ABSTRACT

The Formation of Mic 1–3:
From the Eighth Century to the Exile

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The Book of Micah is a fascinating writing that developed over several hundred years. According to scholarly consensus, the earliest portions of the writing are located in Mic 1–3 and originated in the eighth century. Though scholars often assign all of Mic 1–3 to the eighth century, this dissertation argues that Mic 1–3, developed in three phases which can be linked to three specific historical settings. The first phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 originated in the period before Sennacherib's Judean campaign (701 BCE). The first phase (Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12) records a dispute between the prophetic speaker and the ruling and religious leaders in Jerusalem over land in the Judean Shephelah. The second phase in the formation Mic 1–3 (Mic 1:8, 10–15*) developed after Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign which left the Judean Shephelah in ruins. Displaced, former residents, of the Shephelah migrated to Jerusalem and the second phase material developed as a lament over the destruction of the Shephelah. The third phase originated in the exile (Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16). This new introduction to Mic 1–3 accomplished three things. First, it shifted the focus from social concerns (Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12) to cultic concerns. Second, it introduced Jerusalem as the focus divine warrior's

attack. Third, it provided a transition piece for an early collection of prophetic writings commonly referred to as the Book of the Four. The Micah oracles were preserved from the eighth century to the exile by tradents who first preserved the oracles in the Shephelah because of opposition from the Jerusalem elite. Following Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign, tradents in Jerusalem added the second phase material along with an oral tradition that viewed Micah of Moresheth and Hezekiah's interactions positively. Thus the Micah traditions (oral and written) became part of the larger cultural narrative. Tradents at Mizpah added the third phase material during the exile as a commentary on the effectiveness of Hezekiah's reforms.

The Formation of Mic 1-3
From the Eighth Century to the Exile

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
AB	Anchor Bible
ABR	Australian Biblical Review
ABS	Society of Biblical Literature Archaeology and Biblical Studies
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament
Arc	Archeology
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
AUSS	Andrews University Seminary Studies
BA	Biblical Archeologist
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BEvTh	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
Bib	Biblica
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CBR	Currents in Biblical Research
CC	Continental Commentaries
COS	Context of Scripture
CHANE	Cultures and History of the Ancient Near East
EBib	Etudes bibliques
ErIsr	Eretz-Israel
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms in Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HALOT	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament. Translated under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994–1999.
HAR	Hebrew Annual Review
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
Int	Interpretation
ITP	The Incriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III King of Assyria, by Hayim Tadmor. Jerusalem: Israel Accademy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994.
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBQ	Jewish Biblical Quarterly
JBS	Jerusalem Biblical Studies
JCS	Journal of Cuneiform Studies

JHS	Journal of Hebrew Scriptures
JNSL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTsup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Studies
NCB	New Century Bible
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NorTT	Norsk Teologisk idsskrift
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OTL	Old Testament Library
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly
PRS	Perspectives in Religious Studies
RB	Revue biblique
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East
SHBC	Smyth and Helwys Biblical Commentary
SymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
TA	Tel Aviv
TynB	Tyndale Bulletin
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WHJP	World History of the Jewish People
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
ZBKAT	Zürcher Bibelkommentare. Altes Testament
ZAH	Zeitschrift für Althebräistik
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins

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For my husband, Matt,
Who always believed I could

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The Book of Doom

Micah 1–3 has been dubbed "The Book of Doom" by prominent Bible scholars Francis Andersen and David Noel Freedman.[1] This characterization of Mic 1–3 is apt as the text block contains very little in the way of hopeful oracles (aside from 2:12–13).[2] Micah 1–3 ends with a statement concerning the demise of Jerusalem (3:12), perhaps the most doom-filled statement in the entire book, "Zion will be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a mound of ruins…"[3] This "book of doom" has several characteristics that link it to the eighth century. Most notably, the lament over the Judean Shephelah in Mic

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[1] Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Micah*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 8.

[2] Scholars often view these two verses as a later addition to Mic 1-3. There is some discussion as to whether to read these verses as a further statement of doom or as a hopeful insertions. For example Andersen and Freedman see the verses as a later insertion that offers hope after judgment in which the people of God will be gathered like sheep.(Micah, Anchor Bible, 332) Van der Woude on the other hand, reads Mic 2:12-13 as a continuation of the prophetic dispute in Mic 2:6–11. In this case, the hopeful words are a continuation of the false prophet's declaration of peace. (A. S. van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute with the 'Pseudo-Prophets,'" *Vetus Testamentum* 19 [1969]: 257). Mays suggests that the breeching of the wall indicates YHWH's attack on Jerusalem in 587 rather than YHWH's salvific activity (James Luther Mays, *Micah: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library [Westminster John Knox, 1976], 75). Indeed, these two verses are difficult to interpret. However, the imagery of being "gathered up" as "sheep" are those generally associated with restoration in post-exilic texts (for example, see, Isa 43:5; 54:7; Jer 29:14). Additionally, Willis has shown that the book of Micah follows a pattern of doom followed by hope. He thus argues that Mic 2:12–13 were introduced as a statement of hope in a largely doom filled section of the writing to accomplish this pattern (J. T. Willis, *The Structure, Setting, and Interrelationships of the Pericopes in the Book of Micah* [unpublished PhD dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1966], 124). Mic 2:12–13 also connect the material in Mic 1–3 with Mic 4:6–8 through the language of gathering (אסף) and kingship (2:13; 4:8) indicating that they are later hopeful insertions (See, Jakob Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuches: Entstehung und Komposition*, BZAW 360 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 149–51.

[3] The following verse, Mic 4:1 contains a word of hope for the exaltation of Jerusalem. Scholars generally view this disjointed movement form doom in 3:12 to hope in 4:1 as an indicator of the end of one text block and the beginning of another.

1:8–16 which fits well with Sennacherib's campaign through Judah in 701, cause many scholars to associate much of Mic 1–3 with the eighth century.[4] In addition, the material in Mic 2–3 that supposes a profitable Shephelah (2:1–11) and a functioning temple (3:1–12) fit well with the eighth century context. Despite the connection between much of the content of Mic 1–3 and the eighth century many scholars also note that the text exhibits signs of editorial activity which post-date the eighth century.[5]

Description of the Problem

These general characterizations of Mic 1–3 as both a book of doom and a text block that originated in the eighth century require further exploration. Two considerations provide a clearer view of the text block in question. First, the rhetorical flow of the "book of doom" lacks coherence. The textual block, in fact, contains three smaller declarations of coming doom because of transgressions (1:1–9 and 2:1–11; 3:1–12). These three sections accuse perpetrators for two distinct abuses. Micah 1:1–9 contains indictments against all the people for religious abuses while Micah 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 contain indictments against the powerful of the land for social abuses. Second, these three accusations, when evaluated closely betray conflicting rhetorical agendas that lead to the conclusion the accusations (one against cultic abuses and the other against social abuses)

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[4] See, for example, Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 200–249 and James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, Smyth and Helwys (Macon, Georgia: Smyth and Helwys, 2011), 527–31 for evidence that links the lament song in Mic 1:8–16 to Sennacherib's 701 campaign. See also, Chapter Four, for an overview of the evidence for various dates as well as a defense of the eighth century date.

[5] Other text blocks include: Mic 4–5 and 6–7. See the history of research beginning with Wolff who suggested a deuteronomistic (Dtr.) update to the eighth century material. Jakob Wöhrle, for instance finds the base layer in Mic 1:3–5a, 8, 10–12a, 13–16; 2:1–11; 3:1–12. To this base text different redactors have added a "threat to the people" layer (2:12–13), a Dtr. layer (1:5b–7, 9, 12b), and a foreign enemy layer (1:2). Wöhrle, *Die Frühen Sammlungen Des Zwölfprophetenbuches*, 1111.

* Indicates that the section does not come from a single hand.

do not belong to the same hand or the same historical period. Between these two indictments, Mic 1:10–16* contains a description of judgment taking place within the land of Judah. Thus, the rhetorical movement of Mic 1–3 is as follows; an indictment for cultic abuses, followed by a description of judgment, followed by an indictment for social abuses.[6] This strange sandwiching of the description of judgment causes confusion. It is clear that scribes augmented the text but the process by which these updates occurred needs clarity.

Three Phases of Growth

This dissertation argues that scribal activity shaped the rhetorical movement of Mic 1–3 in three phases, each of which are closely connected to a specific historical period. First, tradents associated with the prophetic speaker preserved the sayings located in Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 which come from a time before Sennacherib's invasion of the Judean Shephelah (701 BCE).[7] Second, after Sennacherib's invasion, tradents added Mic 1:8, 10–15* to the front of the pre-existing collection (Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12) creating a rhetorical piece that proclaimed the judgment of Judah (Mic 1:10–16*) followed by the reasons for that judgment (2:1–11, 3:1–12). Third, exilic tradents added 1:1, 3–7, 9, to 1:8, 10–15*; 2:1–11; 3:1–12.[8] This exilic update suggests the cultic abuses are the reason for the judgment in Mic 1:10–16*. Tradents incorporated minor updates to Mic 1–3 in the

[6] The final verse in the accusation against social abuses is a declaration of judgment (3:12). However, painting with broad strokes, the majority of the text is an accusation.

[7] The term "tradent" is used throughout this dissertation to designate those individuals responsible for preserving the oral and written Micah traditions. Tradents is an intentionally broad term as the individuals who preserve the Micah tradition change over time. Some version of the superscription (Mic 1:1) that attributes the work to the prophet Micah was likely attached to this early collection.

[8] Exilic tradents also added 1: 12b, 13b, 16 to the existing lament song.

postexilic period, adding Mic 1:2, and 2:12–13 to connect the material in Mic 1–3 to the material with later text blocks; Mic 4–5 and 6–7. These minor updates will be covered briefly in the Chapter Seven but because they are connected to the growth of the Mican corpus beyond Mic 1–3 they do not function in the early form of Mic 1–3 that will be the focus of the bulk of this dissertation.

These shifts in the rhetorical flow of Mic 1–3 have only been partially studied by Micah scholars as the history of scholarship below will show. Additionally, because this study is limited to Mic 1–3, it has ample opportunity to investigate these shifts as well as the historical settings that gave rise to them. While scholars have often noted the disjointed nature of Mic 1–3, they have yet to link the shifting rhetoric to specific historical settings.[9] By linking textual units in Mic 1–3 to specific segments of Hezekiah's reign and the exile, this dissertation will trace the development of the early Mican corpus through these three rhetorical shifts from the eighth century to the exile. To that end, this dissertation also provides a plausible reconstruction of the scribal processes by which the Mican oracles were preserved, shaped, and reframed from the eighth century to the exile. This reconstruction of the scribal processes that shaped Mic 1–3 is the most unique contribution of this dissertation as it relies on recent scholarship on scribal education in pre-exilic and exilic Judah in ways that has not previously been considered in relation to Mic 1–3.[10]

[9] See above, 1–3.

[10] See Chapter Five, 179-240.

History of Scholarship: Micah 1–3[11]

Scholars have devised various ways to deal with the challenges that the book of Micah poses.[12] Many have followed Bernhard Stade's observation that much of Mic 1–3 comes from the eighth century. Since the time of Stade scholars have refined his original contribution in various ways. Two primary questions have governed many of these scholarly endeavors: What is the rhetorical purpose of Mic 1–3, and what historical background makes the most sense of these chapters?

Early Efforts to Make Sense of Micah: Delineation of Units and Redaction

In his 1881 article, "Bemerkungen über das Buch Micha," Bernhard Stade proposes that Micah 1–3 belongs to the eighth century, and 4–7 are from a later date.[13] He argues that Micah 1–3 is a literary unit that rhetorically moves from the

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[11] Histories of the scholarship of Micah are plentiful and quite sufficient in their presentation of the scholarly conversation and hardly need to be re-stated here. For an extensive history concerning scholarship on Micah up to Shaw's 1993 work on the rhetoric of the entire book of Micah see, Mignon R. Jacobs, *The Conceptual Coherence of the Book of Micah*, vol. 322, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series (Sheffield, Eng.: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 14–43. Jacobs's history of research stops short of Nogalski's on the formation of the Book of the Twelve and Micah's incorporation in to the Book of the Four and later the Book of the Twelve. These additions will be noted in this history of scholarship. This history of scholarship will necessarily focus on Mic 1–3 and highlight the important contributions to understanding the formation and rhetorical movement of this textual block.

[12] This section will discuss the contributions of several different scholars and the ways that they understand the text of Mic 1–3.

[13] Bernhard Stade, "Bemerkungen über das Buch Micha," *ZAW* 1 (1881): 161–72. Stade bases his dating of Micah 1–3 on similarities that he finds with eighth century portions of Isaiah. Following Ewald (Heinrich Ewald, *Commentary on the Prophets of the Old Testament* (Williams and Norgate, 1875). Stade surmises that Micah 6:1–7:6 comes from the time of Manasseh because of the mention of child sacrifice. Micah 4–5 cannot belong to the original prophet because it contains hopeful material and the prophet was known only as a prophet of doom (cf. Jer 26:18). Additionally, the theological agenda of Mic 4–5 is similar to that of Joel and Zechariah 12–14—both writings from a time later than the eighth century.

Those who have followed Stade's division of Micah and relative dating are many (with minor variations). Several are mentioned below. In addition, Theodore H. Robinson and Horst Friedrich, *Die zwolf kleinen Propheten*, Handkommentar zum Alten Testament 14 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1938). and Bernard Renaud, *La formation du livre de Michée: tradition et actualisation*, Etudes bibliques; (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1977).

pronouncement of judgment in Micah 1 to the reason for that judgment in Micah 2–3.[14] Stade's observations are helpful in that they begin a conversation concerning the rhetorical movement of Micah 1–3, but his observations are incomplete. He fails to note that Mic 1 does not only contain pronouncements of judgment but also reasons for judgment. Moreover, the reasons for the judgment in Mic 1:1–9* are cultic while the reasons in Mic 2:1–11, 3:1–12 are social.[15] This disjointed characteristic of the text block's rhetorical flow (outlined above) requires further explanation. In addition, Stade began a trend in Micah scholarship by which scholars assigned Mic 1–3 to the eighth century broadly without examining more specific contexts within the eighth century from which the prophetic oracles may have come.[16]

James Luther Mays follows Stade's observation that Micah 1–3 functions as a unit arguing that chapters 1–3 contain the only oracles of the book that offer discernible coherence. He concludes that the judgment theme of Mic 1–3 indicates a single author.[17] Mays correctly states that Mic 1–3 mainly conveys a sense of accusation and judgment, but he fails to note that the reasons for judgment differ in Mic 1:1–9 as compared to Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12. Additionally, Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9* is not an eighth-century text but an exilic text because the rationale for Jerusalem's destruction is the same as 2 Kgs 17:19 and 2

[14] Stade, "Bemerkungen über das Buch Micha," 162–65.

[15] Mic 1:5–9 suggests that the idolatry and improper offerings (1:7) that took place in Samaria, also occur in Jerusalem. Micah 2:1–4 condemns land fraud and Mic 3:1–12 condemns eating human flesh (figurative) and bribery.

[16] See the following survey of Mays, Wolff, etc.

[17] Mays holds that Mic 1–3, was a part of Micah's ministry at the temple in Jerusalem during the last half of the eighth century. Mays, *Micah*, 23.

Kgs 21:13, texts from the exilic redaction of the Deuteronomistic History.[18] Mays is also pessimistic about the ability of biblical scholars to trace the development of Micah through historical periods.[19] Though he holds that Mic 1–3 belongs to the eighth century prophet, Micah of Moresheth, he is reticent to assign oracles to any particular setting in the eighth century. Mays argues,

> Many questions cannot be answered, even though the biblical and extra-biblical evidence available for reconstructing the history is greater and firmer. The growth of the book of Micah was one current within that larger stream of history. Its movement remains even more opaque to the historian's view, its stages and directions more hidden.[20]

Nevertheless, Mays like many scholars suggest that Mic 1:10–16 contains a memory of Sennacherib's 701 campaign.[21] Sennacherib's campaign through the Judean Shephelah is typically the only specific historical setting that can be found in the text. If it is possible to suggest a specific historical setting for this oracle, why not others? Still, scholars (including Mays) generally assign other oracles within Mic1–3 to the eighth century broadly, allowing readers to imagine when the oracle may have occurred in this hundred year period.[22]

Like Stade and Mays, Hans Walter Wolff concludes that Micah 1–3 is authentic to the eighth-century prophet and 4–7 are not.[23] Wolff narrows the eighth century

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[18]See in the following paragraphs the details concerning Mic 1:1–9. See Aaron Schart, *Die entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs: Neubearbeitungen von Amos im rahmen Schriftenübergreifender Redaktionsprozesse*, BZAW 250 (Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 177–83., and Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 524–26.

[19] Mays, *Micah*, 23.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Mays, *Micah*, 23.

[22] See the survey of Wolff and others below.

[23] Hans Walter Wolff, *Micah*, Continental Commentaries (Philadelphia: Fortress Publishers, 1990), 17. Wolff builds his case for the early date of Micah 1–3 on several lexemes (ex. the titles of leaders

sections to 1:6, 7b–13a, 14–16; 2:1–3, 6–11; and 3:1–12.[24] Wolff holds that a deuteronomistic redactor updated this core material and added his own interpolations that align with deuteronomistic ideology known from the Deuteronomistic History.[25] Wolff's suggestion of a deuteronomistic update to the earliest material in Micah created a new set of issues for Micah scholars.[26] Previous scholarship generally saw Micah 1–3 as the work of a single author.[27] Wolff's view of the deuteronomistic update is limited to isolated passages within Mic 1–3. Wolff's analysis fails to account for the shifting rhetorical agendas of Mic 1–3. Rather, Wolff isolates portions of verses that he contends bear an awareness of the destruction of Jerusalem and highlight the city's guilt as well as those that focus on warfare. Wolff's method results in an incomplete and, at times, erroneous view of the work of the deuteronomistic tradents that updated Micah.

In the vein of considering various historical situations for the formation of the eighth century material in Mic 1–3, Wolff goes further than his predecessors and suggests that the eighth century material in Mic 1–3 comes from before Samaria's destruction in

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are early as is the fact that Micah refers to the rulers as those who rule over "Jacob" and "Israel" as opposed to later terms such as Judah). In chapters 1–3 Wolff notes several later updates: 1:1, 3, 5, 7, 13–14; 2:13–13; 3:8.

[24] Ibid., 18–20.

[25] Ibid., 20. Scholars have suggested various redactional schemes for the formation of Mic 1–3 each emphasizing different angles. Lescow focuses on liturgy shaping Micah hypothesizing that Mic 1–3 was updated during the exile as a text for the ceremony for the rebuilding of the temple and updated again in the fourth century with an anti-Samaritan polemic in 1:6–7.Theodore Lescow, "Redaktionsgeschichtliche Analyse von Micha 1 - 5," ZAW 84 (1972): 46–85. Jörg Jeremias argues for the concept of *Nachinterpretation* as the method by which scribes updated Mic 1–3. The updates consist of theological reinterpretations of older material during the exile. These include: 1:5, 7, 13; 2:3–4, 10; 3:4; 6:14, 16; 5:9–13. Wolff, *Micah*, 2.

[26] See the next section on the Book of the Four.

[27] See above, 1–3.

722 BCE.[28] Wolff uses the reference to Micah of Moresheth in Jer 26:18-19, the Mican superscription, and the prophet's apparent prediction of the fall of Samaria to date the eighth century prophet's oracles to the period preceding the fall of Samaria. Wolff erroneously supposes that the kings listed in the superscription provide plausible dates for the eighth century prophet's work.[29] He also mistakenly reads Mic 1:6–7 as an eighth century prediction of the fall of Samaria. Both the superscription and the texts the deal with the fall of Samaria are exilic texts related to the Book of the Four.[30] Through Wolff's argument concerning a deuteronomistic layer, scholars began to explore how this editorial activity might be connected to the editorial activity that shaped the Book of the Twelve.[31] Wolff's work which traces the Deuteronomistic language in Mic 1–3 began the current that would lead to work on the Book of the Four. Wolff fails to recognize the connections in Mic 1–3 to Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah that indicates that Micah became part of a larger editorial endeavor during the exile and beyond. These connections include the superscription and Mic 1:6–7. The tradents responsible for the formation of what has become known as the Book of the Four also used deuteronomistic ideology to link Micah to Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah.

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[28] Wolff, *Micah*, 2–5. Wolff takes three pieces of information as instructive in determining the dates of the ministry of Micah of Moresheth. First, Wolff notes that Jer 26:18-19 places Micah of Moresheth in the midst of Hezekaih's reign and the Assyrian conflict.[28] This limit's Micah's ministry to the 29 years the Hezekiah reigned. The second piece of information that establishes Wolff's dating of the oracles in Mic 1–3 is the superscription which notes that Micah's prophetic activity also spanned the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz which pushes the date for Micah's activities into the 730's. Finally, Wolff notes that Micah warned of Samaria's demise as an immediate pre-cursor to Jerusalem's. Thus, Wolff views the eighth century sayings in Mic 1–3 as belonging to the period prior to Samaria's fall in 722 BCE.

[29] Ibid.

[30] The Book of the Four is literary precursor to the Book of the Twelve. The Book of the Four consists of early portions of Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah. Tradents began to edit these writings together during the exile.

[31] See the following section.

Movement to the Book of the Four

In 1993, James Nogalski proposed that Micah 1–3; 6:1–14 were part of a larger literary work known as the "Deuteronomistic corpus," now commonly referred to as, "the Book of the Four."[32] In this ground-breaking proposal, Nogalski argues that an exilic editor added Mic 1:1–7 and 6:1–14* and united the existing portions of Hosea, Amos, Micah and Zephaniah creating a precursor to the Book of the Twelve.[33]

Nogalski effectively develops the hypothesis that Micah 1–3 is part of a larger project known as the Book of the Four. He also demonstrates that Micah 1:1–7* is part of an exilic program.[34] Nogalski does not discuss the evolution of units that predate Mic 1:1–7* and 6:1–14* nor does he offer a specific historical background for the material in Mic 2:1–11, 3:1–12. A discussion of the evolution of units as well as an exploration into the historical context of the units would help to ground the Mican oracles in their socio-cultural setting and link the oracles with more concrete historical settings.

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[32] James Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*, BZAW 217 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 137–40. Schart quibbles with Nogalski's term, "Deuteronomistic corpus" because the corpus lacks typical deuteronomistic vocabulary, Schart, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs*, 33. Rainer Albertz suggests the term Book of the Four Prophets (*Vierprophetenbuch*) as a more neutral term. See Rainer Albertz, "Exile as Purification: Reconstructing the Book of the Four," in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve* (Paul Redditt and Aaron Schart, eds.; BZAW 325; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003) 232-251.

[33] James Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*, BZAW 218 (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1993), 274. In 2011, Nogalski added to his proposal that the portions of Micah that date to the eighth century include: 1:8–16; 2:1–3, 6–11; and 3:1–12. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 512.

[34] Nogalski shows that Micah 1:1–7 provides a rationale for the destruction of Jerusalem by which the sins committed in Jerusalem are the same as those that Samaria committed. This explanation for the destruction of Jerusalem is also found in 2 Kings 17, an exilic text. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 512.

In his volume on the Book of the Twelve, Aaron Schart takes up Nogalski's concept of the Book of the Four.[35] Schart suggests that an author created Mic 1–3 as the climax to a pre-existing two-book corpus consisting of early portions of Hosea and Amos, which was a precursor to the Book of the Four. [36] Schart finds several links between the Hosea-Amos corpus and Micah 1–3.[37]

Schart adds to Nogalski's original observation of the Book of the Four by elaborating on the connections that Nogalski found to Hosea and Amos. However, Schart's suggestion that an author created Micah 1–3 for its place with Hosea and Amos is incorrect. The material in Mic 1–3 suggests a prophetic ministry in Judah and Jerusalem that predates the connections to Hosea and Amos. The connections to Hosea and Amos arose not in the eighth century but the sixth century with the addition of Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9. Like Nogalski's 1993 work, Schart lacks an in-depth exploration of the historical situations that function as a background for the material in Mic 1–3.

Jakob Wöhrle has also taken up the idea of the Book of the Four.[38] Wöhrle argues that parts of Micah 1:1–3:12, and 7:1–7 comprise the foundational layer of Micah.[39] Exilic editors added a deuteronomistic layer including portions of Micah chapters 1, 3, and 6. The Dtr. layer brings early versions of Hosea, Amos, Micah, and

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[35] Schart, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs*.

[36] Ibid., 101–51. See also, Jörg Jeremias, *Die Anfänge Des Dodekapropheton : Hosea Und Amos*, FAT 13 (Leiden: BRILL, 1995).

[37] Such as calls to "hear" and the judgment theme. Schart, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs*, 201.

[38] Wöhrle, *Die frühen*, 180-188 .

[39] Ibid., 177.

Zephaniah to create the Book of the Four.[40] Like Nogalski, Wöhrle does not discuss the literary evolution of his base layer (Mic 1–3; 7:1–7). Additionally, Wöhrle does not notice the rhetorical difficulty caused by the addition of 1:1, 3–7, 9 to the front of Micah 1:8, 10–16*; 2:1–11; 3:1–12. Wöhrle does attempt to link the text of Mic 1–3 to historical situations but like Schart and Nogalski, the historical reconstruction lacks specificity.

Reading Micah Sociologically from the Eighth Century

In his 1984 Hermeneia commentary, Delbert Hillers rejected the trend that Stade began. Instead of a redaction critical approach, Hillers proposes a "unifying explanatory approach."[41] He reads all of Mic 1–7 from the standpoint of the sociological struggles of the eighth century.[42] Since the sociological environment of the eighth century is an important backdrop to Micah, Hillers' work is important. However, the shifting rhetorical

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[40] Wöhrle bases his model on several thematic redactions of Micah, first connecting the base layer with the Book of the Four and then the Book of the Four with the rest of the growing Book of the Twelve. Ibid., 18, 188.

[41] Delbert R. Hillers, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Micah*, Hermenia 33 (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1984), 3. According to Hillers, the message of Micah is one of revitalization. Hillers follows Stade's divisions of Micah, but only as a formality. He argues that there is no discernible structure in Micah though, at times, one can recognize the hand of an updating editor.

Similarly, Andersen and Freedman argue that all of Micah 1–3 belongs to the eighth century prophet (with minor updates). Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 8–9. Like Andersen and Freedman, others who see Micah as the work of the eighth century prophet include: A. van Honacker, *Les douze petit prophetes* (Paris: Gabalda, 1908), Leslie C Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002)., A. S. van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute with the 'Pseudo-Prophets'," *VT.* 19 (1969), A. S. van der Woude, "Deutero-Micha: Ein Prophet aus Nord-Israel?," *NorTT* 25 (1971): 365–78.

Helmut Utzschneider reads Micah as a two-act drama divided into chapters 1–5 and 6–7. Utzschneider holds that the first written material of the Mican text could come from no earlier than the exilic period. Though the text of Micah did grow over time, the whole should be seen as this kind of play. Helmut Utzschneider, *Micha*, Zucher Bibelkommentar 24 (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 2005).

[42] Hillers does allow for one over-arching historical statement: the book of Micah originated from the participation of Micah and his followers in a social protest movement that is of the "millennialist" type. Hillers, *Micah*, 6–8.

agendas of Mic 1–3 (much more the entire Mican corpus) mitigate against reading the entire text block against one historical set of sociological struggles. Rather the text itself indicates that various agendas have shaped it over time.

Reading Micah from the Persian Period

Ehud Ben Zvi advocates reading Micah as the product of the Persian period because it was in this period that Micah took its final form. He finds approaches that consider periods before the Persian period too tentative.[43] Ben Zvi's method limits the reader's understanding of a text that clearly began its formation before the Persian period. This dissertation investigates the textual formation of Mic 1–3 that occurred from the eighth century through the exile because the text itself reflects historical situations that predate the Persian period and are best understood in light of earlier centuries.

The Contribution of this Project

Scholars have laid a solid groundwork upon which this dissertation builds. This dissertation provides an extensive study of the rhetorical flow of Mic 1–3, the historical backgrounds that informs Mic 1–3, and the scribal processes that shaped Mic 1–3.[44] These three areas shed new light on this fascinating piece of the prophetic corpus. The problematic rhetorical movement of Mic 1–3 which proceeds from reason for judgment (1:1-9) to judgement (1:10–16) to different reasons for judgment (2:1–3:12) was the motivator for further study. These conflicting rhetorical agendas in Mic 1–3 prompted the

[43] Ehud Ben Zvi, *Micah*, FOTL 21b (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 4–8. Ben Zvi focuses his study on the literati (intended readers) and the re-readers of Micah. He locates the literati to ca. 450-332 BCE and argues that the literati were in Jerusalem. Ibid., 10. Ben Zvi argues that from this later historical location, the portrait the Mic 1–3 presents reflects the constructed memory of the eighth century.

[44] See above, 3–13.

method by which this dissertation will address the difficult text. The conflicting rhetorical agendas in Mic 1–3 indicate scribal activity that spanned several different historical periods. The rhetorical movement of Mic 1–3 suggests that the textual unit developed in three phases.

Method and Overview of Study

Methodologically, this dissertation analyzes three historical periods, the eighth century prior to Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign (Chapter Two), the developments in Judah following Sennacherib's campaign (Chapter Four), and the exile (Chapters Six). Following the historical analysis in each chapter, a literary analysis links textual units in Mic 1–3 to the historical setting (Chapters Three, Four, and Six respectively). The historical settings indicated cover a large span of time, therefore, between the analysis of the phases of development surrounding Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign and the exile, a chapter on scribal systems explores the preservation and development of the Micah tradition from the eight century to the sixth.

Chapter Two traces developments in Israel and Judah from the time of Omri (northern kingdom, ninth century) to the reign of Hezekiah (southern kingdom, eighth century). This chapter establishes that beginning in the ninth century and continuing in to the eighth century Israel and Judah experienced an increase urbanization and as well as a mounting dependence on surplus crops. Following the destruction and resettlement of Samaria, Jerusalem became the urban center of the Judean state. Under Hezekiah, the Judean governing elites made serious movement towards centralization, production of surplus, and acquisition of royal production sites. As an exceedingly profitable region for production of surplus, the Judean Shephelah felt the growing pains of the Judean

monarchy's program in two important ways. First, land holders in the Judean Shephelah faced increasing pressure to produce surplus goods while concurrently finding themselves increasingly disadvantaged by a system that routed these goods through the central structures in Jerusalem. Second, as a region on the border between Judah and Philistia, the Shephelah was continually contested territory.

Chapter Three argues that the first phase in the formation of the Mic 1–3 (Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12) comes from the period just after Hezekiah lost his Philistine land holdings. Within this context, Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 level a serious accusation against the Jerusalem political and religious elite. The political leaders are guilty of land fraud because they have appropriated property from Judean land holders' property to fulfill surplus requirements (2:1–11). The religious establishment is no better because they support the corrupt leaders and greedily perform their religious duties for money (3:1–12). This chapter demonstrates that Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 function as a rhetorical unity despite several scholarly arguments which suggest portions of this text belong to a later hand.[45] This chapter also shows that the most likely historical setting for the accusations against the political and religious elite is the eighth century just prior to Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign.

Chapter Four covers both the historical background and the literary analysis of the second phase in the formation of the Mic 1–3. This chapter argues that Mic 1:8, 10–15* developed as a lament song among displaced Shephelahites living in Jerusalem following Sennacherib's campaign through the Shephelah. The chapter shows that inhabitants of the

[45] See Chapter Three, 122-123. Mic 2:12–13 are the only verses that belong to a later hand (postexilic).

Shephelah re-located to Jerusalem after the destructive Assyrian campaign. Additionally, while the Shephelah had once been one of the most profitable regions in the production of surplus goods, following Sennacherib's campaign, the center of production moved to the Refi'im and Sorek valleys that border Jerusalem. Micah tradents, were likely among those who relocated to the Shephelah following Sennacherib's Campaign. The literary analysis shows that Mic 1:8, 10–15* is a call to lament which originally focused solely on cities in the Shephelah (additions concerning Jerusalem belong to the exile). At some point in the decades following Sennacherib's campaign Micah tradents added the lament song to the front of the Micah 1–3. Thus, the second phase in the development of Mic 1–3 re-framed the first phase. The addition of the lament song reframes the first phase material and changes the rhetorical impact of the lament song. Together Mic 1:8, 10–15*; 2:1–11; and 3:1–12 read as an act of judgment (the lament over the destruction of the Shephelah) followed by the reason for that judgment (accusation against political and religious leaders in Jerusalem). The rhetorical movement of the Mican corpus following the addition of the lament song functions as an actualization of Mic 2:4 which predicts that in the same way that the Judean political leaders took Shephelah lands, the stolen lands would be taken from them. Thus, the lament which grieves the destruction for the Shephelah becomes the consequence for the improper land dealings of the Judean monarchy. However, this rhetoric of consequence followed by accusation could not survive in the new context of Jerusalem in which pro-Hezekiah factions presented the strongest and most powerful voices. Therefore, a new oral tradition arose alongside the written Micah tradition. This tradition, recorded in Jer 26:18-19 held that Hezekiah had heeded Micah's warning concerning the coming destruction of Jerusalem (Mic 3:12).

Hezekiah listened to Micah's warning and Jerusalem was spared in Sennacherib's 701 BCE attack. This oral tradition allowed the Mican corpus to survive in the new context of a pro-Hezekiah Jerusalem.

Chapter Five discusses the scribal activities which preserved the Mican oracles from the eighth century to the exile. This chapter asks three primary questions concerning the preservation of the Mican oracles: who preserved these oracles, why were they preserved, and how were they preserved? Beginning with the eighth century, this chapter argues that a small group of tradent/disciples who functioned as elders in the Judean Shephelah preserved the first phase of Mican oracles (2:1–11; 3:1–12). The Micah tradent/disciples preserved these oracles because of the prophetic speaker's conflict with the Jerusalem elite (recorded in Mic 2:6–11). Beyond this initial recording of the Mican oracles, tradents who migrated to Jerusalem following Sennacherib's campaign preserved and transformed the Mican oracles. The Mican oracles survived in Jerusalem by providing modes of educational enculturation for displaced Shephelahites living in Jerusalem. The reinterpretation of Mic 3:12 as a prophecy that Hezekiah heeded allowed the Mican oracles to survive in the pro-Hezekiah Jerusalem. The pro-Hezekiah oral tradition that accompanied the written Mican oracles allowed the Micah traditions to gain acceptance among the larger populace.

Chapter Six explores the historical setting of the exile from which the third phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 came (the addition of Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16). This chapter argues for the ideological proximity of the Micah tradents to ideas present in the Deuteronomistic History and Deuteronomy. This chapter also suggests that these Micah tradents are the same as the Book of the Four tradents who, during the exile, brought

together early portions of Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah. An examination of the literary units shows that these additions are most at home in the context of the exile. These additions also re-frame the Mican oracles once again by redefining the reason for the judgement recorded in Mic 1:8–16. The new rationale for the judgment includes the proliferation of cultic abuses in Samaria and Jerusalem. By adding material concerning the demise of Samaria and Jerusalem to the Micah 1–3 the Micah/Book of the Four tradents provide a transition piece for the Book of the Four. The added material in Micah make the transition from writings that primarily deal with the northern kingdom (Hosea and Amos) to those that deal with the southern kingdom (Micah and Zephaniah).

Chapter Seven provides a brief conclusion that recaps the findings of the study and provides several suggestions for further research. The chapter establishes the particular contributions of this dissertation including establishing plausible historical settings for the oracles in Mic 1–3 and its application of research in scribal practices to the preservation of Mic 1–3. This concluding chapter suggests that continued research is needed in the area of the continued growth of the Mican corpus and its transmission as a part of the Book of the Four and, eventually, the Book of the Twelve. Specifically, more work remains in the area of the addition of the other Micah text blocks (4–5 and 6–7) and how these additions relate to Mic 1–3 and the growth of Micah as part of the Book of the Four, and later, the Book of the Twelve.

CHAPTER TWO

The Historical Background to the First Phase: Mic 2–3

Introduction

The first phase in the formation of the book of Micah (Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12) comes from the particular social, political, and economic situation of the late eighth century in Judah. Chapter Three will make the case for a strong connection between the issues presented in Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 and the eighth century. Briefly, the primary reasons to see these texts as associated with eighth century Judah are the connections to the eighth century prophet's homeland (the Judean Shephelah); the implied prosperity of the Judean Shephelah, which archaeology suggests occurred mainly in the eighth century; the land dispute referenced in Mic 2:1–11, which indicates a centralized power structure and stratified society; and the centralized religious/political group functioning from Jerusalem. Each of these indicators points to the historical period of the eighth century. This chapter will outline the major developments of eighth century Judah in preparation for the task of Chapter Three, which will explore Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 within this historical context. This chapter traces the development of Judah from the time of the Omride dynasty up to the period just before Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign during the reign of Hezekiah. Two issues help set the scene for the first phase of the formation of Micah: a profitable Shephelah that was sought after territory and the increasing centralization of power throughout the eighth century.

This chapter will outline the developments of eighth century Judah back to the ninth century and the rise of the Omride dynasty. The Omride dynasty brought both Israel

and Judah into the international trade scene and began a trajectory of urbanization. [1] Judah, existed in Israel's shadow until Israel's demise around 720 BCE, participated in the trajectory towards urbanization begun by the Omrides but did so in a more limited sense than their northern neighbors until the time of Hezekiah.[2]

The development of Israel and Judah from rarely recognized city-states in the highlands of Palestine to urbanized centers interacting in international affairs is marked by a cycle of growth and decline from the end of the ninth century and throughout the eighth century. The time of growth led by the Omride dynasty came to an end with the Jehu coup during which time, facing pressure from Assyria and surrounding nations, Israel and Judah entered a period of decline.[3] Economic and territorial growth began again under Jeroboam in the North and Uzziah in the South as the monarchs expanded their borders and implemented strategic planning for creating surplus goods.[4] Following this time of prosperity, Israel and Judah dealt with the continual threat from both Aram-Damascus and Assyria.[5] Raids, military skirmishes and increased demands for tribute crippled the once great Israelite kingdom. Eventually, Israel fell to Assyria and Judah stood on its own.

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[1] See Stefan Timm, *Die Dynastie Omri: Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Israels im 9. Jahrhundert vor Christus*, FRLANT 124 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982) 272–307.

[2] D. N. Pienaar, "The Role of Fortified Cities in the Northern Kingdom during the Reign of the Omride Dynasty," *JNSL* 9 (1981): 152–155.

[3] Lester Grabbe, "The Kingdom of Israel from Omri to the fall of Samaria," in *Ahab Agonistes: The Rise and Fall of the Omri Dynasty*, ed. Lester Grabbe, LHBOTS (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 66–70.

[4] Matthew J. M. Coomber, "Caught in the Crossfire? Economic Injustice and Prophetic Motivation in Eight-Century Judah," *BibInt* 19 (2011): 405–415.

[5] J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 356–359.

The cycle of growth and decline had a lasting effect on both Israel and Judah. During times of growth, the infrastructure to maintain prosperity grew. Systems for producing and managing surplus goods developed under a centralized authority. During times of decline, scarcity forced the more vulnerable rural inhabitants toward fortified cities.[6] As new inhabitants of urbanized society, the individuals who fled their rural homes required additional infrastructure and a more stable hierarchy developed.[7] With each new cycle, Israel and Judah became more urbanized and the centralized authorities in Samaria and Jerusalem gained more power.

At no time can one see this movement to a centralized urban society more strikingly than at the end of the eighth century. With Samaria destroyed and Israel resettled, Jerusalem continued as the urban center of the Judean state. Hezekiah reinforced a centralized system focused on the production of surplus through the acquisition of royal production sites. He also routed surplus to Jerusalem through religious reforms that brought worshipers and their tithes to the holy city.[8]

This process of urbanization and centralization, begun by the Omrides and culminating in Hezekiah's efforts, had several important effects on the Judean Shephelah.[9] First, land holders in the Judean Shephelah and the hill country were under increasing pressure to produce surplus goods. As the infrastructure for channeling profit

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[6] Coomber, "Caught in the Crossfire?", 400–401.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Chapter Four will address the *defacto* centralization that occurred because of Sennacherib's campaign.

[9] Though centralization also occurred during Josiah's reign, it did not affect the Judean Shephelah in the same way. By the seventh century, the Judean Shephelah had a much smaller population. Consequently, Josiah's efforts were not as focused on the Shephelah.

through the centralized authority in Jerusalem grew, land-holders in the countryside found themselves increasingly disadvantaged.[10] Second, the Shephelah was a continually contested region during the cycles of prosperity and decline outlined above.

A Brief History of the Urbanization Process in Israel and Judah

The Omrides

Beginning in the ninth century, a powerful new dynasty emerged the northern regions of Palestine. The Omride dynasty expanded the boarders of Israel and moved the capital from its outpost in Tirzah to the more central Samaria which was also closer to international trade routes.[11] The Omride dynasty expanded the Israelite boarders in nearly every direction. In the north they took land which Hazael of Damascus would later claim had previously belonged to the Arameans.[12] To the east, the Omrides took territory that Mesha of Moab would later claim for himself.[13] In the northwest they established an alliance with the powerful Phoenicians strengthened through the diplomatic marriage of Ahab and Jezebel.[14] To the south, the Omrides secured a diplomatic marriage between

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[10] See below, 39.

[11] Hermann Michael Niemann, "Royal Samaria—Capital or Residence?" in Grabbe, *Ahab Agonistes: The Rise and Fall of the Omri Dynasty*, 85–90.

[12] Avraham Biran and Joseph Naveh, "An Aramaic Stele Fragment from Tel Dan," *IEJ* 43 (1993): 81–98. The Tel Dan inscription dates to 840 BCE. The inscription is part of a victory stela commissioned by Hazael of Aram-Damascus.

[13] André Lemaire, "La stèle de Mésha et l'histoire de l'ancien Israël.," in *Storia e tradizioni di Israele*, ed. J. Alberto Soggin, Daniele Garrone, and Felice Israel (Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1991), 143–70. See also, idem., "The Mesha Stele and the Omri Dynasty," in *Ahab Agonistes: The Rise and Fall of the Omri Dynasty*, ed. Lester Grabbe, LHBOTS (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 135–144.

[14] Dagmar Pruin, "What Is in a Text?—Searching for Jezebel," in *Ahab Agonistes: The Rise and Fall of the Omri Dynasty*, ed. Lester Grabbe, LHBOTS (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 208–235.

Jehoram and the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, Athaliah (2 Kgs 8:18).[15] Even before this alliance was established through marriage, Judah always functioned in the shadow of the more established Omrides. Ahab appears to be Jehoshaphat, King of Judah's superior when the Northern king calls upon him to fight alongside him against the Arameans (1 Kings 22).[16] Consequently, Judah felt the effects of Omride success and began a process of building infrastructure to engage in international trade through the production of surplus goods. Limited urban growth also occurred in Judah at key sites such as Jerusalem, Lachish, and Beersheba.[17]

The dominance of the Omride dynasty did not last. The usurper, Jehu, soon took the throne in Israel. At the same time, the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (858–824 BCE) continually campaigned through the area to put down resistance and enforce the payment of tribute.[18] The Black Obelisk reports the spoils of Shalmaneser III's sixth and last campaign through Syria-Palestine. Here Shalmaneser III records, "I marched to the cities of Hazael of Damascus. I captured four cities and received tribute from the peoples of the land of Tyre, Sidon, and Byblos." Panel B of the obelisk depicts Jehu of "*Bit-'Humri*" and records that Shalmaneser III received tribute from the Israelite king.[19] The inscription

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[15] See, Reuven Chaim (Rudolph) Klein, "Queen Athaliah: The Daughter of Ahab or Omri?," *JBQ* (2014): 11–20. Klein's analysis explores the biblical witness to Athaliah's lineage. Some inconsistency occurs concerning her father. It is most likely that Ahab was her father and Omri is invoked as the grand patriarch.

[16] Ibid. The biblical text and the Tel Dan inscription indicate that Judah served the military ambitions of the Omride dynasty.

[17] Israel Finkelstein, "The Rise of Jerusalem and Judah: The Missing Link," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology*, ed. Andrew Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 93–100.

[18] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 329–330.

[19] See C. C. Smith, "Jehu and the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III," in *Scripture in History and Theology: Essays in Honor of J. Coert Rylaarsdam*, ed. A.L. Merrill and T.W. Overhold (Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1977), 71–105. The Black Obelisk inscription records that Shalmaneser received from Jehu,

continues to describe Jehu as part of *Bit-'Humri*, a designation Assyrian inscriptions continue to employ until the end of the northern kingdom. Although outsiders continued to count Jehu as a part of Omri's house, he was not as adept a ruler, and Israel soon faced decline because of Assyria's interest in the area as well as the growing prominence of Aram-Damascus.[20]

The Eighth Century under Jeroboam II and Uzziah

For the next 30 years, following this final campaign of Shalmaneser III, Assyria left Syria-Palestine un-molested. During this time, Aram-Damascus rose in prominence leading to Israel and Judah's subservience to this emerging regional power. Assyria's renewed interest in Syria-Palestine began again at the close of the ninth century and continued throughout the eighth century. Beginning in the second half of the eighth century, under the leadership of Jeroboam II in the North and Uzziah in the South, Israel and Judah experienced significant growth and movement towards increased urbanization.[21] Jeroboam II cooperated with Assyria during the first twenty-five years of his reign which led to economic growth.[22] Second Kings 14:25 records that Jeroboam II "restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah." Lebo-

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"silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden goblet, golden cups, golden buckets, tin, a staff of the king's hand, and javelins."

[20] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 352.

[21] Ibid., 353.

[22] Menahem Haran, "Rise and Decline of the Empire of Jeroboam Ben Joash," *VT* 17 (1967): 278–281.

hamath refers to the Bekaa Valley between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains.[23] The passage likely refers to a location near the city of Dan.[24] The summation of Jeroboam's reign records that he restored Damascus to Israel and Judah. This is an overwhelming claim which may indicate that Jeroboam took territory previously belonging to Aram-Damascus rather than Damascus itself.[25] Uzziah also contributed importantly to the growth of the state (likely with help from the North). Second Kings 14:22 records that Uzziah rebuilt and retook the port at Elath. According to the Chronicler, Uzziah "built the arm of Judah" and experienced significant victories over adjacent city states.[26] Second Kings credits Jotham, who followed Uzziah to the throne, with adding a new gate to the Jerusalem temple (2 Kgs 15:35). Uzziah's expansion indicates an interest in trade as the territories he acquired included important trade routes. The archaeological record for this period also shows an interest in storing surpluses of wine and oil at key locations in Judah.[27] Jotham's activity in expanding the temple indicates an interest in centralization of worship, which would benefit Jerusalem.[28]

In the final years of his reign, Jeroboam II (Jotham in Judah) faced considerably more trouble as the Assyrian forces with whom he had become friendly were drawn away

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[23] Ibid., 283.

[24] Ibid., 279–84.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Gary Knoppers argues that the Chronicler's account of Uzziah's expansion and interest in agriculture is borne out in the archaeological evidence for the period. Therefore, the Chronicler's description to this effect is historical ("History and Historiography: The Royal Reforms," in *The Chronicler as Historian*, ed. M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven McKenzie, JSOTSup 238 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997], 194–195).

[27] See below, 46–48.

[28] In the reign of Jotham, one can see the early recognition that beatifying the temple and expanding its precincts is important for shifting cultic practices towards Jerusalem.

to skirmishes in Mesopotamia. With the Assyrian overlords away, various uprisings began in the region of Syria-Palestine.[29] Israel and Judah were faced with pressure on every side as anti-Assyrian sentiment grew in Assyria's absence.[30] The opposition that Israel and Judah faced from surrounding nation-states cut them off from trade routes and significantly diminished their economic status. Israel declined considerably, oscillating between pro-Assyrian and anti-Assyrian kings. As Israel weakened, both Israel and Judah lost territory. Notably, Judah primarily felt pressure from the Philistines who took Judean land holdings (Isa 9:11–12) in the west. The growth and relative prosperity of the mid-eighth century declined as the century wore on.

Ahaz and the Syro-Ephraimite Rebellion

During this period of Syrian dominance, Rezin of Aram-Damascus led a coalition to oppose Assyrian hegemony in Syria-Palestine. Assyrian forces withdrew from the region in order to focus military might on uprisings within Mesopotamia and Anatolia.[31] In their absence Rezin recruited nation-states in Syria-Palestine to fight against the Assyrian overlords upon their return to the region. Rezin secured the support of the Edomites who aided him in taking Elath from Judah. Isaiah 9:11–12 indicates that Rezin also had the support of the Philistines who pressured Israel and Judah from the West while Rezin pressured them from the East to join the coalition (cf. 2 Chr 28:18). Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE) records several other states in Syria-Palestine which he

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[29] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 355.

[30] Ibid. Amos's oracles against the nations in Amos 1:3–2:3 reflect this situation.

[31] See, Bustenay Oded, "Historical Background of the Syro-Ephraimite War Reconsidered,"*CBQ* 34 (1972): 155. See also, Roger Tomes, "The Reason for the Syro-Ephraimite War," *JSOT* 59 (1993): 55–71.

attacked, who were likely part of the coalition. To the south, these states include the Meunites and Samsi queen of Arabia. To the North, Hiram of Tyre also cooperated with Rezin of Aram-Damascus.[32]

The pro-Assyrian Israelite king, Menahem ruled just over a decade until his son Pekiah succeeded him. Menahem probably only controlled the rump state of Samaria since the Assyrian inscriptions that mention him refer to him as "Menahem of the land of Samaria" rather than "Menahem of Israel" or "Menahem of Bit-Omri."[33] Pekah, the usurper responsible for Pekiah's untimely demise, raised support in the Transjordan and received backing from Rezin. Second Kings 15:25 records Pekah's supporters as the men from Gilead which was under the control of Rezin. Additionally, 2 Kgs 15:37 records that Pekah and Rezin previously colluded against Judah during the reign of Jotham. Isaiah 7:1–2 implies a strong political connection between Rezin and Pekah with Rezin as the leader. Isaiah 7:2 indicates that Pekah's seizure of the throne in Samaria was in the interest of Rezin and Pekah may have acted as Rezin's puppet king. The text describes Pekah's seizure of the throne as, "when Aram came to rest on Ephraim."

Shortly after Pekah assumed the throne in Samaria, Rezin and Pekah marched against Judah to persuade Ahaz to join their cause or to replace him.[34] Judah previously functioned in Israel's shadow for decades, making Ahaz's refusal to join the anti-Assyrian Pekah surprising. Ahaz had the support of the prophet Isaiah who strongly

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[32] See ITP 177–179, 187–91; COS 2:290–292.

[33] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 377.

[34] Isaiah 7:6 records that the unnamed "son of Tabeel", perhaps a member the Tyrian royal family or from Damascus, was set to replace Ahaz. The Phoenicians had ties to the Judean throne through Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel.

urged him not to join the coalition, though many in the land of Judah were likely in favor of joining: "This people delight in Rezin and the son of Remaliah [Pekah]" (Isa 8:6).[35] Rezin and Pekah were unsuccessful in bringing Ahaz to their side and before long Tiglath-pileser III returned to Syria-Palestine putting down the ill-fated rebellion.[36] The Assyrian inscription that records those who paid Tiglath-pileser tribute at the beginning of his campaign in 734 BCE contains the name "Jehoahaz [Ahaz] of the land of Judah."[37] Remarkably absent are Rezin, Pekah, Hiram of Tyre, and Queen Samsi of Arabia. Ahaz must have offered tribute quickly when Tiglath-pileser III appeared in Syria-Palestine while the other states were still aligned against Assyria.[38] Ahaz may have only maintained control over Jerusalem at the time of Tiglath-pileser's campaign. There is evidence that some of the smaller cities in the Judean countryside, Shephelah, and Negev regions may have been destroyed before Sennacherib's 701 campaign.[39] Tell Beit Mirsim, Tel Halif, Tel Beersheba, Tel el 'Hesi, Tel 'Eton, Tel 'Erani, and Tel Lachish each contain destruction levels that can be attributed to Tiglath-pileser's earlier campaign.[40] These cities and others formerly under the authority of the king in Jerusalem

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[35] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah,* 380.

[36] COS 2:289

[37] Ibid.

[38] ITP 171; COS 2:289.

[39] Jeffrey A. Blakely and James W. Hardin, "Southwestern Judah in the Late Eighth Century B.C.E.," *BASOR*, 326 (2002): 11–64.

[40] Ibid. Blakely and Hardin show that Tell Beit Mirsim, Tel Halif, Tel Beersheba, and Tel 'Eton have two destruction layers dating to the late eighth century. The first destruction should be attributed to Tiglath-pileser's campaign around 734 BCE. Afterward the sites were re-inhabited though the population was smaller. Perhaps the sites were merely forts for Hezekiah's military efforts. The later strata contain *lmlk* seal impressions and should be associated with Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign. At Beersheba, the site appears to have been immediately rebuilt and re-inhabited on a larger scale than Tell Beit Mirsim or Tel Halif.

may have followed the surrounding states of Tyre and Israel in their revolt. It would not be unusual for the political bodies in Jerusalem and the more rural political bodies to have opposing ideas concerning the welfare of the state.[41] Following Tiglath-pileser's campaign, inhabitants of despoiled regions likely migrated to the cities that were not destroyed, further urbanizing the region.[42] Jerusalem likely experienced its first significant influx of refugees after Tiglath-pileser's campaign.[43]

The Fall of the Northern Kingdom

Tiglath-pileser III set up Hoshea as a puppet king in Samaria.[44] Hoshea remained loyal to Assyria until the death of Tiglath-pileser III. Then Hoshea revolted, looking to Egypt for help (2 Kgs 17:4). The exact events and timeline for the demise of the northern kingdom remain foggy.[45] Both Shalmaneser V (726–722 BCE) and Sargon II (721–705 BCE) claim credit for Samaria's destruction.[46] What is clear is that sometime early in the reign of Sargon II, Assyria exiled many of the Israelite inhabitants and made Samaria the

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[41] This division is apparent in the murder of Queen Athaliah some years earlier. The biblical writer summarizes the event of her assassination by describing its orchestration by the "people of the land." Following her death the biblical writer states, "So all the people of the land rejoiced, but the city [Jerusalem] was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword at the king's house" (2 Kgs 11:20). See, William Schniedewind, *Society and the Promise to David: A Reception History of 2 Samuel 7:1–17* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 77–80.

[42] William M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 94–95.

[43] See the discussion of the growth of Jerusalem below.

[44] See ITP 139, 187 in which Tiglath-pileser III refers to *Bit-Humri* to describe Israel and Judah.

[45] For more on this see Hayim Tadmore, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study, " *JCS* 12 (1958): 22–40, 77–100; Nadav Na'aman, "The Historical Background to the Conquest of Samaria (720 BC)," *Bib* 71 (1990): 206–25.

[46] There is some debate concerning whether two separate siege attempts were responsible for the fall of Samaria. For that debate see, M Christine Tetley, "The Date of Samaria's Fall as a Reason for Rejecting the Hypothesis of Two Conquests," *CBQ* 64 (2002): 59–77.; K. Lawson Younger Jr., "The Fall of Samaria in Light of Recent Research," *CBQ* 61 (1999): 461–82.

Assyrian province of Samerina. Assyria repopulated the region with other exiled people groups.[47]

Hezekiah's Judah

Hezekiah came to the Judean throne in Hoshea's third year during the reign of Sargon II. During Hezekiah's rule, Judah recovered from the difficulties of the Syro-Ephraimite rebellion and the campaign of Tiglath-pileser III.[48] Under Hezekiah, Jerusalem, the Shephelah, and the Negev experienced growth. Early in Hezekiah's reign Samaria fell to the Assyrians. Therefore, unlike his predecessor Ahaz, Hezekiah did not have the Israelite buffer when dealing with Assyrian suzerainty.

Hezekiah's reign experienced four Assyrian campaigns in Syria-Palestine. The first, noted above, took place between 726 and 722 BCE, leading to the destruction of Samaria and focusing on the northern regions of Syria-Palestine. The second campaign led by Sargon II accomplished the final steps in making the region of Israel into an Assyrian province between 720 and 719 BCE.[49] This campaign focused on the Phoenician and Philistine coast and secured control of trade routes down to Egypt. Hezekiah participated in the Assyrian efforts and Sargon granted Hezekiah some level of authority in Philistine territory.[50] The third Assyrian campaign responded to an uprising led by Ashdod. Judah may have allied themselves with Ashdod resulting in a loss of

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[47] ANET, 286

[48] See analysis of the advances made during Hezekiah's reign below, 46.

[49] Younger, "The Fall of Samaria in Light of Recent Research," 481–82.

[50] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 392.

territory in the Shephelah.[51] The final campaign during Hezekiah's reign responded to revolts across the empire following the death of Sargon II in 705 BCE. In 701 BCE, Sargon's successor, Sennacherib (704–681 BCE) marched through Syria-Palestine putting down revolts and re-asserting authority throughout the region.

In addition to Hezekiah's involvement with Assyria, the archaeological record shows two important developments. First, the population in Judah grew exponentially during Hezekiah's reign creating the need for an infrastructure to support the increase.[52] Second, the *lmlk* jar handles found in several Judean cities date to the reign of Hezekiah and suggest a centralized administrative system focused on the production of surplus.[53] Finally, the biblical record contains a memory of Hezekiah's religious reform that required worshipers to travel to the central shrine in Jerusalem.[54] This religious reform brought even more revenue to the central city through tithes and offerings. Thus the religious reform further served as part of the centralizing forces of the eighth century.

Assyrian Interactions with Hezekiah's Judah

Each of the three factors mentioned above (Assyria's involvment in Syria-Palestine, population growth, and the focus on surplus) led to significant changes during the reign of Hezekiah. The Assyrian incursions produced three major shifts. The first shift occurred early in Hezekiah's reign when he fought as an Assyrian vassal against an

[51] Judah's participation in the Ashdod Rebellion is contested. The "Broken Prism" of Sargon II which mentions the uprising is not entirely clear concerning the participation of Judah, Moab, and Edom. It simply states that they were tempted to participate. See below, 37.

[52] See below, 53.

[53] The Hebrew phrase *lmlk* means "of," "to," or "belonging to the king."

[54] See below, 63–64.

uprising in Philistia and possibly gained territory in the Shephelah as a result. The second shift is more tentative. Hezekiah may have partnered with Ashdod in an uprising against Assyria and lost the territory he previously gained in the Judean Shephelah. The third major shift (a definite and extremely important shift) occurred after Hezekiah's revolted against Assyria. This revolt was the most devestating as Assyrian forces decimated Judean towns throughout the Shephelah and hill country leaving only Jerusalem standing.

Gains as an Assyrian vassal. Hezekiah, as an Assyrian vassal, may have expanded the land holdings of Judah. Second Kings 18:8 remarks that Hezekiah led a successful campaign against the Philistine coast, extending Judean land to the Mediterranean Sea; a claim which is debated. This bold claim opens the possibility that Hezekiah conducted a campaign against the Philistine coast as an Assyrian vassal during Sargon's campaign to Egypt in 720-719 BCE.[55] It is possible that as a loyal vassal to the Assyrian crown, Hezekiah fought on the side of the Assyrians and was then made a manager of Philistine territory.[56] Sargon needed to pass through the Philistine plain unimpeded to capitalize on his new relationship with the rulers of the Nile delta.[57] Hezekiah presented himself as a likely candidate to manage, for a time, the Philistine

[55] See, Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 405. Paul Kenneth Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah: Judah in the Geo-Political Context of the Late Eighth Century BCE" (PhD diss., Emory University, 1993), 182–198. Hooker discusses the various possibilities for the content of this verse. There is no material evidence for Hezekiah's presence in the Philistine Coast, however, if any king managed to expand Judean territory to the west, Hezekiah remains the most likely monarch to have done so. It is likely that Hezekiah functioned as a manager of this land rather than expanding Judean territory which would account for the biblical and (lack of) material data.

[56] Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 182–89.

[57] Ibid., 121.

district.[58] His father, Ahaz had been a loyal vassal and Hezekiah promised to be the same. This scenario would have provided for a time of prosperity in Judah. As a result, Judeans may have expanded their land holdings in the Shephelah region toward Philistine territory.

The city lists in Joshua 15 provide evidence for this expansion. Scholars have long puzzled over the status of these lists, placed in the midst of the account of Joshua's conquest.[59] The lists detail four regions and their cities (Negev, Shephelah, hill country, and wilderness). Notably, the insertion of three Philistine towns (Ashdod, Ekron, and Gaza) falls between the lists of the Shephelah and hill country. The insertion is stylistically different from its surroundings, consequently several scholars understand it as a later insertion.[60]

There are several ways to deal with this apparent insertion of the Philistine cities. This section will survey the suggestions of Alt, Wright, Na'aman, Kallai, and Rainey concluding based on their assertions and the biblical text that the insertion of the Philistine cities fits the reign of Hezekiah and indicates that Hezekiah controlled these cities during a period of prosperity.[61] Alt concludes that the lists dealing with the four

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[58] Ibid., 325.

[59] See the following survey.

[60] See Yohanan Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1979), 348; Richard D. Nelson, *Joshua* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 190. Nelson attributes the addition to the interest of the editor in rounding the number of districts to twelve. For a treatment of the textual differences between the MT, LXXA and LXXB see also Jan Svensson, *Towns and Toponyms in the Old Testament with Special Emphasis on Joshua 14-21* (Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1994), 29–59.

[61] Albrecht Alt, *Die Landnahme der Israeliten in Palästina: Territorialgeschichtliche Studien* (Leipzig: Druckerei der Werkgemeinschaft, 1925), 100–116.100–116. Frank Moore Cross and George Ernest Wright, "Boundary and Province Lists of the Kingdom of Judah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 75 (1956): 224–26. Nadav Na'aman, "Josiah and the Kingdom of Judah in Lester L. Grabbe, *Good Kings and Bad Kings: The Kingdom of Judah in the Seventh Century BCE* (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2005), 196. Zekharyah Kallai, "Town Lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan," *VT* 8 (1958):

regions in Israel and Judah are administrative lists from the time of David. Scribes updated the lists during Josiah's reign to include the Philistine cities.[62] This addition took place during the expansion efforts of King Josiah, whom Alt argues moved west to Philistia as well as north towards Samaria, though there is no textual evidence for a western expansion under Josiah. Wright opposes Alt, and after first assigning the addition to the reign of Jehoshaphat,[63] he later revises his claim, arguing that the time of Uzziah makes better sense for the inclusion of the Philistine cities. He adds that Uzziah, "for a time controlled the whole southern plain" making his reign the most likely period.[64]

Na'aman also suggests that this portion of Josh 15 belongs to the reign of Josiah and is exemplary of an aggrandizing tendency found in the Deuteronomistic History. He argues that the list is not historical but rather theological. The statement that the editor of this list makes is that the Philistine territory rightly belonged to Judah.[65]

Kallai argues that the information concerning the provinces of Israel and Judah comes from early in the divided monarchy. However, he holds that the Philistine additions in Josh 15:45–47 come from the time of Hezekiah because 2 Kgs 18:8 records Hezekiah's defeat of Philistine land holdings. Additionally, following the 701 BCE Assyrian campaign, Sennacherib likely assigned Judean territory to the rulers of Ashdod,

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137. Anson Rainey, "The Administrative Division of the Shephelah", *TA* 7 (1980), 194–202; idem., "The Biblical Shephelah of Judah," *BASOR* 251 (1983): 1–22.

[62] Alt, *Die Landnahme der Israeliten in Palästina*, 100–116.100–116.

[63] Cross and Wright, "Boundary and Province Lists of the Kingdom of Judah," 224–26.

[64] Robert G. Boling and G. Ernest Wright, *Joshua*, AA 6 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982), 70.

[65] Nadav Na'aman, "Josiah and the Kingdom of Judah in Lester L. Grabbe, *Good Kings and Bad Kings: The Kingdom of Judah in the Seventh Century BCE* (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2005), 196.

Ekron, and Gaza. These three cities are precisely the cities listed in Josh 15:45–47.[66] The Philistine additions of 2 Kgs 15:45–47 constitute the final stage of the formation of the text for Kallai, and he reads this entire section of Joshua as the editorial product of Hezekiah's scribal efforts.

Anson Rainey modifies Kallai's contribution concerning the arrangement of the Shephelah districts.[67] Rainey argues that the districts as they appear in the biblical text do not follow a simple north to south arrangement but instead, the central valley, Nahal Guvrin, has been shifted to last place, resulting in a composition that mentions first, the northern most district, second, the southernmost district, and third, the central district.[68] Rainey surmises that this arrangement is merely a literary phenomenon. He dates the insertion of the Philistine cities to the reigns of Uzziah (2 Chr. 26:6) or Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:8) who controlled parts of the Philistine coast for a time.

The primary proposals for dating the insertion of the Philistine cities to the regional lists in Joshua are the reigns of David and Solomon, Uzziah, Hezekiah, or Josiah. Na'aman's assertion that the Joshua 15:45–47 is an ideological statement is in keeping with the impulses of the Deuteronomistic Historian as well as material evidence which does not support Judean influence in Philistia. The suggestion that the insertion comes from the time of Uzziah, however, is incorrect. Uzziah's expansive efforts focused on the northern territory of Philistia, with the text naming building projects in Gath,

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[66] Zekharyah Kallai, "Town Lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan," *VT* 8 (1958): 137.

[67] Anson Rainey, "The Administrative Division of the Shephelah", *TA* 7 (1980), 194–202; idem., "The Biblical Shephelah of Judah," *BASOR* 251 (1983): 1–22.

[68] Rainey, "The Administrative Division of the Shephelah", 194–202.

Jabneh, and Ashdod while apparently avoiding the areas of Ekron and Gaza.[69] The suggestion that the insertion of the Philistine cities is Josianic is possible from an ideological standpoint but lacks evidence in the efforts mentioned in 2 Kings. Second Kings does not mention a desire for Josiah to expand westward. The biblical text does record efforts to the north but this expansion does not correspond with the inclusion of Philistine cities. Hezekiah's reign provides the most likely historical situation for the inclusion of the Philistine cities in an ideological piece because Hezekiah may have expanded territory in the Shephelah toward Philistia following the Assryian campaign mentioned above. In addition 2 Kings 18 (unlike the Josianic material) mentions Hezekiah's efforts to the west. As Kallai argues, both 2 Kgs 18:8 and 1 Chr 4:41–43 record Hezekiah's expansion into Philistine territory. Additionally, following the 701 BCE Assyrian campaign, Sennacherib assigned Judean territory to the rulers of Ashdod, Ekron, and Gaza. These three cities are precisely the cities listed in Josh 15:45–47.[70] Sennacherib's inscription, following the 701 BCE campaign, records that Ekron had formerly been under the auspices of Hezekiah of Judah. Consequently, extra-biblical evidence assigns leadership of Ekron (mentioned in Josh 15:45–47) to Hezekiah. The most likely scenario is that the Philistine insertion into the regional lists in Joshua occurred during the reign of Hezekiah, who expanded Judean territory westward in the Shephelah and may have had managerial power over Philistine cities for a time.

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[69] Amihai Mazar, "The Northern Shephelah in the Iron Age: Some Issues in Biblical History and Archaeology," in *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays in Honor of Philip J. King*, ed. Cheryl J. Exum, Michael David Coogan, and Philip J. King (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 257.

[70] Kallai, "Town Lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan," 137.

The period of Hezekiah's compliance with Assyria was a time of prosperity for Judah. Judah could engage in profitable agricultural endeavors throughout the Shephelah.[71] Without Israel as an intermediary, Judah prospered in her own right. With Assyria's trust in Judah to manage the region well, for several years, Judah functioned as an important component in the Assyrian Empire.

Possible Land Loss in Ashdod Rebellion

The political landscape that Assyria set in place in Syria-Palestine began to unravel when Assyrian forces returned to Mesopotamia.[72] Sargon and his troops faced battles in Urartu for much of 715-713 BCE. Unrest developed along the coast of Syria-Palestine in his absence. Marduk-apla-iddina likely took this opportunity to prepare for his own revolt in Babylonia in conjunction with the revolt in Syria-Palestine.[73] To the south, Shabako ascended the Ethiopian throne in 713 or early 712 BCE. His policy vigorously opposed Assyrian control in southern Syria-Palestine.[74] The pressure that Hezekiah faced from the western city of Ashdod, the possible encouragement from Babylonian delegates, and the hope of aid from Egypt may have been persuasive enough

[71] The nature of Hezekiah's dominion over these territories is unsure. Ashdod and Ekron maintained their own rulers. Hooker suggest that Hezekiah gained access to the towns and villages that supported Ashdod and Ekron but that the cities themselves maintained the same political structure and inhabitants. See Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 331.

[72] Sargon appeared in Syria-Palestine again in 716 BCE to bring into submission Arab tribes located in the Sinai. This expedition is recorded in VA8424 (This prism was found in the Ashur temple forecourt and is currently located in Berlin).

[73] Stephen C. Russell, *The King and the Land: A Geography of Royal Power in the Biblical World* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 101.

[74] Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 119–20.

for Hezekiah to change his pro-Assyrian policy.[75] It is unclear whether Hezekiah participated in the Ashdod Rebellion and the point is debated.

A Sargonic inscription, The Broken Prism, describes a revolt led by the Philistine city of Ashdod in the years following Sargon II's (721-705 BCE) initial campaigns in Syria-Palestine. The inscription may implicate Hezekiah of Judah along with other rulers in the area.[76] The inscription is unclear and states that a leader in the revolt against Assyria "spread countless evil lies to alienate [the leaders of Palestine, Judah, Edom and Moab] from me."[77] It is possible that Hezekiah, under pressure from neighboring city-states decided to participate in the Ashdod revolt.

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[75] Hooker, Miller and Hayes suggest that this change in Judean policy may have occurred during Hezekiah's illness in coordination with pressure from the Babylonian delegates, around the fourteenth year of his reign. These scholars suggest that perhaps Hezekiah was incapacitated and the administration of his kingdom fell to anti-Assyrian parties (Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 182–190; Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 408–9. Hezekiah's incapacitation is not a necessary conclusion since later in Hezekiah's reign he is perfectly willing to revolt against Assyrian hegemony (in 705 BCE, following the death of Sargon). It appears then, that Hezekiah was willing to revolt on two occasions. There is no need to posit that one of these revolts was carried out against his desires.

[76]*ANET*, 286–87. It seems likely that this revolt was a coordinated affair with the Babylonian ruler Merodach-baladan who revolted against Assyrian rule around the same time (See Hooker, 327). The record of the visit of Babylonian delegates to Jerusalem (2 Kings 20:12–19) may reflect an effort to coordinate the revolts intended to divide the interests of the Assyrian empire. Hooker makes a strong case for Judah's participation in this rebellion based on evidence of coordinating events in other locations as well as Hezekiah's interest in expanding his western border. Nevertheless, Na'aman maintains that the inscription implies Ashdod's failed attempt to entice Judah, Moab, and Edom to participate in the revolt. Na'aman cites the prism's characterization of the enticed groups as "tribute payers" and the tendency of Assyrian kings to justify military action against vassal kings because the vassal king has tried to incite others to rebel. See, Nadav Na'aman, *Ancient Israel and Its Neighbors: Interaction and Counteraction* (Eisenbrauns, 2005), 103. Unfortunately, the fragmentary text does not clarify whether the other leaders participated in the rebellion. The pertinent textual translation is reproduced just below for further clarity. In the larger context, the text records that a rebellion against Assryia led by the king of Ashdod in coordination with the Hittites. Someone—likely the king of Ashdod—attempts to entice the laeders of Judah, Edom, and Moab to participate in the rebellion. Following the selection below, Sargon boasts that he put down the uprising.

> …The [to] the rulers of Palestine (*Pi-liš-te*), Judah (*Ia-u-di*), Ed[om], Moab, (and) those who live (on islands) and bring tribute [and] *tâmartu*-gifts to my lord Ashur—[he spread] countless evil lies to alienate (them) from me, and (also) sent bribes to Pir'u, king of Musru—a potentate, incapable to save them—and asked him to be an ally…"

[77] Ibid.

In another inscription, which scholars date to the same period, Sargon boasts that he subdued the Judean city of Azekah as well as "the royal city of the Philistines, which Hezekiah had taken and fortified for himself."[78] This is a strong indicator that Hezekiah lost territory in the Shephelah following the Ashdod Rebellion as Azekah was likely under his control before the revolt. Sargonic inscriptions on the walls of the Khorsabad palace recount the military action that quelled the Ashdod Rebellion. The picture these inscriptions create is of Assyrian military activity moving from Ashdod in northern Philistia, east to Ekron, and south to Azekah. [79] By 711 Sargon II annexed Ashdod to the Assyrian Empire. Judah found itself surrounded to the north and west by an Assyrian presence. This failed revolt likely resulted in loss of land and life for many Judeans.[80] The rapid swing from fortune to misfortune left many unsettled and disenfranchised. The leadership of the wounded Judean state understandably laid low for the remaining years of Sargon's reign.

Other Major Developments in Hezekiah's Judah

Population growth. In addition to the changes brought by Judah's interaction with Assyria (or perhaps because of it?), eighth century Judah also experienced significant population growth. Several archaeological sites show an increase in inhabitants during the eighth century. Broshi and Finkelstein report that the population of Israel and Judah

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[78] COS 2:304

[79] Hayim Tadmor, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study," *JCS* 12 (1958): 79–80; idem., "Philistia under Assyrian Rule," *BA* 29 (1966): 94–95.

[80] Hooker notes that along with the loss of the Philistine cites, Judah also lost Azekah. Sargon created an Assyrian province from the rebellious cites that was administered from Ashdod. By the time of Sennacherib's campaign, the area was no longer a province causing Hooker to conclude that the original decision was reversed ("The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 336–337).

reached an all-time high in the eighth century numbering about 460,000 individuals.[81] This population boom served as both an asset and a detriment to the Judean economy. An increased population meant more laborers and military service members. However, the population growth also meant more drain on the resources available in Judah, especially land resources. With the growth in population Judean society became increasingly urban as the majority of the population growth occurred in the cities.

Archaeological surveys indicate the presence of 34 Iron IIA sites in the highlands of Judah and 21 sites in the Shephelah around 800 BCE.[82] In the second half of the eighth century the number of sites in the highlands more than tripled with 122 sites present.[83] In the Shephelah the growth occurred exponentially with 276 sites in the second half of the eighth century.[84] The Jerusalemite population additionally grew significantly in the eighth century as Jerusalem expanded onto the western hill.[85] Though there is some discussion concerning when Jerusalem began to expand onto the western hill, scholars agree that by the end of the eighth century the western hill was completely inhabited bringing the population in Jerusalem to an all-time high.[86]

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[81] Magen Broshi and Israel Finkelstein, "The Population of Palestine in Iron Age II," *BASOR* 287 (1992): 54.

[82] Ibid. The Iron Age divides into two subunits: Iron I and Iron II. Scholars generally place Iron I around 1200–1000 BCE and Iron II around 1000–550 BCE. See, Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000-586 B.C.E*. (New Haven, CT: Anchor Bible, 1992), 295–550. See, specifically, Mazar, *Archaeology of*, 295 for a breakdown of the smaller units within the Iron Age.

[83] Avi Ofer, "'All the Hill Country of Judah': From a Settlement Fringe to a Prosperous Monarchy," in *From Nomadism to Monarchy*, ed. Nadav Na'aman and Israel Finkelstein (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1994), 104–105.

[84] Ibid.

[85] See the following two paragraphs below for a discussion of the western hill.

[86] Magen Broshi and Israel Finkelstein, "The Population of Palestine in Iron Age II," *BASOR* 287 (1992): 54–56.

Avigad conducted excavations in Jerusalem between 1969 and 1982 in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. He unearthed a city wall on the western hill of Jerusalem (known as "Avigad's Wall" or the "Broad Wall").[87] Avigad uncovered over 200 feet of the first temple wall.[88] Before the incorporation of the western hill, Jerusalem covered only about 40 acres. Following the inclusion of the western hill, Jerusalem quadrupled in size, covering about 160 acres.[89] Excavations conducted on the western hill uncovered pottery vessels, remains of walls and floors indicating that the western hill was inhabited in the first temple period. Excavators also found remains of structures beneath the Broad Wall indicating that the western hill was inhabited prior to its enclosure. [90] Excavators dated the pottery on the western hill based on analogy to Lachish Level III on account of similarities indicating that the inhabitation of the western hill of Jerusalem took place at the same time as Lachish III.[91] Excavators date the destruction level above Lachish III to Sennacherib's invasion in 701 BCE. The growth onto the western hill, therefore, occurred before or around 701 BCE.

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[87] Nadav Na'aman, "When and How Did Jerusalem Become a Great City? The Rise of Jerusalem as Judah's Premier City in the Eighth-Seventh Centuries B.C.E.," *BASOR* 347 (2007): 21–56.

[88] Hillel Geva, "The Western Boundary of Jerusalem at the End of the Monarchy," *IEJ* 29 (1979): 84–89; Nahman Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 31–60.

[89] Ronnie Reich, "The Topography and Archaeology of Jerusalem in the First Temple Period," in *The History of Jerusalem: The Biblical Period*, eds. S. Ahituv and A. Mazar (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 2000), 116.

[90] Geva, "The Western Boundary," 84–89; Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, 31–60.

[91] Avigad and Geva, "Iron Age II Strata 9–7," in *Jewish Quarter Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem Conducted by Nahman Avigad, 1969–1982*, ed. H. Geva (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 1:81.

The discoveries associated with the growth in Judah and Jerusalem sparked questions concerning how such growth may have occurred. Broshi's proposal became, for a time, one of the primary ways that scholars explained the growth.[92] Broshi surmises that an influx of Northern refugees fleeing in light of the Assyrian campaign that eventually took Samaria in 720 BCE accounts for the growth in Judah and first wave of growth in Jerusalem. After the fall of Samaria, refugees from the south of Israel flooded Judah, taking up residence in Jerusalem, the hill country, and the Shephelah. According to Broshi's schema, a second wave of refugees flooded Jerusalem in 701 BCE after Sennacherib campaigned through the Shephelah. Finkelstein develops Broshi's hypothesis, suggesting that the massive growth in Jerusalem occurred after the fall of Samaria. [93] In a later publication, Finkelstein and Silberman describe Jerusalem's growth as a transformative event that took place in a single generation with the rapid influx of Northern refugees.[94] Finkelstein suggests that Jerusalem's population may have increased from 1000 to 15,000 people.[95]

Rather than a rapid influx of refugees, Gabriel Barkay argues for a gradual settlement of the western hill. Barkay proposes that settlement of the western hill gradually increased from the end of the ninth century and throughout the eighth century.

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[92] Magen Broshi, "Expansion of Jerusalem in the Reigns of Hezekiah and Manasseh," *IEJ* 24 (1974): 21–26.

[93] Broshi and Finkelstein, "The Population of Palestine in Iron Age II," 51–52.

[94] Neil Asher Silberman and Israel Finkelstein, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 243.

[95] Israel Finkelstein, "The Settlement History of Jerusalem in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries BC," *RB* 115 (2008): 510.

[96] Similarly, Vaughn suggests that the archaeological data from the western hill points to gradual increase in inhabitation from the beginning of the eighth century until the seventh century.[97] Vaughn maintains that some of the growth can be attributed to Northern refugees but that refugees are not the primary factor in the growth.

Na'aman also finds the suggestion of rapid growth on the western hill unappealing. He argues instead for gradual growth from the ninth century to the seventh century.[98] Because of the continual habitation of the western hill from the ninth century to the early sixth century, Na'aman proposes that the earliest potshards are no longer recognizable as early because they were used continually or dissipated. Based on an analogy to the City of David, Na'aman notes that very little pottery from Iron Age I-IIA (ca. 1200-925 BCE) is present at the City of David, however, archaeologists are sure that the City of David was inhabited during that time. Additionally, Avigad and Geva reported four building stages preceding the construction of the Broad Wall and some isolated Iron II potsherds scattered around the Western Hill. Nevertheless, Na'aman admits that based on findings on the Western Hill and due to the lack of epigraphic evidence, inhabitation in the ninth century remains merely conjecture.[99] Next, Na'aman turns to international expectations in the ancient Near East for refugees. He argues that clear understandings between states, empires and vassal states alike, concerning the

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[96] Gabriel Barkay, "Northern and Western Jerusalem in the End of the Iron Age", (PhD diss., Tel Aviv University, 1985), 488–492

[97] Andrew Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology in the Chronicler's Account of Hezekiah*, ABS 4 (Atlanta: SBL, 1999), 64–69.

[98] Nadav Na'aman, "When and How Did Jerusalem Become a Great City?"

[99] Ibid., 27.

repatriating of refugees were in place.[100] Additionally, it was in Assyria's interest to prevent refugees from fleeing Israel.[101] Finally, Na'aman finds no evidence, either textual or archeological for the movement of such large numbers. He allows that some Northern refugees would have made their way to Judah, but not in the numbers that Finkelstein proposes.

Na'aman's proposal for growth on to the western hill in the ninth century should not be followed. As Na'aman himself admits, only isolated potsherds from Iron II A are extant and these could easily have been brought to the northern hill by chance because of agricultural activity or travelers.[102] Additionally, the four phases that Na'aman cites occurring below the Broad wall are not actual strata but phases within the same strata as the wall.[103] Finally, Na'aman's examples of international agreements concerning refugees are not convincing. His examples of the repatriation of refugees are chronologically inappropriate (dealing with the second century BCE) or have to do with refugee groups or individuals that were a threat to the state from which they sought refuge. He does not bring a clear case for war time repatriation. Moreover, Na'aman concedes several points that work against his case. For instance, he points to testimonies of the movement of refugees from the territories of the Assyrian empire into Shubria and Urartu.[104] In

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[100] Ibid., 34.

[101] Ibid., 43–35

[102] Finkelstein, "The Settlement History of Jerusalem," 507. Finkelstein persuasively argues that a smattering of potsherds from the early postexilic period are also present on the Western Hill by scholars are generally agreed that the early postexilic inhabitants of Jerusalem were located primarily in the City of David.

[103] Ibid., 503.

[104] Na'aman, "When and How Did Jerusalem Become a Great City?," 34.

addition, Assyrian sources mention "the flight of inhabitants upon the arrival of the Assyrian army."[105] His evidence, therefore, indicates that that the influx of refugees is, in fact, possible and recorded elsewhere.[106] Concerning the growth in Jerusalem, then, it is best to surmise the expansion onto the western hill occurred in the eighth century and that some of the growth can be plausibly attributed to Northern refugees. Finkelstein's conjecture of this massive growth taking place in one generation is not entirely out of the question though it does seem unlikely. When one considers the instability of the northern kingdom in the last 50-100 years of its existence, waves of refugees even before the final collapse of Samaria is a feasible hypothesis. The increased population in Judah created the demand for an infrastructure that would support the population growth. Hezekiah answered the demand of a growing population by increasing focus on the production of surplus goods to bolster the economy and by focusing on Jerusalem as a central political, economic, and religious administrative city.[107]

This discussion of population growth in the hill country, Shephelah, and Jerusalem squares with the observations of this chapter thus far. Beginning with the Omrides, both Judah and Israel began a process of urbanization. The trajectory begun by the Omrides reaches its apogé during the reign of Hezekiah. Specifically, in the Shephelah and in Jerusalem serious population growth in urban centers marked the second half of the eighth century. In the absense of an Israelite power in the North,

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[105] Ibid.

[106] See, Finkelstein, "The Settlement History of Jerusalem," 506–508.

[107] See the following sections on production of surplus and the lmlk seal impressions.

Hezekiah embarked on a quest to produce surplus goods and centralize authority in Jerusalem.

Production of surplus. In the eighth century Judah witnessed significant economic growth along with increased population and urbanization. One of the major components of an urbanized society is its ability to create surplus for trade and tax. Archaeological evidence indicates that Judah's economy focused on the production of surplus for trade. This evidence adds substance to the claims that during the eighth century Judah increasingly invested in production of surplus goods.

At Gibeon, just north of Jerusalem, there are remnants of an extensive wine industry. The settlement at Gibeon extends from the tenth century to the sixth century BCE.[108] Several seasons of excavations uncovered 59 jar handles, a clay funnel, and over 40 clay stoppers.[109] Excavators also found 63 vats cut into bedrock. The vats measured, on average, six feet in diameter and seven feet deep. Pritchard hypothesizes that these vats functioned as storage cellars for wine jugs. The wine jugs were about two feet high and were stacked on top of one another in the vat. Pritchard estimates that these vats could hold in excess of 25,000 gallons of wine.[110] Additionally, Pritchard found that these rock-cut vats could maintain a temperature of 65 degrees which helps to preserve

[108] James B. Pritchard, *Gibeon, Where the Sun Stood Still: The Discovery of the Biblical City* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 79.

[109] James B. Pritchard, *Winery, Defenses, and Soundings at Gibeon*, University Museum Monograph (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1964), 24.

[110] Pritchard, *Gibeon, Where the Sun Stood Still*, 90–92.

wine.[111] This evidence indicates Gibeon's participation in the wine industry and engagement in producing surplus amounts of wine to trade with others.

Stratum A2 (eighth century) at Tell Beit Mirsim, located southwest of Hebron in the hill country at the point where the hill country transitions to the Shephelah, excavators discovered several "free-standing central vats."[112] Albright argues that these units served as dying vats.[113] Gustaf Dalman argues against this hypothesis, suggesting instead that the vats functioned as olive presses.[114] Dalam points to the similarities between the vats at Tell Beit Mirsim and the olive presses at Beth Shemesh and Tell en-Nesbeh.[115] Dalman's suggestion accounts for the location of the site in an area with olive orchards. The large vats may have served to store the oil as a surplus good used to engage in trade.

Eighth century Judah also participated in the wool industry. At Lachish, in the Shephelah of Judah, several living quarters (Rooms H. 15:1003; G. 14:1001, 1005, 1006, 1007, and 1008) contained large numbers of loom weights (about 25-50 per room),

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[111] Ibid: 83.

[112] Rafael Frankel, *Wine and Oil Production in Antiquity in Israel and Other Mediterranean Countries*, JSOT/ASOR Monograph Series 10 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 63.

[113] William Foxwell Albright, "The Excavation of Tell Beit Mirsim. Vol. III: The Iron Age," *AASOR* 21/22 (1941): 60–65. Albright's conclusions were based on three observations. First, the analogy to more modern Arab installations. Second, traces of slaked lime which Albright considers to be part of the dye mixture. Third, gray ash that he considers potash (part of the dying process). Fourth, doughnut shaped weights, and plastered basins that he considers part of the dying process.

[114] David Eitam, "Olive Presses of the Israelite Period," *TA* 6 (1979): 152. Eitam bases his conclusions on five arguments. First, he points to the differences between the Arab installations at Hebron and the installations at Tell Beit Mirsim. Second, he argues that the line of residue that Albright argued was from dying could have been from plastering or cleaning the basins. Third, he objects that the potash was not analyzed in a laboratory and so one cannot be sure that potash was present. Fourth, he argues that the stone weights may not have been associated with a loom but instead were part of a beam press. Finally, Eitam argues that the rock-cut basins were not for dying but crushing olives.

[115] See also, Ibid.

spindle whorls, and hammer stones. One room contained the burned remains of a vertical loom.[116] These remains are part of a destruction level associated with Sennacherib's siege of Lachish, indicating that the wool industry was a part of the eighth century commerce.[117] Tell Halif also shows signs of involvement in the textile industry.[118]

Several of the sites surveyed above show signs of specialized production. Sites such as Gibeon show an interest in the production of wine, Tell Beit Mirsim focused on the production of olive oil, and Lachish and Tel Halif show evidence of the surplus production of textiles. Frick notes that villages and cities dedicated to specialized production often bear the marks of strategic city planning. [119] For example, cities dedicated to the production and storage of wine will have mechanisms built into the city structure that allow for that production and storage. Sites such as Gibeon and Tell Beit Mirsim show signs of city planning akin to what Frick outlines. Frick notes that these sorts of developments indicate involvement of the monarchy in building cites specifically aimed at the production of surplus. He proposes that Hezekiah was involved in developing cities focused on the production of surplus goods.[120]

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[116] Olga Tufness, *Lachish III (Tell Ed-Duweir): The Iron Age* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 109. See also more recent discussions cited in Finkelstein, "The Rise of Jerusalem and Judah."

[117] Tufness, *Lachish III (Tell Ed-Duweir)*, 109.

[118] Seung Ho Bang, *Ritual Threads*, 307–322.

[119] Frank S. Frick, "'Oil from Flinty Rock' (Deuteronomy 32:13): Olive Cultivation and Olive Oil Processing in the Hebrew Bible--A Socio-Materialist Perspective," *Semeia* (1999), 10. Frick states, "For example, at the Iron II sites of Tell-en Nasbeh, Tel Beit-Mirsim, Beth Shemesh, Tel Batash, and Tel Miqne, most of the olive oil presses were located in a belt of structures that surrounded the town center. This suggests that the town planners were guided by considerations such as access to both the raw material and the finished product."

[120] Ibid.

Access to Trade Routes. Along with the production of surplus in the eighth century, Judah also became interested in expanding to control trade routes. Tel Nagila was a contested site that would have provided access to trade routes. The site, near Ashkelon on the border between Judahite and Philistine territory, contains ambiguous pottery assemblages in the eighth century strata with no clear indication of the site's status as Philistine or Judahite.[121] This ambiguity leads to the conclusion that Tel Nagila changed hands during Iron II, at times falling under Judean hegemony and at other times Philistine.[122] The biblical material also indicates that Hezekiah had a vested interest in the Philistine coast.

There is also evidence that Judah expanded its influence to the South in the eighth century. Four primary trade routes ran through the Negev.[123] The first connects Kadesh-Barnea and Arad, the second runs from Kadesh-Barnea through the Nissanah valley down through the way of Shur and south to Egypt. The third route moves south from 'Avdat through Mount Ramon to the 'Arabah. The fourth links the 'Arabah with Edom and continues south past Tamar to Elath.[124] Archaeologists have discovered several Judean fortresses along these routes that aided in the smooth flow of trade. A fort at Kadesh Barnea probably functioned as early as the tenth century. Towers form the

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[121] Itzhaq Shai et al., "The Iron Age Remains at Tel Nagila.," *BASOR* 363 (2011): 31.

[122] Ibid. In Stratum IV the evidence is strongest for Philistine occupation. However, Area G contains a Stratum III which appears to be Judahite. Finally, Stratum II is ambiguous.

[123] Aharoni, "Forerunners of the Limes: Iron Age Fortresses in the Negev," *IEJ* 17 (1967): 11–14.

[124] Ibid., 11.

casemate fortifications which belong to the eighth century and show an interest in the fort during the period.[125]

A fort at Arad contains eighth century remains that indicate an interest in trade including storage for surplus and ostraca that mention needed supplies. The fort at Horvat ‘Uza between the edge of the Negev and the descent to the Dead Sea bears resemblance to the forts at Kadesh Barnea and Arad. Excavations of this fort found nothing that dates prior to Iron II, indicating that the fort was a part of expansion under the Judean kings of the eighth century.[126]

Similarly, a fort at Beersheba, served as part of Judean fort system since the ninth century, contains storage units as well as administrative structures that functioned into the eighth century.[127] The site of Kuntillet ‘Ajrûd in northeastern Sinai, also shows signs of an interest in trade.[128] The site dates to the late ninth or early eighth century. It may have been used as a religious site for traveling merchants. Two smaller rooms at the fortress contain religious inscription and paintings. The inscriptions mention YHWH of Samaria and YHWH of Teman.

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[125] Avraham Faust, “The Negev ‘Fortresses’ in Context: Reexamining the ‘Fortress’ Phenomenon in Light of General Settlement Processes of the Eleventh-Tenth Centuries BCE,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126, no. 2 (April 2006): 157.

[126] Yohanan Aharoni, “The Negev of Judah,” *IEJ* 8 (1958): 35; Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert: A History of the Negev: Being an Illustrated Account of Discoveries in a Frontierland of Civilization* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1959), 179.

[127] Finkelstein, “The Rise of Jerusalem and Judah,” 93–94.

[128] See Ahituv, Eshel and Meshel, “Chapter 5: The Inscriptions.” In Kuntillet Ajrud (Horvat Teman): An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah Sinai Border, Meshel, Ze’ev (ed.), Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 73–142. See also, Judith M. Hadley, “Some Drawings and Inscriptions on Two Pithoi from Kuntillet ’Ajrud,” *VT* 37 (1987): 180–213; B A. Mastin, “The Inscriptions Written on Plaster at Kuntillet ‘Ajrud,” *VT* 59 (2009): 99–115.

These archaeological finding reinforce the larger focus of this chapter. The findings show that beginning in the ninth century and continuing throughout the eighth century, Judah had a vested interest in becoming more involved in international trade. These developments are part of the program that led to increased centralization and more power located in the monarchy.

Increased administrative power. The centralization process also included increased administrative power among centralized authorities. Before the fall of the northern kingdom, an increase in centralized administrative power is apparent in the Samaria ostraca. In the southern kingdom, the *lmlk* jar handles found throughout Judah indicate the increased power of the monarchy and increased infrastructure throughout the kingdom.

Samaria ostraca. The Samaria ostraca are a group of texts (written in ink on potsherds) found at Samaria that offer evidence for administrative practices in the distribution and storage of commodities such as wine and oil. Aharoni and Rainey argue that the Samaria ostraca were records of shipments received by government officials as payment from their respective vineyards and orchards in the outlying territories of Samaria.[129] Rainey suggests that "the life setting underlying the ostraca is the land-grant and patrimonial system."[130] The shipments of goods were received from the outlying family holdings that ran the orchards and vineyards by those serving in the capital. In addition to family holdings, the high-ranking officials would also receive capital from

[129] Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*, 363.; Anson F. Rainey, "Administration in Ugarit and the Samaria Ostraca," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 62–63.Anson F Rainey, "Samaria Ostraca in the Light of Fresh Evidence," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 99 (1967): 32–41.

[130] Rainey, "Samaria Ostraca in the Light of Fresh Evidence," 33–39.

estates granted to them by the king.[131] Thus, the elite, serving in the capital or royal court, benefited from their more rural agricultural holdings while they stayed in the city and conducted business. Yadin has suggested that instead of seeing the records of these shipments as payment to private dignitaries, it is better to assume that they were taxes sent from estate owners to the king.[132] Whatever their purpose, the Samaria Ostraca point to a level of infrastructure and centralization that was not seen before in Samaria. This chapter has traced the trajectory of this process of urbanization from Samaria in the ninth century to Jerusalem in the eighth. The best indicator for this level of infrastructure and centralization in Judah are the *lmlk* seals.

Lmlk seal impressions. Similar to the Samaria Ostraca, the *lmlk* seal impression point to centralized administrative functioning. Primarily, the *lmlk* jars handles point to an economy run by and benefiting the crown. The *lmlk* jars are a clear marker of Hezekiah's centralized strength, administration, and economic organization.[133] Archaeologists found these jar handles throughout the various regions of Judah. Though the function of the jars is debated, most scholars agree that they indicate centralized power in the monarchy and significant infrastructure run by the state.[134] The jar handles

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[131] Ibid., 33–39.Yadin has argued against Rainey's reconstruction by suggesting instead that the names recorded on the ostraca belong to the famers of the estates from which the supplies were sent rather than the names belonging to the officials in the city. According the Yadin, the ostraca are tax receipts from private land owners who sent their dues to the tax collectors in the court. Yigael Yadin, "Recipients or Owners: A Note on the Samaria Ostraca," *Israel Exploration Journal* 9 (1959): 184–87.

[132] Yadin, "Recipients or Owners," 184–87. See also, Cross (1975, 8–10), Y. Aharoni (1979, 364–367), Kaufman (1982, 235–238) and Renz (1995, 81–84) See also, Schloen 2001, 163–164. Schloen studies the personal and geographical names on the ostraca to the biblical names of Mannassite clans. Niemann (2008, 246–249) Niemann takes Schloen's conclusions and proposes that they commodities represented in the Samaria ostraca were political gifts to the Mannassite clan leaders aimed at consolidating support for Jehu

[133] See survey of evidence related to *lmlk* jar handles in the following paragraphs.

[134] See below, 59.

point to an organized and urbanized society under the authority of the crown. The survey that follows will explore the various scholarly arguments for the use of the jars concluding that the jar handles indicate significant centralization of power and an organized society focused on creating surplus for international trade.

The Hebrew phrase, "lmlk" can be translated "of," "to," "for," or "belonging to the king." These jar handles date to the late eighth century and help depict the centralized administration in Judah. In addition to the inscription "lmlk," these seal impressions bear four different place names, Hebron, Ziph, Socho, or *mmšt*. Excavators discover these jars only in Judean sites and date them to the period following the destruction of Samaria. Scholars disagree concerning the use of these jars. Aharoni suggests that the place names on the jars indicate four of the primary Judean tax collection centers.[135] These centers were concerned with storing taxes in kind in preparation for Sennacherib's invasion in 701 BCE.[136] Rainey argues that the *lmlk* jars functioned predominately to collect wine and various other surplus goods from royal estates.[137] The four place names indicate storage cities where these units of wine were collected and distributed.[138] Yadin also promotes the idea that the *lmlk* jars served to store supplies of wine and oil at war time.[139] Because the four city names fall in unusual or unknown locations for wartime

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[135]Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*, 398–99.

[136] Ibid., 399.

[137] Anson Rainey, "Wine from the Royal Vineyards," *BASOR* 245 (1982), 57–62. This hypothesis differs from others because it supposes that the supplies came only from royal vineyards and orchards. This proposal is not a necessary conclusion based on the inscription "*lmlk*." Instead, *lmlk* may designate taxes in kind from the populace. This does not exclude goods from royal vineyards and orchards

[138] Ibid.

[139] Yigael Yadin, "The Fourfold Division of Judah," *BASOR* 163 (1961): 8.

preparations, Yadin devises that the city names are shorthand for administrative regions. He holds that, based on Josh 15 (discussed above) four primary regions existed for the collection of taxes: the Shephelah, the hill country, the Negev, and the wilderness. [140] From these regional collection centers, the *lmlk* jars were filled and sent throughout the kingdom to various fortified sites to prepare for battle. Na'aman suggests a hypothesis related to Yadin's but with some slight modifications. Na'aman agrees that the four city names are likely indicative of larger regions.[141] However, he does not see the regions mentioned in Josh 15 as indicative of the regions represented. Instead, Na'aman cites the list of cities recorded in 2 Chr 11:5–11 as part of Rehoboam's fortification of Judah. He argues that the Chronicler placed these fortified cities at the time of Rehoboam mistakenly and that the fortifications actually belong to the time of Hezekiah.[142] He argues that the four regions were located in the Shephelah, the southern, central, and northern hill country. In this way, Na'aman modifies the view of Yadin who includes the Negev and the wilderness. Na'aman argues that the Negev was not an essential military location because the attack would come from the North and the hill country and Shephelah would be the main line of defense.[143] Na'aman reconstructs the process for the *lmlk* jars this way:

> The *lmlk* jars of Type 484 were all produced in a single pottery-making center located some-where in the Shephelah, probably in the region of Lachish… The *lmlk* stamps indicated that the manufactured jars were under royal authority ("belonging to the king"). The private seals stamped

[140] Socoh applies to the Shephelah, Hebron to the hill country, *mmst* to the Negev, Ziph to the wilderness. Ibid., 9–10.

[141] Nadav Naʾaman, "Hezekiah's Fortified Cities and the 'LMLK' Stamps," *BASOR* 261 (1986): 5–8.

[142] Ibid., 8–10.

[143] Ibid., 17.

> on the *lmlk* jars probably belonged to the king's officers supervising the preparations for war, who were entitled to use the official royal seal. From the central workshop the empty jars were sent to the four military-administrative districts where preparations for the war took place. The names of the four towns probably designated the names of the four regions where the empty jars stamped with names would have been sent. Jars bearing the *lmlk* stamps with no town name might have been dispatched to towns all over the country. The empty jars were filled in the towns in the four defense and supply areas and then were sent and stored in the fortified cities of Judah. The two-winged insignia and the four-winged insignia were intended to mark the region where the loaded jars would have been sent. Jars bearing the sundisc were sent to the northern region of Judah, and those bearing the scarab were sent to the Shephelah. The contents of the jars must have included all the resources of the kingdom: taxes in kind, payments by rich land owners, perhaps even tithes and possibly products from the crown lands.[144]

Na'aman therefore combines several theories by arguing that the goods that filled the jars were from the royal taxation system as well as royal estates. Additionally, Na'aman offers an explanation for the distribution of the various *lmlk* jars by indicating that the winged scarabs designated the destination of the jar.[145] Ussishkin follows Na'aman

[144] Nadav Na'aman, "The Kingdom of Judah under Josiah," *Tel Aviv* 18 (1991): 16–17.

[145] Na'aman provides this table of the distribution of the *lmlk* jar handles that have been found in "Hezekiah's Fortified Cities and the 'LMLK' Stamps", 8. The table here reflects the Hill Country and Shephelah:

arguing that the *lmlk* jars were a part of Hezekiah's preparations for the impending Assyrian attack. In addition to Na'aman's work, Ussishkin adds that Neutron Activation Analysis supports the theory that the jars were produced at a single pottery making center located in the Shephelah.[146]

More recently, Yosef Garfinkel and Andrew Vaughn counter Na'aman's conjecture that the *lmlk* jars are related to preparation for attack.[147] Instead of the specialized military function, limited to the period of Hezekiah's preparations, Garfinkel and Vaughn argue that the purpose of the jars was non-specialized and related to economic efforts as opposed to military.[148] A close examination of the personal names on the jars led to this conclusion. Vaughn found that several of the personal names from the

TABLE 1. Seal Impressions Found in the 15 Cities

Geographical Zone	*City*	*No. Impressions*	*Excavated?*
Hill Country	Bethlehem	2	no
	Etam	0	no
	Tekoa	0	no
	Beth-zur	11	yes
	Ziph	0	no
	Adoraim	0	no
	Hebron	0	"cursorily"
Shephelah	Socoh	"numerous"	no
	Adullam	0	no
	Gath	6	yes
	Mareshah	17	yes
	Lachish	350	yes
	Azekah	17	yes
	Zorah	0	no
	Aijalon	0	no

[146] David Ussishkin, ed., *The Renewed Archaeological Excavations at Lachish (1973-1994): Introduction. The Bronze Age Stratigraphy and Architecture*, vol. 4, Monograph Series/Tel Aviv University 22 (Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2004), 2141–42.

[147] Andrew G. Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology* 157–65; Yosef Garfinkel, "A Hierarchic Pattern in the Private Seal-Impressions on the 'LMLK' Jar-Handles," ErIsr 18 (1985): 108–15.

[148] Ibid.

jars discovered at Lachish are similar to the personal names found at other sites such as Jerusalem and Ramat Rachel. Basing his work on Garfinkel's hierarchical pattern for the seal owners, Vaughn suggests that the personal names belong to Hezekiah's kingdom-wide officials.[149] Vaughn primarily argues that the *lmlk* jars point to a centralized administrative infrastructure. This infrastructure was economically motivated to distribute and store royal goods. Therefore, the *lmlk* jars were not part of Hezekiah's preparations for battle but part of his overall political and economic reforms that led to centralized power in Jerusalem. The distribution of the *lmlk* jars is a fascinating part of Vaughn's argument. Sixty-two percent of the *lmlk* jars come from Lachish, Jerusalem, and Ramat Rachel.[150] The distribution of the *lmlk* jars runs counter to Na'aman's conjecture that the jars were sent to Hezekiah's fortified towns. Additionally, archaeologists have found some *lmlk* jars at unfortified towns.[151]

Still, Vaughn's argument has flaws. The distribution of the *lmlk* jars along with the geographical names on the *lmlk* jars does not substantiate a governmental use for the jars in Hezekiah's reforms. Ziph, Socoh, and *mmst* are unlikely governmental centers because more established and larger towns are located nearby. Sueng Ho Bang isolates three reasons to stop thinking of Hebron, Socoh, Ziph, and *mmst* as governmental

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[149] Andrew G. Vaughn, "Is Biblical Archaeology Theologically Useful Today? Yes, a Programmatic Proposal," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period,* ed. Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew, SBLSymS 18 (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 424.

[150] See Gabriel Barkay and Andrew G. Vaughn, "The Royal and Official Seal Impressions from Lachish," in *The Iron Age and Post-Iron Age Pottery and Artifacts* Vol 4 of *The Renewed Archaeological Excavations at Lachish (1973-1994): Introduction. The Bronze Age Stratigraphy and Architecture*, Monograph Series 22, ed. David Ussishkin (Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2004), 2167, Fig. 29. 18.

[151] See Yosef Garfinkel, "2 Chr 11:5–10 Fortified Cities List and the Lmlk Stamps: Reply to Nadav Na'aman," BASOR 271 (1988): 69–73.

centers.[152] First, the location of Hebron and Ziph overlap. Second, Socoh has no economic significance. Finally, *mmst* lost its geographical identification. For these reasons, Bang argues that these cities were not identified with an economic concern such as tax collection, nor were they established in the interest of military fortification due to their peculiar geographical configuration. Bang suggests that the four geographical names are related to royal estates that produced wine and oil.[153] As mentioned above, Rainey observes that all four cities were located in the Judean Hill Country. Bang reasons that since Hebron came under David's control (2 Sam 2:3–4), Davidic descendants likely inherited the city.[154] Thus, Hebron likely functioned as a royal vineyard. Bang adds that the shape of the *lmlk* jars is ideal for holding liquids such as wine and oil. Bang points to the "Canaanite Jar" known from the Bronze Age.[155] These jars, similarly shaped to the *lmlk* jars, were used for the transportation of wine, olive oil, tree resins, incense, and honey. Each of the three cities for which the location is sure, would have been prime locations for vineyards or olive orchards.[156] Several places near to the cities named on the *lmlk* jars are known for producing wine and oil. For example, En-gedi, Shiloh and Gibeon are well known for wine production while Beth-Shemesh and Timnah are known for oil refinement. [157] Thus, there is good reason to see the place names on the *lmlk* jars as belonging to royal orchards and vineyards.

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[152] Bang, *Ritual Threads*, 275-276

[153] Bang, 275.

[154] Bang, 275.

[155] Bang, 276.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Bang, 276–277

Based on the above analysis, one can conclude that the *lmlk* jars transported quantities of wine and oil from royal production sites to areas where they were sold or traded.[158] Hezekiah used surpluses of wine and oil produced by royal estates to bolster the economy and continued to interact in the international market. In addition, the storage jars were not specifically manufactured as part of Hezekiah's preparations for rebellion against Assyria. The production and use of the jars predate Hezekiah's preparation for revolt and instead point to Hezekiah's economic success, acquisition of royal land, and interest in surplus production. Additionally, the infrastructure required to produce and distribute wine and oil indicates a significant royal presence in the production of surplus for trade.

Religious centralization. In addition to the state infrastructure and the power of the monarchy indicated by the *lmlk* jar handles; several biblical accounts contain a memory of religious centralization. The biblical accounts of Hezekiah's reign in both 2 Kgs18:3–4 and 2 Chr 31:1–10 record a religious reform that results in the centralization of worship at Jerusalem. These accounts contain some differences that indicate that both are literary constructs.[159]

The work of the Chronicler, however, is often more ideological than historical and therefore the sections of this chapter that deal with the Chronicler's account of religious

[158] So, Bang 276–278

[159] The Deuteronomistic account in 2 Kgs has as its background the ideological material in Deut 12 which advocates for one place of worship. For a brief but thorough introduction to the idea of Deuteronomistic History, see Thomas C. Römer, *So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 13–44.The Chronicles account, on the other hand, portrays the centralization of worship as the means by which the priests and temple functionaries receive their payment and provision.

centralization will require further evaluation. When considering the historical value of a passage in Chronicles, the comparison of the accounts in Chronicles to those in the Deuteronomistic History is particularly interesting. Though the Deuteronomistic History is an ideological account, the Deuteronomistic History is more historically reliable than Chronicles on account of its earlier date. In addition, the Chronicler appears to have used the Deuteronomistic History or a source like it to create his account. The Chronicler used the sources available to create an ideological piece. In several places, the Chronicler records events that are not present in the Deuteronomistic History. These instances of deviation are interesting because they may point to historically valid source material. Therefore, when evaluating the historical reliability of the Chronicler's account Andrew Vaughn finds that according to the majority of scholarship, the Chronicler's account can be dismissed as historically invalid if it is *not* found in Kings, if it is consistent with the ideological or theological agenda of the Chronicler, and if it is not verifiable with extra-biblical historical data.[160]

Scholars are divided concerning passages in Chronicles that are not found in Kings concerning Hezekiah's reform.[161] Some hold that the passages that have no parallel in Kings belong to a source not present in the Deuteronomistic History. They then question whether or not this underlying source is historically reliable or historically suspect. The other possibility is that the material with no parallel in Kings is entirely fabricated. One way of dealing with this tension is to evaluate whether the situation

[160] Andrew G. Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology*, 170–171.

[161] See the following discussion and Robb Andrew Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, VTSup 155 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 203.

presented by the Chronicler fits with extra-biblical evidence.[162] About 70 percent of the material in 2 Chronicles concerning Hezekiah is unique to Chronicles.[163] These passages include the purification of the temple (29:3–36), the celebration of Passover (30:1–27), details concerning how the priests and Levites will maintain the temple (31:2–19), and the record of Hezekiah's great wealth (32:27–30). These passages fulfill the first criteria of being historically suspect because they are not reflected in Kings. The record of Hezekiah's great wealth and economic program (32:27–30) is similarly suspect because of the Chronicler's disposition to paint the great kings of Judah as successful. Nevertheless, the Chronicler's account of Hezekiah's wealth is corroborated by extra-biblical evidence such as the growth of the Jerusalem, increase in surplus goods, and *lmlk* jars throughout the kingdom. Thus, the record of Hezekiah's wealth and economic program is reasonably trustworthy as an (embellished) historical memory.[164] Nevertheless, some difficulties persist when comparing Chronicles with the Deuteronomistic History which one can deal with in a variety of ways.

The 2 Kings account mentions the religious reforms as part of the summary statement concerning Hezekiah's reign. Second Kings 18:3–4 does not state when the reforms occurred. Second Chronicles places the reforms in Hezekiah's first year, seemingly to indicate that the good king wasted no time in reforming the kingdom, thus,

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[162] Ibid.

[163] Ibid., 195.

[164] The Chronicler's account of Hezekiah's great wealth certainly has support in the archaeological record. However, this account also betrays the Chronicler's agenda in aggrandizing the accomplishments of the great king. Therefore, though the claim of Hezekiah's wealth is supportable, it is also likely embellished in accordance with the Chronicler's agenda to show Judean kings in the best light. For more on the Chronicler's aggrandizing tendencies see: H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles :* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 25–32.

this record is historically suspect.[165] Other difficulties also persist. The chronology of Hezekiah's reign is uncertain. Second Kings 18:10 records that Assyria destroyed Samaria in Hezekiah's sixth year making his ascension year 727/726 BCE. However, 2 Kgs 18:13 records that Sennacherib invaded in Hezekiah's fourteenth year, pushing his ascension year to 715/714 BCE.[166] These dating discrepancies cause some scholars to argue for two Assyrian campaigns into Judah under Sennacherib.[167] Finally, those who interpret the archaeological evidence are divided as to whether material remains from the period support the idea of a religious reform.[168] These difficulties lead scholars to several different conclusions concerning Hezekiah's reform that deal with both the biblical text and the material evidence.[169]

The reasons for Hezekiah's reform. H. H. Rowley, who follows the suggestion of two Assyrian invasions under Sennacherib, sees the reforms as the inevitable outcome of Hezekiah's revolt against Assyria.[170] Rowley takes the account of Ahaz's incorporation of an Assyrian altar into the temple (2 Kgs 16:10, 18) as an indication that Assyria

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[165] Diana Edelman, "Hezekiah's Alleged Cultic Centralization," *JSOT* 32 (2008): 399.

[166] For a discussion of this difficulty see Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology*, 7–14.

[167] Though G. Rawlinson was the first to suggest the two campaigns theory, H. H. Rowley completes the most extensive work on the topic ("Hezekiah's Reform and Rebellion," *BJRL* 44 [1962]: 395–431). For those who follow Rowley, (e.g. W. F. Albright, John Bright, Siefried Horn) 2 Kgs 18:13–16 refers to the first campaign while 2 Kgs 18:17–19:36 refers to the second. Additional evidence from the Tirhakah text provides possible evidence of two campaigns. See William H. Shea, "The New Tirhakah Text and Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign.," *AUSS* 35 (1997): 181–87. Nevertheless, the two campaign theory has not received wide following by Assyriologists or many biblical scholars because Sennacherib's annuls only list one campaign.

[168] See below, 65.

[169] See the following section.

[170] Rowley, "Hezekiah's Reform and Rebellion," 425.

required the submission of local gods to the Assyrian gods when a nation was its vassal. Therefore, up until the time of Hezekiah's revolt, the Assyrian gods were worshiped at the temple. Hezekiah's religious reform was actually a removal of the Assyrian images from the land.[171] John McKay rejects Rowley's argument for a politically motivated reform and suggests that, instead, the Deuteronomistic ideas circulated by the prophets Isaiah and Micah and made increasingly popular by Northern refugees who promoted Deuteronomistic ideology motivated Hezekiah.[172]

Richard Lowery argues for a more political and economic scenario than McKay.[173] Hezekiah's closure of the high places as a part of his religious reform, was the means by which he revolted against Assyria.[174] According to Lowery, the high places were the collection locations for the annual tithe. The annual tithe acted as the revenue source for paying tribute to Assyria. If these sites were closed, tribute no longer went to Assyria. By closing the high places, Hezekiah made his rebellion known.

Similarly, Lowell Handy sees the high places as revenue sites and the reform as one with economic rather than religious concerns at its core.[175] Handy argues that the reforms were a final effort to save funds from outlying shrines in Judah that Sennacherib was poised to redistribute to Ekron.[176] Hezekiah would not have wanted to lose the

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[171] Ibid., 430.

[172] John McKay, *Religion in Judah Under the Assyrians 732–609 BC* (London: SCM Press, 1973), 17–19.

[173] Richard Lowery, *The Reforming Kings: Cult and Society in First Temple Judah*, JSOTSup 120 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).

[174] Ibid., 151.

[175] Lowell K. Handy, "Hezekiah's Unlikely Reform," *ZAW* 100 (1988): 111–15.

[176] Ibid., 111–15.

revenue from local shrines and so, as Sennacherib's victory grew near, Hezekiah ordered that the closure of sanctuaries in marginal regions and had the gold, silver, and tribute offerings brought to Jerusalem.[177] If Hezekiah failed to defend Jerusalem, he could use the funds to pay tribute to the Assyrian king.

Kristin Swanson sees more political and less economic motivations behind Hezekiah's reforms.[178] She argues that Hezekiah's reform was aimed at removing all Egyptian iconography from the royal Judean symbol.[179] As an Assyrian vassal, Hezekiah would have needed to display his loyalty in this way. Swanson follows Donner's three stages of Assyrian vassalage.[180] The first step involved asserting dominance over the vassal by a display of military power. The second step included immediate intervention if the Assyrian suzerain suspected the vassal of revolt and the appointment of a puppet leader. The third step involved a military incursion that dissolved the state and absorbed the territory as an Assyrian province with an Assyrian governor. Swanson argues that Hezekiah's rebellion brought Judah into the second stage.[181] Swanson notes that Hezekiah should have been deposed following Sennacherib's campaign. One possible reason that Hezekiah remained on the throne, according to Swanson, was that he

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[177] Ibid.

[178] Kristin A. Swanson, "A Reassessment of Hezekiah's Reform in Light of Jar Handles and Iconographic Evidence," *CBQ* 64 (2002): 460–69.

[179] Ibid., 467.

[180] Herbert Donner, "Separate States of Israel and Judah," in *Israelite and Judaean History*, ed. J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes (Philadelphia: SCM Press, 1977), 419.

[181] Swanson, "A Reassessment of Hezekiah's Reform," 468–469.

displayed his undivided loyalty to Assyria by banishing Egyptian symbolism and adopting Assyrian symbols.[182]

Israel Finkelstein and Aaron Silberman consider the demographic shifts of eighth century Judah to be instructive for discovering the reason for Hezekiah's reform. [183] Finkelstein and Silberman note that the shift toward a highly bureaucratic state with a promising economic outlook and a presence in international trade developed along with the destruction of the Israelite presence to the north.[184] The population boom of the eighth century added to this advance in an organized and centralized state as many northern refugees settled in Jerusalem. The refugees also brought with them their own religious traditions. The Northerners were accustomed to worshipping at Bethel, a northern shrine. In an effort to unite the newly constituted Judean society, the monarchy refocused the national religion.[185] The new common religious identity of those from north and south centered on the Jerusalem temple.

The extent of Hezekiah's reform. Finklestein and Silberman's demographic argument for an influx of refugees has been discussed above. In addition to the demographic argument, Finkelstein and Silberman also point to shrines at Arad, Beersheba, and Lachish that were deliberately dismantled around the time of Hezekiah's reforms.[186] However, Ussishkin, Diana Edelman, and Lisbeth Fried cast doubt on earlier

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[182] Ibid.

[183] Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology," *JSOT* 30 (2006): 259–85.

[184] Ibid., 264–66.

[185] Ibid., 269.

[186] Ibid., 259–285. See also, Ze'ev Herzog et al., "The Israelite Fortress at Arad," *BASOR* 254 (1984): 19–22; Yohanan Aharoni, "Arad : Its Inscriptions and Temple," *BA* 31 (1968): 23–27.

conjecture about the shrine at Arad. Ussishkin questions the dating[187] while Edelman and Fried doubt that the retirement of the shrine had anything to do with religious reform.[188] Instead Edelman argues that Judean military troops dismantled the shrine and retired the holy room because of the impending Assyrian attack in 701 BCE[189] while Fried holds that the attacking army retired the shrine as a respectful sign of the Judean deities defeat.[190]

The evidence at Beersheba is similarly difficult. Archaeologists found a dismantled horned altar composed of ashlar stones at Beersheba. Aharoni, Herzog, and Rainey each suggest that based on the stratigraphy, the altar was dismantled around the time of Hezekiah's reform.[191] Na'aman and Edelman bring this hypothesis into question.[192] Na'aman and Edelman question the security of the dating of the dismantled altar to the late eighth century because of some uncertainty in the stratigraphic reconstruction. They also point to the differences between the retirement of the shrine at

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[187] David Ussishkin, "The Date of the Judaean Shrine at Arad," *Israel Exploration Journal* 38 (1988): 142–57.

[188] Edelman, "Hezekiah's Alleged Cultic Centralization," 417; Lisbeth S. Fried, "The High Places (Bāmôt) and the Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah: An Archaeological Investigation," *JAOS* 122 (2002): 437–65.

[189] Edelman, "Hezekiah's Alleged Cultic Centralization," 432–34.

[190] Fried, "The High Places (Bāmôt) and the Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah," 460–64.

[191] Yohanan Aharoni, "Excavations at Tel Beer-Sheba," *BA* 35 (1972): 126; Ze'ev Herzog, "Perspectives on Southern Israel's Cult Centralization: Arad and Beer-Sheba," in *One God- One Cult- One Nation*, ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Gunkel (Göttingen: de Gruyter, 2010), 193; Anson Rainey, "Hezekiah's Reform and the Altars at Beer-Sheba and Arad," in *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays in Honor of Philip J. King*, ed. Michael D. Coogan, Cheryl J. Exum, and Lawrence E. Stager (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 339.

[192] Nadav Na'aman, "The Debated Historicity of Hezekiah's Reform in the Light of Historical and Archaeological Research," *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 107 (1995): 185–87. Edelman, "Hezekiah's Alleged Cultic Centralization," 420.

Arad and the dismantled altar at Beersheba.[193] They argue that these two holy sites were likely not retired/destroyed by the same individual/administration.

At Lachish Aharoni identifies a stone altar and several cultic vessels inside of what he calls a "high place."[194] Aharoni dates the sanctuary to the tenth century.[195] Ussishkin, however, recently re-dated the stratigraphy at Lachish, concluding that the sanctuary belongs to the period just before the reign of Hezekiah.[196] Finkelstein and Silberman accept the later dating but see the destruction of the sanctuary as part of Hezekiah's reforms. Finkelstein and Silberman go on to point out that that few sites excavated around Judah that are dated to the seventh and sixth centuries have yielded evidence of a sanctuary which is evidence that the removal of countryside sanctuaries occurred sometime in the late eighth century.[197]

Scholarly assessments currently lack consensus concerning these sites. It is difficult to speak with any real clarity about Hezekiah's destruction of sanctuaries outside of Jerusalem in the archaeological record. In the midst of this uncertainty, household and industrial shrines remain consistent in the archaeological record. Specifically, Bang's work at Tell Halif in the southern Judean Hill Country shows that domestic religion persisted during the late eighth century.[198] Tell Halif's close proximity to Arad,

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[193] Edelman, "Hezekiah's Alleged Cultic Centralization," 420.

[194] Yohanan Aharoni, *Investigations at Lachish: The Sanctuary and the Residency* (Tel Aviv: Gateway, 1975), 26–32.

[195] Ibid.

[196] David Ussishkin, "The Level V 'Sanctuary' and 'High Place' at Lachish," in *Saxa Loquentur: Studien Zur Archaologie Palastinas/Israels*, ed. Gerard den Hertog, Ulrigh Hubner, and Stefan Munger, n.d., 210–11.

[197] Finkelstein and Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty," 273.

[198] Bang, *Ritual Threads*, 19–22.

Beersheba, and Lachish, makes Bang's observation particularly relevant. Although larger sanctuaries at Arad, Beersheba, and Lachish may have been destroyed during Hezekiah's reforms, the evidence from Tell Halif indicates that domestic religion persisted.[199] Evidence suggests that practitioners may have carried out certain cultic practices in conjunction with food preparation and textile production at Tell Halif. Similarly, Albertz and Schmitt show that domestic religion persisted at a variety of sites throughout the eighth century and into the seventh.[200] This observation indicates that if Hezekiah's reform did occur, his concern was not solely religious purity. Aside from Rowley and McKay who suggest deuteronomistic motivations, others surveyed above see the reform as politically and/or economically motivated.

Economic rather than religious motivations. Bang suggests that the alleged reform was economically motivated.[201] Based on his survey of the implications of the *lmlk* jars, he finds that Hezekiah's main objective was to create more revenue.[202] Bang briefly suggests that the motivations for the religious reform were similar. He notes that Hezekiah would have needed the monetary support of outlying shrines if Jerusalem were to fall in order to pay Assyria tribute.[203] While the 2 Kings account of the religious reform does not mention economic gain in Jerusalem, the 2 Chronicles account records that Jerusalem benefited greatly from this new religious policy.

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[199] Ibid.

[200] Rainer Albertz and Rüdiger Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 474–77.

[201] Bang, *Ritual Threads*, 304–307.

[202] Ibid.

[203] Ibid.

In conjunction with the religious reforms, Hezekiah held a Passover feast in Jerusalem according to 2 Chr 30:1. The king invites those from throughout the northern and southern kingdoms to the Passover celebration. Part of the celebration was an order from the king that the people should support the work of the temple personnel. Second Chr 31:5 records that,

> As soon as the order went out, the Israelites gave generously of the first fruits of their grain, new wine, oil, and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything. The men of Israel and Judah who lived in the towns of Judah also brought a tithe of their herds and flocks and a tithe of the holy things dedicated to YHWH their God, and they piled them in heaps.

This account supports Bang's and other's argument that the religious reforms economically benefitted Jerusalem. The work of the Chronicler, however, is often more ideological than historical and therefore this account requires further evaluation. As mentioned above, when an account is not recorded in the Deuteronomistic History, it is historically suspect. For instance, the Chronicler displays a tendency toward support of the priesthood. Thus, the portion of the account that highlights the people's support of the priests and Levites is historically suspect. Similarly, the account of the Passover is historically suspect. The Chronicler suggests Hezekiah's merit on the basis of his holding the Passover. These two aspects of the Chronicler's account are historically suspect. The Chronicler also displays a tendency toward aggrandizement of the great kings of Judah.[204] It would not be out of keeping with the Chronicler's tendencies to display Hezekiah as extremely wealthy and successful.[205] Therefore, the Chronicler's

[204] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 28.

[205] Sara Japhet, *I and II Chronicles: A Commentary* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 995.

characterization of Hezekiah's wealth is likely overblown. Nevertheless, the memory of Hezekiah routing of goods in interest of economic gain streaming to Jerusalem has support in the archaeological record. Hezekiah was interested in increasing surplus goods and the record in Chronicles suggested that Hezekiah routed the surplus goods to Jerusalem. Thus, the record of Hezekiah's interest in bringing surplus to Jerusalem has historical merit because it is supported by extra-biblical evidence.

ויהי ליחזקיהו עֹשֶׁר וכבוד הרבה מאד ואצרות עשֹׂה־ לו לכסף ולזהב ולאבן יקרה ולבשֹׂמים ולמגנים ולכל כלי חמדה: ומסכנות לתבואת דגן ותירוֹשׁ ויצהר וארות לכל־בהמה ובהמה ועדרים לאורות: וערים עשֹׂה לו ומקנה־צאן ובקר לרב כי נתן־לו אלהים רכוֹשׁ רב מאד: והוא יחזקיהו סתם את־מוצא מימי גיחון העליון ויישֹׁרם למטה־מערבה לעיר דויד ויצלח יחזקיהו בכל־מעשֹׂהו: 2 Chr 32:27-30	And it was that Hezekiah had great riches and honor; and he made for himself treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields and all kinds of valuable items, storehouses also for grain, wine and oil, pens for all kinds of cattle and sheep pens for the flocks. And he made cities for himself, and acquired flocks and herds in abundance; for God gave him great wealth. It was Hezekiah who stopped the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all that he did. 2 Chr 32:27-30

Japhet finds that the wording of the passage frames Hezekiah as similar to Solomon and David in his achievements.[206] Therefore, it appears that the Chronicler framed the information at his disposal in order to portray Hezekiah positively. Vaughn eliminates the passages concerning the cleansing of the temple, temple maintenance, and celebration of the Passover because he finds no extra-biblical evidence to support them.[207] Nevertheless, Vaughn notes a striking similarity between the goods in

[206] Sara Japhet, *I and II Chronicles: A Commentary* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 1024.

[207] Ibid., 260–265.

Hezekiah's storehouse (historically reliable) and the items that the people of Israel and Judah bring to support the temple at Passover (historically suspect). Both verses record the accumulation of grain, wine, and oil. Vaughn maintains that it is likely that the Chronicler had access to a historically reliable source that recorded Hezekiah's efforts to accumulate grain, wine, and oil at the central sanctuary.

Both the archaeological evidence and the record that the Chronicler provides speak to Hezekiah had a vested interest in collecting surplus. Both the *lmlk* seals and the accounts of Hezekiah's centralization efforts indicate that the monarchy in eighth century Judah made an effort to collect surplus goods. The survey of the *lmlk* seals showed that the monarchy invested in agricultural sites for the sole purpose of creating surplus. The survey of Hezekiah's religious reform indicates that the monarchy was also interested in directing local privately owned surplus toward Jerusalem and a central sanctuary.

Land in the ANE and Judah

This chapter has thus far outlined particular interactions with Assyria that initially increased Judah's territory, before a sudden subsequent territorial decrease. This chapter has also shown that factors such as population growth put a strain on Judean resources. Importantly, this chapter has shown that the monarchy played a significant role in Judah's movement toward urbanization, production of surplus, and increased infrastructure. The monarchy met some of the increased need for surplus through royal land holdings. This section will focus on the methods that the monarchy would have used to secure and administer more land.

In ancient Israel the evidence suggests that a division existed between patrimonial lands, passed down from one generation to the next; and prebendal land, royally owned

and organized land. This dichotomy is clearest in the narrative of Naboth's vineyard. The northern king, Ahab, wished to purchase Naboth's patrimonial land and convert it to part of the royal estate, essentially prebendal land. Interestingly, Naboth had the authority to deny the king's request even though the king offered him a fair price and better land. Ahab only managed to seize the land because two local individuals falsely accused Naboth of treason at a town gathering. The local authorities carried out Naboth's death sentence. Ahab seized Naboth's land only after his execution. The text does not mention why Naboth's death made Ahab's seizure possible. Perhaps Naboth had no heirs and the land automatically passed to the crown. Perhaps the conviction of treason meant that Naboth's heirs lost their rights to the land. In any case, the land passed to Ahab but not without consequence. The prophet, Elijah, held Ahab accountable for murder as well as taking Naboth's land.

Two other instances in the biblical narrative indicate that kings could purchase land and administer it for their own gain. David purchases the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite in order to build an altar for worship. Araunah subjugates himself to David by calling him "lord" and offers the threshing floor free of charge. David insists on paying and provides Araunah with fifty shekels of silver (2 Sam 24:24).

While David purchased merely a threshing floor, Omri purchased an entire hill. First Kings 16:23-24 records that halfway through his reign, Omri moved the capital of Israel from Tirzah to Samaria. He purchased the "hill of Samaria" from Shemer. Omri built the city of Samaria on the hill and named the city for the hill's previous owner.

Biblical sociologists suggest that as Israel and Judah developed into more urbanized and centralized societies, royally administered prebendal land holdings

increased and patrimonial land holdings decreased.[208] As Israel and Judah followed the trajectory towards urbanization, interaction in international trade, building projects, and maintaining a standing army, more and more power transferred to the royal administrative structures. The monarchy imposed taxes to pay for building projects and armed forces. Crops that created the most revenue in international trade were the most desirable for taxation in kind.[209] As taxation demands increased, citizens sold their land holdings to larger estate holders associated with the crown.[210] This system led to a more stratified society and a larger gap between the elites and the poor. Though there is not precise biblical or inscriptional evidence for this process, several passages from the eighth century prophets allude to injustice in land administration that disadvantaged the poor.

Isaiah 5:8–10 declares a curse on those who, "add house to house and join field to field till no space is left." The text goes on to say that the great houses will become desolate and the fine mansions left without inhabitant and the massive vineyards and field will yield only a small amount of produce.[211] Amos 2:6–8 also points to a system of

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[208] See for example, Robert B. Coote, *Amos Among the Prophets: Composition and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 26–28, and Seong-Hyuk Hong, *The Metaphor of Illness and Healing in Hosea and Its Significance in the Socio-Economic Context of Eighth-Century Israel and Judah* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 118–19. Both of these authors also discuss the possibility of system based on rent capitalism. In this system, the peasantry would rent on each production factor. The process of production could be split into multiple production factors, each with a separate rent. For more on rent capital see Walter J. Houston's discussion (*Contending for Justice: Ideologies and Theologies of Social Justice in the Old Testament* [London: T&T Clark, 2006], 21–25; cf. Bernhard Lang, "The Social Organization of Peasant Poverty in Biblical Israel," in *Anthropological Approaches to the Old Testament*, ed. Bernard Land [London: SPCK Press], 83–99).

[209] See the discussion below concerning taxation systems in ancient Israel.

[210] Coote, *Amos Among the Prophets*, 26.

[211] See, Marvin L. Chaney, "Whose Sour Grapes? The Addressees of Isaiah 5:1–7 in the Light of Political Economy," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 105–22. Chaney's discussion of this passage places it in the

abuse among wealthy land holders who engage in selling those who cannot pay taxes into slavery, as well as taking garments and wine from the poor for payment: "They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals…They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge…the drink wine taken as fines."[212] Later in Amos, the voice of the prophet indicts those who, "trample the poor and force him to give you grain…though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them, though you have planted lush vineyards you will not drink their wine." Finally, Micah 2:1–2 describes a similar problem. Powerful men "covet fields and seize them" because it is "within their power to do so." These powerful men, "defraud a man his home and another man his inheritance." Micah 2:4 records a lament for those whose "possession is divided" and those whose fields have been "assigned to traitors." The villains of Micah 2 also, "strip the robe from those who pass by" and "drive the women of m people from their pleasant homes" (2:8–9).

As Judah became more urbanized and power became more centrally located in the monarchy, a shift toward prebendal land holdings as opposed to patrimonial land holdings occurred. This shift is evident from the archaeological sites surveyed above that focused on surplus as well as the *lmlk* jars. The surplus products that filled those jars were associated with the king. Additionally, biblical sociologists maintain that the trend toward more prebendal land corresponded with state urbanization. The biblical passages surveyed above point to a memory of kings building cities for themselves, and powerful groups taking privately owned land from the weak.

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sociological context of eighth century Judah as he argues for a problematic process by which land was divided.

[212] Jeremias, *Die Anfänge Des Dodekapropheton*.

System for Land Grants from Sources in the ANE

In addition to the monarch's ability to purchase land for the crown, literature from the ancient Near East also indicates that kings had the power to assign land through a system of land grants. Land grants from kings occurred with some frequency in the ancient Near East. The pattern for land grants followed a basic structure.[213] Land grants were drafted on a tablet and began with a preamble naming the king as the grantor. The tablet continued with a list of the grant which usually consisted of fields, vineyards, and houses. Often a word exempting the party receiving the grant from certain taxes was included. Finally, the tablet contained a word of warning for transgressing the conditions of the grant, a list of witness, and the name of the scribe as well as the date.[214] At times the king provided a land grant as payment or reward for service to the king, but explicit mention of a grant as payment or reward is not frequently included. In several of the documents from Ras Shamra (Ugarit) the King provided a land grant along with some sort of bestowal of a status increase in the government or military.[215] The land grants usually involved three parties: the king, the individual from whom the land was taken, and the individual to whom the land was given. Rarely do texts supply the reason for the land seizure from the previous land owner. The land grant document that do provide a

[213] This structure derives from Zafrira Ben-Barak's survey of various ancient Near Eastern land grant inscriptions from Ugarit to Neo Assyrian sources. Ben-Barak finds commonalities and indicates in his study the most frequent inclusions ("Meribaal and the System of Land Grants in Ancient Israel," *Bib* 62 [1981]: 73).

[214] For the method of land-grants in the ancient Near East, see E. A. Speiser, "Akkadian Documents from Ras Shamra," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75 (1955): 157–65, doi:10.2307/595167.; Anson F. Rainey, *A Social Structure of Ugarit: A Study of West Semitic Social Stratification During the Late Bronze Age* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1967), 31–37; J. N. Postgate, *Neo-Assyrian Royal Grants and Decrees* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969).

[215] Rainey, *A Social Structure*, 31–37.

reason for the land redistribution generally include only vague descriptions communicating that the previous land owner did not meet his obligations.[216] The land-grant process was likely in important instrument by which the king developed the ruling class and maintained loyalty. Ben-Barak argues that the land grant systems detailed in the texts from Ras Shamra and the Neo Assyrian texts usually indicate that that the king could distribute as he saw fit.[217]

Land Grants in the Bible

The biblical texts rarely reference land grants. First Samuel 8 presents Samuel's admonishment to the people of Israel who have asked for a king "like the nations."[218] Samuel warns the people that a king will conscript their sons for military service (8:10). Those whom the king does not assign to the military, he will assign to the fields (8:12). The king will take the people's daughters for perfumers and cooks (8:13). Verses 14 and 15 mention the king's ability to commandeer land and levy taxes:

> He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. He will take a tenth of our grain and you wine and give it to his attendants and officials...He will take a tenth of our flocks and you ourselves will become his slaves. (1 Sam 8:14–17).

Samuel's speech is part of a larger antimonarchy unit in 1–2 Samuel. Most scholars date this unit somewhat later than other source blocks used in Samuel.[219] The

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[216] Ibid.

[217] Ben–Barak, "Meribaal and the System of Land Grants," 73–75.

[218] See discussion of the date for this piece below.

[219] Timo Veijola. *Das Königtum in der Beurteilung der deuteronomistischen Historiographie: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1977), 115– 22. While Veijola sees this antimonarchic sentiment as a later addition, Alexander Rofé argues that the

anti-monarchic section represents a historical period marked by dissatisfaction with the monarchy. These antimonarchic sentiments may reflect the situation of the exilic or post-exilic period when the monarchy appeared to have failed.[220] First Samuel 8:14–17, however, betrays awareness of a practice of kings which likely reflects actual practices taking place in the late monarchy. In this representation, the king has full authority over what is probably prebendal land to distribute it as he sees fit. Furthermore, the king has the ability to take land and distribute it among his attendants and collect taxes to benefit his attendants and officials.

First Samuel 22:7 provides another example which points to the possibility of land grants in ancient Israel. Saul asks his officials, "Listen you men of Benjamin, will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds?" The association between military service and land grants indicates that either Saul or David likely provided land grants for military service.[221] First Samuel 27:6–12 records Achish, King of Gath, gave David a land grant of the town of Ziklag for his service. Apparently, the king of Gath had authority to assign warriors and their units to towns in the outlying regions of Gath.[222]

The text attributes similar authority to assign land to David during his reign. Second Samuel 9 records the narrative of David returning the land holdings of Saul to

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antimonarchic sentiments actually come from an Ephraimite (northern) source predating the Deuteronomistic History.

[220] For more on this see Christophe Nihan, "I Samuel 8 and 12 and the Deuteronomistic Edition of Samuel," in *Is Samuel among the Deuteronomists?: Current Views on the Place of Samuel in a Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Cynthia Edenburg and Juha Pakkala (Atlanta: SBL, 2013), 225–274.

[221] See Ben-Barak, "Meribaal and the System of Land Grants," 77.

[222] A. Graeme Auld, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 317–18.

Jonathan's son, Meribaal. This incident indicates that David had authority over land that had previously belonged to Saul. The rhetoric of the passage indicates that David is not obligated to return Saul's land holdings to Saul's heir. Instead he chooses to do so in order to "show kindness for Jonathan's sake" (9:1).[223] The text leaves several questions open. How did David achieve authority over Benjaminite land holdings that once belonged to Saul? Did David conquer Benjaminite territory resulting in the royal acquisition of the land? What is clear is that David maintains authority over the land even after he has returned it to Saul's house. When David hears Zibba's report that Meribaal supports Absalom, David cedes the land to Zibba likely as a gesture of goodwill for Zibba's help in the defense against Absalom. When he discovers that Zibba lied to him, David divided the land between Meribaal and Zibba. Consequently, one finds in this narrative that the king had control over patrimonial lands as well as prebendal lands. The king received control over Meribaal's patrimonial land when he believed that Meribaal acted treasonously. David ceded the land to Zibba as a land grant because of Zibba's loyal service.

This account of David's dealing with Saul's patrimonial land describes a custom for land grants that early readers/hearers of this story would have understood. David had control over the patrimonial lands of Saul until he knew about Saul's living grandchild. David was, however, able to reassign the land when he heard of Meribaal's treason and then re-distribute the land yet again when Meribaal proved his innocence. This narrative displays the unmitigated control that the king displayed over land holdings. The biblical witness attests to the notion that kings of Judah had significant amount of control over

[223] Contra Ben-Barak "Meribaal and the System of Land Grants," 73–75.

land within their state. The land that David assigned to Meribaal and Zibba was likely considered prebendal land by the time David began making the land assignments. Thus, the narrative shows that kings could use land holdings to their political advantage whether in the interest of making alliances with weakened dynasties to appease heirs (Meribaal) or as a signifier of appreciation for aid during a time of crisis (Zibba).

In Judah, land grants functioned much like they did in their larger ancient Near Eastern context. The king could grant land to high ranking officials or those who had proved specifically beneficial to the crown.

Conclusion

This chapter traced the urbanization in Israel and Judah from the Omride dynasty through the end of the eighth century. Beginning in the ninth century, Israel and Judah developed as an urbanized society. Urbanization continued after the fall of the Northern Kingdom leaving Judah to interact with international trade. Under the leadership of Hezekiah in the second half of the eighth century, Judah experienced two significant shifts through its dealings with Assyria. In the first shift, Judah gained territory in the Shephelah as a faithful Assyrian vassal. In the second shift, Judah likely lost territory in the Shephelah by participating with the Philistine state of Ashdod in a revolt against Assyria. This fluctuation in territory caused a jarring turn from prosperity to economic strain in Judah, most stunningly felt in the Judean Shephelah.

In addition to these two major shifts in Judah's relationship with Assyria, Judah's population also grew exponentially during the eighth century, the monarchy increased infrastructure focused on surplus, and the monarchy began a new campaign for centralization. Population growth can be seen in the eighth century strata in Jerusalem,

the Hill Country, and the Shephelah. A variety of eighth century sites show signs of the focus on infrastructure and surplus. These sites contain systems in place to produce surplus wine, oil, and textiles. Additionally, the *lmlk* seal impressions indicate the king's interest in securing, transporting, and trading these surplus goods for economic revenue as well as the king's administrative strength. The centralization efforts recorded in the biblical witness, under the leadership of Hezekiah, speak to a memory of a king with a vested interest in moving revenue to the capital.

Along with the growing infrastructure, biblical sociologists argue that much of the surplus of the growing eighth century economy came from prebendal lands which the king owned and managed. During times of economic growth the king would have had means to seize land and push cities toward the production of surplus. The biblical witness contains memories of many instances in which kings bought land that had previously been privately owned or built cities. The king administered these lands through a system of land grants given to high ranking officials. This custom of land grants is strongly attested in the ancient Near East as well several biblical passages.

Thus eighth century Judah experienced a time of economic growth and consolidation of power in the monarchy. The likely loss of land following the Ashdod Rebellion would have been a time of restructuring for the monarchy in order to maintain high levels of surplus and revenue. The period would have been ripe for exploitation. In the midst of concern and stress over territorial loss, the crown would have looked for ways to shore up land holdings and turn a profit in order to keep up with Assyrian tribute demands.

CHAPTER THREE

The First Phase: Micah 2:1–11; 3:1–12 in its Eighth Century Setting

Introduction

Micah 2:1–11; 3:1–12 comprises the first phase in the formation of the Mic 1–3. Micah 2:1–11 deals with land fraud as a powerful family takes land resources from those with less power. Micah 3:1–12 accuses the Jerusalemite political and religious leaders of corruption, while recapitulating the accusations of Mic 2:1–11. This chapter will show that these texts have as their background the circumstances outlined in Chapter Two. Specifically, these texts deal with the period prior to Sennacherib's campaign (701 BCE).

Within the eighth century context the prophetic speaker levels a powerful accusation of corruption at the highest levels of Judean society. This chapter will show that the prophetic speaker accuses the royal house in Mic 2:1–11of abuses against land holders in the Judean Shephelah. Micah 3:1–12 builds on this accusation by implicating the prophets and the priests along with the corrupt leaders. As a result of the corruption of the political and religious contingencies in Jerusalem, the prophetic speaker pronounces the imminent destruction of the holy city (3:12). Thus, the text associated with the first phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 is characterized as an accusation and statement of coming judgment for the corruption of the centralized leadership in Jerusalem which will result in the city's destruction.

In order to demonstrate the primary function of the first phase as an accusation and statement of coming judgment against the centralized political and religious elite in the context of the eighth century, two considerations are in order. First, scholarly

opinions differ concerning the rhetorical unity of the text. Though scholars generally agree that Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 has its roots in the eighth century, many scholars posit isolated updates to the eighth century text.[1] This chapter will show that Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 functions as a unity through a rhetorical analysis of each literary unit within phase one. Second, this chapter will show that each literary unit within Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 has the late eighth century as a likely historical setting. The organizing principle of the chapter will be to first examine the literary unit and then discuss its historical context in the eighth century. First, however, a general overview of the literary units within the first phase and a general overview of the historical period are in order.

The Literary Units of the First Phase and the Larger Historical Context

Explanation of Literary Units

Micah 2:1–11; 3:1–12 follows a rhetorical logic that moves through three stages. First, Mic 2:1–5 contains a woe oracle that accuses evil-doers for taking land from the prophetic speaker's group. Second, Mic 2:6–11 contains a prophetic disputation between the prophetic speaker and opposing prophets who represent the royal family. Third, Micah 3:1–12 contains a series of prophetic judgment speeches that condemn the ruling class (3:1–4), the prophetic group functioning in Jerusalem (3:5–8), and finally the ruling class, prophets, and priests (3:9–11). Micah 3:1–12 mirrors Mic 2:1–11in its accusations against the rulers (3:1–4 cf. 2:1–5) and the prophets (3:5–8 cf. 2:6–11). The prophetic speaker declares the verdict in 3:12, stating that because of these abuses, Jerusalem will be destroyed (See Table 3.1 below).

[1] See pages 78 and following.

Table 3.1 *Explanation of Units (First Phase)*

Form	Verses	Content
Woe Oracle	Mic 2:1–5	Accusation of rulers
Prophetic Disputation	Mic 2:6–10	Accusation of prophets
Judgment Speech 1	Mic 3:1–4	Accusation of rulers
Judgment Speech 2	Mic 3:5–8	Accusation of prophets
Judgment Speech 3	Mic 3:9–12	Accusation of rulers, priests, and prophets

Concerning the woe oracle (2:1–5), this chapter will show that the motif of *lex talionis* governs the woe oracle, that the royal family is the group accused by the prophetic speaker in the woe oracle, and that the victims whom the prophetic speaker represents are land owners from the Judean Shephelah. In the prophetic disputation section (2:6–11), the *lex talionis* motif continues and the eighth century context illuminates the unusual accusation concerning those returning from war. This chapter will show that the reference to the war returnees concerns soldiers from the Shephelah returning from battle only to be treated no better than an enemy. Concerning the judgment sayings (3:1–12), this chapter will examine the historical setting of the centralized religious apparatus as an appropriate background for the accusations against the rulers, prophets, and priests.

The Eighth Century Setting

Micah 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 come from the eighth century context discussed in Chapter Two. Three general observations concerning the relative date of the text outlined above will help situate the text in the context of the eighth century. First, the location of

the land conflict provides evidence for dating the text. Micah 2:1–5 assumes that land disputes are taking place in the Judean Shephelah which would imply that there is land within the Judean Shephelah that is worth disputing.[2] The Judean Shephelah is the most likely location for the disputed land because the victims of the land dispute are from the Judean Shephelah. The prophetic speaker implies that the victims are from the Judean Shephelah by referring to the victims as "my people" (2:4).[3] Chapter Two showed that the Judean Shephelah was at the height of its productivity during the Iron IIB as Hezekiah's kingdom expanded toward the Philistine coast.[4] The population of the Judean Shephelah declined significantly in Iron IIC due to Sennacherib's attack. Judeans who survived and did not go into exile fled to Jerusalem and the surrounding environs as evidenced by a population surge at the beginning of the seventh century BCE.[5] The Shephelah never again reached the level of productivity it experienced during the eighth century. Consequently, the second half of the eighth century is the most likely period for land disputes within the Judean Shephelah. During the second half of the eighth century the Shephelah experienced unprecedented growth. It is during this period that land would

[2] Chapter Two outlined the economic growth seen in the ninth and eighth centuries BCE. This growth involved the cultivation of land for surplus goods as an agrarian society that focused on subsistence farming moved toward a market in which wine and oil were in high demand. Matthew Coomber surveys the shift from subsistence farming to surplus goods in recent literatureCoomber, "Caught in the Crossfire? Economic Injustice and Prophetic Motivation in Eight-Century Judah." Coomber uses modern examples of agrarian societies that come into contact with the global market and the trends for land use that one finds in these examples to draw conclusions about the biblical texts that involve land seizure.

[3] See below, 88, for further evidence that "my people" are individuals from the Judean Shephelah whom the prophetic speaker represents.

[4] Avraham Faust notes that according to archaeological surveys, the Shephelah became the demographic hub of Judah during Iron IIBAvraham Faust, "The Shephelah in the Iron Age: A New Look on the Settlement of Judah," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 145 (2013): 212–14.

[5] See Chapter Four, 142–149.

have been most sought after. Land disputes were less likely following Sennacherib's siege because the population was diminished and agricultural centers were largely destroyed. Thus, the regions around Jerusalem became the hub of agricultural production.

Second, the nature of the land conflict in Mic 2:1–5 provides pertinent information for dating the text. The land dispute in Mic 2:1–5 implies a stratified system of power in Judah. The text indicates that one group has power to take land from another.[6] During the eighth century, the monarchy gained power as Hezekiah sought to engage in foreign trade and gather surplus. Chapter Two explored the implications of a focus on surplus and building projects.[7] The archaeological record shows several cities that focused their resources on producing surplus.[8] This information coupled with the discovery of the *lmlk* seal impressions indicate that monarchy was involved in the production of surplus.[9] This chapter explores the implications of the monarchy's program to gain land and produce surplus. For the purpose of dating the text, the eighth century and the efforts of Hezekiah fit the stratification described in Mic 2:2. Taken together with the desire for land in the Judean Shephelah, the implied power structure in 2:1–5 (cf. 3:1–12) provides a strong case for the eighth century context of Mic 2:1–5.

Finally, the superscription connects Micah of Moresheth with the reign of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, all of whom were eighth century kings. Micah's connection with

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[6] Economic anthropologists have shown that in conjunction with interaction in the global market, societies become more stratified and the leadership of the society tends to consolidate power to administer the surplus goods. See Allen Johnson and Timothy Earle, *The Evolution of Human Societies: From Foraging Group to Agrarian State,* 2nd ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 24–27.

[7] Chapter Two, 22–29.

[8] Chapter Two, 45–48.

[9] Chapter Two, 52–53.

Hezekiah also appears in Jer 26:18–19. Nogalski has shown that superscript's mention of Jotham and Ahaz are editorial additions along with the updates to the other superscriptions in the Book of the Four to create continuity of the kings of Judah throughout the Book of the Four. [10] Nogalski argues that originally the superscript only contained the name Hezekiah. Nogalski's case for an eighth century core superscription that only mentions Hezekiah is strong because Jer 26:18–19 comes from the early exile and only mentions Hezekiah.[11] The editorial process that brought the Book of the Four together occurred later in the exile. Nogalski argues that the addition of Jotham and Ahaz to the Micah superscription provided continuity in the periods covered by the superscripts of Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah.

The data above provides a strong case for dating Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 to the eighth century. The location of the conflict in the Judean Shephelah must have occurred when land in the Shephelah was in high demand. The nature of the conflict has to do with a stratified society in which more powerful members are able to take land from the less powerful members. Taken together, the location of the conflict and the nature of the conflict provide a strong case for an eighth century text. Finally, the superscription associates the oracles of Micah of Moresheth with the eighth century king, Hezekiah.

The eighth century setting generally fits the text of Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12; nevertheless, scholars have suggested several isolated updates to the text.[12] The following literary analysis will assess the scholarly arguments for isolated updates to the text. The

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[10] James Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*, BZAW 217 (Berlin: Gruyter, 1993), 127.

[11] See Chapter Five, 209-210.

[12] See the following section concerning the Woe Oracle.

primary argument of the section that follows is that the supposed updates actually fit the rhetoric of the eighth century text and therefore belong to the eighth century. The examination of the textual sub-units (outlined above) will assess each section on two levels. First, an examination of the rhetoric of the section will show that the suggested updates are actually part of the eighth century *Grundtext*. Second, the eighth century setting outlined in the Chapter Two will shed further light on some difficulties in the text.

The Woe Oracle: Micah 2:1–5

The woe oracle that begins Mic 2 contains three parts: an indictment of evil-doers (2:1–2), a divine speech introduced by a messenger formula that relates the punishment for the evil-doer's activities (2:3–4), and a judgment declaration that the evil-doers will have no one to represent them in the assembly of YHWH (2:5). The woe oracle assumes four separate characters, the prophetic speaker, YHWH, the victims, and the evil-doers.[13]

Micah 2:1–5 supposes that the action occurs in the Judean Shephelah detailing the unsavory activity of a group of evil-doers and the consequences for their actions. Micah 2:1–2 is a woe oracle against the evil-doers for their land seizure.

הוי חשבי־און ופעלי רע על־משכבותם באור הבקר יעשוה כי יש־לאל ידם:	Woe to those who plan iniquity, who plot evil on their beds! When the light of the morning comes, they do it, for it is in the power of their hands.
וחמדו שדות וגזלו ובתים ונשאו ועשקו גבר וביתו ואיש ונחלתו:	They covet fields and then seize them, and houses, and take them. They rob a fellow of his house, and a man of his inheritance.
Mic 2:1–2	Mic 2:1–2

[13] The term "evil-doers" is borrowed from Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*.

These verses describe a powerful group of evil-doers that first planned to take the land of a group of victims and then carried out the action. The powerful group took fields and houses from a גבר and an איש.[14] One can discern the identity of the powerful group and their victims from the text.[15] Identifying the victims first will also help identify the setting of the action since it is occurring on the victim's property.

Who are the Victims?

The text provides three primary clues concerning the identity of the victims. First, the victim group is separate from those in Jerusalem whom the prophetic speaker accuses in 3:1–12.[16] Second, the prophetic speaker is a spokesperson for the victims. Throughout Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 the prophetic speaker refers to the group he represents as "my people" (2:8, 2:9; 3:3, 3:5) in contrast to those who the prophetic speaker accuses.[17] The continual use of "my people" by the prophetic speaker signifies a level of advocacy for the victim group that would make sense of a spokesperson for a certain locale.[18] The

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[14] Wolff concludes that the uses of גבר implies a citizen. Ergo, the evil-doers are committing a crime against citizens of the state (*Micah*, 8). Walter Beyerlin senses some distinction between the magistrates in Jerusalem and the common farmer in the use of גבר and איש (*Die Kulttraditionen Israels in der Verfündigung des Propheten Micha*, FRLANT [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959], 62–63).

[15] Baruch Levine laments the fact that discovering the entities behind land seizure in the biblical narrative is often impossible. Unlike the other ancient Near Eastern contexts, in the prophetic literature that cites this kind of land abuse, there is no access to court documents, seizure treaties, or land grant documents. The situation has to be deduced from a variety of extra-biblical and biblical sources that have no actual connection to the prophetic text ("Farwell to the Ancient Near East: Evaluating Biblical References of Ownership of Land in Comparative Perspective," in *Privatization in the Ancient Near East and Classical World*, ed. Baruch Levine and Don Michael Hudson [Cambridge: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, 1996], 224).

[16] Several references to Jerusalem in 2:5, 3:9, and 3:12 are associated with the evil-doers, prophets, priest, and rulers. Each of these appears to be associated with Jerusalem in some way. However, the group that the prophetic speaker represents is not from among the evil-doers, prophets, rulers, or priests. This observation simply rules out victims among those in Jerusalem who have power.

[17] Wolff, *Micah*, 5–7.

[18] Ibid., 5–8.

tradition surrounding Mic 1–3 associates the prophetic speaker with Moresheth, a town in the Judean Shephelah.[19] This tradition receives further support in Mic 1:10–15 in which the prophetic speaker shows concern for cities in the Shephelah, including Moresheth Gath (1:14).[20] The level of advocacy displayed in these chapters by a prophetic speaker from the Judean Shephelah indicates that those for whom the speaker advocates are from the Shephelah region that the prophetic speaker represents. Third, the victims have profitable land. The Shephelah was a profitable region during the eighth century. Several production sites in the Judean Shephelah functioned as profitable surplus bases.[21] Based on this evidence, the victims in Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 are individuals from the Shephelah. Additionally, the contested land is in the Judean Shephelah. The prophetic speaker maintains that the victims are the rightful owners of the land but an outside group has taken it.

The Woe Oracle (Mic 2:1–5) and Questions of Unity

The first two parts of the woe oracle (the woe saying and the divine speech) contain stylistic difficulties. The woe saying (Mic 2:1–2) proceeds as classic Hebrew poetry with classical parallelism. However, the divine speech (Mic 2:3–4) is more similar to prose.[22] While there is clear parallelism between the crime (2:1–2) and punishment (2:3–4), the

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[19] See the superscription and Jer 26:18–19.

[20] See Chapter Four, 163.

[21] Frankel, *Wine and Oil Production in Antiquity in Israel and Other Mediterranean Countries*. See also, Chapter Two which surveys Lachish and Tel Halif, both in the Judean Shephelah. Chapter Two also considers sites in the central Benjamin plateau and the hill country that belong to the eighth century. See also Frank S. Frick, "'Oil from Flinty Rock' (Deuteronomy 32:13): Olive Cultivation and Olive Oil Processing in the Hebrew Bible--A Socio-Materialist Perspective," *Semeia* 86 (1999): 3–17.

[22] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 76.

stylistic differences as well as unusual phrases, have caused scholars to question the unity of the woe oracle and divine speech (2:1–5).[23] Despite these difficulties, the woe oracle and the divine speech function as a rhetorical whole as the following analysis will bear out. Micah 2:3–4 mirrors the temporal movement of 2:1–2 and a strong sense of *lex talionis* governs the entire oracle.

The sense of *lex talionis* begins in Mic 2:1–2 as the reader discovers that YHWH will deal with the evil-doers as the evil-doers have dealt with the victims of land fraud. The woe saying (Mic 2:1–2) progresses in two temporal sequences. First, the evil-doers scheme iniquity and work out evil (חשׁבי־און ופעלי רע) during the night and then they carry out the evil during the day by taking land from the victims. The divine speech (Mic 2:3–4) follows this two part accusation with a two part judgment. Beginning with the causative conjunction לכן, a messenger formula introduces YHWH's speech in which YHWH mirrors the evildoer's evil plotting as YHWH will now plot evil (חשׁב... רעה) and at a later time carry it out. The temporal sequence of YHWH's judgement also mirrors the temporal sequence of the evildoer's activity. As the evil-doers first plot evil and at a later time carry it out, so YHWH first plots evil and at a later time (on that day) carries it out (see Table 3.2 below).

Consequently, it is easy to see the rhetorical thrust of this passage. YHWH will repay the evil-doers in kind. YHWH will mirror not only their actions but also the sequence in which they plotted and then committed the evil activity. In this way Mic 2:2 establishes the sense of *lex talionis* that will govern the entire woe oracle.

[23] Many have observed the parallelism between the punishment and the crime. See for example: Lamontte M. Luker, "Beyond Form Criticism: The Relation of Doom and Hope Oracles in Micah 2-6," *HAR* 11 (1987): 285–289.

Table 3.2 *Temporal Mirroring in Micah 2:1–4*

Sequence	Accusation	Sequence	Judgment
First	Woe to those who plan (חשׁב) iniquity who plot evil (רעה) on their beds!	First	Therefore (לכן), I am planning (חשׁב) evil (רעה) against *this family* from which you cannot save yourselves.
Second	When the light of the morning comes they do it for it is in the power of their hands They covet fields and seize them, And houses and take them. They rob a fellow of his house and a man of his inheritance.	Second	You will no longer walk proudly, For it will be a time of calamity. In that day, they will lift up against you a taunt song and they will wail a bitter lamentation. So it was, he has said, "We are utterly ruined; my people's possession is divided. He takes it from me! He assigns our fields to apostates."

Who is "This Family?"

Scholars have suggested that several updates occur within the divine speech (Mic 2:3–4) which follows the initial woe oracle (2:2).[24] The first suggested addition is על־ המשׁפחה הזאת (against this family) in Mic 2:3.[25] The general claim is that this phrase broadens the scope of the speaker's accusation to all Judeans instead of just the evil-doers.[26] Mays argues that the broadening of the scope of the punishment is an exilic

[24] See the following discussion.

[25] Karl Marti was among the first to extract this phrase, because he found the grammar substandard (*Das Dodekapropheton: erklärt*, KHC 13 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1902], 273).

[26] Renaud attributes the phrase to a later writer on four grounds: first the object should precede the adverb syntactically, second the expression is stylistically "prosaic", third the addition of this phrase extends judgment to the whole community while the judgment should only apply to those targeted in v. 1, and finally the use of similar language in Amos 3:3 and Jer 8:3 belongs to the deuteronomic redactor and therefore this is a later addition with a similar agenda (Bernard Renaud, *La formation du livre de Michée:*

update because one would not expect all Judah as the focus of the punishment in the eighth century.[27] Instead, an editor who knows of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile adds "against this family" to re-imagine Micah's prophecies as those that predict the destruction of Jerusalem in the sixth century.[28]

Schart also understands על־המשׁפחה הזאת as a later addition.[29] Schart contends that this addition provides a link to Amos 3:2 which uses the same image of a "family" to refer to all Israel as those whom YHWH brought up from Egypt and will now punish. Schart finds this link appealing because of other links that he argues are present between Mic 1–3 and Amos.[30] Schart's argument is not compelling because it is based on the common lexeme, משׁפחה. In Amos 3:2 the term refers to collective Israel (North and South) whom YHWH delivered from Egypt. Schart's conception of "family" in Mic 2:3 refers to Judah alone. Additionally, the appeal to the nation brought up out of Egypt is nowhere present in Mic 1–3, though it is incredibly important for the speaker in Amos 3:2. Therefore, it is unlikely that the designation המשׁפחה links to Amos 3:2 as Schart argues.

Instead, it is more likely that this phrase is not a later addition but part of the eighth century woe oracle. על־המשׁפחה הזאת is not a reference to all Judah in the context

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tradition et actualisation, EBib [Paris: J. Gabalda, 1977], 73–74). Andersen and Freedmen understand the phase as the entire nation but argue that the text may reveal an earlier time before the destruction of the northern kingdom when Judah transgressed the border of Israel to gain more land. "This family" then, refers to Judah's unsavory activity in taking land from his brother to the north (*Micah*, 276–277)

[27] Mays, *Micah*, 64. Mays writes, "'This family' as a designation of those to be punished is unexpected; in such a context the term must refer to the entire people, all Israel."

[28] In addition, Mays argues that the addition interrupts the expected syntax. Ibid., 65.

[29] Schart, *Die Entstehung Des Zwölfprophetenbuchs*, 183–84.

[30] Ibid.

of Mic 2:1–5. Instead, it is more likely that Mic 2:3 has in mind the family (מִשְׁפָחָה) of evil-doers. Just as the prophetic speaker often refers to the people he represents as "my people" (2:4, 2:8, 2:9; 3:3, 3:5), indicating people of a certain locale, so here the speaker designates the group that he opposes with the phrase עַל־הַמִּשְׁפָחָה הַזֹּאת.[31] Wöhrle argues that עַל־הַמִּשְׁפָחָה הַזֹּאת refers directly to the group of evil-doers.[32] He points to Mic 2:4 in which the evil-doers speak and refer to their own group as "my people", indicating a certain clan.[33] Additional rhetorical evidence also links עַל־הַמִּשְׁפָחָה הַזֹּאת to the group of evil-doers.

The confluence of terms in Mic 2:2–3 point toward an accusation against a specific family as opposed to all Judah. The following analysis will show that the connection between מִשְׁפָחָה and נחלה suggests the use of מִשְׁפָחָה in 2:4 references a specific family who has taken the inheritance of another family. Micah 2:2a accuses the evil-doers of taking fields (שָׂדֶה) and houses (בית).[34] This accusation is parallel to the indictment in Mic 2:2b accusing the evil-doers of depriving the victim of his house and

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[31] The noun מִשְׁפָחָה is a kinship term used frequently in the Hebrew Bible to designate a group smaller than a tribe but larger than an extended family. Andersen has argued for the translation, "clan." It is possible that the text uses archaizing language in order to create a word play with שִׁכְבוֹתָם in Mic 2:1 (Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 276).

[32] Wöhrle, *Die Frühen Sammlungen Des Zwölfprophetenbuches*, 146–47.

[33] Ibid., 147. Although I do not follow Wöhrle exactly here, I agree with this segment of his argument. As the following pages will show, the mournful song in Mic 2:4 is the ironic re-appropriation of a song like the song that the prophetic speaker's group would have sung when victimized. The sense of *lex talionis* is conveyed in Mic 2:4 by having the evil-doers sing this song. Therefore, Wöhrle is correct that the evil-doers employ the term "my people" but they do so only derivatively following the uses of the phrase by the prophetic speaker's group.

[34] Raymond Westbrook argues that the use of עשק in Mic 2:2 implies that the evil-doers have denied land to the victims that rightfully belongs to the victims. Westbrook sees this as an offense against the specific nuclear families (cf. בית) that have been wronged (*Property and the Family in Biblical Law*, JSOTSup 113 [New York: T&T Clark, 2009], 13).

his inheritance (נחלה).[35] The prophetic speaker equates the victim's inheritance with his fields and his home.

וחמדו שדות וגזלו ובתים ונשאו ועשקו גבר וביתו ואיש ונחלתו: Mic 2:2	They covet fields and then seize them, and houses, and they take them. They rob a fellow of his house, a man of his inheritance. Mic 2:2

Passages within the Hebrew Bible point to a system in which one's land holdings were connected to one's family (משפחה). This idea is particularly prominent in texts that describe land distribution. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that, in the context of a struggle over inheritance (Mic 2:2), a certain family (Mic 2:4) bears the brunt of the accusation. The land distribution detailed in Numbers appeals to the family (משפחה) as the unit by which an inheritance (נחלה) is allotted. [36]

והתנחלתם את־הארץ בגורל למשפחתיכם לרב תרבו את־נחלתו ולמעט תמעיט את־נחלתו אל אשר־יצא לו שמה הגורל לו יהיה למטות אבתיכם תתנחלו: Num 33:54	And you will *inherit* the land by lot according to your *families*; to the greater you will give more *inheritance*, and to the smaller you will give less *inheritance*. Wherever the lot falls to a man, that will be for him. You will *inherit* according to the tribes of your fathers. Num 33:54
וכל־בת ירשת נחלה ממטות בני ישראל לאחד ממשפחת מטה אביה תהיה לאשה למען יירשו בני ישראל איש נחלת אבתיו: Num 36:8	And every daughter who receives an *inheritance* of any tribe of the sons of Israel, will be wife to one of the *family* of the tribe of her father, so that the sons of Israel each may receive the inheritance of his fathers. (Num 36:8)

[35] The passage implies more than one victim but uses the singular terms איש and גבר as representative of the entire group.

[36] Numbers 16:14; 18:20; 26:53, 55; 33:54; 34:18; 36:2; 36:8. Deuteronomy also contains verses expressing the importance of inheritance in terms of land. However, in Deuteronomy the term is more widely used to describe the whole land of Canaan, which the Hebrews were about to enter. The only time that an issue of taking land from another comes up is in Deut 19:14 which condemns moving boundary stones. Here the ideal of familial land is at play.

The text in Numbers 27 concerning Zelophehad's daughters is so concerned with keeping land inheritance within the family that it provides for even female offspring to receive the land inheritance if there is no son (Num 27:8).[37] While making arrangements for land to remain with one family from generation to generation, Num 35:54 discusses the division of land by lots; a situation that also occurs in Mic 2:5.[38]

The division of land in Joshua appeals to the same sense of familial inheritance as each family (מִשְׁפָּחָה) is allotted a certain plot of land as inheritance.[39] The textual formula for the land distribution sections is as follows, "This is the inheritance (נַחֲלָה) of the tribe of the sons of [tribe name, i.e. Judah] according to their families (מִשְׁפָּחָה)."[40] The textual evidence from Numbers and Joshua makes a strong case for the association of land holdings with "family" (מִשְׁפָּחָה).

The appeal to land distribution in Micah, Numbers, and Joshua points to a deeply encrypted norm whereby certain plots of land were associated with certain families. The

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[37]See, Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, "Zelophehad's Daughters," *PRSt* 15 (1988): 37–47. Sakenfeld shows that the connection between Num 27 and 36 is somewhat artificial but speaks to an ongoing concern over land division.

Eryl Davies has argued that the practice of levirate marriage as recorded in the Hebrew Bible (cf. Num 36 for Zelophehad's daughters's reference) has to do with the maintenance of the family name. This practice is inextricably related to inheritance and land holdings. One's family must continue to inherit to continue to exist. Davies notes that this concern for the family name is not present in Hittite and Assyrian law codes Eryl W. Davies, "Inheritance Rights and the Hebrew Levirate Marriage," *Vetus Testamentum* 31 (1981): 142–44.

[38] Horst Seebass argues that the traditions concerning the distribution of the land in Numbers originated in the period following the destruction of the northern kingdom. He holds that concern over the Northern tribes would have ceased following the destruction of the northern kingdom. Consequently, he holds that the Priestly writer, responsible for so much of Numbers, updated these eighth century traditions ("'Holy' Land in the Old Testament: Numbers and Joshua," *VT* 56 [2006]: 97). See also Manfried Wüst, *Untersuchungen zu den siedlungsgeographischen Texten des Alten Testaments*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1975), 69, who also suggests that the Priestly editor uses an early source from before the destruction of the northern kingdom.

[39] Joshua 13:23, 28; 15:20; 16:5, 8; 18:20, 28; 19:1, 8, 10, 16, 23, 31, 39, 48.

[40] Joshua 15:20; 16:8; 18:20; 18; 28; 19:1, 8, 10, 16, 23, 31, 39, 48,

reference to נחלה in Mic 2:2 must refer to land because נחלה is parallel to "fields". Because of the proximity to 2:2, it is reasonable to suppose that the context of land distribution also informs Mic 2:3. Therefore, the most natural understanding of מִשׁפחה in the context of land distribution is related to familial land holdings because of the strong connection between מִשׁפחה and נחלה. Consequently, מִשׁפחה in Mic 2:4 most likely refers to a specific "family" within Judah.

Based on the above analysis of the strong connection between inheritance and family, the judgment oracle "against this family" in Mic 2:3 does not broaden the scope of the accusation. Within the context of land distribution (Mic 2:2–3), interpreting על־המִשׁפחה הזאת as a specific family makes more sense than understanding it as an accusation against all Judah. Consequently, על־המִשׁפחה הזאת fits the rhetorical movement of Mic 2:1–5 well because it refers to the family of evil-doers. The family of evil-doers will be punished for the land fraud, not all Judah. "All this family" is not a later addition meant to broaden the accusation but part of the eighth century text that targets a specific family.

What Day?

The calamity that YHWH will bring against "this family" will occur "on that day." Scholars question the authenticity of ביום ההוא in Mic 2:4 along with the reference to על־המִשׁפחה הזאת.[41] These scholars surmise that a redactor inserted ביום ההוא along with על־המִשׁפחה הזאת to push the forecasted judgment the distant future (i.e. the 6th century destruction of Jerusalem).[42] Since על־המִשׁפחה הזאת makes more sense as an indictment of

[41] See for example: Jörg Jeramias, "Die Deutung Der Gerichtsworte Michas in Der Exilzeit," *ZAW* 83 (1971): 333–335; .Mays, *Micah*, 62. Renaud, *La formation*, 74. Lescow, "Redaktionsgeschichtliche Analyse von Micha 1 - 5," 51.

[42] Ibid.

a specific family in the eighth century than a later addition that broadens the scope of the judgment, its corollary, ביום ההוא, also needs re-evaluation.

Although ביום ההוא sometimes refers to a distant or cosmic calamity in Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve, it can also describe a more immediate threat.[43] Several passages use the phrase to indicate an event that will occur within the eighth century context. For example, Isa 22 contains an oracle concerning the Assyrian threat against Jerusalem in the eighth century. Isaiah 22:8 uses ביום ההוא to refer to Hezekiah's preparation for the Assyrian attack in 701 BCE. Similarly in Isa 22:25, the prophetic speaker condemns Shebna and proclaims thatביום ההוא Eliakim son of Hilkiah will replace Shebna as steward; a prediction for the eighth century context. Isaiah's pronouncement against Tyre also concerns the eighth century context of the coming Assyrian attack which will occur ביום ההוא (Isa 23:15). Hosea 1:5 uses ביום ההוא to describe the day of the fall of Jehu's dynasty in the eighth century. Concerning the demise of the northern kingdom in 722 BCE, Amos 8:3 states that ביום ההוא there will be a mournful song. These examples indicate that the phrase ביום ההוא can refer to an immediate threat in the eighth century. Based on these instances of the use of ביום ההוא, it would not be out of place within the prophets for ביום ההוא to refer to an immediate context. Consequently, the use of ביום ההוא does not automatically push the outlook of the oracle to the distant future.

[43] James D. Nogalski, "The Day(s) of YHWH in the Book of the Twelve," in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*, ed. Paul L. Redditt and Aaron Schart, BZAW 325 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 192–213. Nogalski defends the thesis that "that day" can refer to "the day of YHWH" (193-195). Additionally, Nogalski argues that within prophetic literature, the "day of YHWH" refers to a period of YHWH's direct intervention (202), whether in the distant future or immediate historical context.

The rhetorical use of ביום ההוא in Mic 2:4 fits the eighth century context as the following rhetorical analysis will show. The phrase mirrors the temporal sequence laid out in Mic 2:2 which I have already argued is an eighth century text. As mentioned above, the woe oracle begins with an accusation against evil-doers that conceptualizes their actions as occurring in a two part temporal sequence. First they plot the evil and then they carry it out. YHWH's response mirrors this structure as YHWH first plots the evil and then, "on that day" (ביום ההוא) carries it out.[44] This rhetorical sequence also fits the sense of *lex talionis* established by the repetition of "plotting" (חשב) and "evil" (רע) in vv. 2 and 3. These two pieces of evidence, that ביום ההוא occurs within eighth century texts that refer to an immediate threat and that ביום ההוא fits the rhetorical temporal sequence of Mic 2:1–5 as well as the sense of *lex talionis*, are strong indicators ביום ההוא in Mic 2:4 is not a later addition but part of the eighth century text.

Micah 2:4 The Proverbial Lament Song

Like Mic 2:1–4a, Mic 2:4b–5 fits the rhetorical agenda of Mic 2:1–5. The following rhetorical analysis will show that though the shift in Mic 2:4b to a taunt song brings complexities; these complexities are understandable within the context of the rhetorical movement of Mic 2:1–5. Micah 2:4 states that "on that day" YHWH will bring judgment against the evil-doers. The verse declares that a masculine singular entity will "lift up" a משל and utter a lament, before recounting the words of the lament song itself.

[44] Charles S. Shaw, *Speeches of Micah: A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis*, JSOTSup 145 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 73.

ביום ההוא ישׂא עליכם מׄשׄל ונהה נהי נהיה אמר שׂדוד נׄשׄדנו חלק עמי ימיר איך ימישׁ לי לׄשׄובב שׂדינו יחלׄק: Mic 2:4	In that day, they will lift up against you a taunt song and they will wail a bitter lamentation. So it was, he has said, "We are utterly ruined; my people's possession is divided. He takes it from me! He assigns our fields to apostates." Mic 2:4

The meaning of מׄשׄל varies in the Hebrew Bible.[45] It can designate a proverb or wisdom saying as well as a mournful song. In this context, the text draws upon both meanings of the word. The nature of the punishment against the evil-doers has, at its core, the notion of *lex talionis*; the same sense that governs Mic 2:1–3.[46] YHWH will plot evil against the ones who plotted evil, a classic proverbial notion. By extension, YHWH will take land from the ones who previously took land. In this context of proverbial poetic justice, the strange wording of Mic 2:4 serves as a complex play on the *lex talionis* theme.

Two observations suggest that the proverb introduced in Mic 2:4 is a lament song previously voiced by the victims of the evil-doers, which will become the lament song of the evil-doers "on that day" when the principle of *lex talionis* returns their sins upon them. First, Mic 2:4 speaks of "my people" (עמי), a term that occurs frequently in Mic 2–3 to designate the group that the prophetic speaker represents (2:9; 3:2, 3, 5). This group consists of the victims of land fraud. It would be odd for the term to refer to the evil-doers in Mic 2:4. Consequently, the lament song must have been sung by the victims ("my people") when the evil-doers took their land.

Second, the lament song references the evil-doers calling them "apostates." The apostate (שׂובב) receives the victim's fields from a masculine singular entity. Although

[45] According to TDOT the noun form can mean a proverbial saying such as in 1 Sam 10:12, Ezra 1:2 or a by-word and a taunt song such as in Deut 28:37 and 1 Kings 9:7. The noun form can also be used of a prophetic discourse such as Isa 14:4.

[46] Wöhrle, *Die Frühen Sammlungen Des Zwölfprophetenbuches*, 146–50.

some scholars suggest that these "apostates" are invading forces such as the Assyrians or Babylonians, the textual evidence favors identifying the apostates (שׁובב) in 2:4bβ with a group within Judah.[47] The designation "apostate" (שׁובב) only occurs in the Hebrew Bible to reference those within Israel who have turned away from YHWH.[48] It is most likely that the use of שׁובב in Mic 2:4b, therefore, references an inter-Judean conflict in which the apostates are members of Judean society who have taken land from fellow Judeans.[49] An inter-Judean conflict also fits the description of affairs that precedes this verse in which the evil-doers cheated their fellow citizens out of land (Mic 2:2) as well as the focus on "this family" as a family within Judah (Mic 2:3). Both the reference to "my people" and the "apostates" indicates that the lament song is a literary device that highlights the irony of the situation; the evil-doers are singing a song that could easily have sung following the evil-doers seizure of the victim's land.

The larger context of Mic 2:4 indicates that the evil-doers will suffer on the day that YHWH acts. Consequently, the evil-doers must be the group who sings the lament song following YHWH's judgment of them. The use of the lament song in Mic 2:4, therefore, reinforces the sense of *lex talionis* that has governed the text thus far. Although the song sounds like a song that the victims of Mic 2:1–3 could sing, (replete with a

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[47] Mays, *Micah*, 62. Wolff, *Micah*, 80. See also Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, *Micah*, OTL (Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 88.

[48] Isaiah 57:17; Jer 3:13; 22; 31:22 (personified Zion); 49:4 (personified Zion). See also Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 287. Andersen and Freedman note that "apostate" is not a proper designation for Assyria. Assyria would be the logical choice for those to whom the land is assigned as they were the primary threat to Judah.

[49] Wolff holds that the meaning of שׁובב must remain uncertain (*Micah*, 70; cf. Renaud, *La formation du livre de Michée*, 76). The designation שׁובב serves a variety of functions in the diverse contexts of the Hebrew Bible. However, taking it as an absolute adjective makes the most sense. Certainly the Isaiah and Jeremiah texts are later, yet they help illuminate the term's use here.

reference to “my people”) the evil-doers will be the ones to sing the song on the day that YHWH acts. This explanation accounts for the use of both “my people” and “apostates” in the lament while allowing the evil-doers to sing the lament song. This explanation also accounts for the double meaning of מׄשׄל as both a taunt song and a proverb against the evil-doers. Recognizing the ironic use of the lament song increases the impact of the מׄשׄל and emphasizes the continued use of *lex talionis*. The evil-doers will say precisely what one could imagine the victims to have said.

The grammar of Mic 2:4 requires explanation. The verbs in the first line of Mic 2:4 cause significant difficulty for translators.[50] One of the primary concerns for translators of this line has to do with the subject of the four verbs. The unstated subject of ישׂא is likely YHWH because YHWH is the one who will bring the calamity in 2:3 it is likely also YHWH who will bring the proverb/taunt song against the evil-doers. Therefore, on that future day, YHWH will lift up a מׄשׄל against you (pl.) i.e. the evil-doers.

The following verb, ונהה, indicates a subject other than YHWH. The verb ונהה (“and he will lament”) refers to future action and therefore the most likely candidates are the evil-doers whom YHWH judges. The following perfect verb, אמר, indicates a completed action. Thus Mic 2:4 has two temporal planes in view. “On that day,” YHWH will lift up a proverbial taunt and the evil-doers will “lament a lament.” However, at a previous time, “he has said.” The lament song follows the perfect verb indicating that it is

[50] In this one verse Renaud finds three voices. Micah 2:4aAα-β are the voice of the prophet; 4aAγ the voice of the evil-doers; 4aB the prophetic speaker or God; 4bA the victims; 4bB the evil-doers (*La formation du livre de Michée*, 68). Bernhard Duhm considered 4bB dittography(*Die Zwölf Propheten* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1910], 85). Leslie Allen dismisses the אמר as a scribal note (*The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, NICOT [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976], 285).

a quotation of a lament that has already been sung. The use of "my people" and "apostates" suggest that lament functions rhetorically to intensify the irony of the passage. The reader/hearer recognizes the terms in the lament (specifically, "my people") as those that the victims would have used in their lamenting over the loss of land. Ironically, the lament is placed in the mouth of the evil-doers. Thus the rhetorical use of the lament reinforces the sense of *lex talionis*.

The third verb, the niphal perfect of היה, is difficult to translate. In the context of Mic 2:4 it functions as a confirmation of the idea that the victims' time for singing the lament is past. Most scholars are happy to consider the form dittography, following Stade.[51] Stade's comments are, in fact, likely why the apparatus of the BHS suggests dittography. However, 4QXII^{g}, frgs. 91 ii, 93-94 i have ink marks indicating the beginning *nun* of the form. Thus an early witness likely contains the form. Wolff notes the form's presence at Qumran but still maintains that it is dittography and that the redactor read the form as a confirmation of the loss of the land at the time of the exile.[52]

Wolff's suggests reading, "it has happened" or "it has thus taken place."[53] He notably maintains the completed tense. Wolff suggests possible cross references including 1 Kgs 12:24 and Joel 2:2. Translators of 1 Kgs 12:24 render the same form as the actualization of divine initiative. So, "the thing has occurred" and the divine speaker

[51] Cited in Wolff without page number. See: Wolff, *Micah*, 69.

[52] Hans Walter Wolff, *Micah the Prophet* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 70. Note also that Renaud suggest that the form is intentional dittography. Though it is unclear what intentional dittography might imply, perhaps Renaud understands the form as the playfulness of the copyist who uses the word play with the previous forms to make a statement about the actualization of the curse (*La formation du livre de Michée*, 75).

[53] Wolff, *Micah*, 70.

adds that the thing originated with him. Therefore, "the thing *from me* has occurred." Joel 2:2 negates the form as a statement that the thing has never been. Wolff's impulse to translate the niphal perfect of היה as a confirmation of something that has previously occurred makes the most sense of the form's use in Mic 2:4. Wolff's claim that the form is a later insertion is not appropriate. He claims the form is late because he understands "all this people" and "on that day" to be later insertions as well. The analysis above has shown that "all this people" and "on that day" are part of the eighth century text. Instead, the form functions in Mic 2:4 as a confirmation that the victims previously had cause for this kind of lamentation. Thus, YHWH's taunt/proverb against the evil-doers functions as both a taunt concerning the calamity by which the evil-doers will lose the land that they took, as well as a proverb by which the evil-doers suffer the same fate as their victims.

This analysis of Mic 2:4 deals with the complexities of the verse. The sense of *lex talionis* governs the text and therefore Mic 2:4 promotes that those who took land will now suffer loss of land. "My people," though frequently used by the prophetic speaker to refer to the victims, in Mic 2:4 refers to the evil-doers because they will suffer the same fate as their victims. The lament song sets the evil-doers apart as a specific group of people much like referring to the evil-doers as "this family" accomplishes in 2:3. The rhetorical agenda of Mic 2:1–5 contends that the evil-doers have stolen the victim's land causing them to lament. On the day YHWH acts, however, an outside force will steal land from the evil-doers causing them to lament. Micah 2:5 completes the rhetorical movement of the passage. Mic 2:5 states that the evil-doers will not have representation in the "assembly of YHWH." The sense of *lex talionis* continues to govern the text in

Mic 2:5 as the evil-doers lack representation when familial land is divided in the assembly.

Micah 2:5

Micah 2:5 addresses land distribution and the method by which the division and assignment of land occurred. This focus is apparent in the use of the phrase "cast a line by lot" in Mic 2:5 (see below, 106). Furthermore, Mic 2:5 declares that the evil-doers will lack representation in the assembly of YHWH when land is distributed and assigned.

לכן לא־יהיה לך מֹשליך חבל בגורל בקהל יהוה: Mic 2:5	Therefore, you will have no one to throw a line for you by lot in the assembly of YHWH. Mic 2:5

This declaration likely points to the method by which the evil-doers managed to secure the land holdings of the victims for themselves. However, following the action of YHWH (2:3–4), the evil-doers will be as helpless as their previous victims. The evil-doers will lack any representation in the assembly. Thus, the sense of *lex talionis* continues in Mic 2:5.

Scholars routinely question the authenticity of Mic 2:5 because the verse reads as prose, lacking poetic parallelism.[54] Scholars also find the use of לכן introducing the verse redundant because of its use in 2:3.[55] Wolff argues that the entire verse is a later addition because of correspondences to other additions that he finds in 2:4.[56] The removal of לכן or

[54] See Lescow, "Redaktionsgeschichtliche Analyse von Micha 1–5," 50. Lescow notes that the entire verse should be extracted as redactional because it does not follow Micah's poetic style. Duhm argues that only the לכן is a later addition and thus removes it (*Die zwölf Propheten*, 71).

[55] Lescow, "Redaktionsgeschichtliche Analyse von Micha 1–5," 50.

[56] Wolff also argues that a redactor uses לכן in 1:14 and 1:13b. He interprets the second person singular in לך as a connection to 2:4 (*Micah*, 70).

the entire verse is not necessary.[57] One would expect the poetic nature of the passage to change with the completion of the proverbial lament song in 2:4. The second לכן does not introduce a new thought but rather builds upon the calamity that YHWH will bring against the evil-doers. Because of the calamity, the evil-doers will have no one to divide the land. Additionally, the theme of parsing out land fits nicely in this context. Not only will the evil-doers have their land taken by others, they will also have no mechanism for receiving it back.

Three observations prevent the bifurcation of Mic 2:5 as a later addition to the eighth century text. First, Mic 2:5 fits the sense of *lex talionis* established in Mic 2:1–4. Second, the ending of the lament song in 2:4 accounts for the perceived disruption of genre in 2:5, since the text would naturally change after the end of the quoted song. Finally, the following analysis will show that the terminology of the passage points to a system for land distribution. The focus on land distribution fits the concerns of Mic 2:1–4 and not a later period. Concerns over land distribution certainly do not fit the alleged context of the other supposed updates ("against this family" and "on that day") that some scholars suggest broaden the context and push the catastrophe into the distant future.[58] Instead, these concerns over land distribution fit the context of the eighth century and the

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[57] Andersen and Freedman find a quandary in 2:5. Though they understand 2:5 as a continuation of the judgment announced in 2:3, they interpret 2:4 as a cry for help from the victims of the evil-doers. Because they see the victims as the final speakers in 2:4, the logic of the passage moves strangely from announcement of doom, to cry for help, to second announcement of doom related to the first. The problem is resolved, however, since 2:4 relates to the announcement of doom in 2:3; and the speakers, "on that day," are the evil-doers (*Micah*, 289).

Others remove the verse on account of the phrase בקהל יהוה. Wöhrle, however, argues that the evidence of a handful of postexilic texts is not enough to excise the verse. Instead it fits the context of land distribution (*Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuches*, 146–156).

[58] See the above analysis of Mic 2:4, 98–100.

contracting territory of Hezekiah.[59] Micah 2:5 contains two references that will provide helpful information to place this text within the context of land distribution. First, the reference to casting a line and lots will help make the context clear. Second, the reference to the assembly of YHWH will provide further information for the situation to which the text alludes.

The line and the lots. Micah 2:5 provides more details concerning the conflict between the prophetic speaker and the evil-doers. The prophetic speaker uses מֹשִׁלִיך חבל to describe those who perform the task of casting the line in the assembly of YHWH. Similar terminology also occurs in Joshua. Although the relevant texts in Joshua and Micah do not date to the same era, both texts point to the larger context of familial land distribution (cf. Mic 2:3 above).[60] Joshua 18:8, 10 record that Joshua was also a מֹשִׁלִיך. However, Joshua threw גורל (lots) as opposed to the line or rope that Mic 2:5 records.[61] Micah 2:5 further records that the one who casts the line will do so in the interest of lots.[62] In Joshua 18, the surveyors divide the land into regions and then Joshua casts lots to assign tribes to each region. The casting of lots in Joshua functions to assign rather than divide the land. Joshua 17:14 employs the parallel terms גורל and חבל in the context of dividing and assigning land; although it is not clear what function each have in the

[59] See Chapter Two, 37–39.

[60] As a part of the Deuteronomistic History, Joshua was likely shaped during the Josianic reforms and after. Micah 2:5 would then predate the Joshua text. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the context of both passages is land distribution and consequently, though the texts are likely separated by two centuries, the Joshua text can provide helpful information for understanding the cryptic references in Mic 2:5.

[61] Andersen and Freedman suggest that one should take חבל as metonymy for חבל נחלה (cf. Deut 32:9). This suggestion makes good sense of the word's use here. (*Micah*, 289).

[62] Karl Budde simply suppliesמֹשִׁלִיך as the subject for the second verb ("Eine folgenschwere Redaktion des Zwölfprophetenbuchs," *ZAW* 39 [1921]: 138).

process. Deuteronomy 32:9 uses חבל in the sense of allotment, parallel to חלק, a verb often used of dividing property.

This analysis makes two things apparent. First, Mic 2:5 has in mind a process by which land was assigned (cf. the other uses of גורל). Second, Mic 2:5 alludes to a process by which land was divided (cf. חבל). Andersen and Freedman note that, "The terms 'lot' and 'rope' are so closely associated that they are virtually synonymous."[63] It is true that the two terms appear to be closely related. However, based on their use elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, it is more likely that חבל has to do with dividing land into portions for distribution and גורל has to do with assigning the previously divided land to specific groups. The absence of the exact phrase found in Mic 2:5 in the rest of the Hebrew Bible, likely indicates that it served as a more ancient designation for dividing and assigning land than those present in Deut 32:9 and Josh 18:8, 10 (cf. 17:14).[64]

The judgment that the prophetic speaker pronounces is now clearer. Within the context of land distribution, like that described in Josh 18 and Deut 32, a certain group will lack representation. The most likely candidates for the newly disenfranchised group are the evil-doers. The evil-doers are the most likely object of the second masculine singular pronominal suffix in Mic 2:5 because they are the object of the most recent judgment sayings (2:3–4). There is no indication that the object of the address has

[63] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 289.

[64] The date of Mic 2:5 is earlier than the passages in Deuteronomy and Joshua though the references in Deuteronomy and Joshua can help elucidate Micah. See Richard D Nelson, *Deuteronomy : A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 6–13. Nelson's model for dating the Deuteronomistic History follows Cross by positing a Josianic recension. For Nelson, much of the Deuteronomistic History was formed during the reign of Josiah with updates occurring during the exile. This model takes into account that some portions of the Deuteronomistic History date to the monarchic period while others (specifically those that know about the events that led to the exile) are products of the exilic period.

changed. The evil-doers will have no one present in the assembly of YHWH to throw the line on their behalf or to assign the divided land to them.

The rhetorical schema of Mic 2:1–5 suggests that the evil-doers previously used the division and assignment of land in the assembly to achieve land seizure. The sense of *lex talionis* that governs the text suggests that the group of victims previously lacked representation in the assembly when the land was divided and assigned. The assembly at which the land was divided was likely the place where the evil-doers asserted their power (2:2) and carried out their evil schemes (2:2). Following the reversal of fortunes that YHWH will bring about "on that day," the evil-doers will lack representation in the assembly.

The Assembly of YHWH. The casting of the line occurs in the קהל יהוה (assembly of YHWH). Beyerlin argues that the language in Mic 2:5 appeals to ancient tribal laws that governed land distribution in the pre-monarchic period.[65] In Beyerlin's analysis, the prophetic speaker appeals to a bygone idealized time when people had strong tribal representation in the assembly and therefore had their rightful inheritance.[66] Because קהל appears so frequently in late exilic and post-exilic writings (Chronicles 43x, the Priestly material of the Pentateuch 19x, Ezekiel 15x), Milgrom concludes a late date for the verse.[67] Though it is true that the lexeme קהל occurs with the highest frequency in exilic

[65] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 290.

[66] Beyerlin, *Die Kulttraditionen Israels in der Verfündigung des Propheten Micha*, 59.

[67] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus*, CC (Augsberg: Fortress, 2004), 244. קהל occurs in Gen 49:6 and Num 22:4 which scholars generally find to be earlier. Additionally, the exact phrase קהל יהוה occurs in Deut 23:2, 3, 4. Scholars usually assign this section to the monarchic period indicating that the phrase is not limited to the exilic and postexilic periods. On the dating of Deut 23:2, 3, 4, see footnote 66.

and post exilic literature, the exact phrase קהל יהוה occurs only in Num 16:3; 20:4; Deut 23:2, 3, 4; 1 Chron 28:8; 29:20. The 1 Chronicles occurrences come from the post-exilic period, the Numbers verses are likely exilic,[68] and the Deuteronomic verses come from the sixth century.[69] The temporal range for the phrase used in Mic 2:5 complicates the linguistic dating of this verse. It is best to acknowledge the context of land distribution and, from there, try to discover what that might tell the reader about the historical setting. Conflicts over land distribution could have occurred in a variety of periods. This chapter already established that the most likely historical setting for the land conflict in Mic 2:1–4 is the eighth century under Hezekiah because of the shifting borders in the Shephelah during his reign. The eighth century makes most sense for contesting land holdings in the Shephelah because during the eighth century the Shephelah was profitable in comparison to the under-inhabitation of other periods.

The strongest links to the exact phrase found in Mic 2:5 (קהל יהוה) occur in Deuteronomy along with the prohibitions for those who are allowed to enter the קהל יהוה.

לא־יבא פצוע־דכא וכרות שפכה בקהל יהוה: לא־יבא ממזר בקהל יהוה גם דור עשירי לא־ יבא לו בקהל יהוה: ס לא־יבא עמוני ומואבי בקהל יהוה גם דור עשירי לא־יבא להם בקהל יהוה עד־עולם: Deut 23:1-3	No one whose testicles are crushed, or whose is penis cut off, will enter the assembly of YHWH. No one conceived illegitimately will enter the assembly of YHWH; even to the tenth generation, none of his will enter the assembly of YHWH. No Ammonite or Moabite will enter the assembly of YHWH even to the tenth generation, none of theirs will enter the assembly of YHWH, Deut 23:1-3

[68] Seebass, "'Holy' Land in the Old Testament: Numbers and Joshua," 94–96. Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1–20*, AAYB 4a (Yale University: Yale University Press, 1993), 25.

[69] Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 274. Nelson argues that the core of these verses come from the sixth century BCE and Josiah's reform. They have been redacted by a later hand to include the material concerning descendants to the tenth generation.

The references to the קהל יהוה in Deuteronomy concern those who may legitimately gather at the assembly of the tribal leaders.[70] Furthermore, Mic 2:5 alerts the reader that land division and assignment happen at this assembly.[71] Therefore, the assembly of YHWH designates a gathering of Judean elites, likely in Jerusalem, who gathered to decide important civic matters such as land distribution.

Summary

The first unit, Mic 2:1–5 references an inter-Judean land dispute in which the prophetic speaker represents the dis-enfranchised among his people in the Judean Shephelah. Because the evil-doers have taken the victim's land, the prophetic speaker declares that YHWH will bring disaster on the evil-doers. The reference to "this family" does not broaden the scope of the coming disaster to all Judah but instead focuses on the family of the evil-doers. The disaster brought against this family will be a punishment in kind. Just as they seized the land of others, now their land will be seized. On the day of the calamity, the evil-doers will sing the lament song that their victims previously sang. The prophetic speaker predicts that the evil-doers who commit the injustices will suffer the same fate by having their land taken. Finally, the prophetic speaker predicts that, though the evil-doers once cast a line and divided the land by lots in the assembly of YHWH, they will no longer have any representatives there. This too is punishment in

[70] Gerhard von Rad suggests that tribal leaders also made important military decisions at this cultic assembly: *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*, trans. Dorothea Barton, OTL [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1966], 146.

[71] Ibid.

kind. Just as the evil-doers denied the victims proper representation during land distribution, in the future, they will have no one to represent their own interests.

In addition, the study above considered several possible later additions to the text in Mic 2:1–5. Each of these suggested additions fit the rhetorical flow of the eighth century text. First, this study rejects the suggested addition of על־המשׁפחה הזאת because it fits the eighth century context well. Rather than an addition that refers to the sixth century Babylonian attack that led to the end of Judah, this phrase originally refers to the family of evil-doers that have transgressed the boundaries of their familial inheritance. Thus the phrase connects to the indictment in Mic 2:2 which accuses the evil-doers of seizing other's inheritance. Second, this study affirms the authenticity of the supposed addition of ביום ההוא because of the sequential parallelism between Mic 2:1 and 2:3–4. The evil-doers plot evil and later carry it out and YHWH plots evil and "on that day" carries it out. Finally, this study affirms the authenticity of Mic 2:5. Micah 2:5 continues to describe the judgment of the evil-doers after the end of the lament song. The shift from poetry to prose occurs because the lament song ends, not because Mic 2:5 belongs to a later hand. The following section will describe the historical situation to which this text speaks.

The Historical Situation Assumed in Mic 2:1–5

Although Mic 2:1–5 does not make the specific historical situation clear, four indicators in the text point to the late eighth century for the conflict between the evil-doers and the victims. First, the evil-doers constitute a powerful group within Judah (see the analysis of 2:4 above). Second, the evil-doers took land from the victims, which the

speaker perceives as an injustice.[72] Third, the assembly of YHWH served as the mechanism for completing the land seizure. The evil-doers conceived of a way to divide and distribute the land to their liking.[73] Fourth, some perceived external threat looms that allows the speaker to predict that the evil-doers will soon sing the lament song that the victims previously sang.[74]

The Reign of Hezekiah as a Likely Context

As outlined in the previous chapter, the earliest extant traditions associated with Micah of Moresheth place him during the reign of Hezekiah.[75] The biblical text reveals some evidence of a centralization effort during the reign of Jotham as indicated by his building project at the Jerusalem temple.[76] Jotham's advances, however, do not offer a likely scenario for the land-seizure recorded in Micah because Jotham's centralization efforts were minimal. Additionally, there is no evidence that reforms progressed beyond Jerusalem.[77] Neither is Ahaz's reign a likely candidate for the conflict described in Mic 2:1–5. At the time of the Syro-Ephraimite rebellion, Ahaz had so little control over the cities in the Judean Shephelah that they joined the rebellion, siding with Philistia to the West and Israel to the North.[78] Following the Syro-Ephraimite rebellion, Ahaz may have managed to consolidate some power because of the weakened conditions of the states

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[72] Cf. Mic 2:1–5

[73] Cf. Mic 2:5

[74] Cf. Mic 2:4

[75] Jer 26:18–19

[76] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 355.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 380. Cf. Isaiah 8:6.

surrounding him. In addition the refugees from the North and the Shephelah region coming to Jerusalem would have helped Ahaz consolidate power in Jerusalem.[79] This historical scenario however fails to account for inter-tribal land disputes. The land disputes found in Mic 2:1–5 point to an established system that has a functioning bureaucracy headed by a powerful state. Ahaz's Judah, even at the end of his reign, was moving toward this reality but had not yet reached it.[80]

During Hezekiah's reign Judah reached higher levels of centralization and urbanization than previously experienced.[81] Following Sennacherib's campaign, Judah was reduced to a state that functioned out of Jerusalem and the Shephelah never fully recovered. As outlined in the previous chapter, Hezekiah's reign saw four important shifts: a time of prosperity when Hezekiah fought as an Assyrian vassal, a time of likely decline following the Ashdod rebellion, a time of fortification preparing for the second rebellion, and a time of devastating decline following the rebellion that brought Sennacherib to Judah.

The first major shift during Hezekiah's reign is not the most likely setting for the land distribution crisis mentioned in Micah 2:1–5. When Hezekiah assumed the throne in Judah, the political turmoil of Tiglath-Pileser's siege and the Syro-Ephraimite rebellion were beginning to resolve.[82] However, the trouble in the North had only just begun. Early in Hezekiah's reign, Assyrian forces put down two uprisings in the North, finally

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[79] Blakely and Hardin, "Southwestern Judah in the Late Eighth Century B.C.E.," 11–55.

[80] Chapter Two, 28–29.

[81] Magen Broshi and Israel Finkelstein, "The Population of Palestine in Iron Age II," *BASOR* 287 (1992): 54. Ofer, "'All the Hill Country of Judah' : From a Settlement Fringe to a Prosperous Monarchy," 104–5.

[82] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 405.

destroying Samaria and establishing the Assyrian province of Samarina.[83] Hezekiah fought on behalf of Assyria during Sargon II's second campaign into Syria-Palestine.[84] The events of this campaign gave Hezekiah more authority in the west as a manager, on behalf of Assyria of Philistine city-states.[85] With significant increases in population and land holdings, Hezekiah positioned himself to centralize authority in Jerusalem and build a bureaucratic state that could interact in the international market without interference from Israel to the North. This time of prosperity and population increase does not suggest itself as the most reasonable time for the land dispute in Mic 2:1–5 because Judean land holdings were increasing.

The shift towards prosperity suggests that the monarchy would have seized this opportunity to increase prebendal land holdings.[86] As the previous chapter showed, in times of prosperity, the monarchy was able to buy more land designated for the production of surplus goods.[87] Therefore, during the first shift of Hezekiah's reign, one can reasonably assume that the focus was on building up centralized infrastructure to support the population increase as well as buying previously destroyed or conquered excess land.[88]

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[83] Ibid.

[84] Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 182–98.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Robert B. Coote, *Amos Among the Prophets: Composition and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 26–28

[87] Ibid.; Hong, *The Metaphor of Illness and Healing in Hosea and Its Significance in the Socio-Economic Context of Eighth-Century Israel and Judah*, 118–19.

[88] Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 338.

The Aftermath of the Ashdod Rebellion

Following the Ashdod Rebellion, Sargonic sources show that Hezekiah lost control of land in the Shephelah (specifically Azekah).[89] The Assyrian demand for tribute from the Judean king would not have diminished because he suddenly had fewer resources.[90] Similarly, the monarchy's need to participate in the international market in order to produce more revenue in the wake of a significant loss would have propelled restructuring of land holdings. As mentioned in the previous chapter, there is evidence that Hezekiah was interested in creating surplus goods for trade.

Hezekiah's Prebendal Land

Exploration of the *lmlk* seal impressions in the previous chapter showed that the monarchy had economic operations that produced surplus goods throughout Judah.[91] Sometime in the closing years of Ahaz's reign or the beginning of Hezekiah's a Judean king would have been in an excellent position to take hold of the territory in the Shephelah belonging to those cities that participated in the Syro-Ephraimite rebellion. Similar to the memory of David's action recorded in 2 Samuel by which David asserted authority over the previous land holdings of Saul to administer them as he saw fit, so Hezekiah would have had the opportunity to gain land holdings in the Shephelah.[92] The cities that sided with Israel to the North and the Philistines to the West would have lost

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[89] Ibid., 336–37. COS 2: 304. See the introduction in COS which indicates at least two scholarly opinions concerning the date for the inscription. The most likely date according to Hooker is after 712 BCE because of this inscription likely belonging to Sargon II.

[90] Ibid.

[91] See Chapter Two, 54.

[92] Zafrira Ben-Barak, "Meribaal and the System of Land Grants in Ancient Israel," *Bib* 62 (1981): 84–85.

the right to administer the land because of their rebellion, much like the text's memory of Meribaal's loss of his patrimonial land when David suspected he was disloyal.[93]

Hezekiah's seizure of land in the Shephelah would have been problematic for those who held patrimonial land in the Shephelah, but things became even more complicated when the Ashdod rebellion failed and Sargon campaigned through the Philistine coast and toward Azekah in the Shephelah.[94] This situation would have been a perfect time for Hezekiah to re-divide Judean land holdings. With the borders of the state constricting, Hezekiah would have needed to "cast the line" again to divide what land remained. Then, while assigning that land "by lot" the king would need to make sure that he compensated for prebendal land lost by either obtaining new territory or expanding territory he already owned in the Shephelah.

Hezekiah's Administrative Power

In addition, during this time Hezekiah began his preparations for his rebellion against Assyria that resulted in Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign. These preparations in Jerusalem, as well as Judah, indicate a significant centralized power. For the purpose of exploring the Micah passage, the *lmlk* jar handles are the most instructive. As discussed in the previous chapter, these jar handles point to administrative districts throughout the eighth century Judean kingdom.[95] The administrative districts likely precede Hezekiah's preparations for revolt, as they would have needed to be in place before the construction of the *lmlk* jars. Additionally, the previous chapter

[93] Ibid.

[94] Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament with Supplement*, 286–87.

[95] Nadav Na'aman, "The Kingdom of Judah under Josiah," *TA* 18 (1991): 3–71.Yigael Yadin, "The Fourfold Division of Judah," *BASOR* 163 (1961): 6–12.

showed that these jars contained surplus crops such as wine and oil that were gathered in these administrative regions and distributed throughout the state.[96] The goods that filled the jars likely originated from both prebendal lands as well as from the taxation system that collected taxes in kind from the patrimonial holdings.[97] This kind of centralized power is precisely what is envisioned in the anti-monarchic speech of Samuel,

> He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. He will take a tenth of your grain and your wine and give it to his attendants and officials...He will take a tenth of our flocks and you ourselves will become his slaves" (1 Sam 8:14–17).

Following the Ashdod Rebellion, the monarchy would have had the power and the cause to apprehend patrimonial land holdings. Thus, as biblical sociologists have argued, the patrimonial land dwindled as the needs of the king and the power of the centralized government grew.[98] Therefore, the period following the Ashdod Rebellion when Hezekiah would have needed to consolidate power and produce more surplus goods is the most likely historical setting for the inter-Judean land disputes represented in Mic 2:1–5. The time following the Ashdod Rebellion coincides with the period in which Hezekiah began preparations for the rebellion that resulted in Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign.[99] These preparations required revenue to finance the building projects and sustain a military. The time surrounding Hezekiah's preparations for his rebellion is also appealing

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[96] Ibid.

[97] See Chapter Two, 53; and Bang, 217.

[98] Coote, *Amos Among the Prophets*.; Hong, *The Metaphor of Illness and Healing,* 118–119. For more on rent capital see Walter J. Houston's discussion in *Contending for Justice: Ideologies and Theologies of Social Justice in the Old Testament* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 21–25. See also Bernhard Lang, "The Social Organization of Peasant Poverty in Biblical Israel," in *Anthropological Approaches to the Old Testament*, Bernard Land ed., (London: SPCK), 83–99.

[99] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 405–9.

because it assumes the approach of the Assyrian threat once again. The prophetic speaker could predict the re-use of the lament song by the evil-doers because he knew that the odds of the revolt ending badly were high.

Hezekiah's House as the Evil-Doers

Hezekiah's house receives praise from the Deuteronomistic Historian who views his religious reforms and the survival of Jerusalem following Sennacherib's attack as indicative of a positive reign. However, Hezekiah fails to receive a positive evaluation everywhere in the Hebrew Bible. The tradition located in Jer 26:19 remembers Micah's evaluation of Hezekiah as negative. The Jeremiah passage (26:1–24) records the happenings of Jeremiah's trial. In the midst of the defense brought forward concerning Jeremiah's words of judgment against Jehoiakim and Jerusalem, the elders of the land appeal to the tradition concerning Micah of Moresheth (Jer 26:17–19). Apparently Jeremiah's scathing prediction of Jerusalem's demise was similar enough to Micah's to call to mind the oracles of the eighth century prophet (26:18). In the tradition recorded in Jer 26, Micah's judgment caused Hezekiah to seek YHWH and therefore YHWH relented and did not bring about the calamity. The Jeremiah 26 tradition, contains a strong memory of Micah's encounter with Hezekiah and Micah's negative evaluation of something having to do with Hezekiah's policy. By the time of Jeremiah's trial was recorded, Mic 1:8, 10-15* would have already been established as the work of Micah of Moresheth. Consequently, it is not without merit to suggest that Micah 2:1–5 records the issue that that "Micah of Moresheth" had with Hezekiah's policy. Namely, Mic 2:1–5 records improper land seizure carried out by evil-doers who belonged to a certain family

that had power to take land. Hezekiah's administrative practice of seizing land is in view.

Hezekiah and his "family," including his royal officials, had the power and the reason to seize land from the inhabitants of the Judean Shephelah in the late eighth century. The increase in centralized power, the likely loss of land following the Ashdod Rebellion, and the efforts toward the Hezekiah's later rebellion (cir. 705 BCE) created the royal family's need for more surplus. Centralization provided the royal family with administrative power in Jerusalem to divide and assign the land. The need for oil and wine to trade for revenue required the acquisition of prebendal land.[100] In light of these observations, the royal family and their designated officials are the best fit for the family of evil-doers that seize land in Mic 2:1–5.

In addition, leaving behind the land dispute; Mic 2:6–11 and 3:1–12 point to a serious impasse between the prophetic speaker and royal and religious functionaries in Jerusalem with rulers, prophets, and priests accused of serious abuses. The prophetic voice is certainly at odds with the centralized administration.

The following examination will explore Mic 2:6–11 and 3:1–12 in which the action moves from a land dispute in the Judean Shephelah to a disputation with the highest ranking religious and state officials in Jerusalem. The section will demonstrate a high level of interconnectivity between the three sections outlined above (Mic 2:1–5; Mic 2:6–11; and Mic 3:1–12).

[100] In addition to wine and oil, Tel Halif produced textiles for Assyrian consumption. See Bang, *Ritual Threads*, 19–20.

The Rhetorical Movement of Micah 2:1-5, 6-11; 3:1-12

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Mic 2–3 combines three units to create a rhetorical whole. The first unit (2:1–5), discussed above, declares the judgment of YHWH against the evil-doers for land fraud in the Judean Shephelah. The second unit (2:6–11) is a disputation between the prophetic speaker and a group of opposing prophets. Rhetorically, the pronouncement of judgment (2:1–5) is the catalyst for the prophetic disputation.[101] In fact the opposing prophets appear to speak on behalf of the evil-doers, defending them for the crimes recorded in 2:1–2. The third section (3:1–12) constitutes three judgment oracles (3:1–4, 5–8, 9–12) against the rulers, prophets and priests in Jerusalem.

Micah 2:6–11

Micah 2:6–11 links to 2:1–5 through similar subject matter in 2:9 and 2:2. In 2:2 the prophetic speaker laments that powerful men have taken houses from the men in the prophet's community. In 2:9 the prophetic speaker accuses the opposing prophets of being in league with the evil-doers who evict the women of his people from their houses. Additionally, *lex talionis* reappears in 2:10a in which the prophetic speaker instructs the offenders to "get up, and go away for this is not your resting place."[102] Like the victims of 2:1–5, the evil-doers and the prophets that support them will not be able to stay in the

[101] Shaw, *Speeches of Micah*, 88.

[102] Micah 2:10b contains the lexeme טמא. Wolff sees טמא as more closely connected to the priestly material in the Pentateuch. However, he finds some correlation to the deuteronomistic use of טמא. Therefore, he concludes that this use might be the work of the deuteronomistic editor of Micah(*Micah*, 71). The rationale that the land is defiled does have more in common with the priestly portions of the Pentateuch than eighth century prophecy. Consequently, Mic 2:10b is possibly a later gloss, added to update the text along with priestly sensibilities in the postexilic period.

land. Micah 2:6–11 links to 3:1–12 in its content concerning the abuses of the prophets. The prophetic speaker accuses the opposing prophets of falsehood (2:11aα) and giving positive prophecies for the price of wine (2:11aβ). This pronouncement links to 3:5 which accuses the prophets of prophesying peace for those who give them something to put in their mouth.

Though 2:6–11 links to 2:1–5, the focus changes in 2:6 from the fate of the evil-doers to a disputation with opposing prophets who are in league with the evil-doers.[103] In other prophetic disputations recorded in the Hebrew Bible the prophetic speaker's opposition speaks on behalf of a group. Both Amos and Jeremiah face opposition from a religious functionary that represents the royal house (Jeremiah vs. Hananiah, and Amos vs. Amaziah).[104] The group represented by the opposing prophets in Mic 2:6–11 is a group that seizes houses (2:9 cf. 2:2) and will therefore suffer a similar eviction (2:10). The accusation and the punishment in 2:6–11 are so similar to the accusation and the punishment in 2:1–5 that the text promotes a direct connection between the evil-doers and the opposing prophets. The reader should assume the opponents represent the evil-doers of Mic 2:1–5; identified above as the royal family. The prophetic disputation therefore pits the prophetic speaker against prophets that support the monarchy.

Do not Prophesy

The disputation opens with a quote from the opposing prophets in 2:6–7a followed by the prophetic speaker's voice in 2:7b.

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[103] Wolff argues that the opposition in 2:6–11 consists of military officials (Ibid., 75). However, Amos 7:16 uses נטף of prophecy. The opposing prophets instruct the prophetic speaker not to prophecy and the prophetic speaker retorts that they too prophecy. אל־תטפו יטיפון לא־יטפו לאלה לא יסג כלמות:

[104] See Amos 7:16.

אל־תטפו יטיפון לא־יטפו לאלה לא יסג כלמות:	‘Do not prophesy,’ *so* they prophesy. ‘Do
האמור בית־יעקב הקצר רוח יהוה אם־אלה מעלליו	prophesy concerning these things, He will
הלוא דברי ייטיבו עם הישר הולך:	not bring disgraces.’
Mic 2:6–7	Is it being said, O house of Jacob: ‘Is the Spirit of YHWH short? Are these his doings?’ Do not my words do good to the one whose way is upright? Mic 2:6–7

The opposing prophets use the prophetic voice to instruct the prophetic speaker not to prophesy.[105] The opposing prophets contradict the prophetic speaker's prediction of coming judgment saying, "He [YHWH] will not bring disgraces."[106] Further, the opposing prophets question the prophetic speaker, "Is it said, oh house of Jacob, is the spirit of YHWH short? Are these his doings?" The rhetorical questions of the opposing prophets are intended to be answered in the negative: Surely YHWH will not bring disgrace.[107]

The prophetic speaker's reply to the opposing prophets is that his own words "do good to the one whose way is upright." He implies that those for whom the opposing prophets speak are not among the upright. Those who will bear the brunt of the prophetic speaker's judgment sayings are those who abuse the prophetic speaker's people.

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[105] The term that the opposing prophets use is derogatory. They accuse the prophetic speaker of "dripping" (נטף) prophecies, perhaps like the tongue of the adulterous woman that drips with honey to lead men astray (Prov 5:3).

[106] Several translations including the NRSV and NIV make disgraces (fp) the subject of סוג. Marvin Sweeney points out that this syntactical arrangement is in incorrect because the subject and the verb do not agree. Rather, the implied subject is YHWH (*The Twelve Prophets: Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 2 vols. [Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2000], 2:363). Sweeney argues that the speech actually belongs to Micah and not the opposing prophets. Therefore, he translates 2:6, "YHWH will not turn back disgraces." This translation is also a possibility.

[107] See below for more on the prophetic dispute and the opposing prophet's use of the Zion tradition. See Gary Stansell, *Micah and Isaiah : A Form and Tradition Historical Comparison*, SBLDS 85 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988), 42–44.

My People Arose as an Enemy

Micah 2:8 begins with a difficult phrase. The prophetic speaker contends, "Yesterday my people arose as an enemy."[108]

ואתמול עמי לאויב יקומם ממול שׂלמה אדר תפשׂטון מעברים בטח שׁובי מלחמה: Mic 2:8	Lately my people have become an enemy- - You strip the robe off the garment, from those who pass by, those returned from war. Mic 2:8

There is no reason to assume that the reference to "my people" is not consistent with the prophetic speaker's previous and subsequent uses of "my people".[109] The prophetic speaker represents the disenfranchised group from the Shephelah. The reference to "my people" becoming an "enemy," therefore, reflects the new status of the people in relation to the royal house.[110] The verse thus conveys that: "lately my people have arisen as an enemy [to the king]." This statement functions as a further accusation against the royal house which has begun to treat fellow Judeans as enemies instead of allies. What follows clarifies the ways in which the royal house has treated the prophetic speaker's people as an enemy. The speaker accuses "you" (pl.) of stripping the costly robe from the one who peacefully passes by (ממול שׂלמה אדר תפשׂטון מעברים בטח). The prophetic speaker's people are behaving peacefully and the royal family repays them with

[108] It is possible to understand the reference to "my people" as the evil-doers who, though they are a part of the same state as the prophetic speaker, yet they perpetrate injustice against his group. See Jacobs, *The Conceptual Coherence of the Book of Micah*, 322:115.The grammar does not necessitate this. Instead, it is just as possible that the prophetic speaker's people have become and enemy to the evil-doers. In fact, as the historical section will show, the military imagery of this section implies that the prophetic speaker's people have been treated as enemies.

[109] Wolff, *Micah*, 82; Mays, *Micah*, 71; Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 316.

[110] Andersen and Freedmen remark that biblical writers often reserve "enemy" for those outside of the covenant. The prophetic speaker is then making a specific statement about the treatment of his people as those outside of the covenant. While their ancestral land holdings should be honored and the fighting men should be allotted the rewards promised them, instead the monarchy treats them as outsiders or enemies A(*Micah*, 315).

hostility befitting an enemy. The appositional phrase which further defines the victims is "those returning from war" (שׁובי מלחמה).

Women, Children, and the Glory

Micah 2:9 continues to elaborate on the abuses suffered by the prophetic speaker's people.

נשׁי עמי תגרשׁון מבית תענגיה מעל עלליה תקחו הדרי לעולם: Mic 2:9	The women of my people you evict. Each from her pleasant house. You take my glory from her children forever. Mic 2:9

The description of women evicted from their homes fits well with the description of the evil-doer's activity in 2:1–2.[111] The eviction of women from their homes puts a more sympathetic face on the injustice occurring.[112] Rhetorically, the prophetic speaker moves from injustices committed against soldiers to injustices committed against women to injustices committed against children. The evocative nature of the image of homeless mothers and children cannot be overstated.

As the antagonists have deprived the women of their homes, so they also deprive the children of "my glory." It makes most sense here to understand the speaker as YHWH. However, the referent of this obscure term, "my glory," remains unclear.

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[111] The Hebrew reading "each her house" employs the distributive property of Hebrew and should not be amended to the plural "their house". For example Ina Willi-Plein amends the text arguing that originally the suffixes were plural and that the mem was lost by haplography (*Vorformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testements*, BZAW 121 [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1971], 123).

[112] Luker, following Hillers, contends that the reference to the "women of my people" should be taken as a reference to Lady Zion. These are not individual women driven from their homes but Lady Zion driven from her home, Jerusalem. Hillers, *Micah*, 35. Luker, "Beyond Form Criticism," 170. Shaw, in trying to make sense of this suggestion, argues that perhaps instead of Lady Zion, the women stands for the population of "my people" (i.e. those that the prophetic speaker represents). None of this is necessary. In the previous note the difficulty of the Hebrew has been explained using the distributive property. Amending the text is not necessary but neither is suggesting a metaphorical singular woman. Instead, the woman mentioned in 2:9 is a singular collective. The singular represents the group, cf. Mic 2:2.

Because of the connection between Mic 2:1–2 and 2:9 with the mention of בית, it is tempting to suggest that glory (הדר) correlates to inheritance (נחלה) or possessions of some sort because of the parallel "houses."[113] However, הדר is never used in the context of inheritance. The term generally denotes ornamentation or status often associated with an elite sector of society.[114] Lamentations 1:6 provides a possible explanation for the use of "glory" even though it is a later text.[115] In Lam 1:6, the departed "glory" of Israel is parallel to the departure of her princes. Therefore, in Lamentations, this lexeme had a connection to elite standing in a community.[116] The context of Mic 2:8 makes a reference to the royal house or elite status likely. The prophets who represent the king are those that the prophetic speaker accuses. Within this context, the prophetic speaker likely indicates that the children of the disenfranchised women cannot expect to obtain high status among the people of Judah.

The Verdict

Micah 2:10 shifts to the verdict against the evil-doers and opposing prophets for their nefarious activity.[117] The evil-doers and the opposing prophets will no longer be able to stay in the land of Judah. Similar to the judgment sayings in 2:3–5, the final verdict carries the sense of *lex talionis*. The evil-doers have deprived soldiers, women,

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[113] Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 293.

[114] See Ps 21:6; Prov 25:6; Lam 1:6. See *BDB* entry 2293, 214.

[115] Delbert Hillers, *Lamentations*, AB 7a (Minneapolis: Doubleday, 1972).

[116] See also Lam 5:12 in regard to elders and Prov 20:29 in association with those that have grey hair. Some symbolism concerning high status is at play.

[117] Wolff, *Micah*, 80, reads Mic 2:10a as belonging to the evil-doers. This is not the case. In keeping with the sense of *lex talionis*, the prophetic speaker now pronounces the judgment for the evil-doers.

and children of their homes; therefore, they will not be allowed to stay in their own homes.[118]

Micah 2:11 contains parallels to both the judgment sayings of 2:1–5 and diatribe against the prophets in 3:5–8. Significantly, the prophetic speaker accuses the opposing prophets of "walking [after] the spirit/wind." The opposing prophets are pursuing something that they have not yet caught. Micah 2:11 looks forward to the prophetic speaker's declaration in Mic 3:8 that he is, in fact, the only one who has received the spirit/wind of YHWH. Additionally, the opposing prophets speak lies to the people. The opposing prophets prophesy a time of prosperity in which wine and beer are prevalent and the prophetic speaker declares that a prediction of prosperity is precisely what "this people" wants to hear. "This people" correlates to "this family" (cf. 2:4) but broadens the scope. No longer is the prophetic speaker only accusing "this family," (i.e. the royal house and its officials) but now, he expands the message of doom to those who conspire with them; namely, the prophets.

The Historical Situation of 2:6–11

Because of the significant overlap between the abuses mentioned in 2:1–5 and 2:6–11, the historical setting of the passage has not changed. The period following the Ashdod Rebellion remains the most likely scenario for the prophetic disputation.[119] In Mic 2:8 the prophetic speaker accuses the opposing prophets of stripping a rich robe from

[118] Andersen and Freedman see a link between מנוחה and נחלה because both terms are used in Deut 12:9 (*Micah*, 324). This connection further illuminates the sense of *lex talionis* in this passage. Just as the evil-doers have deprived the victims of their נחלה so now the will be deprived of their מנוחה. Isaiah 32:18 contains the opposite proclamation saying that the מנוחה cannot be disturbed and is totally secure.

[119] Or a similar event in which Hezekiah lost land in the Judean Shephelah before Sennacherib's 701 BCE.

those returning from war. Because the prophetic speaker represents those from the Shephelah, the returning soldiers are likely those from the prophetic speaker's area who have been mistreated following their military service.[120] The reference to stripping the robe also has military connotations.[121] Generally, conquering military forces stripped the robe (שׂלמה) from those they defeated and took the clothing as a spoil of war (cf. Josh 22:8).[122] Those the prophetic speaker represents have been treated no better than those defeated in battle even though they fought on behalf of the ones who now persecute them. The stripping off the robe from the one returning from battle in 2:8 leads directly into evicting women from their homes in 2:9. In the aftermath of battle one would expect the enemy to be stripped and the women and children evicted as the conquering military force takes over the newly obtained land. In the aftermath of a military exploit in which these soldiers fought on behalf of Hezekiah, this accusation carries heavy weight. The group that the prophetic speaker represents should have been treated as allies of the Judean monarchy but instead were treated as a conquered people.

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[120] Perhaps in the Ashdod Rebellion or some other military encounter.

[121] Shaw maintains that the reference to stripping the robe in Mic 2:8 concerns those who peacefully turn away from war (*Speeches of Micah*, 80). He makes this case on the basis of the verb but the verb can also mean those returning from war. Because of the situation involving the Ashdod rebellion and the citizens of the Judean Shephelah's likely involvement in the conflict, it is likely that the group that the prophetic speaker represents are those returning from war. Not those who turn away. Usually scholars understand this reference in Mic 2:8 to have some correspondence to the law codes concerning a robe taken in pledge. Just as the evil-doers have taken homes, so they take robes as a pledge of future payment. For example see, Mays, *Micah*, 64. Hillers, *Micah*, 33. This connection is unlikely because of the military setting. Instead of condemning a practice of holding pledges through the night, the prophetic speaker bemoans the treatment of his people as an enemy.

[122] Note also that the verb פשט does not often concern taking a garment as a pledge but instead is used of plundering conquered people—often those who are dead. Cf. Ezek 23:26 and 1 Sam 31.

Micah 3:1–12

Micah 3:1–12 is the third section in the first phase of the formation of Mic 1–3.[123] The disputation (2:6–11) leads directly into 3:1–12. The evil-doers (royal house) and the opposing prophets are also present in Mic 3:1–12 and the prophetic speaker accuses them again of mistreating his people. Micah 3:1–4 indicts the royal officials for abuses against those whom the prophetic speaker represents. Micah 3:5–8 supplies a messenger speech directed at the prophets which accuses them of making predictions for payment. Micah 3:9–12 consists of a judgment speech that summarizes the accusations against the rulers and the prophets and supplies an additional accusation against the priests who, like the prophets, perform their duties for a price.

The Rulers Named

Micah 2:1–11 does not name the ruling class. The royal family is simply an un-named group who does evil by taking the inheritance of fellow Judeans. Micah 2:3 assumes that the king and king's family are the opponents and refers to them as "this family." Because of "this family's" abuses of the prophetic speaker's people, they will suffer the same fate. In contrast, Mic 3:1 (cf. 3:9) names the villains. The prophetic speaker accuses the "heads of Jacob" (ראשׁי יעקב) and the "rulers of the house of Israel" (וקציני בית ישׂראל) of treating his people like a slaughtered animal prepared for a ritual meal.

The text names the perpetrators of this evil in two ways. They are the "heads of Jacob" (ראשׁי יעקב) and the "rulers of the house of Israel" (וקציני בית ישׂראל). The first term,

[123] Micah 2:12–13 are postexilic additions to the eighth century material found in Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12. See Chapter Six.

“heads of Jacob” is rather broad. “Heads” most often refers to judges or those who hold upper level status in the military.[124] “Rulers,” on the other hand, is much less common. “Rulers” also frequently applies to military officials (see Isa 1:10; 3:6–7; 22:3).[125] The only other use of both “head” and “ruler” together occurs in the description of Jephthah’s role as a ruler of Gilead.[126] Since the context for these terms in Micah is not combat but land distribution, several scholars suggest that the role to which Mic 3:2 points is one of a military commander, appointed by the king, responsible for land distribution following a conflict.[127] Given the larger context of the indictment against the heads and rulers, the individuals appear also to function from a place of central authority in Jerusalem. These observations fit well with the previous analysis of the context of Mic 2:1–11 in which the evil-doers have power to “seize land” and divide the land by lot in the “assembly of YHWH.”[128] The “heads” and “rulers” then are likely individuals with authority bestowed by the king to distribute land and rule in cases related to land division. It is still

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[124] For the various uses of the term see, BDB, electronic edition, entry for ראש and John R. Bartlett, “Use of the Word ro’š as a Title in the Old Testament,” *VT* 19 (1969): 1–10. Bartlett appeals to the military use of the word in 1 Sam 15:17; 2 Sam 23:8–39; and Num 14:14. See also, J. Andrew *Property Rights in the Eighth-Century Prophets*, SBLDS 106 (Atlanta Scholars Press, 2006), 50.

[125] Mays, *Micah*, 78.

[126] The use of the terms in Judges 11 have to do with making the once outcast brother into the leader of the tribe. Tribal leadership may be in the background in the Micah passage, but the passage assumes centralized leadership by referring to all of Judah and Israel. Therefore, the use of these terms in the Jephthah narrative is dissimilar to their use in the Micah narrative. See, Susan Niditch, Judges, *OTL*, (Westminster: John Knox Press 2008), 131. Dearman, *Property Rights in the Eighth-Century Prophets*, 50.

[127] Shaw, *Speeches of Micah*, 110. Hammershaimb concludes that these royally appointed officials would have been in charge of land distribution outside of Jerusalem. E. Hammershaimb, “Some Leading Ideas in the Book of Micah”, Pages 29–50 in *Some Aspects of Old Testament Prophecy from Isaiah to Malachi*, Teologiske Skirten, 4; Copenhagen: Rosenkelde og Baggen, 1996, 31–32. See also Dearman, *Property Rights in the Eighth-Century Prophets*, 143–44.; Wolff, *Micah the Prophet*, 78–79.

[128] See the connection that Andersen and Freedman make between the “heads” and “rulers” (3:1) and the evil-doers (2:1–3). The “heads” and “rulers” are high level officials in Hezekiah’s court. They function as an extension of the king.

appropriate to associate these individuals with the royal house even though these terms relate to officials functioning under the king. These individuals likely served as part of the royal governing body in much the same way that the centralized prophets (2:1–11) worked under the authority of the king.

Connections to the Evil-Doers in Micah 2:1–11

Similarities between Mic 3:1–12 and 2:1–11 persist in the description of the ruler's abuse of the prophetic speaker's people. Noticeably, the rulers of 3:1 and the evil-doers of Mic 2:2 do the same things; both tear/seize (גזל). The parallelism between seizing a man's house and tearing his flesh call to mind the image of the removal of the victim's covering.[129] Similarly, the rulers flay (פשט) their victims (3:3), which reminds the reader of Mic 2:8 in which the evil-doers strip (פשט) the victims of their robes. The imagery of tearing, flaying and boiling in a pot is reminiscent of the sacrificial system (cf. Lev 1:6; 1 Sam 2:14).[130] This imagery further supports the proposal that the background for the accusations of 3:1–12 is Jerusalem, likely the central sanctuary. The image of the rulers preforming ritual sacrifice on the victims is an elaborate metaphor for the evil deeds in 2:1–11 in which the evil-doers seize land and tear off the victim's coats. The repetition of these lexemes indicates continuity between 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 suggesting that they belong to the same phase in the development of the Micah corpus.

[129] The root גזל occurs only 36 times in the Hebrew Bible.

[130] Andersen and Freedman compare the imagery in Mic 3:2–3 to the ritual of human sacrifice because the terminology associated with sacrificial acts is present in the verses (cf. 1 Sam 2:14; Ezek 11:3–8; 16:20). Andersen and Freedmen suggest that it is impossible to know whether the text implies actual human sacrifice in a ritual setting or simply uses the imagery metaphorically. Because of the links to the acts of the evil-doers who seize houses and strip those who pass by, it is more likely that the allusion to tearing and flaying are metaphors for the oppressive activity of the evil-doers referenced in Mic 2:1–11.

Additionally, the prophetic speaker accuses the rulers of building Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with wickedness. This passage fits best in the context of Hezekiah's reign and the focus on surplus crops in the Judean Shephelah.[131] The bloodshed caused by the stripping of the prophetic speaker's people produced surplus; the profits of which flowed directly to Jerusalem.

The Prophets

The accusation against the prophets in Mic 3:5–8 also links to the material in 2:1–11. The prophets accused in Mic 3:5–8 are the same as or connected to the opposing prophets of the prophetic disputation (Mic 2:6–11). What follows will elaborate on the connections between Mic 2:1–11 and 3:5–8. These connections indicate that the opposing prophets of 2:6–11 and the accused prophets of 3:5–8 are connected.

The accusation against the prophets begins with a divine messenger formula. The prophetic speaker accuses the "prophets" of leading "my people" astray (cf. 3:3). In addition, the "prophets" provide positive prophecies for those who give them something to eat or drink; a concept related to the accusation in 2:11 in which the opposing prophets receive an audience because they predict wine and beer for their listeners. If the prophets are full, they will predict full bellies. Conversely, the prophets wage holy war against those who cannot fill the prophets' bellies.[132] Most often scholars conclude that the "holy

[131] See Chapter Two, 45–48.

[132] Shaw, *Speeches of Micah*, 114. Taken literally, the phrase accuses the prophets of declaring "holy war" against the victims. Shaw takes this to mean that the prophets were consulted in matters of war and were conspirators with the rulers in their gruesome attacks on the victims. Shaw reads the imagery of 3:1–4 as wartime atrocities rather than imagery related to the land fraud committed in 2:2–3. Thus, he concludes that the prophets, in cahoots with the rulers wage war on the victims. The war imagery is certainly present, but instead of suggesting actual war atrocities such as flaying, this accusation relates to the victims treatment as enemies.

war" waged against the victims consists of providing negative prophecies for those who are not able to pay.[133] Shaw suggests that the accusation goes further than a metaphorical "holy war." Instead, one should envision the prophets in league with the rulers (3:1–4), both committing wartime atrocities against the victims. Instead of imagining actual gruesome attacks against the victims, the analysis above suggests that the sacrificial imagery of Mic 3:1–4 metaphorically describes the royal house's abuses against the victims following their military service to Hezekiah (cf. 2:1–3, 8–9). The links to Mic 2:1–11 in the description of the officials seizing/tearing and stripping/flaying (3:2–3) suggest that the prophetic speaker uses the imagery of sacrificial slaughter and consumption to articulate the crime of seizing fellow Judeans land and stripping fellow Judeans of their possessions. Similarly, the imagery of waging "holy war" links to the image in Mic 2:8 of the evil-doers who treat the victims as enemies when they return from battle. Again the rhetoric Mic 3:1–12 draws on the images of Mic 2:1–11 and develops them by suggesting a ritual component (sacrifice and holy war). The link between the behavior of the "prophets" in Mic 3:5 and the accusation against those whom the "prophets" support in 2:8 corroborates the interconnection of these rhetorical sections and substantiates the claim that they belong to the same phase in the development of the Micah corpus.

Furthermore, the prophetic speaker accuses the "prophets" of saying, "Is not YHWH among us, no disaster will come upon us." The rhetorical question calls to mind the prophet's rhetorical question in 2:7, "Does YHWH do such things?" In both cases the prophets attempt to cast doubt on the prophetic speaker's prediction of doom (2:4 and

[133] Mays, *Micah*, 83. Hillers, *Micah*, 46.

3:12). The rhetorical questions concerning the prophetic speaker's predictions of doom further link the rhetorical sections.

Finally, one of the links pointed to above was between Mic 2:7 and Mic 3:8. In Mic 2:7 the opposing prophets claim that the "spirit of YHWH" is not too short to provide them with a prophetic vision and Mic 3:8 prophetic speaker states that he alone is filled with the "spirit of YHWH".[134] The opposing prophets will experience a total lack of visions and no word from God (3:6–7). The prophetic speaker alone is filled with the "spirit of YHWH" (a prophetic characteristic) and with "justice" (a characteristic that the rulers should possess; cf. 3:1). Thus the prophetic speaker is the antithesis of those whom he opposes.

The Second Verdict

The transgressions of the rulers and "prophets," connected to the land fraud described in 2:1–11, will lead to the destruction of Jerusalem according to the prophetic speaker. The verdict pronounced by the prophetic speaker involves the utter destruction of Jerusalem. There are no direct links between Mic 3:12 and Mic 2:1–11. Nevertheless, the verdict concerning Jerusalem resembles the verdict against the evil-doers in Mic 2:3–4. Both Mic 3:12 and 2:3–4 suggest the loss of the evil-doers' land. Micah 3:12 specifically names Jerusalem as the land that the rulers, prophets, and priests will lose. The comparison above shows that Mic 2:1–11 provides accusations in which the evil-doers are not named while Mic 3:1–4, 9, and 11 name the rulers. Similarly, Mic 2:3–4

[134] Wolff notes that the "filling" that the prophetic speaker claims should be distinguished from any semblance to a call narrative. Instead, Wolff draws lines of comparison to the prophet's role as a mouthpiece who YHWH fills with words (cf. Jer 6:11; 15:17; Job 32:18; Wolff, *Micah*, 106–7.

does not specifically name the land for which the evil-doers will weep but Mic 3:12 names Jerusalem.

Structural Coherence

Jakob Wöhrle suggests that Mic 2:1–11; and 3:1–12 bear structural markers indicating that the entire work belongs to the earliest phase of the formation of the Micah corpus.[135] Wöhrle argues that the first phase follows a recurring structure of social criticism followed by a prophetic criticism.[136] Thus, Mic 2:1–5 consists of social criticism and 2:6–11 of prophetic criticism. Micah 3:1–4 consists of social criticism and Mic 3:5–8 of prophetic criticism and Mic 3:10 and 11 repeat the social and prophetic criticism. For the purpose of this analysis Wöhrle's observations are helpful. The examination above shows that both Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 have several linking terms and ideas. Both passages betray concern over the abuses of the ruling class and the prophets. Structurally, as Wöhrle notes, the emphasis moves from the rulers to the prophets in Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–8, and recurs in Mic 3:9–12.[137] The above analysis adds that Mic 3:1–12 is a recapitulation of Mic 2:1–11 in which the prophetic speaker uses metaphorical language to describe the abuses of the rulers and the prophets. Additionally, 3:1–12 identifies both the evil-doers and the location of the coming destruction while 2:1–11 leaves them un-named. The analysis above also draws on the ritual imagery in both 3:1–4 and 3:5 regarding the transgressions of the rulers and prophets respectively. The interconnection

[135] Wöhrle, *Die Frühen Sammlungen Des Zwölfprophetenbuches*, 154–56.

[136] Ibid., 155.

[137] Ibid.

of Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 leads to the conclusion that the two sections belong to the same literary phase.

A Relative Date for Micah 3:1–12

While Mic 2:1–5 had the Judean Shephelah as its background, the action in Mic 3:1–12 occurs in Jerusalem. This new setting is discernable from the individuals addressed, their defense of the central city, and the prophetic speaker's prediction concerning Jerusalem specifically. As mentioned above, Mic 3:1–12 addresses the abuses of the rulers (3:1–4), prophets (3:5–8), and priests (3:9). Micah 3:12 states that because of the activities of these groups "Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble." The coming disaster will affect the interests of the rulers, prophets, and priests because it will decimate the site of their centralized authority. The previous chapter surveys the evidence available for centralization in Jerusalem before Hezekiah's revolt, concluding that centralization began in the decades leading up to Hezekiah's revolt as he worked to create a stronger centralized state for the production of surplus.[138] Following Sennacherib's invasion, centralization at Jerusalem reached its zenith because the Assyrian forces laid waste to many of the other cities surrounding Jerusalem. Micah 3:1–12 indicates a period prior to Sennacherib's invasion but after centralization had begun under Hezekiah. Micah 3:12 incorrectly predicts the destruction of Jerusalem in the eighth century (cf. Jer 26:18–19). Consequently, it must predate Sennacherib's campaign. The text points to a centralized authority structure in Jerusalem consisting of rulers, prophets, and priests indicating that the process of centralization had already

[138] Chapter Two, 51–70.

begun. Furthermore, the prediction of Jerusalem's destruction indicates a strong external threat. Finally, Mic 3:1–12 links back to Mic 2:1–11. These pieces of evidence fit the period of Hezekiah's preparations for the 705 BCE revolt that resulted in Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign. The centralized authority in Jerusalem, the Assyrian threat, and the incorrect prediction of Jerusalem's fall all point to a period of centralized authority, a functioning Shephelah focused on the production of surplus, and contested land in the Shephelah. The period that best fits these observations is certainly the period previous to Sennacherib's campaign and is likely associated with the Ashdod Rebellion or another military endeavor that took place near the Shephelah. Therefore, Mic 3:1–12 along with Mic 2:1–11 come from the same approximate time; after the period of prosperity and before Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign.

Conclusion

This chapter places the first phase in the development of the Micah corpus (Mic 2:1–11; 31–12) in the context of the eighth century. The most likely period for the events described in these prophetic oracles is the before Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign and may be associated with the Ashdod Rebellion. This period was one of preparation in which the royal house was motivated to create surplus with limited land resources. Thus, the royal house would have had the means and the motivation to obtain privately owned land from Judeans. The primary concern of the first phase is a land dispute in the Judean Shephelah. The prophetic speaker accuses the royal house and their prophets of colluding to take land from his people. A strong sense of *lex talionis* governs Mic 2:1–11 in which the prophetic speaker predicts that the evil-doers and opposing prophets will suffer the loss of their land just as their victims did. Micah 3:1–12 recapitulates the abuses of Mic

2:1–11 but puts them in a cultic context and metaphorically describes the land seizure as ritual sacrifice and holy war. The final verdict is that Jerusalem will be destroyed, which mirrors the earlier prediction (2:4–5) that the evil-doers would eventually suffer the same fate as the prophetic speaker's people.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sennacherib, the Aftermath and Phase Two (Mic 1:8, 10–15*)

Introduction

Chapters Two and Three examined the first phase in the formation of the Micah corpus (Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12) within the context of an eighth century dispute among Judeans from the Shephelah and the Judean rulers, prophets, and preists in Jerusalem. Two circumstances contributed to this tense situation: Judah's relationship to Assyrian and Judah's increase in population and infastructure. Two shifts in Judah's interaction with Assyria caused significant stress. Early in Hezekiah's reign, he fought as an Assyrian vassal and gained control of Philistine land. Later, Hezekiah may have participated in the Ashdod Rebellion, which resulted in the loss of these land holdings. In addition to fluctuating land holdings, Judah also experienced exponential population growth during the eighth century. As the population grew, so did Judah's need for surplus and interaction with international trade. The focus on creating surplus brought about an increase in the monarchy's control of land as well as increased infascructure for moving surplus goods. The monarchy was involved in the creation of surplus, the creation of infastructure (*lmlk* seals), and the centralization of power in Jerusalem. The conflict described in Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 takes place against this backdrop.

The previous chapter argues that Mic 2:1–11 accuses the Judean royal house of taking land from land-owners in the Shephelah (2:1–5). The previous chapter also contends that the land dispute implied in 2:1–11 fits best in the aftermath of the Ashdod Rebellion or some other military encounter. In this period, Shephelah land holders and

the monarchy would have disputed the territory because of land loss to the west. Similarly, Mic 3:1–12 alludes to a dispute between the prophetic speaker and the rulers, prophets, and priests. The prophetic speaker appears as an outsider confronting the abuses occuring among the Jerusalem elite. The prophetic speaker represents a people group from outside of Jerusalem and speaks as their advocate among the Jerusalem elite. Because of the abuses of the Jerusalem leadership, the prophetic speaker announces Jerusalem's immenant destruction (3:12).

Chapter Two outlined the first two shifts in Judah's interaction with Assyria during the eighth century. This chapter (Chapter Four) surveys a third shift in Judah's interaction with Assyria that provokes an Assyrian attack. Judah made plans to rebell against Assyrian suzerienty again after Sargon's death. The rebellion brought a decisive response from the new Assyrian king, Sennacherib.[1] Sennacherib's campaign through Judah severly diminished the Shephelah's population, and many of its cities were destroyed.[2] Only Jerusalem remained in Judah, to which refugees escaping Sennacherib fled. The urbanization and centralization in Jerusalem, which began before Sennacherib's campaing, became more pronounced as a result of Jerusalem's status as the only major city left standing in Judah.[3] In the developments that followed Sennacherib's campaign, Jerusalem remained as the only epicenter of Judah. Hezekiah fortified his administrative strucures as he sought to rebuild the state.

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[1] See below, 142–146.

[2] See below, 143–146.

[3] See below, 144–146.

The Historical Setting of the Second Phase

Revolution and the Aftermath of Sennacherib

The third shift in Judah's interactions with Assyria began in 705 BCE, when Sargon died in battle in Anatolia.[4] This event sparked revolt throughout the empire: in southern Anatolia, Babylonia (under Merodach-baladan), and Southern Palestine (under Hezekiah).[5] Sennacherib marched through the Judean countryside and demolished city after city.[6] In his annals, Sennacherib boasts that he took 46 of Hezekiah's fortified cities and confined Hezekiah in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage."[7] The destruction layers from the time of Sennacherib's march largely confirm this picture.[8]

The Shephelah and Sennacherib's Campaign

Both Sennacherib's account and the biblical accounts locate significant destruction in the Shephelah. The archaeological record shows destruction levels at a variety of Shephelah sites (see below, 143–146). Additionally, though the archaeological remains from the eighth century Shephelah show remarkable growth and prosperity, the beginning of the seventh century indicates widespread destruction and extremely limited recovery after the Assyrian forces left. Thus, the three shifts in Judah's Assyrian interaction can be characterized this way: the first resulted in territorial gain and

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[4] William Gallagher, *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: New Studies*, Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2.

[5] Ronald Ernest Clements, *Isaiah 1-39*, NCB (Winona Lake: Eerdmans, 1980), 139–40. Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39*, FOTL 16 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 232-233; 237.

[6] Gallagher, *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah*, 120–142 .

[7] *COS* 2:303

[8] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 412.

prosperity, the second resulted in some territorial loss and limited economic decline, the third resulted in severe devastation, population reduction, and the establishment of Jerusalem as the only metropolitan hub in Judah. As the archaeological evidence bears out, the third shift was the most significant and devastating for Judah.

Lachish. Lachish provides an exceptionally well documented destruction level for Sennacherib's incursion into Judah. Excavations at Tell ed-Duweir (Lachish) reveal a siege ramp composed of dirt and rocks which allowed Assyrian forces to breach the wall.[9] Inside the city wall, the defenders of Lachish also composed a counter-ramp. The counter-ramp rose almost 10 feet above the city wall. The Lachish reliefs from the Nimrud palace show what excavator, David Ussishkin, refers to as a "siege-machine" that the Assyrian forces pushed up the siege ramp. The "siege-machine" moved on four wheels with a long wooden ram protruding from its front. The wooden ram had a sharp metal point at one end. The Lachish relief shows Assyrian soldiers moving the "siege-machine" up the siege ramp as the Judeans on the opposite side of the wall hurl flaming torches at the "siege machine."[10] The remains at Lachish also revealed large stone blocks, weighing about 200-400 pounds. Excavators found bits of charred rope in perforations in the stones. Ussishkin surmises that defenders of Lachish used ropes to hoist the stones and hurl them or swing them into the "siege-machines" from a platform at the top of the defense ramp. In addition, the excavation found a fragment of an iron chain. Ussishkin suggests that the defenders used the chain to snare the metal point of the "siege-machine"

[9] David Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," in *Sennacherib at the Gates of Jerusalem: Story, History and Historiography*, ed. Kalimi Isaac and Richardson Seth, CHANE 71 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 81.

[10] Ibid., 82.

and then, would try to unsettle the "siege-machine" by maneuvering the chain from above.[11] Excavators found sling stones and nearly one thousand arrow heads concentrated around the siege ramp indicating a concerted effort at this place in the wall as well as a significant struggle.[12]

In the years following Sennacherib's campaign in Judah, he completed his palace at Nimrud. Sennacherib commissioned reliefs depicting of the siege of Lachish and placed them in a prominent room in the palace. Ussishkin concludes that the placement and detail of the reliefs indicate that Lachish was a significant and celebrated victory for the young king.[13] Other Judean cites did not warrant Sennacherib's boasting as much as Lachish. Lachish was the crowning glory of the Sennacherib's Judean campaign. Nevertheless, destruction layers throughout the Judean Shephelah show that similar events transpired at other cities.

Four Other Shephelah Sites. In addition to Lachish, several other excavated sites show complete or partial destruction at the end of the eighth century. Many of the sites from the Judean Shephelah show growth and development during the eighth century, especially in the creation of surplus, but by the beginning of the seventh century, production significantly declined or ceased all together. The following survey of four key sites will establish the widespread and lasting nature of the destruction.

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[11] Ibid., 83.

[12] Ibid., 84.

[13] Ibid., 85. The Lachish relief is the longest and most detailed series of Assyrian reliefs depicting the siege of a fortified city.

Tell el-'Areini, Tell el-Hesi, Tell el-Batashi, and Tel Halif northwest of Lachish, along the border between the Philistine coast and the Judean Shephelah, shows evidence of partial destruction that coincides with Sennacherib's siege. Stratum VII and VI contain a partial destruction layer associated with the end of the eighth century.[14] Tell el-Hesi, west of Lachish, shows signs of growth during the earlier decades of the eighth century but a destruction layer consistent with Sennacherib's siege ended the growth abruptly. Strata VII C at Tell el-Hesi contains a destruction level dateable to the end of the eighth century. Timnah, Tell el-Batashi, north of Lachish and directly west of Jerusalem, suffered a similar fate. A destruction layer at stratum III shows several *lmlk* jar handles (discussed in Chapter Two) dating the destruction to the end of the eighth century. Additionally, Sennacherib's annals record the destruction of Timnah, indicating the city's important status in the Assyrian campaign.[15] Tel Halif, directly south of Lachish, also contains a destruction layer dated to the end of the eighth century in stratum VI B1. As discussed in Chapter Two, Tel Halif had a complex for the production of textiles during the eighth century.[16] Sennacherib's destruction significantly hurt the textile industry. At Tell Beit Mirsim, south of Lachish and north of Tel Halif, in stratum A2, damage to the city walls signify an attack at the end of the eighth century.[17] The interior buildings apparently remained intact. The destruction levels at these cities in the Judean Shephelah show that a devastating military campaign destroyed or greatly

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[14] Hooker, "The Kingdom of Hezekiah," 343.

[15] Miriam Aharoni and Yohanan Aharoni, "Stratification of Judahite Sites in the 8th and 7th Centuries BCE," *BASOR* 224 (1976): 73–90.

[16] J.D. Seger, "Halif, Tell," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, vol. 2 (New York: Carta, 1993), 558.

[17] Aharoni and Aharoni, "Stratification of Judahite SitesBCE," 73–90.

damaged many cities in the region at the end of the eighth century. These destruction levels corroborate the records of Sennacherib's campaign both in the Bible and in Sennacherib's Prism and the Lachish relief.

Based on the data from Lachish and the four smaller sites as well as extensive surveys in the Shephelah, Finkelstein estimates that the population of the Shephelah decreased by 70 percent following Sennacherib's campaign.[18] The population of the Shephelah shifted from about 108,000 in the late eighth century to about 34,000 at the beginning of the seventh century. Serious loss of life, many thousands of exiles, and refugees abandoning their homes are all factors that account for this demographic shift. Sennacherib gave much of the Shephelah to Philistine monarchs, reducing Hezekiah's land holdings even significantly.[19]

A Population Shift toward Jerusalem

The decline in the Shephelah at the end of the eighth century caused a demographic shift toward Jerusalem for the remaining Judeans. In order to support the growing population and compensate for the reduction in arable land, several farmsteads and other agricultural installations grew up around Jerusalem in the decades following Sennacherib's campaign.[20] The Shephelah emerged as the economic backbone for the growing infrastructure of the state during the eighth century.[21] With the destruction and

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[18] Israel Finkelstein, "The Archeology of the Days of Manasseh," in *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King,* ed. M Coogan, J. Cheryl Exum, and L. Stager (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 173.

[19] See Chapter Two, 37–39.

[20] Yuval Gadot, "In the Valley of the King: Jerusalem's Rural Hinterland in the 8th-4th Centuries BCE," *TA* 42 (2015): 18.

[21] Ibid.

re-assignment of many Shephelah sites, a greater amount of pressure persisted in and around Jerusalem to produce the food needed for the inhabitants of Judah.[22] Surveyors note that a dramatic shift from only about 11 agricultural sites in the eighth century to around 60 agricultural sites in the seventh century around Jerusalem.[23] The shift noted in Chapter Two towards state-run sites which specialized in surplus crops such as wine and oil, moved to Jerusalem following Sennacherib's campaign. Still under Assyrian control, Judah continued to produce specialized crops to sell for revenue. Thus, the greatly reduced state constructed farmsteads, small collection centers, and isolated agricultural installations in the arable land surrounding Jerusalem.[24] The Refa'im (running southwest from Jerusalem) and Sorek (running northwest of Jerusalem) Valleys became the bread basket of Judah in the period following Sennacherib's campaign.[25]

The population growth and agricultural expansion in Jerusalem is explainable when one factors in refugees fleeing to Jerusalem in light of the Assyrian attack. Chapter Two examined the significant population increase in Jerusalem during the eighth century. Some of that growth was likely the result of the Sennacherib's campaign. The growth in the Refa'im and Sorek valleys occurred after Sennacherib's campaign and the growth in this region likely developed because of displaced peoples from the Shephelah.[26] The archaeological record shows that, in large part, the refugees did not return to the

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[22] Gadot, "In the Valley of the King," 16–17.

[23] Ibid., 16.

[24] Ibid., 16–18.

[25] Ibid., 16.

[26] Bloch-Smith, Elizabeth "Assyrians Abet Israelite Cultic Reforms: Sennacherib and the Centralization of the Israelite Cult," in *Exploring the Longue Durée*, ed. David J. Schloen and Lawrence E. Stager (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 35–44.

Shephelah after Sennacherib's departure. Instead, many remained in or around Jerusalem.[27]

The refugees who re-located from the Shephelah to the fertile regions around Jerusalem brought with them the specific traditions and curriculums common to their region and their educational system. Chapter Five will discuss the Micah traditions in light of the educational/enculturation systems of the ancient Israel.[28] For now, it will suffice to say that the refugees from the Shephelah brought with them traditions and pieces of enculturation specific to their region. Just as the displaced Judahites sought to maintain their traditions during the Babylonian exile, so peoples displaced from the Shephelah strove to preserve their traditions in their new setting. The Micah traditions survived the devastation of the Judean Shephelah (where they originated) and continued to evolve. Since the large portions of the population did not return to the Shephelah, it stands to reason that the Micah traditions found a new home in Jerusalem following Sennacherib's campaign. It is likely that the tradents responsible for preserving the early Mican oracles were among the refugees who came to Jerusalem. The historical and archaeological evidence surveyed above as well as the Mican text itself supports this conclusion. The section that follows will examine Mic 1:8, 10-15* in light of this historical background. This section will show that Mic 1:8, 10-15* is a lament song concerning the military defeat of the Judean Shephelah. Such an expression of grief over the loss of the Shephelah makes most sense as originating among displaced people of the

[27] See Chapter Three which shows that the Shephelah remained did not recover its population following Sennacherib's 701 campaign.

[28] Chapter Five (179–240) argues that a small group of elite tradents preserved the Micah traditions in both oral and written form. These traditions served as enculturation among the displaced people of the Shephelah.

Shephelah following Sennacherib's campaign. The poetry of the lament supposes the Shephelah's devastation. Micah 1:8, 10-15* is different from the exilic section that precedes it because Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9 focuses on cultic abuses. The lament song is set apart from what follows it because Mic 2:1-11; 3:1–12 assumes a functioning Shephelah while Mic 1:8, 10–15* assumes the Shephelah's destruction. Micah 1:8, 10–15* can stand alone as a lament song in which the prophetic speaker summons the cities of the Judean Shephelah to lament and calls them to enact their military defeat. What follows will help situate the poetry of Mic 1:8, 10–15 in the historical context of the aftermath of Sennacherib's campaign with the Micah tradents who relocated to Jerusalem.

The Second Phase in the Formation of Mic 1–3: The Lament Song (Mic 1:8, 10-15)*

The extreme devastation to the Shephelah offers the best explanation for the poetic section in Mic 1:8, 10–15*. What follows will survey the various opinions in scholarship for the date of Mic 1:8, 10–15. It is common to date the lament to the Assyrian period but often place it before Sennacherib's campaign. Then, a close examination of the poetry will show, first, that a mournful and distressed tone governs the poetry. Second, the poetry focuses exclusively on the Judean Shephelah. Third, the form of the poetry is a prophetic call to lament which becomes a lament song as the personified cities (or their "inhabitant") of the Judean Shephelah add their voices and actions to the prophetic speaker's song. These three elements, the mournful tone, the exclusive concern for the Shephelah, and the communal nature of the mourning lead to the conclusion that the lament song functioned as an expression of grief for displaced Shephelahites living in Jerusalem following Sennacherib's campaign.

The Question of Historical Setting

Scholarly Proposals. Scholars are generally convinced that the lament song belongs to the period of Assyrian dominance.[29] Scholars disagree, however, on the precise period. I will outline five possible periods for Mic 1:8, 10–16 that briefly represent the breadth of scholarly opinion.[30] I will conclude that the early seventh century, following the destruction of the Shephelah and the relocation of the Micah tradents to Jerusalem, provides the most likely period for the formation of the lament song (Mic 1:8, 10–15*).

Hans Walter Wolff argues that the lament song belongs to the period before the fall of Samaria (722 BCE) because Mic 1:3–7 predicts the fall of Samaria and Jerusalem.[31] The connection between Samaria and Jerusalem in Mic 1:3–7 however, is an exilic update to the collection of Mican oracles.[32] The exilic update (1:1, 3–7, 9) creates the link between Samaria and Jerusalem. Since the mention of Samaria is a later addition,

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[29] See the discussion that follows.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Hans Walter Wolff, *Micah: A Commentary*, trans. Stansell, Gary (Minneapolis: Augsburg 1990), 49.

[32] See Chapter Six, 274–279. Chapter Six deals with the quandary presented by the Jerusalem material in Mic 1 fully. However, here it is important to provide a brief overview of the argument that dates Mic 1:3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16 to the exilic period. Mic 1:3–7, 9 are a product of the exilic redaction of Mic 1, because these verses present the destruction of Samaria as a warning to Jerusalem, claiming that Jerusalem will face the same fate. Second Kings 17, part of the exilic redaction of the Deuteronomist History, promotes the same ideology of Samaria's fall as a precursor to the fall that Jerusalem will experience. In addition, Mic 1:3–7, 9 assumes that cultic abuses like those presented in the exilic recension of the Deuteronomist History are the reason for the fall of Samaria and Jerusalem. These links to the exilic recession of the Deuteronomistic history place Mic 1:3–7, 9 in the exilic period. Micah 1:12b, 13b, and 16 also belong to the exilic redaction because they contain links to Mic 1:3–7, 9. Micah 1:12b, 13b, and 16 also contain כי clauses that set them apart from the poetry of the earlier lament song. Micah 1:3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16 also fit the exilic period best because they assume the destruction of Jerusalem, an event that did not occur until the sixth century.

the lament song (1:8, 10–15*) was not originally connected to the fall of Samaria or Jerusalem and therefore does not help date the lament. Dating the lament to the years surrounding Samaria's fall is also unlikely because Hezekiah remained a loyal subject to Assyria during this time.[33] Following Samaria's fall, the Judean kingdom began to prosper. Thus a lament song concerning the Judean Shephelah is unlikely in the years following Samaria's fall.

Charles Shaw argues that the text presumes a time previous to the Syro-Ephraimite rebellion (c. 735 BCE). [34] He reads Mic 1:2–16 as a unity and therefore argues that the focus on both Samaria and Jerusalem as recipients of judgment suggests a period before Ahaz broke ties with Israel. Therefore, the text refers to a time when Judah was still in Israel's shadow. This suggestion is also untenable because Mic 1:3–7, 9 does not belong to the eighth century, but is instead an exilic addition that creates the connection between Samaria and Jerusalem.[35]

Others suggest the Syro-Ephraimite Rebellion as the period around which the lament song centers.[36] The invasion and devastation that the lament song bewails would have come from the Syrian and Israelite coalition. However, Chapter Two showed that many of the Shephelah cities likely aligned themselves with Israel and Syria during this

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[33] See Chapter Two, 30–36.

[34] Charles S. Shaw, *The Speeches of Micah: A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis*, JSOTSup 145 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 59–62

[35] See Chapter Six, 274–279.

[36] Herbert Donner, *Israel unter den Völkern: die Stellung der klassischen Propheten des 8. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. zur Aussenpolitik der Könige von Israel und Juda*, VTSup 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 102.

conflict.[37] Thus, the Shephelah cities would not need to lament the attack of Syria and Israel.[38]Additionally, Lachish features prominently in the lament song but Lachish does not have a destruction level that dates to the period of the Syro-Ephraimite rebellion or Tiglath-Pileser's campaign.

Another possible period for the date of the lament song is the period surrounding the Ashdod Rebellion (c. 712 BCE).[39] Chapters Two and Three have already promoted this period as the most likely time for the formation of the oracles in Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12. Certainly the Ashdod Rebellion posed a threat to the Judean Shephelah and some land holdings were lost. Micah 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 decry the abuses of the royal house against land owners in the Shephelah and assume that the Shephelah still functions. The inter-Judean squabble between private land holders and the royal administrators alluded to in Mic 2:1–11 indicates that the Shephelah is still functioning as Judean territory. Following the Ashdod Rebellion, the Judean land holdings in the Shephelah were diminished but the Shephelah still functioned and provided revenue for the royal house. The lament song (Mic 1:8, 10-15*) assumes that the Shephelah has been completely destroyed. There is no need to discuss the proper ownership of the land in the Shephelah as Mic 2:1–11 does because it is a complete loss. Thus, the period following the Ashdod

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[37] Chapter Two, 27.

[38] Miller and Hayes suggest that Mic 1:13b which claims that Lachish was the beginning of the sin of Zion, has the Syro-Ephraimite Rebellion as its background. Miller and Hayes suggest that Lachish sided with the Syro-Ephriamite coalition against Jerusalem. The destruction layers at Lachish are secure. The major destruction layer of the eighth century belongs to Sennacherib's siege. If Lachish had aligned itself with the Syro-Ephriamite coalition, it would have suffered from Tiglath-Pileser's campaign. Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 395–397.

[39] Leslie C. Allen sees either 712 BCE (Ashdod Rebellion) or 701 BCE as possibilities for the lament song (*The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, NICOT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976], 241). See also, Otto Eissfeld who appeals to both 712 and 701 as possibilities (*The Old Testament: An Introduction*, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd [New York: Harper & Row, 1965], 552).

Rebellion is not likely because the Judean Shephelah was still profitable Judean territory following the Ashdod Rebellion.

Others hold that the lament song refers to Sennacherib's campaign, but, they do not specify whether the sayings are predicative or originated after the event. Jörg Jeremias draws lines of correlation between the Assyrian campaign of 701 BCE and the poetry in Mic 1:8, 10–16 but he does not specify whether the lament originated before or after the attack.[40] Jeremias's primary objective is to show how an exilic editor shaped these verses to fit with Hosea and Amos. Similarly, Jakob Wöhrle sees the lament song as a product of the eighth century, likely Sennacherib's campaign, but does not provide a more specific delineation of the time frame.[41]

Andersen and Freedman suggest the period just before Sennacherib's campaign for the origination of the lament song. They argue that the lament song is a prediction of the coming wrath of YHWH. Like Wolff, Andersen and Freedman see the lament song as a continuation of the text of Mic 1:3–7 and argue that all of Mic 1:3–16 comes from the period before Sennacherib's campaign. Wolff and Andersen and Freedman's association of Mic 1:3–16 with the Assyrian period is perplexing because the text so clearly focuses on Jerusalem. Micah 1:3–5 declares Jerusalem's fate and then 1:8–16 traces a trail of lament as it moves toward Jerusalem. However, Jerusalem escaped destruction during the Assyrian period. Jerusalem's fateful day occurred much later. Why then, would a passage focusing on an army advancing towards Jerusalem and causing mourning in Jerusalem (1:16) belong to the Assyrian period? Wolff and Andersen and Freedman's impulse to

[40] Jeremias, *Die Propheten Joel, Obadja, Jona, Micha*.

[41] Wöhrle, *Die Frühen Sammlungen Des Zwölfprophetenbuches*, 139–45.

date most of Mic 1 to the Assyrian crisis is understandable because the Mic 1:8–15 (except for the portions that mention Jerusalem) have the Judean Shephelah as their focus and Sennacherib's campaign in the Shephelah is well known. Similarly, epigraphic and biblical evidence clearly link the destruction of Samaria to Assyrian forces. Chapter Six will show that the exilic update creates a link between the destruction of Samaria and the destruction of Jerusalem that only fits following Jerusalem's destruction in 587 BCE.

A Defense of Lament Song's Proper Period. The period directly following Sennacherib's campaign through the Judean Shephelah supplies the most likely period for the formation of the lament song.[42] Following the campaign, when the cities of the Shephelah lay in ruins, displaced residents would have needed an expression for their grief that the lament song could fulfill. Several pieces of internal evidence point to the lament's composition following Sennacherib's siege (contra the various scholarly opinions surveyed above). First, the prophetic speaker engages in this mourning song as a fellow mourner who experienced the suffering brought by the Shephelah's destruction. Second, the prophetic speaker knows of the events he describes and refers to the region Sennacherib actually attacked. Third, the lament song assumes that the cities of the Judean Shephelah already lie in ruins. Micah 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 appeal to a time before the Shephelah's destruction when the Judean monarchy still viewed the land as viable (cf. 2:1–3). The shift from viable land in 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 to unviable land in 1:8, 10–15* indicates a shift in the fate of the Shephelah best understood as Sennacherib's campaign. The author of the lament song must know of the extent of Sennacherib's campaign in the

[42] For evidence that Mic 1:8, 10–15* functions as a lament song, see the following pages.

Shephelah and Sennacherib's inability to take Jerusalem because any mention of Jerusalem is suspiciously absent when the exilic updates are removed. If the prophetic speaker had composed the lament song before Sennacherib's campaign, one could expect Jerusalem to be included in the destruction as the prophetic speaker had previously predicted (incorrectly, cf. 3:12). Instead the prophetic speaker focuses on the response to a calamity in the Judean Shephelah alone. The prophetic speaker summons the cities of the Shephelah to lament and react to military defeat. Consequently, the most likely context for the composition of the lament song is in the period following Sennacherib's attack.

The Poetry

An analysis of the poetry of Mic 1:8, 10–15* reinforces the claims above; namely, that the lament song expressed grief over the Shephelah in the period following Sennacherib's campaign. In addition the above internal evidence concerning the prophetic speaker and the state of the Shephelah at the time of the lament's composition, the literary analysis that follows will provide several observations. First, the poetry of the text is difficult to understand owing to unusual meter and syntax. Second, despite the difficult text, the general sense of grief along with names of cities in the Shephelah region mark the lament song as an expression of grief over this specific region. Third, rhetorically, the text's difficult meter, syntax, and word play come together to create the cumulative effect of chaos and sorrow in which the prophetic speaker summons the cities of the Shephelah to join in mourning rites and (re)enact their own destruction. Each city in turn joins the drama of the song adding a corporate dimension to the lament song. Fourth, though the lament song likely began as an oral performance, tradents in

Jerusalem preserved the lament song as a written expression of grief over the loss of the Shephelah.

A Difficult Text. The text of Mic 1:8, 10–15* is notoriously difficult. The meter of the poetry makes it difficult to classify. Though it does contain *qina* meter (a meter reserved for liturgical mourning) in places, the meter lacks consistency. The language is often unclear. The grammar is consistently enigmatic. Scholars regularly suppose that these difficulties indicate a text damaged by scribal transmission.[43] Nevertheless, scholars generally agree that the mood of the text is one of mourning. Therefore, regardless of how one amends the text, the consensus is that Mic 1:8, 10–15 represents an expression of grief, best classified as a lament.

Paul Haupt explains the inconsistency of the *qina* meter (3:2 meter) by suggesting that scribes added several glosses to the text thus destroying the original meter.[44] Thus, Haupt proposes a much shorter original text than that preserved in the MT. Elliger also holds that *qina* meter is the most appropriate convention for the original text. Therefore, Elliger explains the frequent 2:2 meter by suggesting that a strip was torn from the early scroll which removed words that would have completed the 3:2 meter.[45] Elliger restores the missing words, creating a longer "original" text than the MT.[46] Fohrer takes the prevalent 2:2 meter as instructive and modifies the rest of the text to mirror the 2:2

[43] See the following discussion.

[44] Paul Haupt, *The Book of Micah* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910), 4–5.

[45] Karl Elliger, "Die Heimat des Prophetes Micha," *ZDPV 57* (1934): 81–152.

[46] Ibid.

meter.[47] Allen accepts some of Elliger's emendations while rejecting others.[48] He allows the irregular meter to stand with minor emendation. Andersen and Freedman reject the notion of emending the text all together.[49] They argue that poetic verse does not have to follow any specific meter. They suggest that the text bears the marks of a stylized literary work. These marks include the use of place names and puns. Instead of looking for consistency of form, Andersen and Freedman argue that the text of the MT serves a rhetorical function. The uneven verse communicates the state of the speaker and should be read as choking sobs from a prophetic speaker overcome with grief.[50]

Each of these attempts to understand the difficulty of the Mic 1:8, 10–15 share a realization that the mood of the text is one of lament. Thus, both Haupt and Elliger try to amend the meter to fit with their expectations for a funeral dirge. Andersen and Freedman accept the text's broken meter as an indicator of severe grief. Both Fohrer and Allen move away from the *qina* meter while, at the same time, upholding the sense of general mourning.

Positive Statements about the Difficult Text. The attempts to amend the lament require widely divergent hypothetical reconstructions that lack any textual support as the above survey demonstrates. Thus, it is best to begin with the MT, a version of the lament

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[47] Georg Fohrer, "Micha 1," in *Das Ferne und nahe Wort. Festschrift Leonhard Rost zur Vollendung seines 70.*, ed. Fritz Maass, BZAW 105 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1967), 65–80.

[48] Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 126.

[49] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 206.

[50] Ibid.

that does carry textual support.[51] The following sections will seek to understand this version of the lament. First, the text lists certain cities in the Judean Shephelah. Second, the tone of the poetry is one of alarm and severe anxiety as evidenced by the multiple calls to ritualistic mourning practices for these cities. Third, the prophetic speaker of these verses experiences grief along with the personified cities. Fourth, a later editor updated the text in three places: vv.12b, 13b, and 16. Notably, these three additions are where the poetry conforms to more usual patterns such as parallelism and conjunctions.[52]

These observations concerning the lament song allow for some limited conclusions. First, the text conveys militaristic destruction alongside mourning rites through poetic verse. Therefore, the text suggests an abstract expression of lamentation over a catastrophe. Second, the prophetic speaker addresses personified cities (or their inhabitants) and instructs them to perform mourning rites. Fourth, a focus on Jerusalem was not part of the earliest rendition of this lament song. The late eighth to early seventh century song focuses on the Judean Shephelah alone. The following sections will explore the poetry of the lament song beginning with the place names moving on to the features of the lament song that indicate its use as a call to lament.

*The Place Names in Mic 1:8, 10-15**

The cities listed in Mic 1:10-15* form an important part of the poetry and the rhetoric of the lament song. The poetry of the song uses each city to form a pun. The song also personifies each city (or the "inhabitant" of the city), portraying each city as

[51] Other textual traditions such as the LXX and Peshitta show signs of wresting with a Hebrew *Vorlage* very similar to the MT.

[52] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 206.

performing acts associated with ritualistic mourning or exile. The locations of several cities are unknown. The main difficulties lie with the cities in 1:10-12 while the cities in 1:13-15 are at least known from other references in the Hebrew Bible. One can often identify these latter cities with an archaeological tell.

The lament song names Gath first. The phrase "Tell it not in Gath" is also known from David's lament over the death of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 1:10). In the 2 Samuel context the phrase indicates a desire for those in Philistia to remain uninformed concerning the death of the Israelite king because it would be an occasion for rejoicing. In the context of Micah, Gath appears as a disputed city between Judean and Israelite kingdoms. Mays considers the mention of Gath textually uncertain because it is the only Philistine city in the lament.[53] Elliger suggests emending the text to Giloh, but this is unlikely because of the connection to 2 Sam 1:10. Additionally, Giloh is in the southern hill country and not the Shephelah according to the city lists in Josh 15.[54] Rainey suggests that Tell es-Safi is the ancient Gath of the Philistines. Tell es-Safi is located in the Shephelah west of Sochoh and Azekah.[55] Excavations at the site indicate that its identification with Philistine Gath is probable.[56] Excavators have uncovered several *lmlk*

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[53] Mays, *Micah*, 56.

[54] Yigal Levin, "The Search for Moresheth-Gath: A New Proposal," *PEQ* 134 (2002): 28.

[55] See Anson F. Rainey, "The Identification of Philistine Gath: A Problem in Source Analysis for Historical Geography," *ErIsr*, 1975, 63–76. Rainey makes a good case for the identification of Philistine Gath with Tel es Safi in 1975. Schneidewind revisits the conversation identifying Tel el Safi as Philistine Gath in 1994, providing a useful overview of the discussion up to the 1990s. See William M. Schniedewind, "The Geopolitical History of Philistine Gath," *BASOR*, 1998, 69–70. Schniedewind argues that Gath's location at Tel es Safi is secure and uses its proximity to trade routes and Judean territory to argue for its identification with Gath. He also explores the social and economic contest of Gath as related to this site.

[56] Levin, "The Search for Moresheth-Gath," 30.

seal impressions at Tell es-Safi suggesting that the site was under Judean control at the end of the eighth century.[57] The site contains a destruction layer from the time of Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign. The inhabitants of Tell es-Safi do not appear to have returned after the destruction of 701 BCE. Tell es-Safi fits the picture that one would expect from a Judean city at the time of Sennacherib's campaign. The site also borders the Philistine territory suggesting a probable identification with Gath.

The second half of Mic 1:10 contains an injunction against weeping in Gath. The form, בכו, (usually translated as "weep") in the MT causes some difficulty because of an alternate reading in the LXX. It is natural to read בכו as an infinitive absolute of בכה (to weep) which follows the pointing of the MT. However, the LXX might suggest Acco with the translation "in Akkim." Acco causes difficulties because of the tendency of the poetry to allow one city per bicolon. In addition, Acco's location along the coast does not fit the geographic locality of the known cities listed. Consequently, it is best to follow the pointing of the MT and read בכו as an infinitive absolute of בכה. Thus, Gath should not weep over the calamity of Sennacherib's campaign. Reading בכו as "weep" additionally makes sense of the bicolon. The addressee should not mention the calamity in Gath and therefore, Gath will not have the opportunity to weep over the calamity.

Beth-le-aphrah is the next city in the lament song (Mic 1:10). This place name appears nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible. One primary difficulty in determining the place name is the lamed which acts as a bound morpheme to the root of the city name רפע (1:10).[58] We know of the practice of using the lamed prefix in city names from Lidebir in

[57] Ibid.

[58] Matthew Suriano, "A Place in the Dust: Text, Topography and a Toponymic Note on Micah 1:10-12a," *VT* 60 (2010): 439.

Josh 13:26 and Lo-debar in 2 Sam 9:4.[59] Such a convention suggests that the lamed was originally part of the place name and was not an editorial addition.

In the Islamic period, place names containing the toponymic element עפר were updated to *tayibeh* ("sweet; good") to reduce confusion with the Arabic word for a "malevolent spirit" (*ʻifrīt*).[60] Consequently, some scholars identify Beth-le-aphrah with either Khirbet et Tayibeh or Tayibet el-ʻIsm. Khirbeth et Tayibeh is in the Central Highlands of Judah and Tayyibet el-ʻIsm is located east of Mareshah and Lachish in the Shephelah.[61] M. J. Suriano proposes Tell el-ʻAreini as a possible site for Beth-le-aphrah.[62] He argues that the Arabic place name Wadi el-Ghufr preserves the toponymic עפר.[63] He notes that not every Hebrew place name with the root עפר changed to Tayibeh in the Islamic period and that the shift from ע to *g* is attested in place names such as Gaza. Wadi-el-Ghufr is located near Mareshah just south of Beit-Jibrin.[64] *The Survey of Western Palestine* locates Wadi-el-Ghufr in the larger system of Nahal Lachish.[65] The wadi system flows northwest, opening into the Inner Coastal Plain near Tell esh Sheikh Ahmed el-ʻAreini.[66] The tell boarders Judean and Philistine land holdings of Iron I and Iron II. Excavators found a small Philistine settlement dating to Iron I followed by a

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., 440.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., 441–46.

[63] Ibid., 441.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid. See note 31.

[66] Ibid., 442.

fortified Judean town in Iron II. The Iron II site contained 20 *lmlk* seal impressions and a destruction layer that excavators associate with Sennacherib's campaign.[67] Therefore, Tell el-'Areini is a probable location for Beth-le-aphrah. Its placement in the Judean Shephelah near Lachish and Mareshah make it a likely location for the city mentioned in the Mican lament song.

The prophetic speaker addresses Shaphir, Zaanan and Beth-haesel in Mic 1:11. All three cities' locations are unknown. Concerning Beth-haesel, Na'aman makes a case for the mocking title "the house of no shade."[68] He suggests that the prophetic speaker mocks the city for trusting in the shade of Assyria which has provided no shade at all. Others suggest Deir el-'Asal, two miles east of Beit Mirsim because of the toponymic similarities.[69] Deir el-'Asal falls outside the vicinity of the other cities mentioned in the lament song. It is much further south nearing the Negev. Consequently, Deir el-'Asal is unlikely. Thus the location of the city remains unknown. Maroth is also unattested elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible and its location is uncertain. Thus, within Mic 1:10–12, the only place names for which one can be reasonably sure of a location are Gath and Beth-le-araphah. Nevertheless, Beth-le-araphah is located in the Shephelah and Gath on

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[67] Baruch Brandl, "Tel Erani," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East II*, ed. Eric M. Meyers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 257.

[68] Nadav Na'aman, "'The House-of-No-Shade Shall Take Away Its Tax from You' (Micah I 11)," *VT* 45 (1995): 516–27.

[69] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 209. Andersen and Freedman suggest this possibility initially but go on to cast aspersions on the likelihood of the location because of its location outside of the Shephelah. They conclude that it is a possibility because it is impossible to rule locations so far south. They suggest that if the city list represents the line of march for Sennacherib's campaign, then one can reasonably rule out Deir el-'Asal. However, they maintain that the lament song may not be associated with Sennacherib's line of march.

the border of the Shephelah. Micah 1:1–15 mention more cities that belonged to the Shephelah region, so we can be reasonably sure that the unknown cities were also located in the Shephelah.

At last, Micah 1:13 contains a place name that is recognizable. Lachish, discussed above, was a fortified city in the Judean Shephelah which served as the final line of defense for Jerusalem which archaeologists identify with Tell ed-Duweir.[70] The next place name, Moresheth-Gath is likely a longer version of the name of the prophetic speaker's hometown (cf. 1:1).[71] Moresheth-Gath likely resided in the general vicinity of ancient Gath because its name is associated with the Philistine city. The search for Moresheth-Gath has yielded various results. Eusebius locates Moresheth-Gath east of Bet Guvrin calling it "Morathei, from whence came the prophet Micah."[72] The Madaba map places "Morsti" in the same location as Eusebius' "Morathei."[73] Many scholars use these identifications to suggest sites for Moresheth-Gath. The most popular identification based on Eusebius and the Madaba map is Tell el-Judeida defended most recently by Aharoni.[74] Levin rejects the association of Moresheth-Gath with Tell el-Judeida.[75] Levin notes that the Amarna letters speak of Mu'rasti as a debated site between the leaders of the Shephelah in the Bronze Age. Thus, Levin contends that the site for Moresheth-Gath

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[70] See discussion of this site and the late eighth century destruction above.

[71] Mays, *Micah*, 58.

[72] Levin, "The Search for Moresheth-Gath," 29.

[73] Ibid. The Madaba map is part of a Byzantine mosaic on the floor of the church of Saint George in Madaba Jordan. It is the oldest known map of ancient Palestine.

[74] Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*, 330.

[75] Levin, "The Search for Moresheth-Gath," 29-30.

began in the fourteenth century BCE.[76] Furthermore, Levin argues that Rehoboam fortified Moresheth-Gath in the ninth century BCE. Therefore, the correct site would contain a fortification layer around this time.[77] Finally, 2 Chr 14:8–14 records that Zerah took Zephathah of Mareshah which Levin associates with Moresheth Gath. Thus the proper site would have a destruction layer in the early ninth century. Levin concludes that Tel Harassim best correlates to Moresheth-Gath, located about five kilometers north-west of Tell es-Safi (Gath).[78] Tel Harassim fits each of Levin's criteria. Levin adds that since Tel Harassim is west of Gath and Ekron, it would only have been under Judahite control beginning with Uzziah which explains why Moresheth-Gath is not mentioned in the Shephelah district list of Josh 15.[79] This evidence provides a strong case for Tel Harassim as Moresheth Gath. Tel Harassim stratum IVb contains a destruction level that excavators Givon and Byrne attribute to Sennacherib's campaign. Stratum IVa (beginning of the seventh century BCE) likely served as part of the Assyrian sponsored state of Ekron.[80] Stratum III shows continuing habitation at the site through the Persian period. Excavators found two Persian period *yhd* stamp-impressions at the site indicating that ties with Judah/Yehud continued even if the site was mainly associated with Philistia.

Not only does Tel Harassim conform to Levin's criteria, it is also closer to Gath (Tell es-Safi) than Tell el-Judeida. The incorporation of "Gath" into the city's title

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[76] Levin, "The Search for Moresheth-Gath," 31.

[77] Ibid., 32.

[78] Ibid., 33. Interestingly, this places Moresheth-Gath further west than Gath, a known Philistine site.

[79] Ibid.

[80] S. Givon and R. Byrne, "Stratigraphy, Chronology and History of the Site," in *The Tenth Season of Excavation at Tel Harassim*, ed. S. Givon, Tel Aviv, 1999, 17.

indicates relative proximity to Gath that Tell el-Judeida does not provide. Furthermore, Chapter Two argued that the group which the prophetic speaker represents likely occupied land in the Shephelah that bordered Philistine territory.[81] Tel Harassim is the most likely location because of its proximity to Tel es-Safi (Gath), toponymic similarity to Mu'rasti, and its status as a border city between Judah and Philistia which fits the situation described in Mic 2. In addition, the archaeological evidence for widespread destruction at the site around 701 BCE with limited population recovery and/or reassignment to Philistine municipalities during the seventh century is similar to the other sites discussed above.

Achzib (Mic 1:14) is known from the Shephelah district outlined in Josh 15 (see 15:44). Joshua 15:44 locates Achzib near Mareshah (discussed below) on the border between the Shephelah and the Hill country of Judah. Eusebius places Achzib near Adullam.[82] Thus, the general location of Achzib is secure though not the exact tell. Mareshah (Mic 1:15) has solid attestation in ancient sources as Marisa (1 Macc 5:66; 2 Macc12:35).[83] Mareshah is in the Shephelah district and Joshua 15:44 mentions it alongside Achzib. Because of the continuity of the place name in ancient sources, Mareshah can be located at Tell Sandahanna. Excavators found seventeen *lmlk* seals from the late eighth century at the site. Additionally, Mareshah's location situates it as a part of Hezekiah's southwest defense. Archaeologists identify Adullam with Khirbet esh-Sheikh Madkur. Similar to Lachish, Adullam was also a fortress town (2 Chr 11:7). Additionally,

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[81] Anson F. Rainey, "A Persian Period Seal Impression," in *The Ninth Season of Excavation at Tel Harassim*, Tel Aviv, 1998, 50–53.

[82] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 211.

[83] Ibid.

a cave by the same name was traditionally known as a hideout of David (1 Sam 22:1) in the Judean Shephelah.

The known sites of the lament song form a cluster in the central Shephelah with Ekron and Beth-Shemesh to the north and Hebron and Tell el Hesi to the south. Since the other sites mentioned in the lament song are unknown, it is difficult to draw definite conclusions concerning the geographic focus. Nevertheless, based on the known cities some tentative conclusions are possible. The most likely scenario is that the cities listed represent a certain tribal district which the prophetic speaker represented in Jerusalem.[84] Since the known cities form a cluster in the central Shephelah, some sort of tribal grouping or administrative district seems likely. The Shephelah district outlined in Joshua 15 resembles the region to which the known cities from Mic 1:10-15* belong. Importantly, these sites fall within the same region as the prophetic speaker's home. The observation of the geographical grouping of these cities also fits the argument that the prophetic speaker represents a certain group of Judeans to whom the speaker refers as "my people." Though the prophet is the primary speaker of the lament song, the instructions to the cities to join in the mourning indicate that the song is a corporate in nature. Therefore, the text envisions prophetic speaker and the inhabitants of the Shephelah as taking part in a lament.

[84] See: Zekharyah Kallai, "Town Lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan," *VT* 8 (1958): 137 and Anson Rainey, "The Administrative Division of the Shephelah", *TA* 7 (1980), 194-202; idem., "The Biblical Shephelah of Judah," *BASOR* 251 (1983): 1–22. The Shephelah is a specific administrative district in Joshua 15. Each of the cities in the lament song for which one can be reasonably sure of the location come from this administrative district. Chapter Two discussed the prophetic speaker's role as an advocate for a specific group of people. Since the lament addresses a calamity in the Shephelah district, the prophetic speaker likely functioned as a spokesperson for this region. See also, Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, *Micah: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 70.

The cities as puns. The cities in the lament song function as more than mere geographical markers for towns in the Judean Shephelah. The song personifies the cities and the prophetic speaker calls upon each city to perform a mourning ritual in turn. The prophetic speaker calls each personified locality to a certain action or proclaims that an action will occur. The action is a pun related to the geographical name. Nogalski observes that the puns fall into two types. The first type involves a word play in which the action sounds similar to the name of the locality.[85] The second type involves a word play with the meaning of the name of the locality.[86] One or both of these puns occur with each locality and action pairing. The imperative to "tell it not in Gath" inverts sounds. The "tag" of תגידו is inverted in the "gat" of בגת. Thus the first pair exhibits a type one pun.[87] Beth-le-aphrah should roll in the dust. The root עפר means "dust."[88] Therefore a type two pun is at play as the house of dust should roll in the dust.[89] The name Shaphir means "graceful." The type two pun indicates that the graceful one will be disgraced because the prophetic speaker calls her to go out in nakedness and shame.[90] The wordplay for Zaanan

[85] Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 531.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Smith-Christopher, Micah, 70.

[89] Smith-Christopher discusses the act of rolling in the dust and placing dust upon one's head as a sign of anguish. Smith-Christopher suggests that the city name may be fictitious or sound similar to an actual city name. The name is then used as a poetic device to indicate the grief experienced by towns in the Shephelah. Ibid.

[90] Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 531. Smith-Christopher also notes the similarity between the sound of "Shapir" and "inhabitant" (yosebet). The s and b sounds are repeated. (Micah, 73).

is a type one pun.[91] The "ṣa" of Zaanan (צאנן) is reflected in the "ṣa" sound in יצאה.[92] Beth-haesel means "house of withdraw."[93] The house of withdraw will have its security withdrawn from it. Thus Bet-haesel and its correlating action forms a type two pun.[94] The town of Maroth, meaning "bitterness" (cf. Ruth 1:20), waits for something good or pleasing but receives disaster. This is a type two pun.[95] The town of Lachish (לכיש) should bind the chariot to the steed (לרכש).[96] The similarity of the sounds between Lachish and "steed" form a type one pun.[97] The word play surrounding Moresheth-Gath deals with the meaning of אשת ("desire") which sounds like Moresheth minus the first

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Mays and Shaw see an accusation here. They argue that Zaanan faces judgment from which she cannot escape because she abandoned Jerusalem. See, Mays, *Micah*, 57 and Shaw, *The Speeches of Mica*h, 40. There is certainly a sense of calamity in these verses but no indication that Zaanan has abandoned Jerusalem.

[93] A similar place name occurs on Zech 14:5 without "house of…"

[94] The root "ezel" means to take away. Literally, the poetry suggests that the house of withdraw will have its place to stand removed. Smith-Christopher suggests that "ezel" denotes "standing alongside." So the house that once stood alongside (often seen in instances of idol worship where something is placed alongside the idol) will have no standing place. (*Micah*, 73). This interpretation requires that the brief statements call to mind idols. Smith-Christopher may be reading later Deuteronomistic ideas into this eighth century text. He suggests that the city itself stood alongside idols. Smith-Christopher's assessment remains unconvincing as the text lacks indications of a negative reaction to idol worship in this portion of the text. Shaw sees "ezel" as withdraw as well but argues that the prophetic speaker is accusing Beth-ezel from withdrawing from Jerusalem. Shaw reads all of 1:10–16 as accusations against the various cities. This is incorrect as the following section will show (*The Speeches of Micah*, 40). Shaw sees "ezel" as withdraw as well but argues that the prophetic speaker is accusing Beth-ezel from withdrawing from Jerusalem. Shaw reads all of 1:10–16 as accusations against the various cities. This is incorrect as the following section will show (*The Speeches of Micah*, 47).

[95] Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 531.

[96] Again Shaw finds fault with Lachish. He suggests that perhaps she put her trust in chariots. According to Deuteronomic ideals trusting in chariots is prohibited (Deut 7:16; Shaw, *The Speeches of Micah*, 41). Shaw fails to realize that these verses pre-date this kind of Deuteronomic ideal. He goes on to suggest that Lachish may have engaged in cultic practices that the prophetic speaker disagreed with. Again, Shaw reads Deuteronomistic ideals into an eighth century text.

[97] Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 531.

syllable making it a type one pun.[98] The once desirable city will be given the parting gift that a women receives in a divorce (שלוחים).[99] The town of Achzib means deception. This pun involves both type one and type two puns as the town of deception will be a deception to the glory of Israel.[100] The prophetic speaker declares that a conqueror will come upon the inhabitant of Mareshah.[101] The word for conqueror and "inhabitant of Mareshah" have similar sounds creating a type one pun.[102] A former king of Israel, David, fled to Adullam (meaning "refuge"). The descendants of David will also flee for refuge. The word play on Adullam uses the meaning of the word and the tradition concerning David making it a type two pun.

These word plays create a cumulative effect of chaos and bitter lamentation over an entire region. Rhetorically the text begins with the voice of the prophetic speaker in anguish and then adds to the chorus one city after another resulting in an image of swelling grief. The fate of the city rapidly follows its name as if the speaker calls each city to their activity with rapid-fire distressed word associations.[103] The mournful song spreads from one city to the next until the entire region is engulfed in the anguish.

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[98] Ibid.

[99] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 213.

[100] Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 531.

[101] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 212.

[102] Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 531..

[103] Andersen and Freedmen, *Micah*, 206.

The Lament Song and Communal Mourning

The characteristics of a funeral dirge mark the swelling lament song of the Shephelah. *Qina* meter, used in funeral dirges and laments, shows up unevenly throughout Micah 1:8; 10–15*.[104] Additionally, Mic 1:10 parallels 2 Sam 2:18; a part of David's lamentation or funeral dirge over the death of Jonathan.[105] The text also portrays the prophetic speaker and several of the personified cities as enacting ritual mourning in the midst of military defeat. The *qina* meter as well as the ritual acts of mourning that the prophetic speaker calls the cities to perform have lead scholars to classify Mic 1:10–16 as a *Traueraufruf* (call to mourning).[106] Both the general tone of mourning and the description of military defeat support this designation. What this designation misses is the corporate nature of the lament. The prophetic speaker does not merely call the cities to lament, but the text portrays the cities as enacting the activity to which they are called. Thus the summons to lament, becomes a lament song in which the activity and the voices (1:11 Beth-ezel) of one city after another.

This particular summons to lament disaster causes problems because of its location within a prophetic text. The reader cannot discern whether the lament originated before the catastrophic event (as a warning) or after (as an expression of grief). Wolff argues that the "summons to lament disaster" originated before the catastrophic event and

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[104] See discussion of emendation of the text above, 156–157.

[105] A. Graeme Auld, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 270.

[106] Wolff was the first to use this precise term (Wolff, *Micah*, 49. See also, Hardmeier, "Texttheorie und biblisher Exegese," *BEvTh* 79 (1978), 355-357 who argue for a similar classification. Shaw agrees that the entire section functions as a call to lament ("Micah 1:10-16 Reconsidered," *JBL* 106 [1987]: 226).

that the lament features function rhetorically as an indicator of a coming calamity. As noted above, Wolff dates Mic 1:2-16 as originating previous to the fall of Samaria. He notes that prophetic texts often use the funeral dirge and summons to lament as a rhetorical feature (cf. Amos 5:2, 16–17; Isa 3:25–4:1; 32:11–14; Jer 9:16–21) to predict a future catastrophe.[107] Wolff also argues that the lament song is not connected to a religious ceremony that laments a disaster that has already occurred. If it were, calls to prayer would be present (cf. Joel 1:13–20; 2:12–17).[108]

In spite of Wolff's protestations, Andersen and Freedman, and Smith-Christopher suggest that an oral performance serves as the original setting for the lament song.[109] The lament song does lack ties to a religious ceremony of the type described in Joel 1:13–20; 2:12–17, but two primary factors point toward an oral performance. First, as noted above, Micah 1:8, 10–15* is an extremely difficult text with uneven meter and awkward syntax. Thus, Andersen and Freedmen (followed by Smith-Christopher) argue that the event of the oral performance of the lament song was difficult to reproduce literarily.[110] Second, the prophetic speaker's summons to mourn often involves enactment of mourning rites by the personified cities. The prophetic speaker walks around naked and

[107] Wolff, *Micah*, 49.

[108] Wolff cites Elliger as promoting the idea of a ceremony that mourned the destruction of the Shephelah in 701 (*Micah*, 49). Wolff does not see elements of a religious ceremony in this text and therefore argues for its secular use. Since Wolff does not find religious elements, he concludes that the lament song is merely a rhetorical component of the literature and does not find a place for it in a ceremonial setting.

[109] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 206 and Smith-Christopher, *Micah*, 70. See also, Utzschneider's treatment of this passage. Utzchneider examines all of Micah through the lens of performance criticism. Concerning the lament song he finds elements of performance (Helmut Utzschneider, *Micha* [Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2005], 38–42.).

[110] Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 206.

barefoot, howling like an ostrich (1:8). The prophetic speaker calls Beth-le-aphrah to roll in the dust (1:10), Shaphir should proceed in nakedness much like the prophetic speaker (1:11); and Beth-ezel is in the midst of mourning (1:11). The prophetic speaker describes other cities as responding to a military calamity that is either imminent or has already occurred. The inhabitants of Zaanan do not go forth, as if into battle, likely because the inhabitants are already defeated (1:11). Maroth waits for good news but is disappointed (1:12). Lachish prepares for battle by binding the chariot to the steed, but the prophetic speaker does not declare the outcome of this effort (1:13). The reader can assume the futility of Lachish's action because of defeat expressed in the surrounding verses. Moresheth-Gath, receives parting gifts associated with divorce as she goes into exile (1:14) and a conqueror comes to Mareshah (1:15). A performer could have enacted each of these descriptions of mourning or military defeat.[111]

An oral performance best explains the uneven meter and the summons to mourn coupled with the cities' responses to military defeat which could easily have been enacted by performers.[112] Micah 1:8, 10–16, however, only presently exists in literary form.[113] Therefore, modern interpreters can only speculate about the text's original function in an oral performance.[114] Nevertheless, these aspects of the poetry that appear to indicate its origin as an oral performance carry rhetorical weight in their literary form. As noted

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[111] Smith-Christopher, *Micah*, 71.

[112] William Doan and Terry Giles, *Prophets, Performance, and Power* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 13.

[113] Ibid., 17–26 for some exploration about how and why performances became texts and some of the implications thereof.

[114] Erhard S. Gerstenberger, "Elusive Lamentations: What Are They About?," *Interpretation* 67 (2013): 123.

above, the uneven meter creates the effect of choking sobs. The call to the cities to lament and enact their defeat one after the other engages the reader through the sequence. As the prophetic speaker calls to one city after another, the reader wonders, "how many more?" By the end, the reader knows that devastation engulfs the entire region.

A Proposed Setting for the Lament Song

The lament song best fits in the period following Sennacherib's campaign in which Micah tradents would have needed a way to express their sorrow over the loss of their homeland. The lament song survived the destruction of the Shephelah and tradents preserved the text outside of the Shephelah as the Shephelah was largely uninhabited in the years following Sennacherib's campaign.[115] The most likely location for the lament song's preservation is Jerusalem because many refugees from the Shephelah traveled to Jerusalem in the period surrounding Sennacherib's campaign.[116] Additionally, later editors show concern for Jerusalem and insert them into this text, indicating that tradents with a concern for Jerusalem preserved the lament song.

The lament song in Mic 1 reflects affinities with what one finds in Lamentations and the communal laments of the Psalms. The prophetic speaker takes part in the mourning. The tone is not one of judgment because of the wrongdoing of the cities but rather utter desperation at their loss.[117] Articulation of wrongdoing does not occur until Mic 2:1–5. In light of the analysis above, the most likely setting for the lament song was

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[115] See above, 140–142.

[116] See above, 140–142.

[117] Micah 1:13b holds that Lachish was the beginning of the wrongdoing found in Zion. Chapter Six (269–270) will show that 1:13b is a later addition. It fits the agenda of the exilic editor who wanted to show that Judah had become guilty of the cultic abuses of Samaria.

in the post-Sennacherib era among the displaced former inhabitants of the Shephelah. This group would have used this song to give expression to their grief over the loss of their homes.

The Rhetorical Effect of the Lament Song's Addition

Tradents preserved the lament song along with Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12. Tradents of the Micah tradition appended the lament song to the beginning of the collection. Thus, the rhetorical force of the collection changed. Alone, Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 communicated that acts of social injustice on the part of the royal house (2:1–5; 3:1–4), centralized prophets (2:6–11; 3:5–7), and priests (3:11) would bring about the destruction of Jerusalem (3:12).[118] With the addition of the lament song, the rhetorical movement of the collection shifted to a pronouncement of calamity that had actually occurred (1:8, 10–15*) followed by the reasons for that calamity (2:1–11; 3:1–12). The new arrangement took the rhetorical focus off of Mic 3:12 which incorrectly (in the eighth and seventh centuries) proclaimed the destruction of Jerusalem. By beginning the Mican corpus with a lament over the destruction of the Shephelah, the tradents suggested that the demise of the Shephelah was the consequence of the monarchy's abuse. The monarchy had taken land from the Shephelah land owners during Hezekiah's prosperity. The land that the monarchy initially stole had, in turn, been stolen from the monarchy and re-assigned by the Assyrian overlords.

The message of the demise of the Shephelah as a consequence of the abuses of the monarchy and centralized religious leaders survived for a limited amount of time. Within

[118] See Chapter Three, 130–139.

the new context of the Jerusalem and its environs, the Micah tradition had to adapt to survive. In the years following Sennacherib's campaign, ideology concerning the greatness of Hezekiah developed in earnest.[119] The first recension of the Deuteronomistic history belongs to this period.[120] In it, one can see the positive representation of Hezekiah. Similarly, the Isaiah prophecies positively depict Hezekiah's monarchy.[121] During this period of positivity toward Hezekiah, a new tradition developed within the Mican oracles that not only dealt with the negative assessment of the monarchy in Mic 2:1–11, 3:1–12 but also transformed the incorrect prediction of Jerusalem's destruction into a warning.[122] Only Jeremiah 26:18–19 makes reference to this new tradition. The tradition holds that the prophet Micah predicted the fall of Jerusalem as a warning to Hezekiah. When Hezekiah heard the proclamation, he sought YHWH's favor and

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[119] See Robb Andrew Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, VTSup 155, (Leiden: Brill, 2012) 289. Young shows that following Sennacherib's unsuccessful attack on Jerusalem, notions concerning the inviolability of Jerusalem and Hezekiah's greatness began to develop. Young notes that the portions of the Deuteronomistic History which can be traced to Hezekiah's reign speak of the monarch in glowing terms and can be seen as a product of the positive traditions concerning Hezekiah that developed following Sennacherib's campaign (2 Kgs 19:35). The exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History was unable to grapple with the positive reigns of both Hezekiah and Josiah and the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BCE. Thus the Deuteronomistic Historian made Manasseh the scapegoat. The overwhelmingly positive view of Hezekiah's reign is therefore eclipsed in the Deuteronomistic History by the negative reign of his son. The eighth century prophecies of Isaiah however, contain overwhelmingly positive assessments of Hezekiah, lauding him as the savior of Jerusalem (Isa 37:36 cf. 9:3–4; 10:17–19; 33–34).

[120] For a helpful explanation of the source material that comprised the first edition of the Deuteronomistic history see Baruch Halpern and André Lemaire, "The Composition of Kings" in André Lemaire and Baruch Halpern, *Book of Kings: Sources, Composition, Historiography and Reception* (Leiden: BRILL, 2009), 123–54. A truncated volume of Kings can be dated to the time of Hezekiah. These source blocks, though debated, have good textual evidence including the assessment of Hezekiah in 2 King 18:5 which states that "there was none like him, before or after him who trusted YHWH completely". This assessment must have preceded the Josianic recension of the Deuteronomistic History which claims the same thing of Josiah. The Hezekian source is particularly interesting and outlined convincingly in Baruch Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology : Chronicles' Thematic Structure: Indications of an Earlier Source.," in *Creation of Sacred Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 35–54.

[121] See Isa 37:36 cf. 9:3–4; 10:17–19; 33–34 and note 113, above.

[122] See above, 173–174.

YHWH spared Jerusalem. This new tradition concerning the Mican oracles allowed the Mican oracles to survive in the midst of the growing positive ideology associated with Hezekiah during the seventh century. The Micah tradents, displaced from their home in the Shephelah adapted the tradition to fit the new setting near Jerusalem where the positive views of Hezekiah would have been strongest. Chapter Five will explore these claims in greater detail.

Conclusion

This chapter began by exploring the third shift in Judah's interactions with Assyria during Hezekiah's reign. During this shift, Sennacherib attacked the Judean Shephelah. Sennacherib's forces destroyed most of the Shephelah and re-assigned several Judean land holdings to the Philistines. The population of the Shephelah fell by 70 percent. The inhabitants of the Shephelah who were not killed or exiled fled to Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. Jerusalem experienced population growth as well as an increase in farmsteads in its immediate environs. For the most part, refugees from the Shephelah never returned to their homes but instead stayed in Jerusalem.

Following the devastation of Sennacherib's campaign, the surviving tradents of the Micah tradition fled to Jerusalem and resettled there. It is in this context that the lament song of Mic 1:8, 10–15* took form. An examination of the poetry showed first that the poetry has a general tone of distressed mourning. Second, the lament song concerns locations in the Judean Shephelah. The inclusion of city names from the Shephelah and only the Shephelah indicates that the song's specific use among displaced residents of the Shephelah. Third, the poetry is a prophetic summons to lament which the cities of the Shephelah answer as they each perform a mourning rite or enact their own

defeat. The cumulative effect of these elements is an expression of bitter grief over the military defeat of an entire region. The most likely historical setting for this expression of sorrow would be the period following Sennacherib's campaign in which Shephelahites (i.e. the Micah tradents), displaced to Jerusalem would have expressed their grief in this way.

Finally, this chapter explored the implications of that addition of the lament song to the beginning of the Mican corpus. This addition shifted the emphasis of the Mican oracles so that the demise of the Shephelah became the consequence for the transgressions of the monarchy in Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12. Rhetoric that blamed the monarchy for Sennacherib's campaign could not survive in the context of Jerusalem and the strong pro-Hezekiah factions. Thus, a new tradition arose. This tradition held that Hezekiah listened to Micah's warnings (specifically 3:12) and therefore, YHWH spared Jerusalem. Thus, the Micah tradition upheld the greatness of Hezekiah and survived in the context of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER FIVE

Preservation of the Micah Oracles
From the Eighth Century to the Sixth Century BCE

Introduction

Chapters Two–Four discussed the first and second phases of the formation of Micah 1–3 along with their historical contexts. The literary and historical analyses of the preceding chapters illuminated the context for the eighth century Mican oracles. Before continuing to the third literary phase, in which an exilic editor added Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, and 16 to the eighth century text, it is important to ask among whom, for what reasons, and how the eighth century text was preserved.

There are two difficulties to overcome in order to answer these questions adequately. First, one would expect the centralized religious establishment to hold the responsibility for maintaining prophetic material. However, the oracles associated with phases 1 and 2 in Micah have characteristics that separate them from the centralized religious apparatus. The oracles charge members of the religious establishment with social abuses and portray significant concern over a group in the Judean Shephelah. Second, the most likely group for preserving prophetic oracles would be those backed by the centralized religious establishment and the monarchy. However, the prophetic speaker in the eighth century oracles of Mic 1–3 is more concerned with the group which he refers to as “my people” over against the centralized leadership. While one could posit preservation at the temple or in the royal courts for prophetic oracles that support the religious establishment, such as those of Isaiah, the early Mican oracles do not support

the centralized religious establishment.[1] Similarly, though Jeremiah also opposed many of the practices of the centralized religious establishment in the sixth century, he was, nevertheless, functioning within it as is apparent by his frequent run-ins with the royal family and his priestly heritage.[2] Micah is different from both Isaiah and Jeremiah. We have no traditions of a scribal apparatus associated with Micah of Moresheth as we do with Jeremiah.[3] Additionally, the prophetic speaker in Mic 1–3 speaks as a Jerusalem outsider. The prophetic speaker represents a group in the Judean Shephelah. Therefore, one must look outside of Jerusalem for evidence of the tradents who preserved the eighth century Mican oracles.

This chapter answers the questions concerning who preserved the Mican oracles, why they were preserved them, and how the preservation occurred. This chapter shows that a small group of disciples formed the earliest tradents of the Mican oracles; specifically Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12.[4] These tradent/disciples were "elders of the land" who, like Micah of Moresheth, represented the interests of towns in the Judean Shephelah to the Jerusalem establishment. The prophetic speaker's dispute with the Jerusalem elite,

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[1] Several indicators link Isaiah's oracle to the temple including his interactions with the kings of Judah and his vision in the temple. For a more extensive treatment of Isaiah's interaction with the centralized religious establishment in Jerusalem see: Gary Stansell, *Micah and Isaiah : A Form and Tradition Historical Comparison*, SBLDS 85 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 101–32.

[2] The text frequently depicts Jeremiah's conflict with the religious establishment and the monarchy in Jerusalem. For example, Jeremiah frequently criticizes both Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. He also opposes false-prophets (Jer 26-28) and experiences a negative exchange with Passhur the priest (Jer 20). Nevertheless, the Jeremiah also has a positive relationship with Shaphan the scribe and his family. Consequently, one could argue that Jeremiah's relationship to the centralized religious apparatus is mixed. There are a few exceptions to his opposition to the religious establishment in the text.

[3] Baruch serves as Jeremiah's scribe and Jeremiah appears to have strong ties to the family of Shaphan, also a scribe.

[4] I will refer to the earliest tradents as tradent/disciples because they were most likely disciples of the eighth century prophet. I will refer to the following generation of tradents preserved the Mican oracles Jerusalem as only tradents because they may or may not have been disciples of the eighth century prophet.

detailed in Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12, served as the catalyst for the initial recording of the eighth century oracles.[5] Beyond this initial recording of the Mican oracles, tradents from the Judean Shephelah who migrated to Jerusalem following Sennacherib's siege preserved and transformed the Mican oracles as oral-written communication that provided educational enculturation. In Jerusalem, Micah tradents added Mic 1:8, 10–15* to the earlier oracles and reinterpreted Mic 3:12 (a prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction) as a warning that Hezekiah heeded. This transformation of the Mican oracles allowed them to survive in the new context of a pro-Hezekiah Jerusalem.

The Who: Prophets and Disciples

One must first consider who preserved the earliest Mican oracles in order to understand the process by which tradents preserved them down to the exile. This section suggests that the Mican oracles were initially preserved among a group of disciples associated with Micah of Moresheth. To support this claim, this section draws upon Karel van der Toorn's comparison of ancient Mesopotamian prophecy with Israelite prophecy. In addition this section considers the likely scenario that Israelite prophets worked in groups and passed down their traditions from "father to son." Two primary pieces of evidence will be considered at length: the implications of the "disciples" mentioned in Isa 8:16 and the role of Baruch in perpetuating Jeremiah's message.

[5] See Chapter Five, 216–220.

Mesopotamian Prophecy and Israelite Prophecy

In recent years the question of preservation has become more prominent for Hebrew Bible scholars.[6] In his 2007 book on scribal culture, Karel van der Toorn studied prophetic literature of the ancient Near East and the methods of preservation represented in Mesopotamia in order to argue for correlations with the biblical literature.[7] In Assyria the evidence for textual prophecies indicates that temple scribes kept a record of the prophetic words spoken at the temple and organized these oracles according to theme.[8] Though prophetic archiving may have occurred in Israel, there is no biblical or material evidence for it. There is evidence of annals of kings and records of proverbs completed by the "men of Hezekiah," but nothing that would indicate an official prophetic repository. Instead, the Hebrew Bible depicts a situation in which the temple and the palace were often at odds with the prophetic message.[9] In addition, the organizing principle for Israelite prophecy was not merely topical but included person of the prophet.[10]

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[6] See for example Quick's overview of the topic: Laura Quick, "Recent Research on Ancient Israelite Education: A Bibliographic Essay," *CBR* 13, (2014): 9–33.

[7] Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 27–74.

[8] Simo Parpola, *Assyrian Prophecies*, SAA 9 (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1997), 53–55.

[9] Van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 191.

[10] This phenomenon is perhaps most clearly seen in the Major Prophets. The various prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah as well as later oracles attributed to the prophets form the collection. In addition, the Major Prophets contain some biographical information about the prophet. Biographical information is markedly absent in the Minor Prophets (with the exception of Hosea and Jonah). See: James D. Nogalski, "Where are the Prophets in the Book of the Twelve?," in *The New Form Criticism and the Book of the Twelve*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Michael H. Floyd, and Colin M. Toffelmire (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 144–63. Micah is unusual in the Book of the Twelve. Though it does not contain biographical information apart from the superscription, there is evidence that the oracles were collected with the eighth century Micah of Moresheth in mind. First, the lament song explored in Chapter Three deals with the Shephelah region from which Micah of Moresheth came. Second, the prophetic speaker consistently refers to a group as "my people" indicating that "Micah of Moresheth" advocated for a specific

This focus on the person of the prophet points to a different mode of preservation than the Mesopotamian practices. The collecting of oracles around a certain prophetic personality points to a disciple group rather than to palace or temple archiving.[11] Sigmund Mowinckel was among the first to suggest that the classical understanding of prophetic personalities acting alone was flawed.[12]

Scholarly Voices: Prophets and Schools

Mowinckel promotes the thesis that ancient Israel contained a strong tradition of prophetic groups centered on one charismatic teacher who was interested in preserving his or her own words among students.[13] This argument has found significant support through the years. In Scandinavia, Harris Birkeland develops Mowinckel's original argument to delineate the stages of building a prophetic corpus among a disciple group.[14] Johannes Lindblom hypothesizes a curriculum for the disciples of the prophets who transmitted the prophetic material through the centuries.[15] Zimmerli argues for a "school of the prophet" in conjunction with editorial additions to Ezekiel.[16] Wolff suggests a

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group. There is however, evidence that once Micah was included in the Book of the Four (see Chapter Six, 279–282), the agenda of the collection of prophetic books trumped the focus on the individual prophet.

[11] Van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 184.

[12] Sigmund Mowinckel, *Jesaja-Disiplene: Profetien fra Jesaja til Jeremia* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1926).

[13] Mowinckel argues that the disciple group responsible for the material in Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah also had a hand in forming other prophetic literature as well as the books of Moses. This thesis has not found support. Ibid., 13.

[14] Harris Birkeland, *Zum hebräischen Traditionswesen. Die Komposition der prophetischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (Oslo: J. Dybwad, 1938), 19–22.

[15] Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1962), 163.

[16] Walther Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 70.

disciple group preserved Hosea's oracles and the additions of the autobiographical material.[17] Wolff similarly finds a school responsible for the preservation of and addition to the oracles of Amos and Micah.[18]

Mowinckel's conception of prophetic schools has not been replaced. As the brief survey above shows, for the most part, scholars build upon this idea to explain phenomena that they see in the text.[19] Nevertheless, some scholars call the idea of prophetic schools into question. [20] Wilson prefers the term "support group" to "school" and argues that prophets, or "intermediaries" as he calls them, could not have existed without at least a small support group.[21] Wilson distinguished between peripheral intermediaries who questioned the status quo, and central intermediaries working as a part of the sanctioned system of religion.[22] Prophets such as Isaiah could fluctuate between central (when he supported the king) and peripheral (when he did not support the king) status.[23] Because of the fluidity of a prophet's status as central or peripheral, different support groups may have access to the prophet's oracles at different times. Thus, various support groups could be responsible for the preservation of the prophetic tradition rather than a static "school."

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[17] Hans Walter Wolff, *Hosea: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Hosea*, Hermeneia 38 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1973).

[18] Wolff, *Micah*, 22–23.

[19] See the preceding paragraphs.

[20] Robert R Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 46.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*, 69.

[23] Ibid., 270.

Blenkinsopp assumes groups of followers were responsible for the preservation of prophetic oracles.[24] Concerning Isaiah, Blenkinsopp notes that it seems likely that Isaiah had a following. Nevertheless, it would be unwise to suggest an Isaian school that promoted the prophet's teaching in the centuries after his death.[25] Blenkinsopp therefore limits the role of the Isaiah disciples in preserving their teacher's oracles to the "first stage" in the transmission of the Isaiah sayings.[26]

Similarly, David Carr urges caution when speaking of "prophetic schools" because of the possibility of thinking anachronistically about what constituted a school.[27] Carr corrects this proclivity to think anachronistically by searching ancient Near Eastern texts and biblical texts for educational models. He concludes that schools in ancient Israel likely consisted of a handful of students, occurred in the home, and were often limited to a father passing down education to his children.[28] Carr contends that prophetic schools existed in ancient Israel but argues that older models which linked Isaiah, for instance, to a specific school that carried on his traditions is flawed because of the long expanse of time over which Isaiah developed and the multiplicity of views different subsections of Isaiah can represent.[29] Nevertheless, Carr urges that scholars not jettison the idea of

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[24] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 5, 13, 14, 15, 21.

[25] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, AB 19 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 243.

[26] Ibid., 244.

[27] David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 333.

[28] David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 113–15.

[29] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 334.

prophetic schools altogether.[30] He notes that "textual sub communities" in Judah certainly had a hand in preserving and forming Isaiah.[31] Carr suggests that "textual sub communities" preserved the unpopular oracles of prophets such as Micah and Amos as a "literary deposit" for future generations.

Summary. Mowinkel's original contribution to the conversation concerning the preservation of prophetic oracles suggests that schools served, edited, and supplemented prophetic material. This idea has explanatory power for prophetic texts that took form over centuries yet remained associated with a specific prophet. Scholars such as Wilson, Blenkinsopp, and Carr move away from thinking of a static school that maintained prophetic oracles for centuries. They caution readers to think in terms of small support groups that may have changed over time. Blenkinsopp envisions a group of Isaiah supporters as responsible for the initial stage of the Isaiah tradition's transmission but suggests that the group responsible for the Isaiah tradition's transmission changed over time. Additionally, Carr suggests that if we are to think of a "prophetic school" it is better to imagine a small group of students educated within the home. These scholarly amendments to Mowinkel's proposal help fill out the picture of prophetic traditions preserved in groups. Importantly, none change the idea of preservation within a group, rather theoretical adjustments relate primarily to the size of the group and the static nature of the group.

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 334.

Terminology for talking about preservation of prophetic traditions in groups is important. Because of the noted fluidity of the various support groups responsible for prophetic transmission, the conversation requires a more inclusive term than "support group," "followers," or "disciples.". Those who preserve certain traditions, regardless of their status as peripheral, central, or somewhere in between, serve as tradents of the tradition. This chapter will therefore use the designation "tradents" of tradition to designate the group(s) responsible for the transmission of the Micah tradition. In addition to this survey of secondary literature, the biblical evidence also bears out the idea of a small support group around a prophet and that support group's role in preserving the prophetic tradition.

Brief Overview of Biblical Evidence

The biblical evidence for Israelite prophets functioning in groups and passing prophetic ministries from one generation to the next comes from the Deuteronomistic History and the prophetic writings themselves. First and Second Kings describe groups known as the "sons of the prophets" (2 Kgs 2:3 [at Bethel], 5, 15 [at Jericho], 7; 4:8, 6:1–7), signifying some sort of an established prophetic group. Elisha refers to Elijah as his "father" and inherits a double portion of Elijah's prophetic abilities (2 Kgs 2:12). Conversely, Amos argues that he is neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet" (Amos 7:14), suggesting that some institution of prophetic groups and their legacies handed down from father to son or teacher to student existed. Furthermore, prophetic texts sometimes identify a prophet along with the prophet's father who was also a prophet. For example, Jeremiah quarrels with "Hananiah the son of Azzur, the prophet, who was from Gibeon" (Jer 28:1, cf. 2 Chr 15:8). In addition, Isaiah passes his teaching to a collection

of students, instructing his למוד (disciple or student) to "bind up the instructions" that he has given them.[32] Then the voice of Isaiah remarks, "See, both I and the young boys that YHWH has given me are signs and wonders amid Israel" (Isa 8:16–18).[33] There are also indicators that Baruch served as more than a hired scribe taking down Jeremiah's words by dictation.[34] Instead, it seems that Baruch had a vested interest in the ministry of Jeremiah and was dedicated to the prophet's teaching as a student to a master.[35] The strongest biblical evidence for the preservation of prophetic oracles among disciples comes from Isaiah 8:16 and the role of Baruch in the preservation of the Jeremiah oracles.

Isaiah 8:16 and the Isaiah disciples. Understandably much of the argument for the idea of a group of disciples preserving and continuing the ministry of the prophet hangs on Isa 8:16 because it involves preserving a tradition among a student group. The verse contains three difficulties. First, although the text fails to identify the speaker as either YHWH or the prophet, most interpreters read Isa 8:16 in accordance early witnesses which identify the speaker as the prophet. Second, it is unclear whether the "disciples" are the prophet's specific disciples or YHWH's general disciples. Third, it is unclear whether the language of a scroll in Isa 8:16 is literal or metaphorical. This section will explore these difficulties, concluding that Isa 8:16 refers to a specific group of

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[32] Mowinckel, *Jesaja-disiplene*, 14–15.

[33] Carr notes that the term for students used here is a cognate for the word for student at Ugarit, *lmdm* (*The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 144).

[34] Van der Toorn notes that Baruch appears to have a vested interest in the survival of the Jeremiah oracles. He behaves as a student adding to his teacher's words with other teachings that he has gleaned (36:32) (*Scribal Culture*, 175).

[35] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 147.

disciples that belong to the prophet and that the scroll is likely a literal scroll of judgment that the prophet instructs his disciples/children to keep as a witness for a later time when the prophecy will prove true.

According to most English translations the prophet speaks the instruction regarding a group of the prophet's disciples.[36] The New American Standard, for example, translates the verse, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." In these translations, Isa 8:16 begins the prophetic speech following the conclusion of the preceding divine speech. However, it is also possible that 8:16 is part of the divine speech. If the verse is divine speech, a group of disciples around the prophet makes less sense. Instead, the disciples are the faithful followers of YHWH in general.[37] Though this division is possible, the Masoretes distinguished 8:16–18 from the preceding divine speech as indicated by the paragraph marker in the Aleppo and Leningrad Codices after 8:15. Isaiah 8:16 begins a new paragraph. Similarly, the great Isaiah scroll from Qumran (1QIsa[a]) begins a new paragraph in 8:16. These textual traditions supply strong evidence that ancient readers understood 8:16 as instruction from the prophet.

Since the prophet likely speaks in 8:16, who are the disciples whom he urges to "bind up the testimony?" Several different interpretations of the verse's mention of disciples are worth noting. Georg Fohrer identifies the mention of the disciples as a later addition that does not fit the syntax of the poetry because of the implied imagery of a

[36]Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 243.

[37] See, Jaap Dekker, "Bind Up the Testimony: Isaiah 8:16 and the Making of the Hebrew Bible," in *Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis*, ed. Raymond de Hoop, Marjo C A. Korpel, and Stanley Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 67. Dekker describes a new Dutch translation that renders 8:16 as part of the divine speech.

purse ("bind up").[38] Scholars have not supported Fohrer's conclusion because, as Watts points out, a teacher could deposit his/her treasure in a group of disciples and liken it to coins in a purse.[39] Csaba Balogh argues that the "disciples" are disciples of YHWH in general rather than Isaiah in particular.[40] Balogh suggests that all those who were receptive to Isaiah's message could be understood as true disciples of YHWH. Blenkinsopp's finding concerning למדי makes Balogh's claim unlikely. Blenkinsopp notes that "disciple" usually connotes a group with a specific skill set learned from a teacher.[41] It would be unlikely for Isaiah to refer to all those who received his message as "my disciples." Rather, the term suggests a small group that has learned from the prophet.

Clements identifies the disciples of 8:16 with Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah from 8:2.[42] The structure of the MT allows for the possibility of Clements' interpretation, but it fails to address the question of whether or not discipleship groups preserved and continued the ministry of the prophet decisively. If Uriah and Zechariah are included in the disciples mentioned in 8:16, there is nothing to indicate that they are not part of a larger group of students or that they are not the primary preservers of the text. Clements contends that the primary purpose of the disciples is to act as witnesses to the prophetic word rather than preserve it on account of his perceived relationship between v.2 and v.16.[43] Otto Kaiser agrees with Clements that the disciples

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[38] Georg Fohrer, *Das Buch Jesaja: Kapitel 1-23*, vol. 1, ZBK (Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1964), 115.

[39] John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, Revised (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 123.

[40] Csaba Balogh, "Isaiah's Prophetic Instruction and the Disciples in Isaiah 8:16," *VT* 63 (2013): 5.

[41] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 243.

[42] Ronald Ernest Clements, *Isaiah 1-39*, NCB (Winona Lake: Eerdmans, 1980).

[43] Ibid.

function as witnesses.[44] He goes so far as to translate בלמדי as "in the presence of my disciples."[45] The disciples then do not act as the repository of the testimony (i.e. the testimony is bound up in their minds, hearts, or scrolls) but rather as witnesses to the spoken testimony. Kaiser envisions a legal proceeding in which Isaiah desired to have his memoirs sealed and following the sealing, his disciples may have provided their signature on the scroll.[46]

Wildberger denies the existence of the scroll altogether. Rather, he sees the instruction to "bind up the testimony" as a metaphorical imperative to the disciples to remember the oral word of the prophet.[47] He cites passages such as Prov 7:1 (cf. 6:23 and 3:3) which contains the notion of preserving God's word on one's heart. Similarly, Carr treats the passage as a metaphorical instruction to a disciple group to preserve the testimony of the prophet through oral-written communication; meaning that memorization as well as written documentation played a key part.[48] Carr promotes the idea of oral-written communication as the medium for preservation. Thus while Carr understands 8:16 as an instruction to preserve the prophet's word in the memory of the disciples, he also makes allowances for a written component.[49] Carr's model for the mode of preservation is fluid as he sees both written and oral preservation at play. Joseph

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[44] Otto Kaiser, *Das Buch des Propheten Jesaja: Kapitel 1-12*, ATD (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1981), 189.

[45] Clements, *Isaiah 1-39*.

[46] Kaiser, *Das Buch des Propheten Jesaja*, 189–90.

[47] Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, First Printing (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991), 344–45.

[48] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 151.

[49] Ibid.

Blenkinsopp falls even further down the continuum between oral and written preservation arguing that the "binding of the testimony" implies written preservation.[50] According to Blenkinsopp, Isaiah's disciples are instrumental in preserving and transmitting his oracles.

There are three reasons to follow Blenkinsopp's argument that the binding up of the testimony has to do with the written record of the prophetic word among disciples. First, Wildberger convincingly shows that "binding up" a testimony has legal ramifications.[51] Second, the act of sealing (חתם) a document in the Hebrew Bible often carries legal ramifications.[52] For instance, Jezebel sealed a letter with Ahab's seal to order the destruction of Naboth and the seizure of his field (1 Kgs 21:8). Later texts such as Esther 3:12; 8:8, 10 also concern a sealed royal letter that contains binding instructions. Nehemiah 10:1–2 deals with the formal sealing of the covenant following its renewal. Third, the closest parallel to the sealing mentioned in Isa 8 comes from Isa 29:11 which concerns the prophetic word as well. In Isa 29:11 the vision of the prophet is "like a sealed document" which can be read. In each of these cases someone seals a written document. Each of these examples points to the written characteristics of the testimony in Isa 8:16.[53]

The sealed testimony in Isa 8:16 is likely a written document with legal ramifications.[54] What does it mean then for the document to be sealed "בלמדי" ("among

[50] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 244.

[51] Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 367.

[52] Csaba Balogh, "Isaiah's Prophetic Instruction," 16.

[53] Dekker, "Bind up the Testimony," 66–68.

[54] Jensen notes that the terminology of "wrapping up" or "binding" as well as "sealing" would have been common terms used of scrolls. Therefore the imagery of the verse has to do with a written

my disciples")? As noted above, Kaiser argues that one should translate the *bet* prefix as "in the presence of," as the disciples are witnesses to the sealing of the document.[55] Reading the *bet* prefix this way is highly unusual and Kaiser only suggests it because he sees the disciples functioning as witnesses in a legal proceeding. It is better to allow the *bet* prefix to fulfill its more common function and translate it as "among." Translating the *bet* this way preserves the legal nuances of the passage. Translating the *bet* as "among" reveals the means by which the legal document will be preserved. The disciples will maintain the document until it is needed. Although the content of the sealed testimony is unknown, Blenkinsopp suggests that it is a short oracle that was unfavorable to the establishment. Hence the need to bind the testimony for a later time when it should prove true. Blenkinsopp suggests this act of sealing the oracle is the final somber act of Isaiah's proclamation against the Syrian-Samarian coalition.[56] The legal component of sealing a testimony among disciples also suggests a specific group of prophetic supporters rather than a wide array of individuals who were receptive to Isaiah's message.[57] A legal proceeding would not call for a large number of Isaiah supporters but a small and specific group to witness the act.[58]

This examination of Isa 8:16 shows that the most likely setting for the instructions from the prophetic speaker to "bind up the testimony among my disciples" draws upon an

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document such as a scroll. Joseph Jensen, *The Use of Tora by Isaiah: His Debate With the Wisdom Tradition* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Assn of Amer, 1973), 110–14.

[55] Kaiser, *Das Buch des Propheten Jesaja: Kapitel 1-12*, 189–90.

[56] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 243.

[57] Contra, Balogh, "Isaiah's Prophetic Instruction and the Disciples in Isaiah 8:16," 16.

[58] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 243.

ancient legal custom which involved a small number of specific Isaiah followers.[59] They bound the document in order to bear witness at a later time when the prophecy proved true.[60] The earliest tradents of this specific Isaiah prophecy were a group of disciples who were witnesses to and repositories for the prophecy.

Baruch and the Shaphanides as Jeremiah's preservation group. Baruch and the scribal legacy he provided for Jeremiah supplies a similar example. Baruch functioned as an early tradent for the Jeremiah tradition and preserved the prophet's oracles both as written documents and through memorization.[61] Though the text does not refer to Baruch as a "prophet" or "disciple" he functions very similarly to the disciples mentioned in Isaiah 8:16. Baruch rewrites the prophet's words after Zedekiah destroys them in the fire. Because of Baruch's knowledge of Jeremiah's testimony, he also adds many additional words (Jer 36:32). In this way, Baruch reveals a vested interest in the oracles of Jeremiah and his role in preserving them. He acts like the disciples who bind up the unfavorable testimony. Baruch's knowledge of Jeremiah's prophetic teaching enables him, like a disciple, to recreate the teaching and add to it "many additional words" that he has learned from the prophet.

In addition, the Shaphanides appear as Jeremiah's advocates frequently in the narrative sections (26:24; 29:3; 36:10; 39:14; 40:1–41:10) suggesting that this scribal

[59] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 161.

[60] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 243.

[61] Jeremiah 36:32

family played a role in preserving and transmitting Jeremiah's message.[62] This group, along with Baruch, likely functioned as the prophet's support group. Though the Shaphanides are never commissioned to reproduce Jeremiah's testimony (like Baruch), the scribal family defended and protected the prophet when he fell out of favor with the monarchy. The Jeremiah tradition consistently paints the Shaphanides in a positive light, indicating that the Shaphanides may have had a role in preserving the Jeremiah tradition even if the text does not address their role specifically.

The Who: Some Conclusions Concerning Preservation among Small Groups of Disciples

Prophetic archiving in ancient Israel and Judah appears more concerned with organizing prophecy around the person of the prophet than collecting oracles and archiving them in a central place by subject. This focus on the person of the prophet indicates that support groups, or disciples, likely participated in preserving prophetic oracles for later generations. The most likely scenario for preserving the prophet's oracles is not a static prophetic "school" but a small group of followers who were educated by the prophet. Through the generations, the prophetic support group likely changed as prophetic traditions transitioned between peripheral and central acceptance. The most significant biblical witnesses to the phenomenon of prophetic oracles preserved among support groups are Isa 8:16 and the accounts in Jeremiah of Baruch and the Shaphanides functioning as early tradent/disciples of the Jeremiah tradition. Both example indicate that early tradent/disciples preserved unpopular oracles in the midst of opposition.

[62] John Hill, "Writing the Prophetic Word: The Production of the Book of Jeremiah," *ABR* 57 (2009): 22–33.

The following section will turn to the early Micah oracles by exploring the likelihood of a Micah support group originating in the Judean Shephelah among the elites of the region. The observations from this exploration of preservation occurring within support groups will be crucial in sorting out how the preservation of the Micah oracles occurred.

The Who: The Early Mican Oracles

The above analysis demonstrates that Israelite prophetic traditions were preserved by groups of tradents. The question in the writing of Micah concerns the degree to which the text betrays evidence of a group of tradents responsible for the preservation of the earliest Mican oracles (Mic 1:8, 10-15*; 2:1–11; 3:1–12). The text itself contains clues concerning who the earliest tradent/disciples might have been. The earliest Mican oracles (2:1–11; 3:1–12) oppose the royal house for the practices of land seizure, the centralized prophets for their false prophecy, and the temple priests for their greed. Though this kind of critique could have come from a prophetic voice ensconced in the religious establishment in Jerusalem, it is unlikely. Prophets of the ancient Near East associated with the crown or temple produced negative prophecies but never those that predicted the absolute destruction of the central religious and royal establishment.[63] Additionally, the prophetic speaker portrays a knowledge of and concern over the cities of the Judean Shephelah in 1:8, 10–15*. The known cities in the lament song all fall within the

[63] Matthijs J. De Jong, "Biblical Prophecy-A Scribal Enterprise. The Old Testament Prophecy of Unconditional Judgment Considered as a Literary Phenomenon," *VT* 61 (2011): 48–49.

Shephelah.[64] The superscription and Jer 26:18 also locate the prophetic speaker in the Judean Shephelah.[65] Finally, the prophetic speaker consistently advocates for a specific group which he calls "my people" five times within Mic 2–3. This group likely consists of individuals from the Judean Shephelah (see below, 200–201).

Despite the fact that the prophetic speaker likely originated from the Judean Shephelah, there is also reason to believe that he traveled to Jerusalem regularly to advocate for his interest group. The prophetic speaker targets Jerusalem and the leadership therein as the recipients of judgment. The pronouncements thus assume a Jerusalemite audience. Micah 2:1–11 concerns a disputation between the prophetic speaker and a prophetic group that represents the crown—the opposing prophets are likely located in Jerusalem.[66] Finally, the Jeremiah 26 tradition holds that Micah of Moresheth gained audience with Hezekiah resulting in the monarch's repentance. Though this tradition may contain unhistorical elements, it points to the strong possibility that a prophet known as Micah from Moresheth traveled to Jerusalem to proclaim judgment oracles against the king. These pieces of internal evidence suggest a prophetic ministry in Jerusalem as an advocate for inhabitants of the Judean Shephelah.

Isaiah 8:16–18 assumes a group responsible for the preservation of the words of the prophet that have met with resistance. There are indicators in the earliest portions of

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[64] Bethleaphra, Shaphir, Saanan, Bethasel, and Maroth, are geographically unknown. However, Lachish, Moresheth-Gath, Mareshah, Achzib and Adullam are all known cities in the Judean Shephelah. See Andersen and Freedman, *Micah*, 207–11. See also Suriano, *A Place in the Dust*, 438, concerning Gath.

[65] Chapter Six, 257 argues that Mic 1:1a, which attributes the visions to Micah of Moresheth, came from the eighth century. Thus, the earliest traditions locate the prophetic speaker in the Judean Shephelah.

[66] See Chapter Three, 113–121.

Mic 1–3 as well as the tradition in Jer 26:18 that a similar group preserved these early Mican oracles. Some of the best evidence to help us identify the social function of this group and the prophetic speaker in Mic 1–3 comes from the Jeremiah 26 tradition. In Jeremiah 26, the group that remembers the words of Micah of Moresheth are the "elders of the land." In what follows, I will make a case that the earliest oracles in Mic 1–3 belonged to an eighth century leadership group in the Judean Shephelah. I will demonstrate the apparent continuity between the early Mican tradents and the "elders of the land" whom the Jer 26 tradition remembers as quoting Micah of Moresheth. The early Mican tradents in the Judean Shephelah likely functioned similarly to Isaiah's "disciples."

The Prophetic Speaker as an "Elder of the Land"

Several pieces of internal evidence indicate that the prophetic speaker in Mic 1–3 functions not only as prophet, but also as political spokesperson for a certain community. The prophetic speaker shows significant concern for justice (מִשְׁפָּט 3:8), in opposition to the leaders' (קְצִינִים) and rulers' (רָאשִׁים) lack of justice.[67] The rulers should know justice (3:1), but instead they despise it (3:9). Micah 3:1–12 evaluates only the political leaders in Jerusalem and the prophetic speaker according to their justice (3:1, 8). This correlation between what the political leaders should do and what the prophetic speaker actually does indicates that the prophetic speaker likely fulfilled a political role. In addition, the prophetic speaker claims that he is filled with "might" (גְּבוּרָה), a term connoting a sense

[67] Hans Walter Wolff, *Micah*, CC (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1990), 7–8.

of military strength and used of the kings of Judah to describe their accomplishments.[68] The prophetic speaker's self-description (3:8), in the context of Mic 3:1–12, is one of a political leader opposed to the Jerusalem leadership.

Wolff notes that though there are several other individuals named Micah in the Hebrew Bible, Micah of Moresheth is the only one who receives no designation other than his place of origin, adding to the notion that Micah represented a specific group.[69] Wolff suggests that Micah fulfilled the civil office of "זקן" or "ראש."[70] In this office he likely traveled to Jerusalem on feast and fast days to serve as a spokesperson for his people in the temple and palace. [71] This is precisely the kind of function to which Mic 2 and 3 point. The superscription makes clear that Micah is not from Jerusalem, but the oracles themselves point to speeches delivered in Jerusalem. Micah 3 indicts the rulers, priests, and prophets for practices connected to the official governing body and the official cult in Jerusalem. Additionally, the declaration that there will be no one left to cast lots in the "assembly of YHWH" implies an assembly at the temple. Finally, Mic 3:12 declares that YHWH will destroy Jerusalem, indicating that the oral presentation of these oracles likely took place in Jerusalem. If the prophetic speaker was not from

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[68]For the kings of Judah see 2 Kgs 15:23; 16:5, 27; 22:46; 2 Kgs 10:34; 13:8, 12; 14:15, 28; 18:20; 20:20. For military might see, Judg 8:21; Prov 8:14; Isa 3:25; 28:6; 30:15; Jer 9:22; 23:10; 49:35; 51:30; Exod 32:29, 32:30; Mic 7:16. Ibid.

[69] Hans Walter Wolff, *Micah the Prophet* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 7–8.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Wolff draws on images of the "elders of the land" and the "elders of Judah" traveling to Jerusalem on special occasions (1 Kgs 8:1-2; 2 Kgs 23:1; and 1 Sam 30:26). Wolff finds it likely that Micah was a local elder (זקן) or the head of a clan (ראש). Wolff draws attention to the fact that neither the text of Micah nor the reference to him in Jer 26:18 refer to him as a prophet. He states, "He (Micah) knew himself to be an ambassador of a completely different sort than those professional prophets whom he opposed" (Ibid. See also: Robert North, "Postexilic Judean Officials" in ABD 6: Logos Libronix edition.

Jerusalem but from Moresheth, he must have traveled to Jerusalem on occasion. If he held the office of "elder" it would make sense for him to travel to Jerusalem as a representative of his people.

"My People"

The eighth century Mican oracles also indicate that the speaker has a vested interest in a group external to those with whom he speaks. Within the first three chapters of Micah, the prophet refers to the group that he defends as "my people (עמי)" five times (2:4, 2:8, 2:9; 3:3, 3:5) indicating that he is an advocate for a specific group. The prophetic advocacy displayed in Mic 2–3 points to the prophetic speaker's special interest in the welfare of a group that he distinguishes from the group's oppressors. The oppressors are located in Jerusalem, as discussed in Chapter Two.[72] The people whom the prophetic speaker represents are from outside of Jerusalem.

Within the prophets, this level of advocacy for a specific group over against another group within Israel is distinctive. Frequently, prophetic literature employs the epithet "my people Israel" to refer to the prophet's or YHWH's collective people.[73] Similarly, "my people" often parallels some designation for the entire populace (i.e.

[72] The connection of the land owners to Jerusalem is seen in Mic 2:5 which states that the deceptive practices by which they obtain the land takes place in the assembly of YHWH, a reference to a gathering at the Jerusalem temple. The rulers are likely associated with the palace in Jerusalem. The prophets are chastised alongside the priests who serve at the temple. The prophets under attack serve at the temple as well. The people who are the victims of these oppressors are not from Jerusalem but may come there on occasion to participate in the local cult or for the official business of land distribution. It is at these times that they interact with the oppressive parties. See Chapter Two, 113–138.

[73] Jeremiah 7:12; 12:14; 23:13; 30:3; Ezek 14:9; 25:14 36:12: 38:14, 16; 39:7; Amos 7:8, 15; 8:2; 9:14.

"nation" or "Israel").[74] Finally, the context often illuminates the use of "my people" and its reference to the entire nation of Israel. For example, a common theme depicts YHWH or the prophet lamenting the exile of "my people."[75] The earliest passages of Micah use "my people" differently from this collective use. Chapter Three established that the prophetic speaker accuses the monarchy of land fraud in Mic 2:1–5.[76] The designation "my people" in 2:4 concerns a specific group of victims over against the oppressing group. Both groups reside within Judah but the prophetic speaker only refers to the victims as "my people." Similarly, Mic 3:3 accuses the rulers of Judah of "eating the flesh" of "my people." Again the prophet advocates for one group over against others within Judah. Each of the five occurrences of "my people" in Mic 2–3 reflects this social binary internal to Judah.[77]

The prophetic speaker represents a specific group which is distinct from the rulers, prophets, and priests in Jerusalem. The superscription associated with the earliest portions of Micah connects the prophetic speaker with a prophet from Moresheth in the Judean Shephelah. The earliest oracles in Micah 1–3 show an interest in the Shephelah (1:10–15*) and an audience in Jerusalem (2:6–11; 3:1–12). The prophetic speaker also appears to self-identify as a prophet and a political leader in Mic 3:8 in which he, like a

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[74]Isaiah 1:3; 51:4, 16; 65:22; Jer 2:3; 21:12; 37:12; Ezek 45:8; Hosea 1:10; 6:11; Joel 2:27; 4:2 [Eng. 3:2]; Mic 1:9; Zeph 2:9.

[75] Isaiah 5:13; 22:4: 26:20; 32:13; 47:6; 52:4, 5; 53:8; 57:14; Jer 6:26; 8:23 [Eng. 9:1]; 9:7, 14:17; 15:17; 33:24; Ezek 13:21, 23; 34:30; Hos 4:6; Obad 1:13; Zech 8:7.

[76] Chapter Three, 120–122.

[77] The closest parallel to sort of advocacy for a specific group within Israel in the prophets is in Isa 3:12, 15 in which the prophetic speaker accuses the leaders of Jerusalem of taking advantage of the poor ("my people"). The number of references to "my people" in this passage is not as high as the references in Mic 2–3. The sheer number of references to "my people" stands out in Micah as unusual.

true prophet, has the power of God and, like a good leader, is concerned with justice. Each of these pieces of evidence indicates that the prophetic speaker is a political advocate for a group in the Judean Shephelah.

The previous section concluded that a small group of prophetic disciples preserved the oracles of their teachers. The tradent/disciples responsible for the preservation of the earliest Micah oracles likely came from the Judean Shephelah because the oracles advocate for a Shephelah group. But who were these tradent/disciples from the Judean Shephelah? The following examination of evidence from outside of Micah narrows the field from the Shephelah in general to a specific group, referred to in Jer 26:18 as "the elders of the land."

Jeremiah 26 and Micah's Disciples

Jeremiah 26 recounts Jeremiah's trial for declaring the destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah faces the death penalty for treason because of his prediction. The court acquits Jeremiah after "the elders of the land" witness on his behalf. The elders of the land quote Mic 3:12 in Jeremiah's defense and invoke a tradition concerning Micah of Moresheth that is not recorded anywhere else in the Hebrew Bible. The tradition that the elders of the land recall claims that Micah of Moresheth prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and that this prophecy found an audience with Hezekiah. Micah of Moresheth was not put to death for his prediction. Instead, Hezekiah listened to Micah and sought YHWH. YHWH, in turn, changed his mind and did not bring the disaster that Micah of Moresheth predicted.

Jeremiah 26 in its literary context. Jeremiah 26 introduces a narrative section that is different from the poetic material before it.[78] This placement, as well as the content of the chapter, lead to a variety of purposes for the chapter. Primary among the scholarly concerns is to discern the purpose of the passage. How does Jer 26 function rhetorically? What claims does Jer 26 make about prophecy, the exile, and the role of different groups in bringing the exile about? What functions do the accounts of Micah/Hezekiah and Uriah/Jehoiakim fulfill? The text is rife with challenges. Scholars have devised several different ways of conceptualizing the purpose of Jer 26; the diverse content of which is discussed in Table 5.1.[79]

Nicholson argues that Jer 26 serves to blame the community's rejection of the prophet for the exile.[80] Rudolph argues, in accordance with the Deuteronomistic ideology of Jer 26–45, that Jer 26 functions to legitimate Jeremiah as a prophet.[81] According to Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Ivo Meyer, Jer 26 supplements the depiction of the Temple

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[78] Jeremiah 26 falls within a block of Jeremiah (Jer 26–45) in which scholars since Mowinkel have noticed Deuteronomistic tendencies. These chapters contain narrative information concerning the prophet, and within Mowinckel's model, these chapters compose source B, the second of four sources. See: Sigmund Mowinckel, *Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Libraries, 2011), 3–57. Scholars frequently ascribe the narratives in 26–45 to Baruch, who, as Jeremiah's personal secretary and disciple, preserved stories from his mentor's life. See, John Bright, *Jeremiah*, AB 21 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1965), 165–72; J. A. Thompson, *A Book of Jeremiah*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 523;Wilhelm Rudolph, *Jeremia*, HAT 12 (Göttingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1967), 154. Scholars variously define the literary structure of Jeremiah. Jeremiah 1–25 generally contains poetic material. The genres of 26-45, however, vary. Jeremiah 30-33 returns to prophetic verse characteristic of 1-25. Jeremiah 29 is an epistle/letter. Within Jer 26–45 there are also several smaller collections. Several scholars suggest that Jer 26–29 circulated as pre-existent narratives. The Book of Salvation (Jer 30–33) divides the narratives in Jer 26–29 from those in 34–45. Additionally, the "prose" sections often have poetic features. For an overview of the history of scholarship in unit delimitation in Jeremiah see: Jack R. Lundbom, "Delimitation of Units in the Book of Jeremiah," in *Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis*, ed. Raymond de Hoop, Marjo C A. Korpel, and Stanley Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 146–51.

[79] See the following discussion.

[80] Ernest W. Nicholson, *Preaching to the Exiles: A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), 106.

[81] Wilhelm Rudolph, *Jeremiah* (Berlin: Gütersloher Verlaghaus Gerd Mohn, 1966), 154.

Sermon (Jer 7).[82] Jeremiah's trial occurs in response to his message of doom presented in the Temple Sermon. Hossfeld and Meyer, alternatively, contend that the trial

Table 5.1 *Paraphrase of Jer 26*

Content Paraphrased	Verses
YHWH commissions Jeremiah with a message: "If you do not listen to me [YHWH] and to my prophets, then I will make Jerusalem like Shiloh"	Jer 26:1–6
The priests, prophets and all the people hear the message and seize Jeremiah saying, "You will die."	Jer 26:7–10
The officials of Judah hear the case in the temple. The priests and prophets accuse Jeremiah. All of the people (apparently changing their allegiance) listen to the case with the officials of Judah.	Jer 26:11–12
Jeremiah addresses the officials and all the people. Jeremiah claims to be a true prophet and reiterates the need for repentance in order for YHWH to spare the city.	Jer 26: 13–15
The officials and all the people declare Jeremiah's innocence and affirm him as a true prophet.	Jer 26:16
The elders of the land testify that Hezekiah heeded Micah of Moresheth's prophecy of doom and Jerusalem was saved.	Jer 26:17–19
The narrator recounts the story of Uriah, a true prophet who Jehoiakim kills for a prophecy similar to Jeremiah's.	Jer 26:20–23
Ahikam the Shaphanide saves Jeremiah from those who want to put him to death.	Jer2 6:24

[82] Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and I. Meyer, "Der Prophet vor vem Tribunal: neuer Auslegungsversuch von Jer 26," *ZAW* 86 (1974): 30–50.

in Jer 26 is not connected to the Temple Sermon. Instead, the trial in Jer 26 calls to mind Deut 18:15–22 which outlines the characteristics of the true prophet of YHWH. Because Jeremiah meets the requirements, he should not be put to death. [83]

Carolyn Sharp uses a redactional model to illuminate how Jer 26 functions rhetorically at different stages in its development.[84] Sharp argues that there are two agendas represented in Jer 26. The first is the agenda of a scribal group remaining in the land after the deportation of 597 BCE.[85] This group holds that the complete destruction of Jerusalem is inevitable and blames the people, the prophets, and priests in Jerusalem for this scenario (cf. Jer 26:9, 11). The other group is part of the deportation of 597 BCE and located in Babylon.[86] This group wants to acquit the Jerusalem officials of any guilt and holds out hope that Jerusalem's destruction is not inevitable (cf. Jer 26:3, 12–19).[87] Sharp bases her analysis on the fractures she finds in the text of Jer 26. She promotes the idea of two competing agendas based upon two observations. First, the text varies in its view of impending disaster. Second, "all the people" shift from condemning to supporting Jeremiah. Sharp dates the competing ideologies to the period following the first deportation in 597 BCE. Sharp uses a redactional model to explain why "all the people" first accuse Jeremiah and then advocate for him.

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[83] Ibid., 45.

[84] Carolyn Sharp, *Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah: Struggles for Authority in the Deutero-Jeremianic Prose*, OTS (New York: T&T Clark, 2003).

[85] Ibid., 57–58.

[86] Ibid., 59.

[87] Ibid.

Each of these explanations of the purpose of Jer 26 fails to account for the disjunction between Jer 26:1–16 and 17–23. Jeremiah 26:1–16 consists of a straightforward account of Jeremiah's prophecy and trial. To be sure, there are elements within the account of the trial that deal with the role of a true prophet, the possibility of exile, and various groups' response to the true prophet. But, Jer 26:17–23 contains the editor's interpretive payoff of Jer 26 as a whole. Kathleen O'Connor suggests that Jer 26:17–23 is an editorial addition to the account of the trial which explains why the editor finds Jeremiah's trial important.[88] Jeremiah's trial serves as a tool for the editor to talk about a king's proper response to a prophet of doom. The editor records the tradition of Hezekiah's response to Micah of Moresheth as an example of a positive response to prophecy that saves Jerusalem. The editor then recalls Jehoiakim's negative response to a prophecy of doom. The editorial addition suggests that because of Jehoiakim's negative response, Jerusalem will fall.

The trial and the editorial addition(s). Kathleen O'Connor argues for a three-part structure in Jer 26.[89] She notes that the narrative in 26:1–16 can stand on its own. To this original narrative, an editor adds two additional units: 26:17–23 and 24. The narrative of 26:1–16 holds out hope that if the people repent, YHWH will save them from the coming calamity (26:3).[90] O'Connor claims that when the prophets and the priests relay

[88] See next paragraph.

[89] Kathleen M. O'Connor, "'Do Not Trim a Word': The Contributions of Chapter 26 to the Book of Jeremiah," *CBQ* 51 (1989): 617–630.

[90] Jeremiah 26:4-6 indicates that if the people heed the message of YHWH presented through the prophet, YHWH will spare them. Jeremiah's audience, composed of "the priests, the prophets, and all the people," pursues the death penalty for Jeremiah on account of his message but omit the possibility of salvation in their representation of his message. O'Connor argues that it is best to read this omission as a

Jeremiah's message to the officials, they omit the possibility for salvation from the coming disaster because they have not really listened to Jeremiah's message. O'Connor's explanation accounts for the differences Sharp notes without necessitating two separate editorial agendas. For O'Connor, the omission functions rhetorically. Positing two competing agendas detracts from the purpose of the narrative in 1:1–16. Sharp herself argues that the purpose of the narrative is to discover which groups will listen to the true prophet: Jeremiah.[91] Another rhetorical move in the trial narrative occurs when "all the people" first accuse Jeremiah along with the prophets and the priests (26:8–9). When the officials arrive, "all of the people" shift their allegiance to the officials and eventually declare Jeremiah's innocence. Thus the groups who heard Jeremiah's message not only get it wrong but are ultimately fickle concerning his fate.[92] In other words, Jeremiah's listeners are the ultimate fools when it comes to dealing with a prophet, but there is still hope that they will do the right thing. O'Connor's observations concerning the purpose of the trial narrative make the most sense of the text. The trial narrative shows the fickle and foolish nature of Jeremiah's audience. This narrative reinforces the idea that at the time of the trial there was still hope that YHWH would not bring the disaster. The trial narrative ends with the verdict of Jeremiah's innocence pronounced by the officials and "all the people" (26:16).

What follows the verdict confuses the narrative and begins the editorial addition to the trial narrative. The previously unmentioned "elders of the land" come forward in

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literary device to show that the people, prophets, and priests have not even listened to Jeremiah's message fully ("'Do Not Trim a Word,'" 622).

[91] Sharp, *Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah*, 55.

[92] O'Connor, "'Do Not Trim a Word,'" 623.

Jer 26:17 to remind the group that Micah of Moresheth preached a similar message which Hezekiah heeded resulting in YHWH sparing Jerusalem. Because of where the elder's speech falls in the chapter, it provides an unneeded further defense of Jeremiah. However, O'Connor notes that the elders' speech functions more as the "praise of the king than the defense of a prophet."[93] The tradition concerning Hezekiah's change of heart reinforces the theme of heeding the prophetic word from the narrative in 26:1–16 as well as setting Hezekiah's action in contrast to Jehoiakim.[94] The editor shifts the focus of the trial from the foolish audience and their reception of Jeremiah to the way that kings should interact with prophets of doom.

The elders' speech ends in 26:19. The following verses recall a narrative in which Jehoiakim does exactly the opposite of Hezekiah by killing Uriah, the prophet of doom. The editor presents the account of Uriah's execution (26:20–23) to demonstrate the threat of Jehoiakim.[95] Jehoiakim's treatment of prophets is not like Hezekiah's. Jeremiah is in danger, but even more problematic is the indication that the king's failure to heed the warning of the prophet will lead to Jerusalem's destruction, the destruction that Hezekiah had avoided.

Finally, Jer 26:24 records that Ahikam, son of Shaphan saves Jeremiah from the hands of the people. This aspect of the story confuses the narrative further. The officials and all the people pronounce Jeremiah "not guilty" in Jer 26:16. Nevertheless, the elders of the land defend him further in 26:17–20. Why then, should Ahikam save him? This

[93] Ibid.

[94] Jeremiah 26:1 alerts the reader that Jehoiakim reigns at the time of the trial.

[95] O'Connor, "'Do Not Trim a Word,'" 623

final note is likely an indication of the scribal group that preserved the tradition.[96] This final verse is a postscript that credits Ahikam's support with saving Jeremiah from Jehoiakim.[97] The postscript reinforces Jehoiakim's poor treatment of prophets and suggests his complicity in the downfall of Jerusalem.

The tradition concerning the elders of the land and their quotation of the Micah tradition are, according to the analysis above, an editorial addition to the trial narrative. The addition of Jer 26:17–23 provides a *terimus ad quem* for the development of the tradition concerning Micah of Moresheth found in Jer 26:17–19. The tradition must have developed before its inclusion in Jer 26.

Date of Jer 26. O'Connor argues that Jeremiah 26, in its final form, dates to the exile.[98] Within this context, the narrative exhorts the community to heed the true prophetic voices following disaster. Furthermore, just as Jeremiah succumbs to his captors and is eventually saved, so should the people succumb to the power of Babylon and wait for salvation.[99] O'Connor is not alone in placing Jer 26 in the context of the exile. Scholars since Mowinckel have considered Jer 26 to be exilic.[100] Sharp also places the chapter within the exile.[101] There are several reasons that the exilic context makes

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[96] Christof Hardmeier, "Die Propheten Micha und Jesaja im Spiegel von Jeremia XXVI und 2 Regum XVIII-XX. Zur Prophetie-Rezeption in der nach-joschijanischen Zeit," in *Congress Volume: Leuven, 1989*, ed. John A. Emerton, VTSup 40 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 172–89.

[97] O'Connor, "`Do Not Trim a Word'," 623–24.

[98] Ibid., 625.

[99] Ibid., 630.

[100] On Mowinckel, see above, 197.

[101] See, Sharp, *Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah*, 25.

particularly good sense for this text. The text portrays an awareness of the exile through its comparison between Hezekiah and Jehoiakim (Hezekiah's action led to Jerusalem's salvation; Jehoiakim's opposite action will lead to Jerusalem's downfall). Similarly, Jeremiah's proclamation that Jerusalem will face the same fate as Shiloh (26:4-6 cf. Jer 7:12) presupposes knowledge of the exile. The comparison of the good king (Hezekiah) to the bad king (Jehoiakim) would be unnecessary following the return to the land. With no king on the throne in Judah it would do little good to provide a narrative concerning the importance of the king listening to the prophetic word. However, in the early years of the exile this narrative would provide the perfect explanation for the downfall of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 26, the Elders of the Land, and Preservation of the Mican Oracles

The comparison between Hezekiah and Jehoiakim in 26:17–20 illuminates the search for the support group that preserved the earliest oracles in Mic 1–3. Specifically, the comparison between Hezekiah and Jehoiakim illuminates not only how the tradition of Micah of Moresheth evolved but also who may have had a hand in preserving the Mican oracles. In the self-contained narrative of Jer 26:1–16 there is no mention of the "elders of the land."[102] One does not encounter this group until the editorial addition to this narrative (26:17–20).[103] The narrative specifically attributes the recounting of the Micah/Hezekiah tradition to this group instead of one of the groups already mentioned (prophets, priests, and all the people). In addition, Jer 26:2 indicates that people from the

[102] O'Connor, "'Do Not Trim a Word'," 617–18.

[103] Ibid.

cities of Judah are present at the temple, which likely implies a feast day in which people from the outlying towns of Judah would travel to Jerusalem. YHWH instructs Jeremiah to "speak to all the people of the towns of Judah who come to worship in the house of YHWH" (Jer 26:2). This instruction differs from the one given to the prophet in Jer 7, which likely contains the words of the oracle that inspired Jeremiah's trial. Jeremiah 7 does not name the recipients of the message. Jeremiah 26 specifically identifies the recipients as those from the cities of Judah, thus explaining the presence of the elders of the land.

It is noteworthy that this exilic text specifically names the elders of the land as those who recall the Micah/Hezekiah tradition. The editor of Jeremiah 26 associates the elders of the land with the oracles of Micah and implies that the elders of the land were able to quote the prophet's words verbatim. The association of the elders of the land with the prophecies of Micah of Moresheth bears further investigation. Did the elders of the land play a role in the preservation of the Mican oracles in the years between Sennacherib's campaign and the exile? Is it possible to find Micah of Moresheth's disciple group among the elders of the land? Some clarification concerning the role of the elders of the land in the Hebrew Bible will elucidate the role and status of this group.

Who are the Elders of the Land?

The narrator offers no explicit reason for the presence of "the elders of the land" at Jeremiah's trial other than the incorporation of the statement early in the chapter that Jeremiah spoke "to all the people of the towns of Judah who come to worship in the house of YHWH." Nor does the editor explicitly state why the elders of the land speak in Jeremiah's defense. However, several other occurrences of "elders" in the Hebrew Bible

may elucidate their presence here. Rainer Albertz maintains that in early Israel the "elders" were the leaders of tribal units.[104] These units ranged in size and scope from a single town as in 1 Sam 11:3 (זקני יבֵּשׁ, "elders of Jabesh") to a region as in Judges 11:5 (זקני גלעד, "elders of Gilead") or tribe as in 1 Sam 30:26 (לזקני יהודה, "elders of Judah").[105] Albertz holds that these elders, "carried out minor political business, represented the settlement to outsiders (1 Sam 16:4), settled conflicts among the clans, were active in administering the law and carried on negotiations (Judg 11:5)."[106] To this analysis of the office of elders, Wolff adds that the elders would travel to Jerusalem as delegates from their various locales for special functions, often at the request of the king.[107] Wolff cites 1 Kgs 8:1 and 2 Kgs 23:1 as two instances in which the king calls the "elders" to Jerusalem to participate in a political/cultic observance such as a festival or other special occasion.[108] Notably in each of these examples, the elders are from outside of Jerusalem but travel there on occasion.[109]

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[104] Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, trans. John Bowden, First American Edition, vol. 1, OTL (Westminster John Knox, 1994), 73.

[105] Albertz distinguishes the "elders" from another group that he finds in the Hebrew Bible known as the "men of" a certain locality. He sees both groups as functioning similarly in early Israel (Ibid., 1:74).

[106] Albertz's ideas concerning "the elders" come from passages which he associates with early Israel, i.e., the pre-monarchic period and early monarchy. However, Albertz shows the longevity of this social and political institution in his discussion of the exilic and post exilic periods. Concerning the early exilic period, Albertz cites Lam 5:12 as evidence that the elders were still functioning with some degree of authority in Jerusalem. He maintains that in the periods following the destruction of Jerusalem these groups of elders gained more authority because of the lack of leadership in the land. See: Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion*, trans. John Bowden, vol. 2, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 372, and Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion*, 1:74.

[107] Wolff, *Micah*, 6.

[108] 1 Kings 8:1 records Solomon moving the Ark of the Covenant to the temple and 2 Kings 23:1 records Josiah's renewal of the covenant. In both cases, the respective king summons the "elders" of the land to Jerusalem.

[109] Jack R. Lundbom takes for granted that these "elders of the land" are from outside of Jerusalem. He writes that these towns in the outlying regions of Judah, were places in which, "memories live long and biases tend to locate evil in urban centers rather than in the localities they inhabit. Micah's

In addition, 1 Kgs 20:7 records that the King of Israel (supposedly Ahab) sends for "the elders of the land" to advise him in a military skirmish with Aram. Therefore, it appears that at some point in Israel's history, the elders of the land had influence in the royal court. In Prov 31:23, the husband of the woman of noble character sits at the gates with "the elders of the land" indicating the role of the "elders of the land" in sorting out legal disputes. Finally, Lam 5:12 parallels princes (שׂרים) and elders. This suggests a similar function or status between the two groups at the time of Jerusalem's destruction.[110]

These references help shed light on the tradition in Jer 26 that places the elders of the land at Jeremiah's trial. From the references in 1 Kgs 8:1 and 2 Kgs 23:1 (cf. 1 Kgs 20:7) one discovers that the elders were not located in Jerusalem but had to be summoned there or happened to be there for fasts or feast days.[111] They also played a part in the system of justice in the monarchic period as indicated by their presence at the city and temple gates in Prov 31:23 and Jer 26:18. From the reference in Lam 5:12, in which princes and elders are parallel, one can begin to understand the presence of the elders alongside the officials at Jeremiah's trial. Elders, in broad terms, were political functionaries that represented a specific group such as a city or a region from the monarchic period to the exile.

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legacy may have been greater in the outlying areas than in Jerusalem, where the prophet towering above all others had been Isaiah…Among these pilgrims to Jerusalem may also have been some who deeply resented Josiah's centralization of worship…" (*Jeremiah 21-36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary by*, AB 21B [New York: Doubleday, 2004], 294).

[110] Delbert Hillers, *Lamentations*, AB 7A (Minneapolis: Doubleday, 1972), 9.

[111] The day of Jeremiah's preaching and trial may have been a feast or fast day. Jeremiah 26:2 preserves the divine command directing Jeremiah to speak to "all the people of the towns of Judah who come to worship in the house of YHWH." The presence of travelers from the towns of Judah likely indicates special days of worship.

The Elders of the Land as the Earliest Micah Tradent/Disciples

The observations above show that according to the traditions found in the Hebrew Bible, the elders of the land, specifically those said to have attended Jeremiah's trial were not from Jerusalem. Accordingly, these elders from outside Jerusalem reportedly quote a preserved prophetic oracle of Micah of Moresheth. This tradition indicates that in the mind of the exilic editor of Jer 26 the elders of the land preserved the oracles of Micah, or at least knew the oracles well enough to recite them.

The association of the elders of the land with the Mican oracles in the mind of the exilic editor of Jer 26 supports the probability of a connection between this group and those who preserved the early form of Mic 1-3*. It is also likely that the prophetic speaker in Mic 2–3 fills a similar role as these "elders of the land." The analysis above notes the prophetic speaker's identification with issues commonly associated with political leaders such as elders, princes, and officials (Mic 3:8). Additionally, the prophetic speaker's special advocacy for a specific people group indicates an ambassadorial function. Finally, the prophetic speaker's advocacy work in Jerusalem while advocating for individuals in the Judean Shephelah indicates frequent pilgrimages similar to that of an elder.

Therefore, the tradent/disciples that originally preserved these oracles were most likely part of the prophetic speaker's region (the Judean Shephelah) for which the prophetic speaker advocated in Jerusalem. The Micah traditions identify the prophetic speaker with Moresheth (Mic 1:1; Jer 26:18), a town in the Judean Shephelah. Since the above analysis demonstrates that elders could come from specific cities, and since the

Micah traditions consistently name Moresheth as the prophetic speaker's city, it is reasonable to conclude that the prophetic speaker was an elder in Moresheth.

The prophetic speaker also shows concern for a number of cities in the Shephelah region (1:8, 10–15*). Though discipleship groups were usually small and local, as noted above, the circumstances described in Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 likely indicate distress felt by land owners throughout the Shephelah.[112] The concerns over land fraud and abuse from the royal house were likely broader reaching than the single town of Moresheth. As an elder of the land Micah of Moresheth was likely commissioned to represent land owners from the entire region and not merely his town. In fact, since the oracles of Micah of Moresheth represent the concerns of various cities, Micah of Moresheth was likely the representative from the elders of the Shephelah region, who brought their case to Jerusalem. The earliest tradent/disciples of the Micah tradition, likely consisted of a group of elders from outside of Moresheth in the larger Shephelah region.[113]

This description of the earliest tradent/disciples of the Micah tradition does not perfectly coincide with the description of prophetic support groups earlier in this chapter, though it does have some similarities. Similar to the description above; the early disciple group was small, consisting of elders from several cities in the Judean Shephelah.[114] Different from the description above; the disciple group was not localized to a single

[112] Note the distribution of *lmlk* seals as well as a focus on surplus that affected the entire region, not only Moresheth.

[113] See Chapter Two (33), which argues for the identification of the Shephelah as a specific region during the monarchic period on account of cross references with Joshua 15.

[114] It is impossible to know exactly which cities. The cities listed in Mic 1:10–15* may be a good starting point but those cities coincide with the destruction brought by Sennacherib's campaign and may not be the same as the cities whose land owners were cheated by the royal house.

town, but likely consisted of elders from throughout the Shephelah region. This difference likely occurred because of Micah of Moresheth's role as an elder of the land. The natural disciple group for him was a group of elites that shared his interest in the welfare of Shephelah land owners. Micah of Moresheth's political status as an elder (representative of a specific city) helped to create his disciple group which consisted of the other elders in his region. Much like the Isaiah disciples sealing the scroll as a legal testimony, the elders of the Shephelah likely sealed (preserved) the earliest testimonies of Micah of Moresheth as a witness against the royal house and their abuses in the final decades of the eighth century. How did this disciple group preserve the sayings of the prophet and what was the impetus for them to do so? For these answers we turn to Jörg Jeremias's recent work on scribal prophecy in the Hebrew Bible.

The Why: Opposition as a Catalyst for Initial Preservation

Jörg Jeremias argues that the prophetic writings themselves tell the reader about the catalyst for preserving some of the prophetic oracles.[115] The Hebrew Bible contains

[115] Jörg Jeremias, "Das Rätsel der Schriftprophetie," *ZAW* 125 (2013): 93–117. Reinhard Kratz challenges in a short article ("Das Rätsel der Schriftprophetie eine Replik," *ZAW* 125 [2013]: 635–39). Jeremias' depiction of Kratz is that Kratz questions Jeremias's ability to find early traces of the prophetic utterance in these texts that indicate prophetic strife. Kratz contends that it is impossible to see any portion of prophetic text as earlier than the exilic and post-exilic periods. In his brief article, Kratz contents that he has dated some prophetic oracles to the pre-exilic period (637). Kratz also that Jeremias misrepresented him when he alleged that Kratz argues that it is impossible to recover earlier versions of the text because prophetic texts were greatly shaped by their transformation to scripture. Kratz contends that his primary concern is the difficulty in reconstructing an early text from a text that has clearly evolved over time (637). This is a valid concern which offers an interesting lens for this study. The focus of this dissertation concerns the formation of Mic 1–3 which fully admits the re-shaping of earlier texts to fit later manifestations of scripture. At the same time, Chapters Two through Four situated the majority of the oracles in Mic 1–3 within the context of the eighth century. Therefore, the present study both recognizes and undermines Kratz's primary caution that prophetic oracles were re-shaped to be incorporated in growing scriptural traditions. At the same time, Kratz recognizes that an early date fits some prophetic oracles better than a later date (636). Because the eighth century context fits the oracles in Mic 1–3 best, there is no reason not to engage with Jeremias's model which considers prophetic dispute as a reason for preserving oracles. As this section will show, prophetic disputes are often assumed as the reason for the

several traditions concerning opposition among prophets or prophetic groups that lead to the preservation of an oracle that met with resistance. This act of preservation among disciples is often the first step in the preservation process. Disciples record the prophet's oracle to preserve it as an "everlasting witness" (Isa. 30:8) to future generations that the prophet's words were true.

For example, the confrontation between Micaiah ben Imlah and Zedekiah ben Kenaanah exemplifies inter-prophetic conflict in the Deuteronomistic History (1 Kgs 22). Micaiah proclaims the military failure of the king of Israel. Zedekiah opposes Micaiah and accuses him of proclaiming false prophecy. Zedekiah and the king have Micaiah put in jail until the king of Israel returns safely. Micaiah replies, "If you ever return safely, YHWH has not spoken through me" (1 Kgs 22:28). The primary question in this exchange between feuding prophets is whose prophecy will prove correct. Because of the dispute, both prophets' predictions are preserved and the reader knows which prophet is justified and which is not.

The narrative of Jeremiah's confrontation with Hananiah contains similar dynamics.[116] As in the case of Micaiah, the text reports the conflict between a positive prediction and a negative prediction (28:6–9).[117] Additionally, the text highlights the truth or falsehood of the prophet's claim. Jeremiah defends his negative pronouncement by

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recording of an oracle. Consequently, prophetic disputes are a good place to begin when investigating the reason for the initial preservation of an oracle.

[116] Childs argues that the edited complex of Jer 23–29 fully focuses on the question of true and false prophecy (*Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1989], 138–39). The included trial of Jeremiah (Jer 26) will be discussed later. This text block contains three judgment oracles against false prophets in Jer 27. Jeremiah 28 follows the basic structure of these oracles in Jeremiah's prophecy against Hananiah.

[117] James L. Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict: Its Effect upon Israelite Religion*, BZAW 124 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971), 52.

declaring that the prophets announcing "peace" will only receive validation at the fulfillment of their words (28:9).[118] Jeremiah predicts that Hananiah will suffer the fate of a false prophet when he dies during the siege of Jerusalem (cf. Deut 18:20). Again, the text records both prophets' predictions and the reader quickly finds that Jeremiah's prediction is correct.

These examples certainly betray the agenda of an editor as well as the Deuteronomistic notion of prophecy and fulfillment. The narratives tell the reader more about the character of the prophet than they do about the process of writing prophecy. Nevertheless, according to the narratives both Micaiah and Jeremiah present their predictions orally (as did their opponents). The fact that we read them textually indicates a transmission from oral to written forms. Additionally, though these narratives function literarily to describe the character of the prophet and promote the theology of the editor, they point to an historical reality in which prophets had public disagreements.[119] Within narratives such as these, Jeremias contends, one finds a probable reason for committing an oral oracle to writing. Under opposition and often persecution such as imprisonment and the threat of capital punishment (cf. Jer 26:11) tradents committed the oracles to

[118] The confrontation between Hananiah and Jeremiah contains textual difficulties. The MT refers to both Hananiah and Jeremiah as נביא. The LXX refers to Jeremiah as προφήτης and Hananiah as ψευδοπροφήτης. The MT allows ambiguity concerning the identity of the true prophet until the end of the narrative when Hananiah's prediction proves incorrect. The LXX identifies Hananiah as the false prophet from the beginning of the narrative. Scholars usually see the LXX as the earlier text on account of its brevity when compared to the MT. However, there is no Hebrew equivalent for ψευδοπροφήτης. Therefore, one cannot suggest a Hebrew *Vorlage* that contained this variant. Consequently, confusion persists. For a clear and convincing treatment of this conundrum see the forthcoming article: "The Septuagint's Selective use of Pseudoprophetes in Jeremiah" by Nicholas R. Werse. Werse concludes that the *Vorlage* of the LXX could not have used a term equivalent to ψευδοπροφήτης because no equivalent term exists in Hebrew. Consequently, the translator of the LXX makes clear early on what the MT does not; Hananiah is a false prophet. See also Crenshaw's discussion of the role that a promise of weal or woe played in the reception of prophetic oracles (*Prophetic Conflict*, 52–54).

[119] Jeremias, "Das Rätsel der Schriftprophetie," 103.

writing to preserve them for a future time when the prophetic pronouncement could be judged true or false.[120]

Opposition to a prophetic oracle may additionally be inferred from the text in the absence of an explicitly recorded dispute. For example, Isa 8:11 implies opposition when the prophetic speaker cautions, "do not call conspiracy everything these people call conspiracy." The prophet's message to his disciples opposes "these people."[121] As a result of this opposition, the prophetic speaker instructs his disciples to "bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples" (Isa 8:16). Again, in Isa 30:8 the prophetic speaker instructs his disciples, "Go, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll that for a day to come it may be an everlasting witness."[122] Isaiah 30:10 quotes the opposition as saying, "they say to the seers, 'see no more visions!' and to the prophets, 'Give us no more visions of what is right! Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions...'" The opposition's rejection of the spoken prophecy creates the need for the initial written record to document the prophecy as an "everlasting witness" (Isa 30:8) so that later generations can attest to its fulfillment.[123]

The encounter recorded in Jer 36 contains a similar concern as Isaiah's "everlasting witness." In Jer 36:9 Baruch the scribe records an oracle for the purpose of its public recitation in the temple on a fast day. Later, Jehoiakim's officials read the scroll

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[120] Jörg Jeremias, "Das Rätsel der Schriftprophetie", 104.

[121] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 243.

[122] Crenshaw argues that the sealing of the document for future validation implies a legal scenario. Deuteronomy 18:15–22 reflects the legal criterion for a true prediction. The Deuteronomy passage may point to an early legal precedent that could have functioned as early as the eighth century ("Transmitting Prophecy across Generations," in *Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi and Michael H. Floyd, SymS 10 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000], 36).

[123] Ibid.

containing Jeremiah's oracles to the king.[124] The scroll's message prompts Jehoiakim to destroy Jeremiah's scroll. Baruch, however, creates another scroll, "with many additional words" (26:32). Jeremiah's first and second scrolls fulfill different purposes. The first scroll conveys the prophetic message to a group in the prophet's absence.[125] The second scroll would hold the same group accountable for their rejection of the negative message after the prophecy's fulfillment.[126] Therefore, as in Isa 30:8, the written prophecy functioned as a witness against those who opposed it.

Based on the above analysis, several things are clear. First, the Hebrew Bible records several instances of inter-prophetic conflict. Second, inter-prophetic conflict or opposition created the initial need for the written record of a prophecy. Baruch's re-writing of the scroll and Isaiah's statement that the written prophecy should function as an "everlasting witness" show that written prophecy created a record of negative pronouncements. The record of the prophecy testified against the original hearers of the prophetic oracle after the prophecy's fulfillment. Thus, conflict was often the motivator for the first step in the preservation of prophetic oracles.

The Why: Micah and Resistance

Micah 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 also record a dispute between prophets (see 2:6–11 for the opposing prophet's response to the prophetic speaker). The prophetic speaker in Mic 2–3 proclaims a coming calamity because of the oppression of his people. The opposing prophets reply, "Do not prophesy about these things, disgrace will not overtake us"

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[124] Van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 184.

[125] Jeremias, "Das Rätsel der Schriftprophetie", 104.

[126] Ibid.

(2:6).[127] The opposing prophets directly contradict the prediction of calamity. The prophetic speaker's pronouncement of doom culminates with a declaration of Jerusalem's destruction (3:12). The prophetic speaker represents those outside of Jerusalem, while the opposing prophets represent those inside: specifically the evil-doers of Mic 2:1–4.[128] As Jerusalem insiders, the opposing prophets support the centralized religious apparatus in Jerusalem. The proclamation that YHWH would destroy this central site was certainly not part of the opposition group's desired message.

One finds the highest level of advocacy for the land owners whom the prophetic speaker and his disciples (a group of elders) represent within the context of the prophetic dispute. The prophetic speaker describes the abusive practices of the opposition group towards the Shephelah land owners. They abuse those returning from war and evict women and their children from their homes.[129] The earliest Micah tradent/disciples made the initial record of these oracles as an enduring witness against the opposition party. Mic 2:6–11 also records the positive prophecy of the opposition party, "disgrace will not overtake us" and the rhetorical question, "is the patience of YHWH exhausted?" The record of the conflict chronicles specific information concerning the abused and the abusers. The abusers would not have chosen to preserve such a prophecy. The abused group, whom the prophetic speaker represents, however, would have preserved the account of their abuse as a witness against the abusers.

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[127] Micah 2:6–11 reinforces the conclusion that Micah of Moresheth functioned as a spokesperson for a group. The opposing prophets tell a group not to prophesy (אל־תטפו) while Mic 2:7–8 suggest a singular prophet (האמור, דברי, and עמי). Thus, the opposing prophets first address the group of elders and then address the prophetic speaker individually.

[128] See Chapter Three, 113–121.

[129] See Chapter Three, 123–129.

Two elements of preservation of the Mican oracles have been observed so far: first, a group of tradents preserved the Mican oracles. Second, the earliest tradent/disciples preserved the Mican oracles because of opposition. The oracles themselves indicate opposition from the centralized religious apparatus in Jerusalem that directly contradicted the message of doom. The Mican oracles persisted beyond this initial step of preservation among disciples. The second step in the preservation of the Mican oracles involves their development into oral-written documents used for educational enculturation among Micah tradents. This second step will be developed further in the following sections. First, to support the claim that the earliest tradent/disciples of the Micah tradition recorded the Mican oracles because of opposition, an investigation into literacy in and around Israel and Judah will provide evidence that in the eighth century elites in the outlying regions of Judah were literate (below). Second, an investigation of the different models for schools in ancient Judah will elucidate the preservation of the Mican oracles beyond this initial step.

The How: Preservation and Educational Enculturation

The earliest tradent/disciples of the Micah oracles likely consisted of a small group of disciples who were elders in the Judean Shephelah. These elders supported and preserved the earliest Micah oracles as a witness against their opposition in Jerusalem. David Carr's work illuminates these observations through his consideration of how tradents preserved oracles beyond their initial recording. He contends that much of the material in the Hebrew Bible served as part of a system of educational enculturation. Certain biblical material functioned as curriculum by which groups passed down the cultural endowment from generation to generation. The Micah tradent/disciples likely

participated in this kind of educational enculturation as they transmitted the Micah tradition to the next generation. This contention implies two things: First, it implies that elite individuals in the Judean Shephelah were literate. Second, it implies that some mode of education was present in the Judean Shephelah. Both implications require further examination. Nevertheless, there is strong evidence for both education and literacy among elites in eighth century Judah.

Literacy in and around Israel and Judah

Inscriptions. Epigraphic evidence indicates that scribes and a few elite individuals in and around monarchic Israel and Judah were literate. The *Amarna Letters* indicate that the small city-states of the Levant maintained scribes who could communicate with Egypt using the Syro-Canaanite system during the Bronze Age.[130] Similarly, the textual remains from Ugarit bear witness to a scribal apparatus and educational system.[131] The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon found on the border between Judah and Philistia dates to eleventh century and shows the presence of literacy along Judah's western border.[132] Similarly the Gezer Calendar from around the same period as the Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon contains a description of seasonal agricultural activities in Judahite Gezer.[133] The *Mesha Stela* from

[130] Richard S. Hess, "Literacy in Iron Age Israel," in *Windows into Old Testament History*, ed. V. Phillips Long, David W. Baker, and Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 84.

[131] Ibid., 83–84.

[132] Christopher A. Rollston, "The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon: Methodological Musings and Caveats," *TA* 38 (2011): 67–82.

[133] Christopher A. Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel: Epigraphic Evidence from the Iron Age* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 29–32. The excavators, Garfinkel and Ganor date Khirbet Qeiyafa to 1050–970 BCE. Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, "Khirbet Qeiyafa: Sha'arayim," *JHS* 8 (2008).Because of his low chronology, Israel Finkelstein contends evidence

kingdom of Moab shows that scribal practices continued into the first millennium.[134] The *Tel Dan Inscription* from the Aramean king shows textual production to Israel's north.[135] Finally, the Siloam Inscription, etched onto the wall of Hezekiah's Tunnel, contains the narrative of the tunnel's completion and dates to the eighth century.[136] Therefore, epigraphic evidence shows literacy in the Levant before Israel's arrival as well as the presence of literacy in surrounding nation-states during the monarchy. In addition, a large number of seals from monarchic scribes in and around Israel and Judah indicate the presence of scribal groups within Israel and Judah throughout the ninth to seventh centuries.[137]

Old Hebrew script. The Old Hebrew script from the Iron Age is also crucial in developing a case for literacy and scribal schools in ancient Israel. Christopher Rollston demonstrates that during Iron II, an Old Hebrew script developed indicating a scribal education system specific to ancient Israel and Judah.[138] Rollston's detailed analysis of the Old Hebrew script demonstrates two main points concerning scribalism in Iron Age Israel and Judah. First, it shows that beginning in the ninth century, there arose in Israel and Judah "a mechanism for the development, use, and retention of an Old Hebrew

points to habitation between 1050 and 915 BCE. See Israel Finkelstein and Eli Piasetzky, "Khirbet Qeiyafa: Absolute Chronology," *TA* 37 (2010): 84–88.

[134] Hess, "Literacy in Iron Age Israel," 89.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ibid., 91.

[137] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 114.

[138] Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel*, 91–113.

national script" that is distinct from its Phoenician forbearer.[139] Rollston shows a synchronic consistency within the Old Hebrew script from the ninth century to the sixth. The consistency of the script indicates that scribal schools educated groups in the specifics of the Old Hebrew script.[140] In addition, Rollston shows that the Old Hebrew text type exhibits diachronic development over time.[141] The diachronic development indicates that scribal schools continuously educated students from the ninth century to the sixth century and that the changes in morphology and stance were consistent. Rollston's conclusions concerning the Old Hebrew script show that scribal schools did not only pass down functional knowledge of a simple script from one scribe to another. Instead, the epigraphic evidence demonstrates a sophisticated script series with characteristically consistent morphology and stance throughout time.[142] The synchronic consistency and diachronic development of the morphology, stance, and orthography of the Old Hebrew script requires a mechanism for consistency in these complex scribal conventions. The evidence supports formal, standardized education for the scribes within Israel and Judah. Rollston argues that this scribal network was likely state-run, thus insuring morphological consistency.[143] Similarly, the state would have had the means to continue the scribal schools for the duration of the centuries in which we find Old Hebrew script.[144]

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[139] Ibid., 113.

[140] Ibid., 107.

[141] Ibid., 108.

[142] Ibid., 91–109.

[143] Ibid., 113.

[144] Ibid.

Conclusions. Based on this inscriptional and orthographic evidence, scribal groups in monarchic Israel and Judah were part of the professional landscape. This conversation concerning literacy and an Old Hebrew national script indicates the likely existence of scribal schools. Because of the synchronic consistency and diachronic change in the script, Rollston suggests a scribal system sponsored by the state.

Scholars debate the question of how far literacy and writing capabilities extended beyond centralized government.[145] The available evidence from the Hebrew Bible as well as inscriptional evidence indicates that literacy was not widespread. Only those with scribal or, at times, elite status could read and write. The evidence for literacy is generally limited to professional scribal functionaries, usually attached to the palace, artisans, and military officials.

Depictions of Literacy in the Hebrew Bible

Within the Hebrew Bible, those depicted as engaged in reading and writing almost always hold official status.[146] Among David's officials one finds those who fill the office of "scribe" and "scribe of the king". The text names David's scribe variously as Seraiah (2 Sam 8:17), Sheva (2 Sam 20:25), Shisha (1 Kgs 4:3), and Shavsha (1 Chr 18:16). Solomon's scribes, Elihoreph and Ahijah (1 Kgs 4:3), are the sons of David's scribe indicating that the role was passed down from father to son. Similarly, the text presents the family of Shaphan as committed to scribal endeavors. Second Kings 22:3–14; 2 Chr 34:8–21, and Jer 36:10 refer to Shaphan as a scribe. Shaphan's sons and

[145] See survey below, 226–229.

[146] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 117.

grandsons also appear to function in official roles, some as scribes, throughout the Jeremiah narratives (Jer 26:24; 29:3; 36:10; 39:14; 40:1–41:10). The Jeremiah narrative recalls another scribal family of Elishama (not a Shaphanide) during the reign of Jehoiakim.[147]

Within the Hebrew Bible, there is also evidence for scribes and other literate individuals functioning outside of the royal courts. Both Jer 52:25 and 2 Kgs 25:19 contain the account of the execution of a "scribe of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land." The scribe Baruch, though at times functioning within the palace, maintains ties to Jeremiah and not the crown. The song of Deborah mentions those in Zebulon who "bear the staff of the scribe" (Judg 5:14) and 1 Chr 2:55 recalls a scribal clan living in Jabez.

One can also find literate elites apart from those specifically named as scribes. Arad and Lachish have yielded letters from military officials, and one letter comes from the governor of Lachish who boasts that he is literate.[148] The Hebrew Bible also depicts the craftsmen constructing the tabernacle as literate (Exod 39:30). Joshua 18:4 remarks that three delegates from each tribe were capable of writing a description of their land allotment. The text also suggests that prophets were able to read and write. Isaiah writes his message on a large tablet (8:1) and YHWH instructs Ezekiel to write down the date in

[147] Different scribal groups sometimes came into conflict with one another with grave results. The text also remembers Elishama's grandson Ishmael for killing Gedaliah, Shaphan's grandson (Jer 41:2). This inter-scribal strife indicates that scribes formed allegiances and sought power through their connections. Gedaliah represents the pro-Babylonian faction while Ishmael represents the opposition. For a thorough analysis of the political interests represented in this narrative see Eric Peels, "The Assassination of Gedaliah (Jer 40:7-41:18)," in *Exile and Suffering* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009), 83–103.

[148] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 118. This text also mentions a prophet indicating that prophets may have been literate.

Ezek 24:2. Habakkuk 2:2 instructs that the revelation be written down on tablets so that the herald can deliver it. Based on these examples, it is evident that the Hebrew Bible understands the literate class as stretching beyond royal scribes to include officials such as tribal leaders and military experts, prophets, priests, and scribes of outlying territories.

Although the Hebrew Bible attributes the scribal craft to those beyond official royal scribes, the literate of the text still reside within a limited group of royal or cultic functionaries, scribes, political officials, priests, and prophets. Additionally, the Hebrew Bible often describes scribes and prophets as handing down their knowledge from one generation to the next. Extra-biblical evidence reinforces this picture of literacy and an interest in preservation among elites. The brief survey that follows will show that literate elites likely functioned outside of Jerusalem beginning as early as the ninth century.

Extra-Biblical Depictions of Literacy

Several inscriptions from the Levant, mentioned above, evince literacy in the area. Excavators found the Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon in Judahite territory. Archaeologists cannot securely label the ostracon as a product of a Judahite scribal school because they cannot prove that the Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon reflects the Hebrew language.[149] None of the lexemes on the ostracon are specific to Hebrew.[150] Similarly, the Gezer calendar, from around the same period, contains no specifically Hebrew lexemes.[151] The Deir ‘Alla

[149] Rollston, “The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon,” 71.

[150] Ibid., 71–72. Rollston’s argument that the lexemes on the ostracon are not specific to Hebrew is convincing despite the speculation of Haggai Misgav, Yosef Garfinkel, and Saar Ganor (“The Ostracon,” in *Excavation Report 2007-2008* Vol. 1 in *Khirbet Qeiyafa*, ed. Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor [Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2009], 254-256).

[151] Albright holds that the Gezer Calendar reflects “perfect classical Hebrew” (script). Albright’s student, F.M. Cross distances himself from Albright’s original statement claiming that the inscription was “written in a Hebrew dialect.” Cross’s student, Kyle McCarter states that the language of the Gezer Calendar is “very close to Hebrew,” but adds that “the language in which the text is written seems also to

inscription, found in a small town in the transjordan, dates between the eighth and ninth centuries BCE.[152] Archeologists discovered the inscription inside a many chambered structure that may have served as a temple.[153] The Deir ‘Alla inscription leads scholars to conclude that literacy and scribal networks existed in temple/administrative complexes in more rural areas on account of the distance between Deir ‘Alla and recognized metropolitan sites.[154]

The Siloam inscription, found in Jerusalem, recounts the completion of the Siloam tunnel. The inscription appears to be the product of the workers commemorating the completion of the tunnel. Some scholars use the Siloam inscription to argue for widespread literacy in Israel and Judah since a common worker likely wrote the inscription.[155] Skeptics object that a royal scribe more likely created the inscription on account of the royal funding of the project. It is, in fact, more likely that a royal scribe commemorated the state sponsored tunnel than that a common worker.[156] Finally,

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contain features not found in later Hebrew inscriptions, so it is probably best to describe the language of the tablet as a dialect of South Canaanite rather than specifically as Hebrew.” Joseph Naveh states that “its language does not have any lexical or grammatical features that preclude the possibility of its being Phoenician.” Christopher Rollston argues that it is Phoenician. The scholarly consensus no longer identifies the inscription as Hebrew. Nevertheless, it is an important piece in discussing literacy in ancient Israel and Judah. For an outline of these arguments see, Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel*, 29–31.

[152] Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit Van der Kooij, eds., *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Alla Re-Evaluated: Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden, 21-24 August 1989* (Leiden: BRILL, 1991), 3–16.

[153] Scholars debate the linguistic designation for the Deir ‘Alla text. See: Jo Ann Hackett, “The Dialect of the Plaster Text from Tell Deir ‘Alla,” *Orientalia* 53 (1984): 57–65.

[154] Ibid.

[155] See Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*. See Rollston’s overview of the arguments for widespread literacy (argument which he opposes), Rollston, *Writing and Literacy*, 127–36.

[156] Simon B. Parker, *Stories in Scripture and Inscriptions: Comparative Studies on Narratives in Northwest Semitic Inscriptions and the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 39.

Lachish Letter III sheds some light on the extent of literacy in Judah.[157] Within the letter a military official boasts that he is literate and does not require a scribe to read for him. He also displays rudimentary writing skills. This demonstrates two things, a military official could read and write in the sixth century and that it was something worth clarifying and boasting about. Therefore, it appears that literacy was not common among military officials, though it was possible.

The general picture created by these inscriptions coincides nicely with the picture created by the Hebrew Bible.[158] Official scribes could read and write, as well as select others in society such as the military official. Literacy in more rural areas such as Deir ʻAlla was possible among elites such as scribes or political officials. It is therefore reasonable to conclude based on the biblical and extra-biblical evidence that those holding official offices such as "elders of the land" likely were literate and capable of preserving a written tradition. At the earliest stage of the transmission history of the Mican oracles, they were preserved because of a dispute between the prophetic speaker and the Jerusalem elites. The written record of the dispute functioned as a witness against the Jerusalem elites for their abuse of the Shephelah land owners. Tradents preserved the earliest Mican oracles (2:1–11; 3:1–12) beyond this initial stage as oral-written documents that functioned as educational enculturation among Shephelah elites.

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[157] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 118. See also William M. Schniedewind, "Sociolinguistic Reflections on the Letter of a `Literate' Soldier (Lachish 3),"*ZAH* 13 (2000): 157–67.

[158] This picture of literacy in ancient Israel does not cohere with the tradition of Moses as author/transcriber of Torah; however, the biblical references to Moses as scribe do not specify the language or script in which he wrote.

Education in Ancient Israel and Judah

How should one think about the educational enculturation of the earliest Micah tradent/disciples? Is a "school" the right model for the preservation of the Mican oracles? The evidence for "schools" within ancient Israel has been an item of debate. Whybray defines a "school" as in institution that "existed for the purpose of giving specialized training."[159] The classes in these "schools" contained a several pupils and a professional teacher. The teacher that Whybray imagines is not simply a parent or a tribal head but an individual with the professional goal of training students. This profession is the teacher's full-time employment.[160] Crenshaw envisions a "school" in ancient Israel as a place where professional education occurred.[161] A teacher instructs students in reading and writing and receives a fee for his or her service.[162] Lemaire argues for schools throughout Israel and Judah as early as the Iron Age. These schools, supported by taxpayers, were available to a large portion of the population.[163]

These reconstructions promoted by Whybray, Crenshaw, and Lemaire tend to incorporate details from the modern world that would not have been present in antiquity. Notably, evidence is lacking for schools of the type that we know today with identifiable buildings, a tuition run institution, and professional teachers who impart knowledge to

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[159] R. N. Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament*, BZAW 135 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 35.

[160] Ibid.

[161] James L. Crenshaw, *Education in Ancient Israel: Across the Deadening Silence*, ABRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 113.

[162] Ibid.

[163] André Lemaire, *Les écoles et la formation de la Bible dans l'ancien Israël*, OBO (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 8–30.

enrolled students. The education system in surrounding cultures of Egypt, Greece, and Mesopotamia better approximated apprenticeship, in which students learned to read, write, and internalized texts as a part of their home life or within workshops of scribal masters.[164] Education most likely occurred within a family setting. The Hebrew Bible presents a picture of education presented similar to what one finds in the surrounding cultures. Education happened on a small scale, with a parent imparting pieces of culture to children within the home.

Education as Enculturation

Carr envisions an educational enculturation system in which "in addition to acquiring varying levels of mastery of the writing system (or systems), student used such skills to memorize and accurately recite key works."[165] The focus of this memorization process that involved both oral and written mediums was not only to make the student literate but also to inscribe the "culture's most precious traditions on the inside of the people."[166]

Carr brings forward numerous biblical passages that show concern for writing a certain tradition "on the heart" of a student.[167] As the section concerning support groups indicated, the evidence suggests that prophets passed down their oracles to a group of students. Carr's use of "enculturation" as a part of the educational process complements these observations. In Carr's model, the education did not occur for the sake of learning

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[164] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 112–13.

[165] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 81.

[166] Ibid., 5.

[167] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 111–76.

proper grammar or form but as a mode of ensuring the survival of a tradition that was sacred to the tradents.[168] The preserved tradition was a part of the lifeblood of the community. The oracles of the prophets were not simply lessons recited in the schoolroom but part of the liturgy of the community and its cultural inheritance.[169]

Educational enculturation generally happened in the home as parents passed down traditions important to their identity to their children. The mode of educational enculturation was both oral and written, or as Carr prefers, oral-written. The traditions were internalized as a part of the student's cultural inheritance. This model best accounts for the persistence of the earliest Mican oracles beyond the safekeeping of the elders of the land. Certainly, the destruction of the Shephelah and subsequent displacement to Jerusalem of the Micah tradent/disciples would have jeopardized the enculturation specific to the Shephelah region. Nevertheless, in the context of Jerusalem, the Mican oracles survived because the Micah tradents enculturated their children with the traditions of the Shephelah.

The How: Educational Enculturation among the Micah Tradents

The message of the earliest Mican oracles (2:1–11 and 3–12) was one of opposition to the centralized authority structure in Jerusalem. These oracles communicated the significant injustice Shephelah land owners faced at the hands of the monarchy and the Jerusalem religious establishment. Nevertheless, the Mican oracles persisted as curriculum for the education of displaced elite Shephelahites in spite of their

[168] Ibid., 3–14.

[169] Ibid., 156–61.

relocation to Jerusalem.[170] The elites of the Judean Shephelah preserved the oracles of Micah of Moresheth through educational enculturation that opposed the centralized religious system in Jerusalem by condemning land fraud on the part of the monarchy, false prophecy on the part of the centralized prophets, and the greed of the priests in Jerusalem (Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12).[171] This tradition was a part of the Micah tradents' cultural identity. It explained their status in relationship to those in the centralized authority in Jerusalem. It explained how and why the royal group took their land. Most importantly, it provided a theological response to the Shephelah's misfortune following Sennacherib's campaign.[172] The king who had stolen land in the Shephelah now had the Shephelah stolen from him (Mic 2:4).

These traditions concerning the victimization of the Shephelahites at the hands of the Jerusalem elite ran counter to the dominant Jerusalem traditions (found in early stages of the Deuteronomistic History) that touted Hezekiah's greatness and fidelity to YHWH (2 Kgs 18:5).[173] Thus, the Mican oracles were at odds with the dominant sanctioned traditions. This precarious position on the fringe of the centralized religious and royal establishment would have been difficult to maintain. Crenshaw notes that though prophetic groups often opposed the Davidic dynasty, the group's tradition often had to

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[170] Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 69.

[171] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 143.

[172] See Chapter Four, 140–142.

[173] Baruch Halpern convincingly argues that an early, truncated version of the Deuteronomistic History originated during the reign of Hezekiah on the basis of 2 Kgs 18:5. The formula indicates that there was no king like Hezekiah before or after (Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology : Chronicles' Thematic Structure: Indications of an Earlier Source.," 35–54.

transform if it was going to survive.[174] As political and prophetic disputes continued there developed a need for "institutional backing." Thus, the adherents of the tradition that initially defied the main authority source would reframe earlier oracles to better align with the dominant pro-Hezekiah traditions. The transformation of the Mican oracles followed this trajectory in the setting of Jerusalem in order to survive.

Reframing the Mican Oracles

The "first phase" material (Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12) aligns with the description of preservation established so far in this chapter. First, tradent/disciples in the Judean Shephelah recorded the tradition of the prophet's indictment of the centralized religious and royal group as a witness. Second, tradents preserved the oracles as oral-written documents that aided in educational enculturation. Following Sennacherib's campaign through the Judean Shephelah, tradent/disciples of the Micah tradition migrated to Jerusalem and did not return to the Shephelah. Nevertheless, tradents maintained the Micah tradition as educational enculturation among displaced elites from the Judean Shephelah.

The "second phase" material (Mic 1:8, 10–15*) developed as an expression of mourning over the destruction of the Shephelah among displaced Shephelahites.[175] Micah tradents living in Jerusalem appended Mic 1:8, 10–15* to the front of Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 thus completing the second phase in the formation of the Mic 1–3. The update, appended to the front of the "first phase" material, reframed the original declaration of destruction

[174] Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 69–70.

[175] See Chapter Four, 173–174.

by changing the rhetorical impact. In the first phase the reasons for the judgment (2:1–11; 3:1–11) preceded the declaration of judgment (3:12). In the second phase, the mournful song appended to the front transformed the rhetorical flow. In the second phase, the act of judgment comes first (1:8, 10–15*) while the reason for the judgment comes second. This re-framing in the second phase removes the emphasis on Jerusalem's judgment (3:12). The focus is on the attack recounted in 1:8, 10–15* as the consequence for the transgressions of the royal house and the religious apparatus.

The tradents responsible for preserving the oracles of Mic 2–3 added 1:8, 10–15* to the oracular collection to make sense of the changing circumstances. The earlier proclamation that Jerusalem would be destroyed (3:12) did not fit with the reality of the circumstances in Judah after 701 BCE. Nevertheless, the Jerusalem monarchy lost significant land holdings when Sennacherib's campaign reduced Judah to a much smaller territory that functioned mostly out of Jerusalem.[176] Additionally, the prediction of royal loss of land in the Shephelah in Mic 2:3–4 proved accurate. In light of the situation following Sennacherib's campaign, the new rhetorical movement established by the addition of 1:8, 10–15* offered a solid explanation for the current circumstances of the Micah tradents. Nevertheless, the support group did not delete 3:12 or qualify it in the text.

Reinterpreting 3:12

The declaration of the impending doom of Jerusalem persisted in spite of Jerusalem's survival. The tradition in Jer 26:18-19 explains how 3:12 survived despite

[176] See Chapter Two, 140–142.

the fact that it was incorrect in the eighth century. The oral tradition surrounding the written oracle reinterpreted the oracle as a warning to Hezekiah (Jer 26:19). Within the ancient Near Eastern context it was not unusual to understand predictions of calamity as warnings to the monarch.[177] If the monarch enacted the appropriate form of repentance, the enraged god would not send the calamity.[178] Reinterpreting Mic 3:12 as a warning to Hezekiah allowed the judgment proclamation to remain by using a common prophetic form. Nevertheless, the tradition that Micah's words were a warning, which Hezekiah heeded, comes into conflict with the Hezekiah traditions elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.

Apart from Jer 26:19 no other account of Micah's interaction with Hezekiah exists. Second Kings and Isaiah record Isaiah's interaction with Hezekiah. Second Kings 19:14-19 (cf. Isa 37:14-20) reports that at the time of Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem Hezekiah went to the temple and prayed, asking YHWH for deliverance. Isaiah then sent a message to Hezekiah, informing him that YHWH would protect Jerusalem from Sennacherib's army (2 Kgs 19:20-28; Isa 37:21-29).[179] According to the tradition located in 2 Kings and Isaiah, it was Isaiah's words of hope not Micah's words of doom that came to Hezekiah as he faced Assyrian forces. Additionally, Hezekiah sought YHWH's protection because of Sennacherib's attack and not because of a prophecy of doom from Isaiah or Micah.

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[177] Stefan Maul, "How the Babylonians Protected Themselves against Calamities Announced by Omens," in *Mesopotamian Magic. Textual, Historical, and Interpretative Perspective*, ed. I. Tzvi Abusch and Karel Van der Toorn (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 123–29.

[178] Matthijs J. De Jong, "Biblical Prophecy-A Scribal Enterprise. The Old Testament Prophecy of Unconditional Judgment Considered as a Literary Phenomenon," *VT* 61, (2011): 49.

[179] The tradition in 2 Chr 32:20 is somewhat different. Second Chronicles does not record Isaiah's positive prophecy. Instead, it records that both Isaiah and Hezekiah prayed to YHWH because of Sennacherib's attack and YHWH delivered Jerusalem after the prayer.

Furthermore, the Jer 26 tradition holds that Hezekiah "feared YHWH and sought his favor" (Jer 26:19) because of Micah's words. Second Kings records two occasions in which Hezekiah prayed to YHWH for deliverance. The first occasion, mentioned above, concerned Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 19:1, 15–19 cf. Isa 37: 1, 14–20). In this account the report of Sennacherib's siege motivates Hezekiah to pray in the temple. The second occasion concerns Hezekiah's illness (2 Kgs 20: 1–11 cf. Isa 38:1–11). Second Kings and Isaiah record Isaiah prophesying that Hezekiah would die from his illness. However, Hezekiah prayed and reminded YHWH of Hezekiah's faithfulness. Following Hezekiah's prayer, Isaiah reports to Hezekiah that because of his prayer, YHWH will heal his illness and that he will live 15 more years. Hezekiah's healing directly contradicted Isaiah's first prophecy (2 Kgs 20:1 cf. Isa 38:1), and therefore the second prophecy was needed to legitimate Isaiah.[180]

The Hebrew Bible lacks support for the tradition concerning Micah's interaction with Hezekiah in Jer 26:19.[181] Moreover, the text preserves no record of Micah's interaction with Hezekiah at all aside from the superscription that places Micah historically in the time of Hezekiah and the tradition in Jer 26. The tradition concerning Micah's interaction with Hezekiah was likely an oral tradition that circulated alongside the written oracles for a time. The record of this oral tradition in Jer 26 provides a window into the preservation of the Mican oracles and the fluidity of the tradition that allowed it to survive.

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[180] For more on incorrect prophecies that require revision; see David Noel Freedman and Rebecca Frey, "False Prophecy Is True," in *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*, ed. John Kaliner and Louis Stulman, JSOTS (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 83–85.

[181] Freedman and Frey, "False Prophecy is True," 82–87.

The Survival of the Micah Curriculum

Two primary observations outline the changes occurring in the Micah tradition following Sennacherib's campaign. First, the addition of 1:8, 10–15* reframed the earlier material in 2:1–11 and 3:1–12, thereby shifting the rhetorical movement from transgression followed by judgment to judgment followed by transgression. Second, the tradition in Jer 26:18–19 makes clear that the Micah tradents reinterpreted the judgment saying of Mic 3:12 as a prophetic warning, which Hezekiah heeded. These two observations create a fascinating tension. The addition of 1:8, 10–15* shifted the focus to Sennacherib's campaign as the judgment for the social abuses of the royal house, opposing prophets, and priests. Therefore, the centralized authority groups suffered because of transgressions—a message that would not garner much support from the centralized authority group.

However, by reinterpreting Mic 3:12 as a warning that Hezekiah heeded, the Micah tradents promoted the positive action of Hezekiah. The reinterpretation of Mic 3:12 upheld the authorized narrative of Hezekiah's greatness and did not challenge the inviolability of Zion. Consequently, the Mican corpus, once transmitted by tradent/disciples outside of Jerusalem as opposition literature against the abuses of the centralized group, became more palatable for the larger Judean society. Notably, in Jer 26:18–19 the elders of the land appeal to the oral (Micah's interaction with Hezekiah) and written (Mic 3:12) Micah traditions in a group of Judeans from many different regions assuming the audience's familiarity with the tradition. Therefore, by the time of the early exile the Micah traditions were a part of the larger mythological fabric of Judean society. The incorporation of both the reframing material of 1:8, 10–15* and the

oral reinterpretation of 3:12 as a warning fostered the survival of the Micah tradition while still maintaining a stance that was subversive to the centralized group. The centralized group was still responsible for social abuses, but Micah's words had helped them weather the Assyrian attack. The ministry of Micah of Moresheth to Hezekiah was the reason that Jerusalem did not fall. Consequently, the subversive message of the centralized group's misconduct was swept up with the authorized tradition of Hezekiah's greatness and YHWH's miraculous salvation of Jerusalem.

These two modifications (the added material and the reinterpretation of 3:12) aided in the preservation of the Mican oracles from the eighth century to the sixth century. The support group in the Judean Shephelah likely continued as the primary keepers of the Micah traditions (thus the association with the elders of the land in Jer 26), but because of the incorporation of the Micah traditions into the larger national meta-narrative, every Judean could identify Micah as a prophet of truth. Thus, the reinterpretation of 3:12 ensured the survival of the oracles.

CHAPTER SIX

Micah 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16: Religious Abuses (Phase Three)

Introduction

The third phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 involves a new introduction and isolated updates to the lament song. These new elements show knowledge of the fall of Jerusalem and interact with exilic Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology suggesting an exilic date of composition. This chapter considers three major components of the third phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 (Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16). Three preliminary conversations will support the isolation and analysis of this third redactional layer. First, this chapter will survey the relevant historical background which will establish a plausible ideological proximity between the exilic Micah tradents and the Deuteronomistic editors of Jeremiah at Mizpah. Second, this chapter will examine the literary sub-units of this third phase revealing how they redefine the reason for the judgment using Deuteronomistic language. Finally, this chapter will position this exilic redaction of Micah 1–3 in relation to the exilic Book of the Four.

Historical Setting

The literary evidence suggests that this the third phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 comes from the exilic period. The new introduction and the isolated updates reflect upon the fall of Jerusalem and suggest that cultic abuses are the reason for the fall of the great city. Three important historical factors contribute to the ideological agenda at work in this third phase: the Josianic reforms, the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, and

life in Mizpah following the Babylonian attack. These three historical factors contextualize the exilic Micah tradents in relation to the diverse uses of Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic thought in the wake of the fall of Jerusalem.

The Josianic Reforms and the Beginnings of Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic Ideology

The Josianic reforms enjoyed wide ranging support prior to the fall of Jerusalem.[1] The monarchy under Josiah as well as the priests associated with Hilkiah, the scribes associated with Shaphan, and prophets such as Huldah and perhaps Jeremiah, all supported the reform (2 Kgs 22:14).[2] While there were likely multiple competing

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[1] Some opposition to this reform can be seen as early as the reference to "the remnant of Baal" in Zeph 1:4. This verse indicates that the Josianic reforms were not completely successful when one reads the verse against the backdrop of Josiah's reign as the superscription directs. Apparently not everyone was compliant with the Josianic reform. See Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 714. For an alternate view concerning "the remnant of Baal" see J. Vlaardingerbroek, *Zephaniah: Historical Commentary on the Old Testament* (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 1999), 74. Vlaargingerbroek sees the reference to "the remnant of Baal" as a statement that the root of Baal should be wiped out. He reads the reference as predating Josiah's reform, consequently he argues that the Zephaniah text urges, not that there are still vestiges of Baal in the land following a purge but instead as an encouragement to wipe out Baal worship completely.

[2] See, Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Persian Period*, vol. 2, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 198–206. Albertz gives a fuller description on these pages of the Josianic reform and the support of these different parties. Most scholars agree that whatever Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology is, it got a significant boost with the Josianic reforms. Scholarship debates, however, how Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology was maintained? Odil Hannes Steck suggests that Levites composed and maintained Deuteronomistic literature from the time of Josiah to the post exilic period (*Israel und das Gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Uberlieferung des Deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spatjudentum und Urchristentum* [Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1967], 23). Steck later refines his view suggesting that country-Levites supported the Deuteronomistic movement from the pre-exilic period into the Hellenistic period ("Strömungen theologischer Tradition im Alten Israel," in *Zu Tradition und Theologie im Alten Testament*, ed. Hartmut Gese and Odil Hannes Steck, Biblisch-theologische Studien 2 [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978], 27–56; this essay was subsequently republished in idem., *Wahrnehmungen Gottes im Alten Testament: gesammelte Studien*, TB 70 [München: Kaiser, 1982], 291-317; and has occurred in English translation as idem., "Theological Streams of Tradition," in *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament*, ed. Douglas A. Knight, trans. Douglas A. Knight [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977], 183–214).Wolff suggests an alliance between the Levites and the prophets from the time of Hosea through Jeremiah that shaped the Deuteronomistic History and Deuteronomy. Smend envisions a school that existed through several generations and incorporated the ideology of different groups (*Die Enstehung des Alten Testaments*, TW 1, [Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1984], 124). Albertz conceptualizes "Deuteronomism" as a "theological current of the time" rather than a school ("In Search of the Deuteronomists: A First Solution to a Historical Riddle," in *Future of the Deuteronomistic History* ed. Thomas C. Römer, BETL 147 [Louvain: Peeters, 2000], 10–11). This conceptualization provides Albertz with flexibility to show that various

political ideologies following the death of Josiah, the Biblical text provides enough evidence to identify at least two political agendas. On the one hand, the monarchy fell out of favor with Jeremiah and the Shaphanides following Josiah's death in 609 BCE.[3] Jeremiah opposed the Davidic monarchy under Jehoiakim (Jer 22:18; 26:1, 21–23; 36:28–32; 52:2), predicted the fall of Jerusalem (Jer 7:14), and advocated for submission to Babylon (Jer 27:9, 11–12). The Shaphanides supported and protected Jeremiah throughout this period (Jer 26:23).[4] An alternative political agenda supported the Davidic monarchy led by Jehoiakim and promoted nationalistic ideals and rebellion against Babylon. Pashhur the priest (Jer 20:1–6) and Hananiah the prophet (Jer 28), for example, strongly opposed Jeremiah and supported Jehoiakim.[5]

Albertz notes that the Hilkiah-family headed the pro-monarchy party since the chief priest Seraiah was a descendant of Hilkaih (Jer 36:26; 52:24).[6] This ideological differences between the Shaphanides and the Hilkiah-family suggests that following the death of Josiah, the supporters of the religious reform parted ways ideologically. One

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groups, including priests, Levites, scribes, and prophets were all interacting with this ideology. Albertz convincingly shows that the Deuteronomistic History and Jeremiah interact with Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology in different ways, highlighting different aspects of the "theological current." He writes that, "In spite of common rhetoric and similar theological topics, it comprised very different groups" (Ibid., 12).

[3] Albertz, "In Search of the Deuteronomists," 12.

[4] The biblical text provides only a limited information concerning the Shaphanides' support of Jeremiah, obfuscating attempts at historical reconstruction. Leuchter contends that the Shaphanide family is Levitical and gained power from the Davidic throne in accordance with Deut 31:9–13. Jeremiah 40:7–10 indicates that the Levitical Shaphanides took power from the monarchic group raising their ire and resulting in the eventual assassination of Gedaliah by Ishmael who had a claim to the line of David. Leuchter contends that the Shaphanides were of northern origin and migrated southward during the reign of Hezekiah (*The Polemics of Exile in Jeremiah 26-45* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011], 123). See similarly: Russell Hobson, "Jeremiah 41 and the Ammonite Alliance," *JHS* 10 (2010): 13.

[5] Albertz, "In Search of the Deuteronomists," 12.

[6] Ibid.

group supported the Davidic monarchy and rebellion against Babylon and the other did not. The Babylonian puppet king Zedekiah eventually sided with the nationalistic Hilkiah group, rebelling against Babylon and bringing about the subsequent deportation of Judeans and the destruction of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar.[7]

The Babylonian Defeat of Judah

The archaeological record from the time of Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Judah shows that the Babylonian military invasion caused significant destruction in the west, south and east of Judah as well as Jerusalem and its immediate environs.[8] Excavations at Lachish (west), Arad (south), En-gedi, and Jericho (east) show significant destruction layers that archaeologists associate with the Babylonian invasion. These cities likely served as fortress towns committed to Babylonian resistance.[9] Cities north of Jerusalem, in the territory of Benjamin likely allied themselves with Babylon as they remained relatively unscathed by the Babylonian attack.[10] The destruction levels as well as the record of deportations in 2 Kings and Jeremiah indicate the extent of the upheaval caused by the Babylonian conquest. Babylonian forces deported the elite classes as well as

[7] For a discussion of these three deportations and the difficulties in establishing the number of exiles see, Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 481. The number of deportees differs in 2 Kings and Jeremiah (see 2 Kgs 24:14. 16 cf. Jer 52:28 and 2 Kgs 25:8, 11 cf. Jer 52:29). 2 Kings displays a tendency to use rounded larger number while Jeremiah gives more exact figures. Additionally Jeremiah contains the account of the third deportation which 2 Kings does not record.

[8] Ibid., 480.

[9] Ibid.

[10] See the exploration of the difficulty in dating strata in Benjamin in Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Bible, Archaeology and Politics; or the Empty Land Revisited," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 27 (December 2002): 169–87. See also Sterns later nuancing of the issue and rejoinder to Blenkinsopp in Ephraim Stern, "The Babylonian Gap: The Archaeological Reality," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 28, no. 3 (March 2004): 273–77.

artisans (2 Kgs 24:16). The death toll in Judah was great and the total annihilation of the governing body left the social structure of Judah in shambles.

Mizpah

Those remaining in the Judah following the Babylonian incursion faced upheaval and uncertainty, but not total annihilation. Babylon did not reorganize and repopulate the region as Assyria had done following Samaria's fall.[11] Instead, Nebuchadnezzar set up a local administration in Mizpah under Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, a Shaphanide (2 Kgs 25:22–25). The choice of Gedaliah, almost certainly reflected his and his family's pro-Babylonian leanings.[12] Mizpah likely functioned as an administrative center before the destruction of Jerusalem but following the Babylonian invasion it became the primary location for governing the Judean territory.[13]

Some redistribution of resources occurred after Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah as ruler in Mizpah. The poor of the land received vineyards and fields to work and Gedaliah encouraged Judeans to work the land and produce surplus again, largely to provide for the taxes needed to appease Nebuchadnezzar.[14] In spite of these provisions,

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[11] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 482–83.

[12] For a clear overview of the pertinent information see Joshua J Adler, "The Triple Tragedy of the Gedaliah Assassination," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 42, (October 2014): 247.

[13] For a brief overview of Mizpah's situation see: Jeffrey Zorn, "Mizpah: Newly Discovered Stratum Reveals Judah's Other Capital," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 23, no. 5 (September 1997): 28. Zorn cites the archaeological records he used to uncover the exilic strata at Mizpah. This brief article is an excellent and readable overview of the topic. See also Jeffrey Zorn, "Tell En-Naṣbeh and the Problem of the Material Culture of the Sixth Century," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 438.

[14] For more details on the assassination of Gedaliah see: Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 485. Adler, "The Triple Tragedy of the Gedaliah Assassination." Eric Peels, "The Assassination of Gedaliah (Jer 40:7-41:18)," in *Exile and Suffering* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 83–103.

tensions remained between more elite groups who had clashed in the final days of Judah concerning submission to Babylon.

The Shaphanides and the Davidic Monarchy Clash

The controversy between the pro-Babylonian Shaphanides and the more nationalistic group in Judah did not die away after the destruction of Jerusalem or the ascension of the Shaphanides to power under Gedaliah. The pro-Davidic monarchy faction that remained in Judah found Gedaliah's leadership problematic and a contingent of nationalistic soldiers, led by a high ranking military official, Ishmael, assassinated Gedaliah shortly after the fall of Jerusalem.[15] Along with Gedaliah, the nationalistic contingent killed Gedaliah's entire guard and the Babylonian military delegation at Mizpah (Jer 41:1–3). Ishmael's claim to leadership in Judah was his linage connected to one of David's sons. The Judean populace did not support Ishmael's claim to leadership and he soon fled to Ammon to escape Babylonian backlash.[16] Other members of the nationalistic contingency fled to Egypt, taking with them an unwilling Jeremiah (Jer 43:1–7).

These two factions, the pro-Babylonian and the nationalistic faction, both began as supporters of the Josianic reforms. Both groups supported the growing Deuteronomistic ideology of the reforms in different ways. Albertz contends that the pro-

[15] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 485. Miller and Hayes note Jeremiah 41:1 mentions only the seventh month and not the year. Gedaliah may have only lasted two months after the destruction of Jerusalem. The other option is to read the seventh month detail as referring to 582 BCE, seven months after Jeremiah's account of the final deportation (Jer 52:30). See also, Joel P. Weinberg, "Gedaliah, The Son of Ahikam in Mizpah: His Status and Role, Supporters and Opponents," ZAW 119 (2007): 358–62. Weinberg surveys the different options for dating Gedaliah's death and holds that the assassination likely occurred in 582 BCE.

[16] Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, 485–86.

Babylonian group, led by the Shaphanides and supported by Jeremiah, advocated for religious and social reform.[17] The Shaphanides began to oppose the Davidic monarchy under Jehoiakim because the monarchy abandoned social change related that Deuteronomic ideology. The nationalistic party saw the cultic changes and the purification and centralization of the cult in Jerusalem as the primary objective of Deuteronomic ideology.[18] This group supported the Davidic monarchy and rebellion against Babylon.

Albertz associates the nationalistic group with the Deuteronomistic ideology found in the Deuteronomistic History and the Shaphan group with the Deuteronomistic ideology found in Jeremiah.[19] These competing Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideologies that Albertz finds in the late sixth century lead him to the conclusion that there was not so much a Deuteronomist or a Deuteronomistic school but that Deuteronomistic ideology was promoted differently by different interest groups.[20] The perception of the kingship reflects one of the primary distinctions between these manifestations of Deuteronomistic ideology among the competing groups. As noted above, the nationalistic group of the late sixth century supported the Davidic kingship while the Shaphanides, whether because of interest in social concerns or a play for more political power, withdrew their support from the Davidic monarchy.

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[17] Albertz, "In Search of the Deuteronomists," 12.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., 12–17.

[20] Ibid., 10.

The Davidic King and Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic Ideology

The exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History ends with the Babylonian king, Evil-Marduk (Akk. Amel-Marduk), releasing Jehioachin from prison and allowing him to eat at the king's table (2 Kgs 25:27–30).[21] This fact was clearly important to the editors of the Deuteronomistic History who include it as a nod to the continued importance of the Davidic monarchy despite the Davidic line's displacement from the land.[22] Indeed the promise to David concerning his everlasting dynasty (2 Sam 7) and the

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[21] Richard D. Nelson, "The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History: The Case Is Still Compelling," *JSOT* 29 (2005): 319–37.

[22] The study of the composition of the Deuteronomistic History has developed since Noth's watershed book *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1943). Three distinct schools have since emerged as the dominant voices in the study: the "Neo-Nothian" single editor models, the dual-redaction models and the Göttingen School. First, a number of scholars continue to advocate, as Noth did, for a single exilic compiler of the Deuteronomistic History who combined preexisting sources and traditions to tell one story of Israelite history from the perspective of the exile. Van Seter's alters this model by attributing points of disjunction in the text to subsequent editorial activity rather than pre-existing sources of histories. Yet he still attributes the formation of the Deuteronomistic History to one primary exilic editor (*In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and The Origins of Biblical History* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997], 317–21; see similarly Steven L. McKenzie, "The So-Called Succession Narrative in the Deuteronomistic History," in *Die sogenannte Thronfolgegeschichte Davids: neue Einsichten und Anfragen*, ed. Albert de Pury and Thomas C. Römer, OBO 176 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000], 123–35). Others follow Frank Moore Cross by accounting for large scale discrepancies concerning the kingship by attributing the Deuteronomistic History to a series of two redactions: one during the Josianic reforms and one during the exile (Frank Moore Cross, "The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J. G. McConville, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 8 [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000], 79–94; Nelson, *The Double Redaction*). Finally, the Göttingen school traces a series of three layers through the exilic and postexilic eras the first comprising the base history (DtrG), the second dedicated to prophecy and prophetic narrative (DtrP), and the third concerned with items of the law (DtrN; see Rudolf Smend, "The Law and the Nations: A Contribution to Deuteronomistic Tradition History," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J. G. McConville, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 8 [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000], 95–110; Walter Dietrich, *David, Saul und die Propheten: das Verhältnis von Religion und Politik nach den prophetischen Überlieferungen vom frühesten Königtum in Israel*, BWANT 7/2 [Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1987], 12-24).

Of these three options, the double redaction theory is the most compelling with one caveat. The positive presentation of Hezekiah indicates that a version of the Israelite history likely dates back to the 8th century (Baruch Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology: Chronicles' Thematic Structure: Indications of an Earlier Source," in *Creation of Sacred Literature: Composition and Redaction of the Biblical Text*, ed. Richard E. Friedman, UCPNES 22 [Berkeley: University of] California Press, 1981), 35–54). Thus, though a double redaction is a good characterization of the formation of the Deuteronomistic History, the textual evidence points to earlier source material that was incorporated into the Josianic redaction. Evidence for the Josianic redaction includes the positive assessment of Josiah and the positive view of the Josianic reforms

hope in the reforms of the two good Davidic kings, Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:5) and Josiah (2 Kgs 23:25) make the Deuteronomistic History a composition pulsing with the hope of YHWH's blessing in the restoration of the monarchy. The opposite is also the case. The Deuteronomistic History suggests the sins of Manasseh caused YHWH to remove his blessing which led to the eventual demise of the kingdom (2 Kgs 21:10–15).[23] Consequently, it is clear that for the Deuteronomistic History the kings bring either hope or destruction. Jeremiah lacks any hopefulness surrounding Jehoiachin's survival or the reinstitution of the Davidic monarchy.[24] Jeremiah describes Jehoiachin as one completely rejected by YHWH (Jer 28:3).

These conflicting views and appropriations of Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology resulted in the assassination of Gedaliah. Albertz contends that though the nationalistic party of post-Gedaliah Judah fled to Egypt, most of the nationalistic party associated with the exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History were already exiles in Babylon.[25] The Shaphanides persisted in Mizpah, continuing to edit the Jeremiah

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(Thomas C. Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* [London: T&T Clark, 2007], 86-90). Similarly, portions of the text that reflect upon the exile likely stem from an exilic composition. This chapter shows that Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9 draws upon this exilic Deuteronomistic ideology present in the exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History (the material may also be from an earlier recension that became a part of the exilic recension). Of primary importance is ideology that blames the fall of Jerusalem on cultic offenses, namely, worshiping idols, and the comparison between the demise of Samaria and Jerusalem (cf. 2 Kgs 17). Thus, a double redaction (Josianic and exilic) of the Deuteronomistic History explains the state of the text best, but one should also hold to the good possibility of earlier source material and its incorporation into the Josianic recension of the Deuteronomistic History.

[23] For more on the Manasseh narrative and how it functions in the Deuteronomistic History, see Andrew Taehang Ohm, "Manasseh and the Punishment Narrative," *TynBul* 61 (2010): 237–54.

[24] Albertz, "In Search of the Deuteronomists," 12–13.

[25] Ibid., 14. Albertz points to 2 Kgs 25:18–21 which demonstrates the Babylonian interest in removing Babylonian opposition from the land of Judah. Albertz notes that the leaders of the nationalistic party were either executed (Hillkiah's son, Seraiah; cf.2 Kgs 25:18) or exiled (Seraiah's son, Jehozadak; cf. 1 Chron 5:41). Additionally, Albertz points to the nationalists' hope for a quick return to the land (Jer 29:21-23). The donation of the Judean exiles toward the coronation of Zerubbabel (a Davidic descendant)

oracles.[26] Therefore, according Albertz, these competing groups who appropriated Deuteronomistic ideology differently spent the exile in different locations.

The Micah/Book of the Four Tradents and Mizpah

Although the nationalistic party fled and the leading Shaphanides were killed, life continued in Mizpah following the upheaval. The sources for reconstructing this period are extremely limited. Excavations at Mizpah show that administrative buildings and private residences persisted there throughout the exile and into the postexilic period.[27] There is also evidence that cultic practices resumed with some traveling to Jerusalem to worship at the destroyed temple. There is also evidence of elite groups feasting at Ramat Rachel during the period.[28] Life, therefore, continued in Judah in a much more limited manner than before the destruction of Jerusalem. With this sort of activity, including administrative and cultic life, it is likely that scribal activity continued as well. Consequently, one does well to ask, what became of the Micah tradents during the exile? There are three pieces of evidence that evince the persistence of the Micah tradents and the Book of the Four tradents in Judah through the exile.

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mentioned in Zech 6:9–12 further reflects the nationalistic party in Babylon. See also E. Zenger, "Die deuteronomistiche Interpretation Rehabilitierung Jojachins," in *BZ* 12 (1968): 16–30, 18–19. In support of a Babylonian Deuteronomistic group, Zenger points to prayers toward Jerusalem (1 Kgs 8:48), the suggestion of a complete exile of everyone in the land (2 Kgs 25:21), the release of Jehoiachin (2 Kgs 25:27–30). The Jehoiachin passage uses language similar to what one finds in neo-Babylonian inscriptions.

[26] Albertz, "In Search of the Deuteronomists," 14.

[27] Zorn, "Mizpah," 30–40. See also Zorn, "Tell En-Naṣbeh," 430–45.

[28] See Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Judaean Priesthood During the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Periods : A Hypothetical Reconstruction.," *CBQ* 60 (1998): 32–41. See also Jer 41:4 which reports that eighty men brought grain offerings to Mizpah. There may not have been a sacrificial system at Mizpah for the slaughtering of animals. See Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah,* 487.

First, the examination of Jer 26 in Chapter Five established the link between the Micah tradents and the elders of the land.[29] The exilic redactor of the Jer 26 added the scene in which the elders of the land spoke in Jeremiah's defense by citing the prophet Micah.[30] During the exile, the editor of Jeremiah connected the Micah tradition with this group known as the elders of the land. Second, the Micah tradents transformed the Micah tradition in the intervening years between Sennacherib's campaign and the exile. They promoted Hezekiah's positive response to Micah's warning; a response which averted disaster.[31] Even in the exilic updates to Jer 26, the editor presents Hezekiah as a good king, worthy of emulation, and Jehoiakim as an evil king who refuses to listen to the prophets.[32] Third, the exilic tradents of Jeremiah likely stayed in Mizpah after Gedaliah's assassination and Jeremiah's forced departure to Egypt.[33] The connection between the Jeremiah tradents responsible for Jer 26 and the Micah tradents quoted in Jer 26 supplies the only evidence for the location of the exilic Micah tradents (and the Book of the Four tradents). Thus while all historical reconstructions should remain open to revision in light of new findings, the present available evidence favors locating the exilic Micah tradents in Mizpah.[34]

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[29] See Chapter Five, 196–216.

[30] See, Kathleen M. O'Connor, "`Do Not Trim a Word': The Contributions of Chapter 26 to the Book of Jeremiah," *CBQ* 51 (1989): 620-27.

[31] Chapter Five, 235–240.

[32] O'Connor, "`Do Not Trim a Word'," 625.

[33] Albertz, "In Search of the Deuteronomists," 14–15.

[34] James Nogalski proposed that Micah 1–3; 6:1–14 were part of a larger literary work known as the "Deuteronomistic corpus," because of Deuteronomistic themes including the link to 2 Kings 17:19 (*Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*, BZAW 217 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993], 137–140). Schart quibbles with Nogalski's term, "Deuteronomistic corpus" because the corpus lacks typical Deuteronomistic vocabulary (*Die Entstehung Des Zwölfprophetenbuchs: Neubearbeitungen von Amos Im Rahmen Schriftenübergreifender Redaktionsprozesse*, BZAW 250 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998], 33).

Regardless of the location of the Micah and Book of the Four tradents, the way these tradents interact with Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology, especially ideology concerning the king, is telling. While the Jeremiah tradents heap abuse upon Jehoiakim and contend that YHWH has rejected Jehoiachin, the Micah/Book of the Four tradents contend that Hezekiah and Josiah were not the great cultic reformers that the Deuteronomistic History claims.[35] A literary analysis of the units in the exilic update to Micah will show how the exilic tradents use of Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomic ideology. An examination of the place of Mic 1:1, 3–16 in the Book of the Four will show that the Micah/Book of the Four tradents regarded Hezekiah as less than an ideal king.

A Literary Analysis of the Exilic Introduction to Mic 1–3

Thus far, this dissertation explored the historical background and literary make-up of the first two phases in the formation of Mic 1–3. The first phase in the formation of the Mic 1–3 (2:1–11 and 3:1–12) originates in the period before Sennacherib's campaign and accuses the royal house along with the centralized prophets of abuses against Shephelah land owners. The second phase (Mic 1:8, 10–15*) originated among displaced Shephelahites living in Jerusalem following Sennacherib's campaign as an expression of grief over the loss of the Shephelah. The third phase (Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16) stems from the exile and deals with the theological problem of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Rainer Albertz suggests the term "Book of the Four Prophets" (*Vierprophetenbuch*) as a more neutral term ("Exile as Purification: Reconstructing the Book of the Four," in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*, Paul Redditt and Aaron Schart, eds., BZAW 325 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003], 232–251).

[35] See section below on the agenda of the Book of the Four editors, 279.

The third phase supplies a new introduction to the Mican corpus, created by exilic tradents who were concerned with Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomic themes.[36] This new introduction proceeds in four parts or sub-units. The first sub-unit of the new introduction, Mic 1:1, introduces the prophet and his task, to relate the vision that he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. The second sub-unit, Mic 1:3–4, is a theophany which announces the divine warrior (YHWH) who is poised to trample the high places of the earth. The third sub-unit, Mic 1:5, alerts the reader to the reason for YHWH's attack, thus presuming the theophany in 1:3-4. Only in Mic1:5 does the text identify improper worship in Samaria and Jerusalem as the rationale for that judgment. The fourth sub-unit, Mic 1:6–7, describes the destruction of Samaria and her cultic sites.

[36] Hans Walter Wolff first notes Deuteronomistic themes in Mic 1 (1:1, 3, 5, 7, 13–14). Previous scholars ascribe Mic 1 to the eighth century core (*Micah*, CC [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1990], 17). By Deuteronomistic, Wolff means that these verses connect to the Deuteronomistic History in some way. He is not clear concerning the date of these additions. Jörg Jeremias argues for the concept of *Nachinterpretation* as the method by which scribes updated Mic 1–3. The updates consist of theological reinterpretations of older material during the exile. These include: 1:5, 7, 13; 2:3–4, 10; 3:4; 6:14, 16; 5:9–13 (*Die Propheten Joel, Obadja, Jona, Micha*, ATD 24,3 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007]128-156. Book of the Four advocates adopted and modified these previous arguments for a Deuteronomistic redaction in Micah in order to support Micah's inclusion in the exilic prophetic collection including Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah. Schart argues that Book of the Four editors composed Micah 1 for its place between in the exilic period. He holds this view because of the similarities he finds between the material in Micah 1 and the ideology of the Deuteronomistic history. Though he does not find enough lexical evidence to posit a direct relationship between the exilic editor of the Deuteronomistic history and the editor of Micah, he maintains that the themes and connections to exilic Deuteronomistic ideology are strong enough to suggest an exilic date for Micah 1. Additionally, Schart finds within Micah 1, connections to Hosea and Amos that cause him to conclude that Micah 1 (as well as 2 and 3) were composed for the corpus that included Hosea, Amos, and Micah during the exilic period. Early portions of Zephaniah were subsequently added to this collection, forming the Book of the Four (*Die Entstehung*, 250). Wöhrle adopts the idea of a Deuteronomistic redaction of Micah, linking it with similar Deuteronomistic redactions in Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah that bind together the Book of the Four (*Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuches: Entstehung und Komposition*, BZAW 360 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006], 18, 188). Wöhrle posits that this Book of the Four redaction employs Deuteronomistic themes to oppose the prevailing Deuteronomistic theology of the exile ("'No Future for the Proud Exultant Ones:' The Exilic Book of the Four Prophets (Hos., Am., Mic., Zeph.) as a Concept Opposed to the Deuteronomistic History," *VT* 58 [2008]: 608–27).

This new introduction attaches to and integrates with the lament song through four updates (1:9, 12b, 13b, and 16) to the lament song (1:8, 10–15*). These updates move the focus of the lament song from the Shephelah to Jerusalem. The first update to the lament song, Mic 1:9, declares that the destroyer intends to move towards Jerusalem. The second and third updates, Mic 1:12b and 13b, also shift the focus of the lament song to Jerusalem. Micah 1:12b makes it clear that YHWH's destination is the "gate of Jerusalem" while Mic 1:13b establishes that Lachish began the cycle of sins that led to Jerusalem becoming like the northern kingdom (cf. Mic 1:7, 9). The fourth and final exilic update instructs an unnamed city (likely Jerusalem), to perform a mourning rite because her children have gone into exile.

A close examination of the text will aid in confirming the exilic date of these texts as well as the agenda of the exilic tradents. The following sections will work through each literary unit, highlighting the exilic tradents' concern with cultic abuses, focus on Jerusalem, and affinity for Deuteronomistic language and ideology. Before engaging with the literary units and isolated updates, it is important to establish the analogy that the tradents make between Samaria and Jerusalem. The tradents have knowledge of the destruction of both sacred cities and draw on that knowledge to provide a rationale for Jerusalem's destruction. Importantly, this analogy between Samaria and Jerusalem (and their cultic abuses) is also present in 2 Kgs 17 and 21—two exilic Deuteronomistic passages that focus on cultic abuses as the reason for the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem.[37] The exilic tradents of the Mican corpus draw on this Deuteronomistic ideology to establish the reason for Jerusalem's destruction.

[37] Second Kings 8:18 and 16:3 negatively evaluate the Judean kings Ahaz and Jehoram by the stating that they "walked in the ways of the kings of Israel." This negative evaluation that compares the

A Closer Look at the Analogy between Samaria and Jerusalem

Second Kings 17:7–20 records the reason for Samaria's destruction: the people of Israel worshiped other gods (17:7), built high places (17:9), set up *asherim* (17:10), and served idols (17:12). Second Kings 17:19 relates that Judah was similarly wayward, "Even Judah did not follow the commands of YHWH their God. They followed the practices Israel had introduced."[38] This comparison between the cultic abuses of Israel and Judah in 2 Kgs 17 belongs to Dtr2, the exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History.[39] The exilic tradents suggest the Judah will fall just like Israel because Judah also participates in cultic abuses.

Judean kings to the Israelite kings is likely a precursor to the more developed ideology correlating Jerusalem's fate to Samaria's. The Josianic recension of the Deuteronomistic History evaluates the kings of the North according to the "sins of Jeroboam." If the kings of the South behaved like the kings of the North, then, in essence, they were as bad as Jeroboam and wildly dissimilar to the monarch *par excellance*, David. See Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 133 for his use of these Deuteronomistic verses to suggest that the Book of the Four is Deuteronomistic. See also, Jason Radine, "Deuteronomistic Redaction of the Book of the Four and the Origins of Israel's Wrongs," in *Perspectives on the Formation of the Book of the Twelve Methodological Foundations - Redactional Processes - Historical Insights*, Rainer Albertz, James D. Nogalski, ad Jakob Wöhrle, eds., BZAW 433 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 287-289. Radine notes the importance of the sins of Jeroboam in the Deuteronomistic History and its portrayal of the kings but argues that this element is missing in the Book of the Twelve. Below I will show that the sins of Jeroboam as part of the larger ideology of the Deuteronomistic History is in the background of the exilic Mican tradents' agenda.

[38] See Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 133–34.

[39] Scholars are divided concerning how to understand the literary history of 2 Kgs 17:7–20. Most see it as a later insertion into the first recension of the Deuteronomistic History. However, scholars date the first recension of the Deuteronomistic History to different periods; most prominently, the exile or the reign of Josiah. According to Dietrich, 17:7-11, 20 belong to DtrH (the exilic first recension) but 12-19 are updates added by DtrN (*Prophetie und Geschichte: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk*, FRLANT 108 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972], 41–46). Second Kings 17:12–19 is not a later update by DtrN. It displays the same concerns over following the customs of the nations as the previous verses (17:8, 11 cf. 17:15) as well as concern over *asherim/asherah* (17:10 cf. 17:16). Nelson contends that 17:7–20 belongs to Dtr2, the exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History (*The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTSup 18 [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981], 55–63). For Nelson, it is instructive that 2 Kgs 17:13, 20 depicts Judah as following the practices of Israel. This acknowledgment of Judah's sins in light of Israel's exile indicates knowledge of the Babylonian exile which could only belong to the exilic editor of the Deuteronomistic History. For others that understand 2 Kgs 17:7-20 as an exilic addition to the Josianic recension of the Deuteronomistic history see, Iain W. Provan, *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings: A Contribution to the Debate about the*

Second Kings 21:13 contains the same Deuteronomistic ideology concerning the fall of Judah, "I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab. I will wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down."[40] This proclamation of Jerusalem's doom came through the prophets (21:10) indicating that by the time of the exile, Deuteronomistic ideology held that the prophets predicted that Jerusalem would fall like Samaria. This prophetic articulation of impending judgment (21:10–13) follows an evaluation of Manasseh who "caused Judah to sin with his idols," (21:11). The exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History blames Manasseh's cultic abuses for the fall of Jerusalem.[41] Manasseh is guilty of rebuilding high places (21:3), erecting altars for Baal (21:3), making an *asherah* pole (21:3), etc. According to the exilic editor of 2 Kings, these sins were so overwhelming that even Josiah's supposed religious reforms could not save Judah from the fate of Israel.

The analogy that these exilic Deuteronomistic passages create between the fate of Israel/Samaria and Judah/Jerusalem focuses on cultic abuses such as high places, idols, and *asherim*. This Deuteronomistic ideology is similarly present in Mic 1:5–7, 9 which also focus on high places (1:5) and idols (1:7). The correlating ideology between the exilic additions the Mican corpus and the exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History suggest that the exilic Micah/Book of the Four tradents were interacting with Deuteronomistic ideology when they formed the new introduction to the Mican corpus.

Composition of the Deuteronomistic History, BZAW 172 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988), 70–73 and Marvin A. Sweeney, *First and Second Kings: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 391.

[40] Schart, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs*, 181.

[41] Sweeney, *First and Second Kings*, 431.

The analysis of the literary units in the third phase (Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b, 16) will shed more light on the Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomic links therein.

Micah 1:1

The superscription (Mic 1:1) sets the Mican corpus apart as "the word of YHWH" (cf. Hos 1:1; Zeph 1:1), names Micah of Moresheth as the recipient of this word, establishes the time frame as the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, and notes that the message concerns Samaria and Jerusalem. Tradents appended this extended superscription to the Mican corpus during the exile to provide continuity with the other writings in the Book of the Four.[42] Three elements create this continuity. First, the names of the kings in the Micah superscription link it to the superscriptions of Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah. Hosea's superscription contains four kings of Judah (Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah) and one king of Israel (Jeroboam). Amos's superscription lists Uzziah and Jeroboam—concurrent kings who are also the first and last kings mentioned in Hosea's superscription. Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah in Micah's superscription fill in the gap left in Amos's superscription. Scholarship attributes none of the material in Micah to the time of Jotham or Ahaz suggesting that their mention in the superscription reflects an editorial link to Hosea.[43] Finally, Zephaniah mentions Hezekiah and lists Josiah in the

[42] See James Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Hosea-Jonah*, SHBC (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 5. See also, Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*, 127 in which he argues that parts of Mic 1:1 likely pre-dated the deuteronomistic editing of Micah. See also, Wöhrle, *Die frühen*, 138. In all, the Book of the Four claims to cover the reigns of five kings of Judah and specifically mentions one king of Israel, Jeroboam II, who bears the same name as the first king of Israel—a king who, according to the ideology of the Deuteronomistic History, exemplifies the cultic transgressions of Israel. Micah shows how this trouble, begun by Jeroboam I seeps into and destroys Judah as well.

[43] Chapters Two–Four demonstrated that the earliest phase of the Mican corpus comes from the time of Hezekiah. Therefore, earlier kings are excluded.

superscription linking back to Micah and pushing forward into the time that Zephaniah covers.[44]

Second, the description of the Mican oracles as the "word of YHWH" (דבר־יהוה) and a vision "which he saw" (אשר חזה) links them to Hosea, Zephaniah and Amos. [45] Hosea and Zephaniah's superscriptions describe the oracles that follow as "the word of YHWH" (דבר־יהוה). The Amos superscription refers to the Amos oracles as "the words of Amos" (דברי־עמוס) and indicates that they were part of a vision. The Micah superscription holds that the "word of YHWH" that came to Micah was also a vision "which he saw" (אשר חזה). Thus, the Micah superscription holds both components (word and vision) of the Book of the Four superscriptions, essentially linking Micah to Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah.

Third, the Micah superscription mentions Samaria and Jerusalem, thus, it notes that Micah functions as a transition piece connecting the writings that concern the fate of Israel (Hosea and Amos) with those that concern Judah (Micah and Zephaniah).[46] These three elements account for the additions of the exilic Micah/Book of the Four tradents. Two other elements, the attribution to Micah of Moresheth and association of the oracles with the reign of Hezekiah, likely accompanied the Mican oracles as early as the eighth century.

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[44] The superscription mentions Hezekiah as part of the prophet's genealogy, nevertheless, this naming of Hezekiah links the superscription to Micah and indicates the strong relationship of the prophets to the kings—namely that prophets were sometimes part of the royal family.

[45] See Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Hosea-Jonah*, 5.

[46] Mentions of Samaria only occur in Micah 1:1 and 1:5–7, both pieces belonging to the exilic redaction.

The first two phases in the formation of Mic 1–3 were likely attributed to Micah of Moresheth and the reign of Hezekiah through oral recitation or shortened written version of the superscription (Mic 1:1). Evidence for an earlier form of the current superscription comes from Jer 26:18, "Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah." In Jer 26:18 the wording is nearly identical to parts of Micah 1:1. The quote in Jer 26:18 only lacks the three exilic elements outlined above.

Thus an oral or written form of the superscription likely accompanied the Mican oracles in their first two phases of development. In the third phase, Micah/Book of the Four tradents added the three elements outlined above: Jotham and Ahaz, "the word of YHWH" as well as "the vision", and that the vision concerns Samaria and Jerusalem. These additions helped situate the developing Mican corpus in the Book of the Four.

Micah 1:3–4

Micah 1:3–4 contains a theophany in which YHWH descends from his place and treads on the high places (במות) of the earth.[47] In the exilic period, this theophany directly followed the superscription.[48] The theophany portrays YHWH as the divine warrior,

[47]See Jeremias' treatment of theophanies in various genres found in the Hebrew Bible: Jörg Jeremias, *Theophanie: die Geschicichte einer alttestamentlichen Gattung*, WMANT 10 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1965), 123–136. Jeremias shows that theophanies occur with some frequency in prophetic judgment speeches (Amos 1:2; Isa 66:15; 59:19; Jer 25:30; Mal 3:1; Ps 50; Isa 26:21). Mark Biddle suggests that the images of the במות in Mic 1:3, 5; 3:12 create an inclusio and link the theophany to the pronouncement against Jerusalem in 3:12 ("'Israel' and 'Jacob' in the Book of Micah: Micah in the Context of the Twelve," in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, ed. James D. Nogalski and Marvin A. Sweeney, SymS 15 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000], 150). The exilic redactor capitalized on the image of the temple mount in 3:12 and used it to draw on Deuteronomistic themes as well as create an analogy between Samaria and Jerusalem.

[48] See the Chapter Seven, 292–295, for more information pertaining to Mic 1:2 and its inclusion in the Mican corpus. Mic 1:2 stands out from the other material in Mic 1 that is either from the eighth century or the exile. Mic 1:2 focuses on "all the people" as the recipients of disaster while eighth century material focuses on the Shephelah and the exilic material focuses on Samaria and Jerusalem. The broad view of Mic 1:2 fits better with the focus of Mic 4–5. Consequently, the addition of Mic 1:2 to the Mican corpus does not constitute a phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 as it has strong links outside of Mic 1–3.

coming from “his dwelling place” to demolish high places and cause upheaval in creation.[49] The mention of YHWH pursuing the destruction of the במות has strong links to the sinful patterns of both Israel and Judah as described in 1–2 Kings. Thus, again, the exilic tradents show an interest in Deuteronomistic ideology and a focus on cultic abuses.

The Deuteronomistic focus on high places can hardly be overstated. First and Second Kings consistently evaluate the kings of Israel and Judah in accordance with their dealings with the high places. Solomon’s great shortcoming is associated with his institution of במות to foreign gods (Chemosh and Molech; 1 Kgs 11:7). Each king of Judah following Solomon who receives a positive evaluation meets with the qualifying refrain, “however, the high places were not taken away” (1 Kgs 15:14; 22:44; 2 Kgs 12:4; 14:4; 15:4; 15:35). The exceptions, of course, are Hezekiah and Josiah who destroy the במות.[50]

Jeroboam, one of the primary villains of the Deuteronomistic History, institutes במות in Israel along with the idols at Dan and Bethel (1 Kgs 12:31).[51] In the meta-narrative of the Deuteronomistic History, the “man of God” prophesies against Jeroboam concerning the במות and the altar upon the במה at Bethel, that a “son born to the house of

[49] Wöhrle sees the theophany of Mic 1:3–4 as part of the foundational eighth century layer of Micah. However, because Mic 1:3 has links to the Deuteronomistic History and the Deuteronomic code (see below, 252–274), it is better to place the theophany with the other exilic updates to Mic 1.

[50] 2 Kgs 18:4; 23:13, 15, 19.

[51] Jason Radine has argued that one of the primary themes of the Deuteronomistic History is that the fall of Samaria was brought about by the religious abuses that Jeroboam son of Nabat instituted. Because this theme is so prominent in the Deuteronomistic History, Radine argues that one would expect some mention of Jeroboam son of Nebat and the religious abuses that he instituted in the Deuteronomistic editing of the Book of the Four. Radine cannot find any reference to Jeroboam and the “sin that he caused Israel to sin”. However, the condemnation of the בָּמוֹת in Mic 1:3 and 5 has strong links to the Deuteronomistic History and specifically the “sins that [Jeroboam son of Nebat] caused Israel to sin as the remainder of this section will show. Therefore, Radine’s concern for some reference to the religious abuses instituted by Jeroboam son of Nebat is met in this Deuteronomistic update of Mic 1.

David whose name is Josiah" will desecrate the altar with the bones of the priests of the במות.[52] Josiah's major religious campaign fulfills this prophecy when the Deuteronomistic History credits him with destroying the במות of Judah, Bethel, and Samaria (2 Kgs 23:13, 15, 19, 20). The drama of the במות may also have influenced Deut 33:29 which charges Israel to tread on her enemy's במות in the manner that YHWH does in Micah's theophany (See Table 6.1).[53]

Table 6.1 *Mic 1:3 and Deut 33:29*

Reference	English	Hebrew
Mic 1:3	…he will come down and tread on the high places of the earth	וירד ודרך על־במותי ארץ
Deut 33:29	…you [Israel] will tread on their high places.	ואתה על־במותימו תדרך

Thus, the theophany displays both Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomic connections. YHWH's destroys the high places as the kings of Israel and Judah were expected to do (and as the good kings did). Furthermore, YHWH completes the task of treading on the high places in the same manner that the Deuteronomic code describes. The exilic tradents of the Mican corpus interacted with this Deuteronomistic and

[52] Specifically, I am thinking of the Josianic recension of the Deuteronomistic history in which Josiah emerges as the righteous king that undoes the wrongs that began with Jeroboam.

[53] See: David Noel Freedman, "The Poetic Structure of the Framework of Deuteronomy 33," in *Divine Commitment and Human Obligation*, ed. J. Huddlestun (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 85–107; Adam S. van der Woude, "Erwägungen zum Rahmenpsalm von Deuteronomium 33.," in *Studies in Deuteronomy: In Honour of C.J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. F. Garcia Martinez, VTSup 53 (Leiden: Brill 1994), 281–88. Each of these authors sees Deut 33 as a composite piece in which a later insert interrupts an earlier blessing. See the section on the Book of the Four (274) below for more details. These authors consistently date Deut 33:29 to the period before the exile indicating that the exilic additions to Micah could have interacted with the pre-existing Deut 33:29.

Deuteronomic ideology to present YHWH as the righteous divine warrior who set right the cultic abuses of Samaria and Jerusalem.

Micah 1:5

Micah 1:5 provides the reason for the divine warrior's activity in 1:3–4. The divine warrior acts because of the sins and transgressions in Israel and Judah. The connection between the במות and the meta-narrative of the Deuteronomistic History explains why, in Micah 1:5a, פשע parallels חטאות but in v.5b פשע parallels במות.[54] According to the Deuteronomistic narrative just after the prophetic word to Jeroboam concerning the destruction of the altars on the במות, 1 Kgs 13:33 states that Jeroboam I consecrated the במות with priests. This act of consecrating the במות is the "sin (חטאת) of the house of Jeroboam that led to its downfall and to its destruction from the face of the earth" (1 Kgs 13:34). Similarly, when 2 Kgs 17:7–20 describes the חטאות (2 Kgs 17:7, 21) for which Israel was exiled, building במות (2 Kgs 17:9, 10) figures prominently. Finally, in 2 Kgs 23:15, when Josiah desecrates the altars at the במות thus fulfilling the prophecy against Jeroboam, the author recalls that it was by building the במות that "Jeroboam, son of Nebat caused Israel to sin (חטא)." These examples from the

[54] Schart argues that post-Deuteronomistic (D) editors redacted Mic 1:5b on the grounds of this seeming lack of parallelism. These later editors inserted the theophany in Mic 1:3–4 and connections to Mic 1:5 by changing חטאות in v.5b to במות. However, because במות and חטאת frequently occur together in the Deuteronomistic History and because the creation of the במות and worship upon them is frequently referred to as חטאת within the Deuteronomistic History, Schart's conclusion is unwarranted. Micah 1:5b was not amended to connect to Mic 1:3–4. Instead, Mic 1:3–7 is the work of the exilic editor who refocuses the eighth century lament song on religious abuses such as the institution of the במות.Other scholarly opinions on Mic 1:5 vary. Lescow identifies 1:5a as a later gloss ("Redaktionsgeschichtliche Analyse von Micha 1 - 5," *ZAW* 84 [1972]: 46–85). Wolff argues that Mic 1:5 functions as a transition piece between the unrelated material in Micah 1:3–4 and 6–7. Wolff understands Mic 1:5 as a continuation of the judgment speech begun in Mic 1:3. Micah 1:6 begins a new unit focused on Samaria (Wolff, *Micah*, 52).Mays describes Mic 1:5b–7 as an addition stemming from the exilic period, thus separating it from the eighth century material that precedes it (*Micah: A Commentary*, OTL [Westminster John Knox, 1976], 45).

Deuteronomistic History indicate an association between במות and חטאת in Mic 1:5 indicate that the exilic Micah/Book of the Four tradents interacted with these Deuteronomistic notions.

Another challenging aspect of Mic 1:5 is the relationship between the parallel of "Jacob" with "house of Israel" in v.5a, and the parallel of "Jacob/Samaria" and "Judah/Jerusalem" in v.5b.

1:5a *All of this is because of the transgression of Jacob, and the sins of the house of Israel.*

1:5b *What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?*

Wöhrle surmises that editors added v.5b to v.5a to create an analogy between Israel and Judah.[55] As Mic 1:5 reads now, Jacob equals the northern kingdom and Israel equals the southern kingdom. It is not at all unusual for the prophets of the Hebrew Bible to use "Israel" as a synonym for "Judah," especially following the fall of Samaria (cf. Jer 2:4–6, 4:1–4, 5:15–17, 18:1–6, 13–17).[56] The only reason to surmise that the parallelism between Israel and Judah is redactional is because of the use of "Jacob" and "Israel" elsewhere in the earliest composition of Micah to speak exclusively of the southern kingdom (e.g. Mic 3:1, 8, 9).[57] Rather, the exilic tradents used the terms already present in the eighth century material in Mic 3:1, 8 and 9 but redefined the identities so that "Jacob" and "Israel" refer to the northern and southern kingdoms respectively. Micah

[55] Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 140.

[56] See Biddle, "'Israel' and 'Jacob,'" 148.

[57] Or, as Biddle has argued, the exilic editor may have read the references to Israel and Jacob in Mic 3:1, 8, and 9 as references to both the northern and southern kingdoms and thus framed the Mic 1 in accordance with Mic 3 (Biddle, "'Israel' and 'Jacob,'" 146-165).

1:5's placement before 3:1, 8 and 9 transforms the use of "Jacob" and "Israel" in 3:1, 8 and 9. An eighth century text that once referred to the southern kingdom alone now refers to both the north and south in accordance with the agenda of the exilic tradents.[58] The exilic Micah/Book of the Four tradents wanted to show that in the eighth century, Micah of Moresheth foresaw the destruction of Jerusalem and, having knowledge of Samaria's demise, used Samaria's fate as a warning to Jerusalem.

Micah 1:6–7

The superscription and Mic 1:5 form an inclusio around the theophany by explicitly promoting the analogy between Israel and Judah. In Mic 1:6–7, the text departs from the analogy to describe the destruction of Samaria's cultic site. The theophany of Mic 1:3–4 indicates that YHWH is coming to tread on the high places of the earth. In 1:6–7 the action slows and the text focuses on YHWH's act of destruction. The terms by which YHWH destroys Samaria are similar to the terms by which the Deut 7:5 and 12:3 instruct the people of Israel to destroy the cultic sites of the nations. The imagery of breaking down stone structures is similar in Deuteronomy and Micah and the passages share the lexical repertoire of שׂרף, פסיל, and אשׁ (see Table 6.2 below).[59]

[58] See above concerning the analogy between the northern and southern kingdoms, 252–253. Andersen and Freedman note that Mic 3:8b and 1:5b are "very close" in their use of "Israel" and "Jacob," "[but] the former leads to Jerusalem, the latter to Samaria" (Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Micah*, AB 24E [New York: Doubleday, 2000], 172).Perhaps this speaks to the intention of the exilic editor. Just as the exilic editor pulls from 3:12 and the image of Jerusalem being destroyed to create his picture of Samaria's destruction in Mic 1:6–7, so he draws from Mic 3:8b which points to Samaria to form the image in Mic 1:5b.

[59] Karl Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton*, KHC 13 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1902), 268.

Table 6.2 *Mic 1:7 and Deut 7:5; 12:3*

Reference	English	Hebrew
Mic 1:6-7	…I will pour her stones into the valley, and will lay bare her foundations. All of her idols will be smashed, all of her earnings will be burned with fire, and all of her images I will make desolate…	והגרתי לגי אבניה ויסדיה אגלה וכל־פסיליה יכתו וכל־אתנניה ישׂרפו באשׁ וכל־עצביה אשׂים שׁממה
Deut 7:5	…tear down their altars, and smash their pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their idols with fire.	מזבחתיהם תתצו ומצבתם תשׁברו ואשׁירהם תגדעון ופסיליהם תשׂרפון באשׁ
Deut 12:3	…you shall tear down their altars and smash their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire and you shall cut down the idols of their gods…	ונתצתם את־מזבחתם ושׁברתם את־מצבתם ואשׁריהם תשׂרפון באשׁ ופסילי אלהיהם תגדעון

Again, the exilic tradents of the Mican corpus interact with Deuteronomic ideology to describe YHWH's activity against Samaria's cultic site.[60] These Deuteronomic verses alone have the same lexical repertoire as Mic 1:6–7. Thus, the text shows YHWH to be the righteous divine warrior who moves against Samaria because of her cultic abuses. Additionally the text indicates that YHWH completes the destruction that the people of God should have completed according to the Deuteronomic code.

[60] Both of these verses can be understood as an admonition in the late monarchic period to stay away from foreign nations and not engage in their religious practices. Nelson notes that these concerns may reflect the Assyrian period. See: Richard D. Nelson, *Deuteronomy : A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 98.

Micah 1:9

Following the description of YHWH's campaign against Samaria, the exilic tradents turn their attention to Jerusalem. To describe YHWH's attack against Jerusalem, the exilic tradents updated the pre-existing lament song (1:8, 10–15*) with four updates including 1:9, 12b, 13b, and 16. With these updates, the tradents reframe the lament song to focus on Jerusalem as the recipient of YHWH's wrath. These tradents added Mic 1:9 to show that Samaria's "wound" had spread as far as Jerusalem. Micah 1:9 refers to a wound that belongs to a feminine singular entity. The closest feminine singular reference is Samaria in 1:6.[61] Thus, the exilic tradents placed the analogy between Israel and Judah in the prophetic speaker's mouth as a part of his first person (1:8) lament song over the Judean Shephelah. The exilic tradents updated the beginning of the lament song (1:8) with the phrase על־זאת to refer back to the use of כל־זאת in 1:5 and to connect the lament song to the exilic introduction.[62] In addition, the exilic tradents employed the term "my people" in Mic 1:9 to refer to all the people of Judah. The prophetic speaker frequently employs the phrase "my people" in the first phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 (2:1–11 and 3:1–12) to refer to the inhabitants of the Judean Shephelah over against the Jerusalem elite. The exilic tradents transform the use of "my people" in 1:9 by using it to refer to

[61] See Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 143.

[62] Most scholars attribute all of Mic 1:8 to the eighth century BCE. See for example Wolff who dates all of Mic 1:8–16 to the period prior to the fall of Samaria during the threat caused by Tiglath-Pileser III (*Micah*, 48). Nogalski assigns all of Mic 1:8–16 to the eighth century Assyrian threat to Judah after the destruction of Samaria (*The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, SHCS [Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2011], 512). Wöhrle assigns Mic 1:8 to the eighth century. He suggests the same connection between Mic 1:8 and 1:5a, however, he considers Mic 1:5a to be part of the eighth century text. Therefore, the connection to 1:5a is not problematic for him (*Die frühen Sammlungen*, 142). Because I have suggested that all of Mic 1:5 belongs to the exilic reframing of the eighth century text, I must account for the link between 1:5a and 1:8 differently. Just as the exilic editor has created links between his updates and the eighth century material in Mic (the use of Israel and Judah in Mic 1:5 linked to 3:1, 8, 9 as well as the use of the image of the "high place" to link 1:3, 5 with 3:12) so here the editor creates links between the exilic update and adds a small phrase to the beginning of an eighth century line, "concerning this". The addition reduces the tension caused by placing Mic 1:8 between the exilic additions of Mic 1:6–7 and 9.

those in Jerusalem; "It has reached the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem itself." Thus, the exilic tradents use terms common to the eighth century prophetic speaker but broaden the scope of the prophet's concern to include Jerusalem. The addition of 1:9 establishes that Jerusalem is the divine warrior's goal. The exilic tradents reinforce this focus on Jerusalem with three updates (1:12b, 13b, and 16) to the lament over the Shephelah cities (1:10–16*).

Micah 1:12b, 13b, 16

Three editorial additions interrupt the structure of the lament in Micah 1:10–16.[63] The evidence that these isolated insertions are from a later hand include: the focus on Jerusalem, the כי clauses in 12b and 13b, and the lack of puns concerning the new target of Jerusalem.

First, it is telling that Mic 1:12b, 13b, and 16 focus on the demise of Jerusalem.[64] The lament song's original context, the aftermath of Sennacherib's campaign, would not have included the destruction of Jerusalem because Sennacherib failed to take Jerusalem and because of the prophetic speaker's preoccupation with the Judean Shephelah. The exilic period is the earliest time in which tradents could be sure of Jerusalem's demise and the earliest opportunity for tradents to revise the lament song to focus on Jerusalem's ill fate. Second, Mic 1:12b and 13b interrupt the structure and rhetoric of the lament song. Both isolated updates employ a כי clause that is not found elsewhere in the song (apart from 1:16). Additionally, the isolated updates do not follow the established rhetoric of the

[63] Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 143–44. Wöhrle notes that both Mic 1:12b and 13b do not contain puns associated with Jerusalem. Puns accompany the other cities in the lament song (see Chapter Four, 167). He therefore surmises that these two mentions of Jerusalem are later additions.

[64] For evidence that Mic 1:16 references Jerusalem, see below, 269.

lament song that first names a city and then employs a pun to talk about the city's act of mourning.[65] A closer look at the verses in question will bear these observations out.

In 1:12 the village named "bitterness" (מרות) waits for good. What follows is the odd phrase, "for evil has come down from YHWH to the gate of Jerusalem" (כי־ירד רע מאת יהוה לשער ירושלם).[66] This statement interrupts the structure of the poem with a כי clause indicating that Maroth ought to writhe in pain because of the disaster coming to Jerusalem.[67] A כי clause also interrupts the structure of 1:13, providing a transition between two parts of an insertion (all of 13b) rather than at the beginning of the insertion.[68] In the form one would expect, the poem instructs "Lachish" to harness the chariot to the horses by utilizing a pun in which the name "Lachish" sounds like the

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[65] Nogalski provides a helpful analysis of the word plays in this section by distinguishing between two types. The first type of word play develops the sound of the city name (e.g. "Lachish" sounds like the instruction to harness the chariots "to the horse" [לרכש]). The second type plays with the meaning of the name and often provides a reversal (e.g. "Shaphir" meaning "graceful" is disgraced with nakedness and shame; see Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 531).

[66] The use of ירד here may link to its use in Mic 1:3. This would be an additional indicator of 1:12b belonging to the same redaction as 1:3. Though ירד is common in the Hebrew Bible, it occurs only in these two places in Micah.

[67] Note that there is a link to this verse in 1:9, "It (or he) has reached the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem."

[68] Andersen and Freedman remark that Mic 1:13 is one of the few places in Mic 1:10–16 that can be "read with relative clarity" (*Micah*, 226). However, the text is somewhat strange. Verse 13a and 13bβ form a second person envelope around the third person feminine statement of 13bα. Therefore the verse would read something like, "You inhabitants of Lachish, harness the chariot to the horse. She was the beginning of sin to Daughter Zion, for the transgressions of Israel were found in you." Though it is not terribly unusual for Hebrew poetry or prose to move back and forth from second person to third person, the use of the feminine third person is unusual in light of the second person masculine used in v.13a and v.13bβ. It is possible that the use of the feminine singular pronoun links back to Samaria in Mic 1:6. The treatment of Mic 1:9 above noted that the mysterious use of the feminine possessive points back to Samaria. It is likely that a similar play is at work here, especially since the reference to Israel in v.13bβ implies the northern kingdom. The other possibility is that the feminine pronoun in v.13bα refers to the "inhabitant" of Lachish and that the editor was trying to even out the unusual use of the second person masculine in the poem when elsewhere the feminine verb is used (1:11, 12, 14, and 16). Andersen and Freedman maintain that the feminine singular pronoun refers to the goddess of Samaria whose worship came to Jerusalem via Lachish (*Micah*, 230). It is most likely that the exilic editor has in mind the sins of Samaria and makes reference to "her" similar to the insertion in Mic 1:9.

phrase “to the horses” (לרכֹּשׁ).One would expect the statement concerning Lachish to end here. However, the poem further indicts Lachish for being the “beginning of sin for Daughter Zion for (כי) the transgressions of Israel were found in you.” The כי clause binds the two parts of the explanatory insertion together.

The third place in which an insert interrupts the poetry is in 1:16, which does not contain a city name but instead contains instruction to a feminine singular entity to shave her head because her children will go into exile. Here a כי clause again offers an explanation for the mourning rite. In these three places, the poetry moves beyond a simple instruction to prepare for or mourn over destruction and offers an explanation for this activity. Additionally, the first two instances of an insertion concern Jerusalem (1:12b, 13b). The third instance arguably refers to Jerusalem as well, as the feminine singular entity whose destruction is the capstone of the poem.[69]

The updates to the lament song in 1:12b and 1:13b link to 1:1, 3–7, 9 further indicating the exilic nature of these updates and their connection to the exilic tradents’ agenda.[70] Micah 1:12b states that destruction is coming to the “gate of Jerusalem” (לשׁער

[69] Nogalski maintains that the feminine singular entity is Lady Zion (cf. 1:13). This assertion makes the most sense of the text because 1:16 assumes a clearly personified city with feminine characteristics capable of having children and performing mourning rites (*The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 530). The LXX supports this idea with the reading “the glory of the daughter of Israel” (ἡ δόξα τῆς θυγατρὸς Ισραηλ) at the end of Mic 1:15.

[70]Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 143–44. Wöhrle questions the Deuteronomistic nature of Mic 1:13b because he cannot find a discernable Deuteronomistic language and because the verse links to 1:5b which is a part of his eighth century layer. He struggles however, because 1:13b mentions Jerusalem, a factor that he finds in the Deuteronomistic updates in Mic 1. In my reconstruction, the tension is alleviated because 1:5 belongs to the exilic redaction and not the eighth century. Therefore, the connection between 1:5a and 1:13b makes sense as the work of the exilic tradents.

See also Wolff, *Micah*, 50. Wolff argues that Mic 1:13b fits neither the style nor the mood of its context. This portion of the verse does not contain a cri of distress or a wordplay on the name of the city. Instead the 1:13b focuses on daughter Zion, another name for Jerusalem. This focus on Jerusalem fits the agenda of the exilic tradents.

ירושלם), connecting the statement to 1:9, which sees the destruction at the "gate of my people—even Jerusalem" (עד־שער עמי עד־ירושלם).[71] Micah 1:13b connects Daughter Zion (Jerusalem) to the transgression of Israel (פשעי ישראל) which finds a similar statement in 1:5a "because of the Jacob's transgression, because of the sins of the house of Israel" (בפשע יעקב כל־זאת ובחטאות בית ישראל). Micah 1:13b likely also plays on 1:5a. Micah 1:5a equates Israel with the southern kingdom and Jacob with the northern kingdom. The northern kingdom commits transgressions (פשע) and the southern kingdom commits sins (חטאת). One would assume that Israel refers to the northern kingdom in Mic 1:13b because of the paradigm established in Mic 1:1, 5, and 9 by which the southern kingdom inherits the northern kingdom's sinful activity. However, since 1:13b refers to 1:5a, 1:13b reverses the order of the lexemes פשע and חטאת. The text thus associates southern kingdom with "sins" as we would expect. The text, however, associates Israel (the southern kingdom in 1:5) with "transgressions" in 13b. It would make more sense for 13b to say, "the transgressions of Jacob were found in you." The exilic tradents' use of Israel muddles the reader. Is Israel the northern or the southern kingdom? Perhaps that rhetorical impact is the point. Judah has become so much like her northern sister, that the two might as well be called by the same name (see Table 6.3 below).[72]

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[71] The LXX and Aramaic versions contain the plural of "gate" suggesting שערים as the Hebrew *Vorlage*. However, amending the singular *Vorlage* to the plural would also be understandable as the plural of Jerusalem's gates occurs in Jer 17:21, 25, 27; 22:19 and "gate of Jerusalem" occurs nowhere else.

[72] Andersen and Freedmen show the connections to Mic 1:5. They show the reversal of the singular of פשע in Mic 1:5 followed by the plural in 1:13 and the plural of חטאת in 1:5 followed by the singular in 1:13 (*Micah*, 229).

Table 6.3 *Who is Israel?*

Verse	Northern vs. Southern	Transgressions vs. Sins
Mic 1:5	Jacob=northern kingdom Israel=southern kingdom	Jacob=transgression Israel=sins
Mic 1: 13b	Daughter of Zion= southern kingdom Israel=?	Daughter of Zion=sin Israel=transgression

The final isolated update to the lament song occurs in Mic 1:16. Micah 1:16 calls an unnamed city to perform the mourning rite of shaving her head and mourning for her exiled children. The most likely referent for the feminine singular entity is Daughter Zion, in 1:13b because she is the personified city par excellence.[73] Therefore 1:16 is also an exilic addition that capitalizes on the image of Jerusalem and her act of mourning. In sum, the material in 1:1, 3–7, and 9 connects to 1:12b, 13b, 16. These literary pieces share similar rhetorical aims that reframe the eighth century lament to focus on Jerusalem.

The updates in 12b and 13b reference Jerusalem and transform the thrust of the poem so that the action is moving toward Jerusalem while the update in Mic 1:16 shows that the calamity has reached Jerusalem. In 1:12b the disaster is moving through the towns in the Judean Shephelah toward the gate of Jerusalem. In 1:13b the sin begins elsewhere and moves to Jerusalem. Finally, in 1:16 Jerusalem herself is called to mourn,

[73] Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah-Malachi*, 530. Nogalski argues that the feminine singular referent in Mic 1:16 refers to Lady Zion because of the feminine singular commands. He notes that Daughter Zion occurs in 1:13 and draws upon that reference to make a case for Lady Zion as the unspoken referent in 1:16. Smith-Christopher suggests that 1:16 may refer to both Samaria and Jerusalem (*Micah*, OTL [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015], 77). The use of the singular commands mitigate against this conclusion. Additionally, the description of Samaria's fateful day occurs in 1:6–7. The updated lament song focuses on the Judean Shephelah and, most notably Jerusalem (1:9, 12b, 13b) with three mentions of the sacred city. Like Nogalski, Andersen and Freedmen see the referent of the commands in 1:16 as Jerusalem and suggest that 1:16 addresses Daughter Zion (*Micah*, 238; cf. 1:13).

just like all of the cities before her, in contrast to the outcome of Sennacherib's siege, this time she will not be spared. When considered as a whole the new introduction (1:1, 3–7) and the isolated updates to the lament song reinforce the deuteronomistic ideology that promotes an analogy between the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem. The Micah/Book of the Four tradents introduce this ideology in Mic 1:1, introduce the divine warrior in 1:3–4, describe the reason for his advance against Samaria and Jerusalem in 1:5, describe the destruction of Samaria in 1:6–7, and reframe the lament song to describe the advance upon and destruction of Jerusalem in 1:8–16. Consequently, 1:1, 2–16 functions as an extended commentary on YHWH's attack on Samaria and then Jerusalem. The Micah/Book of the Four tradents consistently interact with Deuteronomistic ideology and the Deuteronomic code to articulate the cultic abuses for which YHWH is holding Samaria and Jerusalem accountable.

Conclusions Concerning the Literary Analysis of Units

The exilic tradents of the Mican corpus added a new introduction (1:1, 3–7) and four contextual updates to the lament song (1:9, 12b, 13b, 16) to explain the destruction of Jerusalem. The new introduction and isolated updates can be safely dated to the exile because they reflect upon the fall of Jerusalem, placing them after the catastrophe of 587 BCE. Additionally, the exilic additions interact with exilic Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomic ideology. The exilic tradents reframed the Mican oracles to focus on cultic abuses such as high places (1:5), idols (1:7), and images (1:7) in such a way that correlates the fates of Samaria and Jerusalem. This exilic rationale for YHWH's judgment differs starkly from the eighth century rationale which held out social abuses as the reason for YHWH's judgment (2:1–11 and 3:1–12). The exilic tradents also reframed

the lament song over the Judean Shephelah to show the divine warrior's movement toward Jerusalem. The exilic tradents consistently interact with Deuteronomistic ideology including the analogy between Samaria and Jerusalem (2 Kgs 17:20; 2 Kgs 21:13), the focus on the high places, transgressions, sin, idols, and images. The exilic tradents also interact with Deuteronomic ideology in their description of the divine warrior's destruction of the Samarian shrine (Deut 7:5; 12:3). In sum, the exilic tradents appended a new introduction to the Mican corpus that interacts with Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology to explain the destruction of Jerusalem (see Table 6.4, below).

Table 6.4 *Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomic Lexical Links that Frame the Wrong Doings of Samaria and Jerusalem*

Dtr. Word/Phrase	Micah	Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic Link
במה	Mic 1:3, 5	Wrongdoing of Solomon: 1 Kgs 3:3, 4; 11:4 Wrongdoing of the kings of Judah 1 Kgs 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kgs 12:4 [Heb]; 14:4; 15:4; 15:35; 21:3 Wrongdoing of Jeroboam: 12:31, 32; 13:2, 32, 33; 23:19 2 Kings 17: 2 Kgs 17:9, 11, 29, 32 Hezekiah removes: 18:4, 22 Josiah removes and desecrates: 23:5 (x3), 8; 13, 15, 19, 20 Deut 32:13; 33:29
חטאת + במה	Mic 1:5	1 Kgs 13:32–34; 14:22–23; 2 Kgs 17: 7+9, 11; 23:15.
פסיל	Mic 1:7	Deut 7:5, 7:25; 12:3; 2 Kgs 17: 2 Kgs 17:41
זנה	Mic 1:7	Deut 31:16; Judges 2:17; 8:27, 33

The Book of the Four

James Nogalski was the first to propose that parts of Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah formed a larger literary work known as the "Deuteronomistic Corpus."[74] Nogalski argues that an editor united the existing portions of Hosea, Amos, Micah and Zephaniah creating a precursor to the Book of the Twelve by the early postexilic period. Aaron Schart takes up Nogalski's concept of the Deuteronomistic Corpus but suggests a multi-staged process of formation that began with a Hosea-Amos collection.[75] To this Hosea-Amos corpus, editors first added portions of Micah and then Zephaniah. Schart argues that the early four-book corpus lacks distinctive Deuteronomistic language. He thus prefers the designation "D-Korpus" over the label "Deuteronomistic."[76] Albertz, building on the contributions of Nogalski and Schart, coined the more neutral term, "the "Book of the Four" but still sees strong ties between Deuteronomistic ideology and the Book of the Four.

More recently, the conversation concerning the Book of the Four has shifted from documenting the quantity of deuteronomistic references to the question of the corpus's purpose. Wöhrle argues that the Book of the Four develops as a piece of literature redirecting the strong currents of the Deuteronomistic school through its added focus on social justice and militaristic nationalistic pride as the reason for the fall of the northern and southern kingdoms.[77] Rainer Albertz suggests that the Book of the Four offers one

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[74] Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 176–78, 279–80.

[75] Schart, *Die Entstehung*, 218-233.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 241-284.

primary rationale for the exile: purification.[78] Both of these contributions move the conversation concerning the purpose of the Book of the Four in a positive direction.

Structure of the Book of the Four

The Book of the Four easily divides into two parts: Hosea and Amos deal with the transgressions and fall of the northern kingdom while Micah and Zephaniah deal with the transgressions and fall of the southern kingdom. One of the key contributions of the Book of the Four tradents is Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b which provides a transition from the sins of the North to the sins of the South as noted above.[79] Because this editorial addition has a central function in connecting the two parts of the Book of the Four it is a helpful place to start when assessing the motivations of the community responsible for the collection and redaction of the Book of the Four. The analysis of the literary sub-units of the exilic introduction and updates to the lament song above shows that the Micah/Book of the Four tradents interact with Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology to develop this new introduction to the Mican corpus. This new introduction promotes that cultic abuses caused the destruction of Jerusalem. This ideology corresponds both to the Deuteronomistic History and the Deuteronomic code. The Micah/Book of the Four tradents, however, deviate from the classic Deuteronomistic script in one important way

[78] Rainer Albertz, "Exile as Purification: Reconstructing the 'Book of the Four,'" in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*, ed. Aaron Schart and Paul Redditt, BZAW 325 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 232–51.

[79] Micah 1:1, 3-7, and 9 assume the destruction of Jerusalem and connect to 2 Kgs 17, thus suggesting an exilic date of composition. A Persian period editor later supplies Mic 1:2 in order to apply the prophetic message more globally (See Chapter Seven, 289). Micah 1:8 begins the mourning hymn over Sennacherib's campaign in 1:10-16 thus signaling an eighth century date of composition. See Wöhrle, " 'No Future for the Proud Exultant Ones:' The Exilic Book of the Four Prophets (Hos., Am., Mic., Zeph.) as a Concept Opposed to the Deuteronomistic History," 616. Wöhrle sees the theophany of Mic 1:3–4 as part of the foundational eighth century layer of Micah (*Die frühen Sammlungen*, 139–45). Because Mic 1:3 has links to the Deuteronomistic History and the Deuteronomic code (273–275), the theophany better fits with the other exilic updates to Mic 1.

in Mic 1:1, 3–16. The Micah/Book of the Four tradents indicate that YHWH will personally carry out a true cultic reform as the divine warrior. Though the superscription suggests that Hezekiah is on the throne at the close of Micah's ministry, he does not receive credit for the cultic reforms. In this way, the Micah/Book of the Four tradents challenge the presentation of the great reforming king of the Deuteronomistic History.

The High Places

The preceding examination of literary units in Mic 1:3–7, 9 highlighted the use of במות in Mic 1:3 and 5, and its connection to the evaluations of the kings of the Deuteronomistic History. The only kings who receive fully positive evaluations are Hezekiah and Josiah who destroy the במות.[80] Since the superscription situates Micah's prophecies during the reign of Hezekiah, one might expect some mention of Hezekiah's cultic reform. Second Kings 18:4 claims that Hezekiah "removed the high places and broke down the pillars and cut down the Asherah." Micah 1, however, does not reflect this reform. Though the destruction of the במות has strong associations with the positive and negative evaluations of the kings of Israel and Judah in the Deuteronomistic History, the reference in Micah is not associated with a king but with YHWH. YHWH moves to destroy the high places of the earth, not a king of Judah—not even Hezekiah.[81]

[80] Second Kings 18:4; 23:13, 15, 19.

[81] Jason Radine argues that one of the primary themes of the Deuteronomistic History is that religious abuses instituted by Jeroboam brought about the fall of Samaria. Due to this theme's prominence in the Deuteronomistic History, Radine argues that one would expect some mention of Jeroboam son of Nebat his religious abuses in the Deuteronomistic editing of the Book of the Four. Radine cannot find any reference to Jeroboam and the "sin that he caused Israel to sin." The condemnation of the במות in Mic 1:3 and 5, however, has strong links to the Deuteronomistic History and specifically the sins that Jeroboam caused Israel to sin, as the remainder of this section will show. Radine's need for some reference to the religious abuses instituted by Jeroboam son of Nebat is met in this Deuteronomistic update of Mic 1. See: Jason Radine, "Deuteronomistic Redaction of the Book of the Four and the Origins of Israel's Wrongs," in *Perspectives on the Formation of the Book of the Twelve: Methodological Foundations-Redactional*

Treading on High Places, Burning Idols, and Throwing Down Stones

The examination of these literary units also highlighted the Deuteronomic connections between the theophany (Mic 1:3–4) and Deut 33:9.[82] Deuteronomy 33 is a complex chapter with an early divine warrior hymn which a latter insertion interrupts.[83] Deuteronomy 33:2–5 and 25–29 act as a frame around the blessings of the individual tribes in Deut 33:6–24.[84] The divine warrior of the framing hymn offers Israel protection and success in battle. Deuteronomy 33:29 comments on Israel's distinctive status as those saved by YHWH. Israel is set apart from her enemies and with YHWH's help will tread upon their high places.[85]

Processes-Historical Insights, ed. Rainer Albertz, James D. Nogalski, and Jakob Wöhrle, BZAW 433 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 287–302.

[82] The lexemes דרך and במה are only used together in Job 9:8; Amos 4:13; and Hab 3:19. Job refers to the "high places of the sea" likely drawing on imagery of large waves and YHWH's lordship over watery chaos. Amos 4:13 contains a similar idea to that of Mic 1:3. YHWH assumes the role of divine warrior to punish Israel for her sins. Habakkuk is a statement of adoration in the midst of serious threat. Of these, Amos 4:13 comes closest to both Deut 33:29 and Mic 1:3. The connection between Amos 4:13 and the larger project of the Book of the Four requires further study. Both Schart and Wöhrle include the verse in the hymn-layer of Amos. This layer has unifying characteristics in its use of creation language and reliance on substantive particles (cf. Amos 5:8-9; 9:5-6). In Wöhrle's model the hymn-layer predates the Book of the Four, thus making it available to the Book of the Four tradents (*Die frühen Sammlungen*, 133-135). In Schart's model the hymn-layer postdates the Book of the Four (*Die Entstehung*, 234-251).

[83] Nelson argues that this text entered Deuteronomy when Deuteronomy was redacted for inclusion in the Pentateuch, perhaps during the exile ("The Double Redaction," 386).

[84] David Noel Freedman and Adam van der Woude suggest that the framing poetry in Deut 33:2–5; 27–29 were originally an independent ancient hymn (Freedman, "The Poetic Structure of the Framework of Deuteronomy 33," 85–107; Van der Woude, "Erwägungen zum Rahmenpsalm von Deuteronomium 33," 281–88). Nelson notes that the framework is held together by a concentric structure in which YHWH in vs. 2 corresponds to YHWH in vs. 29. The concentric structure is further observable in the use of Jacob (vss. 4 and 28) and Jeshurun (vss. 5 and 26, "The Double Redaction," 319-337).

[85] A double entre may be at play in Deut 33:29. Israel will trample the *bamoth* of her enemies. The lexeme, *bamoth*, can also refer to the "back" of a person. With YHWH's help, Israel will subject her enemies and metaphorically put her foot on her enemy's back. The lexeme also refers to pagan cultic sites throughout the Hebrew Bible. Ancient readers and hearers of this text would have heard the connection between Israel's military success and eradication of foreign worship sites especially if the ancient readers/hearers were familiar with the narratives of the Deuteronomistic History.

There are two reasons suggesting that the Micah/Book of the Four tradents make use of the divine warrior hymn in Deut 33:29. First, both passages employ the common use of דרך and במה. Second, the image of YHWH as the divine warrior is the guiding force of both. YHWH enables Israel to tread on the high places of her enemies in Deut 33:29 and YHWH treads on the high places of Israel and Judah in Mic 1:3. Micah 1:3 reverses the image of Deut 33:29 making Israel and Judah YHWH's enemies upon whose high places he will tread. Again, the Micah/Book of the Four tradents promote that YHWH as the divine warrior completed the cultic purification that the people of Israel and Judah should have completed.

Similarly, the divine warrior's attack on Samaria in Mic 1:6–7 closely resembles the activity that Deuteronomy calls the Israelites to enact against the inhabitants of the land. Like the image of the divine warrior empowering his people to tread on the high places (Deut 33:29), Deut 7:5 depicts the divine warrior bringing Israel into the land and driving out her enemies before her (Deut 7:1). Her obligation is to destroy the indigenous cultic sites (Deut 7:5). Micah 1:6–7 depicts YHWH's destruction of Samaria by using terms and images similar to those in Deut 7:5 and 12:3.[86] The imagery of breaking down stone structures is similar in Deuteronomy and Micah and the passages share the lexical repertoire of פסיל, שׂרף, and אשׁ.[87] The Micah/Book of the Four tradents describe YHWH's cultic purification of Samaria in this way in order to interact with Deuteronomic ideology. The Micah/Book of the Four tradents suggest that Samaria became so corrupt in her worship practices that the city's worship was indistinguishable from that of the

[86] Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 98.

[87] Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton*, 268.

nations. Moreover, Judah followed the same practices. This description of corrupt worship in Jerusalem (Mic 1:3–7) directly follows a superscription (1:1) that places the prophecy during the reign of Hezekiah.

The Agenda of the Micah/Book of the Four Tradents

Based on the above observations, it is noteworthy that Mic 1:3, 5 credits no king, not even Hezekiah, whom the Deuteronomistic History claims destroyed the high places, with the destruction of the high places. Wöhrle pointes to this intriguing discrepancy between the Book of the Four and the Deuteronomistic History.[88] The Deuteronomistic History never mentions the prophets of the Book of the Four even though the superscriptions of the writings place the prophets in the historical context of the monarchy. Similarly, the Book of the Four rarely mentions the kings of Israel and Judah by name aside from the superscriptions. This mutual silence points to different ideological suppositions for those who compiled each of the corpora. Wöhrle suggests that the Book of the Four provides literary opposition to the ideology of the Deuteronomistic History. He contends that the cultic reforms attributed to Hezekiah and Josiah in the Deuteronomistic History are instead viewed as an act of divine judgment in the Book of the Four.[89]

The above observations concerning YHWH's attack as divine warrior depicted in Mic 1:3–7 confirm and modify Wöhrle's thesis. YHWH is responsible for the destruction of the high places and the idols, not Hezekiah. Hezekiah's city, Jerusalem, is guilty of the

[88] Wöhrle, "'No Future for the Proud Exultant Ones," 623–24.

[89] Ibid.

same sins as Samaria. Wöhrle contends that the theological statement of the Book of the Four is that the cultic reforms were not enough. On top of the reforms, the Book of the Four calls for social justice. Wöhrle argues that YHWH judges Israel and Judah for a lack of social justice, self-reliance, and misplaced hope in military might in the Book of the Four. Wöhrle's assertion concerning the role of social justice in the Book of the Four requires further evidence. Although such focus on social justice may appear elsewhere in the editorial activity of the Book of the Four, it is certainly not the central concern in the transition passage examined above. In fact, the transition passage is completely focused on cultic abuses and YHWH's eradication of them. By appending this section to the front of Micah 2–3* (eighth century text), the editor actually detracts from the emphasis on social abuses in the eighth century material. The eighth century material cites the abuse of the poor and land fraud as the reason for divine judgment while the additions to Mic 1 point only to cultic abuses. Thus, Wöhrle's impulses concerning the marked absence of praise for Hezekiah's cultic reforms is correct but his suggestion that the Book of the Four tradents blamed the fall of Jerusalem on social abuses is misguided. The Micah/Book of the Four tradents rather introduce the idea of cultic purification to a prophetic corpus which lacks the concept entirely. The Micah/Book of the Four promote the Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic notion that cultic abuses brought about the destruction of Jerusalem. To be sure, the social abuses of Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 are still present but they are not the primary reason for the divine warrior's campaign against Samaria and Jerusalem. Rather, the divine warrior treads on high places, smashes idols, and throws down images; all signs of cultic purification.

Thus, the Micah/Book of the Four tradents put forth a mediating position. Using the same standard as the compilers of the Deuteronomistic History, the Micah/Book of the Four tradents cast a shadow of doubt on the claims of the historical narrative. Did Hezekiah really do all the law requires in his cultic reform? Perhaps the great king's efforts were not all that the Deuteronomistic History claims. In reality YHWH had to complete the cultic reform himself. In fact, the Zephaniah/Book of the Four tradents reflect a similar sentiment as Zeph 1:4 records that YHWH will eradicate the "remnant of Baal." This statement, in the context of the reign of Josiah (Zeph 1:1), casts doubt on the effectiveness of the king's reforms.[90] Therefore the Book of the Four raises questions about the reforms of both Hezekiah and Josiah, suggesting that they did not purify the cult in the way that the Deuteronomistic History claims.

Where the Deuteronomistic History hopes for the restoration of the Davidic monarch in the midst of the exile with the release of Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon, the Book of the Four holds no such hope.[91] According to the Micah/Book of the Four tradents, the monarchy failed. One ought not put any further hope in that institution but instead look to YHWH as the one true king who can fulfill the cultic cleansing that Deuteronomy requires. Indeed, this position places the Micah/Book of the Four tradents closer to the Jeremiah tradents in their position concerning the Judean kings. In Mizpah, during the exile, questions concerning the necessity of the Davidic monarch were

[90] See Ibid., 619.

[91] Albertz, "Exile as Purification: Reconstructing the 'Book of the Four' Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve," 245. This characterization of the Book of the Four depends upon what one chooses to include in the Book of the Four. For example, if portions of Mic 5 which are pro-Davidic are included, there are pro-monarchic themes. However, Albertz creates a solid case for the absence of pro-kingship language in the Book of the Four.

answered by the Micah/Book of the Four tradents. The Davidic monarch was never the answer, YHWH alone completes the cultic purification that Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology requires.

Conclusion

The third phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 took place during the exile in Mizpah. In this context different groups appropriated Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic ideology to promote various agendas. The Micah/Book of the Four tradents used Deuteronomistic/Deuteronomic language and ideology to show that cultic abuses led to the fall of Jerusalem. The new introduction that the Micah/Book of the Four tradents append to the Mican corpus (1:1, 3–7, 9) functions as a transition piece connecting Hosea and Amos with Micah and Zephaniah by providing an analogy between the fall of Samaria and Jerusalem. In the midst of the exile, the Micah/Book of the Four tradents cast doubt on the success of the Judean monarchy by suggesting that the great king, Hezekiah, did not dispense with the high places and idol worship leaving the divine warrior to set things right.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Introduction

This dissertation has carefully examined the Mic 1–3. Mic 1–3 contains three smaller literary units which each display a different rhetorical purpose. The first, Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9 suggests that Jerusalem will follow the fate of Samaria because of cultic sins. The second, Mic 1:8, 10–15* laments the destruction of the Judean Shephelah. The third, Mic 2:1–11; 3:1–12 accuses the monarchy and the religious leaders the support the monarchy of land fraud. These three literary units within Mic 1–3, when examined closely, suggest three different historical settings. The primary assertion of this dissertation is that the text of Mic 1–3 took form in three phases that can be linked to three separate historical settings. The first phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 (Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12) took place during the eighth century in the period prior to Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign through the Judean Shephelah. The second phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 (Mic 1:8, 10–15*) developed among displaced Shephelahites in Jerusalem in the years following Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign. The third phase (Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9) originated during the exile among tradents who sought to provide a rationale for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple as well as create a transition piece for the Book of the Four.[1] These three phases in the formation of the Mic 1–3 move the scholarly conversation beyond simply suggesting that Mic 1–3 contains material that originated in the eighth

[1] The Book of the Four is a collection of writings (Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah) that were edited together during the exilic and postexilic period to form a coherent collection that is a precursor to the Book of the Twelve.

century.[2] The articulation of these three phases ground the evolution of Mic 1–3 in plausible historical settings and explain the rhetorical shifts in the text. This study has also gone beyond simply positing historical settings for three distinct units in Mic 1–3 by providing a careful reconstruction of scribal practices that would have allowed the written Micah tradition to persist and grow.

Phases One and Two in the Formation of Mic 1–3

Phase One: Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12

The careful analysis of the literary phases of Micah 1–3 provided in this study has shown that the rhetorical shifts in Mic 1–3 are best understood as developing over a period of roughly 200 years. Moreover, this study has provided significant gains in demonstrating that the eighth century material in Mic 1–3 (phases one and two) actually comes from two distinct historical settings.[3] The first phase (Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12) assumes a functioning Judean Shephelah. This first phase also assumes that the Shephelah is sought after territory which the Judean monarchy (illegitimately) claims as its own (according to the prophetic speaker). Chapters Two and Three show that the dispute portrayed in the first phase (Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12) concerns land-owners from the Judean Shephelah who dispute the monarchy's acquisition of their lands. The prophetic speaker is the spokesperson for the disenfranchised Shephelah land owners and

[2] Scholars have seen Mic 1–3 as belonging to the eighth century (while other text blocks belong to later periods) since Stade. See Stade, "Bemerkungen über das Buch Micha," *ZAW* 1 (1881): 161–72; Mays, *Micah*, 23; Theodore H. Robinson and Horst Friedrich, *Die zwolf kleinen Propheten*, Handkommentar zum Alten Testament 14 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1938); and Bernard Renaud, *La formation du livre de Michée: tradition et actualisation*, Etudes bibliques; (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1977).

[3] See Chapters Two through Four, 19–178.

accuses the monarchy and the religious establishment that supports the monarchy of serious abuses against their own people.[4] This dispute of Shephelah land holdings makes most sense against the backdrop of the late eighth century.

Two historical situations make this particular setting likely: one in which the central issue is battling royal centralization policies and the second which laments the loss of the land to a foreign power. Concerning the first, Chapter Two of this dissertation demonstrates that a trajectory towards centralization of power and an increase in infrastructure reached its zenith in the late eighth century under Hezekiah, but prior to Sennacherib's campaign in 701 BCE.[5] During this period, the monarchy administered extensive land holdings and was invested in the Shephelah. Second, the Shephelah also experienced a reduction in territory during this period.[6] Thus, Judean land holdings reduced at a time when the Judean monarchy had a vested interest in producing surplus in the Shephelah. This historical situation is a likely scenario for the land disputes recorded in Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12. In this context, centralized authorities had means and need to acquire land from Judean land-holders, resulting in the reproach of the prophetic speaker.

*Phase Two: Mic 1:8, 10–15**

Importantly, Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 are the earliest text blocks in Mic 1–3. They pre-date the lament song (Mic 1:8, 10–15*) though both literary units come from the same basic period; the late eighth century. The evidence for this date, enumerated in

[4] Chapter Three, 133.

[5] J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah, Second Edition*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 405–7.

[6] Ibid., 406.

Chapter Four, concerns the lament song (Mic 1:8, 10–15*) which treats the event of Sennacherib's campaign as past events over which the inhabitants of the Shephelah mourn.[7] Such an expression of grief would not make sense until after the destruction of the Judean Shephelah by Sennacherib in 701 BCE. Following Sennacherib's devastating campaign the Shephelah many inhabitants fled to Jerusalem.[8] Chapter Four argues that in this new context, tradents from among the displaced Shephelahites developed the lament song as an expression of grief over the loss of their homeland.

The Distinction between the Historical Settings of Phase One and Phase Two

The distinction between the text which originated prior to Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign (the first phase: 2:1–2:11; 3:1–12) and the text which originated after Sennacherib's campaign (the second phase: 1:8, 10–15*) is significant. Though the historical distance between the two phases is relatively short, the social distance is vast. The first phase is securely situated in the context of a profitable Shephelah and shared interest of the Jerusalem elite and the Shephelah land-owners in this territory. The second phase concerns the utter loss of this sought over region. The sadness that the second phase expresses comes from the region's inhabitants who have survived the 701 BCE attack and find themselves in the context of Jerusalem. In this new context, the lament song functioned as an expression of grief which was eventually attached to the front of first phase (Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12).

[7] Chapter Four, 170–172.

[8] Yuval Gadot, "In the Valley of the King: Jerusalem's Rural Hinterland in the 8th-4th Centuries BCE," *TA* 42 (2015): 18.

The Rhetorical Impact of the Addition of the Phase Two Material

The addition of the lament song radically shifted the rhetorical movement of this early Micah corpus. The rhetorical flow of the first phase moved from accusations against the Jerusalem elite in Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–11 to a statement of judgment against Jerusalem itself (accusation followed by judgment). The addition of the lament song brought the statement of judgment to the beginning of the collection. The lament over the Shephelah (Mic 1:8, 10–15*) became a statement of judgment against the Jerusalem elites who had stolen lands from Shephelah land-owners (an actualization of Mic 2:4).[9] Two problems emerged with this new rhetorical development. The first was the proclamation in Mic 3:12 that Jerusalem would be destroyed (an event that did not occur in the eighth century). The second was the serious accusation that the Micah corpus leveled against the monarchy under Hezekiah. In the context of a pro-Hezekiah Jerusalem which had survived Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign both the proclamation of Jerusalem's demise and the shortfall of the monarchy needed re-evaluation. Thus, a new oral tradition arose to aid in the written tradition's survival.[10] This oral tradition is recorded in Jer 26:18-19. In it, Hezekiah seeks YHWH on the basis of Micah or Moresheth's words condemning Jerusalem. The tradition holds that because Hezekiah heeded Micah's warning, Jerusalem was saved. This oral tradition (eventually recorded in Jer 26) allowed the written tradition to survive in the new context of pro-Hezekiah Jerusalem.

[9] Chapter Four, 174–176. Micah 2:4 holds that those who have stolen land from the Shephelah land owners will eventually have the same land stolen from them. See Chapter Three, 110–112.

[10] Chapter Five, 235–240.

Preservation of the Micah Oracles from the Eighth Century to the Exile

The third phase in the formation of the Micah corpus originates during the exile and provides a rationale for the destruction of Jerusalem by invoking deuteronomistic ideology. This shift in ideology and exilic outlook has been evident to a number of scholars throughout the years.[11] This study goes further than simply pointing to evidence for different historical settings within Mic 1–3 by also providing a reconstruction of how, why and by whom the Micah oracles were preserved and augmented. Chapter Five develops a reconstruction of the process by which tradents preserved the Micah oracles from the eighth century in the Judean Shephelah, to the seventh century in the context of Jerusalem, to the sixth century during the exile. Tradent/disciples[12] preserved the first phase (Mic 2:1–11 and 3:1–12) in the late eighth century.[13] These tradent/disciples were likely a group of elders who represented certain locales in the Judean Shephelah.[14] This small group of tradent/disciples preserved the Micah oracles because of opposition that they faced from the Jerusalem elite.[15] Following Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign through the Judean Shephelah, surviving tradents brought the Micah oracles with them to Jerusalem where they added the lament song (1:8, 10–15*) to the beginning of the collection.[16] In addition, in order for the growing Micah corpus to survive in this new

[11] See, for example, Wolff, Micah, 20; Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*, 137–140; and Wöhrle, *Die frühen*, 180-188.

[12] The term tradent/disciples is used in this dissertation to denote those early tradents who were also likely disciples of Micah of Moresheth.

[13] Chapter Five, 196–216.

[14] Chapter Five, 196–216.

[15] Chapter Five, 216–220. See also, Jörg Jeremias, "Das Rätsel der Schriftprophetie," 93–117.

[16] Chapter Five, 174–177.

setting, tradents developed an oral tradition that viewed Hezekiah favorably (as mentioned above). The oral tradition held that Hezekiah took Micah's proclamation of Jerusalem's doom as a warning and sought YHWH. Thus, Sennacherib was unable to destroy Jerusalem in 701 BCE. With the oral tradition that viewed Hezekiah and Micah of Moresheth's interaction positively, the Micah oracles were able to receive more support among the larger population because the Micah tradition supported the dominant narrative in the early seventh century which viewed Hezekiah positively after Jerusalem's survival. The Micah traditions (both oral and written) persisted as a part of the dominant cultural narrative until the exile. We know that the Micah tradition was part of the larger cultural narrative at this time because of its record in Jer 26 in which the Jeremiah editor cites oral and written Micah traditions for a crowd of witnesses that the editor assumes would be familiar with the tradition.[17] In the exilic period, the written Micah tradition was re-visited by a group of tradents responsible for the early formation of the Book of the Four. Chapter Six addresses this third phase.

Phase Three: Mic 1:1, 3–7, 9, 12b, 13b

This study's findings concerning the third phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 are broadly in agreement with the findings of other scholars who have seen parts of Mic 1 as an exilic text which tradents designed to be heard along with early portions of Hosea, Amos, and Zephaniah.[18] Nevertheless the findings Chapters Four and Six move the conversation in a slightly different direction. Chapter Four concluded that the third phase

[17] Chapter Five, 209–210.

[18] Chapter Six, 252–274.

began as a lament song concerning the Shephelah.[19] The lament song also showed evidence of updates (1:12b, 13b, 16) in accordance with a later agenda that revised the original song to focus on Jerusalem as the apex of the catastrophe.[20] These updates connect to the material in Mic 1:1; 3–7, 9; a textual unit which provides a new introduction to the Micah corpus. The new introduction can be reasonably linked to the exilic period because it shares ideology with 2 Kings 17 and other texts that are part of the exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History.[21] The new introduction suggests that destruction is coming against Samaria first and then Jerusalem. The evil practices for which these two great cities are accused concern improper worship including allowing the high places to stand and idols.[22] Because of these transgressions, the divine warrior will attack the cities demolishing their holy sites.[23]

The tradents responsible for the new introduction updated the lament song (1:8, 10–15*) so that it would read as the continued movement of the divine warrior from Samaria (1:6–7) to Jerusalem (1:12b, 13b, 16). The abuses over which the new introduction is concerned have strong links to the exilic recension of the Deuteronomistic History as well as parts of Deuteronomy. These links indicate that the exilic Micah tradents are interacting with Deuteronomistic ideology. However, the exilic introduction challenges Deuteronomistic ideology by placing the cultic abuses during the reign of Hezekiah (Mic 1:1). Hezekiah was supposed to have eradicated these cultic abuses

[19] Chapter Four, 173–174.

[20] Chapter Six, 267–268.

[21] Chapter Six, 255.

[22] Chapter Six, 276. See Mic 1:5, 7.

[23] Chapter Six, 277. See Mic 1: 5–7, 9, 16.

according to the Deuteronomistic traditions. Thus the new introduction casts aspersions on Hezekiah's legacy as recorded in 2 Kings.

Along with the exilic tradents' efforts to cast doubt on the greatness of Hezekiah, the exilic tradents also formed the new introduction to function as a transition piece in the larger editorial work of the Book of the Four (a collection involving early portions of Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah). The exilic superscription (Mic 1:1) provides links to the other writings in the Book of the Four through the kings mentioned.[24] Tradents also developed the exilic introduction to Micah as a transition piece between writings that primarily deal with the demise of the northern kingdom (Hosea and Amos) to those that deal primarily with the demise of the southern kingdom (Micah and Zephaniah). Thus the exilic tradents created an introduction that refocuses the Micah corpus on cultic abuses, introduces an analogy between Samaria and Jerusalem, and provides a transition between the first two writings in the Book of the Four and the second two.

Beyond Mic 1–3

Three verses enter Mic 1–3 after the third phase; Mic 1:2 and 2:12–13. These verses likely enter the corpus in association with Mic 4–5 and 6–7. Because of the small amount of material that these verses constitute and because of their association with text blocks outside of Mic 1–3, this study does not treat them as a "phase" in the formation of Mic 1–3. To treat them fully, one would have to embark upon an extensive study of the other two text blocks in Micah (Mic 4–5 and 6–7) which is outside of the parameters of

[24] See James Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Hosea-Jonah*, SHBC (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 5. See also, Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*, 127 (Nogalski also argues that parts of Mic 1:1 likely pre-dated the deuteronomistic editing of Micah). See also, Wöhrle, *Die frühen*, 138. The Book of the Four superscriptions claim to cover the reigns of five kings of Judah and specifically mentions one king of Israel, Jeroboam II, who bears the same name as the first king of Israel.

this dissertation. Nevertheless, some preliminary remarks are in order to address how these verses fit in Mic 1–3.

Scholars see links between Mic 1:2 and 2:12–13 on the one hand and Mic 4–7 on the other hand.[25] These links point to postexilic tradents and betray a different agenda than that of the Micah/Book of the Four tradents who provided the exilic introduction (1:1, 3–7, 9). Postexilic tradents appear to have provided these updates to Mic 1–3 (Mic 1:2; 2:12–13) to create continuity between the material in Mic 1–3 and 4–5. The first of these additions, Mic 1:2, focuses on "all the peoples" (עמים) as a sweeping view of all humanity. This focus is closely related to the term's use in Micah 4–5 (cf. Mic 4:1, 3, 5, 14; 5:6, 7).[26] Apart from Mic 1:2, every use of עם in Mic 1–3 connotes a particular people group within Judah for whom the prophet is either the spokesperson (1:9; 2:4, 9; 3:3, 5) or accuser (2:8, 11).[27] Therefore, it is clear that the use of עם in Mic 1:2 is not in keeping with its use elsewhere in Mic 1–3. The closest uses of עם in this way come from Mic 4–5. Consequently, Wöhrle's contention that Mic 1:2 entered the Mican corpus along with portions of Mic 4–5 is quite plausible.

The second postexilic addition to Mic 1–3 (Mic 2:12–13) is similar. Wöhrle and Jeremias have shown that Mic 2:12–13 connects the material in Mic 1–3 with Mic 4:6–8

[25] See, for example, Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 149–51 and Jeremias, *Die Propheten Joel, Obadja, Jona, Micha*, 198.

[26] See Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 139. In Wöhrle's assessment this focus on all of the people is part of a redactional layer known as the Fremdvölkerschicht I. Wöhrle links Mic 1:2 to Mic 5:14 because of the similarity of the theme of the threat against the people. Zeph 3:18–19 also allude to Mic 4:6–8 showing more continuity between the redaction of Micah and Zephaniah as tradents continued to revise the Book of the Four.

[27] In Mic 6–7 עם again refers to a particular people group within Judah with whom YHWH is contending (6:2, 3, 5, 16; 7:14).

through the language of gathering (אסף) and kingship (2:13; 4:8).[28] These hopeful verses do not fit the overall tone of judgment in Mic 1–3 and are frequently considered an addition that provides hope of restoration in an otherwise gloomy text block.[29] The verses therefore are likely later additions on two counts. They use images common to Mic 4–5 and the hopeful outlook that is more understandable after the addition of the hopeful material in Mic 4–5.

These postexilic additions indicate continued editorial work that connects Mic 1–3 with other text blocks in Micah. In addition to these postexilic updates, scholars have suggested that the additions included by the Book of the Four tradents extend beyond Mic 1–3 into the other major text blocks in Micah.[30] This possibility requires further research. Questions concerning how Mic 4–5 and 6–7 interact with and integrate into Mic 1–3 will have to wait for another venue. How these text blocks relate to the editorial work involved in the Book of the Four is also a question worthy of further study.

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[28]See, Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 149–51. Jeremias suggests that since both Mic 4–5 and 6–7 have connections to Mic 1–3, but do not have connections to one another, they constitute alternate endings to the pre-existing corpus of Mic 1–3 (*Die Propheten Joel, Obadja, Jona, Micha*, 198).

[29] There is some discussion as to whether to read these verses as a further statement of doom or as a hopeful insertions. Andersen and Freedman see the verses as a later insertion that offers hope after judgment in which the people of God will be gathered like sheep.(Micah, Anchor Bible, 332) Van der Woude reads Mic 2:12-13 as a continuation of the prophetic dispute in Mic 2:6–11. The hopeful words are then a continuation of the false prophet's declaration of peace. (A. S. van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute with the 'Pseudo-Prophets,'" *VT* 19 [1969]: 257). Mays suggests that the breeching of the wall indicates YHWH's attack on Jerusalem in 587 rather than YHWH's salvific activity (James Luther Mays, *Micah: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library [Westminster John Knox, 1976], 75). These two verses are difficult to interpret and the difficulty in the context of Mic 1–3 points to the likelihood that they are later. However, the imagery of being "gathered up" as "sheep" are those generally associated with restoration in postexilic texts (for example, see, Isa 43:5; 54:7; Jer 29:14). Additionally, Willis has shown that the book of Micah follows a pattern of doom followed by hope. He thus argues that Mic 2:12–13 were introduced as a statement of hope in a largely doom filled section of the writing to accomplish this pattern (J. T. Willis, *The Structure, Setting, and Interrelationships of the Pericopes in the Book of Micah* [unpublished PhD dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1966], 124). Mic 2:12–13 also connect the material in Mic 1–3 with Mic 4:6–8 through the language of gathering (אסף) and kingship (2:13; 4:8) indicating that they are later hopeful insertions (See, Wöhrle, *Die frühen*, 149–51.

[30] See Chapter Seven, 293.

The answers that this study has provided relate for the formation and preservation of Mic 1–3. This study provides careful inquiry into the historical settings from which each phase in the formation of Mic 1–3 came. It also provides a plausible reconstruction of how the earliest oracles in Micah were preserved, shaped, and augmented over time. There remains work to be done in the formation of the Micah corpus; a writing that will surely intrigue scholars for ages to come.

APPENDIX

A Translation of Mic 1–3

Phase One: Oldest Composition reflecting the late eight century prior to Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign
Phase Two: The lament song over the Shephelah reflecting the late eighth and early seventh centuries following Sennacherib's 701 BCE campaign
Phase Three: The new introduction reflecting the exile and editorial activity associated with the Book of the Four
Post-Exilic Additions: Additions to Mic 1–3 in conjunction with Mic 4–5 and 6–7

Micah 1

1 The word of YHWH which came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.[a]

2 Hear peoples, all of you, give attention earth and the fullness of it,[b] and let[c] my lord YHWH[d] witness against you, the lord from the temple of his holiness.[e] For behold, YHWH comes forth from his place. He will come down and tread[f] on the high places of the earth.[g]

Micah 1

דבר־יהוה אשׁר היה אל־מיכה המרשׁתי
בימי יותם אחז יחזקיה מלכי יהודה אשׁר־
חזה על־שׁמרון וירושׁלם׃

שׁמעו עמים כלם הקשׁיבי ארץ ומלאה ויהי
אדני יהוה בכם לעד אדני מהיכל קדשׁו׃

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[a] See Chapter Five, 201 for a discussion of the superscription that argues that some version of the superscription that attributed the work to Micah of Moresheth during the reign of Hezekiah probably accompanied the oracles from their earliest stage.

[b] The LXX reads "all who are in it" (ἡ γῆ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐν αὐτῇ) as an attempt to deal with the Hebrew idiom.

[c] The MT contains a jussive but 1QpMic contains the indicative of היה which is common in the Qumran materials. However, the LXX also appears to have an indicative *Vorlage*. It is unclear which reading is more original.

[d] In 1QpMic "my lord" and "YHWH" are inverted. The reading is also present in the Targum, Peshitta, and Vulgate. Some Hebrew manuscripts omit "my lord". It is retained here because the LXX supports it and the inversion of the Qumran materials is unattested elsewhere.

[e] See Chapter Seven, 291–293 for more information concerning the late date of this verse.

[f] Some Greek manuscripts lack "tread" while others lack "come down". The Micah pesher of Qumran also lacks "tread". The doubling of the verbs likely seemed unnecessary to early interpreters.

[g] See Chapter Six, 259-269 for more information concerning the YHWH's approach to Samaria and Jerusalem and the image of treading on high places. 1QpMic and the LXX contain the definite article in association with "earth" which indicates a good possibility of a reading the pre-dates the MT.

כי־הנה יהוה יצא ממקומו וירד ודרך על־
במותי ארץ:

ונמסו ההרים תחתיו והעמקים יתבקעו
כדונג מפני האש כמים מגרים במורד:

בפשע יעקב כל־זאת ובחטאות בית ישראל
מי־פשע יעקב הלוא שמרון ומי במות יהודה
הלוא ירושלם:

ושמתי שמרון לעי השדה למטעי כרם
והגרתי לגי אבניה ויסדיה אגלה:

וכל־פסיליה יכתו וכל־אתנניה ישרפו באש
וכל־עצביה אשים שממה כי מאתנן זונה
קבצה ועד־אתנן זונה ישובו:

על־זאת אספדה ואילילה אילכה שילל
וערום אעשה מספד כתנים ואבל כבנות
יענה:

The mountains will melt beneath him
and the valleys will split apart like wax
3 before the fire, like water being poured
down a slope.
All this is because of the transgression
4 of Jacob and because of the sins of the
house of Israel. What[h] is the
transgression of Jacob? Is it not
Samaria? And what is the high place[i]
5 of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?[j]
I will make Samaria into a field of
ruins, into a place for planting a
vineyard. And I will pour her stones
down into a valley and her foundations
I will uncover.[k]
6 All of her idols will be crushed and all
of her earnings will be burned with fire
and all of her images I will make a
desolation for from the wages of a
harlot she gathered them and to the
7 wages of a harlot they will return.[l]

8 oncerning this I should lament[m] and
howl, I will go about barefoot and
naked, I will wail like the jackals[n] and
mourn like a daughter of an ostrich.

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[h] Lit. “who”. 1QpMic contains “and what”. Perhaps the two interrogative particles were somewhat interchangeable though the Qumran tradition suspiciously evens out the text. It is, nevertheless unclear which reading is more original.

[i] The LXX reads ἡ ἁμαρτία οἴκου Ιουδα clearly amended to create closer parallelism.

[j] See Chapter Six, 262-264 for more on the fascinating parallelism of this verse.

[k] See Chapter Six, 265, for links between Mic 1:6–7 and deuteronomic passages.

[l] The LXX reads συνέστρεψεν (gather) which parallels the previous line.

[m] The LXX contains third person verbs. The identity of the speaker is unknown though one can assume the prophetic speaker. Perhaps the LXX changes the verbs to third person because of the ambiguity of the speaker.

[n] The LXX reads “dragon” or “serpent” likely because the translator confused the plural of jackal with tannĭm.

9	For her[o] wound is incurable[p] for it has come to Judah, it has struck the gate of my people, even Jerusalem.	כי אנושה מכותיה כי־באה עד־יהודה נגע עד־שער עמי עד־ירושלם׃
10	Tell it not in Gath,[q] do not weep[r] at all.[s] In Beth-le-aphrah[t] roll yourself in the	בגת אל־תגידו בכו אל־תבכו בבית לעפרה עפר התפלשת׃
11	dust. Pass on your way inhabitant of Shaphir, in shameful nakedness. The inhabitant of Zaanan has not come out. The wailing of Beth-haesel, he will take from you support.	עברי לכם יושבת שפיר עריה־בשת לא יצאה יושבת צאנן מספד בית האצל יקח מכם עמדתו׃
12	For the inhabitant of Maroth has writhed[u] for good yet evil from YHWH has come down to the gate of Jerusalem.	כי־חלה לטוב יושבת מרות כי־ירד רע מאת יהוה לשער ירושלם׃
13	Attach the chariot to the steeds, inhabitant of Lachish—she was the beginning of sin for the house of Zion for in you were found the transgressions of Israel.	רתם המרכבה לרכש יושבת לכיש ראשית חטאת היא לבת־ציון כי־בך נמצאו פשעי ישראל׃
	Therefore, you will give divorce gifts to Moresheth[v]-gath. The house of	לכן תתני שלוחים על מורשת גת בתי אכזיב לאכזב למלכי ישראל׃
14	Achzib becomes deception to the kings of Israel.	
	Still, I will bring to you the one who takes possession, inhabitant of	עד הירש אבי לך יושבת מרשה עד־עדלם יבוא כבוד ישראל׃
15	Mareshah, as far as Adullam the glory of Israel will come.	

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[o] Likely refers to Samaria.

[p] The LXX reads κατεκράτησεν which is likely the translator struggling with אֲנוּשָׁה.

[q] The LXX (μεγαλύνεσθε) suggests either wrestling with אַל־תַּגִּידוּ and an attempt to amend the *Vorlage* to read "boast not in Gath" or a simple misunderstanding of the Hebrew root. The Peshitta suggests "rejoice not in Gath".

[r] LXX has ἀνοικοδομεῖτε, a misreading of the Hebrew *Vorlage*.

[s] See Chapter Four, 159 for justification for maintaining Gath with the MT and reading בכו as an infinitive absolute of בכה (to weep) which follows the pointing of the MT as opposed to the LXX which may suggest Acco (ἐν Ακιμ). For the type of pun see Chapter Four, 168.

[t] See Chapter Four, 160–161 for an explanation of this place name.

[u] The LXX has ἤρξατο for which the *Vorlage* is unlear.

[v] The LXX reads this place name as a common noun, κληρονομίας, and does the same with Achzib (ματαίους) which likely reflects the translator's unfamiliarity with the place names.

16 Make yourself bald and cut off your hair concerning the children of your delight. Make your baldness expansive like an eagle's for they go from you (to exile).

קרחי וגזי על־בני תענוגיך הרחבי קרחתך
כנשר כי גלו ממך׃ ס

Micah 2

1 Woe[w] to those who plan iniquity, who plot evil on their beds! When the light of the morning comes, they do it, for it is in the power of their hands.

2 They covet fields and then seize them, and houses, and take them. They rob a fellow of his house, and a man of his inheritance.

3 Therefore, I am planning evil against this family[x] from which you cannot save yourselves. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity.

4 In that day,[y] they[z] will lift up against you a taunt song and they will wail a bitter lamentation. So it was,[aa] he has said, "We are utterly ruined; my people's possession is divided. He takes it from me! He assigns our fields to apostates."[bb]

5 Therefore, you will have no one to throw a line for you by lot in the assembly of YHWH.[cc]

Micah 2

הוי חשבי־און ופעלי רע על־משכבותם
באור הבקר יעשוה כי יש־לאל ידם׃

וחמדו שדות וגזלו ובתים ונשאו ועשקו
גבר וביתו ואיש ונחלתו׃ פ

לכן כה אמר יהוה הנני חשב על־המשפחה
הזאת רעה אשר לא־תמישו משם
צוארתיכם ולא תלכו רומה כי עת רעה
היא׃

ביום ההוא ישא עליכם משל ונהה נהי
נהיה אמר שדוד נשדנו חלק עמי ימיר איך
ימיש לי לשובב שדינו יחלק׃

לכן לא־יהיה לך משליך חבל בגורל בקהל
יהוה׃

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[w] The LXX has ἐγένοντο suggesting a *Vorlage* that reads "they were" instead of "woe".

[x] See Chapter Three, 92–97, which argue that "this family" refers to the royal family.

[y] See Chapter Three, 97–98 for the argument that this prediction refers to an immediate event.

[z] The MT is singular. I take it as a collective singular that indicates a group. The verb could also be impersonal "one will raise". The LXX and the Vulgate have passive verbs. The LXX has a tendency to makes verbs passive which may be at work here.

[aa] See the explanation for translating this form as a confirmation of a past event in Chapter Three, 103.

[bb] See the exposition of this difficult verse in Chapter Three, 99–105.

[cc] See the analysis of the vocabulary here in Chapter Three, 107–109. See also the analysis concerning the phrase "assembly of YHWH" in Chapter Three, 109–110.

6	"Do not prophesy," *so* they prophesy. "Do prophesy concerning these things, He will not bring disgraces."[dd]	אל־תטפו יטיפון לא־יטפו לאלה לא יסג כלמות:
7	Is it being said, O house of Jacob: "Is the Spirit of YHWH short?[ee] Are these his doings?" Do not my words[ff] do good to the one whose way is upright?	האמור בית־יעקב הקצר רוח יהוה אם־ אלה מעלליו הלוא דברי ייטיבו עם הישר הולך:
8	Lately my people have become an enemy—You strip the robe off the garment,[gg] from those who pass by, those returned from war.[hh]	ואתמול עמי לאויב יקומם ממול שלמה אדר תפשטון מעברים בטח שובי מלחמה:
9	The women of my people you evict. Each from her pleasant house. You take my glory from her children forever.[ii]	נשי עמי תגרשון מבית תענגיה מעל עלליה תקחו הדרי לעולם:
10	Rise up and go for this is not your resting place.[jj] What is in you has become unclean, it will cause destruction; the territory is stricken.	קומו ולכו כי לא־זאת המנוחה בעבור טמאה תחבל וחבל נמרץ:
11	If a man, walking after wind and falsehood has lied, "I prophesy to you wine and strong drink." He was the propohet of this people.	לו־איש הלך רוח ושקר כזב אטף לך ליין ולשכר והיה מטיף העם הזה:

[dd] See the analysis of this dispute (2:6–11) in Chapter Three, 123–130. Several textual irregularities occur in this passage. Budde has restored the text in multiple places. Andersen and Freedmen, *Micah*, 298 provide the restoration in full. I have chosen to work with the difficulties of the MT as Chapter Three shows.

[ee] The Vulgate supports "shortened" but the LXX has παρώργισεν which is likely an attempt to translate the Hebrew idiom.

[ff] The Vulgate and Targum confirm this reading but the LXX has "his words".

[gg] The LXX has τὴν δορὰν αὐτοῦ ἐξέδειραν which is likely a conflation with Mic 3:3.

[hh] See the exposition in Chapter Three, 125–126 which interprets "my people" and an enemy to the opposing prophets.

[ii] The "glory" should be understood as elite standing in Judean society. See Chapter Three, 127–128.

[jj] The MT lacks the second person possessive suffix but the LXX takes the definite article as implying possession (σοι αὕτη ἡ ἀνάπαυσις). This suggests that that Hebrew implies, "this is not the resting place (for you)."

I will surely gather Jacob, all of you,[kk]
12 I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel as one. I will make them like sheep in a sheepfold, like a flock in the midst of its pasture. It will be noisy with people.

אסף אאסף יעקב כלך קבץ אקבץ שארית ישראל יחד אשימנו כצאן בצרה כעדר בתוך הדברו תהימנה מאדם:

The breaker goes up before them, they
13 break out and pass through the gate and they go out by it and he passes through, their king before them, YHWH at their head.

עלה הפרץ לפניהם פרצו ויעברו שער ויצאו בו ויעבר מלכם לפניהם ויהוה בראשם: פ

Micah 3

And I said, hear now heads of Jacob
1 and rulers of the house of Israel, Is it not for you to know justice?

Micah 3

ואמר שמעו־נא ראשי יעקב וקציני בית ישראל הלוא לכם לדעת את־המשפט:

Haters of good and lovers of evil,
2 seizing their skin from them and their flesh from on their bones.

שנאי טוב ואהבי רעה גזלי עורם מעליהם ושארם מעל עצמותם:

And those who eat the flesh of my
3 people and strip off their skin form them, their bones they break in pieces and they stir like that which is in a pot, like meat in a cauldron.[ll]

ואשר אכלו שאר עמי ועורם מעליהם הפשיטו ואת־עצמתיהם פצחו ופרשו כאשר בסיר וכבשר בתוך קלחת:

Then, they will cry out to YHWH but
4 he will not answer them and he will hide his face from them. At that time, it will be just as the evil they have practiced.

אז יזעקו אל־יהוה ולא יענה אותם ויסתר פניו מהם בעת ההיא כאשר הרעו מעלליהם: פ

Thus says YHWH concerning the
5 prophets who lead my people astray. If they have something to eat they declare peace and if they have nothing in their mouth they consecrate war.

כה אמר יהוה על־הנביאים המתעים את־עמי הנשכים בשניהם וקראו שלום ואשר לא־יתן על־פיהם וקדשו עליו מלחמה:

Therefore it will be night for you
6 without vision and darkness for you without divination. The sun will set on the prophets and the day will be dark for them.

לכן לילה לכם מחזון וחשכה לכם מקסם ובאה השמש על־הנביאים וקדר עליהם היום:

And the seers will be ashamed and the
7 diviners will be embarrassed and all of

[kk] The LXX reads "all of him" and appears to be struggling with the difficulty of the second person suffix rather than reflecting a different Hebrew *Vorlage*.

[ll] See Chapter Three, 132–133, for parallels between 2:1–11 and 3:1–12 as well as links to the sacrificial system.

them will cover their mouths for YHWH does not answer.	ובשׁו החזים וחפרו הקסמים ועטו על־שׂפם כלם כי אין מענה אלהים:
But indeed, I am filled with power—	ואולם אנכי מלאתי כח את־רוח יהוה
8 with the spirit of YHWH—and justice and strength to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.	ומשׁפט וגבורה להגיד ליעקב פשׁעו ולישׂראל חטאתו: ס
Now hear this heads of the house of	שׁמעו־נא זאת ראשׁי בית יעקב וקציני בית
9 Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel you despisers of justice who twist all that is straight,	ישׂראל המתעבים משׁפט ואת כל־הישׁרה יעקשׁו:
who build Zion with bloodshed and	בנה ציון בדמים וירושׁלם בעולה:
10 Jerusalem with injustice.	
Her leaders judge for a bribe and her	ראשׁיה בשׁחד ישׁפטו וכהניה במחיר יורו
11 priests teach for a price and her prophets divine for silver and they lean on YHWH saying isn't YHWH in our midst? Evil will not come upon us.	ונביאיה בכסף יקסמו ועל־יהוה ישׁענו לאמר הלוא יהוה בקרבנו לא־תבוא עלינו רעה:
Therefore on account of you Zion will	לכן בגללכם ציון שׂדה תחרשׁ וירושׁלם
12 be ploughed into a field and Jerusalem will become a ruin and the mountain of the house will become a high place[mm] of thickets.	עיין תהיה והר הבית לבמות יער: פ

[mm] The MT has the plural, בָּמוֹת but the LXX contains the singular ὄρος this likely reflects an effort to even out a difficult Hebrew *Vorlage*.

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