throughout the Jonah narrative. In Jonah 1, it gives rise to the actions of the sailors. In Jonah 2, the Jonahpsalm gains clarity as it is placed in the context of the Noachic narrative with specific concern for the Noachic covenant. In Jonah 3, it explains of the actions of the Ninevites and the peculiar proclamation of their king. In Jonah 4, Jonah's closing debate with Yahweh reveals the place of the Noachic covenant within Jonah and Yahweh's understanding of the His relationship with the Ninevites. And here in the opening verses of Jonah 1, it explains Jonah's reluctance to travel to Nineveh with the message of Yahweh.

anticipation of Yahweh's repentance from condemning the Ninevites is explained by the reader's knowledge of the Noachic narrative.

Jonah and Noah

The principal human character of both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah appears within a unique setting in Hebrew scripture: the sea. Their actions and choices while in that setting offer rich intertextual interpretive insights. But reading the two characters (and the narratives in which they appear) together calls for a textual basis by which to tie the narratives, thus serving as a means to ground the reader's perceptions. That evidence is in the unique presence of Hebrew Jonah, Tarshish, and Nineveh within the Jonah narrative in line with their presence in the Table of Nations proceeding specifically from Ham, Shem and Japheth (Gen 10:4, 11, 21), and in further conjunction with the blessing spoken by Noah upon his three sons and their progeny (Gen 9:25–27).

The Representative Roles of Jonah, the Sailors and the Ninevites

The Jonah narrative offers only three human characters—Jonah, the Tarshish-bound sailors who operate as a single entity, and the Ninevites who also act as a whole. While mention is made of the ship's captain (Jonah 1:6) and the king of Nineveh (Jonah 3:6–8), even their mention leaves them in a representative role. The captain expresses the sentiment of the entire crew when he exhorts Jonah to rise and call upon his god as they had all been doing (Jonah 1:5–6). The king is only mentioned as he declares a fast that not only applies to Nineveh as a whole, but which the people had already begun prior to his appearance (Jonah 3:5). The representative function of the captain and the king is also underlined by the fact that they are not named in the Jonah narrative,

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Jonah knows Yahweh's character because he knows the Noachic covenant.

an omission that is all the more glaring for the king of Nineveh. It is commonplace for Old

Testament texts to name foreign kings, including those associated with Nineveh, especially

within third person narratives, such as that found in the book of Jonah. In the historical

narratives, there is the mention of Sennacherib by name in 2 Kgs 18–19. Shishak is named in 2

Chr 12. Ezra mentions Cyrus (Ezra 1), Xerxes (Ezra 4:6), Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:7), and Darius

(Ezra 6:1). The writings include Daniel's specific mention of Nebuchadnezzer (Dan 1–4),

Belshazzar (Dan 5), Darius (Dan 6), and Cyrus (Dan 10). The prophets, likewise, name specific

foreign kings, such as Sennacherib (Isa 36:1), Cyrus (Isa 45:1), Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 21:7), and

Darius (Hag 1:1; Zech 1:1; 7:1). Both captain and king are unnamed that they might simply be

identified by their association, along with the rest of their respective group, with Tarshish and

Nineveh respectively.

The words of Jonah in the first chapter of the Jonah narrative also give him an identity

beyond "Jonah, son of Amittai." After the lots fall upon Jonah, indicating him to be the cause of

the storm that threatens their lives, the sailors request five pieces of information from him: why

has this evil come upon them? what is Jonah's occupation? where does Jonah come from? what

is Jonah's country? and from what people does Jonah come? (Jonah 1:8). Jonah's reply to their

request offers a two-fold significance. First, rather than answering each of the sailors' requests

for information in turn, Jonah simply says, עברי אנכי, "A Hebrew am I." The fronting of the

predicate emphasizes Jonah's identification as a Hebrew. That emphasis is underlined by Jonah's

terse, two-word response. Jonah has expressly identified himself as a Hebrew, which places him

in a particular relationship with the sailors whose identity is tied to Tarshish and the Ninevites.

Yet their specific identities are kept in a universal framework. Having identified himself as a

Hebrew, Jonah states that he fears Yahweh, the God of the heavens, who made the sea and the dry ground. Thus, Jonah is clear that Yahweh's dominion is over all creation.[38]

That universal character of Yahweh's dominion drives the reader back to the Noachic narrative where Yahweh's universal dominion is upheld, as well as his universal grace. All the more significant, Yahweh's relationship with Hebrew Jonah, the Tarshish sailors, and the Ninevites is defined in the Noachic narrative.[39] Genesis 10:21–24 records the genealogy of Shem as including the following line: Shem—Arpachshad—Shelah—Eber. While various other offspring of Shem are mentioned, this line takes prominence as Shem is identified as אבי כל־בני־עבר, "the father of all the children of Eber" (Gen 10:21). עבר, "Eber," when given its gentilic form, offers the source of the title עברי, "Hebrew"—the very identification that Jonah explicitly attributes to himself. Similarly, Tarshish takes prominence in Gen 10 as Japheth's genealogy includes the line: Japheth—Javan—Tarshish (Gen 10:2–4). So also, Nineveh comes to the fore in Gen 10 as Ham's genealogy includes the line, Ham—Cush—Nimrod, with Nimrod having established the city of Nineveh (Gen 10:6–11).

With so many names being mentioned within Gen 10, why give heed to just three? It is their confluence of both familiarity and exclusivity. The familiarity of the terms Hebrew, Tarshish, and Nineveh is grounded upon their frequent usage within Hebrew scripture. A significant number of the names in Gen 10 are limited to genealogical lists.[40] Yet, the inclusion

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[38] For a discussion of how Jonah's identification of Yahweh as the "God of the heavens" grants a universal character to Yahweh, see Jonathan Magonet, *Form and Meaning: Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1983), 38.

[39] While Gen 10 is not specifically a part of the Noachic narrative, the table of nations flows from Gen 9 as the blessing/curses that Noah speaks upon his three sons leads into the delineation of the generations coming from each of those sons. This connection between the book of Jonah and the genealogy of Ham, Shem and Japheth was first pointed out in Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 210–3.

[40] Tarshish's fellow brother, the son of Javan, דדנים, "Dodanim" is mentioned only in the genealogies of Gen 10:4 and 1 Chr 1:7. Nimrod is given credit for not only establishing Nineveh, but also Calah and Resen (Gen 10:11–12), which are mentioned only in Gen 10. So also, Eber's son Peleg is only mentioned in the genealogical record of

of Nineveh in Gen 10 is unique as it is not in the primeval genealogy of 1 Chr 1. Furthermore, the inclusion of these three designations, Hebrew, Tarshish, and Nineveh, in the same text is unknown throughout the rest of Hebrew scripture, save only the Jonah narrative. And since that narrative has a self-confessed Hebrew and two collective entities identified by Tarshish and Nineveh as its only human characters, the three become prominent when the two narratives are brought together.

This connection gains more prominence with the consideration of the place of Nineveh in the Jonah narrative. Nineveh's choice as the object of Jonah's prophetic work can first be justified by its presence as an ancient superpower. Yet Egypt was still prominent and thus could have been chosen for Jonah's work.[41] Even more, Jonah flees to Tarshish, a location that Arcadio del Castillo[42] argues was located on the Red Sea, thus in close proximity to Egypt. Thus, why not have Jonah instead preach to the Egyptians as a non-Hebrew people? A first answer is the inviolability of Yahweh's command. He commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh; there would not be a change in plans due to the disobedience of the prophet. Another explanation is the notoriety of the Assyrians for cruelty, which would make them the paragon of ungodly behavior. Yet, Egypt could have filled that same role due to its prominence in another meta-narrative, namely Exodus. The choice of Nineveh also presents a jolt to the reader who is aware of the eventual overthrow of Israel by Assyria. Hence, Marvin Sweeney argues that the inclusion of Nineveh is an example of heavy irony and parody since Assyria, who would topple Israel, is said to repent at the message of Yahweh's displeasure.[43] Sweeney's outlook is occasioned by his reading of Jonah in

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Gen 10:25 and 1 Chr 1:19, 25, alongside the repeated genealogy of Eber in Gen 11:16–19.

[41] Sasson raises this same question in Sasson, *Jonah*, 86.

[42] Arcadio del Castillo, "Tarshish in the Book of Jonah." *RB* 114 (2007): 481–98.

[43] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 304.

light of the Book of the Twelve. The irony, which he sees in Nineveh's role in the book of Jonah, is tempered by the reader who is aware of the intertextual connection to the Noachic narrative.

When the Jonah narrative is read intertextually with the Noachic narrative, a different explanation for Nineveh's place in the Jonah narrative arises. With Nineveh originating from cursed Ham, Nineveh brings to prominence Yahweh's concern for all people, even those descended from an accursed forefather, thus including all gentile people, and so underscoring a critical element of the narrative of Jonah—the universal scope of Yahweh's gracious character. As J. H. Stek has pointed out:

> One large element in this message is the emphatic proclamation of Yahweh's vital interest in the Gentile peoples for their own sake, and the reminder that His work in Israel was, in the larger scopes of His purposes, with a view to the blessing of the Gentiles also. In the history of salvation which He is working out in Israel in the midst of the nations, He is making His redemptive approach to all nations. God is saving a people, but what He does in and for His people in history is with a view to channeling His grace to the nations. The extension of the blessing of Abraham to the nations is one of the eschatological goals of salvation history."[44]

The unique combination of Hebrew, Tarshish and Nineveh within the Jonah narrative has been intertextually linked to the Noachic narrative based upon the presence of those three designations being in the genealogies of Gen 10. That connection, and its significance, is further illustrated by Noah's blessing upon the respective forefathers of Hebrew, Tarshish, and Nineveh—namely, Shem, Japheth, and Ham. Noah names Yahweh as the God of Shem (Gen 9:26). Hebrew Jonah, as a descendent of Shem, thus identifies himself as one who fears Yahweh. Japheth is not specifically tied to Yahweh, but only to Elohim. Thus, the Tarshish sailors, from the line of Japheth, each calls upon אלהיו, "his own god" (Jonah 1:5), which would likely have focused upon the deity Yamm.[45] They make the remarkable turn to call upon Yahweh, but that

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[44] Stek, "The Message of the Book of Jonah," 40.

[45] A discussion of Yamm as a likely god upon whom the sailors called takes place earlier in this chapter.

surprise is explicable because Noah's blessing upon Japheth places him in a positive relationship with Shem (Gen 9:27), making their shift understandable. Ham is uniquely unconnected to Yahweh or even Elohim in Noah's blessing, but his son, Canaan, is placed in a adversarial relationship with Shem and Japheth (Gen 9:25–27). Thus, the book of Jonah records the Ninevites believing Elohim (Jonah 3:5), but never Yahweh. It is even Elohim who repents of the evil that He purposed to bring upon them (Jonah 3:10) and then Yahweh immediately reappears to converse with Jonah in the fourth chapter of the Jonah narrative.

The use of יהוה, "Yahweh" and אלהים, "Elohim/God" throughout the book of Jonah is of great significance. Consistently, it is יהוה who interacts with Jonah, though אלהים is used in Jonah 4:7–9, though the surrounding context makes it clear that it is יהוה to whom אלהים refers. Both the Tarshish-bound sailors and the Ninevites refer only to אלהים until Jonah introduces them to יהוה. Once Jonah reveals him to the sailors (Jonah 1: 9), then they recognize יהוה (Jonah 1:10). Yet Jonah never uses the name יהוה when addressing the Ninevites in Jonah 3, hence they only repent and pray to אלהים. The implications of this observation, in tandem with the insights from the intertextual tie to the Noachic narrative (and specifically Noah's blessings upon his respective sons) inform the reader of the intimate relationship bound up in the name יהוה in contrast to the more distant relationship found in אלהים.

The relationship of each of the three human characters of the Jonah narrative with the divine is explained by the Noachic narrative. Jonah, as a descendent of Shem, knows Yahweh from the beginning. The Tarshish sailors, descended from Japheth, first only know Elohim (a step removed from Yahweh), but are brought to know Yahweh by Jonah's testimony. The Ninevites, descended from Ham, have the most limited relationship with the divine prior to Jonah's arrival. An initial, first step toward the divine is made as they believe Elohim, but they

have yet to gain the intimacy found in the use of the name Yahweh. Recognizing this connection

helps answer questions within the Jonah narrative about the use of Yahweh versus Elohim.[46]

Jonah and Noah—Parallel and Distinct

While this discussion of the tie between the designations Hebrew, Tarshish and Nineveh

offers a strong textual basis for the intertextual relationship of the Jonah and Noachic narratives,

it also offers the groundwork for understanding the relationship between the chief human

characters of both narratives: Jonah and Noah. Noah speaks of his own faith in Yahweh as he

blesses Shem, ברוך יהוה אלהי שם, "Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Shem" (Gen 9:26). So also,

Jonah speaks of his faith in Yahweh, whom he fears (Jonah 1:9). While Noah and Jonah confess

the same faith in Yahweh, Jonah's actions do not perfectly mirror those of Noah.

The most readily apparent difference between Noah and Jonah is the faithful obedience of

the former and the disobedience of the latter. Noah is told to build an ark, a command to which

he readily obliges (Gen 6:22; 7:5).[47] Jonah, on the other hand, is notorious for his decision to flee

from the face of Yahweh, heading in the opposite direction from which he had been commanded

to go (Jonah 1:1–3).

The narratives unfold dramatically to illustrate this difference between the two characters.

Jonah is the cause of the raging waters besetting the Tarshish-bound ship (Jonah 1:12), while

Noah is free of such culpability (Gen 6:7–8). The extent of Jonah's culpability is seen in the

details of the narrative of Jonah 1. Jonah tells the sailors to נסא, "lift" him up (Jonah 1:12) in

order to throw him overboard. The use of the verb grabs the attention of the reader as a member

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[46] See Sasson, *Jonah*, 93 for an example of the challenges in understanding how these terms are being used in the Jonah narrative.

[47] The Noachic narrative is persistent in noting that Noah acts just as Yahweh has commanded him—Gen 6:22; 7:5; 7:16; 8:15–18.

of the reading community of biblical scholarship, a community that is aware of the usage of

Hebrew. נסא is "a verb that seldom refers to lifting up an individual. It is constructed, rather, with

nouns such as "sin" and "evil" when Scripture wants to speak of guilt and the many ways in

which human beings sustain it."[48]

Jonah's culpability is placed into the context of the Noachic narrative as the sailors pray to

Yahweh, prior to tossing Jonah overboard, that he not require their lives in payment for the

spilling of דם נקיא, "innocent blood" (Jonah 1:14). The Jonah narrative could have made use of

an alternate expression occurring within Hebrew scripture—דם הנקיא, "blood of an innocent

one". The distinction between the two phrases is more than lexical. "Innocent blood"[49] focuses

upon the act of shedding blood while "blood of an innocent one"[50] focuses upon the

blamelessness of the victim. The sailors use the former term as their concern is with the propriety

of their own act, not Jonah's innocence. That also is the focus of the prohibition against murder

within the Noachic narrative. Genesis 9:6 does not qualify whether the shed blood comes from a

blameless individual or not. As it was in the Jonah narrative, so also in the Noachic narrative the

focus is not upon the blamelessness of the victim, but simply upon the act of shedding blood.

Before moving to other aspects of the relationship between Jonah and Noah in the

respective narratives, one final observation ought to be made regarding Jonah's guilt, which

stands in contrast to Noah's obedience. Jonah instructs the sailors to throw him overboard,

saying, "For I know that on account of me this great storm is upon you" (Jonah 1:12). The

significance of the initial phrase כי יודע אני is taken up by Sasson.

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[48] Sasson, *Jonah*, 124. Sasson's argument draws upon both BDB 2, as well as *THAT* 2.113–114, 3.d–e..

[49] Such usage of דם נקיא with its focus upon the impropriety of shedding blood occurs in Deut 21:8, 9; 1 Sam 19:5; 2 Kgs 21:16; 24:4; Ps 94:21; 106:38; Prov 6:17; Isa 59:7; Jer 7:6; 22:3. Cf. BDB דם 2.d and נקיא 1.

[50] Such usage of דם הנקיא with its focus upon the innocence of the intended victim occurs in Deut 19:13; 2

What is exceptional here is that the first clause, *kî yôdēa̅ ʾānî*, is accorded special attention. Snaith… points out that by reversing the more normal phraseology, *ʾānî yôdēa̅*, the narrator stresses Jonah's awareness of his role. The Masoretes recognized this emphasis and sharpened it by placing the pausal accent *zaqeph qaton* over *ʾānî*. Furthermore, as has been amply recognized in recent years, the verb *yāda̅* can carry a legal sense, "to recognize, to know, to admit," when accepting or entertaining a legal decision… With these words, therefore, Jonah goes beyond admission of his own guilt and actually freely gives the sailors leave to throw him into the sea. Should they do so, he is informing them, they will incur no blame at all.[51]

Not only does this explain the reason for the sailors speaking of "innocent blood" rather than "blood of an innocent one" as Jonah's guilt is apparent, it also places Jonah in stark contrast with Noah. The former is cognizant of his guilt; the latter is made aware that Yahweh declares him to be righteous in his generation (Genesis 7:1).

Jonah's and Noah's Silence

While the respective narratives present Jonah's and Noah's guilt and righteousness as stark contrasts, the characters also demonstrate affinities for each other in their actions. One such affinity is in their silence, a characteristic that bonds Noah and Jonah in their contrast to other biblical characters. Noah is glaringly silent throughout the Noachic narrative as Yahweh repeatedly addresses him. Yet Noah only replies with silent faith. The narrative does not record Noah speaking to Yahweh, his condemned contemporaries, or his fellow passengers aboard the ark. Noah only breaks his silence to speak words of blessing upon Shem and Japheth, while cursing Ham's son Canaan (Gen 9:24–27). Why would Noah remain silent until that point? Because he trusts Yahweh. Never does Yahweh command him to cry out to the condemned world. Noah had nothing to say to those around him because nothing had been given to him by Yahweh to speak.

Kgs 24:4; Jer 22:17. Cf. BDB דם 2.d and נקיא 1.

Jonah, upon close inspection, is in a similar position. Much is said by Jonah, but not until

Yahweh gives him words to speak. Jonah's silence through the first eight verses of the Jonah

narrative is not surprising based upon the narrative's initial phrase: וַיְהִי דְּבַר־יהוה אֶל־יוֹנָה, "And

the word of Yahweh came to Jonah." This familiar formula is typically followed by an

imperative (e.g., 1 Kgs 12:24), the related formula כֹּה אָמַר יהוה, "thus spoke Yahweh …" or a

similar formula (e.g., 2 Sam 7:5; 24:11; 1 Kgs 13:21) that informs the prophet of the content that

he is to speak. Thus, while Jonah has been commanded by Yahweh to travel to Nineveh that he

might speak to its inhabitants, the specific content of that proclamation is not yet revealed to

Jonah (or the reader) in the opening of the narrative. This analysis comports well with Jonah's

explanation for his initial flight in chapter four. Jonah says nothing about his knowledge of the

content of the message that he was to deliver to Nineveh, which could have led him to conclude

that Nineveh might be spared. Instead, Jonah states that he knew Nineveh would be spared due to

Yahweh's character (Jonah 4:2).

While Jonah's and Noah's respective silence is explicable by the fact that Yahweh had not

given them something to speak, their silence sets them apart as unique counterparts when it is

compared to the vocal boldness of others. Prophets are expected to speak, yet Jonah flees that he

might not speak and the Noachic narrative does not include Yahweh's prophetic commission for

Noah. Noah obediently follows Yahweh's commands (Gen 6:22), but never speaks to the

condemned because Yahweh's commands are limited to the building and stocking of the ark

(Gen 6:15–21). This silence from Jonah and Noah is pronounced when held against other

prominent figures, such as Abraham's intercession for Sodom (Gen 18:23–33). Jonah's silence is

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[51] Sasson, *Jonah*, 125.

all the more pronounced when the reader encounters the sailors' willingness to intercede by action on Jonah's behalf as they attempted to row ashore to save Jonah (Jonah 1:13).

The specifics of the Hebrew of Jonah 1 strengthen this observation. Once the sailors resolve to toss Jonah overboard, they appeal to Yahweh not to condemn them בנפש האיש הזה, "because of the life of this man;" Jonah 1:14). Their plea that the innocent not perish with the guilty hearkens to Abraham's intercession for Sodom. H. W. Wolff comments on the prepositional phrase בנפש, noting the ב to be a causal preposition with affinities to Gen 18:23–33."[52]

While both Noah and Jonah were initially silent because they were not given words to speak by Yahweh, Jonah finally breaks his silence in Jonah 1:9 after Yahweh delivers his word to him. When does that word arrive? While Jonah sleeps in the deep recesses of the Tarshish-bound vessel.

Differences between Jonah and Noah

While Jonah's silence places him in the same vein as Noah, the two characters are yet distinct. Jonah is no mere photocopy of Noah. An intertextual relationship exists between the characters, but distinctions are present, distinctions that are apparent when the matter of רעע, "evil," which is discussed earlier in the study, is brought into the present discussion of the chief human characters, Jonah and Noah, within the two texts at hand. Jonan and Noah are distinct in their relationship to the רעע in the midst of each.

Noah is identified as righteous (Gen 6:9) in the midst of a world whose inhabitants have thoughts that are evil all the time (Gen 6:5). Jonah, on the other hand, is recognized by the sailors

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[52] H. W. Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah: A Commentary* (trans. M. Kohl; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 119.

as the source of the רעע that has come upon them (Jonah 1:7, 10). Thus, while Noah is a contrast to the evil around him, Jonah perpetuates the very evil that occasioned Yahweh to commission him to preach against Nineveh (Jonah 1:2). This distinction serves the rhetorical purpose of the Jonah narrative. While Noah and his family are the sole survivors of the flood, Jonah is not to be the sole survivor in the Jonah narrative. Jonah's perpetuation of רעע underscores the very reason why Yahweh's gracious and compassionate character should be extended to the Ninevites.[53]

Summary Insights

As this chapter applies the methodology of the study, it validates the values of that very methodology. Those values are seen in four key areas. First, the application of the methodology further illustrates the evidence for the intertextual relationship. On a textual level, the relationship has been demonstrated by the expanded discussion of the unique setting upon the water, including the relationship between the ark and the ship of Tarshish. Likewise, the unique combination of חמס, "violence" and רעע, "evil" these two narratives bolsters the textual relationship. The reader is key to recognizing that textual relationship. The current reader's ecclesial and scholarly reading communities are in concert with the insights prompted by the textual data, including the reader's surprise at the actions of pagan sailors who pray to Yahweh.

A second value exposed by this chapter is the explanatory power of the intertextual reading. The intertextual relationship explains Jonah's reaction to Yahweh's command to preach to Nineveh. A reader could expect Jonah to welcome the opportunity to proclaim judgment against a city such as Nineveh. But the reader who notes the intertextual relationship quickly understands the reason why Jonah would expect Yahweh to ultimately be gracious toward

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[53] The place of the Ninevites within the Noachic covenant is also reason for Yahweh's graciousness toward them, a matter that is discussed more thoroughly in chapters six and seven of this study.

Nineveh—the Noachic covenant. So also, the Noachic covenant explains the sailors' pious actions to the reader who is surprised by such actions.

A third value is the presentation of a coherent message for the book of Jonah. This chapter's discussion of the intertextual relationship between the first chapter of Jonah and the Noachic narrative refers to the rest of the book of Jonah. The discussion of the intertextual setting of the two texts gives rise to a consideration of the second chapter of Jonah with the perplexing Jonahpsalm. So also, reference is made to the third chapter of Jonah with the surprising actions of the Ninevites. The fourth chapter of Jonah is also discussed with its concluding debate between Jonah and Yahweh. Each of these connections is discussed in greater detail in chapters five through seven. In short, the intertextual reading naturally leads to a consideration of the rest of the book of Jonah. Thus the book is allowed to present a coherent message that is upheld by the intertextual reading even as it is dependent upon the intertextual reading.

The Tempering of Parody and Satire

A fourth value of the intertextual reading is its tempering of the much-discussed satirical reading of the book of Jonah. The satirical reading of the first chapter of the Jonah narrative has received significant attention in scholarship. Sweeny argues for a satirical reading of Jonah 1, going so far as to describe the narrative's depiction of Yahweh as "a god who has lost control."[54] Robin Payne sees a parody of the prophet in his name (both personal and patronym) as she contends that this "faithful dove" is anything but faithful.[55] John Holbert takes note of Yahweh's command that the prophet קום, "arise" (Jonah 1:2), yet he chooses to ירד, "descend" (Jonah 1:3)

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[54] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 311.

[55] Robin Payne, "The Prophet Jonah: Reluctant Messenger and Intercessor," *Exp Tim* 100 (1988–1989): 131.

as a supposed example of satire.[56] Judson Mather continues this popular argument as he maintains that the Jonah narrative makes use of parody in service to the book's "situation comedy" with a satirical purpose.[57] Similarly, John Miles reads the Jonah narrative as a parody of fifth century BC Hebrew letters targeting those returning from Babylon who "were serious in a new and, to some, unwelcome way about the religious writings of Israel."[58]

Critical to sustaining the argument that satire, parody, and the like are the controlling means of reading the first chapter of Jonah is determining the supposed object of the satire. As John Holbert points out, satire requires an object of attack that is apparent, even overt.[59] Holbert states, "Satire has a definite target which must be familiar enough to make the assault meaningful and memorable."[60] Yet it is the identification of such an apparent, even overt, object of attack that has remained exceedingly elusive. It has been so elusive that those scholars who do contend for a satirical reading of Jonah have offered any number of suggestions. This alone is significant reason to question those readings of the book of Jonah that give predominant focus upon a satirical reading of Jonah without tempering that reading with a recognition of the significant non-satirical elements of the text. This is not to deny the presence of some satire within the narrative, but to challenge the conception of satire, parody and the like being the controlling motif within the narrative.

While significant challenges for a cohesive, satirical reading of the Jonah narrative exist, an intertextual reading of the Jonah narrative with the Noachic narrative has proven, to this point of the current study, to give answer to those challenges. The current author is not alone in

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[56] Holbert, "Deliverance Belongs to Yahweh!", 64.

[57] Mather, "The Comic Art of the Book of Jonah," 281, 285.

[58] Miles, Jr., "Laughing at the Bible," 170.

[59] Holbert, "Deliverance Belongs to Yahweh!", 60.

questioning the satirical readings of the Jonah narrative. Jack Sasson offers a critique of "Jonah as Satire, Parody, or Farce" in which he states, "I have had occasions to cite various passages that I deem funny. But the issue here is not whether there is humor, comedy, or buffoonery in this book, but whether the narrator *intentionally* derides Jonah when wishing to ridicule other targets… The case for this intent so far made by scholars is weak."[61] Other critics of the satirical readings include Adele Berlin[62] and Kenneth Craig who argues, "a number of difficulties arise when the book is interpreted as parody or comedy. As we experience Jonah's thoughts and feelings first hand, we discover that the story is too earnest for laughter."[63]

The Healthy Balance Given Satirical Reading of Jonah 1 by Its Intertextuality

Not only are the critiques of Sasson, Berlin, and Craig supported by the conclusions of the intertextual reading of the Jonah and Noachic narratives, but the intertextual reading also offers a means to balance the satirical reading. For example, the supposed ironic conversion of the sailors becomes not only explicable, but expected, when placed within the intertextual reading with the Noachic narrative. The piety of the sailors, as they are tied to Tarshish in the book of Jonah, is not surprising in the view of the Noachic narrative. From the line of Japheth, they have a pre-existing positive relationship with the line of Shem, including Jonah. This not only explains their concern for Jonah's well-being, but also prepares them for their conversion experience. Furthermore, the Noachic covenant presages the sailors' concern for the shedding of Jonah's blood, as well as their positive relationship toward Yahweh.

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[60] Holbert, "Deliverance Belongs to Yahweh!", 62.

[61] Sasson, *Jonah*, 331–2.

[62] Adele Berlin, "A Rejoinder to John A. Miles, Jr., with Some Observations on the Nature of Prophecy," *JQR* 66 (1976): 227–35.

[63] Kenneth Craig, *A Poetics of Jonah: Art in the Service of Ideology* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South

Mather describes Jonah as a situation comedy, utilizing both burlesque and parody for satirical purpose with a focus upon Jonah's relationship with Yahweh. Thus, "the idealized sailors and Ninevites are not actors; they are (like the big fish) props that through their exemplary behavior furnish a foil to the bumbling and all-too-human prophet."[64] But are these characters only props? The intertextual reading recognizes them as more than props. Both the sailors and the Ninevites stand in line with their Noachic forefathers, Japheth and Ham, respectively. Their place in the Jonah narrative is not only determined by the Noachic narrative, but they become more than mere props as they extend and fulfill Yahweh's relationship with humanity beyond the descendants of Shem. Mere props would trivialize what the Noachic narrative makes to be central—Yahweh's care for all creation.

Not only does the tempering of parody within the Jonah narrative by its intertextual relationship with the Noachic narrative offer a more satisfactory reading of the first chapter of Jonah, it also sets the stage for the reading of chapter two. Instead of being read as a misplaced psalm of thanksgiving, Jonah's pious prayer stands in rhetorical tension with a satirical reading. Jonah's flight from Yahweh's call rightly elicits the derision of the reader, but such righteous indignation found in a satirical reading does not undo the ongoing relationship between Yahweh and his prophet. That ongoing relationship is evident throughout chapter one from the deep sleep sent by Yahweh to Jonah's pious confession of faith in Yahweh. That balanced tension of satire and piety continues in the second chapter of the Jonah narrative.

Carolina Press, 1993), 142.

[64] Mather, "The Comic Art of the Book of Jonah," 284.

CHAPTER FIVE

JONAH 2 READ INTERTEXTUALLY WITH THE NOACHIC NARRATIVE

This study operates under the thesis that an intertextual reading that recognizes that the book of Jonah borrows from the Noachic narrative (Gen 6–9) yields a deeper and richer exposition of the meaning of the book of Jonah. Chapters one through three prepare the reader for such a reading by handling issues of methodology while also assessing the textual evidence for reading the book of Jonah through the lens of the Noachic narrative as well as the reader's contribution to the reading. Chapter four begins the application of the reading, examining the textual relationship found specifically in the first chapter of the book of Jonah. Specifically, Jonah 1 was tied to the Noachic narrative based upon various textual elements including the role of water in both narratives, the role of the human characters in Jonah 1 being informed by their descent from the three sons of Noah, and the role of the Noachic covenant for the actions of the sailors in Jonah 1. The implications of such ties include the tempering of a satirical reading of Jonah 1 so that its satire does not overwhelm the text, but serves the greater theme of the text, namely the gracious plans of Yahweh in accord with the Noachic covenant. This chapter furthers the investigation as it focuses upon how the Noachic narrative informs the reading of the second chapter of the book of Jonah.

As the intertextual relationship between Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative is explored, the latter directs the reading of the former. Such direction comes from the specific intertextual ties between the texts as discussed in this chapter. As this chapter unfolds, the ties between the Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative are more substantial than the ties between Jonah 2 and other texts as

suggested by various scholars,[1] though it does not disqualify those ties. The intertextual ties between Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative effectively leads the reader back to the Noachic narrative, specifically to the Noachic covenant, as a means to understand Jonah's state of mind and actions. Such a recognition tempers the reading of Jonah 2 as satire. While satire is present, reading Jonah 2 in light of the Noachic narrative allows the reader to see such satire in service to the greater message of the text, namely the lengths to which Yahweh goes in order to save one with whom he is in a covenantal relationship. This chapter explores how these insights are gained from reading Jonah 2 with the Noachic narrative. Yet before exploring the reading in greater detail, the versification of Jonah 2 should be considered.

Along with Sweeney,[2] the current reader sees Jonah 2:1 (MT) as belonging with chapter two. Including it with chapter one (as is done in English translations as Jonah 1:17) creates the impression that Yahweh's appointing of the fish to swallow Jonah is a result of the sailors' pious prayers, sacrifices and vows. Including Jonah 2:1 (MT) with chapter two recognizes it as Yahweh's next act in which he freely engages, continuing the pro-active stance of Yahweh within the first chapter of Jonah. He chose to send his word to Jonah (Jonah 1:1); he chose to send a tempest upon the sea (Jonah 1:4); he chose to cease the tempest (Jonah 1:15); he chose to appoint the great fish (Jonah 1:16). Furthermore, the framework of the prayer (Jonah 2:2–3a; 2:11 MT) is narrative, preventing the narrative form of 2:1 (MT) from being cumbersome or out-of-place. So also, ending Jonah 1 at verse sixteen allows the tight structure of the chapter to be maintained. That structure involves Jonah 1:1–3 and 1:4–16 each setting forth scenes in which

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[1] E.g., Sweeney's contention that Jonah 2:11(MT) is tied to Genesis 1:9 and Stek's connection of Jonah 2's account of the prophet's death and "resurrection" with Hosea 6:1–3; 8:8; Micah 4:1; and Isa 2; 11:10.

[2] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 316.

Yahweh initiates the action, followed by the response of human protagonists.[3] Also telling is that the ancient versions of the book of Jonah (MT, LXX, Vulgate) are unanimous in their versification of Jonah 2:1 (MT). Thus, there is just cause for holding that Jonah 2:1 (MT) belongs with the rest of Jonah 2 both on a narrative level as well as structurally. Therefore, all references to Jonah 2 within this chapter will follow the versification of the Masoretic text.

Foundation for the Intertextual Link

It is common among biblical scholars to argue that the psalm of Jonah 2 was composed independently before being placed in its current context, though there are scholars who argue for the integrity of the psalm within the book of Jonah.[4] This study opts for the latter position for various reasons. First, the move to divorce the psalm from its canonical context is quite an abrupt move, making the defense of the divorce more challenging. Thus, Ackerman, with language reminiscent of the ultimate expulsion of Jonah from the fish's belly, describes such a removal of the psalm from its canonical context as "an unceremonious regurgitation that removes Jonah's song from its narrative context."[5]

Why is it so unceremonious? Lessing offers a helpful summary of the arguments for excising the psalm from its canonical context along with a persuasive defense of the psalm's integrity.[6] The arguments for removing the psalm include:

1) The psalm would fit better if it were sung from the dry land after deliverance.

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[3] Lessing, *Jonah*, 173.

[4] Jerome T. Walsh, "Jonah 2,3–10: A Rhetorical-Critical Study," *Bib* 63 (1982), 219 presents one scholarly argument for the psalm being out-of-place within the book of Jonah. Ackerman, "Satire and Symbolism in the Song of Jonah," 213–215 presents a summary of the arguments offered by scholars for removing the psalm, as well as arguments for the psalm being integral to its extant location in the book of Jonah. Landes, "The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah," 3–31 also argues for the psalm being an integral part of the book of Jonah. So also, Bolin, *Freedom Beyond Forgiveness*, 98–101 argues for the integrity of the psalm in its canonical context. Similarly, Magonet, *Form and Meaning*, 40 sets forth strong arguments for the psalm's integrity.

[5] Ackerman, "Satire and Symbolism in the Song of Jonah," 213.

[6] Lessing, *Jonah*, 174–83.

2) The psalm describes the fear of drowning, not experience within the fish's belly.
3) Jonah's faith and character in the psalm is distinct from that seen in the narrative.
4) The narrative uses the masculine דָּג, "fish" (2:1, 11), while the psalm uses the feminine דָּגָה (2:2).
5) The psalm meanders in distinction from the tight narrative.
6) It is presupposed that the book of Jonah has two prose sections (chapter 1; chapters 3–4), which makes the psalm out of place.
7) The psalm makes use of different language than the narrative (יָם, שׁלך, רעשׁ, גדול vs. ימים, מנגד עיניך vs. מלפני יהוה, etc.).
8) The psalm at best describes events of chapter one differently; more likely, it does not refer to chapter one at all.
9) The psalm condemns idolaters (2:9) while chapter one describes the sailors sympathetically.
10) Aramaisms are found within the prose of the book, but not the psalm.

Such arguments for removing the psalm may be answered as follows.

1) The use of irony throughout the book of Jonah makes the uniqueness of the psalm explicable.
2) The psalm refers to two prayers by Jonah, the first is not recorded but referred to in 2:3 with the conditions surrounding that prayer being described in 2:3–8; the second prayer (mentioned in 2:8) gives rise to Jonah's praise, having been delivered by the fish.
3) The psalm's genuine form as an individual lament reinforces its appropriateness for Jonah's situation in the belly of the fish.
4) Jonah's positive attitude in the psalm is in concert with the positive role that the fish plays in the narrative.
5) While there are unique usages of terms between the psalm and the narrative, there are also connections (עלה, קרא, ירד, עבר, זבח, etc.).
6) Jonah faith and character is in accord with the narrative, as especially seen in his quick change in attitude in chapter four depending upon whether his desires are being met.
7) Though גדול is absent from the psalm while being used fourteen times in the narrative, there is no appropriate word for it to modify in the psalm.
8) The absence of events from chapter one that are mentioned in chapter two follows the narrative device of the author to withhold information that is only later revealed (e.g., chapter four's revelation as to why Jonah chose in chapter one to run rather than go to Nineveh).
9) Other Old Testament texts place a poem in the midst of prose narrative (Exod 15; 1 Sam 2:1–10; Isa 38:9–20), thus placing Jonah 2 within the confines of Old Testament conventions.

To these strong arguments can be added the continuation of the unique setting of the first chapter of the book of Jonah into its second chapter. Chapter four of this study describes the uniqueness of the setting of Jonah 1; namely, that Jonah 1 takes place upon the waters. While

there is one prophetic text, along with one other poetic text,[7] which refers to events upon the waters, neither of those texts is a narrative with its action unfolding upon the waters. Two narratives involve action *adjacent* to waters,[8] yet those texts are intent upon keeping the principal human characters apart from the waters. The purposeful separation of the principal characters from the waters within these latter two narratives is explicitly seen as both texts mention the presence of יבשה, "dry ground" (Exod 14:29; Josh 3:17) as evidence of the full expulsion of water. By way of comparison to these two texts it is apparent that not only is it rare to find Old Testament narratives involving bodies of water, but it is standard for those texts to separate the human characters from the water. So when the book of Jonah places its human characters in the midst of the waters, it is distinctive. Thus there exists a natural cohesion between Jonah 1 and 2.

Furthermore, that natural cohesion propels the reader all the more into the intertextual reading of Jonah 2 with the Noachic narrative. The only other Old Testament narrative, outside of chapters one and two of the book of Jonah, which explicitly places the principal characters of the narrative in the midst of the water is the Noachic narrative. Likewise, Jonah 2 includes the same critical element that bound Jonah 1 to the Noachic narrative: the presence of a vessel that spares its occupants from the raging waters. In the Noachic narrative, it is the ark that spares Noah and his family; in Jonah 1, it is the ship of Tarshish that spares the sailors; in Jonah 2, it is the great fish that spares Jonah. This critical element of the intertextual connection between Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative receives specific attention later in this chapter.

The intertextual reading of Jonah 2 with the Noachic narrative will further reinforce the integrity of Jonah's psalm in its canonical context. The same textual links between Jonah 1 and

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[7] Ezek 27:25–36 and Ps 107:23–32.

[8] Exod 14 and Josh 3.

the Noachic narrative also link Jonah 2 with the Noachic narrative, thus strengthening the cohesion of the first two chapters of the book of Jonah.

Continuities Between the Texts

While the important role of water within both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah has been mentioned repeatedly, its critical role cannot be overstated. That importance is apparent in the unique narrative setting of the two texts. The importance of water in Jonah 2 is especially clear in the work of J. A. Miles, Jr. who refers to the psalm of Jonah 2, saying:

> [W]e may note that the water and pit imagery is found in four of its seven verses. The most concentrated water and pit imagery of the psalter (Pss. 69 and 84) is not nearly as concentrated as that…. We may say then, to hazard a pun, that this short psalm unleashes a veritable flood of water imagery.[9]

While Miles notes that he is hazarding a pun, his words are quite appropriate. The reader who is familiar with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is struck by the heavy usage of water and pit imagery in the psalm of Jonah 2. Such heavy usage naturally sends the reader back to that narrative that is inundated with water and the deadly consequences of such a deluge, namely the Noachic narrative. The shared usage of water imagery in both texts plays out in various shared elements—water covering the mountains, the shared water experience of Jonah and those condemned in the flood, the deliverance from water provided by the ark and the great fish, and Jonah and Noah's reaction based upon their deliverance from the deadly waters.

Water Covering the Mountains

Unique to the Noachic narrative and Jonah 2 is the description of waters covering the mountains. Genesis 7:19, 20 records the flood waters covering the mountains.[10] Likewise Jonah 2

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[9] Miles, "Laughing at the Bible: Jonah as Parody," 174.

[10] "And the waters increased greatly upon the earth and they covered the high mountains which were under all the heavens. Fifteen cubits over them, the waters increased and they covered the mountains."

describes Jonah's descent in the waters as going down to the קצב, "bottoms" of the mountains (Jonah 2:7).[11] While many texts (i.e., Deut 8:7; Isa 30:25) describe water flowing in the mountains as an indication of God's gracious provision, the Noachic narrative (Gen 7:20) and Jonah 2:7[12] are unique in describing the waters covering the mountains.

As the reader witnesses the waters covering the mountains, two significant effects take place. First, the intertextual tie between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah is strengthened. Not only does this unique element of the two texts strengthen that bond, but the bond is solidified all the more as it is another instance of the ongoing tie between the texts found in their common setting upon the waters.

Second, the imagery of water covering the mountains has a significant rhetorical effect. The harrowing circumstances of those who are condemned in the flood are captured in the covering of the mountains. There is no sanctuary, even upon the heights of the mountains, from the raging flood. So also, the refuge found in the ark by Noah is underlined by the lack of any other refuge from the waters that have even overtaken the mountains. Similarly, Jonah's descent to the bottoms of the mountains places him alongside those condemned in the flood. His is not a location from which one would expect deliverance. Yet, the great fish proves to be a vessel of deliverance (as described below). Thus, Jonah's salvation by Yahweh is pronounced as he comes out of circumstances, which spelled certain death.

והמים גברו מאד מאד על־הארץ ויכסו כל־ההרים הגבהים אשר־תחת כל־השמים: חמש שרה אמה מלמעלה גברו המים ויכסו ההרים:

[11] The translation of "bottoms" for קצב is based upon the contextual location of the mountains in the psalm of Jonah 2. As Jonah is descending in the water, the force of the poem prompts the "extremities" of the mountains to be understood as "bottoms" as a means to intensify the depths to which he descends. Cf. BDB 2.

[12] One other text that refers to water covering the mountains is Ps 104:6, which describes Yahweh's creative work including His causing the waters to no longer cover the mountains. Though the psalm alludes to a time when the waters once covered the mountains, the psalm's focus is upon the fact that the waters no longer cover the mountains, thus setting it apart from the Noachic narrative and Jonah 2, which are co-terminus with, not subsequent to, the covering of the mountains with water.

Jonah and Those Condemned in the Flood

Jonah's parallel experience with those condemned in the flood is not limited to their

witnessing of the waters covering the mountains. Both texts surround their respective characters

with death language. The Noachic narrative describes Yahweh's condemnation of humanity

within the flood by means of three statements by Yahweh and a single record of the fulfillment

of the promised condemnation.

1. Gen 6:7

ויאמר יהוה אמחה את־האדם אשר־בראתי מעל פני האדמה
מאדם עד־בהמה עד־רמש ועד־עוף השמים כי נחמתי כי עשיתם:

And Yahweh said, "I will wipe out humankind, which I created from upon the face of the earth, from humankind unto beast unto creeping thing and unto bird of the heavens for I repent that I created them."

2. Gen 6:13, 17

ויאמר אלהים לנח קץ כל־בשר בא לפני כי־מלאה הארץ
חמס מפניהם והנני משחיתם את־הארץ:
ואני הנני מביא את־מבול מים על־הארץ לשחת כל־בשר אשר־בו רוח
חיים מתחת השמים כל אשר בארץ יגוע:

And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh comes before me for the land is full of violence from them and behold I am destroying them from the land… And I, behold I, am causing a flood of waters to go upon the land to destroy all flesh, which has the breath of life in it from under the heavens; all which is on the land will die."

3. Gen 7:4

כי לימים עוד שבעה אנכי ממטיר על־הארץ ארבעים יום
וארבעים לילה ומחיתי את־כל־היקום אשר עשיתי מעל פני האדמה:

"For in seven days I am sending rain upon the land for forty days and forty nights and I will wipe out all the creatures, which I have made, from upon the face of the earth."

4. Gen 7:21-23

ויגוע כל־בשר הרמש על־הארץ בעוף ובבהמה ובחיה
ובכל־השרץ השרץ על־הארץוכל האדם:
כל אשר נשמת־רוח חיים באפיו מכל אשר בחרבה מתו:
וימח את־כל־היקום אשר על־פני האדמה מאדם עד־בהמה עד־רמש
ועד־עוף השמים וימחו מן־הארץ וישאר אך־נח ואשר אתו בתבה:

And all flesh that crept upon the land perished, the birds, the cattle, the beasts, and all the swarming creatures that swarm upon the earth and all humankind. All which breathed the breath of life in its nose from all which was upon the dry land died. And he wiped out all those dwelling upon the face of the earth from humankind unto cattle unto creeping thing unto bird of the heavens. And they were wiped out from the earth and only Noah remained and those with him in the ark.

The Noachic narrative makes use of two devices to underline the deadly reality of the waters. The first device is repetition.[13] The three pronouncements of Yahweh concerning the coming waters (Gen 6:7; 6:13, 17; 7:4) along with the description of its fulfillment (Gen 7:21–23) flood the reader with the deadly reality of the deluge. That repetition is reinforced by the second device, the employment of key Hebrew terms. The scope of death within the flood is repeated with the litany of "mankind, beast, cattle, birds of the air" (Gen 6:7; 7:21). The litany culminates in the further sweeping descriptions of "all those dwelling on the face of the earth" (Gen 7:23), as well as "all which breathed the breath of life" (Gen 6:17; 7:22). The latter description all the more confronts the reader with the deadly force of the flood as the breath of life is removed.

Another key term used in the repetition of the Noachic narrative is מחה, "wipe out" (Gen 6:7; 7:4; 7:23).[14] The term can be used to describe the physical action of wiping the mouth (Prov 30:20) or tears from the face (Isa 25:8). Yet such a usage turns can also bear a condemnatory accent with Yahweh proclaiming to Manasseh that his judgment upon Judah will lead him to "wipe out" Jerusalem as one "wipes out" a dish (2 Kgs 21:13). The force of מחה is further seen as it describes how the memory of one is "wiped out" (Exod 17:14; Deut 9:14; 25:19; 29:19; 2 Kgs 14:27; Ps 9:6). Thus, the Noachic narrative brings a repetitive force of the deadly judgment found in the flood.

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[13] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York, N.Y.: Basic Books, 1981), 97 captures the powerful use of repetition within the Old Testament, saying, "Many of the psychological, moral, and dramatic complications of biblical narrative are produced through this technique." Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 112 also notes, "All these varied instances of artful repetition reflect in different ways an underlying assumption of biblical narrative. Language in the biblical stories is never conceived as a transparent envelope of the narrated events or an aesthetic embellishment of them but as an integral and dynamic component – an insistent dimension – of what is being narrated…. Again and again, we become aware of the power of words to make things happen." Even more applicable to the use of repetition regarding the demise of Noah's contemporaries are the words of Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 113, "it is the inescapable tension between human freedom and divine historical plan that is brought so luminously through the pervasive repetitions of the Bible's narrative art."

Similarly, Jonah 2 employs repetition and key Hebrew terms to underline the deadly waters that surround Jonah. While repetition is standard in Hebrew and the two texts in question do not share unique words, these two texts are unique in using these devices to bring heightened attention to the deadly waters surrounding the characters. The parallel use of repetition to describe the waters of Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative is all the more noteworthy when it is compared to one of only two other Old Testament narratives that involve waters as a critical part of the setting—Exod 14 (the other text being Josh 3).

Exodus 14:28 depicts the deadly effects of the waters upon Pharaoh's army. Yet such a depiction lacks the repetition found in either the Noachic narrative or the book of Jonah. Furthermore, Exodus 14 does not make use of the forceful language of either the Noachic narrative or Jonah 2. Instead, it simply states that not one member of Pharaoh's army שאר, "remained" (Exod 14:28).[15] By making use of a positive term rather than one that bears an overt negative connotation, Exodus 14 stands in contrast to Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative. This distinctive difference between Exod 14 and the two texts under consideration is not surprising when the reader notes that the principal characters of Exod 14 are not in the midst of the waters, but kept apart from them. No one in the waters of Exod 14 survives. On the other hand, both the Noachic narrative and Jonah 2 place its principal human characters in the midst of the deadly waters, thus causing their survival to be magnified by the description of the death found in the waters.

While Exod 14:28 stands in contrast to the Noachic narrative, Jonah 2 employs the same devices as the Noachic narrative to highlight the deadly waters, allowing survival in such waters

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[14] See BDB I.

[15] The force of שאר is not distinctly deadly. The term bears a significant positive connotation for the reader who associates the term with the "remnant" that survives, rather than being destroyed. Such usage is found in Isa

to be magnified. Death language can be found throughout Jonah 2. Jonah calls out from Sheol (Jonah 2:3);[16] the waters are at Jonah's throat (Jonah 2:6), thus portending drowning; Jonah's soul is fainting away (Jonah 2:8).

Not only does Jonah 2 use such repetition, but, as was the case in the Noachic narrative, the choice in terms bears great significance. Early in the psalm, Jonah cries out from שאול, "Sheol." The term stands out to the reader as this is one of the mere five times in which the term is used in the Book of the Twelve (there are sixty-six occurrences of the term in the whole of the Old Testament). The use of the term elsewhere (Job 26:5; 33:4; Ps 18:5; 22:29; Ezek 32:27–30) heightens the deadly distress for the reader. So also, Sheol bears significant weight throughout the Old Testament as a location from which one cannot return.[17] Not only is Sheol a location from which one cannot return, but it also communicates Yahweh's judgment.[18] Thus, from the beginning of the psalm, Jonah is described with language that makes his demise certain.

Furthermore, Sheol bears the theological weight of one being distanced from Yahweh.[19] Jonah recognizes this distance as he states that he has been driven from Yahweh's sight (Jonah 2:5.[20] The weight of גרש, "driven"[21] adds yet more force to Jonah's seemingly impossible situation. Hezekiah captures the separation as he proclaims, "For Sheol cannot thank you, death

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4:3, 2 Chr 34:21, et al. In fact, Genesis 7:23 records the survival of those on the ark as those who שאר. Cf. BDB I.

[16] So also, Jonah 2:7 makes use of ארץ as a synonym of Sheol; see *HALOT* 5; BDB 2.g.

[17] L. Wächter, "שְׁאוֹל," *TDOT* 14:242.

[18] Wächter, *TDOT* 14:247.

[19] Wächter, *TDOT* 14:246.

[20] נגרשתי מנגד עיניך – "I am driven from before your eyes."

[21] There is a wealth of instances where גרש describes how one is driven from the presence of another in very undesirable circumstances. The instances include, but are not limited to Gen 3:24 (Adam and Eve from the garden), Gen 4:14 (Cain), Gen 21:10 (Hagar) , Exod 2:17 (daughters of Reuel from the well), Hos 9:15 (the wicked from the temple), and Micah 2:9 (women from their houses). See BDB 1644.

cannot praise you; those who do go down to the pit cannot hope for your faithfulness."[22] Other texts describe Sheol as the lowest point (Deut 32:22; Isa 7:11), the opposite of the highest heavens (Amos 9:2; Ps 139:8), "the land of forgetfulness" (Ps 88:4, 13) whose residents are cut off from Yahweh and thus forgotten (Ps 88:6), and so the wicked who forgot God in life find themselves in Sheol (Ps 9:18 MT). Thus, Jonah's psalm causes the reader to see the rebellious prophet in an untenable position. Banished from Yahweh's sight, Jonah is condemned.

Yet such banishment from Yahweh's sight also drives the reader back to the Noachic narrative. In the Noachic narrative, Yahweh's decision to wipe out all mankind from the earth is set in contrast with Yahweh's provision of an ark to deliver Noah and his family. So also, as Jonah has been driven from the presence of Yahweh and descends to Sheol, the reader is acutely aware that only Yahweh's intervention will allow Jonah to be saved.[23] Yahweh's means for preserving Jonah is already present in his appointment of the great fish.

The Fish and the Ark

Noah's ark plays an integral part both within the Noachic narrative as a life-preserving vessel in the midst of deadly waters as well as within the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. Chapter four of this study begins the exploration of the ark's role within the Jonah-Noachic intertextuality as its relationship with the Tarshish-bound ship of Jonah 1 is considered. That exploration continues here as the relationship of the ark to Jonah's great fish is considered.

Within the book of Jonah, the Tarshish-bound ship and the great fish fulfill equivalent roles. Not only do both prove to be life-preserving vessels, but both are surprising in that regard.

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[22] Isa 38:18 כי לא שאול תודך מות יהללך לא־ישברו יורדי־בור אל־אמתך׃

[23] Jonah's descent to Sheol allows only for Yahweh's deliverance as שאול is a locale over which only Yahweh has power. Cf. L. Wächter, *TDOT* 14:248.

A ship of Tarshish would not be expected to save life.[24] So also, a great fish is not an expected vessel of deliverance. Wolff, for example, focuses on the verb בלע, "swallow" (Jonah 2:1), a term that he contends when used in the psalms "always means acute danger, indeed often annihilation."[25] Thus, he underlines the expectation that Jonah being swallowed by a great fish portends his doom rather than his deliverance.[26] Wolff's insight is quite helpful in that it highlights the seriousness of Jonah's predicament. As a result, when Jonah is delivered by Yahweh, that deliverance is made all the more noteworthy.

While the reader thus expects Jonah's demise and has not encountered a parallel means of deliverance in the Old Testament, yet, upon closer inspection, the fish proves to be an appropriate parallel to the ark. Terence Fretheim notes the positive role of the great fish as a cause of Jonah's song of thanksgiving, rather than the cause of his distress.

> As for the primary significance of the fish, it should not be understood as the cause of the distress Jonah voices in the psalm…. Thus, given the fact that the *Song of Thanksgiving* is prayed from the belly of the fish, it is the fish which must be understood as the vehicle for Jonah's deliverance from the sea.[27]

George Landes also views the fish as a positive element for Jonah. "The fish, 'appointed' by Yahweh, is simply a beneficent device for returning Jonah to the place where he may

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[24] The association of "ship of Tarshish" with destruction in the Old Testament is described in chapter four of this study. Of particular help is Sherwood, *A Biblical Text and Its Afterlife,* which describes a "ship of Tarshish" as the ancient equivalent of the Titanic for its reputation as a doomed vessel.

[25] Hans Walter Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 132. Likewise, *HALOT qal* 1 notes that בלע is used of a fish only in Jonah 2:1, though it is used of תנם "leviathan" in Jer 51:34. Furthermore, Richard Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Harvard, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 79–86 discusses how Ugaritic literature describes Mot's domain in words tied to Jonah 2 as Mot is a voracious monster into whose belly one goes only then to further descend, even to the base of the mountains in the netherworld.

[26] Indeed, בלע is used throughout the Old Testament to describe the complete destruction of the item being swallowed – Aaron's staff swallows those of the Egyptian magicians (Exod 7:12); Yahweh swallows death forever (Isa 25:8); Korah and his followers are swallowed by the earth (Num 16:30–34); cf. also Lam 2:2, 5, 8, 16 and Isa 28:4.

[27] Terence E. Fretheim, *The Message of Jonah: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1977), 96.

reassume the commission he had previously abandoned."[28] Landes' argument focuses upon the

use of the term דג, "fish" instead of תנם, "leviathan," a choice that eliminates the hostile

context.[29] As the reader reflects upon the use of these terms within the Old Testament and the

ancient literature that is cognate of biblical Hebrew (literature with which those of the scholarly

reading community are not only familiar, but which the community has found to be helpful in

comprehending the language and worldview of biblical texts), Landes' insight is proven correct.

Herbert Niehr identifies תנם with the Ugaritic *tu-un-na-nu*, which is placed alongside *yammu* and

nahar and other mythological beings who were enemies of Baal and which were vanquished by

▢Anat.[30] Thus, not only does תנם bear a decidedly antagonistic posture, but it would accord with

the Canaanite god Yamm, whom the sailors sought to appease by means of their cargo in Jonah

1. That it is not the violent תנם that swallows Jonah makes him distinct from the sailors as he is

not consumed by a creature related to a pagan pantheon.

It is not only in cognate languages that תנם bears such negative weight. תנם appears as a

sea monster in Gen 1:21, Job 7:12, Isa 51:9, Ps 74:13, and Ps 148:7.[31] The last of these references

even associates תנם with the netherworld, thus making תנם the ideal creature to be carrying

Jonah to the depths (cf. Jonah 2:4, 6, 7), even to the point that Sheol would be closing in upon

him (cf. Jonah 2:3). Insomuch as תנם would be the natural choice for Jonah 2, the fact that it is

not used elicits the reader's attention. Jonah is not consumed by a monster associated with the

pagan pantheon, thus portending that the great fish will bring about his deliverance.

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[28] Landes, "The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah," 12.

[29] Landes, "The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah," 13.

[30] H. Niehr, "תַּנִּין," *TDOT* 14:727.

[31] Niehr, *TDOT* 14:729.

Not only does the fish's role as the means of Jonah's deliverance bring it in line with the role of the ark in the Noachic narrative, so also it further illustrates the narrative setting in the midst of the waters as a feature that is unique to the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. To be in the midst of the waters demands a means of deliverance if the characters are to survive. That vessel is found in the ark and the great fish.

The fish's salvific role is also expected by the fact that it was appointed by Yahweh. The structure of the second chapter of Jonah emphasizes Yahweh's role. While much attention is given to Jonah's psalm, it is framed by Jonah 2:1, 11. Both of those verses place Yahweh as the pro-active party. Jonah 2:1 records that Yahweh appoints the great fish to swallow Jonah,[32] while Jonah 2:11 records that the great fish spits out Jonah only upon the word of Yahweh commanding it to do so.[33] Foundational to Yahweh's salvific use of the great fish is the Hebrew verb מנה, "appoint", which is used four times in the book of Jonah. When the subject of מנה is Yahweh, the "appointment" is for the purpose of deliverance (Jonah 2:1; 4:6). When the subject of מנה is אלהים, "God," then the "appointment" is for the purpose of judgment (Jonah 4:7, 8). In Jonah 2, it is Yahweh, not God, who appoints the fish, alerting the reader (especially that reader who has re-read the book of Jonah, thus revealing its usage of מנה to Yahweh's plan of deliverance for Jonah. Thus, Jonah 2 emphasizes Yahweh as the one who is in control of the situation, while Jonah is passively swallowed and passively spat out.

So also, in the Noachic narrative it is Yahweh who is pro-active, not Noah. Yahweh commands the ark to be built (Gen 6:13–21); Noah obeys (Gen 6:22). Yahweh commands Noah and the others to enter the ark (Gen 7:1–4); Noah obeys (Gen 7:5). Yahweh, not Noah shuts them

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[32] וימן יהוה דג גדול לבלע את־יונה, "And Yahweh appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah."

[33] ויאמר יהוה לדג ויקא את־יונה אל־היבשה׃, "And Yahweh spoke to the fish and it vomited Jonah to the dry ground."

in the ark that they might be saved (Gen 7:16), much as it was Yahweh who appointed the fish that Jonah might be saved (Jonah 2:1). Yahweh blots out all life, while Noah and those with him are left untouched (Gen. 7:23). Yahweh remembers Noah. Thus, he causes the waters to subside in order that Noah and those with him might be saved (Gen 8:1–5). In the same way, Yahweh ordered the fish to spit out Jonah that he might be saved (Jonah 2:11). So also, it is Yahweh who orders Noah to go forth from the ark (Gen 8:15–17). Both texts set forth Yahweh as the one who controls the waters and who preserves his chosen in the midst of those deadly waters. That such salvation might take place Yahweh makes use of the ark and the great fish, his vessels of deliverance.

Jonah and Noah

As Noah and Jonah are both the recipients of Yahweh's deliverance, both respond in sacrifice to Yahweh. Noah's sacrifice, recorded in Gen 8:20–22, not only foreshadows Jonah's sacrifice, but the basic plot of the book of Jonah. Upon smelling Noah's sacrifice, Yahweh says in his heart that he will never again curse the earth or wipe out every living being from earth, even though the intentions of humanity's heart are רעע, "evil" from their youth. It was this same condition (the evil intentions of humanity's heart) that occasioned Yahweh נחם, "changing judgment"[34] that he had made humankind and thus purposed to wipe out humankind (Gen 6:5–7). Yet, following the flood and Noah's resulting sacrifice, Yahweh commits to sparing, not destroying, humanity in spite of humanity's evil. Thus, the reader who knows the Noachic narrative as a meta-narrative recognizes that Yahweh ultimately desires the salvation of Nineveh, not its destruction, although its רעע has gone up to Yahweh (Jonah 1:2). So also, the reader

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[34] The *nip☐al* of נחם is critical in both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah. Its usage will receive specific attention in chapter six in conjunction with the "repentance" that both the Ninevites and Yahweh undergo.

understands Yahweh's desire to spare Jonah in spite of his initial refusal to obey Yahweh's command. Yahweh desires not only to spare Nineveh, but Jonah as well. Thus, Jonah's deliverance by a great fish and his proclamation that "Salvation belongs to Yahweh!" (Jonah 2: 10) accord with the reader's expectations based upon the Noachic meta-narrative. Furthermore, Jonah's sacrifice in response to his deliverance from deadly waters by Yahweh places him in line with Noah.

Yet, the book of Jonah does not record the prophet's sacrifice. The reason is apparent in Jonah's psalm. Twice Jonah refers to the temple as the locale for his relationship with Yahweh. The book of Jonah persistently teaches that neither the prophet nor anyone else can run from Yahweh's presence for he is the "God of heaven, who created the sea and dry ground" (Jonah 1:9).[35] Yet, Jonah also purposefully identifies himself as a Hebrew (Jonah 1:9), which sets him apart from the other human characters of the book of Jonah. They are all descendents of Noah and thus the object of Yahweh's statement in his own heart that he would never wipe out humanity from the earth. Yet the three human characters of the book of Jonah descend from the three sons of Noah, causing each of those characters to relate to the divine in a unique fashion.

Jonah, a Hebrew, descends from Shem (Gen 10:21), whom Noah blesses as he whose God is Yahweh (Gen 9:26), thus placing Shem and his descendants, including Jonah, in an intimate relationship with Yahweh. In accord with the Noachic narrative's description of Shem's line, Jonah desires and even plans to offer a sacrifice of thanks to Yahweh, yet his intimate relationship with Yahweh as a descendent of Shem prevents him from doing so at the time of deliverance (Jonah 2:11). Specifically, Jonah's descent from Shem leads to his self-identification as a "Hebrew" (Jonah 1:9; Gen 10:21), which further specifies Jonah's relationship with Yahweh

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[35] ואת־יהוה אלהי השמים אני ירא אשר־עשה את־הים ואת־היבשה, "And Yahweh, the God of the heavens, I fear, who made the sea and the dry ground."

to the locale of Yahweh's temple, where he promised to cause his name to dwell (1 Kgs 8:29)[36] that Yahweh's people might call upon his name there (1 Kgs 8:44–45) as part and parcel of their intimate relationship with him.

The Tarshish-bound sailors, on the other hand, as descendants of Japheth (Gen 10:2–4), are blessed by Noah with אלהים, "God's" blessing, yet they do not bear the intimacy of Yahweh's personal name (Gen 9:27). Contrary to Jonah and the rest of the line of Shem, the sailors do not have the intimate connection with Yahweh via the temple, which thus allows them to offer a sacrifice upon deliverance from deadly waters (Jonah 1:16).

Finally, the Ninevites, as descendants of Ham (Gen 10:6–11), live under Yahweh's promise to Noah, yet they also bear the repercussions of the curse spoken on the son of Ham, Canaan (Gen 9:25–27). The Ninevites thus are objects of Yahweh's covenant with all creation (Gen 9:8–11). Yet Noah's cursing of Canaan leaves no mention of the relationship between Ham's line and Yahweh or even, more generically, to אלהים, "God." In accord with this description from the Noachic narrative, the book of Jonah does not record the Ninevites sacrifice upon deliverance from impending destruction. While this can be explained in part by the Ninevites not being delivered from deadly waters as were Noah, Jonah, and the Tarshish-bound sailors, it is more clearly underlined by the distinctive use of the three lines issuing from Noah, a use found only in the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative.

A final, yet paramount, element of the intertextual relationship between Jonah and Noah is the grace of Yahweh. Jonah initially appears to be those condemned in the flood, joining them in rebellion, thus facing their same fate in a watery grave. Yet Jonah is saved by Yahweh. The

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[36] The worldview regarding the Temple and Yahweh's name found in 1 Kings is well-known to the reader of the book of Jonah as Jonah is identified as the "son of Amittai", identical to the designation of the prophet Jonah found in 2 Kgs 14:25.

prophet of Yahweh became his condemned prophet and then his saved prophet. While Yahweh's word cannot be ignored without condemnation, his ultimate delight is in sparing his people. Jonah was spared even as the sailors were spared in chapter one and the Ninevites will be in chapter three. Noah was ultimately spared also due to Yahweh's grace (Gen 6:8). Thus, the key to salvation is not the righteousness of the person, but that they look to Yahweh in whom there is grace.

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Discontinuities Between the Texts

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As the continuities between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah confront the reader, there is also recognition of the distinctive application of those continuities within each text. The presence of such discontinuities between the texts reveals the depth and richness that the interpretive re-use of the Noachic narrative grants to the book of Jonah.

Jonah and Those Condemned in the Flood

While the Noachic narrative never records the words of those wiped out by the flood nor does it specifically describe their experience, the narrative is explicit in attributing their death to Yahweh (Gen 6:7, 13, 17; 7:4, 21–23). While it is the evil of the condemned that leads to their death, it is clearly Yahweh who causes their death. In a similar manner, Sweeney argues that Jonah blames Yahweh for his predicament in Jonah 2.[37] His contention is based upon Jonah's statements to Yahweh in Jonah 2:4 ("**you** cast me into the deep… all **your** billows and **your** waves passed over me").[38]

Yet, these are not the only words spoken by Jonah to Yahweh within his psalm. Immediately following his description of his dire circumstances, Jonah speaks of how Yahweh

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[37] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 320.

[38] ותשליכני מצולה... כל־משבריך וגליך עלי עברו, "And you cast me into the deep… all your billows and your

rescues him, saying in Jonah 2:7, "Yet **you** brought from the pit my life, O Yahweh my God."[39] Furthermore, when the reader hears the statements in the context of the whole of the book of Jonah, attributing the waves and billows to Yahweh is the natural consequence of Jonah's confession that Yahweh created the sea (Jonah 1:9). So also, the reader is not only exposed to Jonah's psalm but to the narrative surrounding it. The reader knows that it was Yahweh who appointed the great fish (Jonah 2:1), which, at Yahweh's word, would eventually spit out Jonah on dry ground (Jonah 2:11).

Thus, Jonah is placed in an antithetical position to those condemned in the flood of the Noachic narrative. Jonah is ultimately an object of divine deliverance; Noah's contemporaries are the object of divine wrath. Furthermore, Jonah's psalm, while depicting the dire circumstances surrounding the prophet (Jonah 2:2–6), finds its resolution in Jonah's joy in Yahweh's deliverance (Jonah 2:6–10). The waters that spelled doom for Noah's contemporaries bring Jonah into the context of death, yet his life is preserved because just as the Noachic covenant[40] provides deliverance for the sailors of Jonah 1 and the Ninevites of Jonah 3–4, so Jonah himself is spared. Jonah's piety, expressed in the latter verses of his psalm (Jonah 2:6–10) recalls the piety of the sailors who fear a great fear and thus offer a sacrifice to Yahweh (Jonah 1:16), but is antithetical to those in the flood who are fully impious. The lack of piety of Noah's contemporaries can even be seen in Jonah's psalm as he states, "Those keeping false idols forsake their covenantal love" (Jonah 2:9).[41]

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waves passed over me."

[39] ותעל משחת חיי יהוה אלהי, "Yet you brought from the pit my life, O Yahweh my God."

[40] The Noachic covenant is cut after the flood, thus extending Yahweh's provision to Jonah and the sailors who lived in the post-flood world while it was not present for Noah's contemporaries during the flood.

[41] "Those keeping false idols forsake their covenantal love." משמרים הבלי־שוא חסדם יעזבו

The distinction between Jonah and Noah's contemporaries centers upon the covenant that Yahweh cut with Noah and his descendents following the flood. It is also that same covenant that explains why not only Jonah, but the sailors and Ninevites to be spared in the book of Jonah. It is covenant with all creation (Gen 9:8–11). Furthermore, Yahweh declares it to be ברית עולם, "an everlasting covenant" (Gen 9:16) that is for לדרת עולם, "all future generations" (Gen 9:12). These two phrases reiterate that the Noachic covenant extends into eternity by using עולם, "eternal"[42] to describe the duration of the ברית, "covenant" as well as the extent of Noah's (לדרת, "generations" who are included under the covenant. The eternity of the covenant expresses both its unending validity through time as well as the unlimited scope of the covenant to all descendents of Noah through all three branches (Ham, Shem, Japheth) issuing from him.

Yet this is not the only device within the Noachic narrative that underscores the unlimited scope of the Noachic covenant. Once again, the reader is struck by the use of repetition. Just as the extent of destruction for Noah's contemporaries was underlined in Gen 6–7 by means of repetition, so also the extent of the covenant for Noah's descendents is underlined in Gen 9 by means of repetition.[43] Yahweh tells Noah that he is cutting the covenant…

1) Gen 9:12

ביני וביניכם ובין כל־נפש חיה אשר אתכם

"between me and you and every living being which was with you."

2) Gen 9:13

ביני ובין הארץ

"between me and the earth."

3) Gen 9:15

ביני וביניכם לבין כל־נפש חיה בכל־בשר

"between me and you and every living being among all flesh."

4) Gen 9:16

בין אלהים ובין כל־נפש חיה בכל־בשר אשר על־הארץ

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[42] See BDB 2.d; Allan A. Macrae, "עולם," *TWOT* 2:672–673; E. Jenni, "עולם," *TLOT* 2:852–862.

[43] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* captures the powerful use of repetition within the Old Testament. Alter's insights are discussed earlier in this chapter.

"between God and every living being among all flesh which is on the earth."
5) Gen 9:17

<div dir="rtl">ביני ובין כל־בשר אשר על־הארץ</div>

"between me and all flesh which is on the earth."

The rhetorical purpose of this repetition is described by Gordon Wenham, who builds upon Claus Westermann, as he notes, "it is hardly possible to ascribe this repetition to different sources. Rather, they serve to underline the message, pealing out like bells reverberating into the future."[44] That reverberation extends לעולם, "into eternity, a reverberation that thus sounds upon the sailors in Jonah 1, the prophet himself in Jonah 2, and the Ninevites of Jonah 3. They all descend from Noah and so the Noachic covenant brings them under Yahweh's covenantal grace, allowing them to be spared the destruction visited upon Noah's contemporaries.

Summary Insights

Not only do the discontinuities between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah reveal the deepening and enriching meaning produced within the latter by its interpretive reuse of the former, the intertextual reading also deepens and enriches the reading of the book of Jonah by clarifying, amplifying, and correcting the insights of other scholars. For example, Sweeney sees connection between Jonah 2:11 and Gen 1:9 as Jonah finds himself on dry land as he emerges from waters.[45] While such a connection is defensible, there is a more apparent connection between Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative. Whereas Genesis 1:9 does not involve any human characters within those waters or upon the dry land, both the Noachic narrative and Jonah 2 not only place humans in the midst of the water (a narrative element unique to these texts), but the texts would be drastically altered not only in content but in message were this narrative element eliminated.

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[44] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 195.

Stek builds upon Jonah's experience within the waters. He describes Jonah's experiences in Jonah 2 as his burial and "resurrection," which serves as a metaphor for Israel's need to die and rise again. Stek also sees this metaphor in Hos 6:1–3; 8:8; Micah 4:1; and Isa 2; 11:10.[46] The connection is based upon similar language employed in different contexts (none of Stek's references place humans within deadly waters). Thus, while Stek's intertextual observation offers insight into the relationship between the book of Jonah and the Book of the Twelve (Hosea and Micah, specifically) as well as the larger prophetic corpus (Isaiah), it does not hold the strength of the textual connections found between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative.

The intertextual reading of Jonah 2 and the Noachic narrative leads the reader to take note of a surprising change in Jonah's position. Jonah 2 begins with the prophet in the dire circumstances only shared with Noah's contemporaries who were condemned in the flood. Nevertheless, in the midst of a deadly environment, Jonah does not meet the same end as Noah's contemporaries, but the same end as Noah, both being saved by a vessel of deliverance. This dramatic shift between Jonah's alignment with the condemned and then the saved of the Noachic narrative drives the reader back to Yahweh's covenant with Noah following the flood. Not only does Yahweh decide to never wipe out all humanity again upon Noah's sacrifice (Gen 8:20–22), but he further makes a covenant with all creation in which pledges to never destroy all life by flood again (Gen 9:8–11).

As the intertextual reading of Jonah 2 with the Noachic narrative prompts the reader to recall the Noachic covenant, two critical results arise. First, Yahweh's grace toward his creation, promised in the Noachic covenant, is underlined by Jonah 2 as Jonah's circumstances seemingly place him in a hopeless circumstance, but he is saved. Second, it prepares the reader to find the

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[45] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 322.

same result for the Ninevites. The sailors of Jonah 1 were in hopeless circumstances, but were delivered. Jonah is in hopeless circumstances in Jonah 2, yet he is delivered. The Ninevites are in hopeless circumstances (cf. Jonah's words of destruction in Jonah 3:4), yet they too will be saved. The Ninevites' experience not only parallels that of Jonah and the sailors, but, like Jonah and the sailors' experience, the Ninevites' experience is informed by its intertextual connection with the Noachic narrative, a connection that is explored in chapter six of this study.

The Tempering of Parody and Satire

Thomas Jemielty states, "Narrative satire, like that in Jonah, is rare. No other prophetic text offers narrative satire from beginning to end."[47] His observation anticipates that members of the scholarly reading community will have noted satire within Jonah 2. Thomas Ackerman does note such satire. His observations of satire in Jonah 2 are found in two observations. First, he finds that the song itself bespeaks satire.

> The song performs two functions. It helps to establish an appropriate genre (i.e., satire) through which the story can be understood. It is also the crucial vortex into and out of which all of the story's main images move, helping us to integrate and properly interpret the symbolism with which the work abounds.[48]

Second, Ackerman more specifically notes that "Jonah's song gives increasing vividness to Sheol" therefore we're amused that Jonah sings of deliverance.[49] He magnifies that point as he notes that ירד is the word used in the Psalter to describe one going to Sheol, therefore he concludes that Jonah is on a death-quest in chapters 1–2.[50]

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[46] Stek, "The Message of the Book of Jonah," 41–2.

[47] Jemielty, *Satire and the Hebrew Prophets*, 16.

[48] Ackerman, "Satire and Symbolism in the Book of Jonah," 216–7.

[49] Ackerman, "Satire and Symbolism in the Book of Jonah," 229.

[50] Ackerman, "Satire and Symbolism in the Book of Jonah," 223. See also *HALOT qal* 4, *hip☐il* 2.

Those taken with Ackerman's reading could also note that Jonah's prayer of thanksgiving comes prior to his actual salvation (Jonah 2:10–11). That Jonah would sing with thanks to Yahweh when he is still within the belly of the great fish and within the deep strikes the reader is highly ironic. Yet, as chapter four of this study noted regarding the presence of irony, satire and parody in Jonah 1, so also in Jonah 2 the presence of such elements is tempered by the intertextual reading. It is not that such elements are not present, but that they do not control the reading when the reader takes note of the text's connection to the Noachic meta-narrative.

The satirical elements present the reader with an incredulous situation that calls for an explanation. The satire does not offer that explanation; it only presents the reader with a sense of dissonance. That dissonance is answered by the intertextual reading. Jonah's prayer of thanks while descending to Sheol is explicable to the reader who knows Yahweh's concern, based upon the Noachic narrative, for the Ninevites as well as Jonah. Furthermore, Yahweh's provision of the ark as a vessel of deliverance portends Yahweh's provision of another vessel of deliverance, the great fish, for Jonah. The reader who is a member of the scholarly reading community is reinforced in this outlook as Jonah is swallowed not by תנם, "leviathan" but דג גדול, "a great fish."

In short, Jonah 2 employs satire not to control the reading, but to lead the reader to note the drastic lengths to which Yahweh goes in order to save one who is within his covenant. The covenant that Yahweh cut with Noah covers not only Jonah, who is thus saved, but also the Ninevites, whose experience with gracious Yahweh is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

JONAH 3 READ INTERTEXTUALLY WITH THE NOACHIC NARRATIVE

Chapters four and five of this study demonstrate how the intertextual use of the Noachic narrative (Gen 6–9) deepens and enriches the reading of the first two chapters of the book of Jonah. More specifically, the result of the intertextual reading of chapters one and two of the book of Jonah is the recognition of the presence of satire within the book of Jonah. Yet the intertextual reading tempers the satire by placing it in service to the greater message of the book—namely, that all creation is subject to Yahweh's grace due both to their creational status and as part of his covenant, not only with Noah, but with all creation. Thus, the Noachic covenant offers a rationale for the deliverance of both the sailors in Jonah 1 and the prophet in Jonah 2 from deadly waters. That rationale is all the more convincing as the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative are unique in the Old Testament in placing their primary human characters in the midst of the waters. These observations, built upon the intertextual foundation discussed in chapter three of this study, provide the reader even further insights into the book of Jonah as described in the preceding two chapters. That such a deepened and enriched reading of the book of Jonah results from reading the book of Jonah intertextually with the Noachic narrative is the thesis for this study.

This chapter continues the exploration of how the intertextual reading informs the reading of the book of Jonah with a focus upon its third chapter. A dominant theme in the discussion is the use of the Hebrew *nip□al* verb נחם, "change direction" in both texts. While the verb is not

exclusive to the texts, it is among the great constellation of intertextual connections that ties the texts together and enriches the reading of the book of Jonah.

Foundation for the Intertextual Link

Before specifically addressing the matter of נחם, "change direction" in both texts, attention needs to be given to the textual foundation for linking the Noachic narrative (Gen 6–9) with the third chapter of the book of Jonah. Such a foundation begins with the shared focus of both texts upon Yahweh's authority over creation and his mercy upon all creation.

Yahweh's Authority Over and Mercy Upon All Creation

Commenting upon the structure and theme of Jonah 3–4, Sweeney describes Yahweh's authority over and mercy upon all creation in the book of Jonah, noting, "Whereas Jonah 1–2 prepared the reader (and Jonah) to recognize Yahweh's power over all creation, this portion of the book points to Yahweh's capacity for mercy in exercising that power."[1] Yahweh's authority over creation is demonstrated in his command over the sea (Jonah 1:4), Jonah's confession of Yahweh's universality (Jonah 1:9), the prayer unto Yahweh by the non-Hebrew sailors (Jonah 1:14), and Yahweh's commanding of the fish (Jonah 2:1, 11 MT). This matter of Yahweh's authority extends into Jonah 3–4 as the prophet, unable to avoid the call placed upon him, finally goes to Nineveh according to Yahweh's command (Jonah 3:3). So also, Yahweh exhibits further control over nature with his provision of a plant to shade Jonah, a worm to devour that plant, and a scorching wind (Jonah 4:6–8).

Thus, a central theme that dominates the intertextual reading of the book of Jonah with the Noachic narrative is Yahweh's identity as the Creator. While this theological implication of the intertextual reading is given greater attention in chapter eight of this study, it is helpful at this

point to note its foundation in the book of Jonah based upon the repeated use of the *pi□el* form

of the verb מנה, "appoint." The term is employed four times in the book of Jonah, all in a context

of divine power working beyond the normal experience of the reader. In Jonah 2:1 (MT),

Yahweh appoints a great fish to swallow Jonah; in Jonah 4:6, Yahweh God appoints a plant to

grow overnight to give Jonah shade; in Jonah 4:7, God appoints a worm capable of destroying

the miraculous plant; in Jonah 4:8, God appoints a scorching east wind to cause Jonah to suffer

that he might thus be changed. The repeated use of the verb not only highlights divine authority

over creation throughout the book of Jonah, but it also draws the reader's attention to divine

concern for his creation. Each appointment employs grace as Jonah is either saved from physical

peril (by the appointed fish and plant) or from his own anger (by the appointed worm and wind,

as is discussed in chapter seven). Thus, Yahweh's identity as creator is not restricted to his

authority over creation, but his work as creator finds fulfillment in his gracious action for his

creation.

In the same way, Jonah 1–2 already shows forth Yahweh's mercy upon all creation, even

before it is more fully exhibited in Jonah 3–4. The sailors are spared from the stormy sea, even

though they were on board a ship of Tarshish (Jonah 1:15–16). Yvonne Sherwood argues on the

basis of 1 Kgs 22:2, 2 Chr 20:35–37, Ps 48:8, Isa 23:1,14, and Ezek 27:25–26 that a "ship going

to Tarshish" roughly translates as "the Titanic going out on her maiden voyage" as both are

proud vessels carrying precious cargo that are shattered and sink into the heart of the sea.[2] Thus,

the reader anticipates the doom of the sailors, yet discovers Yahweh's grace when they are

spared. Similarly, Jonah is delivered from his descent toward Sheol because salvation belongs to

Yahweh (Jonah 2:10). What is already seen in these actions by Yahweh comes to the fore as he

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[1] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 322.

changes his mind regarding the destruction he planned to bring on Nineveh (Jonah 3:10) and as

the prophet confesses his knowledge of Yahweh's true character as one who is gracious and

compassionate (Jonah 4:2).

This integral connection between Yahweh's authority over and mercy toward creation is

shared with the Noachic narrative. There also it is his authority that is first established with

reference to his mercy, which is then reversed in the latter portion of the narrative to give

increased focus to his mercy. Genesis 6–7 focuses upon Yahweh's authority over creation with

the repetition of his plan to destroy creation (Gen 6:7, 17; 7:4) and its fulfillment (Gen 7:21–23),

using various descriptions of the whole of creation, which is subsumed under his judgment.[3]

Even in the midst of the powerful description of Yahweh's authority, mention is made of his

mercy as Noah finds grace in his eyes (Gen 6:8) and as Noah and those with him on the ark are

left untouched by the flood (Gen 7:23).

Genesis 8–9 turns the focus to Yahweh's mercy upon all creation. With all creation, save

those in the ark, having died, attention is given to the restoration of Noah and his passengers to

היבשה, "dry ground." The presence of dry ground also is of significance in the book of Jonah.

Jonah confesses his faith in Yahweh who created the dry land (Jonah 1:9); it is to the dry ground

that the sailors attempt to return (Jonah 1:13); the great fish vomits Jonah out upon the dry

ground (Jonah 2:11 MT). Thus the book of Jonah, like the Noachic narrative, associates the dry

ground with deliverance. Within the Noachic narrative, the shift from flood to dry ground is

signaled by God זכר, "remembering" all those on the ark (Gen 8:1), bespeaking his concern for

them.[4] The focus upon Yahweh's mercy is further seen as he vows never again to destroy all

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[2] Sherwood, *A Biblical Text and Its Afterlife*, 250.

[3] For a discussion of this repetition and its impact, refer to chapter five of this study.

[4] W. Schottroff, "זכר," *TLOT* 1:385-386 describes the theological weight of the verb, stating, "such divine

living creatures, in spite of the ongoing evil thoughts of humanity's hearts (Gen 8:21). Yahweh's

mercy comes to a head in the Noachic covenant as he pledges to all creation that he will never

destroy them by flood (Gen 9:15–16). Twice Yahweh makes use of זכר, "remember" as he cuts

his covenant to underline his mercy. In concert with the Noachic narrative, the book of Jonah

makes use of זכר, yet it is Jonah who is the subject of the verb. From the belly of the fish, Jonah

remembers Yahweh, even as his life ebbs away (Jonah 2:8 MT). While the subject of the verb

has shifted from the divine in the Noachic narrative to the human in the book of the Jonah, זכר is

the key to the shift from death to life. In the Noachic narrative, it is Yahweh's remembering that

prompts his action to deliver those on the ark. In the book of Jonah, the prophet's life is ebbing

away, but when he remembers Yahweh his prayer then shows forth his confidence in Yahweh's

salvation.

Yet even as Gen 8–9 gives attention to Yahweh's mercy upon creation, it takes place in the

context of his authority over creation. He sends a wind to cause the waters to recede (Gen 8:1).

He gives a rainbow as the sign of his covenant for he is the one who causes clouds to come over

the earth (Gen 9:12–14).

Thus, both texts balance Yahweh's authority and his mercy. Both texts focus upon his

authority in the first half, while also mentioning his mercy. Then both texts shift to focus upon

Yahweh's mercy in the second half, while also referring to his authority. Key in the both themes

is their extension over all creation. So the intertextual reader not only discovers both texts relying

upon creational theology, but also that creational theology is foundational to the text's

understanding of Yahweh. In contradistinction to the classic position of Gerhard von Rad, who

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remembrance refers to the deity's beneficial and sufficient attention to the individual… in situations of distress and generally in participation in the divine blessing," which can include "the resumption of concern for life and salvation (cf. Gen 8:1…)." See also, Thomas E. McComiskey, "זכר," *TWOT* 1:551.

held that creational theology is ancillary to salvation,[5] creational theology takes a foundational, not ancillary, role in both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah, as well as in their intertextual reading. This critical observation receives extended attention in chapter eight.

Shem—Ham—Japheth

The distinctive connection between the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah based upon the lines issuing from Noah's three sons is first set forth in chapter three of this study.[6] The connection is also discussed in chapter four as it explains the role of the sailors who are bound, as descendants of Japheth, to first call upon the divine as אלהים, "Elohim/God" and to abstain from murder as subjects of the Noachic covenant's prohibition of murder (Gen 9:6). The connection resurfaces here as attention is given to the Ninevites, from Ham's line (Gen 10:6–12), in Jonah 3.

The Noachic narrative establishes the relationship between the descendents of Noah's three sons as well as their relationship with the divine. Noah's blessing upon Shem (Gen 9:26) places him in a positive relationship with Yahweh. Thus, Jonah, as a self-confessed Hebrew (Jonah 1:9) descends from Shem (Gen 10:21) and thus is in a positive relationship with Yahweh. Noah's blessing upon Japheth (Gen 9:27) places him in a positive relationship not with Yahweh, but with the more generic אלהים, "God." Instead of blessing Ham, Noah curses his son Canaan, mentioning neither Yahweh nor אלהים.

As a result, Jonah is addressed by the divine via the personal name Yahweh throughout the book of Jonah (Jonah 1:1; 3:1; 4:4) even as Jonah tells the sailors that he worships the divine via his personal name Yahweh (Jonah 1:9). On the other hand, the sailors each call upon אלהיו, "his

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[5] Gerhard von Rad, *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken, London: Oliver & Boyd, 1966), 56, 63.

own god" (Jonah 1:5) in accord with their descent from Japheth whose relationship with the divine is based upon the impersonal title אלהים (Gen 9:27). Thus, the sailor's conversion, following the prophet's words that disclose the personal name Yahweh to the sailors (Jonah 1:9–10), prompts them to reflect their new knowledge of the personal identity of the divine. Thus, they call upon Yahweh (Jonah 1:14), fear him and offer sacrifices to him (Jonah 1:16). The Ninevites, from Ham's line, are not mentioned in relationship to the divine until after the prophet speaks the word given to him (Jonah 3:4–5). Following their conversion, their relationship with the divine is not founded upon the personal name Yahweh, but with the impersonal title אלהים (Jonah 3:5, 8, 9, 10). Though the Ninevites are not exposed to the personal name Yahweh and thus do not call upon him, they are subject to the same deliverance that Jonah and the sailors received. As discussed in chapters four and five, the sailors and Jonah are delivered from deadly waters by the grace of Yahweh. So also, the Ninevites are in a position of death due to the divine judgment delivered by Jonah, yet they too are delivered by divine grace.

The force of the connection between the two texts based upon the three sons of Noah and their relationship with the divine via the personal name Yahweh and the impersonal title אלהים is two-fold. First, it is an exclusive connection. No other text outside of the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah explicitly employs the three lines issuing from Noah. Second, it possesses significant explanatory power. The relationship between the human characters in the book of Jonah and the divine is determined by their respective forefather in Gen 9.

Animals Alongside People

The Noachic narrative is uniquely bound to Jonah 3 by the inclusion of animals alongside people in their accountability to the divine. Jonah 3:7–8 records the king's proclamation that

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[6] This insight was first noted by Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 210–3.

beasts as well as people were to fast that their penitence might lead to God's repentance. This union between animals and people branches out to Yahweh's closing question to Jonah (4:11), which cites the value of Nineveh not only in terms of its 120,000 residents, but also the city's numerous cattle. So also, Yahweh's מנה, "appointing" of the great fish (Jonah 2:1, MT) and the worm (Jonah 4:7) as the means to communicate his purpose to Jonah, even as Jonah is Yahweh's chosen means to communicate to the Ninevites, highlights how the book of Jonah places animals alongside people. The fish and the worm were used by Yahweh for his purpose even as was Jonah.

Andersen and Freedman recognize this connection between the Noachic narrative and the third chapter of Jonah. While commenting upon Yahweh's decision to destroy both animals and humanity (Gen 6:6, 7) as an act of undoing creation, they state:

> The context is entirely clear that the fault—the evil and sinfulness—is entirely humanity's responsibility, and the punishment is aimed at mankind, and that the animal kingdom will share their fate, but only because of the close association of animals and humans. It may be observed that when the king of Nineveh and his people respond to Jonah's preaching, the domestic animals also put on sackcloth and join in the rituals and acts of repentance (Jonah 3:7–8).[7]

Thus, the inclusion of animals alongside people in Jonah 3 hearkens back to the Noachic narrative. Genesis 6:7 records that Yahweh's judgment upon the great sin of the world was to destroy not only people, but also the animals. While the description of the animals in Gen 6:7 (בהמה, "livestock," רמש, "creeping things," עוף, "birds") is reminiscent of Gen 1:20, 24, there is a distinct difference maintained between humanity and beast throughout Gen 1 by virtue of humankind being given authority over the rest of creation (Gen 1:26). This distinction continues into Gen 2:19–20 with Adam's naming of the animals. The union of humanity and animals is seen, however, not only in Gen 6:7, but also in Gen 9:10, 17, where the Noachic covenant is

made not only between Yahweh and humanity, but also all living animals. Thus, it is not only

humanity that Yahweh pledges to never again completely destroy by a flood, but animals as well.

While this is not an exclusive connection (though it is nearly exclusive) between the Noachic and

Jonah narratives, it certainly stands as a unique, rare usage shared by the two.[8] It is also worth

noting that this unique connection between the Jonah and Noachic narratives goes beyond shared

terms, even beyond shared phrases, to a shared major theme.

There are other passages in which divine judgment is brought to bear upon animals as well

as humanity. Jeremiah tells Zedekiah that Yahweh will use Babylon to strike down Jerusalem's

residents, both human and animal (Jer 21:6). While Joel calls for sackcloth to be worn and a fast

to be held by humans (Joel 1:13–14), he also mentions how the animals suffer as there is no

pasture or stream (Joel 1:18, 20). Ecclesiastes 3:18–21 describes the meaninglessness of life in

that humanity shares the same deadly fate as the animals. Yet each of these examples stops short

of placing accountability before God equally upon humanity and animals. Such accountability is

seen in Gen 9:5 as an accounting for the lifeblood of each human will be demanded from both

human and animals who have spilled it. It is that shared responsibility that issues forth in the

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[7] Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 645-646.

[8] The only other narrative that links humanity with beast in their accountability before the divine is the Exodus narrative. Animals are often made to suffer the consequences of divine judgment in that narrative. The gnats (Exod 8:17), boils (Exod 9:10), and hail (Exod 9:19) are said to come upon humans and beasts. So also, Yahweh's wrath is poured out specifically upon Egypt's animals within the fifth plague of the death of the livestock. Exodus 11:5, 12:12 and 12:29 mention the death of the first-born shall extend to the cattle as well as humans. The matter of accountability by human and beast before the divine comes into play when, just as Jonah mentions the fasting of animals along with humans leading to deliverance from God's wrath, Moses declares that the Egyptians could be delivered from the plagues by the feasting (antithesis of fasting) of Yahweh's people, with their beasts attending them in the feast (Exod 10:9). Furthermore, when Israel is to depart in order to avert the plague of the death of the first-born, not even a dog is to growl against Israelite man or beast (Exod 11:7). The deliverance of Israel and entrance into Canaan leads to the call for the firstborn of both man and beast to be set aside (Exod 13:12, 15). Either human or beast who touches Mount Sinai is to be stoned (Exod 19:13). These incidents from Exodus place animal alongside human as having a moral responsibility before Yahweh, subject to his commands and the object of his punishment if such commands are not honored. Exodus contains this element that is otherwise unique to the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. The methodology of this study recognizes that such unique, nearly exclusive connections bear significant weight in judging the textual evidence for the intertextual connection.

penitential actions shared by humanity and animals in Jonah 3:7–8. This again reminds the reader of the creational theology that underpins both narratives as well as their intertextual reading. Chapter eight discusses the implications for creational theology that is made by the intertextual reading.

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Continuities Between the Texts

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The foundation for the intertextual link between the Noachic narrative and Jonah 3 having been laid, attention may now be given to the continuities between the two texts. While the use of the Hebrew *nip□al* verb נחם, "to change direction" is the overarching matter of discussion, this chapter prepares for the discussion of that verb by first addressing related topics that funnel into the matter of "repentance" in the two texts.

Jonah and Noah

Through the first two chapters of the book of Jonah, its namesake prophet stands in antithesis to Noah's obedience. The Noachic narrative is persistent in recording Noah doing everything that Yahweh commanded (Gen 6:22; 7:5; 7:16; 8:15–18). Jonah, on the other hand, is the notorious paradigm of a disobedient prophet. Yahweh commands him to rise and go to Nineveh (Jonah 1:1–2); he instead arises and descends to Joppa that he might hire a ship to take him to Tarshish (Jonah 1:3).[9]

Jonah's rebellion subsides in Jonah 3. Once again, the word of Yahweh comes to Jonah, telling him to arise and go to Nineveh (Jonah 3:1). This time, Jonah obeys (Jonah 3:3).[10] No

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[9] Jonah's initial flight contrasts him with Elijah, the only other biblical prophet called upon to go to a foreign land (1 Kgs 17:9). Whereas Jonah fled, Elijah is obedient. Thus, Jonah stands as an anti-Elijah. The relationship between Jonah and Elijah is described in greater detail in Lessing, *Jonah*, 48-52; Marcus, *From Balaam to Jonah*, 131-133; Magonet, *Form and Meaning*, 102; Wolff, *Studien zum Jonahbuch*, 80-81; and Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 435.

[10] ויקם יונה וילך אל־נינוה כדבר יהוה, "And Jonah rose and went to Nineveh according to the word of Yahweh."

explanation is given for Jonah's change. The prophet whose words of prayer to Yahweh consume the bulk of Jonah 2 is now silent as he receives his commission a second time. He will speak to the Ninevites (Jonah 3:4) for that is what he is called to do, yet he is silent toward Yahweh. Such silence ties him to Noah. Noah is silent throughout the Noachic narrative until he speaks his words of blessing/curse upon his three sons (Gen 9:25–27). Thus, Noah and Jonah (at least, the Jonah presented in Jonah 3) are united in their silent obedience to Yahweh's command.

Jonah's silent obedience is noteworthy in that it prepares the reader for the critical issue of repentance in Jonah 3. Neither Hebrew term typically used for such change (שוב, "turn"; *nip□al* of נחם, "change direction") is employed, yet the reader is presented with a dramatic change of heart within the prophet, presaging what is to come in the chapter. It also alerts the reader that things may turn out differently for the Ninevites than it did for Noah's contemporaries. Yahweh gave no word for Noah to speak, thus there was only condemnation for those in the flood. On the other hand, Yahweh specifically calls Jonah to speak to the Ninevites, eliciting the possibility that they might be spared. If a rebellious prophet can turn from disobedience to obedience, perhaps an evil city can do so as well.

Forty days

Jonah proclaims that Nineveh will be הפך, "changed/overturned" in יום ארבעים, "forty days." These two Hebrew terms require further attention. First, הפך, in the *nip□al* form that appears in Jonah, specifically means "change,"[11] which may or may not include the specific meaning of destruction. Yet the context of Jonah 3 prompts the reader to expect destruction. The king's edict reveals that the Ninevites expected destruction as he hopes their penitential actions will prompt divine grace (Jonah 3:9). Furthermore, the narrative speaks of God's change from

the רעע, "evil"[12] that he had intended (Jonah 3:10). It does turn out that the הפך, "change" that

comes upon the Ninevites is positive rather than destructive, yet the context of the passage leads

the reader to understand the initial plan for the change to be destructive. That a positive, rather

than destructive, change takes place, further highlights Yahweh's grace, an underlying theme of

the intertextual reading.

Similarly, the use of יום ארבעים, "forty days" serves to highlight divine grace. The time-

frame of forty, whether in days or years, is common throughout the Old Testament for a period

of trial and tribulation.[13] However, it is only the Noachic narrative and Jonah 3:4 that ties forty

days to destruction. Forty days of rain destroys life on earth (Gen 7:4); within forty days,

Nineveh will be no more (Jonah 3:4).

Not only does this usage of the forty day time period tie the two texts together, it also

seizes the reader's attention. Fretheim notes that "to specify a brief time limit such as forty days

was unexampled among the prophets. The closest are Isaiah 7:8 and Jeremiah 25:11–12, which

refer to rather extensive periods of time, and are *not* spoken to the people involved."[14] Thus, the

reader, knowing the Noachic narrative is the only other text that employs forty days as a

timeframe for destruction (a destruction that came to pass) and knowing the exceedingly brief

amount of time that it represents, anticipates the destruction of Nineveh. Thus, the miraculous

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[11] BDB 1; *HALOT* 1.

[12] This significant term receives greater attention later in this chapter.

[13] The idiomatic use of the number forty, especially as a time-frame, is well known and apparent. Forty days occurs throughout the Noachic narrative (Gen 7:4, 12, 17; 8:6) and in Jonah 3:4. The specific timeframe of forty days is found also in Gen 50:3 (duration of Jacob's embalming), Exod 24:18; 34:28; Deut 9:9, 11; 10:10 (duration of Moses' stays on Sinai), Num 13:25; 14:34 (duration of the spying out of the promised land), Deut 9:18 (days of Moses' prostration and fast due to the sin of the Golden Calf), 1 Sam 17:16 (number of days Goliath presented himself uncontested prior to David's appearance), 1 Kgs 19:8 (time of Elijah's travel to Horeb following angelic ministration), and Ezek 4:6 (time spent by Ezekiel lying on his right side in punishment for the sins of Judah). One should also note the prevalence of the time-frame of forty *years* in various texts.

[14] Fretheim, *The Message of Jonah*, 108. Isaiah 7:8 refers to sixty-five years, while Jer 25:11-12 refers to seventy years.

repentance and deliverance of Nineveh is heightened. By extension, Yahweh's grace, which is the efficient cause for the Ninevite's repentance (as is demonstrated later in this chapter), is also magnified.

Nevertheless, the book of Jonah has prepared the reader for the possibility of such a miraculous turn. The immediacy of the sailors' conversion and deliverance from deadly waters in Jonah 1 was accomplished in less than a single day. Likewise, Jonah 2 sets forth the miraculous deliverance of the prophet in a mere three days.[15] Hence, forty days, while too brief a time for the deliverance of an entire people outside the book of Jonah, is quite sufficient within it. Within the book of Jonah, what began as forty days oriented around destruction becomes forty days of repentance.

Collective Humanity

Sasson emphasizes the leadership role of the Ninevite king as he orders the penitential wearing of sackcloth along with a fast (Jonah 3:7–9).[16] The text of the book of Jonah, however, goes to lengths to place the Ninevite king as simply a part of the whole of Nineveh. First, the king is not named. It is commonplace for Old Testament texts to name foreign kings, including those associated with Nineveh, especially within third person narratives, such as that found in the book of Jonah. In the historical narratives, there is the mention of Sennacherib by name in 2 Kgs 18–19. Shishak is named in 2 Chr 12. Ezra mentions Cyrus (Ezra 1), Xerxes (Ezra 4:6), Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:7), and Darius (Ezra 6:1). The writings include Daniel's specific mention of Nebuchadnezzer (Dan 1–4), Belshazzar (Dan 5), Darius (Dan 6), and Cyrus (Dan 10). The prophets, likewise, name specific foreign kings, such as Sennacherib (Isa 36:1), Cyrus (Isa 45:1),

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[15] An argument can be made that the description of Nineveh as being a three days' journey is intended to hearken the reader back to Jonah's three day journey in the great fish as a portend that just as Jonah was delivered, so also Nineveh will be.

Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 21:7), and Darius (Hag 1:1; Zech 1:1; 7:1). Thus, the fact that the Ninevite

king is unnamed, even while speaking, prompts him to be identified with the rest of Nineveh.

Furthermore, the narrative flow of Jonah 3 places the king's proclamation in a position of

response to popular sentiment. Upon Jonah's proclamation, it is the people of Nineveh who

believe and call for penitence (Jonah 3:5),[17] before the king is even mentioned. The king's edict

(Jonah 3:7–8) only repeats what the popular sentiment had dictated. The king's own penitential

actions (Jonah 3:6) even take place immediately after the people call for penitence and prior to

his own edict. Wolff captures how the king's penitential actions makes him equivalent to the rest

of the Ninevites; "But stress is laid on the fact that he takes this self-humiliation upon himself—a

change of place that puts him at the side of the least of all."[18]

This treatment of the Ninevites as a collective whole mirrors the treatment of Noah's

contemporaries in the Noachic narrative. In both texts, none of those who are under divine

judgment are named or specified. In the Noachic narrative, Yahweh's condemnation comes upon

all; there is no need to name them. Thus, when Jonah 3 treats the Ninevites as a collective whole,

the reader anticipates a similar fate. Yet, the book of Jonah has prepared the reader for the

possibility of deliverance. The sailors of Jonah 1 also include a nameless leader who was simply

one of the whole.[19] That collective group of sailors was delivered; so also, the collective

Ninevites are saved. Once again, Jonah 3 mirrors the Noachic narrative to prompt the reader to

expect doom, only to replace that doom with deliverance.

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[16] Sasson, *Jonah*, 241-2, 266.

[17] וַיַּאֲמִינוּ אַנְשֵׁי נִינְוֵה בֵּאלֹהִים וַיִּקְרְאוּ־צוֹם וַיִּלְבְּשׁוּ שַׂקִּים מִגְּדוֹלָם וְעַד־קְטַנָּם: "And the Ninevites believed in God and they called a fast and they donned sackcloth from the greatest unto the least."

[18] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 151-2.

[19] He is only mentioned in Jonah 1:6 where he beckons Jonah to call upon his god as all the sailors had already done (Jonah 1:5). The rest of Jonah 1 holds the sailors as a collective unit.

Repentance

Jonah 3 uses both Hebrew lexemes for repentance to describe the change of action within the Ninevites as well as God's changed course of action. שוב,[20] "turn" (each time in Jonah 3 it occurs in the *qal*) is used in Jonah 3:8 as part of the king's edict that each person turn from his evil way. It is used twice by the king in Jonah 3:9 regarding the hope (occurring in the imperfect) that the Ninevite turn from evil might prompt God to turn from his anger. It is used a fourth and final time in Jonah 3:10 as God sees that the Ninevites have turned from their evil ways.

נחם, "to change direction" (in the *nip□al*) is used once in Jonah 3:9[21] to describe the Ninevite hope (like שׁוב in the same verse, it is in the imperfect) that God will change his plans regarding Nineveh. It is used yet again in Jonah 3:10 to state that God did in fact change his plan so that he did not do the evil that he had planned to do to them. The Noachic narrative uses the *nip□al* of נחם twice in reference to Yahweh's sorrow that he had made humanity (Gen 6:6, 7). To properly understand what these terms signify, their basic lexical data must first be considered.

The most thorough treatment of the divine use of the *nip□al* of נחם is given by Andersen and Freedman in an excursus entitled "When God Repents" within their Amos commentary.[22] Yet the verb has both human and divine subjects. Though it occurs seven times in the *hitpa□el*, three of which with a divine subject,[23] with the same meaning, the root is predominately found in the *nip□al* (thirty times of God, seven times of people) when it speaks of being sorry for a decision or action. The sheer quantity of times the verb is used of God indicates that it is a

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[20] Such "turning" can be physical (e.g., Gen 18:33; Ruth 1:6, 22; see BDB, "שׁוב," *qal*, 2 and 3). The term can also be used to refer to a spiritual turning from impenitence and unbelief to contrition and faith (e.g., Deut 4:30; Hos 6:1; see BDB *qal* 1.c-d; *HALOT qal* 2).

[21] It will also be used in Jonah 4:2.

[22] Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 638-679.

[23] Num 23:19; Deut 32:26; Ps 135:14.

critical means by which the Old Testament defines the divine. That impression is deepened by the attribution of נחם to the divine throughout the Hebrew corpus. The Pentateuch makes use of the term, not only within the Noachic narrative, but also in Exod 32:12, 14. It occurs in historical accounts such as 1 Sam 15:11, 29, 35. Its presence in the prophetic corpus moves beyond Jonah to Jer 18:7–10 and Joel 2:13. So also, the writings use such language of the divine in Ps 106:45.

Within the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative, the basic meaning of the *nip□al* of נחם is "be sorry, rue, suffer grief, repent of one's own doings."[24] Stoebe gives focus to the term, noting that it is "never sorrowful resignation but always has concrete consequences."[25] Thus to "regret" one's actions is to take new action to undo the previous action, hence the translation "change direction." Such change is seen in the Noachic narrative as Yahweh's regret that he had made humanity prompts his decision to destroy humanity by a flood (Gen 6:6, 7). So also, the Ninevites' regret over their evil, violent ways prompts them to change direction, forsaking their violent ways (Jonah 3:8–9). Likewise, God regrets his plan to destroy the Ninevites so he changes direction, choosing to spare Nineveh rather than destroy it (Jonah 3:10). The use of the *nip□al* of נחם in both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah provides a critical matrix within the intertextual reading that not only ties the texts together, but offers significant insight into their mutual description of the divine. The implications of that intertextual connection are discussed below and factor into the discussion of chapter eight.

The *qal* of שוב is even more common that its counterpart, occurring 683 times in the Old Testament, though the penitential meaning is a minority of those occurrences. Yet, it is the common verb used to describe human repentance, though of the four times it is used in Jonah 3,

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[24] BDB 2.

[25] H. J. Stoebe, "נחם," *TLOT* 2:738.

two of those occurrences refer to the possibility of God turning from his plans (both in Jonah

3:9). The two divine uses of the term in Jonah 3 may be understood as "turn back from evil" and

"turn away from anger."[26] The human use of the term in Jonah 3 can be described as "change a

course of action from bad to good."[27] Hamilton notes that שוב "combines in itself the two

requirements of repentance: to turn from evil and to turn to the good."[28] Since נחם is the term

shared by the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah, it will receive the rest of the attention in

this discussion. The intertextual reader notes that the book of Jonah uses נחם for divine change of

verdict, while שוב is used for the Ninevites. Since the Noachic narrative only makes use of נחם,

accent is placed upon divine change, rather than human. As the discussion unfolds, the accent of

divine change will be upon change toward grace.

Divine Repentance Toward Gentiles—Jonah 3 and the Noachic Narrative

Bolin connects Jonah 3:5–10 to Jer 18:7–10 as the two texts in which divine repentance is

directed toward Gentiles.[29] Yet there is a significant difference between the two in that the book

of Jonah applies such divine repentance specifically to the Ninevites, while Jeremiah speaks in

the abstract.[30] Thus, Jonah 3 is unique in directing divine repentance to a Gentile people (cf.

Exod 32:14; Jer 26:19; 2 Sam 24:16; Jer 42:10; 1 Chr 21:15; Judges 2:18; Amos 7:3, 6 where

Israel is the object of the divine decision to change from judgment to mercy). What grabs the

reader all the more is the persistence of divine repentance in the Old Testament being a turn from

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[26] BDB 6.e-f.

[27] BDB 5.e.

[28] Victor P. Hamilton, "שוב," *TWOT* 2:909.

[29] Bolin, *Freedom Beyond Forgiveness*, 141; similarly, Whedbee, *The Bible and Comic Vision*, 207.

[30] Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 659 describe Jer 18:7-10 as "the general theory of divine repentance in the Hebrew Bible."

judgment to mercy,[31] yet the only specific instance of Yahweh's repentance toward a non-Hebrew people outside of Jonah 3 is Gen 6:6, 7 where it is Yahweh's regret that drives him turn toward condemnation. What explains the difference? Yahweh's regret in Gen 6:6, 7 occurred prior to his covenant with Noah. That covenant would become the rationale for why a non-Hebrew people like the Ninevites might be the object of his change from condemnation to mercy in Jonah 3. In fact, Andersen and Freedman argue that although the Hebrew lexeme נחם is not used, nevertheless Yahweh changes his attitude immediately following the flood.

> At the end, Yahweh makes another decision with regard to the survivors, in effect reversing or modifying the earlier one, although, strictly speaking, the latter is no longer in force once its objective has been achieved. In 8:21 (J) we read, And Yahweh said to his heart: "I will not ever again curse the earth for the sake of mankind, even though the heart of man is wicked from his youth; and I will never again destroy all living things as I have done." The new decision represents a shift from the preceding one in that the commitment is made to sustain life on earth not only irrespective of human behavior but in full recognition of humans' evil tendencies and proclivities.[32]

Thus, Andersen and Freedman note that Gen 6:5 and 8:21 both refer to evil inclinations of humanity's heart, yet with Yahweh arriving at a different conclusion regarding how to handle humanity. Regarding Gen 6:5 and 8:21, they note:

> The first statement provides support for the decision to wipe out humanity, while the second modifies the commitment never to do so again. We can speak therefore of a new decision based essentially on the same data, in which God promises not to do what was done before; thus, although the term is not used in connection with the second statement, we can speak of a second repentance or change of mind (= heart).[33]

The reader is prepared for the book of Jonah by this second change of mind in the Noachic narrative. First, it anticipates the deliverance of the gentile sailors of Jonah 1 in contrast to the

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[31] Bolin, *Freedom Beyond Forgiveness*, 145 notes that divine repentance in the Old Testament is centered upon divine repentance when divine wrath had been earned.

[32] Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 646.

[33] Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 647.

death of humanity in the midst of the waters of the Noachic narrative. Second, the divine disposition of mercy toward all humanity sets the stage for the deliverance of the Ninevites in Jonah 3. Finally, Yahweh's grace is made to be his lasting, defining characteristic in both texts.

Divine Repentance Toward Gentiles, Part II—הפך

Thus, the Noachic meta-narrative gives precedent for divine change of direction from judgment to grace directed toward gentiles found within the book of Jonah. Jonah 3 also prepares the reader for this change by use of the verb הפך, which Jonah uses to describe what will come of Nineveh after forty days. The term is often translated in Jonah 3:4 as "overthrow," yet its generic meaning of "turn over" can be used either in a positive sense of "change" or in a negative sense of "overthrow."[34]

Wolff concedes that הפך can mean "alter" or "transform" one's disposition in a positive sense,[35] yet he contends that the context of Jonah 3 makes it clear that Nineveh faces the same fate as Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:25, 29).[36] Wolff's rather nonchalant dismissal of the possibility of הפך being used positively hasn't convinced all scholars. Sasson, for one, disagrees.

> Even so, the Ninevites cannot have realized what the philological dissection of the phrase *wenînewēh nehpāket* has revealed: that Jonah's message allows it to bear an entirely different meaning. "Forty more days, Nineveh will turn over (that is, re[-]form)" can therefore also be predictive: of Nineveh's conversion to a better conduct, but also of the surcease God grants it. The narrator is ascribing this understanding of the verbal form neither to Jonah nor to the Ninevites, but to an omniscient God. In doing so, the narrator gives good reason why the survival of Nineveh should not be attributed to a capricious or erratic deity.[37]

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[34] BDB *nip☐al* 2.d. See also Victor P. Hamilton, "הפך," *TWOT* 1:512.

[35] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 149 cites 1 Sam 10:6, 9; Jer 31:13; Neh 13:2; Exod 14:5; Hos 11:8; and Esther 9:22 as evidence of such while also directing attention to Seybold, "הפך," *ThWAT* 2:458.

[36] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 149. Cf. Deut 29:23; Isa 13:19; Jer 20:16; 49:18; 50:40; Amos 4:11; Lam 4:6.

[37] Sasson, *Jonah*, 267; see also his argument on 234-235. His effective argument that this is not an instance of

The Ninevites' penitential reaction reveals that they expected judgment, yet הפך is a textbook case of deliberate ambiguity. The reader who re-reads the text and thus knows that Nineveh does repent and is spared is able to see the richness of הפך. Furthermore, the reader who reads the book of Jonah through the lens of the Noachic meta-narrative knows that it confirms Yahweh's disposition toward re-forming even Gentile nations, rather than overthrowing them.

Divine Repentance—Yahweh's Doing, Not Humanity's

"The theme of Jonah is the possibility of man's repentance, and its purpose is to show that where this occurs among men then it elicits a related change of purpose on the part of God."[38] The intention of this statement by Ronald Clements is not apparent. At the very least, it is a dangerous misstatement that could be read to assert that divine repentance is produced by humanity. The reader notes that the entirety of the book of Jonah and, in this specific case, Jonah 3 sets forth Yahweh as the initiator of both divine and human repentance. It is Yahweh who sends Jonah to speak to Nineveh and it is that divine message that prompts the repentance of the Ninevites (Jonah 3:4–5).

The reader sees Yahweh behind the Ninevite response to Jonah's message because the prophet's utterance is far from inspiring, yet it has dramatic effect upon its hearers. Thus, Fretheim states:

> It is suggested that [Jonah] delivered a message that would make it almost impossible
> for the people to respond positively. And yet they do so in a manner quite beyond the

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divine caprice is a strong counter-statement to the title of A. Cooper, "In Praise of Divine Caprice: The Significance of the Book of Jonah," in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings* (JSOTSup 144; ed. P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 144-63.

[38] Clements, "The Purpose of the Book of Jonah," 28.

realm of human calculation . . . . And yet no preacher has ever met with such success. Little effort, poor skills, a terrible sermon—and total success.[39]

He further concludes, based upon the Ninevite king's hope expressed in "Who knows…" (Jonah 3:9), that "while Nineveh's repentance was a necessary condition for God's repentance, it was not in and of itself sufficient. God's action rested finally on his own sovereign decision."[40] What Fretheim rightly concludes is not surprising to the reader of the Noachic meta-narrative. As discussed earlier in this chapter, both the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative demonstrate a thematic interplay between Yahweh's authority and his mercy. The hope expressed by the Ninevite king recognizes this relationship between divine authority and mercy, even as it was seen in the Noachic narrative.

רעע and חמס—The Need for Repentance

The Ninevite repentance involved turning from רעע, "evil" (Jonah 3:8) as well as חמס, "violence" (Jonah 3:8). The combination of these two terms ties Jonah 3 to the Noachic narrative. Genesis 6:11 describes the חמס[41] for which the world stands condemned. The book of Jonah also describes the Ninevites' evil as coming from the same source. While רעע and its specified form of חמס are within a few verses for the Noachic narrative (Gen 6:8,1 1), only רעע is mentioned in the opening of the Jonah narrative. Then, in chapter three, it is brought up again by the king of Nineveh who recognizes that the רעע of his people specifically includes חמס

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[39] Fretheim, *The Message of Jonah*, 108-9. To all the factors that make a positive response to Jonah's message a miracle, the reader can add that Jonah 3:3 suggests that Jonah's visit ought to take three days, yet after only the first day (Jonah 3:4), the Ninevites respond in sackcloth and ashes.

[40] Fretheim, *The Message of Jonah*, 113.

[41] H. J. Stoebe, "חמס," *TLOT* 1:437–9 points out von Rad's assertion that there is no distinction between the religious and profane usage of this term because even if the violence is interpersonal, it violates an order established and/or guaranteed by God. This observation thus makes חמס a term to be naturally applied to Noah's contemporaries outside of a covenantal relationship with Yahweh or the Ninevites who also are without such a

170

(Jonah 3:8). The textual bond in this matter is further strengthened by the scope of the evil

violence. Genesis 6:12 speaks of the guilt of such clinging not just to humankind but to all בשר,[42]

"flesh" hence Yahweh's decision to flood all the earth, bringing death not just to humankind but

to animals as well. Similarly, the proclamation of the Ninevite king in Jonah 3:8 does not leave

the concern for guilt only in the human realm, but humans and animals join together in

repentance.

But just how unique of a tie is this between the two narratives? Just as רעע[43] commonly

appears as reason for Yahweh's anger, so does חמס.[44] The unique bond between the Jonah and

Noachic narratives is in their contextual usage of these two terms in combination. That

contextual usage is key is apparent in comparison to the twelve other texts that wed רעע and חמס.

An examination of those passages, however, will reveal that the book of Jonah and the Noachic

narrative remain distinct in their usage of the terms in narrative tandem.

1. Exod 23:1,2
   אל־תשת ידך עם־רשע להית עד חמס לא־תהיה אחרי־רבים לרעת
   "Do not raise your hand with a wicked one to be a malicious witness. Do not go after the
   multitude to do evil."
   This is not a narrative description of divine condemnation of the violent, evil actions of a
   specific people, but one item in a legal list of actions prohibited by Yahweh.
2. Deut 19:16, 19
   כי־יקום עד־חמס ...ועשיתם לו כאשר זמם לעשות לאציו ובערת הרע מקרבך
   "If a malicious witness should arise… you will do to him as he intended to do to his brother
   and you will purge the evil from your midst."
   As was the case with Exod 23, so also Deut 19 only makes use of the terms רעע and חמס in
   the context of a prohibitive list.

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covenantal relationship.

[42] G. Gerleman, "בשׂר," *TLOT* 1:283-285 notes that the use of כל בשר in Gen 6:17; 9:16 ff. is to be understood as all creatures, both human and animals. Such is also the case in Job 34:15. Similary, BDB בשר 6.a notes that Gen 6:17, 19; 7:21; 9:11, 15, 16, 17; Lev 17:14; Num 18:15; Job 34:15; and Ps 136:25 all use כל בשר to mean "all living beings."

[43] E.g., 2 Sam 12: 7-15; 1 Kgs 21: 17-19, 20-24; Isa 31: 1-3; Mic 2: 1-5.

[44] E.g., Ps 11:5; Ezek 7:23; 8:17; 12:19; 28:16; Zeph 1:9.

3. Isa 59:6, 7

וּפֹעַל חָמָס בְּכַפֵּיהֶם רַגְלֵיהֶם לָרַע יָרֻצוּ

"Violent deeds are in their hands; their feet rush into evil."
Once again, the terms are not set within a narrative, but, in this incident, within a prophetic denunciation of sinful activity. While Israel is within view of this prophecy, their condemnation is not clearly set forth as it is for humankind and the Ninevites within the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah.

4. Jer 6:7

כֵּן הִקְרָה רָעָתָהּ חָמָס וָשֹׁד יִשָּׁמַע בָּהּ

"Thus she pours out her evil things; violence and destruction are heard in her."
Not surprisingly, Jeremiah follows Isaiah in using the terms in prophetic utterance against Yahweh's people, this time Jerusalem. Yet again, however, the terms are used neither in a narrative nor in a manner that specifically names its object as in the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

5. Mal 2:16, 17

וְכִסָּה חָמָס עַל־לְבוּשׁוֹ... בְּאָמְרְכֶם כָּל־עֹשֵׂה רַע טוֹב בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה

Yahweh hates "the one covering violence upon his cloak…the one saying all who do evil are good in the eyes of Yahweh."
Malachi stands in the same vein as Isaiah and Jeremiah: not only is Malachi a prophetic text rather than a narrative, but Malachi also mentions Judah as the guilty party, but without the specific condemnation involving specific punishment as in the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

6. Ps 35:11, 12

יְקוּמוּן עֵדֵי חָמָס... יְשַׁלְּמוּנִי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה

"Malicious witnesses will arise… they repay me evil for good."
Not only is this a poetic text rather than a narrative, it does not speak of condemnation at all. Rather, the psalmist describes the evil (רעע) ways of the malicious (חמס) witness.

7. Ps 55:10, 16 (MT)

כִּי־רָאִיתִי חָמָס... כִּי־רָעוֹת בִּמְגוּרָם בְּקִרְבָּם

"For I see violence… for evil dwells in their midst."
As would be expected, this text is not a narrative, but poetic. Furthermore, it does not offer divine condemnation, but the prayer of the psalmist, asking Yahweh to punish those who would act with רעע or חמס. (Notice the lack of a specific target once again.)

8. Ps 140:12 (MT)

אִישׁ־חָמָס רָע יְצוּדֶנּוּ

"The violent man, let evil hunt them."
The psalmist makes use of poetry (not narrative) in his prayer that Yahweh would cause רעע to come upon the unspecified practitioners of חמס.

9. Prov 16:27, 29

אִישׁ בְּלִיַּעַל כֹּרֶה רָעָה... אִישׁ חָמָס יְפַתֶּה רֵעֵהוּ

"A worthless man plots evil… A violent man deceives his neighbor."
This text does not truly hold the two terms together as they are used in separate proverbs, which happen to occur in adjacent verses.

10. Ps 7:15-17 (MT)

הִנֵּה יְחַבֶּל־אָוֶן וְהָרָה... וְעַל קָדְקֳדוֹ חֲמָסוֹ יֵרֵד

"Behold, he who is full of trouble and evil… upon his head his violence descends."

This text stands as a proverb regarding how the one who does רעע finds his חמס coming back upon his own head. The lack of a specified target, the absence of divine condemnation, and the poetic form once again sets the text apart from the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

11. Ps 140:2 (MT)

חלצני יהוה מאדם רע מאיש חמסים תנצרני

"Rescue me, O Yahweh, from evil men; from violent men protect me."

The psalmist prays that Yahweh would preserve him from men who are רעע or חמס. Yet again, the distinctive features of the Noachic and Jonah narratives are absent.

12. Prov 4:14, 17

ואל־תאשר בדרך רעים... ויין חמסים ישתו

"Do not go on the path of evil men… The wine of violence they drink."

A father offers his son wise counsel to steer clear of those who walk in the path of רעע or drink the wine of חמס. In consistent fashion, the text lacks the narrative form, divine condemnation, and specific target as in the Noachic and Jonah narratives.

Not only are the Noachic and Jonah narratives unique as they bring חמס and רעע together within their narrative description of Yahweh's condemnation of a specific people, their distinctive connection is illustrated all the more by the fact that there is only one other narrative (Judg 9:24) that brings condemnation specifically for חמס, and that without the mention of רעע! While such a unique connection offers another example of the strong textual evidence for the intertextual connection of the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah, the connection bears significant theological impact. The tandem use of the terms adds rhetorical weight, heightening the sense of wrong-doing among the offending parties. The dramatic divine change from the pre-diluvian to post-diluvian attitude toward humanity that is רעע, while committing חמס, accents the chief divine characteristic of universal grace.

Discontinuities Between the Texts

The continuities between the Noachic narrative and Jonah 3 not only tie the two texts together, but also present a matrix by which the reader might gain a deeper and richer reading of the book of Jonah. The discontinuities between the texts also provide such enrichment.

Opportunity for Repentance

While the role of both human and divine repentance in Jonah 3 is informed by its role in the Noachic narrative, there exists a significant difference between the two texts regarding repentance. The Ninevites are given the opportunity to repent, whereas Noah's contemporaries are not afforded such an opportunity. This fact is critical for the meaning of both texts. Without the repentance of the Ninevites giving way to God's change of direction to not overthrow them, the fourth chapter of Jonah would have no place in the book of Jonah. Likewise, were Noah's contemporaries to repent, their demise would either be prevented by Yahweh's further change of mind from destroying them or the Noachic covenant, coming after the destruction of the penitent, would appear as divine hypocrisy.

Nevertheless, a significant disparity regarding the opportunity for repentance exists between the texts. That disparity is also explicable by comparing the texts themselves. The first point of comparison between the texts that serves to explain this difference is the presence or absence of an intermediary. The Ninevites repent upon hearing Jonah's proclamation (Jonah 3:4–5). Prior to the prophet's words, there is no sign among the Ninevites that they are aware of a need for repentance. Within the Noachic narrative, no such intermediary exists. Yahweh does not give words to Noah to speak. He is only given directions regarding the construction of the ark. No words are spoken to the condemned, therefore there is no repentance. This further highlights the weight of a prophet's words. As half-hearted as Jonah's proclamation may have been, his words are effective because they are words given him by Yahweh. Silent Noah offers no effective words to the condemned world around him.

Alfred Jepsen captures the significance of the word spoken by Jonah to the Ninevites. "So his word, sent ahead of the disaster… creates a space in which faith becomes possible."[45] The Ninevites are not the first characters to be saved by the word of Yahweh in the book of Jonah. It is only after Jonah speaks to the sailors (Jonah 1:9) that they too are saved (Jonah 1:10–16). The reader of the Noachic meta-narrative recalls that the same is true of Noah and those with him on the ark. They are saved only because Yahweh's word (Gen 6:13–21) has been delivered to them (immediately to Noah rather through a prophet.

While it is the delivery of the word of Yahweh that allows for repentance in Jonah 3 and its absence that precludes repentance in the Noachic narrative, both texts also tie prayer to those whom Yahweh spares. In this vein, Robin Payne writes, "The proclamation of the king insists that everyone call on God for mercy, 'let them cry mightily to God' (3:8). The possibility of God showing mercy echoes the thought of the sailors (3:9, cf. 1:6) and God *does* answer and show mercy."[46] Kenneth Craig also notes the significance of the Ninevite's prayer, tying it to the pattern of the sailors in Jonah 1 and the prophet in Jonah 2, so that the imminence of death (Jonah 3:4) prompts a call for prayer (Jonah 3:8), which then is followed by divine deliverance (Jonah 3:10).[47] Taking the progression in reverse order, deliverance (Yahweh's change of direction from destruction) is preceded by prayer that is preceded by the imminence of death, which is only properly perceived when the word of Yahweh intervenes.

The matter of repentance receives one final twist. The reader is aware of what the character Jonah was not aware. Nineveh eventually does fall.[48] This fact is noted by many scholars who

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[45] Alfred Jepsen, *Der Herr ist Gott* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1978), 156.

[46] Robin Payne, "The Prophet Jonah: Reluctant Messenger and Intercessor," *ExpTim* 100 (1988-89): 132-3. Emphasis his.

[47] Craig, *A Poetics of Jonah*, 100.

[48] Nahum proclaims the impending doom of Nineveh throughout its three chapters, but the certainty of

175

make this historical fact a crux for the interpretation of the book of Jonah.[49] The current

readership is well aware of Nineveh's fall and it will invariably impact the reading. A reader can

read along with Sweeney who connects the words of the Ninevite king in Jonah 3:9 with Exod

34:6–7.[50] While the immediate impact of the words is one of mercy as the Ninevites hope in

God's mercy, there is more to Exod 34:6–7. Yahweh's justice is referenced in the text, justice

that was eventually meted out upon Nineveh. As Andersen and Freedman explain, "Moses'

action bought time only, time to remedy the situation, because a holy God cannot dwell in the

midst of an idolatrous people, and unless the idolatry and the apostasy are eliminated the great

experiment will end at its birth."[51] So also, the penitence of the Ninevites bought them time, but,

unless their idolatry was eliminated, they would not escape Yahweh's justice. Readers of the

Noachic meta-narrative know this well as they observe the fate of Noah's contemporaries who

did not repent.

Summary Insights

The crux of Jonah 3 and this study's treatment of that chapter is "change of direction," both

human and divine. The intertextual relationship between Jonah 3 and the Noachic narrative

illustrates that both human and divine change are dependent upon Yahweh.[52] To put it succinctly,

Jonah 3 serves the larger purpose of the book, "absolute divine freedom capable of forgiveness

or destruction (or both for the same situation), and whose messages are phrased accordingly so

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Nineveh's fall is highlighted in Nahum 1:4, 18, while the book concludes with "nothing can heal your wound" (3:19). Nahum's prophecy was fulfilled, as the reader of the book of Jonah is aware, in 612 BCE when it was razed and its provinces divided between the Medes and Babylonians.

[49] E.g., Payne, "Jonah from the Perspective of Its Audience," 7; ben Zvi, *The Signs of Jonah*; et al.

[50] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 327.

[51] Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 674.

[52] So also, Jonah 4, especially verses 10-11, demonstrates that both human and divine change are dependent upon Yahweh.

that God is never proven false."[53] This same theme is present also in the Noachic narrative. Yet "absolute divine freedom" is not about a whimsical God who simply does as he pleases. Yahweh's change of heart within the Noachic narrative (Gen 8:21) is applied to all humanity, even specifically to Nineveh.

The Tempering of Parody and Satire

Reading the first two chapters of the book of Jonah intertextually with the Noachic narrative has occasioned a temperate approach to satire, parody and the like within the book of Jonah, neither denying that such elements are present nor allowing them to override the rest of the book. The intertextual reading of Jonah 3 involves the same temperate approach to parody and satire.

Quoting the work of Julius Bewer, Judson Mather, who considers the genre of the book of Jonah to be situation comedy, states:

> The burlesque of piety begun in Chapter I is carried to even greater lengths in Chapter III. The people of Nineveh, "from the greatest to the least," on hearing Jonah's message of destruction, immediately "proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth." The king, hearing this, rushed forth to lead his already marching populace. He commanded them to do what they were doing and (as if to demonstrate the reach of his authority) extended the wearing of sackcloth and ashes and the ban on food and drink to cattle as well as humans. Bewer remarks (ironically?) that the conversion of Nineveh "was a more astounding miracle than the miracle of the fish."[54]

Echoing Mather is Wolff's depiction of the repentance of Nineveh, "The satiric tone cannot be overlooked in this antithetical picture to Jerusalem."[55] Both scholars are reacting to the unbelievable, nearly instantaneous conversion of the Ninevites. Reading the Ninevite response as

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[53] Bolin, *Freedom Beyond Forgiveness*, 146.

[54] Mather, "The Comic Art of the Book of Jonah," 282; Julius A. Bewer, *The Literature of the Old Testament* (3d ed.; rev. Emil G. Kraeling; New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1962), 423.

[55] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 146.

a parody of those in Jerusalem who did not respond to the prophetic utterance of Jeremiah and/or others is not only plausible, but nearly beyond refutation. Yet such parody is not an end to itself. It is meant to serve a larger message. In this case, parody underscores the power of Yahweh's word that produces both human and divine repentance as demonstrated in the intertextual reading of Jonah 3 with the Noachic narrative.

CHAPTER SEVEN

JONAH 4 READ INTERTEXTUALLY WITH THE NOACHIC NARRATIVE

The intertextual re-use of the Noachic narrative in the first three chapters of the book of Jonah is discussed in chapters four through six of this study, thus unveiling not only the textual evidence for the intertextual relationship, but also how it deepens and enriches the reading of the book of Jonah. The study finds Jonah 1–2 linked to the Noachic narrative by means of their unique narrative setting upon the waters. The intertextual connection then gives way to the parallel role of other textual elements, such as the deliverance provided by Yahweh. In the Noachic narrative deliverance comes via the ark. In Jonah 1, it comes via the great fish as well as via the ship of Tarshish. The latter is a surprising vessel of deliverance as it safely delivers its sailors in spite of the biblical identity of a ship of Tarshish as doomed vessel. Yahweh's deliverance is thus highlighted all the more for it is even greater than the expected doom of such a ship. Even as both texts rely upon vessels of deliverance, so also the texts share similar traits within the principal human characters. The primary characters operate in parallel fashion as Jonah (Jonah 2:10 MT) and the sailors (Jonah 1:16) react to their deliverance from the deadly waters in a manner that mirrors Noah's reaction (Gen 8:20). Yet there are also discontinuities between the narratives as the disobedience of Jonah (Jonah 1:2–3) strikes a strong contrast to the unquestioning obedience of Noah (Gen 6:22).

As Jonah 3 abandons a maritime setting, the intertextual connection shifts as well. The centerpiece of the connection then focuses upon the role of repentance, both human and divine, within both texts. That theme presents the occasion both for continuities between the texts as

well as discontinuities, the combination of which underlines the centrality of the Noachic

covenant for understanding the book of Jonah. The value of this intertextual reading is seen all

the more as the presence of satire within the book of Jonah is tempered so that it might be rightly

understood as a device employed for the purpose of elevating a central theme of the book of

Jonah, namely the universal grace of Yahweh.

The insights gained from the intertextual reading of Jonah 1–3 with the Noachic narrative

continues in this chapter as Jonah 4 is read with the Noachic narrative. Along with the reading of

Jonah 1–3, the insights of this chapter serve to demonstrate not only the viability, but the value

of the thesis of this study: an intertextual reading of the book of Jonah with the Noachic narrative

yields a richer and deeper exposition of its meaning.

Foundation for the Intertextual Link

In keeping with the methodology of this study, before describing the interpretive impact of

the continuities and discontinuities within the intertextual connection, the link between the texts

is established. That foundation employs both textual data as well as the reader's recognition of

such connections.

Nineveh Under the Noachic Covenant

The author of this study is not the first to read Jonah 4 intertextually with the Noachic

narrative. Albert Kamp describes the foundational role of the Noachic narrative for Jonah 4.

> Within the activated intertextual framework the number of the inhabitants of Nineveh
> seems like a sequel to the blessings of Gen 9.1, 7: its population has become
> extraordinarily numerous. In Nineveh's case the numbers are extended according to
> kind. There are many humans and the animals are just as numerous (3x רב in 4.10–
> 11). The conceptual image of the many humans and the many animals thus recalls the
> covenant with Noah and God's blessing of his creation. YHWH's concern for the
> many cattle of Nineveh thus seems to be a natural continuation of the promise in the
> flood story. The everlasting covenant of Genesis 9.16, between God and all living

creatures, is confirmed in the narrative world of Jonah and displays God's universal engagement.[1]

This observation by Kamp is reinforced by the connection noted by him (as detailed in chapter three of this study) between the human characters of the book of Jonah and the three lines of descendants issuing from Noah. In brief, the line of Shem includes Hebrews (Gen 10:21), a title that Jonah applies to himself (Jonah 1:9). Furthermore, as a descendant of Shem, Jonah relates to the divine as Yahweh, in accordance with Noah's blessing upon Shem (Gen 9:26), throughout the book of Jonah (Jonah 1:1, 3, 9; 2:1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11; 3:1, 3; 4:2, 3, 4, 6, 10 MT). The line of Japheth, whose blessing by Noah links him to אלהים, "God," (Gen 9:27) includes the sailors who are tied to Tarshish (Gen 10:2–4), which explains why they know the divine as אלהים (Jonah 1:14, 16). The people of Nineveh are descendants of Ham (Gen 10:6–11) whose line is cursed by Noah with no mention of the divine (Gen 9:24), thus the book of Jonah makes no mention of their knowledge of the divine until after Jonah speaks to them and then they only relate to אלהים (Jonah 3:5, 8, 9, 10), not Yahweh.

Nevertheless, the Ninevites live under the Noachic covenant that אלהים cut with all creation (Gen 9:8–11). They also live as the benefactors of the implicit change of verdict found in Yahweh's words in Gen 8:27 that he would never again curse the earth because of man, even though his thoughts are evil from his youth—the very reason that led Yahweh to destroy the earth by flood (Gen 6:5). Thus, Kamp rightly notes that Yahweh's description of both the people and animals of Nineveh hearkens mightily to the Noachic narrative. The fact that both are רב, "great" in number hearkens to the blessing of creation that God spoke upon those who survived the flood in the ark (Gen 9:7) that they should רב, "increase in number" (employed twice in the

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[1] Kamp, *Inner Worlds*, 215–6.

181

blessing of Gen 9:7). That blessing upon the survivors of the flood refers even further back to the divine blessing upon Adam and Eve at creation (Gen 1:28), thus placing both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah within the frame of creational theology, a matter that is described at length in chapter eight.

Divine Use of Wind

God appoints a רוח, "wind" (Jonah 4:8) as a means to communicate his displeasure with Jonah's attitude. This is not the first time that Yahweh employs the wind in the book of Jonah; it was a wind that prompted the storm on the sea (Jonah 1:4). Similarly, in the Noachic narrative, the wind is a divine agent for the purpose of causing the waters to recede (Gen 8:1). Yet such divine use of wind is hardly unique to these two narratives. Among the multitude of Old Testament references to the wind as an agent of divine activity is Ezek 37:5 where it is רוח that revivifies the dry bones. Genesis 1:2 speaks of God's רוח hovering over the face of the deep, thus establishing the context for Ps 104:4 and Ps 135:7 where the רוח serves as a divine agent in the realm of creation. The divine usage of the רוח for his purposes takes a specific salvific turn in Isa 11:1–4 as the shoot from the stump of Jesse receives Yahweh's רוח, thus receiving divine gifts to accomplish his purposes.

Jonah 4:8 further specifies that this is רוח קדים, an "east wind," a wind used throughout the Old Testament by Yahweh to bring judgment as it drives in locusts (Exod 10:13), shatters ships of Tarshish (Ps 48:8 MT) and ships of Tyre (Ezek 27:26) and causes vegetation to die (Ezek 17:10; 19:12). Yet such a wind is also used to part the ים סוף, "Sea of Reeds" (Exod 14:21) as YHWH delivers Israel from Egypt. While the predominant usage of the term is one of judgment, it also carries salvific weight from its use in Exodus.

Above all else, the creational connection of the divine with the human informs the use of

רוח in both texts as the former has breathed רוח into the latter (Gen 2:7).[2] Yahweh's concern and

intentions for Noah and Jonah are implicit within the term. While the regularity of the term

throughout the Old Testament precludes its use in these two texts from being exclusive or

unique, its presence stands as part of the critical mass of intertextual connections between the

texts.

Evil—At the Time of Noah, Among the Ninevites, and Within Jonah

רעע, "evil" is found throughout the book of Jonah. Its narrative role climaxes in Jonah 4:1

as Jonah succumbs to the very "evil" that not only occasioned Yahweh's word against Nineveh

(Jonah1:2) but also that of which the Ninevites repent (Jonah 3:8).[3] The climax is heightened all

the more by the intensification of the language of evil within Jonah 4:1, by means of repetition

(both verb and cognate noun employed) and the employment of the adjective "great."

וירע אל־יונה רעה גדולה, "And it was evil to Jonah, a great evil."

Wolff sees such "evil" as the catch-word upon which chapters three and four of the book of

Jonah hinge so that the term "is particularly significant for a discernment of the problem which is

at the heart of the story."[4] The term also ties the book of Jonah to the Noachic narrative as it is

רעע that is the inclination of every thought of man's heart, thus prompting Yahweh's verdict to

destroy the earth by means of flood (Gen 6:5–7). Later in the Noachic narrative, Yahweh states

he will never again curse the earth in spite of the fact that every inclination of man's heart is evil,

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[2] Cf. J. Barton Payne, "רוח," *TWOT 2*, 836–7.

[3] Wolff, *Studien zum Jonabuch,* 38–9 rightly describes Jonah as not simply displeased at Yahweh's action, but having fallen into an evil inclination.

[4] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 162. רעע and its cognates occur four times between the concluding verse of Jonah 3 and the first verse of Jonah 4, thus demonstrating Wolff's contention that it is the hinge for the two chapters.

even from youth (Gen 8:21). The mention of the evil of humanity's hearts is magnified in Gen

8:21 (in comparison to Gen 6:5–7) as it describes that such is the case מנעריו, "from humanity's

youth." Thus, Yahweh's grace that follows the flood is made greater than his judgment that

occasioned the flood. This magnification of grace over judgment is found in the divine grace

extended to Nineveh in the book of Jonah as they are the descendents of the Noachic covenant.

Inasmuch as רעע plays a framing role in both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah and,

more importantly for this study, serves as a vital intertextual connection between the two texts, a

consideration of the lexical data for רעע is necessary.[5]

רעע is regularly set in juxtaposition with טוב,[6] "good" as a means to describe how the one

who does רעע is also opposed to life with which טוב is tied and to which רעע is antithetical.[7]

While רעע can apply to a person's actions, it is often tied to the inner attitude that one has toward

God or another human.[8] רעע can easily become part of a person's life by one's inner attitude and

place the individual in opposition to life (and thus connect the person to death, cf. Deut 30:15),

yet there remains hope in the promise that salvation comes to the one who turns from רעע.[9]

This basic lexical background for the term informs its usage throughout the book of Jonah,

as well as the Noachic narrative. רעע appears in its various cognate forms ten times in the book

of Jonah.

1) Jonah 1:2
<div dir="rtl">קום לך אל־נינוה העיר הגדולה וקרא עליה כי־עלתה רעתם לפני:</div>
"Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and call against it that their evil has gone up before

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[5] Cf. H. J. Stoebe, "רעע," *TLOT* 3:1249–54; G. Herbert Livingston, "רעע," *TWOT* 2:854–6.

[6] Gen 2:9, 17; Deut 30:15; 2 Sam 14:17; 19:35; 1 Kgs 3:9; Isa 7:15.

[7] Deut 31:39; Job 2:10; 30:26; Ps 54:5; 140:11–12; Prov 13:17; 14:22; Eccl 8:9.

[8] Livingston, *TWOT* 2:855.

[9] Job 5:19; Ps 121:7; Prov 19:23; Jer 42:6.

my face."

The usage of רעע within the Old Testament allows the reader to surmise that the actions of Nineveh have aligned it with death, yet the possibility of salvation is present for them if they turn from their רעע. The nature of their evil is not apparent at this time. Later, in Jonah 3:8, it will be tied to חמס ("violence"), yet here it allows for the inner attitude of the Ninevites to be the source of רעע, which will be the case for Jonah in the book's concluding chapter.

2) Jonah 1:7

ויאמרו איש אל־רעהו לכו ונפילה גורלות ונדעה בשלמי הרעה הזאת לנו

"And each man said to his neighbor, 'Rise and let us cast lots and let us determine on whose account this evil is upon us.'"

The sailors use רעע to describe the death that surrounds them in the raging sea. Furthermore, they recognize that culpability attends רעע; it only exists because of an individual's choices.

3) Jonah 1:8

ויאמרו אליו הגידה־נא לנו באשר למי־הרעה הזאת לנו מה־מלאכתך

"And they said to him, 'Tell us on whose account has this evil come upon us. What have you done?'"

When the lot falls to Jonah, the culpability for רעע is apparent, thus they ask him what he has done to occasion it. Furthermore, the relationship of רעע with death is seen in the sole option given by Jonah later (Jonah 1:12) that their lives might be spared—his own death.

4) Jonah 3:8

ויתכסו שקים האדם והבהמה ויקראו אל־אלהים בחזקה וישבו איש מדרכו הרעה ומן־החמס אשר בכפיהם:

"And let both human and beast be clothed in sackcloth and let them cry to God in strength and let a man turn from his evil way and from the violence which is in their hands."

While the nature of the Ninevite רעע is clarified, more important is the desire to turn from it. There is hope that, the Ninevites having turned from רעע, God might relent of his anger (Jonah 3:9); in other words, salvation might follow.

5) Jonah 3:10 (two times)

וירא האלהים את־מעשיהם כי־שבו מדרכם הרעה וינחם האלהים על־הרעה אשר־דבר לעשות־להם ולא עשה:

"And God saw what they did, that they turned from their evil ways and God relented from the evil which he said to do to them and he did not do it."

The realization of the salvation which follows one turning from evil is seen. The connection between רעע and deadly judgment is seen again as God's intention to overthrow them is cast as רעע. Yahweh's actions are described as evil (רעע), not in a moral sense, but as injurious and calamitous.[10]

6) Jonah 4:1 (two times)

וירע אל־יונה רעה גדולה

"And it was evil to Jonah, a great evil."

As רעע becomes a part of Jonah, the narrative takes a significant turn. To this point, רעע

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[10] BDB, רעה 1.

185

had been either the sinful action of the Ninevites or just, divine action. As רעע becomes Jonah's and in גדלה, "great" amount, ironically Jonah, not Nineveh, becomes the paragon of רעע.

7) Jonah 4:2

<div dir="rtl">ונחם על־הרעה</div>

"… and he relents from evil."
In the midst of the creedal statement that Yahweh is gracious and compassionate, Jonah adds the statement that Yahweh relents from evil. As this addition to the central creedal statement of the Old Testament is unique to Jonah 4:2 and Joel 2:13, it piques the reader's attention. Not only does it serve to give רעע further priority in the reading of the book of Jonah, but it also further defines Yahweh's gracious character as one who does not delight in רעע, but one who relents from it. Thus, Jonah's immersion in רעע (Jonah 4:1) is all the more pronounced.

8) Jonah 4:6

<div dir="rtl">וימן יהוה־אלהים קיקיון ויעל מעל ליונה להיות צל על־ראשו להציל לו מרעתו</div>

"And Yahweh God appointed a qiqayon plant and it went up over Jonah to give shade upon his head and to save him from his evil."
Whereas the Ninevites were relieved of the deadly consequence of their רעע only after they turned from it (Jonah 3:10), Jonah is given relief by Yahweh from the רעע upon him that he might be led to turn from his רעע. This has a two-fold rhetorical effect. First, it further underlines the gracious character of Yahweh that he offers such deliverance prior to Jonah's repentance. Second, the depth of Jonah's רעע is underlined. Yahweh extends relief to Jonah prior to any sign of the prophet's turning from רעע because he is so entrenched in רעע.

These observations regarding the role of רעע in the book of Jonah are buttressed by the observations of two scholars. First, Wolff comments upon the use of רעע, especially in Jonah 4, as he observes that "the repeated catchword does not merely accentuate Jonah's opposition to God's judgment; it also stresses that Jonah and Nineveh have actually exchanged roles. That it should be God's very mercy that brings 'great wickedness on Jonah' is both dramatic and satiric."[11]

Although Jonah is not guilty of the חמס, "violence" that is part of the Ninevites' רעע (Jonah 3:8), his רעע alone is גדלה, "great". Lessing observes the text's powerful description of Jonah's "evil" in that his name is sandwiched between the verbal form of רעע and its cognate accusative

in Jonah 4:1; thus, Jonah has surrounded himself with evil.[12] Jonah is left alone with his רעע for

all other characters have been delivered of their evil; the sailors are delivered of the "evil" upon

them when Jonah is thrown in the water (Jonah 1:8, 15); the Ninevites turn from their evil and

are delivered (Jonah 3:10); Yahweh relents of evil (Jonah 4:2) and even gave Jonah initial relief

from the evil, yet ultimately just, judgment upon him (Jonah 4:6). Nevertheless, the narrative

closes with Jonah still clinging to his anger.

רעע also plays a critical role in the Noachic narrative, occurring in only two verses, yet in

positions of importance. The first such instance is in Genesis 6:5.

וירא יהוה כי רבה רעת האדם בארץ וכל־יצר מחשבת לבו רק רע כל־היום:

> And Yahweh saw that the evil of humanity increased in the earth
> and that every intention of the thought of his heart was only evil all
> the time.

The verse makes use of repetition (using both noun and adjectival forms of רעע), exclusive

terms (רק, "only") to limit humanity's thoughts to רעע, and universal terms (כל־יצר, "all the

thoughts;" כל־היום, "all the time") to describe the extent of humanity's רעע. Not only do such

literary conventions draw the reader's attention to the enormity of humanity's רעע, but the

prominence of the verse is seen by its contextual function. The preceding verses describe

humanity's condition that prompts Yahweh to limit their days to 120 years (Gen 6:3), yet it is not

until Gen 6:5 that the reader learns the reason for Yahweh's נחם, "change of direction" (Gen 6:6)

regarding having created humanity and his decision to remove all life from earth (Gen 6:7).

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[11] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 165.

[12] Lessing, *Jonah*, 359.

Just as Gen 6:5 introduces the flood narrative, providing the rationale for its events, Gen 8:21 uses the same language to close the flood narrative, bridging the narrative into the giving of the Noachic covenant (Gen 9:1–17). The verse reads:

וירח יהוה את־ריח הניחח ויאמר יהוה אל־לבו לא־אסף לקלל עוד את־האדמה בעבור האדם
כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעריו לא־אסף עוד להכות את־כל־חי כאשר עשיתי:

> And Yahweh smelled the pleasing smell and Yahweh said to his
> heart, "I will not destroy again the land on account of man because
> the thoughts of the heart of humanity are evil from their youth and
> I will not again wipe out every living creature as I have done."

While the reader notes that Gen 8:21 hearkens back to Gen 6:5 with its language, the reader is aware that the literary devices (repetition, exclusive terms, and universal terms) used in Gen 6:5 to magnify the extent and enormity of humanity's רעע are not employed in Gen 8:21. Nevertheless, Gen 8:21 does further magnify the extent of humanity's רעע by noting that it is present מנעריו, "from youth."

The textual changes between Gen 6:5 and Gen 8:21 do not diminish the function of Gen 8:21 also due to the contextual usage of Gen 8:21. First, along with Gen 6:5, Gen 8:21 serves as a book-end for the flood portion of the Noachic narrative. Thus, humanity's רעע frames the flood, giving rise to it and giving rise to Yahweh's decision to never bring similar destruction again. Furthermore, Gen 8:21 serves as a transition to the cutting of the covenant (Gen 9:1–17) as it establishes the rationale for the Noachic covenant. What Yahweh decides in Gen 8:21—that humanity will not be destroyed by a flood again—is made certain for humanity by means of the Noachic covenant.

Yahweh's cutting of his covenant with Noah, his descendants and all creation (Gen 9:9–10), in spite of humanity's thoughts being רעע from youth, prepares the reader for Jonah 4. Yahweh's condemnation of Nineveh's רעע in Jonah 1:2 gives way to his sparing of Nineveh in Jonah 4 just as the רעע of mankind, which had prompted judgment in Gen 6:5, no longer is

sufficient reason for condemnation in Gen 8:21, thus prompting the Noachic covenant. As Nineveh lives under the Noachic covenant, the condemnation of their רעע can be rescinded. Yahweh can and does spare them due to the universality established in the Noachic covenant, which itself is grounded upon Gen 8:21.

Furthermore, both those who disembark from the ark and the Ninevites may be seen as a new creation. The flood brought the earth back into the watery chaos existing before creation (Gen 1:2), even as the destruction of all life, save that on the ark, seemingly undoes creation.[13] Noah and his companions come forth from the ark to a new creation in which they receive the same blessing that God spoke upon Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth." (Gen 1:28; 9:1, 7). Nineveh also becomes a new creation as they move from death to life. The unity of humanity and animals (Jonah 3:7–8) places the Ninevites in a creational context. Yahweh further instructs Jonah of his concern for Nineveh by referring to Jonah's concern for the plant that he did not bring into being. The implication of Yahweh's observation is that he has brought Nineveh, both its human and animal occupants, into being and thus he has full right to be more concerned for them than Jonah does for the plant. Finally, the Ninevites expect death (Jonah 3:9), yet they are spared (Jonah 3:10) and allowed to live. Both the Ninevites and the ark are exemplars of the divine concern for the salvation of life. Thus, life comes forth from where there had been death, bringing about a new creation.

Continuities Between the Texts

The use of רעע in the two texts provides not only a significant intertextual link, but it also illustrates a continuity between the texts. Other continuities further enrich the intertextual reading.

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[13] Gordon Wenham, *Reading Old Testament Narrative Ethically* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2000), 34.

Divine Grace

The universality of divine grace is a critical continuity between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative.[14] Such universality is illustrated by the grouping of humanity and animals together (Jonah 4:11), indicative of divine concern for all creation. It is further underlined by the use of the Hebrew words גדל and רב. In Jonah 1:2, Nineveh is described as גדל, "great." By the end of the book of Jonah, Yahweh explains his clemency toward Nineveh by reference to its 120,000 residents and that its cattle are רב, "great" in number.[15] Thus, Nineveh's greatness is clarified in the close of the book to be about its number of residents—not its power or its stature, but simply its residents and cattle for which Yahweh is concerned. The great city that was the object of divine condemnation becomes the object of divine compassion along with its abundant cattle, allowing the book of Jonah to demonstrate the breadth of divine grace.

Creedal Grace

A consideration of the universality of divine grace in Jonah 4 must include an examination of the creedal confession of Yahweh's identity in Jonah 4:2. Jonah attests to Yahweh's character as he proclaims:

אתה אל־חנון ורחום ארך אפים ורב־חסד ונחם על־הרעה:

> You are a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love
> and changing direction from evil.

Jonah's words can be rightly described as a creed for they occur explicitly or by way of allusion within fourteen other Old Testament passages.[16] The sheer quantity of occurrences

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[14] See chapter three for a discussion of this intertextual connection between the texts; see chapter four for its specific use in Jonah 1.

[15] Sasson, *Jonah*, 319 translates ובהמה רבה as "and animals galore."

[16] A helpful chart comparing the various occurrences of the creedal statement in its several forms is found in

points to the phrase's creedal nature.[17] Its importance as a creed is further seen in its occurrence within every part of the Old Testament—Pentateuch, historical books, the writings, and the prophets. The creedal nature of the phrase is also underscored by it first appearing as Yahweh's self-revelation to Moses; thereafter, it is always on the lips of someone else who is confessing who Yahweh is. Finally, before examining the various instances of the phrase throughout the Old Testament, it should be noted that the personal appellation Yahweh is used in each occurrence, thus bonding divine grace to the specific deity Yahweh.

1. Exod 34:6–7

יהוה יהוה אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב־חסד ואמת: נצר חסד לאלפים נשא עון ופשע וחטאה ונקה לא ינקה פקד עון אבות על־בנים ועל־בני בנים על־שלשים ועל־רבעים:

"Yahweh, Yahweh, the God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Keeping steadfast love to thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and guilt, but the guilty he will not hold guiltless, visiting the sin of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children, upon the third and fourth [generations]."

Although this is Yahweh's self revelation of himself to Moses, the usage of the third person for Yahweh points to its creedal form. It is also noteworthy that the passage references the punishment of the guilty. Thus, Yahweh's gracious character does not exclude his justice, but makes such justice be subject to his grace.

2. Num 14:18

יהוה ארך אפים ורב־חסד נשא עון ופשע ונקה לא ינקה פקד עון אבות על־בנים על־שלשים ועל־רבעים:

"Yahweh, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression and guilt, but the guilty he will not hold guiltless, visiting the sin of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and fourth [generations]."

This occurrence records Moses' intercession on behalf of rebellious Israel in which he repeats Yahweh's own self revelation. Once again, the matter of just punishment is included. Even though Moses is speaking to Yahweh, the third person rather than the second person is used due to the creedal nature of the formulation.

3. Deut 4:31

כי אל רחום יהוה אלהיך:

"For a gracious God is Yahweh, your God."

Sasson, *Jonah*, 280.

[17] While there are innumerable biblical expressions of Yahweh's character, a biblical creed identifies Yahweh's character so that it is used repeatedly as a normative statement.

Deuteronomy records this truncated form of the statement. The preceding verses describe how the people will lose the Promised Land in the event that they follow after other gods. Yet when they turn from such gods, restoration is promised for Yahweh is gracious. Thus, this text ties into the matter of divine grace and its relationship to repentance as previously discussed.

4. 2 Chr 30:9

כי־חנון ורחום יהוה אלהיכם ולא־יסיר פנים מכם אם־תשובו אליו:

"For gracious and merciful is Yahweh your God and he will not turn the face from you if you return to him."

Hezekiah bids Judah to keep the Passover that Yahweh might return Israel from captivity, which he is confident will happen due to Yahweh's character. The assurance that Yahweh will not turn his face from his people if they return to him relates strongly to Yahweh's change from condemnation to mercy following the Ninevites' repentance.

5. Neh 9:17, 31

ואתה אלוה סליחות חנון ורחום ארך־אפים ורב־וחסד ולא עזבתם:
ולא עזבתם כי אל־חנון ורחום אתה:

"You are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and you did not abandon them…. But you did not abandon them for a God gracious and merciful are you."

The two verses are part of the levitical recounting of Yahweh's past graciousness toward his people, which becomes the foundation for their corporate confession of sin. Such a reference to Yahweh's past graciousness is the natural context for a creedal statement. While the personal name Yahweh is not used specifically in these verses, the larger prayer to which these verses belong is addressed specifically to Yahweh (Neh 9:6, 7).

6. Ps 78:38

והוא רחום יכפר עון ולא־ישחית והרבה להשיב אפו ולא־יעיר כל־חמתו:

"But he is merciful; he covered iniquity and did not destroy them and he restrained his anger and he did not stir up all his wrath."

While this verse does not use the personal name Yahweh, the psalm is set forth as a recounting of Yahweh's deeds for his people (Ps 78:4). Verse thirty-eight recalls Yahweh's patience with Israel in the wilderness. Once again, recalling Yahweh's past gracious actions is the natural context for a creedal statement.

7. Ps 86:5, 15

כי־אתה אדני טוב וסלח ורב־חסד לכל־קראיך:
ואתה אדני אל־רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב־חסד ואמת:

"For you are a Lord good and forgiving and abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you… And you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."

Once again, while the personal name Yahweh is not used within these verses, the overall psalm, a penitential prayer of David, repeatedly names Yahweh as its subject (Ps 86:1, 6, 11, 17) with verses 1 and 17 serving as bookends to further clarify the psalm's focus upon Yahweh.

8. Ps 103:8

רחום וחנון יהוה ארך אפים ורב־חסד:

"Merciful and gracious is Yahweh, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."

Psalm 103 is a litany of Yahweh's greatness, which includes his gracious character.

9. Ps. 111:4

<div dir="rtl">חנון ורחום יהוה</div>

"Gracious and merciful is Yahweh."
Psalm 111 also speaks of Yahweh's greatness, specifically in the form of an acrostic. The psalmist again includes a truncated form regarding Yahweh's grace as part of his greatness.

10. Ps. 112:4

<div dir="rtl">חנון ורחום וצדיק:</div>

"Gracious and merciful and righteous."
Psalm 112 likewise sets forth an acrostic in praise of Yahweh. The addition of Yahweh being righteous can be read as an allusion to the just punishment of sin found in Exod 34:6–7.

11. Ps. 116:5

<div dir="rtl">חנון יהוה וצדיק ואלהינו מרחם:</div>

"Gracious is Yahweh and righteous and our God is merciful."
Once again, Yahweh's righteousness is brought alongside his grace and mercy, hearkening to Exod 34:6–7.

12. Ps 145:8–9

<div dir="rtl">חנון ורחום יהוה ארך אפים וגדל־חסד: טוב־יהוה לכל ורחמיו על־כל־מעשיו:</div>

"Gracious and merciful is Yahweh, slow to anger and great in steadfast love. Good is Yahweh to all; and his mercy is upon all he has made."
Psalm 145, another acrostic, applies Yahweh's grace and mercy to "all he has made." The inclusion of such an object recalls the universality of divine grace and ties the same to creational theology and to the Noachic covenant as is discussed in chapter eight.

13. Nahum 1:3

<div dir="rtl">יהוה ארך אפים וגדול־כח ונקה לא ינקה יהוה</div>

"Yahweh is slow to anger and great in power and the guilty Yahweh will not hold guiltless."
Mercy and justice are again set in symbiotic tension. Nahum is unique in that a greater emphasis appears to be placed upon Yahweh's refusal to hold the guilty as guiltless.

14. Joel 2:13, 14

<div dir="rtl">ושובו אל־יהוה אלהיכם כי־חנון ורחום הוא ארך אפים ורב־חסד ונחם על־הרעה:</div>
<div dir="rtl">מי יודע ישוב ונחם והשאיר אחריו ברכה</div>

"Return to Yahweh, your God, for gracious and merciful is he, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and he changes direction from evil. Who knows? He may turn and change direction and leave behind him a blessing."
This occurrence holds special interest as Joel is a co-text with Jonah as both are part of the Book of the Twelve. Joel's quotation is strongly tied to Jonah 3:9 where it is the Ninevite king who shares Joel's thought: "Who knows? He many turn and change direction and leave behind him a blessing." That shared phrase is accompanied by the unique presence in Jonah and Joel's use of the creedal statement with the additional phrase ונחם על־הרעה, "and he changes direction from evil." Jonah and Joel are further tied together due to a penitential setting for both passages. Yet they are unique in their attitude toward such penitence. Joel invites the repentance of Israel in the face of the invading locust army. Jonah, on the other hand, despairs over Nineveh's penitence and Yahweh's ensuing change of direction. Joel uplifts and desires Yahweh's willingness to change; Jonah despairs of the same.

This discontinuity between Jonah and Joel's use of the same material serves two important purposes for this study. First, it makes Jonah's personal lack of penitence striking.[18] Not only does Jonah stand in stark contrast to Yahweh who "changes from evil," but he is also distinct from his fellow prophet Joel who reveals his own desire for Yahweh to live out such change. Second, the distinction between Jonah and Joel again highlights the intertextual tie between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. Attention is now given to that tie.

Jonah's Creedal Grace in Relation to the Noachic Covenant

A note of irony is struck as the prophet of Yahweh despairs over the most prevalent Old Testament creedal statement, which focuses upon Yahweh's grace. Fretheim argues that Jonah is angry because Yahweh is not angry.[19] Sweeney describes Jonah's anger similarly:

> His fundamental problem is YHWH'S self-contradiction, and if YHWH chooses to contradict the divine self by failing to follow through on an earlier divine word, then Jonah must consider the possibility that YHWH will fail to follow through in granting him life as well.[20]

Yet the Noachic meta-narrative prepares the reader (and should have prepared Jonah) for this very reality. Yahweh, who had destroyed the earth for all its thoughts being evil all the time, promises in Gen 8:21 that he will never again destroy the earth by flood in spite of the thoughts of humanity being evil all the time. Contrary to Jonah's attitude as explained by Fretheim, the Noachic narrative informs the reader that Yahweh will be gracious in the face of evil. Contrary to Sweeney's explanation, Yahweh is not contradicting his earlier word because the divine is acting in concert not only with the creedal proclamation of his grace, but also his post-diluvium promise to spare humanity in spite of its pervasive evil. Whedbee rightly observes the situation:

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[18] The prophet's lack of penitence also prompts Jonah to be seen as representative of Israel's lack of penitence.

[19] Fretheim, *The Message of the Book of Jonah*, 118.

What appears as caprice is in fact a kind of deeper consistency in the divine makeup: as connoisseur of the covenantal tradition Jonah knows about God's habit of changing his mind because of his compassionate nature.[21]

Irony arises again as Jonah's concern for Yahweh to punish evil could easily turn on himself. He is now the focal point of רעע, "evil" (Jonah 4:1), while Nineveh has turned from its evil. Thus, it is the prophet who is subject to condemnation. Yet Jonah is spared for he also is subject to Yahweh's grace in the face of humanity's evil (Gen 8:21). That grace is seen in Jonah 4 as God continues to "appoint" a means of deliverance. Just as a great fish had earlier been appointed to deliver the disobedient prophet (Jonah 2:1 MT) from death,[22] so once again a plant is appointed by God to deliver Jonah from his רעע (Jonah 4:6; certainly a physical evil/discomfort, yet perhaps also a means to deliver Jonah from his evil disposition).

There are two other occasions in which there is a divine מנה, "appointment" of a unique element of creation for a specific purpose, both of which are for the purpose of judgment. A worm is appointed to destroy the plant that had given Jonah shelter (Jonah 4:7) and then the exposed prophet is subject to a scorching east wind appointed by God (Jonah 4:8). Even in the midst of such judgment, divine grace is seen. Following the appointment of the worm and wind, Jonah does not turn from his evil. Yet his refusal does not occasion death, which he desires (Jonah 4:8). Instead, God engages him with a series of questions (Jonah 4:9–11) in order to not only explain Yahweh's concern for Nineveh's 120,000 residents and many cattle, but also to deliver Jonah from his evil disposition. Even the display of divine wrath is put to use for the

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[20] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 328.

[21] Whedbee, *The Bible and Comic Vision*, 210.

[22] See the discussion earlier in this chapter regarding the intrinsic tie between evil and death with the Old Testament.

purpose of turning Jonah from his evil that he might be a recipient of grace.[23] Such had been the case with Nineveh, which heeded the message of divine judgment, leading the city to turn from their evil and receive grace.

The role of מנה in the book of Jonah is analogous to the role of the ark in the Noachic narrative. Just as the appointment of the fish saved Jonah from deadly waters, so also the ark saved its passengers from deadly waters. While the verb מנה is not used regarding the ark, it is clearly an example of divine provision as Noah does not construct it of his own accord, but only upon the command of God and in accord with his direction, even as their entrance into the ark is attended by God's promise of cutting his covenant (Gen 6:14–18). Thus, the ark is tied to the Tarshish-bound ship, the plant, the worm, and the scorching east wind as all are unique, divinely appointed objects that accomplish the unique task for which they were appointed.

As It Was in the Beginning…

Dramatic change takes place within both texts in question. The Noachic narrative finds the world decimated and its inhabitants nearly wiped out. The book of Jonah begins with Nineveh as the object of divine judgment as it is full of evil; the book ends with Nineveh having turned from its evil to become the object of divine grace. In spite of the significant change within each text, there is continuity.

Within the Noachic narrative, the flood arises due to humanity's thoughts being רעע, "evil" all the time (Gen 6:5). Although the flood destroyed nearly all inhabitants, yet Yahweh recognizes that the evil of humanity has not changed, their thoughts are evil from youth (Gen

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[23] Theodore Laetsch, *The Minor Prophets* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia, 1956), 241 notes that God's wisdom prompts him to send both "weal and woe" upon his children as he sees fit. While that observation is correct, it is incomplete. The sending of the "woe" is ultimately for the purpose of turning the children away from their evil that grace might abound.

8:21). Thus, divine grace comes to the fore as Yahweh pledges never to destroy the earth by a flood again.

Continuity also exists within the book of Jonah. Like the flood narrative, it begins and ends on a note of רעע. The book begins with record of Nineveh's evil, which prompts divine wrath (Jonah 1:2) as had humanity's evil in the Noachic narrative. The book ends with Jonah's evil disposition (Jonah 4:1) to which he tenaciously clings throughout the closing chapter (and thus he is subject to the רעע of the sun and scorching wind, from which he is sheltered by the plant in Jonah 4:6, only to be deprived of such shelter in Jonah 4:7). The intertextual reader recalls Yahweh's gracious response to the continuous presence of humanity's evil in Gen 8:21—there is still hope for Jonah.

Discontinuities Between the Texts

Not only do the continuities enrich and deepen the intertextual reading, so also the discontinuities between the texts inform the intertextual reading. While such discontinuities are present, they are not as prevalent in this chapter as they are in the first three chapters of the book of Jonah.

Jonah's and Noah's Attitudes

The intertextual reading of the first three chapters of the book of Jonah with the Noachic narrative reveals a discontinuity between the attitudes of the primary human character of each text, namely Jonah and Noah. That discontinuity remains in the intertextual reading of Jonah 4 with the Noachic narrative.

On the one hand, Jonah is negative in approach, yet effective in result. Jonah's negativity is evidenced by his actions in the first and final chapters of the book that bears his name. He seeks to avoid the divine call placed upon him by fleeing in chapter one. The rhetorical impact of his choice to go down to Joppa (Jonah 1:3), descend into the depths of a ship (Jonah 1:5), and then

fall into a deep sleep (Jonah 1:5) when he had been called not to go down, but rise to go to Nineveh (Jonah 1:2) is a classic example of Jonah's negativity about his call. Similarly, Jonah's negativity is apparent in chapter four as he sees the sparing of the Ninevites as a great רעע, "evil" (Jonah 4:1). Even more, he frets more over the shade he has lost than the potential loss of the Ninevites (Jonah 4:8, 9).[24] Payne describes Jonah's negativity toward his call in that while he prayed for himself from the belly of the great fish (Jonah 2:2–10 MT), yet he refuses to pray for others.[25] In spite of Jonah's negative outlook toward the call placed upon him, he is effective. He not only delivers the word of Yahweh to the Ninevites (Jonah 3:3–4), but it even takes hold of the Ninevites so that they believe in God (Jonah 3:5), call for a fast (Jonah 3:5), and change from their evil ways (Jonah 3:10). Thus, God changes from condemnation to grace (Jonah 3:10). The efficacy of the prophet's message is independent of his attitude.

Instead, the efficacy of the prophet's message is dependent upon Yahweh's דבר, "word". It was Yahweh's דבר, which came to the prophet in Jonah 1:1. Though he tried to run from it, Yahweh's דבר would not be denied, so Jonah was delivered to dry ground that Yahweh's דבר might come to him a second time (Jonah 3:1). So Jonah reaches Nineveh, despite his desires otherwise, in accord with Yahweh's דבר (Jonah 3:3), and proclaims that דבר (Jonah 3:4), which then reaches the king of Nineveh who reacts positively in accord with it (Jonah 3:6). So the prophet's negativity will not undo Yahweh's דבר.

On the other hand, Noah does not exhibit any specific negativity toward God's command. While Noah does succumb to a drunken stupor (Gen 9:21), the reader finds no evidence of Noah's attitude toward the specific divine decree set upon him to construct the ark and embark

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[24] Person, *In Conversation with Jonah*, 53–4 magnifies this matter by suggesting that Jonah's anger is simultaneous with the repentance of Nineveh.

upon it, even while the rest of creation perishes. The Noachic narrative sets forth an emotionless Noah who reacts neither to the news that his fellow humans stand condemned nor to the enormous task placed upon him in the construction of the ark. While the reader knows nothing of Noah's attitude, the reader does know he did everything that he was commanded (Gen 6:22). Noah is perfectly obedient and the reader can surmise that he is effective. The ark he builds at Yahweh's command does what it is meant to do.

Jonah is reluctant and bitter; Noah is obedient and emotionless. Yet both accomplish that which they were called to do. The discontinuity between these primary human characters thus illustrates a critical point—the efficacy of their actions is not found in themselves but in the God who called them into action. For Jonah, that efficacy is wrapped up in the power of Yahweh's דבר.

Repentance after the Flood

While there is a strong continuity between the two texts as both reveal Yahweh's character as one who changes verdict from condemnation to forgiveness (Gen 8:21; Jonah 4:2), a significant shift takes place following the flood regarding Yahweh's expectation of humanity. Yahweh purposes never to curse the ground again on account of humanity's sin, even though their thoughts are evil from their youth. Yet this does not give humanity freedom to do evil without consequences. Yahweh expects repentance.

That truth is seen in the generations flowing from Noah. In the midst of the genealogy coming from Noah in Gen 10–11 is the story of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1–9). The actions of humanity at Babel illustrate that their thoughts remain evil from youth. Yet Yahweh does not pass over their sin, but corrects it. Later in the book of Genesis, the same will be seen in the

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[25] R. Payne, "The Prophet Jonah," 133.

treatment of Sodom and Gomorrah whose lack of repentance leads to destruction (Gen 19). The same holds true for the Ninevites in the book of Jonah. Yahweh is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and changing verdict from evil (Jonah 4:2). Yet that follows on the heels of the Ninevites' repentance as they שׁוב, "turn" from their evil (Jonah 3:8–10).

Thus, a key change follows the flood. Prior to the flood, Yahweh holds humanity accountable for their evil, bringing the condemnation of the flood (Gen 6:5–7). Following the flood, Yahweh continues to hold humanity accountable, now expecting human repentance. Thus, Yahweh remains just while also allowing grace to prevail over humanity's evil.

Summary Insights

Reading Jonah 4 intertextually with the Noachic narrative reveals much about the pervasive nature of humanity's evil, the nature of divine grace, and the place of the Noachic covenant in the extension of that grace to all creation, even in spite of a reluctant prophet and the prevalence of humanity's evil. The sum of those insights underlines that divine grace is greater than human evil. Similarly, both texts focus upon divine action. The Noachic narrative begins with Yahweh condemning man's evil (Gen 6:5–7) and finds resolution in his covenant with all creation (Gen 9:1–17) so that the evil deeds to follow (Gen 9:18–29) would still be under his covenantal grace. So also, the book of Jonah begins with Yahweh condemning Nineveh's evil and ends with Yahweh seeking to deliver Jonah from his self-imposed evil. While the book of Jonah does not explicitly resolve that matter, it stands in concert with the Noachic narrative in ending upon a note of divine grace, even as it entrusts both the initiation and resolution of human evil to Yahweh.

Tempering of Satire

It is also worthwhile to note that the intertextual reading of Jonah 4 with the Noachic narrative tempers various satirical readings of the book of Jonah. For example, Mather contends that "Chapter IV makes it clear that the troubled relationship between God and Jonah, depicted throughout the story, is not simply a burlesque, but essentially farcical."[26] The intertextual reading does not dismiss the presence of satire, but allows it stand as simply a tool employed to place the prophet's refusal to accept universal divine grace in proper perspective. The text is not ridiculous in its portrait, but focused upon subjugating human evil (including that of Jonah's attitude) to divine grace.

Fortunately, two readers who note satirical elements within the book of Jonah[27] also recognize that it does not displace the text's greater message, but instead serves that message. For one, Whedbee argues that the satire of the prophet does not undercut the reality of his anger.[28] Jonah's anger is real, not a farce. Yet satire allows his anger to be seen as out of concert with Yahweh's gracious character. The pervasive, yet intricate, use of satire within the book of Jonah in order to arrive at a specific message is best described as "the irony of the narrative art guides the reader towards theological wisdom."[29]

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[26] Mather, "The Comic Art of the Book of Jonah," 282.

[27] No scholars contend for satire in the Noachic narrative.

[28] Whedbee, *The Bible and the Comic Vision*, 211.

[29] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 162.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DEPTHS OF THE DELUGE: INSIGHTS FROM THE JONAH-NOACHIC INTERTEXTUALITY

When the book of Jonah is read intertextually with the Noachic narrative, the reading of the

book of Jonah is deepened and enriched. In order to substantiate such a thesis, chapters one

through three of this study introduce the topic. Chapter one describes reader-oriented and text-

oriented intertextuality, arguing that text and reader are to be held in symbiotic tension within

intertextuality rather than being made to be rivals. Chapter two investigates the extant

scholarship treating the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic

narrative, finding that helpful work has been done, but that a more thorough investigation with

methodological clarity is needed. Chapter three answers the methodological void by considering

both the textual evidence for the intertextual relationship between the Noachic narrative and the

book of Jonah as well as the reader's contribution to the intertextual reading. Upon the

foundation established in chapters one through three, chapters four through seven each in turn

examine the four chapters of the book of Jonah, exploring the intertextual influence of the

Noachic narrative upon the book of Jonah. More specifically, chapters four through seven first

address the evidence for the intertextual link and then explicate the impact that the link has upon

the reading of the book of Jonah.

This chapter serves as an extension of that exercise by means of a three-part discussion.

First, a summary of the findings, both in terms of the evidence for the intertextual relationship

and its impact upon the reading of the book of Jonah, is offered. Second, the deepening and

enriching role that the intertextual relationship has upon the reading of the book of Jonah as a whole is considered by means of five key theological themes that emerge from the intertextual reading. Finally, suggestions for further investigation into intertextual readings of the book of Jonah are suggested.

The Intertextual Reading of the Book of Jonah with the Noachic Narrative: A Summary

Chapter two discusses the methodological shortcomings that hamper the work of various scholars who investigate the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative. While various scholars treat the relationship, two scholars stand above the rest with the most thorough treatment of the topic. Timothy Koch's doctoral dissertation[1] describes the Jonah-Noah intertextual link in the span of a single chapter. While that space allows him to describe various textual links, it does not afford the space to establish a clear methodology for establishing the links. Thus, many of the links suggested by Koch become questionable upon closer inspection as they are simply the presence of common Hebrew usage with both texts.[2] By not offering a methodological means to identify and verify such connections, Koch's contributions are weakened.

Albert Kamp also takes up the intertextual link.[3] His discussion is even briefer, yet his work does have the advantage of taking into consideration exclusive links between the texts. The most helpful link identified by Kamp is the relationship between the lines coming forth from Noah's three sons and the three principal people of the book of Jonah. Jonah comes from the line of Shem; the Ninevites from the line of Ham; the Tarshish sailors from Japheth. Nevertheless,

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[1] Koch, "The Book of Jonah and a Reframing of Israelite Theology."

[2] Examples of such idiomatic links suggested by Koch are: the use of the number forty, חמס, "violence" as the key sin in both texts, and Yahweh's decision to נחם, "change direction."

[3] Kamp, *Inner Worlds.*

the brevity of Kamp's discussion prevents him from establishing a clear methodology for substantiating intertextual links.

This study employs Koch's and Kamp's observations, seeking to legitimate the intertextual link by a clear methodology. The methodology employed herein is theoretically realistic by discounting neither the text's role in the production of meaning nor the reader's interpretation of the text. Thus, those textual elements identified by Koch that are not exclusive links are not sufficient for legitimating the intertextual relationship. That is not to say that they are not elements of the intertextual relationship, but the foundation for the link must be established through other means before instances of shared common Hebrew usage can be considered.

Similarly, Kamp's textual discovery of the unique relationship surrounding Noah's three sons and the three principal characters of the book demands an investigation into whether a reader would notice such a link. This study employs the work of Ehud ben Zvi regarding communal meta-narratives to answer that need for the reader's ability to notice such a connection.[4] Communal meta-narratives are those stories that are foundational to a people's self-understanding so that when elements of such stories emerge later, they are readily noticed by the reader. While ben Zvi argues that the book of Jonah is such a communal meta-narrative, this study's contention is that the Noachic narrative is a communal meta-narrative so that it would be foundational for the world-view of the book of Jonah. In fact, the meta-narrative character of the Noachic narrative is underlined by the fact that it possesses every characteristic of a meta-narrative, even as ben Zvi argues that it is typical for meta-narratives to only possess a few of those characteristics. Thus, the Noachic narrative might be called a meta-narrative *par excellence*.

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[4] ben Zvi, *The Signs of Jonah*, 1–11.

While this brief review illustrates that the methodology defined within the first three chapters of this study is theoretically realistic, the results of its application prove that it is realistic in practice as well. The study's explication of both the text's and the reader's contribution to the intertextual relationship displays the realistic practicality of the methodology. The text's contribution includes: the unique narrative setting upon the waters of both the Noachic narrative and Jonah 1–2; the unique role of the ark, the Tarshish-bound ship, and the great fish as vessels of deliverance (even as the latter two are surprising as such); the textually exclusive description of waters covering the mountains (Gen 7:20; Jonah 2:7); and the further exploration of Kamp's observation regarding the unique usage of the lines of Shem, Ham, and Japheth within the book of Jonah, which explains the interrelationship of Jonah, the Ninevites, and the Tarshish-bound sailors as well as the relationship of each to the divine.

So also, the methodology defined within the first three chapters of this study and applied in chapters four through seven is practical, thus allowing the reader's contribution to be evident. Based upon the link established by the textual connections, the reader is led into various character comparisons. Thus, Noah's and Jonah's roles are both compared and contrasted. Both are silent, yet the latter does so in spite of the divine command to proclaim (Jonah 1:2). The plight of Noah's contemporaries is both compared and contrasted to that of the Tarshish-bound sailors, Jonah, and the Ninevites, all of whom face impending death at some point. Such character comparisons illustrate the reader's engagement of the intertextual relationship that was established by textual evidence.

While there are both shared affinities and discontinuities between the actions of the characters in the two narratives, the reader discovers seamless continuity regarding Yahweh in the intertextual reading. Yahweh's decisions are consistently determined by his gracious character so that he regularly changes from one decision to another. In the Noachic narrative,

Yahweh's change from judgment to grace is seen in his statement following the flood as he decides to never destroy the earth again in spite of the inclinations of man's heart being evil all the time (Gen 8:21), even though the flood was prompted by the inclination of man's heart being evil all the time (Gen 6:5–7). In the book of Jonah, the reader notes a repeated move of Yahweh's grace bringing life to those who face death as the Tarshish-bound sailors are taken from a tumultuous sea to one that is calm in Jonah 1, as Jonah moves from the belly of the fish to dry ground in Jonah 2, and as the Ninevites are spared the judgment that they are due in Jonah 3. This theme is underlined all the more by Jonah 4:2, which declares that Yahweh's gracious character stands behind his repeated decision to move from death to life.

The reader is also confronted by the role of the Noachic covenant within the book of Jonah. The reason why not only Jonah, but the Tarshish-bound sailors and the Ninevites are objects of Yahweh's grace is because all are under the Noachic covenant (Gen 9:8–17). So also, the Noachic covenant explains why the Tarshish-bound sailors are concerned about guilt for shedding innocent blood (Jonah 1:14) and why the Ninevites were joined by their livestock in their penitential actions (Jonah 3:7–8).

Finally, the reader is led by the intertextual connection to temper the satirical reading of the book of Jonah. There is much satire within the book of Jonah to be sure. Yet the reader employs the satire as a means to read the book of Jonah properly rather than the satire being an end in itself. The satire highlights Jonah's lack of piety in comparison to both his call and the other characters of the book. Such satire underlines Yahweh's grace in the face of Jonah's impiety. Yahweh is gracious to those whom Jonah desires to not be shown mercy; even more, he is gracious to Jonah who is so devoid of grace himself.

<center>**Theological Insights from the Intertextual Reading**</center>

As text and reader combine in the intertextual reading, key theological motifs emerge. Five theological motifs arising from the intertextual reading are discussed below.

Creational Theology

The book of Jonah is replete with creational language. It is seen in the repeated theme of Yahweh's use of creation for his purposes. Yahweh makes use of a great wind to create a tempest on the sea (Jonah 1:4), a great fish to swallow Jonah (Jonah 2:1 MT), a miraculously growing plant to shield Jonah (Jonah 4:6), a voracious worm to destroy that plant (Jonah 4:7), and yet another wind, this time a scorching east wind, to magnify Jonah's discomfort (Jonah 4:8). The reader is not surprised by Yahweh's repeated use of creation, nor should Jonah have been. When asked about his God, Jonah replies, "I worship Yahweh, the God of heaven, who made the sea and land" (Jonah 1:9). Thus, Yahweh is identified in creational terms. The creational focus continues in Jonah three as humanity is not isolated, but brought into communion with the rest of creation as beasts are made part of the Ninevite penitential fast and donning of sackcloth(Jonah 3:7–8). This creational focus is of significant importance for the book of Jonah as it underscores that just as Yahweh's dominion extends over all creation, so His love is not exclusive to Jonah and his countrymen, but is extended to all creation, including the sailors and the Ninevites, both of whom are spared what appeared to be imminent death.

This creational focus of the book of Jonah is fortified by its relationship with the Noachic narrative, which also has a decidedly creational character. That creational character is seen most clearly in Yahweh's blessing upon Noah and his sons that they "be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth" (Gen 9:1), a blessing that was first given to Adam and Eve (Gen 1:28). The Noachic covenant furthers the creational focus of the narrative as the covenant is cut not only with humanity, but with כל חית הארץ, "all living things of the earth" (Gen 9:9–10). Thus, Yahweh

will hold animals responsible for the spilling of humanity's lifeblood (Gen 9:5). That animals would bear responsibility is presaged by the animals being subject to condemnation via the flood (Gen 6:8), even though it was specifically the evil of humanity that prompted Yahweh's wrath (Gen 6:7).

That both of these narratives would have a creational focus is not surprising to the reader of the Old Testament. While other prominent motifs exist within the Old Testament, creation is a foundational matter throughout its pages. The Old Testament begins with creation, not salvation nor the choosing of Israel. As Rolf Rendtorff stated, "faith in God the creator was perceived and experienced as the all-embracing framework, as the fundamental, all-underlying premise for any talk about God, the world, Israel, and the individual."[5] In other words, the creation narratives (Gen 1–2) are meta-narratives for the Old Testament. Since the Noachic covenant offers a new beginning for creation with Yahweh's repeated blessing for fruitfulness, the meta-narrative character of creation further strengthens the meta-narrative character of the Noachic narrative. Bernhard Anderson furthers this point as he notes that "the Noachic covenant, then, is a *covenant of creation*."[6] This gives rise to Anderson's contention that the creational focus of the Noachic covenant grants the covenant as particular focus upon the universality of God's grace. He also argues that it points to God's covenantal commitment, stating "the Creator remains committed unconditionally to the creation in an everlasting covenant."[7] Thus, the reader

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[5] Rolf Rendtorff, *Canon and Theology: Overtures to an Old Testament Theology* (ed. And trans. Margaret Kohl; OBT, ed. Walter Brueggemann, et al; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 107–8.

[6] Bernhard W. Anderson, *Contours of Old Testament Theology* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1999), 94. Emphasis his.

[7] Anderson, *Contours of Old Testament Theology*, 95.

whose worldview is informed by the Noachic narrative approaches the book of Jonah aware that the Creator's concern for the rest of creation has not come to an end.

Thus, scholars have found creation as not only an explanatory theme in the book of Jonah, but critical to the entirety of the book. Wolff notes the foundational role of creational theology for the book of Jonah as he states, "What is important throughout the narrative is his theology of creation."[8] Wolff further unveils the explanatory role of creation in the book of Jonah as he discusses grace in the book of Jonah, noting that "the reason given for this compassion is now the idea of creation."[9] The book of Jonah is not alone in grounding divine compassion upon creation. The Noachic narrative does the same as God renews the blessing of creation to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 9:7), as his covenant is cut with כל חית הארץ, "all living things of the earth" (Gen 9:10), and as the value of all human life is based upon humanity's creation in the image of God (Gen 9:6 referring back to the creation account of Gen 1:28).

The creational focus of both texts serves yet another purpose, setting forth Yahweh to be the primary actor. As the biblical account of creation gives sole credit for creation to God, so those texts that make use of creational theology place God as the primary actor. The primacy of the divine is testament to the inability of man. Unable to cope or respond to the various threats to life, humanity is left to rely upon God. Both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah follow this point. Divine control is underlined in the Noachic narrative as Noah is silent until he speaks blessings/curse upon his sons (Gen 9:25–27) even while Yahweh speaks much in the narrative. The divine primacy is also seen as all his directives are followed (Gen 6:22).

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[8] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 87. The referent of "his" is the narrator of the book of Jonah.

[9] Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 164.

The book of Jonah also sets forth Yahweh as the primary actor. He controls the dramatic events of the book as he מנה, "appoints" a fish (Jonah 2:1 MT), a plant (Jonah 4:6), a worm (Jonah 4:7) and a wind (Jonah 4:8), thus interjecting himself into his creation to accomplish his purpose even by created means. Yahweh's role as primary actor is further seen in that he has both the first (Jonah 1:2) and the last word in book of Jonah (Jonah 4:10–11). This predominant role of Yahweh in the book of Jonah is summarized by Robin Payne, "Any sending and any praying become the vehicle of God's work. The inadequacy of the messenger does not thwart the purposes of God, but the messenger misses out on participation in them."[10]

Prophetic Role

Payne's observation hearkens to the prophetic role as another key motif within the intertextual reading. The efficacy of the prophet's work is not dependent upon the prophet's own qualities, but upon the divine word that the prophet speaks, even if he is prone to despise or reject that very word. Jonah's reluctance illustrates the truth of this observation. When commanded to go to Nineveh (Jonah 1:2), the prophet heads in the opposite direction to Joppa (Jonah 1:3), seeking to flee from the presence of Yahweh (Jonah 1:3), even though prophets classically have unique access to Yahweh. Jonah's flight is all the more dramatic as Yahweh commands him to rise (Jonah 1:2), yet he chooses to go down to Joppa (Jonah 1:3), down into the inner part of the ship (Jonah 1:5), and down in a deep sleep (Jonah 1:5). Jonah's refusal to bear Yahweh's word to Nineveh continues as he chooses to be aboard a Tarshish-bound ship, a designation that portends destruction (Jonah 1:3).[11] The prophet also asks to be thrown overboard into the deadly waters rather than head back toward Nineveh. (Jonah 1:12). Even after being

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[10] Robin Payne, "The Prophet Jonah," 133.

[11] Sherwood, *A Biblical Text and Its Afterlife*, 250.

saved from the water and the belly of the fish and heading to Nineveh by Yahweh's second

calling upon him (Jonah 3:1–2), Jonah's reluctance is still evident in the sour attitude he takes

toward the repentance of the Ninevites and Yahweh' changing of his prior decision that they be

condemned (Jonah 4:1–3). In spite of Jonah's resistance, the word of Yahweh that he proclaims

is effective, leading the Ninevites to believe in God and turn from their evil ways and their

violence (Jonah 3:5–9). As Landes points out, "it is also quite clear from the story that Yahweh's

ubiquitous power and rule are subservient to his word."[12]

The prophet's efficacy is found not in himself, but in the word given to him by Yahweh.

While this is evident from the book of Jonah by itself, it is all the more evident when the Noachic

narrative is read with the book of Jonah. Just as the word spoken by Jonah was effective because

it was supplied by Yahweh, so also Noah is effective in his task because it is undertaken in

accord with Yahweh's word. Throughout the Noachic narrative, Noah is verbally silent, but it is

apparent that Yahweh's word is effective as Noah is obedient in following Yahweh's instruction

for the building of the ark (Gen 7:5) resulting in the ark's success as it alone stays afloat while

the rest of the earth is covered (Gen 8:18–19). Nothing is said regarding Noah's disposition

throughout all this. And that is just the point; the efficacy is dependent not upon Noah, but upon

Yahweh. That is underlined by the conclusion of the Noachic narrative as Noah is presented as a

drunkard (Gen 9:21) who is vindictive against his own son so that he curses his grandson (Gen

9:24–25). Both the book of Jonah and the Noachic narrative conclude with Noah and Jonah, the

divinely appointed agents, having been successful in their mission in spite of themselves. Thus,

the focus remains on Yahweh's word.

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[12] Landes, "The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah," 21.

Because the efficacy is dependent upon Yahweh and his word, the prophet is left in a position of some freedom. Von Rad has much to say of the prophet's freedom, which leads to the "personality" of their prophetic work.[13] That personality is seen not only in each prophet's unique speaking/writing style, but also in their choice of actions. Jonah's personality was seen in his choice to flee. Noah's personality is seen in his drunkenness and choice to curse Canaan for the sin of Ham while blessing Shem and Japheth.

While the prophet has freedom to be himself, he does not have freedom to deviate from the specific message or task to which he has been called. Jonah's personality can neither thwart the divine command to preach to Nineveh nor the universal nature of divine grace that is evidenced in the Noachic covenant. Hence, Yahweh goes to great lengths to bring Jonah to Nineveh—the casting of a storm upon the sea (Jonah 1:4) and the appointing of a great fish to swallow and regurgitate Jonah (Jonah 2:1, 11). Yet, Yahweh also addresses the prophet in the midst of his sinfulness. Miles describes Yahweh's address of Jonah.

> We may almost say that Yahweh "kids" Jonah; that is, he treats him like a "kid," like the child that he has chosen to be—but gently, not contemptuously. The last line in particular, with its closing words *ûběhēmāh rabbāh*, "plus the many animals," must surely prompt a smile; for if Jonah is foolish in his resentment, the Ninevites, dressing their animals in sackcloth and forcing them to fast, have been foolish in their repentance.[14]

Jonah cannot take credit for being an effective preacher of Yahweh's word. Yahweh makes it clear to him by "kidding" him that his role in the matter has been deficient. Jonah is made to look foolish next to the formerly pagan, but now converted Ninevites and their animals. Yet, even then, Yahweh's ultimate purpose to make himself known to pagans through his chosen people is not lost. Alfred Jepsen states:

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[13] Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Vol. II* (Trans. D. M. G. Stalker. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1965), 70–9.

It is only through Jonah that the seamen learn that Yahweh is the author of the storm. It is through the Hebrew voice and through no other that Yahweh reveals himself… The self-revelation of God in Israel and Israel's election to God's service as messenger in the Gentile world is the essential presupposition of the story, and it is carried through consistently throughout the whole narrative.[15]

Jepsen illustrates that Yahweh's purpose through the prophet will be achieved. He further points to an issue in covenantal theology. Specifically, the relationship between the Noachic covenant with all living things of the earth and the Abrahamic covenant with Israel can be seen in how the prophet speaks to other nations. When Jonah answers to the Tarshish-bound sailors, he does not identify himself as one who worships Yahweh who brought Israel out of Egypt, but Yahweh, the God of heaven, who made the sea and dry ground (Jonah 1:9). So also, Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites does not reference Yahweh's past saving actions for Israel, but announces impending judgment that moves the Ninevites to repentance (Jonah 3:4–5).

Covenantal Symbiosis

This relationship between the covenants can be described as covenantal symbiosis. Rather than having the Noachic and Abrahamic covenants stand in tension, they can and should inform each other's proper role. To that end, the Abrahamic covenant is presaged in the Noachic narrative. As Noah blesses his sons, he speaks specifically of the line of Shem, from which comes Abraham, standing in relationship with Yahweh (Gen 9:26) while Japheth has a relationship with אלהים, "Elohim/God" (Gen 9:27) and Ham's son Canaan is cursed with no reference to the divine (Gen 9:25). Thus, Shem and his line, tied to the personal divine name Yahweh, have a privileged place that eventually results in the Abrahamic covenant.

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[14] Miles, "Laughing at the Bible," 180.

[15] Alfred Jepsen, "Anmerkungen zum Buche Jona" in *Wort—Gebot—Glaube* (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1970), 123.

Yet that unique relationship does not disrupt the relationship that God established with all living things of the earth in the Noachic covenant. It is ברית עולם, "an everlasting covenant" (Gen 9:16). The Noachic covenant reveals the general disposition of God toward his creation to be one of grace. His gracious attitude is underlined by his determination to never curse the earth again on account of man in spite of the thoughts of humanity's heart being evil from youth (Gen 8:21), a decision made by Yahweh immediately prior to establishing the Noachic covenant. Thus, Yahweh's decision can be in Gen 8:21 can be read as explaining the rationale behind the covenant revealed in Gen 9. Key to the matter is Yahweh's determination to be gracious not because of humanity having earned grace, but in spite of their lack of having earned such.

Thus, the Abrahamic covenant builds upon the Noachic covenant. Noah and his covenantal lineage live under Yahweh 's grace, a grace made more manifest through Shem's line in which all families of האדמה, "the ground" will be blessed (Gen 12:3). The linguistic tie between האדמה and האדם reminds the reader of the first Adam of creation and Noah as a "second Adam" of the new creation emerging from the flood with the renewed blessing of fruitfulness (Gen 1:28; 9:1). This symbiotic relationship between the covenants, first presaged in Noah's blessing upon his sons, comes to fruition in Jonah's prophetic work. Even prior to Yahweh's change from destruction to grace for the Ninevites (Jonah 3:10), Jonah knows of Yahweh's gracious disposition toward all creation, prompting his decision to flee Yahweh's call (Jonah 4:2). The bond for the two covenants that allows them to exist in symbiosis is divine grace, another theme coming forth from the intertextual relationship.

Divine חן "Grace" and חסד "Steadfast Love"

Two key words underscore Yahweh's character both in the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah, further bonding the two together. חן, coming from the verbal root חנן, "depicts a heartfelt response by someone who has something to give to one who has a need."[16] The adjectival form of חנון is reserved for God in the Old Testament. The word, in any of its forms, indicates the favorable actions of a greater individual toward one who is lesser.[17] It occurs in a critical position both in the Noachic narrative (Gen 6:8 where it explains why Noah was spared Yahweh's decision to destroy all living beings) and the book of Jonah (Jonah 4:2 where it speaks of Yahweh's character).

חסד, when applied to God, refers to divine "realization of promises inherent in the covenant."[18] Yet, the term refers primarily to an attitude that then is realized in actions.[19] Thus, the term is appropriate for speaking of Yahweh's character that yields corresponding actions, as takes place in Jonah 4:2. The term is also used in Jonah 2:9 (MT), though it is not found in the Noachic narrative, arguably due to the term's dependence upon the covenant that is absent until the end of the Noachic narrative.

Yahweh's gracious character is pronounced in the concluding chapter of the book of Jonah. There Jonah confesses that he knew that Yahweh would spare Nineveh because he is "a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and relenting from disaster" (Jonah 4:2). While it is not only this latter part of the book that Jonah confesses Yahweh's gracious identity, it is apparent throughout the book. From the sparing of the Tarshish-bound

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[16] Edwin Yamauchi, "חנן," *TWOT*, 302.

[17] H. J. Stoebe, "חנן," *TLOT*, 441.

[18] H. J. Stoever, "חסד," *TLOT*, 451.

[19] R. Laird Harris, "חסד," *TWOT*, 307.

sailors who had offered their cargo to Yam as a sacrifice (Jonah 1:5) and who knew of their guilt of innocent blood for tossing Jonah overboard (Jonah 1:14) to the provision of a great fish to save Jonah in spite of his disobedience so that he would confess "Salvation belongs to Yahweh" (Jonah 2:10 MT) to the divine decision to not bring disaster upon Nineveh (Jonah 3:10), the book of Jonah consistently and persistently portrays God as one who delights in grace. Divine grace is seen all the more clearly in specific matters found within the book of Jonah.

Divine grace is directed toward all creation throughout the book of Jonah as both the Tarshish-bound sailors and the Ninevites are brought into closer relation to the divine. The sailors' relationship with the divine is first seen as each prays to אלהיו, "his own god" (Jonah 1:5), demonstrating a pluralistic context. Yet, following Jonah's acknowledgment of his own faith in Yahweh (Jonah 1:9), the sailors not only cry out to Yahweh (Jonah 1:14), but they come to fear and offer sacrifices unto him (Jonah 1:16). Moving from the impersonal reference to "gods" to a personal reference to Yahweh, the sailors have been brought nearer to the divine by his gracious actions. Similarly, the Ninevites are brought nearer to the divine. Upon Jonah's proclamation, they believe in אלהים, "Elohim/God" (Jonah 3:5). This movement among non-Hebrews toward the divine is evidence of a clear accent upon the inevitable progress of Yahweh's grace.

The prevalence of divine grace is also seen in the handling of Jonah. Having been thrown into the sea, the reader expects his death. Nevertheless, Jonah emerges alive purely by the gracious action of Yahweh who first appoints a fish to swallow the prophet (Jonah 2:1 MT) and then commands the fish to regurgitate him (Jonah 2:11 MT). The prophet's own words testify to the primacy of divine חסד, "steadfast love" as he notes that those who trust in idols lose such divine love. So the Ninevites' turn to God anticipates the presence of steadfast love. Likewise, Jonah's survival, being brought from certain death to life, portends the survival of the Ninevites

in the coming chapters. In both instances, it is divine grace that allows the rebellious prophet and the violent Ninevites to survive.

Yahweh's gracious character also comes forth from the much disputed Jonahpsalm. As noted by Jerome Walsh, the Jonahpsalm shows forth salvation as Yahweh's gift and His act of faithfulness.[20] Even when the reader has a hard time swallowing Jonah's words that do not match his actions, the disparity highlights the greatness of Yahweh's compassion that he would spare a prophet like Jonah. George Landes not only agrees with Walsh's assessment, but takes note of how the message of the Jonahpsalm is integral to the entirety of the book of Jonah. "In a very real sense, the concluding words of the Jonah psalm express the fundamental theme of the entire book: 'Salvation belongs to Yahweh!' Each chapter of the story is in some way preoccupied with divine deliverance."[21]

The persistent proclamation of Yahweh's grace in the Jonahpsalm is not surprising to the intertextual reader. "The lessons learned and conveyed by the psalmist are not new. On the contrary, they are a fundamental and traditional understanding of Yahweh, the faithful and free."[22] Yahweh was known to be gracious before, even in the Noachic narrative. Just as the surprise of the Jonahpsalm is that Jonah is found alive when the reader expects him to be dead, so also the ark stands as a surprising locale of life in the midst of death. The book of Jonah regularly finds life in the midst of death. The sailors live even in the midst of a stormy sea, Jonah lives even as he sinks toward Sheol, the Ninevites live even when confronted with the condemning word of Yahweh. Each survives because each is subject to his grace. So also, Noah

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[20] Walsh, "Jonah 2,3–10: A Rhetorical Critical Study," 228.

[21] Landes, "The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah," 30.

[22] Walsh, "Jonah 2,3–10: A Rhetorical Critical Study," 229.

and his family are the surprising benefactors of life in the midst of death because Noah found חֵן,

"grace" in the eyes of Yahweh (Gen 6:8).

As divine grace is extended to Noah and his family and thus through them to all creation

(Gen 8:21; 9:15) so it is extended not only to Jonah, but to the Tarshish-bound sailors and the

Ninevites. Yahweh's grace is a universal grace. But universal grace is not equivalent to

universalism. That is made clear in the Noachic narrative as Noah curses Canaan (Gen 9:25) so

that his relationship with the divine would need to be recovered. So also, the reader of the book

of Jonah knows that while God does change his verdict from the destruction he planned for

Nineveh (Jonah 3:10), eventually Nineveh is destroyed.[23] Thus, the grace extended to them is

specific to a determined time. For the grace to transcend that specific time, their relationship with

Yahweh must transcend that specific time due to Yahweh's grace being the one consistent. When

Yahweh is forsaken, then his grace is forsaken as well. The reader notes that solidarity with

Yahweh is to be maintained for just as his grace allowed Noah, Jonah, the Tarshish-bound

sailors, and the Ninevites to survive in the face of death, so it is apparent that "God's mercy can

turn the belly of hell into the womb of new birth."[24]

נחם "Change of Verdict"

Inherent in Yahweh's grace is his נחם, "change of verdict." The intertextual reading

demonstrates that Yahweh's "change of verdict" is a movement of grace. In the Noachic

narrative, Yahweh "changes his verdict" as he determines to destroy humanity (Gen 6:6–7).

While that change is toward judgment, it is a change in which Yahweh does not delight for it is

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[23] The destruction of Nineveh was assured by Yahweh through his prophet Nahum, a destruction that was realized in 612 BC.

[24] Uwe Steffen, *Das Mysterium von Tod und Auferstehung: Formen und Wandlungen des Jona-Motivs* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), 106.

not in keeping with his character. וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל־לִבּוֹ, "and he grieved to his heart" (Gen 6:6). Ronald B. Allen captures the power of the statement with his comment, "the chillingly familiar prologue to the deluge, the grief in the heart of Yahweh."[25] Even more, Yahweh later changes toward grace, a grace that accompanies the sacrificial scent, which is הַנִּיחֹחַ, "soothing" (Gen 8:21).[26] The significance of the statement is furthered by its derivation from the same root as the name Noah. Yahweh rests from his judgment against humanity. Resting from judgment is attended by a turn toward grace. This change of verdict toward grace is for all creation (Gen 8:21–22).[27] Thus, Yahweh's grace prompts him to change from destruction (Jonah 3:10) that the Ninevites must be spared.

It is not Yahweh alone who changes, but also humans. The Ninevites are also the subject of change, not נחם, but שוב (Jonah 3:8, 10). The Ninevites turned from the evil that they had been doing, a movement that can take place because רעע has no ontic value but reflects actions, not the heart itself.[28] Thus, "evil" is something that can be turned from because it does not constitute the essence of a person, even those as evil as the Ninevites. This also explains why Yahweh would be predisposed toward grace. Those to whom he is gracious are not ontologically evil, thus they can still be turned from evil to good by Yahweh's grace.

One final note regarding Yahweh's "change of verdict" is of importance. Yahweh's decision to change from condemnation to grace has been described as divine caprice.[29] Fretheim

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[25] Ronald B. Allen, "עצב," *TWOT*, 688.

[26] BDB 5207 defines the term as "quieting, soothing, tranquilizing."

[27] Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 646–7 identifies Gen 8:21–22 as an instance of divine repentance even though the lexeme נחם is not used.

[28] D. Rick, "רעע," *TDOT XIII*, 581.

[29] A. Cooper, "In Praise of Divine Caprice: The Significance of the Book of Jonah," in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings* (ed. P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 144–63.

rightly notes that because Yahweh's "change of verdict" is persistently directed toward grace, it is not an issue of capriciousness.[30] Rather, it reveals Yahweh's character; he is gracious. He will regularly turn from condemnation to grace due to his own ontology, as is proclaimed in Israel's creed of Yahweh as one who is "gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and changing verdict from evil" (Jonah 4:2).

Intertextual Reading of Jonah: Beyond the Noachic Narrative

Intertextual readings of the book of Jonah with other texts have been either suggested or initially engaged by various scholars. Suggested readings would engage the book of Jonah with Psalms,[31] the Elijah narratives,[32] Nahum and Joel,[33] Micah,[34] and the creation narratives.[35] While each of these is worthy of further exploration under the methodology of this study, there is one potential reading that appears most promising. There is strong reason to explore the intertextual relationship between the book of Jonah and the Exodus narratives. The rationale for such a reading includes Exodus standing as a communal meta-narrative. The events that led to, that took place during, and that followed the Exodus are critical to Israel's self-understanding. Thus, many texts refer to the Exodus. Psalm 114 is one of many psalms referring to the Exodus. The historical narratives repeatedly speak of Yahweh as he who brought Israel מארץ מצרים, "from the land of Egypt."[36] So also, Hosea 11:1, 12:9, and 13:4 defines Yahweh as he who brought Israel

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[30] Fretheim, *The Message of the Book of Jonah*, 114.

[31] Gerstenberger, "Psalms in the Book of the Twelve," 254–62.

[32] Lessing, *Jonah*, 38–48.

[33] Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually," 497–528.

[34] Zapff, "The Perspective of the Nations," 292–312.

[35] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets, Volume I*, 306–7.

[36] Among the many texts using this phrase are 1 Sam 10:18, 1 Kgs 9:9, and 2 Kgs 17:7, 36.

out of Egypt. Thus, the world-view of the book of Jonah operates within the robust knowledge of Yahweh being the one who saved Israel from Egypt.

It is also noteworthy that the book of Jonah and the Exodus narrative both place humans alongside animals as objects of punishment for sin. This study goes to great lengths to describe how such takes place in the book of Jonah. The same takes place in Exod 8:17; 9:19; 11:5; 12:12, 29; 19:13. Both can be argued to flow from the Noachic narrative being cut with all living things of the earth, yet it provides a critical tie between the book of Jonah and the Exodus narratives. The Noachic narrative not only binds humans and animals together, but even makes animals culpable for the shedding of human blood, even as humans are (Gen 9:5). All living creatures, not only humanity, bear the blessings of the covenant (Gen 9:8–11). This shared responsibility and blessing that flows from the Noachic covenant is seen in the Exodus narratives as the animals share in the effects of the plagues and in the book of Jonah as the Ninevite animals join in penitential actions and thus are spared along with the Ninevites.

The reading of the two texts would also provide a complement to this study. While this study found non-Hebrews being saved in the book of Jonah in concert with the Noachic narrative, the Exodus narratives does not restrict deliverance to Israel, but includes others who left with them (Exod 12:38). Thus, the Jonah-Exodus reading would serve as an interesting partner with the Jonah-Noah reading.

While the intertextual reader would benefit from reading the book of Jonah with other verifiable intertexts, it is equally important to recognize that many, if not all, readers of the Jonah narrative would have read the narrative with a knowledge of the ultimate destruction of Nineveh. The reading community of biblical scholarship that largely dates the book of Jonah to the exilic or post-exilic period would hold the original readership of the book of Jonah to have known that Nineveh fell to Babylon. Many in an ecclesial reading community would also recognize that the

text of the Jonah narrative does not demand that it was authored during the lifetime of the prophet whose prophetic activity it records. Such ecclesial readers can also hold that the composition of the narrative took place after the destruction of Nineveh. Even more, ecclesial readers, approaching the book of Jonah canonically, would read it along with the book of Nahum in which the destruction of Nineveh is assured. Knowing that Nineveh's ultimate fate was assured in the prophecy of Nahum, which was historically realized in 612 BC at the hands of the Babylonians, the intertextual reader knows that the impenitent can and will face the judgment that fell upon Noah's contemporaries. Such judgment was seen already shortly after the flood as Ham is cursed by Noah due to his sin.

Yahweh's universal grace, set forth in the Noachic covenant and which drives Jonah to balk at his divine call to preach to Nineveh, does not negate His right to judge the sin of the impenitent as seen in the days of Noah and in the eventual fate of Nineveh. That having been said, both the Noachic narrative and the book of Jonah each independently affirm that Yahweh's character is gracious. The intertextual reading of the two texts together strengthens their mutual message of Yahweh's grace. Thus, the reader knows that Yahweh desires to spare humanity in spite of their thoughts being evil (Gen 8:21), for Yahweh is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (Jonah 4:2).

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