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The Problem of the Oracles to the Nations in Jeremiah

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THE PROBLEM OF THE ORACLES TO THE NATIONS
IN JEREMIAH

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Old Testament Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Jeremiah is one of the outstanding prophets of the Old Testament. He has been misunderstood and many have avoided his writings because of various reasons. It has been claimed that Jeremiah wanted to see the destruction of all his enemies.¹ Such prejudice against the prophet's writings has colored the judgment of many.

Critics have attacked the authorship of Jeremiah in large scale. Some try to make his writings only half of the actual book.² Others try to throw out smaller sections and separate verses.³ The section of the book of Jeremiah which has received the strongest attacks is the section often referred to as the oracles to the nations. In this thesis we will consider the various problems raised up by the critics.

There are quite a number of arguments advanced by the critics against the authorship of Jeremiah. The major arguments will be treated in this thesis. These are four in number. The first one is that the concept of Jahwe as

¹A. W. Streane, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Together with the Lamentations (Cambridge: University Press, 1952), p. 45.

²Ibid.

³James Philip Hyatt, The Book of Jeremiah, Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon, 1956), V, 1104.

a God of vengeance is not the concept of the rest of the book of Jeremiah. The second argument is that the oracles contain such few details regarding historical events and are therefore in contrast with the rest of the book of Jeremiah. Another argument is that the critics feel that there is confusion in the oracles which is not found in the other chapters of the book. One more argument is that the attitude of chapters fifty and fifty-one is entirely against Jeremiah's attitude against the Babylonians.⁴ We will discuss and refute these major arguments, since there are many proofs of Jeremiah's authorship of the oracles to the nations.

One of the strongest arguments upholding Jeremiah's authorship of the oracles to the nations is the clear statement found in the book that Jeremiah is the prophet to the nations.⁵ Many items will also be brought from the context upholding this fact.

There has also been much debate over the special section comprising chapters fifty and fifty-one. This section will receive special attention as we point out the fallacies in the critic's methods.⁶

Chapter fifty-two presents a special problem. Who is the author of this chapter? Even very conservative authors

⁴Streane, op. cit., p. 46.

⁵Jer. 1:5.

⁶H. A. Haevernick, Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament. Zweiter Theil. Zweite Abtheilung (Erlangen: Verlag von Carl Heyder, 1844), p. 240.

concede that it was not Jeremiah.⁷ We will give some of the arguments on both sides of the question without coming to a definite conclusion.

Another problem which has been much discussed is the place of the oracles in the book of Jeremiah. Should they be placed into chapter twenty-five? Are they at the right place at the end of the book? Basing our arguments on the Massorete text, we will point out that the logical place is at the end of the book.

The following chapters will deal with these problems and will bring the conservative viewpoint on these problems.

⁷L. Fuerbringer, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1913), p. 70.

CHAPTER II

AUTHENTICITY

Principal Arguments against Authorship of Jeremiah

When we consider the argument against the authorship of Jeremiah, we encounter four principal arguments. There are many arguments of the critics directed against small sections of the oracles to the nations. Some would take out small sections for one or another reason; others would delete entire chapters. At this point we will first consider the principal arguments against the authorship of Jeremiah.

Perhaps the outstanding argument advanced is that the concept of Jehovah in the oracles is not the concept of the rest of the book of Jeremiah. Here in the oracles Jahwe is usually presented as a God of vengeance; and there is no call for the nations to repent. We must concede that Jahwe is presented as a God of vengeance, but only as the avenger of crimes that have actually been committed. Jeremiah is presenting God as God would have him do it. In writing the oracles to the nations, he would naturally present God as He would also appear to the heathen nations, a God of vengeance to punish them for their crimes. Binns makes much of this point that the conception of God in the oracles is not the conception of God in the rest of Jeremiah, but he finally replies and shows that Jeremiah, considering the

message, would present God as a God of vengeance.¹

More than one critic has tried to point to the fact that Jahwe is pictured as a God of vengeance. Cornill quotes Schwally:

Dem Ganzen wirft Schwally vor, es sei eine Ungerechtigkeit, die Heiden fuer Israels Suenden buessen zu lassen: Jahve erscheine hier als Rachegott, der die Heiden als Nichtisraeliten vernichtet, und als absoluter Herr der Welt in einer noch ueber Ezechiel hinausgehenden Weise.²

Cornill does not agree with this argument, but gives a very good refutation of it.

Aber von Rache is nur bei Aegypten aus einem sehr triftigen Grunde die Rede, und wenn Jahve Nebukadnezar herbeifuehrt als Werkzeug seiner Strafe an Juda, so ist es logisch absolut unmoeglich, die diesen von Jahve gewollten Erfolg vorbereitenden und begleitenden Umstaende von einer anderen Kausalitaet herzuleiten: der Gottesbegriff dieser Reden ist durchaus der von Jes 10, v. 5ff; 18, 4ff.³

The second big argument⁴ advanced against the authorship of Jeremiah is that the oracles contain very few details regarding historical events. No king is ever mentioned by name. This fact is in contrast with the general nature of Jeremiah's oracles against Judah and Israel. It is true that these oracles do not contain the same detail and the same names as the oracles against Judah and Israel. These oracles

¹L. E. Binns, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah (London: Methuen and Co., 1919), pp. 318-319.

²Carl Heinrich Cornill, Einleitung in die Kenonischen Buecher des Alten Testaments (Tuebingen: Verlag von J. O. B. Mohr, 1905), p. 191.

³Ibid.

⁴A. W. Streane, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Together with the Lamentations (Cambridge: University Press, 1952), p. 45.

were not written about Judah or Israel; they are about the heathen nations and have a style of their own. There is no reason why they should contain the same detail as the other oracles. It is begging the question to assume that these oracles must contain exactly the same type of material as the oracles against Judah and Israel contain. The message is a different message; therefore the contents are different.

Another of the major arguments against the authorship of Jeremiah is based on the fact that the critics claim that the literary character of these oracles differs from that of the other oracles in the book of Jeremiah. We read such statements as the following:

the oracles to the nations are repetitions and often in confused order, and they contain many verses apparently borrowed from other Old Testament books, especially from Isaiah 15-16, Obadiah and the work of Second Isaiah.⁵

Such a statement shows that the critics will look for needles in haystacks. There is no proof that passages were actually borrowed from other Old Testament sources. Even if Jeremiah had borrowed some manner of expressing a certain thought, it would not disprove his authorship. The omniscient God used the efforts and the talents which He had given His prophets and often gave them similar, if not identical, messages to deliver to His people.

Another argument against the authorship of Jeremiah

⁵James Philip Hyatt, The Book of Jeremiah, Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon, 1956), V, 1104.

is that chapters fifty and fifty-one have an attitude toward the Babylonians which is directly contrary to Jeremiah's attitude during the reign of Zedakaiah the king, when he constantly counseled the people to submit to the Babylonians because the Lord had appointed Nebuchadnezzar as His own servant.⁶ In chapters fifty and fifty-one Jeremiah is foretelling the end of the Babylonian regime. He prophesies judgment and destruction against them. This argument does not take everything into consideration. When Jeremiah prophesied that Nebuchadnezzar was the servant of the Lord, he was stating the truth for the people at that time. They should serve Nebuchadnezzar, who was the servant of the Lord to punish them, but in chapters fifty and fifty-one the prophet is looking into the future. After seventy years of the domination of the Babylonians the destruction will come. The prophet is not changing his attitude; he is only saying what the Lord has told him to prophesy about Babylon at two different times in the history of Babylon.

These are the major arguments raised against the authorship of Jeremiah. Some of the critics go to the extreme of making a claim without even trying to prove it, as Duhm does:

Das keines von diesen Orakeln dem Jer angehoert is schon mehrfach, besonders von SCHWALLY (ZATW 1888 177ff), nachgewiesen; nach meiner Meinung gehoeren sie zu den juengsten Erzeugnissen der Schriftgelehrsamkeit im Jeremiabuch. Sie sind auch vielmehr

⁶Streane, op. cit., p. 47.

reines Produkt der Kunst und Gelehrsamkeit als die meisten Ergaenzungen zu Jeremias Gedichten oder Baruchs Biographie.⁷

He takes it for granted that it is proven without a doubt that Jeremiah is not the author of the oracles to the nations.

Skinner is outspoken in trying to take the authorship from Jeremiah, but he follows the same type of argument.

If we could believe, as some good scholars do, that chap. xlvii contains genuine oracles of Jeremiah, we should have evidence that he watched the struggle . . . but the whole of that chapter is so unlike anything else from the pen of Jeremiah that I must regard it as the work of an anonymous, perhaps contemporary, poet, with a genius akin to that of Nahum. The mixed authorship of the foreign prophecies in chaps. xlviii is generally recognized; and the effort to disentangle a Jeremianic nucleus in the various oracles hardly repays the labour spent upon it.⁸

Others, like Leslie, argue that the different parts of the oracles can be attributed to Jeremiah, but that other parts should be deleted.⁹ So we could take up different parts of the oracles and bring arguments pro and con with regard to their authenticity. However, the bigger sections, such as chapters fifty, fifty-one, and fifty-two, and also the verses 59-64 of chapter fifty-one will be treated in separate chapters of this thesis. Such arguments that smaller sections should be deleted because of one or the

⁷D. Bernh. Duhm, Das Buch Jeremia (Tuebingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1901), p. 337.

⁸John Skinner, Prophecy and Religion (Cambridge: University Press, 1951), p. 239.

⁹Elmer Leslie, Jeremiah (New York: Abingdon, 1954), p. 160.

other reason has been, in my opinion, very well refuted by Haevernick as he states:

die Argumentation Hitzigs ist eine ganz perfide und unwahre. Zeigen sich die angeblich eingeschobenen Stuecke mit dem Jeremianischen Texte genau verbunden, so sagt Hitzig, der interpolator habe "Risse, welche durch das Eindringen des Fremdartigen entstanden, zugeheilt." Zeigt sich Uebereinstimmung mit Jeremianischen Ausdrucksweisen, Redensarten u.s.w. in den angeblich interpolirten Stellen, so sagt H. darauf, der Glossator habe "anderswoher Saetze aus Jerem. hieher verpflanzt." So wird. Vs. 8., "blos ein Extract aus Vs. 21ff." (wo naemlich Jerem. jenen Gedanken weiter ausfuehrt) genannt. Bei Vs. 44, wird der Jeremianische Sprachcharakter durchaus zugegeben, aber dabei bemerkt, diesz sei "Affektation." . . . Gegen diese Art von Beweisfuehrung genuegt es, sie aufzudecken, da hier jede weitere widerlegung Verschwendung waere.¹⁰

The arguments of many of the critics have really been based on such flimsy ground as stated above. Their argument changes to fit the way they would like to have it read, to prove their predisposed conviction.

Jeremiah, Prophet to the Nations

After pointing out the principal arguments against the authorship of Jeremiah, we shall now point out some of the strongest arguments that prove that Jeremiah is the author of the oracles to the nations. The strongest argument of all is the repeated statement in the book of Jeremiah that the prophet is the prophet to the nations.

The call of the Lord to Jeremiah is so clear that it is

¹⁰Dr. H. A. Ch. Haevernick, Handbuch der historisch-kirchlichen Einleitung ind dae Alte Testament (Erlangen: Verlag von Carl Heyder, 1844), pp. 235ff.

difficult to envision anyone saying that Jeremiah did not write the oracles to the nations. In the first chapter of Jeremiah we have verses 5 and 10: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."¹¹ What clearer statement could we ask for? God himself called Jeremiah and gave him the order that he was ordained as a prophet to the nations. God himself proclaims in the first chapter of the book of Jeremiah that He has sent this prophet and has ordained this prophet as a prophet unto the nations. These words are confirmed in the tenth verse, where we read: "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant."¹² These words came to Jeremiah from the Lord at the time the Lord called and ordained him to be His prophet.

In Chapter twenty-five, verses 15 and following again show us that Jeremiah was a prophet to the nations. We read in verse 15: "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it."¹³

¹¹Jeremiah 1:5.

¹²Jeremiah 1:10.

¹³Jeremiah 25:15.

Such clear words of God cannot be ignored or taken out of the text. Jeremiah was sent to the nations; God sent him as His prophet to the nations. Proof is piled upon proof to show that Jeremiah is really the prophet unto the nations.

Another chapter and verse which uphold the call of Jeremiah as prophet to the nations are found in chapter 28, twenty-eight, verse 8: "The prophets that were before me and thee from old time prophesied against many lands and against great kingdoms."¹⁴ Here Jeremiah shows clearly that other prophets had prophesied against heathen nations, and that he considered this prophecy a part of his work.

Chapter twenty-seven is another chapter which must be stricken from the book of Jeremiah if he is not the prophet to the nations. Here he again prophesies directly against nations, he sends messengers to a number of kings, and he demands that they serve Nebuchadnezzar the servant of the Lord.¹⁵ So we see clearly that Jeremiah is the prophet to the nations.

This position is clearly stated by Nowak:

Jeremia hat das Bewusstsein Heidenprophet zu sein und spricht es selbst an mehreren Stellen aus, 1:5. 10, 25: 15ff. In 35:2 besitzten wir von Baruchs Hand oder doch jedenfalls aus guter Quelle eine Nachricht darueber, dass auch das alte Buch Weissagungen ueber alle Heiden enthalten habe. Mag dieser Ausdruck nun auch etwas zu weit gehen, so ist doch hiernach das

¹⁴Jeremiah 28:8.

¹⁵Jeremiah 27.

Vorhandensein einer groesseren Buendels von Heidenorakeln im Alten Buch a priori nich unwahrscheinlich.¹⁶

In spite of these fine words, Nowak goes on to deny that Jeremiah wrote the oracles to the nations.¹⁷

Skinner has a very good chapter on Jeremiah's call as prophet to the nations.¹⁸ He points out that Jeremiah's call has a surprising element over against the calls of Amos and Isaiah and other prophets. Amos had received the call: "Go, prophesy to my people Israel,"¹⁹ while Isaiah had received the call: "Go, speak to this people."²⁰ Hosea had nothing at all to say about the fate of any foreign nation, although his affinities with Jeremiah are the closest among the prophets. Skinner goes on to point out that Jeremiah often shows in his book that he is conscious of the fact that he is the prophet to the nations.²¹

Keil and Delitsch stress Jeremiah's call as prophet to the nations, pointing out its importance and the fact that God had chosen him for this work, to prophesy to the nations. These authors give the conservative viewpoint:

¹⁶W. Nowack, Das Buch Jeremia in Handkommentar zum Alten Testament (uebersetzt und erkluert von Friedrich Giesebrecht, Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Rupprecht, 1892), p. 228.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Skinner, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁹Amos 7:15.

²⁰Isaiah 6:9.

²¹Skinner, loc. cit.

Dieses Wort erging an Jeremia vermittelt geistiger Einsprache, und ist weder Produkt reflectirenden Nachdenkens ueber seinen Beruf, noch Erzeugnis eines unwiderstehlichen Dranges, den er in seinem Innern empfand, als Prophet aufzutreten, sondern eine uebernatuerliche Gottesoffenbarung, die ihm zuteil wurde und sein Geistesleben ekstatisch erhob, dasz er nicht blos die Stimme Gottes vernahm, sondern auch seine Lippen von der Hand Gottes geruehrt fuehlte (v. 9) und dann noch hinter einander zwei Gegenstaende im Geiste sah, welche Gott ihm als bestaetigende Zeichen seiner goettlichen Sendung deutete (v. 11-19). Jeremia's Bestimmung zum Propheten fuer die Voelker beruht auf einem Rathschlusse, den Gott vor seiner Empfaengnis und Geburt gefasst hat.²²

These words give the right viewpoint on Jeremiah's call as prophet to the nations. God called him; it was not a dream or an inner urge of the prophet, or some ecstatic condition which led him to believe that he was the prophet to the nations, but God called him in a supernatural way as He called His prophets.

We must also take into consideration the word which God uses. We read: $\pi' \gamma^3$ the nations, to the nations.

This means not only Judah or Israel, but the nations. Some try to alter the text. Skinner says:

A few critics have thought to get rid of the difficulty by a slight but utterly unacceptable alteration of the text, reading "my nation" instead of "the nations."²³

This statement is clear and again shows how some critics often try to change clear statements to serve their purpose.

The word יְרֵמְיָה is clear. Jeremiah is the prophet sent

²²Carl Friedr. Keil und Franz Delitsch, Der Prophet Jeremia und die Klagelieder (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1872), p. 28.

²³Skinner, op. cit., p. 29.

by God as prophet to the nations.

Duhm especially is a champion of the arguments against Jeremiah's authorship, but Skinner disposes of his arguments showing

now Duhm suggests a partial answer to his own objections when he points out that a tendency to ascribe to the prophets of Israel a commanding influence over the destinies of foreign states appears already in the popular biographies of Elijah and Elisha preserved in the book of the Kings. And that the idea was not strange to Jeremiah's later thinking is seen from the words he addressed to an opponent many years afterwards: "The prophets that were before me and thee from old time prophesied against many lands and against great kingdoms, of war, . . ." (chap. 28:8).--a passage, by the way, whose authenticity Duhm is at pains to affirm.²⁴

The critics have tried either to change or to strike out the two passages, verses 5 and 10 of chapter one. These verses don't fit their theory, that Jeremiah did not write the oracles to the nations. Stade proposed to alter "the nations" to read "my nation," and thus to bring Jeremiah's commission into agreement with what he believed to have been the scope of Amos's work.²⁵ The words in verse 10, "over the nations and over the kingdoms to overturn and to build up," don't suit many. "Naturally Duhm, with all who, like him, are unable to suppose that Jeremiah could conceive himself to be a prophet to the nations, strikes out the whole verse (v. 10), because it expresses the same idea in another form."²⁶

²⁴Skinner, loc. cit.

²⁵Adam Welch, Jeremiah: His Time and His Work (New York: Macmillan, 1951), p. 38.

²⁶Ibid., p. 43.

Considering all of the clear passages which cannot be stricken from the text, we come to the conclusion that Jeremiah is the prophet to the nations. This is a strong argument in favor of his authorship of the oracles to the nations.

Context Supports Authorship of Jeremiah

There are many other items in the context besides the clear call to Jeremiah as prophet to the nations which prove the authorship of Jeremiah for chapters forty-six to fifty-one. Jeremiah receives the two visions which are explained by the Lord, and in verses 14 and 15 we have a clear statement that punishment will come from the north over the Israelites. In verses 17 and 18 of the first chapter we hear that the Lord tells Jeremiah that He will be with him against the whole earth, even if all are against him.

In chapter eighteen, verses 7-10 the Lord shows that He has the absolute power over all the nations. This statement strengthens the point of view that Jeremiah was sent to the nations.

Chapter twenty-five is full of prophecies against the nations, verses 11 and 12 predict the end of the reign of the king of Babylon. Many nations are mentioned by name in later verses of the same chapter, all proving that Jeremiah was a prophet to the nations.

Chapter twenty-seven shows us that the Lord sent yokes and bonds to a number of nations through messengers.

The date given in this chapter clearly demonstrates that Jeremiah is a prophet to the nations.

When we study chapter twenty-eight, we note that Jeremiah did not limit the task of his predecessors to Israel. This is shown clearly in his attitude over against the prophet Hananish. Jeremiah's remark (Jer. 28:8) about the work of the prophets before him shows that he knows that the prophets did not prophesy only to Israel, but also against many countries and great kingdoms.

Chapter twenty-nine, especially from the tenth verse on, gives a strong prophecy against the Babylonians. Again and again we note that the context supports the view that Jeremiah is the prophet to the nations.

We have two separate sections which deal with prophecies against Egypt. Chapter forty-three predicts the future of Egypt. In Chapter forty-four we also have some predictions against Egypt.

Word studies will also show us that Jeremiah wrote the oracles to the nations. We will take up these studies in the section which deals with the authenticity of chapters fifty to fifty-one.

The clear call to Jeremiah as prophet to the nations, seconded by the many statements in the context, prove that Jeremiah, the prophet to the nations, wrote the oracles to the nations.

Comparison with Other Books

Jeremiah follows the example of the other prophets in his prophesy against the heathen nations. Amos, Isaiah, and Ezekiel also have prophecies against the nations. However, the prophet Amos has a different purpose in his oracles to the nations. When Amos speaks about the six nations which are around Israel, he uses these prophecies more as an introduction to the proclamation of judgment over Judah and Israel, and in order to show that it is necessary to have this judgment over the entire world in order to bring the progress of the kingdom of God.²⁷ In the Ten Masses (Is. 13-23) Isaiah brings the thought that all kingdoms, nations, cities, and people should be humbled and must come to Israel's God to submit themselves to Him and to do what they can to build God's kingdom. Finally he closes with a revelation of the judgment over the whole earth and the fulfillment of the kingdom of God in glory.²⁸

Ezekiel prophesies showing that the kingdoms of the earth, of the heathen nations, are being used to bring God's judgment upon his people, but these heathen kingdoms should know that they are only instruments of God's judgment.²⁹

²⁷Keil und Delitsch, op. cit., p. 433.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

Jeremiah carries this thought further and shows the judgment that God will bring upon these heathen nations.³⁰

Hosea has been called the Jeremiah of the Northern kingdom.³¹ They have much in common in subject matter. They both look back on the wilderness days, when Israel was like a faithful spouse, as being the best period in the national history (Jer. 11:2ff; Hos. 1:3; 8:5). Both denounced the sins of idolatry and moral corruption. We have the descriptions of idolatry as adultery and whoredom in both books. In a general comparison of the two prophets we see that Hosea has no conception of the relation of Jahwe to the individual apart from the nation and therefore no presentiment of Jeremiah's profound idea of the new covenant.³²

When we consider the oracles to the nations, we notice quite a few parallels to other oracles to the nations. In chapter forty-six, verse 10 we see the day of vengeance mentioned. The prophet Zephaniah speaks much of this day in his first chapter.

In chapter forty-seven Jeremiah describes Nebuchadnezzar as a flood that will come over the land. We see a parallel to this in Isaiah 8:7, where the Assyrians are spoken of as a flood. Amos also uses this expression in 3:8.

The forty-eighth chapter reminds us of the prophet

³⁰Ibid., p. 434.

³¹Streane, op. cit., p. 27.

³²Ibid.

Isaiah. Both prophets write of the evil which will come upon Moab, and both prophets weep for Moab. Jeremiah, in chapter forty-eight, expresses his sorrow over Moab (31:16). Isaiah writes of this in two chapters (15:5; 15:11).

Fuerbringer, speaking of Jeremiah, says:

Mit Vorliebe Lehnt er sich an das Gesetz und an
 ältere Propheten an, . . . vgl. z. B. Jer. 48, 5
 mit Jes. 15, 5; Jer. 49, 14-16 mit Obadja 1-4.³³

The comparison of the oracles to the nations with the work of other prophets results favorably with the authorship of Jeremiah of the oracles to the nations. We see how the other prophets also brought similar messages. We note a number of parallels with other prophets. We again see how God used His prophets to bring His message down through the ages.

We have noted the main arguments against Jeremiah's authorship of the oracles to the nations and have shown the weakness of these critical arguments. On the other hand, we have seen that Jeremiah is the prophet to the nations, that the context supports his authorship of the oracles to the nations, and that a comparison with other prophets results favorably to the theory of Jeremiah's authorship of the oracles to the nations.

We will continue with the special problems which confront us in chapters fifty, fifty-one, and fifty-two.

³³Fuerbringer, op. cit., p. 68.

Opinions of Conservative Critics

A number of conservative critics bring strong arguments in favor of Jeremiah's authorship of the oracles to the nations. Some of these arguments are the following:

In der Frage nach Entstehung und Verfasser der Voelkergedichte gehen die Auffassungen weit auseinander. In der Meinung, dass Jeremia nur als Gerichtskuender und Buszprediger fuer Juda aufgetreten sei, haben Schwally, Stade, Smend und Duhm die Echtheit der Voelkersprueche grundsatzlich bestritten. Allein, ist es an sich schon unwahrscheinlich, dass Jeremia angesichts der weltpolitischen Umwaelzungen seiner Zeit, die ueber die verschiedenen Voelker hereinbrachen, sich lediglich mit dem Schicksal Judas befasst habe, so deuten doch Worte wie 1, 10; 12, 14ff.; 25, 15ff.; 36, 2; 43, 8ff. darauf hin, dass auch die Botschaft an die Voelker im Bereich seines Prophetischen Auftrags gelegen, und Jeremia sich in dieser Hinsicht von einem Amos, Jesaja, und Ezechiel grundsatzlich nicht unterschieden hat.³⁴

Die Weissagungen Jeremia's tragen durchweg so deutlich den Stempel der stark ausgepraegten Individualitaet dieses Propheten, dass ihre Echtheit im Groszen und Ganzen auch von der neueren Kritik unangefochten geblieben ist. Hitzig z. B. haelt dieselbe fuer so unzweifelfaft, dass er in den Vorbemerkungen zu seinem Comment. sie ohne weiteres voraussetzt, und Ewald bemerkt nach Derlegung des Buches, dass eine grosse Gleichheit in Ausdruck, Haltung und Farbe sich durch alle Stuecke desselben hindurchzieht, so bedeutend, dass man ueberall denselben Propheten hoert.³⁵

Fuerst brings a number of arguments in favor of Jeremiah's authorship of the oracles to the nations. He comes to the conclusion that Jeremiah wrote the entire book

³⁴Volkmar Hertrich, Jeremia der Prophet und sein Volk (Gueterslo, 1938), p. 389.

³⁵Keil und Delitsch, op. cit., p. 22.

and arranged it in the order in which it is now found.

"Jiremia hat sein Buch selbst geordnet und niedergeschrieben."³⁶

Fuerbringer is also very concise in his statements and his opinion of the attacks of the critics. His statements point out that the entire book of Jeremiah clearly shows signs of the authorship of Jeremiah. He states:

Die Authentie und integritaet des Buches ist bis in die neuere Zeit unangefochten geblieben, da das ganze Buch den Stempel der stark markierten und leicht erkennbaren individualitaet Jeremias traegt. Die Gruende, mit denen moderne Kritiker (Strack, Koenig, Cornill) einzelne Kapitel und Kapitelteile dem Jeremia absprechen und als interpolationen des Deuteriojesaja oder als mehr oder weniger von diesem "Unbekannten" ueberarbeitete Stuecke bezeichnen, sind nicht berechtigt.³⁷

Lange adds his testimony to that of other conservative scholars as he states that we have received the pure text as Jeremiah wrote it. He declares:

Obwohl Jeremia zu den Propheten gehoert, die am meisten gelesen wurden, so koennen wir doch sagen, dass wir seinen Text im Ganzen rein und unverfaelscht ueberliefert erhalten haben.³⁸

Haevernich points out how the prophets were so very careful that the words they prophesied were rightly written down. They did not leave this to chance, but carefully watched the entire procedure. Haevernich makes this a strong

³⁶ Julius Fuerst, Der Kanon des Alten Testaments (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1868), p. 17.

³⁷ Fuerbringer, op. cit., p. 69.

³⁸ J. P. Lange, Bibelwerk des Alten Testaments (Bielefeld und Leipzig: Verlag von Volhagen und Klsing, 1868), XV, xx.

point as he writes:

Aber wir wissen auch, wie sorglich unter den Augen des Propheten dies geschah und welchen gewissenhaften Haenden jenes Geschaeft anvertraut war.³⁹

In summing up all these authorities we come to the conclusion that Jeremiah, the prophet to the nations, called by God, wrote the oracles to the nations. He had the call to prophesy to the nations, and the words written do not depart from his style. They, in themselves, give enough proof of his authorship, even without the stamp written: Thus far the words of Jeremiah.

³⁹Haevernick, op. cit., p. 221.

CHAPTER III

AUTHENTICITY OF CHAPTERS FIFTY TO FIFTY-ONE

Chapters fifty and fifty-one have been the chapters which have received the most attacks from the critics. Quite a number of critics are willing to concede that Jeremiah wrote chapters forty-six to forty-nine, even though they attack some parts of these chapters, but when they come to these two chapters they know no bounds in their criticism. They try to paint these two chapters as chapters that have poor content, chapters that are far from reality. They present quite a number of arguments, which when examined, fail to prove their point. Let us examine a number of the arguments of some of the critics.

One of the strongest points which a number of critics try to make against the authorship of Jeremiah (chapters fifty to fifty-one) is that there is quite a bit of repetition in this section. The critics claim that the work of Jeremiah appears at isolated places, although at many isolated places in this section. They also claim that these sections have been reworded or reworked from other parts of Jeremiah. Some of the remarks of the critics are the following:

Da Jer. auch sonst nicht selten sich selbst zu wiederholen pflegt, so koennte diesz auf den ersten Blick sogar ein guenstiges Vorurtheil fuer seine Abfassung von Jer. selbst erwecken. Allein Jeremia wiederholt sich mehr im Groszen und Ganzen und wird bei seinen Wiederholungen sich nicht selber untreu; hier aber

blickt das Jeremianische nur an einzelnen, wenn auch sehr zahlreichen Stellen durch, und die wiederholten Stellen werden oft gaenzlich umgearbeitet und versondert; was also hier als Jeremianisch erscheint, ist vielmehr gelehrt Wiederholung und Nachahmung, die hier desto staerker sein muesste, da das Stueck wirklich als eine Schrift Jeremias gelten sollte. (Ewald).¹

Another critic writes the following:

Die Weissagung gegen Babel C. 50 u. 51 soll entweder unecht oder von Deutero-Jesajo interpoliert sein: wegen der "vielen Wiederholungen, bei denen das Jeremianische nur an einzelnen, wenn auch zahlreichen Stellen durchblickt und die wiederholten Stellen oft gaenzlich umgearbeitet und versondert sind."²

It is quite interesting to note the reasoning of the critics. When the proofs of Jeremiah's authorship lie in the context, they claim that it is overdone, that the authors [?] tried to ape the writings of Jeremiah and wrote even more like Jeremiah than the author himself. I am of the opinion that Haevernick again brings one of the best arguments against the critics.

In dieser Argumentation findet ein greller widerspruch staat. Einerseits soll der Faelscher dieser Weissagung die Absicht gehabt haben, durch jene Wiederholungen seiner Arbeit ein Jeremianisches colorit zu geben, also desto besser zu taeuschen, gleichwohl soll er die Stellen des Jerem. "gaenzlich umgearbeitet und veraendert haben."³

This argument of the critics is really a boomerang. It

¹H. A. Haevernick, Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Zweiter Theil. Zweite Abtheilung. Erlangen: Verlag von Carl Heyder, 1844), p. 240.

²Carl Friedrich Keil, Lehrbuch der Historisch-Kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Frankfurt A/M: Verlag von Heyder und Zimmer, 1873), p. 288.

³Haevernick, op. cit., p. 240.

gives a convincing evidence that Jeremiah is the author of the two chapters in question. The evidence of the context points to Jeremiah as the author.

The second big argument advanced by the critics against the authorship of Jeremiah of chapters fifty and fifty-one is that new thoughts which are entirely foreign to Jeremiah are introduced in these chapters--thoughts which point to a time later in history. The fall of Babylon is pictured. The critics claim that this picture is not according to Jeremiah's thought. The Medes are pictured as the conquerors of Babylon, and the critics claim that Jeremiah could not have foreseen the Medes as conquerors of Babylon. What are the facts? The critics fail to see the difference between the prophecy for the near future and the distant future. Jeremiah prophesied that Babylon would conquer Judah, that Israel would be captive. He pointed to Babylon as the servant of the Lord, but he points out in these chapters that the time will come when Babylon has served the Lord, and the Lord will then chastise her for her sins. You have served your purpose; now it is your turn to receive your punishment for your sins.

The critics are quoted by Haevernick as saying:

Man sagt weiter, der Untergang Babels werde hier als nahe bevorstehend geschildert, waehrend sonst Jerem. die Aussicht auf die Befreiung als eine ferne darstelle, wie Kap. 25, 27.⁴

⁴Ibid., p. 241.

Keil names a number of critics who try to argue that there are thoughts foreign to Jeremiah's way of thinking in the oracles to the nations. He then sums up their arguments as follows:

Wegen der neuen Jeremia voellig fremden Gedanken und Worte die auf eine spaetere Zeit hinfuehren: Babel bereits von Kyros unmittelbar bedroht; ein voellig entartetes, der letzten Zerstoerung nicht mehr zu entgehen vermoegendes Reich; die prophetisch heftige Empoerung gegen die chaldaeischen Zwingherrs und die offene Aufforderung an alle in Babel lebenden Brueder zur Flucht aus . . . alles dies ist dem Jeremia fremd, widerstreitend, ja unmoeglich.⁵

All this, however, points to the fact that Jeremiah was a true prophet of God. He not only pointed out the events of the near future, but also what would happen in the distant future. The fact that Jeremiah speaks of the Medes as the principal enemies of Babylon is not against his authorship, but for it. Haevernick rightly states: "Beachtenswerth is dabei der Umstand, das Jerem. gerade die Meder und nicht die Perser nennt, welches nur zu Gunsten der Aechtheit spricht."⁶

A third main argument of the critics against the authorship of Jeremiah for chapters fifty and fifty-one is that they claim there are so many words which are written in this section that describe the names, but do not give the names directly. They claim that Jeremiah never does this.

⁵Keil, op. cit., p. 288.

⁶Haevernick, op. cit., p. 243.

In this section the words יְהוָה for יְהוָה 51:41, and יְהוָה for יְהוָה in 51:1. Ewald, Hitzig and others⁷ try to prove this point. But in their arguments they forget that Jeremiah loved this sort of play on words. We need only look at Jeremiah 20:3 and 25:26 to find several examples of this. In Jeremiah 25:26 he already calls Babylon בָּבֶל . Haevernick again comes up with the right statement as he shows us that this play on words is exactly what Jeremiah often used:

Man vgl. z. B. 20, 3 und besonders die Namensänderungen und Anspielungen auf ihre Bedeutung in Kap. 22. Daraus ergibt sich dasz dies gerade recht Jeremianische Manier ist, wie bei keinem andern Propheten. In unserm Falle kommt noch der besondere guenstige Umstand hinzu, dasz Ezechiel 23, 23 auf diese Stellen des Jerem. theilweise sich zurueckbezieht.⁸

So again we see how the critics try to take an argument that is for Jeremiah's authorship of the oracles to the nations and turn it around. The word play is a strong argument for Jeremiah's authorship.

Another of the big arguments of the critics is the fact that they find many words in the oracles in these two chapters which to them belong to a later time and first appear in the work of the prophet Ezekiel. Ewald claims that יְהוָה and יְהוָה (chap. 51:23), and יְהוָה (chap. 50:2), יְהוָה as false prophets in 50:36, also יְהוָה (chap. 50:21), are all words that appear only after the death of Jeremiah.⁹

⁷Ibid., p. 240.

⁸Ibid., p. 238.

⁹Ibid., p. 239.

But this argument brings into consideration words which in part already appear in the Old Testament. Jeremiah himself uses the word $\Pi' 7 \Pi \Pi$ (chap. 25:9), although Ezekiel uses it more often. $\Pi' 7 \Pi \Pi$ is taken from the Pentateuch (Lev. 26:30; Deut. 29:16). $\Pi' 7 \Pi$ is also in the book of the prophet Isaiah (Is. 44:25). But we must really wonder why the critics believe that Ezekiel, who was a contemporary of Jeremiah, should have such a different vocabulary. Their vocabularies should have much in common.¹⁰ Besides this, we find so many words in Jeremiah that were not used before in the Old Testament, not only in chapters fifty and fifty-one.¹¹

Another argument used by the critics is that there is a close relationship between chapters 50:27 and 51:40 with chapter 34:6ff of the book of the prophet Isaiah. They also point out the close relationship between Jeremiah 50:39 and Isaiah 34:16. It is true that there is a close relationship between these chapters, but this does not prove that Jeremiah is not the author of the oracles to the nations. Jeremiah could have read the works of Isaiah and then followed his thoughts in his prophecy. The Lord undoubtedly gave them both the same message to deliver to His people.

Keil and Delitsch quote Graf and give the result of his research as follows:

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

Die Weissagung enthaelt nichts, was Jer. im 4ten Jahre das Sedekija nicht haette schreiben koennen, und die Schreibart selbst zeigt alle die in seinen Buche hervortretenden Eigentuemlichkeiten. Diese Weissagung ist ebensowohl sein Werk wie die Weissagungen gegen die uebrigen auswaertigen Voelker.¹²

Summing up the arguments of the critics, we find that almost all the arguments brought against Jeremiah's authorship are in reality strong arguments for it. The repetition, the prophecy against Babylon, the play on words, the so-called words used only at later times, the relationship between parts of these chapters and parts of Isaiah, all strengthen the point of view that Jeremiah wrote these two chapters. We have so much proof that we need not add the last words of the chapter: "Thus far the words of Jeremiah." This last section of chapter fifty-one will be taken up in the next chapter of our thesis.

¹²Carl Friedr. Keil und Franz Delitsch, Der Prophet Jeremia und die Klagelieder (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1872), p. 496.

CHAPTER IV

AUTHENTICITY OF CHAPTER FIFTY-ONE

VERSES FIFTY-NINE TO SIXTY-FOUR

This passage stands as a sequel to the prophecy against Babylon comprising the fiftieth and fifty-first chapters. It shows that after the prophet had written the prophecy against Babylon, he gave it to Seraish to carry to Babylon. The prophet also gave him explicit instructions as to what he was to do with this prophecy against Babylon. A number of objections have been raised against the authenticity of this section, and some of the critics have tried to place the prophecy at different places in the book.

Rosenmueller and other German critics have strenuously denied the authenticity of this section.¹ They maintain that it is incredible that Jeremiah should send such a prophecy to Babylon at a time when it would be necessary to conciliate and to preserve the goodwill of the Chaldeans, especially in view of the fact that he sent the prophecy in company of the king of Judah who went to Babylon for the express purpose of conciliating the Chaldeans.

Cowles² answer him that this is a misconception of

¹Henry Cowles, Jeremiah and His Lamentations (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1887), p. 362.

²Ibid.

the case, since it is not affirmed that this prophecy was to be read to the Chaldeans; it was not even supposed to be brought to their knowledge, at least not at this critical time. The entire prophecy shows that it was intended for the Jewish exiles. The entire context of the prophecy contains exhortations to them personally. It instructed the exiles to prevent them from settling there permanently; this prophecy brought them the hope of a restoration after Babylon would fall. Perhaps it was read to the Chaldeans in a future period when it would have served for their moral benefit.

However, Volz³ finds this impossible. He asks how it is possible to harmonize chapter 29:7 with this section. How could Jeremiah tell the people to pray for the peace of the city and at the same time secretly curse the city? Rudolph answers him showing how he again mixes the present with the future. The captives should pray for the peace of the city for the present. In the future God's judgment will come over the city. "Damit ist von Jer auch der Schein 'juedischer Reuchelei' genommen (nach aussen loyal, im Innern ein 'Ferment der Dekomposition')." ⁴

Another objection brought by Rosenmueller⁵ is that no man in his senses would destroy the permanent record of

³Wilhelm Rudolph, Jeremiah (Tuebingen: Mohr, 1947), p. 275.

⁴Ibid., p. 276.

⁵Cowles, loc. cit.

such a prophecy. This is again an assumption. He brings no proof for such an assumption. It is not stated that this was the only copy of the prophecy. If so, where did our copy come from? There was a symbolical object in casting this copy into the water. The symbolic act would make a strong impression for the great truth it taught.

Duhm⁶ argues that this section was added at some later time, for he believes that the ending of verse 64 belongs right after verse 58. He holds that this section was added and the ending repeated.

Weiser is also of the opinion that this section is a section that was added at a later time. He argues:

Die jetztige Stellung und die Form der Erzählung v. 59-64 deuten darauf hin, dass die spätere Redaktion in dem grossen Babelgedicht 50, 1-51, 58 den Inhalt der Drohschrift erblickte, ueber deren Schicksal in V. 59-64 berichtet ist. Waere diese Auffassung richtig, denn waere der Bericht als spätere midraschartige Erzählung von Zweifelhaftem historischen Wert zu beurteilen (so Ewald, Giesebrecht, Dähm, Volz).⁷

Perhaps the strongest argument which the critics try to advance against this section is that they find that the repetition of the word דָּלַל argues that this section should really come before 50:1. Keil and Delitsch sum up the arguments of a number of the critics and refute them with clear statements.

⁶Bernh. Duhm, Das Buch Jeremia (Tuebingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1901), p. 375.

⁷Artur Weiser, Das Buch des Propheten Jeremia (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Rupprecht, 1952-1955), p. 447.

Die Bedeutung der wiederholung des לָא יִדְּוּ verkennend haben Nov. Hitz. u. Gr. darauf verschiedene haltlose conjecturen gebaut. Nov. folgert daraus die Unechtheit des ganzen Epilogs, Hitz. u. Gr. schlieszen daraus, dass die Schlussworte $\text{לָא יִדְּוּ דְּזִכְרֵי יְהוָה לְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵי}$

urspruenglich hinter v. 58 gestanden haetten und der Epilog (v. 59-64), da derselbe von dem groszen Orakel gegen Babel sich durchaus nicht trennen lasse, urspruenglich dem Orakel vor 50, 1 vorausgegangen, spaeter aber an das Ende gestellt worden sei, wobei der Urheber dieser Umstellung die Schlussbemerkung $\text{וְזִכְרֵי יְהוָה לְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵי}$ von v. 58 getrennt und an

den Schluss des epilogs gesetzt, dabei aber zugleich das לָא יִדְּוּ mit heruebergenommen habe, um anzudeuten

dass die worte d. h. Weissagungen Jeremia's genau nur bis dorthin gehen. In der That eine gann ueberfluessige Andeutung, da es keinem verstaendigen Leser in den Sinn kommen konnte, den Epilog v. 59-64 fuer einen integrireden Bestandteil der Weissagung selbst zu halten. Und die Stellung des Epilogs vor 50, 1 waere sinnlos gewesen.⁸

In my opinion, Lange gives one of the best refutations of this argument of the critics. He argues:

If the word לָא יִדְּוּ is not genuine it can only have come here through the transposition of the following words, "thus far," etc., with which the copyist, through carelessness or of purpose, connected this. This, however, involves the authenticity of vers. 59-64 or their original position before 50, 1. Hitzig says the passage "bears some marks of genuineness, none of the contrary," and it is incredible that it stood before 50, 1, since it would then appear that this great prophecy was only of secondary importance. If, then, vers. 59-64 are genuine and in their original position, the same must be said of the concluding words, since they could never have had their position before v. 59. A copyist could not have added by mistake. Jeremiah, then, must have done it. His object probably was to give a token of identity to

⁸ Carl Friedr. Keil und Franz Delitsch, Der Prophet Jeremia und die Klagelieder (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1872), pp. 533, 534.

the sinking prophecy by an unmistakable quotation from it. The ancient translations, with the exception of the LXX., which is of no authority, all express the word.⁹

Some of the critics bring strong attacks against other sections of the oracles to the nations, yet agree that this section was written by Jeremiah. Streane, who does not accept Jeremiah's authorship of the rest of chapters fifty and fifty-one, argues for the genuineness of this section. He argues:

The rejection as non-Jeremianic of the preceeding prophecy against Babylon by no means need involve suspicion of this section. Here impassioned denunciation finds no place and the forecast of the overthrow of the great Eastern power is quite in keeping with the attitude of the prophet in xxxix 10 in limiting her dominion over Israel to 70 years. . . . That Zedekiah should himself visit Babylon at this time here specified has already been shown to be by no means improbable.¹⁰

Bewer brings a number of arguments for the validity of Jeremiah's authorship of this section. He points out that there is no reason to doubt the journey to Babylon in 593 B. C., when Zedekiah had reason to clear himself of the suspicion of complicity in the plotted rebellion. He also points out that Jeremiah had a dual purpose in prophecy—to warn and to threaten the people in Jerusalem

⁹ John Peter Lange, Jeremiah in Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1871), p. 431.

¹⁰ A. W. Streane, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Together with the Lamentations (Cambridge: University Press, 1952), p. 310.

and to calm the exiles so that they should not nourish their unfulfillable hopes. Jeremiah knew that the fall of Babylon should not be published, but the word must be spoken aloud in order to release its power, so he sent the prophecy to Babylon to the exiles.¹¹

Cornill also argues for the validity of Jeremiah's authorship of this section. He argues:

Anderseits ist aber die Anlehnung an Jeremia in dem ganzen Stueck zu merklich und beabsichtigt, um als blosser Zufall gelten zu koennen. Die Erklaerung dieser Tatasche bietet das erzaehlende Schlussstueck 51, 59-64, dessen Echtheit Budde eben so ueberzeugen dargetan . . . Offenbar soll und will 50, 2-51, 58 die jeremianische Drohwaisseung wider Babel sein, welche Seraja damals in den Euphrat versenkt hat.¹²

Summing up all the arguments, we come to the conclusion that Jeremiah wrote the section in question and that it is in its rightful place after the oracle to Babylon.

¹¹ Julius A. Bewer, The Book of Jeremiah (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), II, 84.

¹² Carl Heinrich Cornill, Einleitung in die Kanonischen Buecher des Alten Testaments (Tuebingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1905), p. 193.

CHAPTER V

AUTHORSHIP OF JEREMIAH, CHAPTER FIFTY-TWO

Quite a number of critics hold that Jeremiah fifty-two is a copy of II Kings. However, on the other side of the question comes the exact opposite, that Jeremiah is also the author of II Kings. In some of the older books we read quite a bit about this theory, which has some points for it.

The idea of Jeremiah's authorship of both the sections in question is held by a number of church fathers and by Talmudists, as Hertwig states:

Die Talmudisten und einige Kirchenvaeter nennen den Propheten Jeremias oder einen Schueler desselben wegen (a) der linguistischen u. Ideen-Verwandtschaft dieses Buches (Die Buecher der Koenige) mit den Schriften des Jeremias; (b) wegen der gleichen Vorliebe des Verfassers fuer das Entleihen von Redensarten aus dem Pentat. und der sorgaeltigen Bezugnahme auf fruehrer Weissagungen; (c) wegen der fast woertlichen uebereinstimmung von II Koen. 24, 13ff. mit Jer. 3.¹

Fuerst is dogmatic in his viewpoint. He states clearly that he considers Jeremiah the author of the books of Kings and also of chapter fifty-two. He states:

¹Otto Rob. Hertwig, Tabellen zur Einleitung in die Kanonischen und Apokryphischen Buecher des Alten Testaments (Berlin: Verlag von G. W. F. Mueller, 1856), p. 36.

Jirmija hat sein Buch selbst geordnet und niedergeschrieben, wie er auch seine Klagelieder und das Buch der Koenige redigirt hat.²

In another section of his book, we read:

Was den Orderdes Buchs der Koenige anlangt, so soll der Ueberlieferung zufolge der Prophet Jirmija gewesen sein, und zwar nach Benutzung der theile ausdruecklich genannten, theils ungenannten Quellen.³

Neumann, like many others, does not accept this theory, that Jeremiah is also the author of II Kings. He argues:

Nichtminder verfehlt erachten wir den Beweis, dass Jeremia Verfasser der Buecher der Koenige, oder gar, wie Tostatus Abulensis meinte, auch der Buecher Samuelis sei. Denn der ganze Beweis stuetzt sich einmal auf die unerwiesene Annahme, dass die historischen Buecher von den Ordnern des Kanons darum die fruerehen Propheten genannt worden seien, weil sie von Propheten geschrieben, und sodann auf das noch viel prekaere Argument aus der Uebereinstimmung von II Koen. 25 mit Jeremias 52.⁴

Most of the critics argue that chapter fifty-two was taken from II Kings and added to the book of Jeremiah.

²Julius Fuerst, Der Kanon des Alten Testaments (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1856), p. 17.

³Ibid., p. 14.

⁴Wilhelm Neumann, Jeremias von Anathoth (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1856), I, 75.

Herntrich,⁵ Keil and Delitsch,⁶ Driver,⁷ Rudolph,⁸ and others all are for this viewpoint.

Fuerbringer states:

52, vgl. mit II Koen, 24, 18-25, 30; aber dieser Anhang ist schon durch die Unterschrift, 51, 64, als ein Nachtrag bezeichnet, der von einem andern heiligen, aber juengeren Schreiber, vielleicht von Baruch, herruehren wird.⁹

Lange states that the final words of chapter fifty-one prove that chapter fifty-two does not procede from Jeremiah himself, but that it is the addition of another person.¹⁰

However, Haevernick points out that we should not just say that Jeremiah was too old to have written this chapter. Yet he does not try to prove that Jeremiah wrote this chapter. He takes no position on this point.¹¹

⁵Volkmar Herntrich, Jeremia der Prophet und sein Volk (Gueterslo, 1938), p. 449.

⁶S. RR. Driver, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), p. 328.

⁷Carl Friedr. Keil und Franz Delitsch, Der Prophet Jeremia und die Klagelieder (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1872), p. 536.

⁸Wilhelm Rudolph, Jeremiah (Tuebingen: Mohr, 1947), p. 275.

⁹L. Fuerbringer, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1913), p. 70.

¹⁰John Peter Lange, "Jeremiah," Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, translation by Philip Schaff (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids 2, Michigan, 1871), p. 432.

¹¹H. A. Haevernick, Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Zweiter Theil, Zweite Abtheilung. Erlangen: Verlag von Carl Heyder, 1844), p. 429.

Laetsch also comes to no definite conclusion as to the authorship of this chapter. He writes:

We cannot determine whether this chapter was added by Baruch, or some other person, or by Jeremiah himself, who may have lived to see Jehoischin delivered from prison by Evil-Merodach, the son and successor of Nebuchednezzar, 562-561. According to one tradition, Jeremiah was slain by the Jews in Egypt; according to a Jewish tradition, Nebuchadnezzar, after his conquest of Egypt, 568/7, transported Jeremiah and Baruch to Babylon, where Jeremiah died peacefully.¹²

We prefer to leave this question open. There is quite a bit of evidence on both sides of the question.

¹²Dr. Theo. Laetsch, Bible Commentary Jeremiah (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1952), p. 368.

Editor of the critical text is following the LXX version, although the majority follow the Masoretic version. The point that is debated is whether the LXX text is based on another original Hebrew text other than the one we have, the one adopted by the translators, or whether it is a translation, or possibly a very adaptation, of the Hebrew text. The identity of these questions will then also be cleared up.

Prof. Laetsch:

After the innumerable instances given above of the arbitrariness and capriciousness of the Alexandrian translators, it is altogether inadvisable to give this new edition—for one can scarcely call it a translation—any critical authority, or to draw from it any conclusion.

¹³H. Borch, Buch des Propheten Jeremia (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1908), p. 368.

CHAPTER VI

PLACE IN THE BOOK

There has been quite a bit of dispute about whether these oracles belong at the place they now have in the book or after chapter twenty-five, verse 15. Duhm claims that this is a point that has no value as he states:

Aber ueber die Stelle, die sie im Jeremiahbuch haben sollten, sich den Kopf zu zerbrechen, haette dann einen Sinn, wenn dies Buch im Uebrigen gut und vermuentlig disponiert waere.¹

However, there has been much dispute on this point since the LXX brings this section in chapter twenty-five. Quite a few of the critics try to follow the LXX version, although the majority follow the Massorete version. The point that is debated is whether the LXX text is based on another original Hebrew text other than the one we know, the one adopted by the Massoretes, or whether it is a translation, or should we say adaptation, of the known Hebrew text. The location of these chapters will then also be cleared up.

Graf says:

After the innumerable instances given above of the arbitrariness and capriciousness of the Alexandrian translator, it is altogether impossible to give his new edition--for one can scarcely call it a translation--any critical authority, or to draw from it any conclusion.

¹D. Bernh. Duhm, Das Buch Jeremiah (Tuebingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1901), p. 336.

as to the Hebrew text having ever existed in a different form from that in which we have it at present.²

Keil and Delitsch wish to underscore this statement of Graf's, since they so wholeheartedly agree with it.³

Bleck points out that in earlier times it was the unanimous opinion that the Hebrew text was the original and that the differences found in the Septuagint were due to the arbitrariness and capriciousness of the adaptor. Jermoe already considered this so, as did many other earlier critics. Also De Wette is of the opinion that the differences are due to the translator.⁴ However, Bleck goes on to say that Eichhorn Bertholdt u. A. believed that the translator used a different Hebrew original.⁵ But even Ewald comes back to the point that the translator made the changes.⁶ On this point Bleck quotes A. Kueper, Haevernick, Joh. Wichelhaus and Keil as declaring themselves for the

²A. W. Streane, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Together with the Lamentations (Cambridge: University Press, 1952), p. xlv.

³Carl Friedr. Keil und Franz Delitsch, Der Prophet Jeremia und die Klagelieder (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1872), p. 24.

⁴Friedrich Bleck, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1893), pp. 318-319.

⁵Ibid., p. 319.

⁶Ibid.

integrity of the Massorete Text. They declare that all the differences are due to the translator into the LXX.⁷

Bleek himself gives the LXX too much credit. We note his reasoning.

Die Uebersetzung der Sept. ist bei diesem Buche teilweise so Wortgetreu und dermassen sich an den Hebraeischen Ausdruck anschliessend, dass es schon deshalb durchaus unwahrscheinlich ist, dass der oder die Uebersetzter selbst sich anderswo und an so vielen Stellen solche willkuerliche Aenderungen und besonders Auslassungen sollten erlaubt haben, als der Fall muesste gewesen sein, wenn von ihnen alle die Aenderungen herruehrten, welche ihr Text gegen den Hebrbeischen-masorethischen darbietet. . . . Es laesst sich daher zuvoerderst das als sicher feststellen, dass schon die Griechischen Uebersetzter einen im Wesentlichen so gestalteten Hebraeischen Text unseres Buches vorgefunden haben, als worauf ihre Uebersetzung fuehrt.⁸

Streane also takes this point of view as he states:

This charge of capriciousness, however, does not seem to be securely based, and may safely be set aside. It remains therefore to assume that their translation is a fairly close rendering of the Hebrew text which lay before them, and to ask further which of the two has a better claim to be taken as representing the original.⁹

In speaking of the difference between the two manuscripts, LXX and Massorete, Streane points to what he calls the two main differences. The fact that the LXX is much shorter has made few additions but an immense number of "trifling omissions," besides some of more importance. The second main difference is the fact that the LXX has the

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., pp. 320, 321.

⁹Streane, Loc. cit., pl xlv.

oracles to the nations after chapter twenty-five, verse 13, whereas the Massorete has them at the end of the book.¹⁰

Volz argues strongly for the fact that the oracles to the nations first were placed after 25:13 and then moved to the back of the book, but the words in chapter twenty-five, verses 15-38 remained in chapter twenty-five. He states that "undoubtedly G. or his Hebrew antecessor knew of the former connection and put them in this old order."¹¹

Some of his arguments are the following:

Die Zusammengehörigkeit dieser Einleitungsgeschichte und der Sammlung der Voelkerlieder wird neben dem ausseren Grund der Verbindung in G durch die sachliche Uebereinstimmung zwischen 25, 15ff. und Kp. 46ff. erwiesen; es treten in 25, 15ff. die Leitmotive auf (Weintrinken, Schwert, Verwuestung, Klagegeschrei) die die Voelkergedichte beherrschen, Auch die spaeter beigefuegte Liste der Voelker in 25, 17-26, die der Voelkerreihe in 46-51 im wesentlichen entspricht, laeszt sich nur erklaren, wenn 24, 15ff. urspruenglich mit Kp. 46ff. verbunden war.¹²

Haevernick agrees with Graf and Keil-Delitsch and points out that also Kueper "welcher die Movers'schen Untersuchungen einer sehr gruenden lichen Pruefung und widerlegung unterworfen hat" finds that the Massorete text is the original and that the LXX has left out much and changed the text at will.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Paul Volz, Der Prophet Jeremiah (Tuebingen: Mohr, 1930), p. 374.

¹² Ibid., pp. 374, 375.

¹³ H. A. Haevernick, Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Zweiter Theil. Zweite Abtheilung. Erlangen: Verlag von Carl Heyder, 1844), p. 240.

Hyatt gives a very fine evaluation. It is pointed out that the position after 25:13 as in the LXX seems more appropriate than in the Hebrew, but that the order in the Hebrew seems to be the original, since it corresponds more closely to the list of the nations in 25:19-26 and roughly to the chronological order of the history of the nations treated.¹⁴

This is also our conclusion on this point. The prophet follows the example of other Hebrew prophets and has his oracles together and then places them at the end of the book. The Hebrew, Massorete text, is the original, and the LXX is an adaptation of the Massorete.

¹⁴James Philip Hyatt, The Book of Jeremiah, in The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon, 1956), V, 1104.

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