

Making Sense in Zephaniah:
An Intertextual Reading

John de Jong

A thesis submitted to
Auckland University of Technology
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

2015

Faculty of Culture and Society
through Laidlaw College

Abstract

The question this thesis answers is, “How does an intertextual reading contribute to interpreting the book of Zephaniah?” To answer this question the thesis examines the ways in which Zephaniah takes up other texts as it constructs its own message. After the introduction, chapters 2 to 4 address the theory of intertextuality, methodological issues in an intertextual reading of the OT in general, and historical-critical aspects of Zephaniah. Exegesis of Zephaniah constitutes the main body of the thesis (chapters 5-7), proceeding one pericope at a time in analysing the effect intertextual allusion and echo have on the signification of the text. This intertextual reading reveals that the first oracle, Zeph 1.2-3, is key to understanding the entire book of Zephaniah. Allusion to the creation-flood account in Genesis 1-9 carries into the text of Zephaniah the concept of representation. Just as humanity represented God in the primeval times and humanity’s failure resulted in universal judgment, in Zephaniah the failure of the people of God likewise results in universal judgment. This concept of representation enables the book of Zephaniah to be read as a cohesive text which makes sense from beginning to end. The relationship between Judah and the nations in Zephaniah is a difficulty which has led scholars to emending the text and/or attributing what appear to be logical inconsistencies to redactional adjustments to the original Zephaniah text. An intertextual reading provides a solution to this interpretive impasse. The thesis concludes that an intertextual reading makes a significant contribution to understanding the book of Zephaniah.

Dedication

To the young and growing church of Myanmar.

Contents

Abstract.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
List of Figures	vi
List of Tables	vi
Attestation of Authorship.....	viii
Acknowledgments.....	ix
List of Conventions and Abbreviations	x
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Outline of the thesis.....	3
Chapter 2 Theory of Intertextuality	6
2.1 M.M. Bakhtin and intertextuality	7
2.1.1 Heteroglossia and intertextuality.....	8
2.2 Intertextuality: A contentious concept.....	10
2.2.1 More than presupposition.....	11
2.2.2 An overarching theory of texts.....	13
2.3 Intertextual allusion and echo.....	14
2.4 Summary	17
Chapter 3 Intertextual Analysis of the Old Testament	19
3.1 “Inner-biblical exegesis”	19
3.2 Intertextuality in the prophets.....	24
3.2.1 Issues arising from OT works on intertextuality.....	25
3.3 Identifying allusion and echo in the OT	32
3.3.1 Identifying allusion	33
3.3.2 Identifying the direction of allusion.....	35
3.4 The effect of allusion and echo on the text	38
3.5 Summary	39
Chapter 4 Historical-critical Assumptions about the Book of Zephaniah.....	41
4.1 The book of Zephaniah as a discrete text	41
4.2 The coherence of the book of Zephaniah	42
4.3 Authorship and date.....	45
4.4 Summary	48
Chapter 5 Zephaniah 1: Reproach	49
5.1 Zephaniah 1.1	49
5.2 Zephaniah 1.2-3.....	50
5.2.1 How are Zephaniah 1.2-3 and 1.4-18 related?	51
5.2.2 Allusion to Genesis 1-9.....	54
5.2.3 The effect of the allusion to Genesis 1-9	63
5.2.4 Summary of Zephaniah 1.2-3.....	70

5.3	Zephaniah 1.4-6.....	70
5.3.1	Intertextuality with 2 Kings 21 and 23?.....	73
5.3.2	“I will stretch out my hand”.....	74
5.3.3	Exodus 15.1-18: The Song of the Sea.....	81
5.3.4	Isaiah 9.7-20; 5.25-30	84
5.3.5	Summary of the echoes of Yahweh’s outstretched hand	86
5.3.6	Summary	87
5.4	Zephaniah 1.7-9.....	88
5.4.1	Reuse of Amos	88
5.4.2	Yahweh’s sacrifice	92
5.4.3	Summary	103
5.5	Summary of Zephaniah 1.2-9.....	103
5.6	Zephaniah 1.10-11.....	104
5.6.1	“Cut off”.....	108
5.6.2	Summary	111
5.7	Zephaniah 1.12-13.....	111
5.7.1	Zephaniah 1.12 and Amos 9.1-4	113
5.7.2	Allusion to the futility curses in Amos 5.1-17 and Deut 28.30	115
5.7.3	Summary	123
5.8	Zephaniah 1.14-16.....	123
5.8.1	Isaiah 9	124
5.8.2	Horeb/Sinai theophany.....	125
5.8.3	Conquest reversed	127
5.8.4	Summary	128
5.9	Zephaniah 1.17-18.....	128
5.10	Summary of Zephaniah 1.10-18.....	130
5.11	Conclusion for Zephaniah 1	131
Chapter 6	Zephaniah 2: Repentance	134
6.1	Zephaniah 2.1-3.....	134
6.1.1	Zephaniah 2.1	135
6.1.2	Zephaniah 2.2	138
6.1.3	Zephaniah 2.3	138
6.1.4	Summary	146
6.2	Zephaniah 2.4-15: Oracles against the nations.....	147
6.2.1	The purpose of the OAN in Zephaniah: Motivation to repent.....	149
6.2.2	Function of the OAN in Zephaniah: Promise of salvation for Judah.....	151
6.2.3	Selection of the nations	153
6.2.4	Intertextuality in Zephaniah’s OAN.....	155
6.2.5	Summary	163
6.3	Conclusion for Zephaniah 2	164

Chapter 7	Zephaniah 3: Restoration	166
7.1	Zephaniah 3.1-5	167
7.1.1	Intertextuality in verse 1	168
7.1.2	Similarities with Micah, Lamentations and Ezekiel	172
7.1.3	Intertextuality with Psalms and with Psalm 46	177
7.1.4	Summary	181
7.2	Zephaniah 3.6-8	181
7.2.1	Intertextualities in 3.6-8	183
7.2.2	Who will be judged?	193
7.2.3	<i>Intra</i> -textuality	196
7.2.4	Summary	198
7.3	Zephaniah 3.9-13	199
7.3.1	Zephaniah 3.9-10: The nations	200
7.3.2	Zephaniah 3.11-13: The people of God	214
7.3.3	<i>Intra</i> -textuality	216
7.3.4	Summary	218
7.4	Zephaniah 3.14-20	219
7.4.1	Verse 14	221
7.4.2	Zephaniah 3.17 and Jeremiah 14.9	223
7.4.3	Verse 18	228
7.4.4	The lame and the outcast: Zephaniah 3.19 and Micah 4.6-7	228
7.4.5	“Praise and renown”	231
7.4.6	Summary	240
7.5	Conclusion for Zephaniah 3	241
Chapter 8	Conclusion: Zephaniah Makes Sense	243
8.1	Intertextuality in Zephaniah	244
8.1.1	Zephaniah 1: Reproach for the failure of God’s people	244
8.1.2	Zephaniah 2: Repentance and hope for escape from judgment	246
8.1.3	Zephaniah 3: Restoration of the people and the peoples	246
8.1.4	Patterns of intertextual reuse in Zephaniah	248
8.2	The gains of an intertextual reading	251
8.3	Reflection upon theory and methodology	251
8.4	Conclusion	253
References	256

List of Figures

Figure 3.1: Spectrum of intertextual reuse.....	31
Figure 5.1 Possible locations of the Fish Gate, Second Quarter (Neustadt) and Mortar	107

List of Tables

Table 4.1: Structure of Zephaniah.....	43
Table 5.1: Order in which animals are listed in Gen 1.24-25	57
Table 5.2: $\square 78$ as pinnacle of creation.....	58
Table 5.3: Animal lists in Zeph 1.3a-b and Gen 1.26	58
Table 5.4: Animals in prophetic judgment speeches compared with Gen 1.26	59
Table 5.5: Animal lists in Gen 1.26; 6.7; Zeph 1.3	60
Table 5.6: Deuteronomistic phraseology	78
Table 5.7: Source critical analysis of “outstretched hand/staff” texts in Exodus 6-15	79
Table 5.8: Lexical similarities in Zeph 1.7b and 1 Sam 16.5.....	99
Table 5.9: “Good and evil” in Zeph 1.12d and Amos 9.4.....	113
Table 5.10: Zeph 1.13 and Amos 5.11	116
Table 5.11: Zeph 1.13 and Deut 28.30.....	116
Table 5.12: De Waard’s chiasmic structure of Amos 5.1-17	119
Table 5.13: Structure of Amos 5.1-17.....	120
Table 5.14: Lexical similarities between Zeph 1.15b-d and Isa 8.22	124
Table 5.15: Theophanic language in Deut 4.11b; 5.22	126
Table 5.16: Theophanic language in Exod 19.9, 16.....	126
Table 5.17: Lexical similarities in Zeph 1.16b-c and Deut 9.1	127
Table 5.18: Lexical similarities in Zeph 1.16 and Deut 3.5	128
Table 5.19: Similarity of Zeph 1.18 and Ezek 7.19	129
Table 6.1: Zeph 2.3 and Amos 5.14-15.....	139
Table 6.2: Nations/places appearing in both Zeph 2.4-15 and Gen 10.6-20.....	158
Table 6.3: Similarities between Zeph 2.11c and Gen 10.5	161
Table 7.1: Lexical similarities between Zeph 3.1-5 and Mic 3.9-11	174
Table 7.2: Lexical similarities between Zeph 3.5a-d and Ps 46.6.....	179
Table 7.3: Repetition of Zeph 1.18 in Zeph 3.8d.....	198
Table 7.4: Similarity of clause in Gen 4.26 and Zeph 3.9	207
Table 7.5: Chiastic structure of Zeph 3.1-13	216
Table 7.6: Lexical and genre similarities in Zeph 3.14; Zech 2.14a; 9.9	221
Table 7.7: Lexical and genre similarities in Zeph 3.14; Pss 47.2; 95.1; 98.4	222

Table 7.8: OT occurrences of the four verbs in Zeph 3.14	223
Table 7.9: Similarity of Zeph 3.17 and Jer 14.9	224
Table 7.10: Similarity of Zeph 3.17 and Isa 62.5	227
Table 7.11: Similarity of Zeph 3.19 and Mic 4.6-7	229
Table 7.12: Intertextual relationship between Deut 26.18-19; 7.6; Exod 19.5-6.....	232
Table 7.13: Ball's analogy between Zeph 3.19e-f and Mic 4.7	236
Table 7.14: Parallelism of Zeph 3.19e-f and 3.20c-d.....	236
Table 7.15: Changes in Zeph 3.20c-d from 3.19e-f.....	238
Table 7.16: "Name" and "praise" in Pss 48.11; 66.1b-2; 102.22-23; 145.21	239

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgments), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.



29 February 2016

John de Jong

Acknowledgments

Writing this PhD thesis has been a journey which gathered focus and momentum along the way. I did not travel alone and would never have reached the end without the expert guidance of my doctoral supervisors Dr Tim Meadowcroft and Professor Allan Bell, whose academic acumen was matched by their warm friendship and care. The insights of this thesis emerged from my own research but without their help I would not have been looking in the right places to begin with. Along the way many others have contributed in different ways and cannot be mentioned here but several must be singled out. Over the course of writing Mareike Fries was always quick to help with *schwierige deutsche grammatikalische (Satz-) Konstruktionen* (difficult German grammatical constructions). Professor Takamitsu Muraoka gave me helpful feedback on an earlier draft of “קדש in the Hiphil and Piel stems” (pp. 97-99). Sue Knox gave invaluable advice on formatting and Alan Knox proofread the thesis for a modest fee. Laidlaw Graduate School of Theology gave warm encouragement and help throughout, including a complete fees scholarship and an office in which to study. AUT provided money for research costs and provided other areas of support such as writers’ retreats and workshops. A continuing theme was contributions from the John Baldwin Fund which had already given financial support for my Bachelors and Masters degrees. The Myanmar Evangelical School of Theology (MEGST), where I teach Old Testament, graciously arranged the timetable and relinquished much of their call upon my time to give me regular space to work on the thesis. Finally, my wife, Rebecca, and our children Adam, Grace, Sarah and Charlotte, supported me throughout the journey, proving the Burmese proverb:

လမ်းဆုံးလျှင်ရွာတွေ့

(If you keep going to the end of the road you will reach the village).

For all of these people and for the privilege of being able to study the scriptures and teach them to others I give thanks to God who is in our midst, “a mighty one who saves” (Zeph 3.17).

List of Conventions and Abbreviations

Abbreviations for biblical books and biblical studies conventions follow *The SBL Handbook of Style*.

To prevent prepositional morass “Zephaniah” will often refer to “the book of Zephaniah.” Similarly, “intertextuality” means “the theory of intertextuality”, and “intertextual” is related to that theory.

The writer/s of the book of Zephaniah is/are referred to as “Zephaniah” throughout this thesis.

Similarly, the question, “Would Zephaniah have known” a particular text, refers to the availability of the text in question to the writer of Zephaniah.

[...] within a quotation represent my comments.

Verse numbers enclosed in square brackets [] are English verse numbers where they differ from the MT numbering, e.g., (Exod 22.20 [21]).

AT	Author’s translation
BDB	<i>The New Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon</i>
BFC	French Bible en français courant, édition révisée
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
DH	Deuteronomistic History
E	Elohistic Source
EIN	Einheitsübersetzung der Heiligen Schrift
ELB	Elberfelder Bibel revidierte Fassung
ESV	English Standard Version
GKC	Cowley, A. E. <i>Gesenius’ Hebrew grammar as edited and enlarged by the late E. Kautzsch</i> .
H	Holiness Code or Holiness Source
HALOT	L. Koehler et al. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
J	Yahwistic Source
JPS	Jewish Publication Society Holy Scriptures
KJV	King James Version
LUT	Lutherbibel 1984
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NAU	New American Standard Bible Updated
NEG	Nouvelle Edition de Genève
NIDOTT	W.A. van Gemeren (Ed.), <i>New international dictionary of Old Testament theology and exegesis</i> .
NIV	New International Version

NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NJPS	New Jewish Publication Society TANAKH
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
OAN	Oracles against the nations
OT	Old Testament
P	Priestly Source
par.	parallel synoptic text
SCH	German Schlachter Version 1951
TOB	Traduction Œcuménique de la Bible
<i>TWOT</i>	R.L. Harris (Ed.), <i>Theological wordbook of the Old Testament</i> .

Chapter 1

Introduction

My initial interest in the book of Zephaniah began when teaching a survey course on the Prophets at the Myanmar Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (MEGST) in Yangon where I live and work. The book of Zephaniah typically constitutes a minor part of such courses and OT introductions generally. A good example is Gerhard von Rad's *The Message of the Prophets*, which devotes a bit over three pages to Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, but dispenses with Zephaniah in just four lines (von Rad, 1968, p. 160). Yet upon reading this neglected book, the way Zeph 1.2-3 alludes to the creation-flood narrative in Genesis 1-9 stood out. My initial interest was along historical-critical lines as scholars generally consider the Genesis creation-flood account to be later than the book of Zephaniah. After some initial discussion one of my doctoral mentors-to-be sent me Patricia Tull's article, "Intertextuality and the Hebrew Scriptures" (Tull, 2000) and I discovered the theory of intertextuality.

At first encounter the theory of intertextuality can appear to be counterintuitive. On the one hand, we often assume that an earlier text is more authoritative than the later text which quotes or alludes to it. When someone quotes or alludes, the assumption is that the older text channels authority and meaning to the new text, which is passive. The authoritative understanding of the quotation or allusion lies in the earlier text. Thus as a new Christian many years ago I gave my niece and nephew a Bible and thought to inscribe it with Jesus' words from Matt 4.4, "But he answered, 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" However, I changed my inscription from Matt 4.4 to Deut 8.3, the text that Jesus quotes, thinking that the original text must somehow express more pristinely what Jesus wanted to say. On the other hand, we construct our own texts by constantly, usually unconsciously, reusing earlier texts in much different ways than channelling authority from an earlier text. Appreciation of intertextuality recognises the different ways a text takes up earlier texts for its own purposes in the construction of its own message. Such intertextual reuse of other texts is ubiquitous.

Since intertextuality is a theory about the nature of texts, exploring the intertextuality of a text is important for interpretation. It is part of the "ethical-interpretive duty to

investigate the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic construction of the individual text as a given entity truly different from the interpreter and his or her desires” (Alkier, 2009, p. 11). From a Christian perspective this duty to understand the text is all the more heightened by the conviction that this text is the word of God. Intertextuality is an overarching theory about texts which opens up many potential avenues of textual analysis. The angle of intertextuality explored in this thesis is how earlier texts are taken up and redeployed in the construction of the text of Zephaniah. As the chapter on theory explains, the texts that are available for this analysis are those that have been preserved within the OT.

Recognising allusions and echoes in Zephaniah adds considerably to understanding this small prophetic book. Not only does appreciation of intertextuality help to understand individual pericopes, it also contributes to understanding the book as a whole. Significantly, the very thing that first caught my attention, allusion to the Genesis creation-flood account, is the key to the entire text of Zephaniah. That this stood out is not surprising as allusions, by their very nature, announce themselves. Yet what emerged from exploring this intertextuality was surprising as it offers a solution to a problem with which commentators have struggled. This problem is the relationship between the global judgment in Zeph 1.2-3, 17-18; 3.8 and the judgment oracles against Judah’s very concrete sins in 1.4-16; 3.1-5. The problem extends beyond these texts to the relationship between God’s people and the people of the world, a theme which permeates the entire book. Zephaniah 1.2-3 alludes to the creation-flood account from the so-called Primeval History (Genesis 1-11) and this allusion brings the theme of representation into the text of Zephaniah. אדם (humanity) represents God to all creation in these early Genesis chapters and the sin of אדם meant judgment for the entire creation. Zephaniah presents God’s people as now bearing this representative function and because of their failure once again the entire creation must suffer destruction. The representative function of God’s people and their relationship with the peoples of the world forms the basic theme and underlying logic for the whole book of Zephaniah. At the completion of the book the restoration of the people of God goes hand in hand with the restoration of the peoples of the world to relationship with God. Zephaniah employs a number of intertextualities throughout the book which develop this ongoing theme.

I arrived at this understanding through exploring the book of Zephaniah with a focus on intertextual allusion. The idea of the representative function of the people of God in

Zephaniah was not something that I understood at the beginning of the process. Rather it was something that emerged as my understanding developed of the way intertextuality works, and also in dialogue with scholars who had grappled with this text before me. There were significant moments along the way. For example, J. O'Brien's observation that Zephaniah "subtly intertwines the fates of Judah and of the world" (O'Brien, 2007, p. 108). However, her suggestion for how these fates are intertwined was not satisfying. It was a "eureka" moment when the concept of representation, carried over from the early chapters of Genesis, emerged through my reading of the text. Other scholars, such as House, "Israel's reversal of covenant agreement causes a reversal of creation" (House, 1989, p. 63), and Gowan, "So, in Zephaniah, the judgment of Jerusalem involves the whole world" (Gowan, 1998, p. 81), had approached the issue but not suggested why this should be the case. Generally speaking the consensus position is that Zephaniah "never gives reasons of the punishment of the whole earth. He simply announces punishment" (Bailey, 1999, p. 410). Through understanding intertextuality the key concept of representation emerged which has contributed to understanding the entire book of Zephaniah.

The thesis title, *Making Sense in Zephaniah: An Intertextual Reading*, is a *double entendre*. At one level scholars have struggled to understand how the book of Zephaniah makes sense. A number think that Zephaniah does not make logical sense, leading them to emend the text and/or attribute parts of it to later redaction. Through an intertextual reading Zephaniah as a whole text makes sense. At a second level, and more generally, intertextuality is a theory of how sense, or signification, is created in texts. At both levels, therefore, an intertextual reading of the book examines how sense is made in Zephaniah.

1.1 Outline of the thesis

The thesis question is, "How does an intertextual reading contribute to interpreting the book of Zephaniah?" In answering this question chapter 2 explores the theory of intertextuality, discovering that it is a contentious concept with some theorists claiming that only their explanation is correct. The chapter concludes that intertextuality is an overarching theory about texts and stakes out the aspect of intertextuality explored in the thesis as allusion and echo. Chapter 3 looks at the way biblical, particularly OT, scholars have approached the intertextuality of texts in their exegesis. The contentious nature of the theory of intertextuality in the world of literary criticism carries over into biblical studies. However, some expert readers appreciate the intertextuality of the OT without

any reference to the theory or its literature. Methodological issues of identifying allusion and echo within the OT are laid out in this chapter. Chapter 4 briefly surveys historical-critical issues in the book of Zephaniah such as authorship, date, setting, and redactional history of the text. This chapter outlines the historical-critical assumptions that undergird the exegesis.

Following these introductory chapters, and constituting the bulk of the thesis, is the exegesis of the book of Zephaniah. It contains three chapters which follow the chapter division of the book itself. Chapter 5, “Reproach”, interprets the first chapter of Zephaniah as God’s threat of judgment for the people of God failing to live out their divinely given commission. Chapter 6, “Repentance”, is the appeal to respond to the threat of judgment through a call to repentance and a future vision of the restored remnant of the people of God. Chapter 7, “Restoration”, is the final chapter of Zephaniah which looks towards God restoring God’s people to their original calling and more. Yet Zephaniah is not only about the people of God. The peoples of the world are also presented in a variety of guises at different stages of the book: judged with the people of God, vanquished by the people of God, judged for the sake of the people of God, worshipers of God, and fellow recipients of God’s blessing. The exegesis also addresses these varying relationships of the peoples of the world and the people of God within the book of Zephaniah. The final chapter is entitled “Zephaniah Makes Sense.” This chapter synthesises the exegesis and considers how the thesis question has been answered, concluding that significant gains have been made in the interpretation of Zephaniah. There is some reflection upon theoretical and methodological issues that have arisen through the exegesis and the chapter finishes by considering the importance of intertextuality in biblical exegesis more generally.

The exegesis is based upon the Hebrew text of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) and the English Standard Version (ESV) provides most of the English renderings of the intertexts, unless otherwise noted. This version has been chosen over the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) for the sake of clarity. The NRSV follows the LXX more often than the ESV and uses gender inclusive language. Both of these factors can sometimes make highlighting a specific point from the Hebrew text unclear. Not an inclusive language translation, the ESV better suits the particular requirements of the task at hand. My own translation of Zephaniah is used throughout and sometimes I translate other OT texts (AT = author’s translation). German and French quotations are followed by my own

English translation in italics. Concordance searches of *BHS* have been made with *BibleWorks for Windows* Version 7.0.012g (2006).

Chapter 2

Theory of Intertextuality

This chapter explores the theory of intertextuality, beginning with Julia Kristeva who coined the word, but moving quickly onto Mikhail Bakhtin whose thought lies behind the concept. Different claims about the nature of intertextuality are considered and a broad definition of intertextuality is adopted for this thesis: Intertextuality is an overarching theory of texts. Approaches of literary theorists to allusion and echo, particularly John Hollander, are looked at as aspects of intertextuality. The chapter finishes by delimiting the aspect of intertextuality that the thesis will explore.

Kristeva coined the word, intertextuality (*intertextualité*) as a result of studying Bakhtin's work.¹ Kristeva describes the writer of a text as first a reader of texts: literary texts, historical texts, social and political texts, the texts of the reader-writer's own experience. To produce a new text the reader-writer rewrites these other texts, thus Kristeva's elegant definition: "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva, 1980b, p. 66). These historical and socially embodied prior texts – intertexts – become part of the new text through this rewriting, "(d)iachrony is transformed into synchrony" (Kristeva, 1980b, p. 65). However, the social and historical realities of these intertexts retain a presence in the text through their fragments which have become part of the new text. This is an important insight, central to Bakhtin's thought, although Ellen van Wolde illustrates how it can be misunderstood:

Kristeva's definition, 'every text is absorption and transformation of other texts', is very much open to question for in any case a text, alongside possible intertextual elements, consists to a large extent of elements that are not borrowed from other texts, and of sentences that definitely do not occur in any other text...If it means that texts are constructed from sounds and words that also occur in other texts, the definition of intertextuality is not of much use and no more than a tautology (van Wolde, 1997, p. 428).

To the contrary, "Kristeva's definition", emerging from her study of Bakhtin, understands that it is impossible to conceive of a "word" whose meaning is not intrinsically related to its participation in other texts. Hence "the word comes to its user already marked by its history, bearing the traces of its previous uses" (Dentith, 1995, p. 35). A word is never a

¹ "...the word (i.e. intertextuality) has become an international 'star'..." (Kristeva, 2002, p. 8).

neutral entity but always arrives imbued with energy from its previous texts which themselves are the rewriting of the social and historical texts in which they were written. Thus Kristeva wrote of the “the word within the space of texts” and describes Bakhtin’s

conception of the “literary word” as an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a *point* (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character), and the contemporary or earlier cultural context (Kristeva, 1980b, p. 65).

Kristeva’s introduction to Bakhtin, even coining the word “intertextuality” and providing its classic definition or formula, “Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations...”, is a good entry point into intertextuality. However, Kristeva’s interest in Freudian psychoanalysis, dream logic, carnival and, in general, post-structuralist categories, did not prove immediately useful for the kind of OT exegesis in which I was interested. The writings of Bakhtin himself offer more generally usable and transferable insights into the nature of texts.²

2.1 M.M. Bakhtin and intertextuality

Bakhtin epitomises the image of the enigmatic genius, and his life story of surviving (just!) Stalinist Russia and World War Two, living in exile and somehow producing some of history’s most profound reflections on language and literature is fascinating in itself (see, e.g., Holquist, 1981; Holquist, 2002, pp. 1-12). Tzvetan Todorov lauded Bakhtin as “the greatest theoretician of literature in the twentieth century” (quoted in Emerson & Holquist, 1986, p. x). Biblical scholars, amongst others, have mined his work for insights into reading the Bible.³ However, the treasures of Bakhtin’s thought must be hard won, as anyone who starts reading his work will quickly discover “that the English of most of these works is difficult to read, and they are prefaced by translator comments that Bakhtin’s Russian is itself difficult” (Bell, 2007). Bakhtin “has been described as structuralist and poststructuralist, Marxist and post-Marxist, speech act theorist, sociolinguist, liberal, pluralist, mystic, vitalist, Christian, and materialist” (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 4). Therefore B. Green’s warning should come as no surprise:

the vastness and complexity of Bakhtin’s thought makes it quite possible for the ingenuous to get him fundamentally wrong or to trivialize him. One does

² The focus here is only on intertextuality as it arises from Bakhtin’s thought and not on other areas such as carnival or chronotope.

³ E.g., Aschkenasy, 2007; Boer, 2007; Claassens, 2005; Claassens, 2003; Green, 2000, 2005; Newsom, 2002, 2007; Sykes, 1997.

not need to read for long to be quite intimidated by the possibilities of serious miscuing (Green, 2000, p. 5).

Yet for all of this vastness and complexity Green goes on to write that the “umbrella under which Bakhtin’s positions on language all stand is the dialogic, which acknowledges the multiplicity and interconnectedness of voices at work simultaneously and at many levels in language, involves a way of hearing such languages consciously” (Green, 2000, p. 46).

2.1.1 Heteroglossia and intertextuality

Foundational to what has come to be known as intertextuality is Bakhtin’s concept of “heteroglossia” which he discusses at length in his essay (163 pages!) “Discourse in the Novel” (Bakhtin, 1981). For Bakhtin language is an irreducibly social phenomenon. It cannot exist abstractly, only in concrete utterances made by socially embodied people in dialogue with others in time and socially variegated space. This social variegation means that any given single language is actually composed of different languages or heteroglossia, which are

social dialects, characteristic group behaviour, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific socio-political purposes of the day, even of the hour (each day has its own slogan, its own vocabulary, its own emphases) – this internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its historical existence...” (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 262-263).

Opposed to heteroglossia is “unitary language”, which is language in the abstract, “the spirit of Saussure” (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 263-264). Unitary language is a centripetal force which “gives expression to forces working toward concrete verbal and ideological unification and centralization, which develop in vital connection with the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralization” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 271). Heteroglossia, on the other hand, is a centrifugal force of “decentralization and disunification.” As a result there is a tension in all language: “Every utterance participates in the ‘unitary language’ (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces)” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 272). For Bakhtin these heteroglossia constitute the key characteristic of the novel. Through the juxtaposition of these heteroglossia through the characters and narrator it is not simply the conflict between individual characters that is portrayed. Rather, “oppositions of individual wills and minds are submerged in *social* heteroglossia, they are

reconceptualised through it...oppositions between individuals are only surface upheavals of the untamed elements in social heteroglossia” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 326). It is for this reason, therefore, that within the novel the issues cannot be finalised. “The internal dialogism of authentic prose discourse, which grows organically out of a stratified and heteroglot language, cannot fundamentally be dramatized or dramatically resolved (brought to an authentic end)” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 326). Were that possible then the problems of human existence would also be solved.

This is the essence of intertextuality. Words are never neutral, “it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 294). Rather the words come from other texts and bring with them “a residue of their past adventures” (Green, 2000, p. 53). The words in the text gain their signification from their participation in other texts and create a relationship between the texts, hence intertextuality.

Incorporated genres

It is not only the words, but also the genres, that carry signification into a text. As Bakhtin worked on the novel he understood that the “indispensable prerequisite for the novel” is that the writer deploys, or even unleashes, these different voices, these “heteroglossia”, within the text (of the novel). The novelist imports these heteroglossia into the text in three ways: through the narrator, through the character and through what Bakhtin calls “incorporated genres” (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 314-324). The effect of this deployment of heteroglossia “is *another’s speech in another’s language*, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. Such speech constitutes a special type of *double-voiced discourse*” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 324). Incorporated genres, inserted into the text, bring with them the conflicting drives and desires of different strata and groups in society. Indeed, for the purposes of signification Bakhtin subordinates the actual words to their particular heteroglot:

Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized) (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 263).

There is similarity between Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and Hollander’s *metalepsis* (see 2.3 below). Just as for Hollander the fragment of the intertext that is echoed or alluded to creates the hidden presence of the whole intertext in the text, so for Bakhtin the speech genre or heteroglot brings the ferment of an entire social sphere into the text. Both

approaches are equally well described as intertextuality, one the intertextuality of literary texts, the other the intertextuality of socio-political texts.

Heteroglossia and OT texts

For OT studies, however, Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia must be adapted. The "heteroglossia" of the Bible's world, the socially stratified voices of ancient Israel, are largely lost to us. As Green writes, it is difficult to find "places where a clear and sustained case can be made for class, gendered, or regional dialogue variation within a work" (Green, 2000, p. 53).⁴ Therefore the term "heteroglossia" must be used by analogy to Bakhtin's usage. In the place of these different social languages we must substitute different canonical texts which the writers of later biblical texts deployed in their texts in the manner that Bakhtin's novelist deploys the socially stratified and conflictual heteroglossia. In OT texts the words carry with them signification, not from the different strata of society, but rather from different texts within the OT. This is the way that Christine Mitchell uses the term when she writes of "the heteroglossic text of Chronicles" (Mitchell, 2007, p. 35; see also Mitchell, 2001, p. 49). Yet the fundamental concept is the same. The words, and genres, with which texts are made are so "completely shot through with dialogized overtones" (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 277-278) that "(o)nly the mythical Adam, who approached a virginal and as yet verbally unqualified world with the first word, could really have escaped from start to finish this dialogic inter-orientation with the alien word that occurs in the object" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 279). What Bakhtin fundamentally presents is a theory about texts which, through Kristeva, has become known as intertextuality. However, the nature of intertextuality is a hotly contested topic.

2.2 Intertextuality: A contentious concept

Within scholarly discussion intertextuality is distinguished from "influence" (Clayton & Rothstein, 1991b). Influence is a causal explanation of texts, assuming that the earlier text has a controlling and guiding effect upon the later text (Culler, 2001b, p. 33). Intertextuality, drawing upon insights from semiotic theory, seeks to explain each element (text) as part of a synchronic system and not as links in a causal chain (Culler, 2001a, pp. 31-34). Within this synchronic system it is the text that takes up and uses the intertexts for its own discursive purposes. This is how Kristeva's reader-writer is to be understood. However, the way that the text reuses the intertexts is understood in different ways in the discussion of intertextuality. Does intertextuality describe the conscious reuse of

⁴ See T. Muraoka (Muraoka, 2012) for such an attempt.

intertexts by the writer, i.e. allusion? Or does intertextuality describe only the unconscious reuse of a “cultural code” that makes communication possible? These two options are sometimes presented as two diametrically opposed poles.

2.2.1 More than presupposition

There is a strong current in the discussion of intertextuality that wants to preclude conscious allusion to earlier texts from the field of “intertextuality.”⁵ This distinction can be traced to Kristeva herself, in another well quoted statement, “The term *intertextuality*...has often been understood in the banal sense of ‘study of sources’” (Kristeva, 1980a, pp. 59-60). Accordingly J. Culler, in his discussion of intertextuality, insists that “previous texts” does not mean identifiable texts. Rather, he speaks of previous texts as having made “contributions to a code which makes possible the various effects of signification” (Culler, 2001, p. 114). By this Culler means that any text can only be understood because the reader understands how the code (the conventions, *la langue*) operates. Such understanding is possible only because previous texts provide the “intertextual codes.” Yet, for Culler, a specific text that contributes to this intertextual understanding cannot be identified because the production of any such specific text was only possible because of previous texts again. Thus, we are “faced with an infinite intertextuality where conventions and presuppositions cannot be traced to their sources and thus indubitably identified as grounds of signification” (Culler, 2001, pp. 112-113). Thus, for Culler, intertextuality is

less a name for a work’s relation to particular prior texts than a designation of its participation in the discursive space of a culture: the relationship between a text and the various languages or signifying practices of a culture and its relation to those texts which articulate for it the possibilities of that culture (Culler, 2001, p. 114).

This is a concise summary of Roland Barthes’ approach to intertextuality in which “the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located” (Barthes, 1981, p. 39). Hence, according to this approach, intertextuality is not about “the investigation of sources and influences as traditionally conceived; it...include(s) anonymous discursive practices, codes whose origins are lost, that make possible the signifying practices of later texts” (Culler, 2001, p. 114). Culler explicitly excludes the identification of specific prior texts from the theory of intertextuality and,

⁵ E.g., Aichele & Phillips, 1995, p. 7; Green, 1993, p. 59; Peterson, 2003, p. 218; Sommer, 1996a, pp. 486-487; 1998, pp. 6-10.

ironically in the light of her much quoted “banal sources” statement, criticises Kristeva for doing just this in her work on intertextuality (Culler, 2001, pp. 116-118). For Culler, Kristeva’s focus upon actual sources “cannot serve as the paradigm for a description of intertextuality, if intertextuality is the general discursive space that makes a text intelligible” (pp. 117-118).

Yet that is a big “if.” Why should intertextuality be restricted to Culler’s definition? If the concept of intertextuality comes from Bakhtin via Kristeva then by the time it arrives at Culler, certainly via Barthes, Bakhtin’s original thought has been reduced. The essence of intertextuality is that the elements which make up a text already have participated, and continue to participate, in (by necessity) prior texts. The participation of these elements in these other texts contributes to the meaning of the text and, furthermore, the texts are related through these common elements. Whether the elements from prior texts are reused unconsciously or consciously in the construction of a new text is not constitutive of intertextuality. What is fundamental to intertextuality is that signification and meaning are created through the reuse of elements from other texts. In the creation of a new text the reader-writer reuses prior texts unconsciously and consciously.

Bakhtin also addresses the “discursive space of a culture” in his later discussion of “speech genres” (Bakhtin, 1986). Bakhtin’s speech genres are similar to what he had earlier described as heteroglossia. Speech genres belong to distinct “spheres of human activity and communication. Each sphere has and applies its own genres that correspond to its own specific conditions” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 64). Over and against Saussure (or at least that which has been attributed to Saussure) Bakhtin insists that texts (*parole*) are not free creations based on *la langue* (the rules), but also rely upon speech genres and without these speech genres communication would be impossible (Bakhtin, 1986, pp. 79-81). Signification enters the new text both unconsciously and consciously through the reuse of elements of prior texts:

Thus, the expressiveness of individual words is not inherent in the words themselves as units of language, nor does it issue directly from the meaning of these words: it is either typical generic expression [c.f. Culler’s anonymous cultural codes] or it is an echo of another’s individual expression, which makes the word, as it were, representative of another’s whole utterance from a particular evaluative position [allusion, echo] (p. 89, my comments in brackets).

This is fundamentally similar to the thought of Barthes' who through Kristeva has "absorbed and transformed" Bakhtin's work (even as Kristeva had previously drawn upon Bakhtin and Barthes):⁶

‘Significance’ – the glow, the unpredictable flash of infinities of language – is at all levels of the work without distinction: in the sounds, which are no longer considered as units meant to determine the meaning (phonemes) but as drive-movements; in the monemes, which are not so much semantic units as networks of associations, produced by connotation, by latent polysemy, in a generalised metonymy; in the syntagms, whose impact, whose intertextual resonance, is more important than their lawful meaning; and finally, in the discourse, whose ‘readability’ is either overflowed or overlaid by a plurality of logics other than mere predicative logic” (Barthes, 1981, p. 40).

At the heart of this quotation from Barthes is that every element in a text carries signification because of its prior participation in other texts, certainly for Barthes an unconscious effect. Yet whether the reuse of these elements is unconscious or conscious the effect remains the same. Bakhtin's thought encompasses the entire spectrum: “any speaker...presupposes not only the existence of the language system he is using, but also the existence of preceding utterances...Any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 69). Thus, intertextuality is not to be distinguished from allusion. Rather, allusion is one aspect or dimension of the intertextuality of texts. This is recognised, for example, by H. Plett who in the introductory chapter of *Intertextuality*, uses “quotation” as the main example to demonstrate aspects of intertextuality (Plett, 1991).

2.2.2 An overarching theory of texts

Intertextuality is an overarching theory of texts. This means that different aspects of a text's intertextuality can be explored. Stefan Alkier, for example, suggests “three perspectives for intertextual work...*a production-oriented perspective, a reception-oriented perspective, and an experimental perspective*” (Alkier, 2009, p. 9). The production-oriented perspective studies the signifying effects of prior intertexts within a text and many OT intertextuality studies are examples of this approach (see 3.2 below). The reception-oriented perspective looks at how a particular text has subsequently been read in the production of new texts, as J. Stazicich does in the second half of his study of how Joel was used by later writers in the Bible (Strazicich, 2007). The experimental

⁶ “My concept of intertextuality thus goes back to Bakhtin's dialogism and Barthes' text theory” (Kristeva, 2002, p. 8). Hence this Barthes text has absorbed and transformed earlier Barthes as well as Bakhtin and Kristeva.

perspective reads any texts together to see what intertextual patterns emerge, for example “the intertextual relationship between some biblical texts and the two *Terminator* films” (Boer, 1995, p. 165). Such is the contested nature of intertextuality that some theorists reject Alkier’s first two perspectives as “a restrictive tool for nailing down authorial intent and literary influence...Thinly veiled in such efforts are conservative ideological theological interests in maintaining the primacy of certain (usually Christian) texts over against secondary (usually Jewish) precursors” (Aichele & Phillips, 1995, p. 7). It was in response to this kind of criticism that Hays quite rightly responded, “While I am well aware of the philosophical context in which these theorists employ intertextual analysis, I fail to see why my interest in intertextual echo should compel me to accept their ideological framework” (Hays, 1993b, pp. 79-80). The study of echo and allusion is one valid aspect of intertextual analysis. Kristeva’s original description of the writer being first a reader of other texts which are then rewritten into a new text indicates that Alkier’s first category of intertextuality, the “production-oriented perspective”, is an important one to explore in order to understand a text. This thesis analyses Zephaniah from the production-oriented perspective.

2.3 Intertextual allusion and echo

Once a text has been produced it exists synchronically with its intertexts and signification can go both ways when the text and its intertexts are read together. The specific focus of this thesis is on the way prior texts were used in the construction of the text of Zephaniah. This approach does not deny the validity of other ways of exploring the intertextuality of texts but chooses to focus on allusion and echo. However, the vast majority of texts that the reader-writer “Zephaniah” read are irrevocably lost in the dusts of time. Historical and archaeological data do provide general background data but not the specific and subtle intertexts with which a living language resonates (see “What is a text and which texts are relevant?” p. 27). Very little remains of the gossip, the political jokes, the hopes and fears of the individual Israelites in different social strata, the nuanced attitudes towards the imperial powers, exactly what the different social classes thought of each other. Almost all that we know of any of these things is what has been preserved in the OT. Thus this exploration of the intertextuality of Zephaniah cannot analyse all the texts that contributed to the production of the book but is, by necessity, limited to literary allusion to the texts that remain, namely, those preserved in the OT. A number of literary theorists have explored the way allusion makes its effect in a text.

In his book, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After*, John Hollander uses the metaphor of “echo” to explore how elements or fragments from earlier texts are taken up in later texts. This book provided the creative inspiration for Richard Hays’ pioneering work, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (Hays, 1989). When echo occurs in texts the result is that “more is heard than meets the eye” (Hollander, 1981, p. 22). Looking at the poems of Milton and those following him, as well as the earlier classical texts “echoed” within those poems, Hollander describes the literary trope⁷ of “transumption” (from the Latin) or *metalepsis* (Greek), terms he uses synonymously. Metalepsis is referring to the subject at hand through reference to something else that is not immediately or obviously related and this can be done, as Hollander shows, by referring to another text. Through deliberate allusion to a text that already exists the “metalepsis fetches signification from afar in time as well as in semiotic space” (Hollander, 1981, p. 143). Hollander traces echoes through different poetic texts and shows how each text is enriched and meaning is made more profound as another text subtly echoes within the text:

...the fragment of present utterance, the mite of quotation which is unquoted (by conscious or unwitting design), has been broken off from the context of a more complete utterance, as well as a prior one. It is, of course, incorporated into a new utterance (Hollander, 1981, pp. 62-63).

When such echo occurs the echoed text becomes present within the text. It is hidden by its absence yet present in the “echo” of the prior text/s. M. Riffaterre recognises the same phenomenon when he writes,

Such words may carry meaning in ways that cannot be explained as metaphorical or metonymic, and they point to textual significance because they stand for a whole “text”, the other text, while at the same time functioning like any other word, in accordance with grammar and lexical collocation, within their more ‘natural’ sequence (Riffaterre, 1978, p. 86).

In order to fully understand a text, therefore, this intertextual allusion must be perceived. Thus one of the tasks of scholarship is to recover the transumed (transferred) material in order to interpret the metalepsis (Hollander, 1981, p. 115). Ziva Ben-Porat similarly writes that although “It is possible to read and understand the alluding text (AT) without actualizing the allusion...The actualization of the allusion is a step towards a richer interpretation” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 115). Yet this is not always an easy task. When

⁷ A trope is a figure of speech. Other tropes include metaphor, metonymy (substitution for related rather than similar, e.g. “soak up the sun”) and synecdoche (part-for-whole or whole-for-part). Steen defines “trope” by “strange meaning” or “semantic deviation” (Dinneen, 1995, pp. 160-161; Steen, 2009, p. 608).

allusion is made and understood it is usually at an implicit level as the texts of reader-writer and their audience are activated. For readers of the OT these texts, most of which are lost in any case, are not heard at an implicit level and the allusion must be “recovered” in order to understand the text more fully.

While Hollander focuses on “echo” his basic idea that the fragment of the intertext transumes (transposes) wider meaning into the text is also true for quotation and allusion. Hollander is not suggesting that the prior text controls the later text, which would be “influence.” Rather, to use his metaphor, the echo bouncing from irregular surfaces can assume any number of variations:

The rebounds of intertextual echo generally, then, distort the original voice in order to interpret it. From the chopping-off or fragmentation of the echo device within texts...to the more subtly modified revisions of allusion, the figure (of echo)...responds in many tones (p. 111).

Thus, “the revisionary power of allusive echo generates new figuration” (p. ix). Here Hollander is recognising the same phenomenon as Kristeva who saw that “literary structure does not simply *exist* but is generated in relation to *another* structure” and that the writer’s “signifying structure (is) in relation or opposition to another structure” (Kristeva, 1980b, pp. 64-65). Ben-Porat’s exploration of allusion works on similar intertextual assumptions when she writes, “literary allusion is a device for the simultaneous activation of two texts” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 107). Allusion is made through a marker in the text which directs the reader to the “evoked text” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 110). However, as Ben-Porat also recognises, the evoked text or the intertext does not control proceedings. Rather, the symbols which constitute the markers in the text, the common elements, “may acquire different denotation(s). These particular denotations, the referents belonging to the reconstructed world of the evoked text, are independent of, and may even be incompatible with, the reconstructed world of the alluding text” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 108). In this way the “simultaneous activation of the two texts thus connected results in the formation of intertextual patterns whose nature cannot be predetermined” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 108). The meaning of the allusion is controlled by the text. All of the preceding discussion on allusion was already, of course, anticipated by Bakhtin himself:

...others’ utterances can be introduced directly into the context of the utterance, or one may introduce only individual words or sentences, which then act as representatives of the whole utterance. Both whole utterances and individual words can retain their alien expression, but they can also be re-

accentuated (ironically, indignantly, reverently, and so forth). Others' utterances can be repeated with varying degrees of reinterpretation (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 91).

2.4 Summary

Intertextuality is a dynamic theory about the nature of texts which recognises the intimate relationship between the reception and production of texts. Every writer of a text is first the reader of other texts and rewrites these texts into the new text. Therefore all texts are intertextually related to other texts. This fundamental relatedness of texts (intertextuality) constitutes a spectrum represented by Culler/Barthes and the reuse of anonymous texts towards one end, and Hollander/Hays and the allusion to specific texts towards the other. This intertextuality creates meaning or signification because the fragment of another text (intertext) within the text, be it an anonymous "moneme"⁸ (Barthes) or an allusion (Hollander), is a signifier. The fragment points beyond itself to the other text/s with which it also belongs, or, to look from the other direction, in itself it imports wider significance from those intertexts into the text, Hollander's "transumption." Whether those intertexts are identifiable texts or whether they belong to the anonymous cultural code by which we communicate is not the defining factor of intertextuality. In both cases the principle is the same. Through the element within the text which also belongs to other texts signification is created. Intertextuality creates what Paul Ricoeur, describing the effect of metaphor, called a "surplus of meaning."⁹

The exploration of intertextuality in this thesis will be on the texts that were read and taken up in the production of the text of Zephaniah. This approach is restricted to the inter-texts that have been preserved within the OT itself. Other intertextual explorations could be taken with the book of Zephaniah, for example, how the text of Zephaniah has been read and transformed by other texts, e.g., in the NT or in the post-NT era. Another intertextual approach would be to read the entire OT, or the OT and NT, canonically and consider the effect of intertextual connections between the text of Zephaniah and other texts within the canon without regard to dating. There are many approaches that could be taken but it is not possible to take them all in one thesis-length project. This thesis will restrict itself to intertextual allusion within the text of Zephaniah.

⁸ This is what Barthes calls a morpheme.

⁹ "Surplus of meaning" is a well-known phrase to describe the effect of metaphor coined by Paul Ricoeur, e.g., (Ricoeur, 1976).

Plett warns that an inadequate understanding of intertextuality results in “the dynamism of intertextual sign processes” being replaced by “a static phenomenological accountancy” (Plett, 1991, p. 4). Simply identifying intertexts is what Harold Bloom describes, in a much quoted quip, as “the wearisome industry of source-hunting, of allusion-counting, an industry that will soon touch apocalypse anyway when it passes from scholars to computers” (quoted in Hays, 1989, p. 17). Identifying an intertext without considering the effect it has on the text is banal. Likewise, assuming that a fixed meaning from the intertext imposes itself upon the text (influence) does not appreciate the dynamic effects of intersecting texts. This leads to the next chapter which explores how the theory of intertextuality has been used in OT exegesis and lays the methodological foundation for the exegesis of Zephaniah which forms the main body of this thesis.

Chapter 3

Intertextual Analysis of the Old Testament

The OT is, to borrow Hollander's phrase, "allusively charged" (Hollander, 1981, p. 119) and this chapter looks at some ways scholars have explored this intertextuality of the OT. The previous chapter showed how intertextuality is a contested concept within literary scholarship and this conflict carries over into biblical studies. This contentiousness emerges throughout the various sections of this chapter. The first section, however, argues that intertextuality was implicitly understood by OT scholars Nahum Sarna and Michael Fishbane, neither of whom ever mention the theory, let alone argue about it. More recent works on intertextuality in the prophets are surveyed and issues around intertextuality that emerge from these works are discussed. Particular attention is paid to the three questions of what is intertextuality, what constitutes a text, and how does echo differ from allusion. The final section looks at methodological issues in identifying allusions and echoes in OT texts.

3.1 "Inner-biblical exegesis"

The first full-scale work assessing reuse of texts within the OT was published in 1985, Fishbane's *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Fishbane, 1985), in which he develops ideas presented in his earlier article (Fishbane, 1980). Fishbane's work builds on the thought of his teacher, Sarna, as can be seen from Sarna's brilliant study of Psalm 89 (Sarna, 1963). In this study Sarna developed the idea of "inner-biblical exegesis"¹⁰ to describe the way later OT texts reuse earlier texts within the OT. Sarna's and Fishbane's work lacks any reference to intertextuality theory, but they are outstanding examples of what Tull describes as "doing naturally what others discover through theory" (Tull, 2000, p. 70).

Sarna shows an implicit appreciation of intertextuality although the insights from later theoretical discussion can sometimes offer correctives to his work. Specifically, Sarna identifies the two prose accounts of Nathan's oracle to David (2 Sam 7.4-17; 1 Chr 17.3-15) as "recensions", and the poetry of Ps 89.20-38 as an "interpretation" of the oracle.

¹⁰ Sarna was not the first to have thought in this way. He quotes Albright, "There was undoubtedly much more exegesis of the Hebrew text in pre-Exilic times than we often realize" (Albright, 1957, p. 296 cited in Sarna 1963).

This distinction between “recension” and “interpretation” can no longer be maintained as it is now understood that any reuse of a text is at the same time an interpretation of it. The omission of the threat of punishment to David’s offspring in the Chronicles version demonstrates this. Hence the two prose accounts must also be read against each other just as Sarna reads Psalm 89 against 2 Sam 7.4-17 in order to understand how one of the texts is using the other.

Nevertheless, Sarna’s insights into the way intertextuality operates cohere remarkably with later discussions of intertextuality.¹¹ For example, Sarna refers to “the idea of authority and immutability and, ultimately, of sanctity” of authoritative texts in the ANE, giving the examples of Hammurabi’s Law and the *Enuma Elish*.

Paradoxically, this very idea of authority and immutability itself engenders change. The past is drawn upon to give sanction to the present, and the ancient words, precisely because they are invested with authority, are reinterpreted to make them applicable to the contemporary scene (Sarna, 1963, p. 34).

This recognises the way a later text takes up an earlier one for its own purposes, in the same way as Kristeva described the reader-writer who rewrites other texts in the production of a new text. Fishbane develops this further with the categories of *traditum* and *traditio* (Fishbane, 1985).¹² Following Sarna, for Fishbane the decisive question that gives rise to inner-biblical exegesis is how an authoritative text becomes meaningful in a new context. (Fishbane, 1980, p. 343). A text may be considered authoritative,

Yet its very authoritativeness underscores the dilemma caused by the inevitable inability of the first revelation to deal with all new situations and unforeseen contingencies. This problem was variously resolved in different biblical genres and narratives (Fishbane, 1980, p. 343).

In order for the authoritative text, the “revelation”, which Fishbane calls the *traditum*, to remain relevant to the community, it must be adapted by the process he calls the *traditio*. The central task of this *traditio* “is to demonstrate the capacity of Scripture to regulate *all* areas of life and thought” (Fishbane, 1985, p. 3). Fishbane refers to Abraham Geiger as

¹¹ J.R. Kelly’s thesis has valuable discussion of Kristeva and the theory of intertextuality, and Sarna and Fishbane’s inner-biblical exegesis, but he does not bring these discussions together (Kelly, 2014).

¹² Fishbane borrowed these terms from D. Knight’s study of OT tradition-history scholarship (Knight, 1975).

one who grasped this insight some time ago,¹³ quoting Sarna's summary of Geiger's position,

...the history of the biblical text is interwoven with the history of the people, that the text itself, being a response to life, constantly adapted itself to the needs of the people, ...[and] that what the process of midrash and exegesis accomplished in a later age, was achieved through textual manipulation in the period before the final stabilization of the biblical text (Fishbane, 1985, pp. 5-6).

Geiger, Sarna and Fishbane employ different terms, "textual manipulation" and "inner-biblical exegesis", but regardless of the terminology they are describing an intertextual process, just as Kristeva situated "the text within history and society, which are then seen as texts by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them" (Kristeva, 1980b, p. 65). The affinity of the Sarna and Fishbane's work with intertextuality, although they nowhere refer to it as a theory, is striking. Fishbane, for example, points out that the relationship between the received text (*traditum*) and the rewriting of that text (*tradio*) is

paradoxical, for while the *tradio* culturally revitalizes the *traditum*, and gives new strength to the original revelation, it also potentially undermines it...Where each particular *traditum* was believed to derive from divine revelation, recognition of its insufficiencies – inherent in the need for the interpretation of the *tradio* – decentralizes the mystique of the authority of the revelation (Fishbane, 1985, p. 15).

This insight shares similarity with that of literary theorist Tilottama Rajan, who writes,

...the concept of intertextuality makes the source of influence [Fishbane's *traditum*] into a text that is already within a chain of textual substitutions. In so doing it radically reconceives the hierarchical model of literary history as a sequence of repetitive confirmations in which authority is protected from any inscription in its own future, without substituting for it a discontinuous model in which a later text can claim a revolutionary autonomy from any inscription in its past (Rajan, 1991, pp. 61-62).

What Rajan is saying is that an early and authoritative text is not privileged with an unalterable message that is reconfirmed through the texts that are written in the ages that follow it, as though its "authority is protected from any inscription (i.e. re-writing) in its own future" (Rajan quote above). The earlier text does have an effect upon later texts, but the later texts also have an effect upon how the earlier text is understood. The relationship of texts is not uni-directional but inter-textual and if the concept of "authority" is raised

¹³ Geiger, A. (1928). *Urschrift und Undersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwicklung des Judenthums*. Frankfurt-on-Main: Mada, cited in Fishbane 1985.

it belongs, paradoxically as Fishbane writes, to the later texts which read and rewrite the inter-text.

The term “inner-biblical exegesis” itself reveals an insight into the intertextuality of texts. Benjamin Sommer, who with Fishbane as his doctoral mentor constitutes the third generation of an illustrious scholarly lineage starting with Sarna, rejects the term “inner-biblical exegesis” and prefers “inner-biblical allusion” as a better description of what occurs when texts in the OT take up earlier texts (Sommer, 1998, p. 23). This change of terminology, slight as it might seem, represents a movement away from understanding intertextuality. Whereas his predecessors show an implicit appreciation of intertextuality without explicitly mentioning it, Sommer names intertextuality and rejects it:

...an intertextual approach differs markedly from approaches concerned with “influence” and “allusion.” Intertextuality is concerned with the reader or with the text as a thing independent of its author, while an approach oriented towards allusion is concerned with the author as well as the text and the reader (Sommer, 1996a, p. 487; Peterson, 2003, p.218, argues for this same position).

This represents a reductionist understanding of intertextuality, similar to that of L. Eslinger who criticises Fishbane’s diachronic approach and claims that the proper way to study the relationship of texts is “as allusions and as biblical intertextuality...a self-consciously literary analysis of the textual interconnections in biblical literature” (Eslinger, 1992, p. 56). Neither Sommer nor Eslinger’s statements appreciate the nuanced intertextual approach to the text that Fishbane and Sarna demonstrate, something that is not missed by Kugel in his review of Fishbane’s *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*:

His book says, in essence, that the whole goal of “peeling away” later material to arrive at “original” formulations is not only far more complex than commonly imagined, but that it fundamentally misconstrues what the sacred corpus of Israel represents, a group of writings in which revelation and (re-) interpretation are part of a continuous dialectic and an ongoing process (Kugel, 1987, p. 283).

For Sommer, “the study of intertextuality is synchronic, the analysis of allusion diachronic or even historicist” (Sommer, 1996a, p. 487). Yet “synchronic” is not synonymous with “present moment.” The production of any OT text was the synchronic rewriting of literary texts and the texts of history and society by a writer at a particular time. This misunderstanding of what synchronic means is criticised by W.M. Schniedewind in his review of Sommer’s book: “While it may be true that intertextual studies have tended to be ahistorical (or, more precisely, have tended to focus on the present historical moment), they are not intrinsically so” (Schniedewind & Sommer,

2001). Indeed, confusion about exactly what “synchronic” means is quite common in discussions of intertextuality. P. Kim, for example, refers to Tull’s book, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah*, as an example of “a synchronic approach” to intertextuality (Kim, 2007, p. 498). Yet Tull herself describes this work as resembling Fishbane in theoretical presupposition but R. Hays in methodology (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 81), both of whom explore diachronic dimensions of the biblical texts.

A misunderstanding about the nature of intertextuality is present in the way Sommer rejects the term “inner-biblical exegesis” for “inner-biblical allusion.” Sommer argues that an exegetical text has no existence apart from the text it is exegeting whereas an alluding text does exist in its own right (Sommer, 1998, pp. 17-18). At a general genre-descriptive level this distinction may be true, but at a more essential level no text exists by itself as an autonomous structure. As Kristeva wrote, “literary structure does not simply *exist* but is generated in relation to *another* structure” and the writer’s “signifying structure (is) in relation or opposition to another structure” (Kristeva, 1980b, pp. 64-65). This insight is very much a concern of Sarna and Fishbane, for example,

...the author of the lament (Ps 89) needed to adapt Nathan’s oracle to his own immediate purposes. He had not the slightest interest in the original occasion of the oracle...His sole concern was with the Divine Pledge of perpetuity to the Davidic dynasty....It is this exclusive interest that explains the expansions, selectivity, departures from, and changes of emphasis in the psalmist’s citations from the text of the oracle” (Sarna, 1963, p. 39).

This describes the process of re-reading and re-writing, and stands in contrast to Sommer’s claim that “a writer alludes to an older text for some purpose in his own text [true enough], not to suggest a particular understanding of the old one” (Sommer, 1998, p. 30). Sommer himself contradicts this assertion when he shows how Second Isaiah reverses a number of Jeremiah’s prophecies (Sommer, 1998, pp. 36-46) which cannot be understood in any other way than suggesting a particular understanding of the older text. T. Dozeman demonstrates this exegetical dimension, “bringing out” the meaning, in his study of the reuse of Exod 32-34 by Joel and Jonah:

(T)he reuse of tradition in Joel and in Jonah is not simply a matter of quoting an authoritative text from Torah in a new literary context, but that these texts approach Exodus 32-34 from very distinct perspectives in order to explore latent or potential meanings concerning the implications of covenant renewal for both Israel and the nations (Dozeman, 1989, p. 222).

This exegetical aspect is inherent in intertextuality when it is understood as a theory about the nature of texts, i.e., all texts take up and rewrite other texts. Such an understanding of intertextuality contrasts with treating it as a methodology for reading the OT. For example, “Intertextuality, then, concerns itself with the relations among many texts; it is a synchronic, reader-oriented, semiotic *method*” (Sommer, 1998, pp. 7, my emphasis); “This approach [i.e. intertextuality] is reader-oriented and synchronic and contrasts with the approach which focuses attention on the author and diachronic ‘allusions’ to a primary text, the *traditum*, to which a second text, the *traditio*, alludes” (Hepner, 2001, pp. 25-26). These definitions of intertextuality contrast, for example, with that of Mitchell who, after an indepth discussion of a number of intertextuality theorists, succinctly describes intertextual analysis of the OT as taking “into consideration the movement of texts and figures through space, time, and discourse” (Mitchell, 2001, p. 59). Intertextuality is not a methodology or approach to texts but rather a theory about the nature of texts in which the reception of texts is closely related to the production of texts. Therefore even without articulating a central theory of intertextuality, sensitive readers of texts (e.g., Hollander, Sarna, Fishbane, Hays) nevertheless find much common ground in their appreciation of the nature of texts. Furthermore, a range of reading methodologies may be employed to explore texts, texts which are all intrinsically intertextual. Hollander’s “study of allusion”, is one way to appreciate the intertextuality of texts. Sarna’s and Fishbane’s studies of the way texts within the OT reuse earlier texts also show great sensitivity to the intertextual nature of the OT.

3.2 Intertextuality in the prophets

Since 1997 six monographs on intertextuality in the prophets have been published.¹⁴ Two general observations can be made of these monographs. First, they are all studies of later biblical books in which allusions to an existing collection of texts, which later became canonised into the OT, can be discerned. The second observation is that these are nearly

¹⁴ Patricia Tull Willey, (1997). *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah*. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press; book reviews: Hanson & Willey, (1999); Klingbeil & Willey, 2001; H. G. M. Williamson & Tull Willey, (2000); Benjamin Sommer, (1998). *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press; book reviews: Barmash & Sommer, (2002); Houston & Sommer, (2001); Linafelt & Sommer, (2000); Pyeon & Sommer, (2001); Schniedewind & Sommer, (2001); Donald Polaski, (2001), *Authorizing an End: The Isaiah Apocalypse and Intertextuality*. Leiden: Brill; book reviews: Hagelia & Polaski, (2003); Moore & Polaski, (2003); J.Todd Hibbard, (2006), *Intertextuality in Isaiah 24-27: The Reuse and Evocation of Earlier Texts and Traditions*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; book review: J. M. Leonard & Hibbard, 2008; John Strazicich, (2007), *Joel’s Use of Scripture and the Scripture’s Use of Joel*. Leiden: Brill; book review: Watson & Strazicich, (2010); Michael R. Stead, (2009). *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1-8*. New York, NY: T&T Clark; book review: Tiemeyer & Stead, 2010).

all studies of limited portions of scripture. Using the NRSV for approximate English word counts, Joel has 1900 words; Isaiah 24-27, 1800; Zechariah 1-8, 3200 words. Tull's study, although the title refers to Second Isaiah, actually treats in detail only 51.19-52.12; 49.1-50.3; 52.13-53.12 and 54.1-17, in that order, for approximately 3300 words. The subject of this thesis, Zephaniah, has around 1500 words. This type of exegesis necessitates shorter texts because it also involves the exegesis of the many intertexts while at the same time giving a coherent exegesis of the (main) text. The exception is Sommer's work which treats the entire text of Second Isaiah, understood as Isaiah 40-66. He concentrates on the different ways in which Second Isaiah reuses earlier texts rather than attempting to show how these reuses contribute to the overall message of Second Isaiah or even larger sections within the book (see this criticism in Houston & Sommer, 2001). However, Sommer does bring his argument to a conclusion in a fascinating discussion of Second Isaiah's role as an important transitional figure in the "rise of hermeneutically based religion" (Sommer, 1998, p. 152).

3.2.1 Issues arising from OT works on intertextuality

What is "intertextuality"?

The monographs referred to above all bear within themselves the marks of their origins as PhD dissertations, especially in their very technical introductory discussions of intertextuality.¹⁵ Not surprisingly, given the contested nature of the concept of intertextuality, a variety of understandings about intertextuality emerges from these discussions. Tull presents the most satisfying model of intertextuality. It is no coincidence that of all these scholars she alone engages in a sustained study of Bakhtin. By contrast the other authors mainly look at and critique the post-structuralist roots of intertextuality, especially Kristeva and Barthes. While these scholars largely position themselves over and against the shortcomings of the post-structuralist approach, Tull has developed a more constructive understanding of intertextuality as an essential theory about the nature of texts. On this basis she critiques the traditional OT literary criticism of Westermann and Eissfeldt for their "narrow understanding of the interactions of texts, which does not take into account the freedom with which a new text might reformulate another's terms..." (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 47). Their approach is part of "a prevailing understanding of textual relationships as 'influence' by precursor texts on 'dependent' receptor texts,

¹⁵ In stark contrast, the edited volume *Formation and intertextuality in Isaiah 24-27* contains no reference to Bakhtin, Kristeva, Riffaterre, or any theorist of intertextuality, nor any discussion of the theory itself (Hibbard & Kim, 2013).

rather than as active appropriation on the part of new texts” (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 54). Tull demonstrates the difference between influence, which does not recognise “the fact that it is the later text that is exerting the intertextual pressure” and intertextuality, which recognises “the power of the new text...to enter the fray of competing discourse and to utilize the language of others to stake its own claim” (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 129). This understanding of intertextuality consistently informs her exegesis, shown, for example, by her comments on Isa 51.17-52.12:

This section richly illustrates the range of texts contributing to Second Isaiah’s thought, the range of attitudes Second Isaiah took toward previous discourse, and the range of ways in which Second Isaiah’s language was able to recall, use, misuse, and appropriate those texts (Tull Willey, 1997, pp. 115-116).

Tull understands that the reuse and transformation of other texts is part of the intertextuality of a text. This stands in contrast with what can be described as arbitrary definitions of intertextuality. Sommer for example, considers intertextuality and allusion to be unrelated: “This distinction between intertextuality, on the one hand, and allusion and influence, on the other, is basic to contemporary theoretical discussions of the relations between texts, though many readers continue to confuse them” (Sommer, 1998, p. 8). Thus Sommer defines intertextuality as a reader-response approach to texts. This is both a reductionist and arbitrary understanding of intertextuality if the theoretical foundations of the concept from Bakhtin and Kristeva are considered. M. Floyd makes this point when he writes,

it is unjustifiably arbitrary to exclude historical influence from the field of intertextual relations...Under the theoretical rubric of ‘intertextuality’ it is possible, and arguably even necessary, to include both the production and reception of texts (Floyd, 2003, p. 226).

Ironically Stead does exactly the same thing as Sommer when he critiques Sommer’s distinction between allusion and intertextuality: “Though Sommer’s two-category definition is neat, it is an over-simplification of the issues, because not all intertextualists are synchronic reader-response critics!” (Stead, 2009, p. 22). The critique should rather be based, not on arbitrary labelling, but on the nature of intertextuality. Such a critique can be made of Stead’s positioning of his own work when he writes:

The approach to be followed in this study is an intertextual approach which lies somewhere between the post-structuralist semiotic *intertextualité* of Kristeva and Barthes, and the historically oriented “inner biblical exegesis” (IBE) associated with Michael Fishbane (Stead, 2009, p. 18).

The problem with this statement is that it does not recognise that Fishbane and Kristeva share fundamental similarities in their understandings of the intertextual nature of texts (see 3.1 above). A less than comprehensive understanding of intertextuality is also revealed by Hibbard who holds up influence as a valid approach to understanding the reuse of texts by later authors over against intertextuality:

While there is certainly merit in recognizing the limitations to the reader's knowledge of the influences acting on an author, in my view it is simply going too far to claim that these are either irrelevant or completely unknowable. In fact, in a traditional culture in which sources were knowingly used, quite the opposite seems to be the case; it would seem plausible that the author might assume the reader would recognize certain influences so that his or her work might be regarded as part of an authoritative literary tradition (Hibbard, 2006, pp. 12-13).

It is true that the author may assume the reader will recognise the reuse of an earlier authoritative text but this quote misses the point that intertextuality is a paradigm that supplants the idea of influence by reconceiving what happens when a text takes up another text. The text is not controlled by the older authoritative text but “rewrites” it. As Tull puts it, there are a “wide variety of ways that one text might respond to another and incorporate, revise, repudiate or ignore its claims” (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 58). The idea of “influence” does not describe the way that a text takes up earlier texts and has its way with them. This is an example of how Sarna and Fishbane, with no explicit discussion of “intertextuality”, intuitively had a more comprehensive understanding than some scholars explicitly working with the theory of intertextuality (see 3.1 above).

What is a text and which texts are relevant?

From Kristeva's “definition”, “Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another”, the question arises of what is a text and which texts are relevant for OT exegesis. For Kristeva everything in a writer's experience was textualised, “history and society, which are...seen as texts by the writer” (Kristeva, 1980b, p. 65), and thus constitute “intertexts” for a text along with literary texts. Thus the intertexts of any given text are many and varied, including but by no means limited to written texts. Therefore, on the one hand, written texts alone do not constitute the “textual web”, as Stead implies:

In order to give a (synchronic) account of how the text of Zechariah 1-8 operates, it must be based on a (diachronic) awareness of the possible intertexts which were in circulation at the time of composition, since these texts (and not later texts) constitute the “textual web” and the “dialogue

partners” and the “gap-filling texts” for Zechariah 1-8 (Stead, 2009, pp. 28-29).

On the other hand, for OT exegesis these written texts are virtually the only intertexts that remain. D. Polaski grasps the holistic nature of intertextuality, “Intertextuality...takes a whole culture as its subject; texts are locations where institutions, norms, conventions and other texts which make up a culture collide” (Polaski, 2001, p. 34). With intertextuality presenting such a range of intertexts Polaski stresses the necessity of delimiting the scope of one’s study: “One simply cannot hold all the possible intertextual relations in view at the same time...Decisions must be made which limit the field...” (p. 34). However, in reality there is little choice with OT texts because the number of intertexts available are so limited. We simply no longer have the “whole culture” with its “institutions, norms conventions and other texts” which birthed the various texts of the OT. The study of intertextuality in the OT is self-limiting because the vast majority of intertexts are forever lost in the dusts of time. Virtually the only intertexts that do remain are those that have been preserved within the OT itself. This is a different situation to the NT for which intertexts have been preserved through the classical literature. M. Forman, for example, studies the intertextual significance of Roman imperial discourse in Paul’s concept of “inheritance” (Forman, 2011). Moreover, the OT itself, along with the Pseudepigrapha, Qumran and other Jewish literature constitute intertexts which are important for understanding the NT (see, e.g., Evans, 1993, pp. 48-50; Hays, 1993b, pp. 71-73).

For the OT there are other intertexts available from the wider ANE but these are a different kind of intertext. Christopher Hays makes a case for identifying ANE intertexts using Richard Hays’ “seven criteria” for recognising allusion and echo (C. B. Hays, 2008, pp. 35-42). His discussion, however, highlights the difficulties in identifying direct relationships between biblical and ANE texts. For example, in considering the question “How ‘loud’ is the echo; that is how explicit or overt is it?”, C. Hays writes,

Where the New Testament scholar may identify louder echoes by means of ‘verbatim repetitions of words and syntactical patterns’ [quoting R. Hays] from the Greek versions of the Jewish Scriptures, the Old Testament comparativist typically faces the problem of linguistic gaps between cultures (Hays, 2008, p. 37).

An example is the Cyrus Cylinder in which Cyrus describes at some length how Marduk made him “king of the world, great king, mighty king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters” (Hallo & Younger, 2000, pp. 315-316). This fascinating text shares similarities with the much shorter edict of Cyrus presented in

different forms in 2 Chr 36.23 and Ezra 1.2-4. The Cyrus Cylinder provides historical background, and “is compatible with a positive evaluation” of the Ezra narrative (Williamson, 1998, p. 14). Yet do we know that the writers of 2 Chronicles or Ezra knew the Cyrus Cylinder? We cannot identify linguistic markers in the texts because they are different languages.¹⁶ Similarly the *Enuma Elish*, the *Atrahasis Epic*, and the *Tale of Adapa* share similar themes to the creation and flood account in Genesis 1-11, and function as intertexts. It is difficult to know, however, whether the biblical accounts directly echo these particular texts. Did the writer/s read these specific texts in the creation of Genesis 1-11? This is an example of what we do not know and one of the reasons for this is that, “In contrast to the situations in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the majority of the literary production of Judah and Israel (i.e., apart from the curated records found in the Bible) has been essentially obliterated and so is inaccessible to direct study” (Hays, 2008, p. 36).

The ANE texts are indispensable for our understanding of the Old Testament but they do not offer themselves as direct intertexts for the biblical books. Rather they are intertexts that help us understand the general text of ancient Israel. A good example of this is Cho and Fu’s argument that Isa 25.8a, “He will swallow up death forever”, echoes “the Baal Cycle in which Mot swallows Baal” (Cho & Fu, 2013, p. 124). However, the connection between a voracious appetite and death is already widespread in the OT (e.g., Ps 73.9; Hab 2.5; Prov 1.12; Exod 15.12; Num 16.30; Isa 5.14; Cho & Fu, 2013, pp. 122-123), leading Cho and Fu to conclude that “the verb בָּלַע and the figure of death are closely connected in biblical tradition, which likely reflects a more widespread Canaanite mythological tradition about the god of death” (Cho & Fu, 2013, p. 129). The direct echoes and allusions in OT texts that we are able to identify are those that have been preserved within the OT itself.

This loss of most of the direct intertexts for any given OT text necessitates further reflection. Intertextuality largely operates at an implicit level of familiarity with the “whole culture”, a familiarity which in the case of the OT is now unrecoverable. This leads to two observations. First, except for the more obvious citation/quotation intertexts, we cannot always verify whether our proposed intertexts were in fact the objects of allusion. Second, even if we could be certain that the text is drawing upon another particular text we may not be able to know for sure what the signifying effect of the

¹⁶ The Cyrus Cylinder is written in cuneiform Akkadian.

intertextuality is. Certainly a large amount of intertextual signification is inevitably and unavoidably missed in OT exegesis. A modern example to illustrate the implicit level at which intertextuality operates is the wedding rehearsal dinner scene from the movie *Five Year Engagement* (Stoller, 2012), where the best man gives a terribly inappropriate speech which leaves the entire room embarrassed. At the conclusion of his speech he drains his glass of beer and announces, “I am an alcoholic”, which triggers a halting applause among the guests. What would exegetes two thousand five hundred years in the future make of that? They would no doubt understand that speeches were given at occasions such as weddings but would they know that the words “I am an alcoholic” belongs to the Twelve Steps/Alcoholics Anonymous programme, that they are spoken by someone trying not to drink, and that this declaration is typically followed by affirmation and applause from the support group? This level of familiarity with the culture is required in order to fully understand the text, highlighting both the importance of pursuing the intertextuality of OT texts but also the limitations in our ability to do so. As Tull writes in her work on Second Isaiah,

Only inhabitants of Second Isaiah’s own community, cognizant not only of the full range of traditions in the prophetic repertory but also the social function, connotation and significance of each of those traditions in exilic Babylon, would be equipped to hear the overtones and undertones of the poet’s message (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 142).

These obstacles to hearing allusions and echoes in ancient texts drew from Hays the warning that in identifying intertexts and considering their signifying effect on the text, “(p)recision in such judgment calls is unattainable, because exegesis is a modest imaginative craft, not an exact science” (Hays, 1989, p. 29).

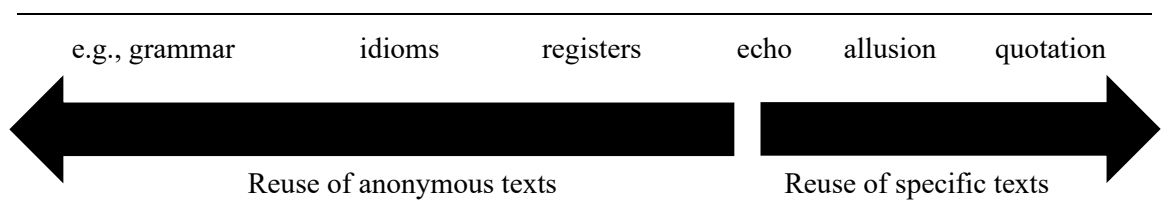
What is an “echo”?

The word “echo” is commonly used in studies of biblical intertextuality, not least because it was introduced by Hays’ ground breaking work, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (Hays, 1989; see 2.3 above). Nevertheless it is a slippery term to define. Skemp writes, “There is little consensus, however, on what precisely constitutes an allusion and how an allusion differs from an echo” (Skemp, 2005, p. 45). Sommer attempts to differentiate allusion from echo by arguing that “allusion consists not only in the echoing of an earlier text but in the utilization of the marked material for some rhetorical or strategic end” (Sommer, 1998, p. 15). He defines echo, however, as occurring when “the meaning of the marked sign in the source has little effect on a reading of the sign with the marker in the alluding source” so that the reader is aware of a reference to another text

but the echo has no bearing on the understanding of the text that is being read (Sommer, 1998, p. 16). Thus Sommer sees “echo” as “non-interpretive borrowing” (Sommer, 1998, p. 31). Yet this description of echo does not describe the effects of intertextuality in which the elements from other texts bring with them signification from those texts. Hollander, and Hays, from whom the term echo has become broadly used in biblical studies, see the effects of echo as profoundly affecting the meaning of the text.

Stanley Porter criticises modern biblical scholarship, with a focus on R. Hays, for using “echo” as though it were a separate category from “allusion” but in their actual work the words are synonymous (Porter, 2008, pp. 36-38). As such Porter states that “it is not clear that the term *echo* provides a way forward as a useful term for indirect references to extrabiblical material” (Porter, 2008, p. 39). Nevertheless, Porter maintains the usefulness of echo as a distinct concept from allusion: “Allusion is concerned to bring an external person, place, or literary work into the contemporary text, whereas echo does not have the specificity of allusion but is reserved for language that is thematically related to a more general notion or concept” (Porter, 2008, p. 40). This statement can be critiqued at two points. First, language cannot be thematically related to a more general notion or concept apart from specific markers in the text that point to that notion or concept. Secondly, general notions or concepts do not exist apart from texts, so effectively Porter is still describing allusion. However, a compelling point does remain in Porter’s attempt at differentiating echo from allusion, the “specificity” factor. This has already been addressed by Hollander who draws up a hierarchy of quotation-allusion-echo, a hierarchy which moves from the explicit to implicit presence of an intertext (p. 64), with all three categories belonging “under the heading of allusiveness” (p. 72). Thus “echo” is a metaphor for a “faint” or less obvious allusion. Within in the broader context of intertextuality echo is a less explicitly marked reuse of a specific text or texts (see Figure 3.1 below).

Figure 3.1: Spectrum of intertextual reuse



This is probably as precise a definition as is possible. An echo is a subtle allusion, as Hays himself wrote, “*allusion* is used of obvious intertextual references, *echo* of subtler ones”

(Hays, 1989, p. 29). A specific text may also be echoed subconsciously in which case signification is nevertheless still imported into the text. Quote is the exact reproduction of part of another text, and allusion sits in between quote and echo. While Hollander himself uses “echo” to describe faint, almost haunting, allusions, the important contribution of his work, highlighted by R. Hays, is his basic premise that the fragment of the intertext transumes wider meaning from the intertext into the text, which is also true for quotation and allusion.

3.3 Identifying allusion and echo in the OT

There are two competing dynamics to consider in the process of identifying allusion and echo in the OT. On the one hand allusion and echo are intended to be recognised; the marker in the text deliberately points to the marked element in the intertext. On the other hand, at our far remove in time and space we are disadvantaged in our ability to recognise the allusions and echoes in the OT. A lot has been written about how to recognise allusion and echo in biblical texts, most of which is a mixture of common sense and exegetical skill and experience. Hays’ seven “rules of thumb” are a good example:

- 1) “availability” of the text to the author;
- 2) “volume”, meaning how obvious is the allusion;
- 3) “recurrence” of allusion to the same scripture in the text or group of texts;
- 4) “thematic coherence” of the alleged echo with the line of argument being developed in the text;
- 5) “historical plausibility”, the question of whether the writer and the audience could have understood the text in this way;
- 6) “history of interpretation”, asking whether other readers have also heard the same echoes;
- 7) “satisfaction”, or does the reading make sense and provide a satisfying reading (Hays, 1989, pp. 29-31).

Hays was working with NT texts alluding to OT texts but working within the OT raises the additional issues. Establishing that there is an alluding relationship between two texts then raises the question of which text is making the allusion. Thus in OT exegesis there are two steps, first identifying allusion and second, determining the direction in which the allusion is made, i.e., which one is the text and which is the intertext.

3.3.1 Identifying allusion

Identifying allusion in OT is immeasurably aided by the fact that allusions and echoes, to varying degrees, announce themselves. This “announcing” is through the markers in a text which point to or mark the text to which the allusion is being made. Different scholars working with the OT have developed criteria with which to identify intertextual relationship between texts. Hibbard, for example, has four tests: common vocabulary, shared theme, meaningful effect, and chronological possibility (Hibbard, 2006, p. 5). C. Edenburg discusses five “textual signs” or “textual triggers” which may cause the reader to make connections between texts:

- 1) “Unique recurrence of peculiar formulations”;
- 2) “Similarity of context and/or structure”;
- 3) “Transformation and reactualization of a common element”;
- 4) “‘Ungrammatical’ actualization of a common element”;
- 5) “Interaction between texts...when one text reacts to the other with interpretation, supplementation, or polemic” (Edenburg, 1998, pp. 72-73).

Similarly R. Bergey finds a number of “semantic-syntactic combinations” and “semantic-thematic” similarities between the Song of Moses (Deut 32.1-43) and First Isaiah (Bergey, 2003). Having noted these similarities between the texts he tests the idea that one text is alluding to the other by considering some obvious alternatives to textual relationship: common source, genre similarities, and coincidence (Bergey, 2003, p. 47). He points to “the more complex shared language features – phrases, expressions, word-pairs or groups” as a further indication of “inner-scriptural borrowing” (p. 47) but notes that even these features are not evidence enough in and of themselves (p. 50). The decisive factor for Bergey is that the common elements in both texts are “always found at the beginning and/or end of the units” in Isaiah (p. 50). These units are the key initial chapters (chapters 1 and 28) or key intermediary chapters (chapters 5 and 30) in the major blocks of Isaiah (p. 33).¹⁷ This points to the Song of Moses being taken up by the Isaiah prophecies as part of its “compositional or literary strategy on the macro- and micro-textual levels” (Bergey, 2003, pp. 50, 52). Bergey’s exegesis demonstrates that there is

¹⁷ With this observation Bergey supports Plett’s contention about the important role allusions play in the key initial, intermediate and final positions (Plett, 1991, p. 11; see “Zephaniah 1.2-3 as an introduction below).

no mechanical process but rather close observation of the text at hand is required by which allusion can be discerned.

J. Leonard's article, "Identifying inner-biblical allusions: Psalm 78 as a test case" (Leonard, 2008), describes eight indications of textual relationship between texts within the OT (Leonard, 2008, pp. 246-257):

- 1) "Shared language is the single most important factor in establishing a textual connection." Leonard asserts that this reduces the degree of subjectivity that is involved in trying to identify a dependency relationship between texts based on themes where there is no shared language. In his criticism of Halpern (Halpern, 1998) Williamson stresses that this common vocabulary must occur in close proximity within the proposed intertext in order for the argument to be convincing (Williamson, 2000, p. 739).
- 2) "Shared language is more important than non-shared language." This is an important observation because the shared language may be interspersed with other language that is not part of the text to which allusion is being made. This is to be expected as the author takes up the intertextual material and uses it for his or her own purposes.
- 3) "Shared language that is rare or distinctive suggests a stronger connection than does language that is widely used." This is evident, for example, in Zeph 3.11 where the term **עליזי גאותך** (your proudly exultant ones) only occurs otherwise, with different possessive pronouns, in Isa 13.3.
- 4) "Shared phrases suggest a stronger connection than do individual shared terms." This is seen, for example, in Zeph 3.19 where the phrase **לְתִהְיֶה וְלִשְׁמָם** (for praise and renown) indicates textual relationship with Deut 26.19 where the same phrase is used.
- 5) "The accumulation of shared language suggests a stronger connection than does a single shared term or phrase." If the text contains a number of instances of shared language from the possible intertext then this is an indication of relationship. An example of this is in Zeph 1.7 which has a cluster of vocabulary that is used a number of times in 1 Sam 16.1-5: **בן** (son); **זֶבַח** (sacrifice); **קרא** (invite); **קדש** (sanctify). By extension, Leonard explains, it may be possible to identify less

obvious allusions from another text if the more obvious ones have already alerted the reader to possible relationship between the two texts. The previous strongly marked allusion to the beginning of King David's career may indicate that the unusual use of the verb כִּי הִכִּין יְהוָה זִבְחָה in Zeph 1.7b (to establish) is echoing 2 Sam 7.1-17 and Yahweh's promise to establish the Davidic dynasty forever.

- 6) "Shared language in similar contexts suggests a stronger connection than does shared language alone." An example of this is Zeph 3.1-5 and Mic 3.9-12 which share vocabulary that is quite common in the OT but textual relationship is indicated by the similar literary contexts as both are judgment speeches against various levels of leadership in Jerusalem.
- 7) "Shared language need not be accompanied by shared ideology to establish a connection." This statement aligns with Kristeva's idea of the "transformation" of one text by another and literary theorists agree that the text can have any range of relationships with the intertext as the writer of the text uses the intertext for his or her own purposes. (e.g., Clayton & Rothstein, 1991a, pp. 6-7).
- 8) "Shared language need not be accompanied by shared form to establish a connection." For example, the poetic oracles against the nations in Zeph 2.4-15 takes up the Table of Nations which is an expanded genealogy.

Leonard's eight "indications" are similar to Hays' seven "rules of thumb" in that they are guidelines and not a formula for certainty. The sampling of exegetes' approaches to identifying allusion given above show that the interpreter must make judgment calls which, by the very nature of the undertaking, in some cases can be suggested but not proven. Establishing the likelihood or possibility of an intertextual relationship between specific texts is only the first step in the process. After this the vector or direction of allusion must be considered. Which text is alluding to which?

3.3.2 Identifying the direction of allusion

Identifying the direction of allusion can be a difficult task. Fishbane was criticised for methodological sloppiness in this area (Kugel, 1987, pp. 277-281), but Eslinger went further to claim that it is not possible to know which text is making the allusion to which text and those who disagree with this are deceived by "the implications (of date) supplied by the biblical plot-line" (Eslinger, 1992, p. 57). Undoubtedly there are difficulties and

uncertainties in this area but Eslinger's assertion is too sweeping. Dozeman demonstrates the difficulties in this area by showing how J. Magonet sees Joel 2.13*ab*-b as alluding to Jonah 4.2 while from the same texts Fishbane concludes the opposite (Dozeman, 1989, p. 16). Texts like Joel and Jonah which both present no clear date and consequently have been assigned a great variety of dates by scholars, will inevitably present this problem when through common language there is clearly some kind of literary relationship. Hence it is no coincidence that the monographs referred to above (3.2) are all of the later prophetic books: Second Isaiah; the Isaiah Apocalypse (24-27); Zechariah 1-8; and Joel. These later books allude to earlier writings that had acquired some kind of authoritative status. As Sommer writes, "Deutero-Isaiah had *scripture*, but he did not have *canon*" (Sommer, 1998, p. 182).

However, even by working with later books the issue is not so easily solved because of the redactional history of the OT texts. For example, although Micah prophesied in eighth century Judah, Mic 4.6-7 may be a later addition. Thus it cannot be simply asserted that Zephaniah, a prophet in late monarchic Judah, is alluding to Mic 4.6-7 in Zeph 3.19. If Mic 4.6-7 is an exilic addition then it may be alluding to Zeph 3.19, except that the problem is further complicated by the possibility that Zeph 3.19 itself was written in the post-exilic period. In many cases we cannot answer these questions with certainty and as a result for any given text OT scholarship has produced many and varied redactional theories which cannot ultimately be proven or disproven.

To avoid this conundrum Eslinger proposes "a self-consciously literary analysis of the textual interconnections in biblical literature" that reads the books of the Bible according to the biblical plotline while recognising that the texts were not written in that order (Eslinger, 1992, p. 56). This is one valid intertextual approach to reading the Bible and it is used in a number of "biblical theology" publications (e.g., Poythress, 2014, pp. 492-494). Along these lines Dozeman reads Jonah as alluding to Joel and then he reads Joel as alluding to Jonah. However, this approach cannot be given the privileged position that Eslinger demands if for no other reason than that "there are times when texts refer so concretely to other texts that they seem to demand that the audience recognize the connection" (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 68). This is demonstrated by Dozeman himself when he asserts that both Joel 2.13*ab*-b and Jonah 4.2 are allusions to Exod 34.6 and by extension to the wider literary complex of Exodus 32-34.

How does Dozeman identify the direction of allusion, i.e., that Joel and Jonah are alluding to Exod 34.6? Dozeman offers no strict methodology in his exegesis. He refers to Wolff's conclusion that by the time Joel and Jonah were written Exod 34.6 "must have already received canonical status", an assertion which Dozeman adjudges "intriguing", without further comment. He continues, "the central problem...is that Joel 2.13*ab-b* and Jonah 4.2 depart significantly from Exod 34.6 with the addition of their closing line: that Yahweh repents from evil" (Dozeman, 1989, p. 219). Without further argumentation from this point Dozeman assumes that Joel and Jonah are alluding to and reusing Exod 34.6. Dozeman's approach demonstrates key points that are raised by different scholars in this area. Edenburg, for example, gives two criteria for determining the direction of reuse: 1) One text is obviously "motivated" by an element in the other text; 2) "The comprehension of the one text is dependent upon knowledge of the other text" (Edenburg, 1998, pp. 73-74). Hays' "seventh test" is also relevant here: "satisfaction", does the reading make sense and provide a satisfying reading? (Hays, 1989). Without being explicitly stated it appears that these points are determinative in Dozeman's decision to assume the chronological priority of Exod 34.6 over both Joel and Jonah.

In a more systematic approach Leonard provides six questions to help discern the direction of allusion and reuse (Leonard, 2008, pp. 258-264), noting that this task is "equally difficult, if not more so" than identifying allusion in the first place (Leonard, 2008, p. 257):

- 1) "Does one text claim to draw upon another?" This covers a small number of texts (e.g., Neh 8.15 which quotes Lev 23.40; Dan 9.2 which quotes Jer 25.11 and 29.10).
- 2) "Are there elements in the texts that help to fix their dates?" such as "orthography, morphology, syntax, vocabulary, content, and so on."
- 3) Very importantly, "Is one text capable of producing the other?" This thesis argues that textual relationship can be demonstrated between Zeph 1.2-3 and Genesis 1-9. It would be highly unlikely that the complex narrative of Genesis 1-9 was generated from two verses in Zephaniah whereas the opposite scenario is plausible. This key question appears to be operative in Dozeman's decision that Joel 2.13*ab-b* and Jonah 4.2 allude to Exod 34.6.

- 4) “Does one text assume the other?” Zephaniah 3.9-10 describes the gathering of the scattered peoples of the world for the worship of Yahweh and seems to assume that the readers will know about the events narrated at length in Gen 11.1-9, the Tower of Babel story, in which the peoples were scattered over the face of the earth. This is related to the Hollander/Hays idea of *metalepsis* or “transumed material.” As Zeph 3.9-10 alludes to an earlier text a whole complex of meaning is transferred into the text, much more than the few words of the allusion. This question is closely related to the previous one and is very useful.
- 5) “Does one text show a general pattern of dependence on other texts?” If a text exhibits more obvious examples of alluding and reuse this may indicate a habit of borrowing which may help to decide in more difficult cases in the same text. In the case of Zephaniah there is much allusion and echo, indicated by the centuries old, but erroneous, description of the book as a “prophetic compendium” (Childs, 1979, p. 460).
- 6) “Are there rhetorical patterns in the texts that suggest one text has used the other in an exegetically significant way?” Sommer highlights this in Deutero-Isaiah, for example “the split-up pattern, sound play, word play, and identical word order” in texts where Deutero-Isaiah reuses other texts. (Sommer, 1998, p. 68).

There is one other aspect not mentioned by Leonard but demonstrated by Dozeman (above), and that is the scholarly consensus on the dating of various texts. Dozeman referred to Wolff’s dating of Exod 34.6 and while he neither confirmed nor denied this dating it did become an implicit plank in his argument. One of the problems with scholarly dating of texts is that dating is usually motivated by other concerns and for any given text there is a vast range of opinion. Nevertheless the commentaries on both text and intertexts must be carefully considered and they themselves become intertexts for this thesis, evoking the whole gamut of reaction from rejection to warm embrace and play their part in the production of this text. In this thesis the issues of dating and direction of allusion will be treated in a case by case basis in each exegetical section.

3.4 The effect of allusion and echo on the text

Identifying an intertextual allusion is only the preparatory work for what is actually important, that is, understanding the effect or the signification that the allusion creates in the text. This question cannot be answered in the abstract, as allusion creates “intertextual

patterns whose nature cannot be predetermined” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 108). The key point, which the theory of intertextuality foregrounds, is that the text controls proceedings and uses the intertext/s to create its own message. Hence one of Hays’ “tests” for identifying an allusion is the “thematic coherence” of the alleged echo with the argument being developed by the text (Hays, 1989, p.30). Just as an allusion announces itself through markers that the reader is able to recognise, so the effect of the allusion becomes apparent to the reader due to the textual world they share with the writer. As modern readers, however, we are removed from this shared textual world and the effect of the allusion must be recovered so that its effect may be understood. The detailed exegesis which follows will explore how evoked texts are used, or reused, by Zephaniah (see 8.1.4 below, for a summary of the main patterns of intertextual reuse in Zephaniah).

3.5 Summary

The importance of intertextuality is now recognised in OT exegesis although what constitutes intertextuality is hotly contested. This thesis is interested in the effect of intertextual allusion in the book of Zephaniah. Yet the difficulties in identifying these allusions and echoes are evident. For example, Sommer claims that many of Second Isaiah’s allusions are to Isaiah 1-39 (Sommer, 1998, p. 73) whereas Tull concludes that in Second Isaiah “(s)ubstantive signs of influence by the eighth-century prophets Isaiah, Micah, Amos and Hosea are not easily found” (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 270). Thus this kind of exegesis can be criticised, as J.C. Beker did of Hays’ *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, as “fanciful” (Beker, 1993, pp. 64-65). Yet the signifying effect that allusion and echo produce in a text necessitates an intertextual reading of texts in OT exegesis, in as much as this is possible. Furthermore, Beker’s criticism of “fanciful” could equally be applied to any number of redaction- and source-critical approaches to the OT texts, which themselves constitute a hypothetical intertextuality: a hypothetical writer in a hypothetical historical setting read hypothetical historical, social and literary intertexts, to produce a text, and sometimes even that text (e.g., J, E, P) is hypothetical!

This thesis explores the effect of allusion and echo on the text of Zephaniah but this does not exhaust the methodological approaches that intertextuality opens up. Other kinds of intertextual readings include reception history, canonical intertextuality, and reader response approaches to the text. The particular approach pursued through this thesis is an attempt to understand what the OT text of Zephaniah intends itself to mean within its canonical context. Given all the inescapable uncertainties in exploring the effect of

intertextual allusion and echo in the biblical texts the most important test is probably Hays' seventh rule of thumb, "satisfaction" (Hays, 1989). The exegesis offered in this thesis will stand or fall on this condition: Does it make sense of the text and provide a convincing reading of the book of Zephaniah? The thesis will argue that exploring the allusions and echoes within the book of Zephaniah offers a richer and more complete understanding of this OT prophetic book.

Chapter 4

Historical-critical Assumptions about the Book of Zephaniah

The Preacher remarked, “Of making many books there is no end”, but there is also rather a lot written about the making of books, that is, redaction-critical studies of the OT texts. This thesis has no inherent interest in the redaction-history of Zephaniah but the exegetical approach requires making decisions on the relative chronology of the text and intertexts. The exegetical sections in the thesis deal with these questions on a text by text basis. This chapter delimits the exegesis of the thesis to Zephaniah, rather than broader texts such as the Book of the Twelve or derivatives thereof. The question of whether an “original” edition of Zephaniah can be identified to which an “appendix” was added is discussed. The discussion concludes that the book of Zephaniah contains “later” material but this material has been integrally incorporated into the final form of the book and draws the entire book to a conclusion rather than being an “appendix” which has been added on.

4.1 The book of Zephaniah as a discrete text

The exegesis which follows treats Zephaniah as a discrete text rather than reading it as one section of the Book of the Twelve (e.g., Dietrich, 2012), let alone as a section of a hypothetical original Book of the Four (e.g., Albertz, 2003, p. 204ff.) or Book of the Six (or possibly Seven) (e.g., Curtis, 2000). As T.S. Hadjiev writes, “right to the very end of its textual evolution the book of Zephaniah was regarded by its editors as an independent entity and not as part of a larger corpus of prophetic texts” (Hadjiev, 2010, p. 334; see Petersen, 2000 for a similar position). B.G. Curtis suggests that, because Zephaniah is the last book whose setting is monarchic Judah, Zeph 3.14-20 acts as “not merely an appendix to Zephaniah, but as an introduction to the prophets of Zion’s restoration” (Curtis, 2000, p. 181; similarly Nogalski, 2000, p. 218). Discussion of this is beyond the scope of this study but the exegesis will present Zeph 3.14-20 as an integral part of the text of Zephaniah. This raises the question of whether material within Zephaniah that was written later than the late seventh-century setting of the book can be referred to as “additions” or “an appendix.” The key issue in this discussion is the coherence or integrity of the book of Zephaniah.

4.2 The coherence of the book of Zephaniah

L. Perlitt presents the “traditional” critical view of the book of Zephaniah. First there was a collection of authentic oracles from Zephaniah himself which fit the pre-reform period of Josiah’s reign, found in chapter 1, e.g., 1.4f, 8f, dated to about 630BC (Perlitt, 2004, p. 97). This collection was eschatologically framed (1.2-3, 18b) to change Zephaniah’s judgment upon Jerusalem into something Zephaniah never intended, a global judgment. Finally the salvation oracles for Judah and the nations (3.9-20) were added and stand in complete contrast to the Judean prophet Zephaniah’s original message. Perlitt sees the formation of Zephaniah as taking hundreds of years and resulting in the classic tripartite structure of the prophetic book: judgment speeches against God’s people (1.2-2.3); oracles against the nations (2.4-15); and salvation oracles (Zephaniah 3). Perlitt even suggests that the OAN may have been added expressly for the purpose of creating this tripartite structure (Perlitt, 2004, p. 98). This approach to the text of Zephaniah is open to criticism. First, the so-called classic tripartite structure of the prophetic books is highly questionable, and M. Sweeney goes so far as to conclude, “The tripartite eschatological scheme simply does not hold up for Zephaniah, or any of the other prophetic books for that matter” (Sweeney, 2007, p. 71).

A more serious criticism is the way Perlitt, and others, do not believe Zephaniah can be read as a coherent text. Perlitt distinguishes later or secondary material from the authentic oracles of Zephaniah on the basis that they contradict the original message of Zephaniah. This may be a possible reading of the book but the exegesis in this thesis will show that Zephaniah can read from beginning to end as a coherent text. Furthermore, rather than the supposed tripartite structure of “judgment against God’s people, judgment against the nations, salvation for God’s people and the nations” (e.g., Hadjiev, 2014, p. 508), a careful reading of Zephaniah presents a quite different arrangement (see Table 4.1 below). This structure shows a consistent interplay between God’s people and the peoples of the world, and even the entire created order, which runs throughout the book of Zephaniah. This theme unites Zephaniah and demonstrates that the book constitutes a coherent text.

If the book of Zephaniah is a coherent text then attempts to discern authentic and secondary material on the basis of glaring contradictions are undermined. Seybold, for

Table 4.1: Structure of Zephaniah

-
1. Judgment against the entire world (1.2-3).
 2. Judgment against God's people (1.4-16).
 3. Judgment against the entire world (1.17-18).
 4. Call for repentance and possibility of salvation for God's people (2.1-3).
 5. Judgment against the nations and salvation for God's people (2.4-15).
 6. Judgment against God's people (3.1-5)
 7. Judgment against the nations (3.6-7)
 8. Judgment against the entire world (3.8)
 9. Salvation for the nations (3.9-10)
 10. Salvation for God's people (3.11-20).
-

example, reads Zeph 1.3 as a secondary exegesis of 1.2, which he considers to be authentic to Zephaniah:

Der zweite Teil (V.3), kaum mehr in gebundener Sprache, erweist sich nach Stil und Sinn vom ersten abhängig und ist dadurch als Auslegung des ersten gekennzeichnet, ist demnach als eine Paraphrase des Spruches von V.2 anzusehen.

The second part (v.3), hardly in continuous language, proves through style and sense to be dependent upon the first and is thereby marked as an exegesis of the first, is accordingly to be regarded as a paraphrase of the saying of v.2 (Seybold, 1991, p. 93).

This is an odd assertion because every text builds upon itself and is dependent upon that which precedes it. Other commentators consider both verses, 1.2-3, to constitute a secondary addition to the authentic Zephaniah material because it does not fit with the following judgment oracles against Judah and Jerusalem (e.g., Deissler, 1964, p. 446; Renaud, 1987, p. 197). The exegesis in this thesis, however, will argue that 1.2-3 does belong with the following verses and makes sense. This is not primarily a dating issue but rather a question of whether or not the text is coherent.

Furthermore, the confidence with which commentators feel that they can distinguish between “authentic” and “secondary” material is unrealistic. Again, to quote Seybold, on Zeph 3.8-10:

Dieser schwierige, weil nicht gut überlieferte Text geht auf einen Spruch Zephajas zurück – wie die Formel in V.8 dies belegt. Dafür kommen die beiden ersten Zeilen von V.8 (V.8a) in Frage, die beiden ersten Zeilen von V.9 (V.9a) und V.10. Alles Übrige ist als beigelegte Erklärung anzusehen, wobei

die letzte Zeile von V.8 –weil mit 1,18b identisch – zur apokalyptischen Schicht gehört.

This text - difficult because it has not been well transmitted - goes back to a saying of Zephaniah, as the form in v.8 proves. Thus the two first lines of v.8 (v.8a), the two first lines of v.9 (v.9a) and v.10. All the rest is to be regarded as added explanation whereby the last line of v.8 – since it is identical with 1.18b – belongs to the apocalyptic layer (Seybold, 1991, p. 113).

The detailed dismantling of this text is based upon the assumption that it does not make sense as it stands within the book of Zephaniah. The identification of the late elements is based on the judgment that they are alien to the text. Sommer's critique of this approach is insightful:

I regard compositional analyses of this type as unconvincing, not only because I doubt our ability to distinguish among diverse hands in prophetic texts but because many of the passages in question present themselves as readable units of considerable length to begin with (Sommer, 1998, pp. 4-5).

This thesis does not deny that the book of Zephaniah contains secondary, or later, material but rather affirms the integrity and coherence of the entire text. Readings which identify secondary material on the basis that an element within the text does not make sense deny the text coherence. Yet Kristeva's now famous observation that "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" means something quite different than the clumsy joining together of texts implied in these redaction-critical approaches.

The same criticism applies to the identification of a later conclusion or appendix to the book of Zephaniah (touched on above, Curtis, 2000). Hadjiev, although cautious about his reconstruction (Hadjiev, 2011, p. 578), proposes "that the original composition of Zephaniah encompassed 1.1-3.8, to which 2.7, 9b, 10, 11 and 3.9-10, 11-13, 14-20 were added later" (p. 578). He considers 3.9-20 a later addition because, in his view, these pericopes do not agree with the preceding material, 1.1-3.8. Thus he sees the sudden appearance of worldwide conversion following judgment in 3.6-8 "to argue in favour of the view that 3.9-10 were subsequently added after 3.8 since nothing in the preceding material prepares the reader for their appearance and message" (Hadjiev, 2011, p. 575). Similarly, he sees 3.14-20 as being added later because unlike other parts of the book "salvation here is promised not to a remnant of survivors but to the whole people" (Hadjiev, 2011, p. 577). Thus the identification of additions is on the grounds that these final verses contradict the "original" text. Similarly Gärtner identifies Zeph 3.8b, 9-10 and 11-13 as three discrete later additions on the same basis. For example, "Content-wise

the second *Fortschreibung* [“updating”; i.e., 3.9-10] opens up an option of salvation for the nations, salvation which transcends the horizon of the book of Zephaniah” (Gärtner, 2012, p. 273; 278). These scholars identify redactional additions through their interpretation of the text.

The exegesis in this thesis will argue that from beginning to end the text of Zephaniah presents a coherent message. If this is convincing it will challenge the suggestion that there was an earlier edition of the book of Zephaniah, which concluded at 3.8, to which an “appendix” or additions were added. The exegesis will also answer the issue raised by Hadjiev and Gärtner, with which every exegesis of Zephaniah grapples, namely the relationship between God’s people and the peoples of the world. Both Hadjiev and Gärtner argue that the salvation of the nations in Zeph 3.9-10 has no relation to anything that has preceded in the book of Zephaniah (see preceding paragraph). However, the relationship of the people of God and the nations, and even the entire creation, is presented throughout Zephaniah as integrally intertwined (see Table 4.1 above). Just as the corruption of the people of God means judgment for the entire world (Zephaniah 1) so the restoration of the people of God will mean salvation for the world (3.9-10). Zephaniah begins with the rebellion of God’s people against their God (chapter 1) but concludes with the purification and restoration of this people by their God (3.11-20). The exegetical sections address these issues in detail. The conclusion that is to be drawn from this discussion is that the book of Zephaniah constitutes a coherent text. Nevertheless, there are good reasons to accept that the book of Zephaniah does contain material that comes from a later period than that of the superscription, the reign of Josiah. This raises difficult questions about how and when the book of Zephaniah was written.

4.3 Authorship and date

This exegesis rejects the assumption that additions to Zephaniah can be discerned through “obvious” contradictions in the text, implying that we moderns can easily see what was beyond the ability of the ancients or of no concern to them. Yet this does not mean that Zephaniah contains no “secondary” or “later” material and this raises two main issues. First, how can “authentic” and “secondary” material be identified and secondly, how was this material combined to form the book of Zephaniah?

The first question is addressed in detail in the exegesis of the texts but the basic rule of thumb followed here is that “secondary” material can be identified if Zephaniah reuses material that is itself later than the historical setting of the book of Zephaniah, the reign

of Josiah in late monarchic Judah. Most commentators accept that much of the judgment oracles against Judah and Jerusalem in Zeph 1.4-18a come from this period. Some commentators consider the opening oracle, 1.2-3 and its corresponding framing element, 1.18b, to be late because they present an apocalyptic perspective, although this claim is presented as an assumption without any clear evidence. Neither does allusion to the creation-flood account in Genesis 1-9 provide any clear clues to dating because the date of Genesis 1-9 is not clear. Thus all of Zephaniah 1 could be from the period of Josiah's reign. Zephaniah 2 also appears to fit the Josianic period, especially with the culminating oracle against Assyria instead of Babylon (Zeph 2.13-15). Some commentators argue that Babylon is actually intended although Nineveh is named (Perlitt, 2004, p. 123), or that the oracle is about Assyria because it had already fallen and thus the oracle invests the entire book of Zephaniah with authority (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 305). These conjectures could be true but they are not self-evident. Similar to chapter 1, Zeph 3.1-5 continues the theme of addressing sinful Jerusalem and appears to come from the late monarchic period. The following verses, 3.6-8, bring these verses to a culmination and may also come from the same period. In Zeph 3.10 and 11, however, material from Isaiah's Babylonian period oracles, Isaiah 18 and Isaiah 13 respectively, is reused. Zephaniah 3.11, for example, alludes to Isa 13.3, a chapter in which Babylon is presented as the world super-power, and whose overthrow is threatened by the Medes (Isa 13.17). This is solid evidence that this part of Zephaniah was written at a later time than the late-monarchic setting of the book.

This raises the second question of how this material was combined to form the book of Zephaniah. Ben Zvi's discussion of this issue is helpful. He takes issue with "widespread assumption that any part of the Book of Zephaniah is Zephanic unless the opposite is proved", the reason for which, he asserts, is "the claim of the superscription is accepted on its face value" (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 32). Yet this is too sweeping a claim as commentators have recognised that many of the oracles in the book of Zephaniah fit Judah's late-monarchic period. Thus the superscription is not the only reason to place Zephaniah in late-monarchic Judah. Ben Zvi goes further with his assertion that there was never an author called Zephaniah (p. 348) and that there was never a single Zephanic text to which later updatings (*Fortschreibungen*) were made (p. 357). Rather, Ben Zvi concludes that the book of Zephaniah was written well into the post-exilic period incorporating some pre-compositional materials which did not come from a late seventh century prophet named Zephaniah.

In other words, the compositional level did not produce the Book of Zephaniah out of nothing, but there was no Book of Zephaniah before the compositional level...The most one can say with any critical convincing weight is that through time certain traditions were attached to the figure of Zephaniah son of Cushi, a prophet who probably lived in the days of Josiah (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 347; 357-358).

Ben Zvi's conclusions have not been widely accepted and are open to challenge. For example, even so critical a scholar as Perlitt thinks there is little ground to mistrust the dating in the superscription of Zephaniah (Perlitt, 2004, p. 97). The strength in Ben Zvi's position, however, is his assertion that the book of Zephaniah was written as a coherent text as opposed to the model of an original text to which additions were made. The primary and secondary material has been formed into a coherent text. Exegetes attempt to identify secondary material based upon interpretation of the text, particularly places they think that the text does not make sense. In the same way, reading Zephaniah as a coherent text is also based upon interpretation, an interpretation that is assisted by reading Zephaniah intertextually. This conclusion shares similarities and differences with Robert Alter's "composite artistry" (Alter, 1981, pp. 131-154). In common with Alter there is the recognition that everything in this text was not written at one time by one author but neither has there been clumsy or even incompetent editing of these elements. A point of difference with Alter is that within Zephaniah there are no elements which have been deliberately juxtaposed, creating apparent inconsistencies, in order to produce in the narrative the "effect of multifaceted truth" (Alter, 1981, p. 140).

This exegesis will take an agnostic line on dating but assumes that the final form of the book of Zephaniah was written sometime after the Babylonian era Isaiah texts which Zeph 3.10, 11 allude to, possibly in the late-exilic or early post-exilic period. Unlike Ben Zvi a much more positive view is taken towards the material coming from the late monarchic Judean period as it fits that period. Overall the book of Zephaniah is not similar to the post-exilic prophets like Haggai, Zechariah and Joel and this makes Ben Zvi's assertion that Zephaniah was written well into the post-exilic period unconvincing. On the other hand, equally unconvincing are attempts to place specific texts in Zephaniah into very exact historical settings, for example, D.L. Christensen's argument that the oracles against the nations in Zeph 2.4-15 represent the expansionist aspirations of Josiah (Christensen, 1984), or Sweeney's claim that Zeph 2.1-4 dates to the early stage of Josiah's reformation (Sweeney, 2003, p. 113). Similarly the claims that Zephaniah prophesied before, during, or after Josiah's reformation cannot be substantiated one way or the other (so also King, 1996, pp. 10-11). As A. Berlin writes, the reign of Josiah is "a

period for which our primary sources are few” and for which “historians and archaeologists have been able to ascertain the general picture although there is disagreement on some of the details” (Berlin, 1994, p. 43). This is hardly a situation which inspires confidence in fixing specific dates and events to the different Zephaniah texts.

4.4 Summary

This thesis will analyse how an intertextual reading contributes to interpreting the book of Zephaniah. The intertextualities that remain available to us are allusions to and echoes of other texts that are now part of the OT. This approach requires identification of intertexts, i.e., the texts that are being alluded to by the book of Zephaniah. For this the methodology presented above will be relied upon (see 3.3 above). The period of Josiah provides the earliest possible date for the texts that make up the book of Zephaniah and the later texts are indicated by allusion to Isaiah texts from the Babylonian period. The assumption underlying the exegesis is that at some point these texts have been combined to form a coherent and unified text that is the book of Zephaniah. This text has no identifiable “original” conclusion and neither can 3.9-20 be considered an “appendix” that has been tacked onto an earlier edition of the book of Zephaniah. Zephaniah in its present form now constitutes a coherent text. This position, like those discussed above, is based upon interpretative judgment. Unlike the positions discussed above, which take their point of departure from apparent contradictions in the text, this exegesis understands the overall message of Zephaniah as making sense. This approach may be accused of being speculative, but in that respect it takes its place alongside every other interpretation of Zephaniah with which this thesis interacts. As German scholars often entitle their work, this is *ein Versuch* (an attempt) at reading a biblical text. While there is every chance that some of the exegetical conclusions that are suggested in the body of the work are arguable, it is the conviction of the writer that there is a sound rigour attached to the methodology. Ultimately it will be the reading itself upon which the methodology and the exegesis will sink or swim. And to that exegesis we now turn.

Chapter 5

Zephaniah 1: Reproach

Zephaniah 1 is an extended judgment speech which lays out God's reproach against Judah and Jerusalem. It is framed, however, by the announcement of God's judgment against all people and even the entire created order (1.2-3, 17-18). This has posed interpretive problems for exegetes as they have tried to understand how the universal judgment fits together with the specific and concrete judgment oracles against Judah (1.4-16). The key to understanding this problem, it will be argued, is the allusion to the creation and flood account of Genesis 1-9 in Zeph 1.2-3. This allusion brings into the text the theme of God's judgment against all of creation because of the failure of God's representative which, for Zephaniah, is the people of God, Judah. Zephaniah 1 returns to this theme at the end of the chapter, forming an *inclusio* (1.17-18). In between these bracketing pericopes the oracles of judgment against Judah reflect how the people of God have failed in their calling to represent God through their corporate and social life (1.4-16). This judgment speech makes intertextual allusion to key texts which constitute Judah's identity. Allusion to the exodus deliverance is marked by Yahweh's "outstretched hand" (Zeph 1.4), and the anointing of David in 1 Samuel 16 is also evoked (Zeph 1.7). Judgment speeches from Amos and Isaiah, which were originally spoken against the Northern Kingdom, are also evoked, casting Judah in the same light as the Northern Kingdom and emphasising the threat of judgment. Allusion to the Sinai/Horeb theophany and Conquest texts is also made in this first chapter of Zephaniah. The overall effect of the allusions in Zephaniah 1 is to show how the power of God in creating Israel/Judah will now be turned against Judah because of its failure. The creative and redemptive works of God will be undone in judgment. The themes developed in Zephaniah 1 continue into the remaining two chapters of the book of Zephaniah.

5.1 Zephaniah 1.1

- 1a The word of Yahweh that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi,
- 1b son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah,
- 1c in the days of Josiah son of Amon, the king of Judah.

The superscription of Zephaniah constitutes the first pericope of the book and is unique on several counts: it is the only prophetic superscription which recounts four generations; the name of Zephaniah's father, Cushi, has raised questions of Zephaniah's ethnicity

(Rice, 1979); there is the question of whether Hezekiah was the king of Judah. The uniqueness of the four generation genealogy that reaches back to Hezekiah indicates that it may well be the king of that name who is Zephaniah's ancestor (Berlin, 1994, p. 65). He was a reforming king who brought Judah back to faithfulness to Yahweh. This is also the overall goal of Zephaniah and the mention of Hezekiah highlights the theme of repentance and return to Yahweh at the beginning of the book. Some scholars deny any historicity to the superscription¹⁸ but much of the subject matter of the book fits the late monarchic Judah setting (see 4.3 above). The theme of repentance that is gently hinted at through the mention of Hezekiah, however, does not prepare the reader for the stark announcement of global destruction in the following pericope.

5.2 Zephaniah 1.2-3

- 2a I will destroy everything
- 2b from upon the face of the earth,
- 2c declaration of Yahweh.
- 3a I will destroy human and animal,
- 3b I will destroy the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea,
- 3c and the stumbling blocks with the wicked,
- 3d and I will cut off humanity
- 3e from upon the face of the earth,
- 3f declaration of Yahweh.

The book of Zephaniah begins with the devastating announcement that Yahweh is about to destroy all life on earth. The opening phrase, **אֶחָד אֶחָד** (I will destroy; v.2a) is grammatically challenging and 3c is difficult to understand. Over and above these technical issues, the greater challenge is to understand why a prophetic judgment speech with very concrete accusations against Judah and Jerusalem (1.4-16) is introduced with a threat of global destruction. As H. Irsigler puts it, “Warum beginnt das Zefanjabuch mit einem derart düsteren Auftakt, der den Leser und Hörer geradezu vor den Kopf stößt?” (*Why does the book of Zephaniah begin with such a bleak prelude, which virtually poleaxes the reader and listener?*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 97). There is no agreement among Zephaniah commentators as to why the book begins with global destruction and subsequently no agreement on how it functions in the text and what effect it has on the overall discourse of Zephaniah. This exegetical section will survey various suggestions for how 1.2-3 and 1.4-18 are related before arguing for a significant and intentional allusion to the creation-flood account in Genesis 1-9. This intertextuality undergirds the

¹⁸ E.g., Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 270-271; Levin, 2011, p. 124.

opening salvo of the book and introduces the underlying theme and logic through which the whole of Zephaniah makes sense.

5.2.1 How are Zephaniah 1.2-3 and 1.4-18 related?

There are three main approaches to explain how Zeph 1.2-3 is related to the following judgment speech against Judah and Jerusalem. The first approach sees the threat of global judgment as a rhetorical device that seizes the hearers' or readers' attention and leads them into the main concern of the text, judgment against Judah and Jerusalem. Scholars following this approach are generally positive about attributing vv.2-3 to Zephaniah in the late seventh century. The second approach sees vv.2-3 as a later apocalyptic oriented addition to the authentic Zephaniah judgment speech that follows. The third approach sees vv.2-3 as an intertextual allusion to the creation and/or flood stories in Genesis 1-11. Scholars following this approach have varying attitudes to the authenticity of vv.2-3.

Rhetorical impact

A number of commentators see the effect of the announcement of global destruction in 1.2-3 in terms of rhetorical effect. O.P. Robertson sees this in general terms: "With the thud of a mighty kettledrum the prophet startles his hearers into a recognition of the solemnity of the hour. Everything on the face of the earth shall be utterly wiped away" (Robertson, 1990, p. 258). Others see an analogy with the way Amos uses the oracles against the nations as a device to arrive at his real goal, judgment against Israel. Kapelrud writes that Amos

wanted to arouse the interest of the people and he did not start straightway with words of doom over his audience. In the same way Zephaniah opened his speech (or speeches) with a few general remarks, which made the people stop and listen. Then, when the audience was listening and waiting for more, he let go his harsh words against Jerusalem, the city where he was preaching. If we have a look at, e.g., Micah 1.2-4 we find the same pattern: first all peoples are threatened, then the prophet turns towards his own people, v.5 (Kapelrud, 1975, p. 20).

Rudolph is adamant that this is the reason:

Zephania knüpft an die allgemeine Erwartung an, daß die Theophanie unter kosmischen Erschütterungen allen Feinden Jahwes Unheil bringt; aber während diese Erwartung als selbstverständlich voraussetzt, daß dabei Israel die große Ausnahme bildet, fährt der Prophet fort – und das ist für die Hörer das Schockierende –, daß sich Jahwe auch Juda und Jerusalem gegenüber nicht anders verhält. Die Gottesrede ist also auf dieselbe Überraschungswirkung angelegt wie Am 1 und 2 (vgl. auch Mi 1)...

Zephaniah connects with the universal expectation that the theophany brings disaster to all of Yahweh's enemies through cosmic trauma; but while this expectation assumes as a matter of course, that in all this Israel constitutes the great exception, the prophet continues – and that is the shock for the hearers – that Yahweh also does not behave differently with regard to Judah and Jerusalem. The divine speech is therefore invested with the same surprise effect as Amos 1 and 2 (c.f. also Micah 1)...(Rudolph, 1975, p. 265).

Similarly J.J.M. Roberts cites Amos 1.2-2.6; Mic 1.2-5 and Hab 3.3-15 as evidence that Zephaniah follows a typical prophetic convention of mixing universal judgment with particular judgment (Roberts, 1991, p. 169). He does not see any particular connection between 1.2-3 and 1.4ff, other than turning “from mankind in general to announce God’s judgment on Judah and Jerusalem in particular and then, sharpening the focus even more, on particular groups in Judah and Jerusalem” (Roberts, 1991, p. 170). This rhetorical approach does not see any significance in the announcement of global destruction other than as a kind of hyperbole or attention grabber (e.g., Hadjiev, 2014, pp. 513-514).

Redactional explanation

In considering the relationship between 1.2-3 and 1.4-18, German scholarship in particular tends to emphasise the disjuncture between the sections. Perlitt typifies this approach when he writes,

Dieser universale Horizont ist unvereinbar mit den ‚kleinen Verhältnissen‘ des Kontextes: In der Überschrift wie gleich in 4ff. geht es um Juda in einer genau bestimmten Zeit...Die „Weltgerichtsschilderung“ „gehört in eine Zeit, wo der Gerichtsgedanke von der faktischen Geschichte losgerissen worden ist“ (Gerleman 5).

This universal horizon is incongruous with the ‘littleness’ of the context: In the superscription as in 4ff. it is about Judah in an exact and specific time...The “depiction of a world judgment” “belongs to a time when the notions of judgment has been broken free from actual history” (Gerleman, p.5) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 103, similarly Renaud, 1987, p. 199).

Perlitt’s emphasis on the difficulty of reading vv.2-3 and vv.4-18 together in effect says that Zephaniah does not make sense in this particular place. R. Edler pushes this perspective in insisting that,

die Antwort Jahwes auf die in Zef 1, 4-13; 3, 1-4. 6-7 genannten Vergehen kann nicht in Zef 1, 2-3aß.b sein, sondern liegt eindeutig in Zef 1,7. 14-16 (3, 8).

Yahweh’s answer to the offences named in Zeph 1.4-13; 3.1-4, 6-7 cannot be 1.2-3aß.b, but clearly lie in Zeph 1.7, 14-16 (3.8) (Edler, 1984, p. 77).

It is true that the threatened Day of Yahweh (1.7 and 1.14-16) is “Yahweh’s answer” to the concrete accusations against Judah (1.4-6; 8-12). This, for Edler, makes vv.2-3 redundant because,

Sie setzen letztlich die nachfolgende Einheit voraus, die allein in der Lage ist, wenn auch in eingeschränktem Maße, dem Gerichtshandeln einen Sinn zu geben.

They ultimately require the following section which alone is able, even if only to a limited extent, to give meaning to the judgment (Edler, 1984, p. 77).

Edler argues that the opening oracle of global judgment requires the specific judgment oracles against Judah to make sense: God will judge the whole world because of the sins of Judah. However, for Edler, this cannot be the case because God’s response to the sins of Judah is the Day of Yahweh (1.7, 14-16), not global judgment. In this way Edler highlights the crux of Zephaniah: What is the relationship between the peoples of the world and the people of God? However, he cannot resolve this question and concludes that the text does not ultimately make sense because vv.2-3 are a later addition:

Der Ergnzer wollte wohl mit seiner ffnung des Blickes auf eine Weltkatastrophe, in der die Menschheit mit allem Getier untergehen, die Dringlichkeit und die Bedeutung der Entscheidung herausstellen, in die die Menschen durch die Prophetie des Zefanja gerufen werden.

The supplementer probably wanted with his opening of the view of a world catastrophe, in which humanity and all animals perish, to highlight the urgency and the meaning of the decision, into which humanity are called through the prophecy of Zephaniah (Edler, 1984, p. 77).

Yet this raises the question that if the text so obviously does not make sense as it stands because there is no logical connection between vv.2-3 and vv.4-13 then why did the “supplementer” not see this? The flip side of this question is that there may well be coherent meaning in the text that modern readers have not grasped.

Irsigler goes even further as he sees Zeph 1.17-18a as an updating of the Day of Yahweh speech in 1.14-16, and then considers Zeph 1.2-3 as later again than vv.17-18a. He goes on,

Was 1,17-18a vom schrecklichen Unglck der Menschen schlechthin sagt, das entfaltet 1,23 in einer alles Leben treffenden universalen Untergangsszenarie. Der Verfasser von 1,23 hat eben nicht nur die konkreten Worte ber Juda und Jerusalem vor Augen, sondern auch die Ankndigen des Tages JHWHs.

While 1.17-18a talks simply about the terrible misfortune of humanity, 1.2-3 develops that in a scenario of universal destruction that affects all life. The

writer of 1.2-3 has not just the concrete oracle about Judah and Jerusalem in view, but also the announcement of the day of Yahweh (Irsigler, 2002, p. 98).

According to this view vv.2-3 does not make sense because

Zef 1,2ß3 stammt von einer nachexilischen spätprophetischen Bearbeitung, die mit ihrer Vorstellung von einer universalkosmischen Lebensvernichtung schon auf dem Wege ist zu den entfalteten Bildern und Texten vom Endgericht in der frühjüdischen apokalyptischen Literatur.

Zeph 1.2-3 comes from a post-exilic late prophetic editing, which with its idea of a universal cosmic destruction of life is already on the way to the developed images and texts of the final judgement in the early Jewish apocalyptic literature (Irsigler, 2002, p. 101).

This is typical of the redactional approach to Zeph 1.2-3 and vv.4-18 which emphasises the disjunction between the units and seeks an explanation in the different histories of the units. Two major problems are the speculative and virtually arbitrary nature of assigning different parts of the text to different historical periods but more importantly the inability, or refusal, to read the text as a meaningful whole. An intertextual reading, however, makes sense of the text as it stands.

Intertextual reading

Some scholars argue that intertextuality with the creation and/or flood accounts in Genesis 1-9 enables Zeph 1.2-3 to be read as a coherent part of the book of Zephaniah. The following sections will make a case for this intertextuality before assessing several works which follow this approach. Finally a new proposal will be made which argues that Zeph 1.2-3 alludes to the creation-flood account in Genesis 1-9 in order to introduce a key theme that will resonate throughout the book of Zephaniah: The people of God bear a representative function in the world and their success or failure in this assignment has global consequences.

5.2.2 Allusion to Genesis 1-9

A number of scholars have recognised that in Zeph 1.2-3 there is allusion to the creation and flood accounts in Genesis, although some scholars explicitly deny this allusion. This section will argue that allusion to the creation-flood complex is strongly marked in these two verses. Rather than survey these markers in the order in which they occur they will be studied in the order of most obvious to less obvious. Along the way the various objections to the allusion will be assessed.

The theme of total destruction

The most immediate indicator that Zeph 1.2-3 is alluding to the flood account in Genesis is the threat of total destruction of all life: “I will destroy everything from upon the face of the earth, declaration of Yahweh” (Zeph. 1.2). In the flood story this is precisely both God’s stated intention (Gen 6.7, 13, 17; 7.4) and God’s action (Gen 7.21-23). This reference to God in judgment destroying all life on earth brings to mind the flood story. By itself this is not enough to make a case for allusion to the flood and creation accounts. Sweeney, for example, denies intertextuality with “any text in the flood tradition” and sees Zeph 1.2-3 as simply portraying “the totality of creation that YHWH intends to destroy” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 63).¹⁹ Yet this is only the beginning of a series of markers that point to this allusion.

Distinctive shared vocabulary

There is a great deal of specific vocabulary in the two verses of Zeph 1.2-3 that occurs in the flood story as well as the first creation account of Gen 1.1-2.3/4.²⁰ The shared vocabulary occurs in both the creation and flood accounts because these stories have already been fused into an intertextual unity (see “2. Animal lists in the flood story: Genesis 6-9” below).

“...from the face of the earth”

The phrase מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה (from upon the face of the earth) occurs at the beginning and end of Zeph 1.2-3:

2a-b	<u>אֶסֶף אֶסֶף כָּל מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה</u>	I will destroy everything from upon the face of the earth
3d-e	<u>וְהִכַּרְתִּי אֶת־הָאָדָם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה</u>	I will cut off humanity from upon the face of the earth

This phrase is found three times in the flood story (Gen 6.7; 7.4; 8.8). The first two of these occurrences are particularly significant as they are the declaration of God’s intention to destroy every living thing. In Zeph 1.2-3 the primary object of God’s judgment that is to be destroyed from the face of the earth is אָדָם (humanity) and this is also the logic of the Genesis flood story. It is because of אָדָם that the rest of creation suffers judgment (Gen 6.6-7, 11-13; 8.21). This corresponds to Gen 1.26-30 where אָדָם is the crowning act

¹⁹ So also Ben Zvi, 1991, p.55-57; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 55-57.

²⁰ Whether Gen 2.4a ends the first account of creation or begins the next is one of the enduring mysteries of biblical studies.

of God's creation, created in God's image and given responsibility over the rest of creation. In Zephaniah too because of human sin all of creation must suffer judgment.

Animal lists

1. Animal lists in the first creation account: Genesis 1

The second set of distinctive shared vocabulary is the list of the other living creatures that must share the consequences of humanity's judgment. Zephaniah 1.3a-b lists the living creatures that God will destroy in his imminent judgment:

1.3a-b	אֶסֶף אָדָם וּבְהֵמָה	I will destroy human and animal,
	אֶסֶף עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְדֹגֵי הַיָּם	I will destroy the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea

The animals and the order in which they are listed corresponds to the order in which the animals were created in the first creation story (Gen 1.1-2.3). In this creation story a world with three categories of animals emerges. These three categories are water, air, and land animals, and they are created in that order. On the fifth day of creation (Gen 1.20-23) God creates water creatures and birds to form the first two categories of animals. In v.20 the water creatures are described in generic terms as *נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה שְׂרִיץ* (swarms of living creatures). The water creatures are further categorised in v.21 into *הַתַּנִּינִים הַגְּדֹלִים* (the great sea creatures) and *כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיִּת הַרְמִשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר שָׂרָצוּ הַמַּיִם* (every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm). Hence there is a classification of “large sea creatures” and “the rest of the swarming water creatures.” The birds are not divided into any categories but are simply described as *כָּל־עוֹף כִּנֵּף לְמִינֵהוּ* (every winged bird according to its kind).

The third category of animal is created on the sixth day (vv.24-25). In v.24 the land creatures are described with the generic *נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה* (living creatures) and then divided into a three-fold category: *בְּהֵמָה* (cattle), *רֶמֶשׂ* (creeping animals), *חַיְתוֹ־אָרֶץ* (wild animals of the earth). The land animals, then, can be categorised as domesticates, small creeping animals, and large wild animals. The order in which the land creatures are created is *חַיְתוֹ־אָרֶץ* (wild animals), *בְּהֵמָה* (cattle), and *רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה* (creepers of the earth; 1.25). It appears that within the category of land animals there is no fixed order in which the sub-categories are listed (see Table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1: Order in which animals are listed in Gen 1.24-25

Gen 1.24	בהמה	רמש	חיתו־אֶרֶץ
Gen 1.25	חית הארץ	בהמה	רמש־הָאָדָמָה

Writing in 1968 W.M. Clark found this inconsistency in the ordering of the animals surprising:

...the variety in the sequence as well as in the designation of the individual members might suggest a complete lack of consistency. Yet this is hardly expected in the P creation account (Clark, 1968, p. 434).

Clark suggested an explanation for this inconsistency:

Fortunately, a way has been pointed out towards an understanding of vv.24f. in terms of the development of the tradition...v.25 represents the original sequence. At a later stage, the summary heading *nepeš hayyā* was added in v.24. This caused the rearrangement of the sequence in v.24 so as not to have the *hayyā* of *nepeš hayyā* followed almost immediately by *hayēto ʿereš*. The unique and artificial phrase חיה חרמשת of v.28 is created by a combination of the first and last parts of the “original” three member series: beasts (of the earth, cattle, creeping things) of the ground (Clark, 1968, p. 434).

Such approaches to the text are challenged by the insights of intertextuality. Clark’s approach suggests that P (or whoever wrote the first creation story) mechanically reproduced lists received from a series of redactors, troubled by their lack of consistency but unable to change them. P. Noble offers a more realistic view about the way texts are produced when he contrasts a “writer” to a “redactor.” A redactor uses sources whereas by “contrast, a writer uses his materials as a *resource* when he allows himself considerable authorial flexibility in reshaping them for his own ends...” (Noble, 2002, p. 248). Over and against Clark it appears that there was not a concern for consistency in the order in which the land animals were listed in these sub-categories. There is, by contrast, a marked consistency in the overall order in which the animals were created and in which they are listed in summary statements, and this order is sea-, air-, and land-animals, with אָדָם (human) constituting the fourth and crowning category. This position as the pinnacle of all things is revealed on the sixth day with the creation of אָדָם (see Table 5.2 below).

Twice in these verses the major animal groups are enumerated in the same order in which they were created: sea, air and land animals. They constitute a description of the scope of the rule of אָדָם, i.e. over every place and every living creature. What is strongly expressed

Table 5.2: אדם as pinnacle of creation

Gen 1.26	וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדֹמוֹתֵנוּ וַיְרִדּוּ בְּדַגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ	And God said, “Let us make אָדָם in our image, in our likeness, And let him rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the sky and the animals, and over all the earth, and over everything that moves on the earth ²¹
Gen 1.28	וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּכְבֹּשׁוּהָ וַיְרִדּוּ בְּדַגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַיַּה הַרְמִשֵּׁת עַל־הָאָרֶץ	And God blessed them and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, subdue it and rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

* AT

in this passage is that אָדָם, created in God’s image and commissioned to rule over the earth, has a representative role for all of creation. It is striking that the exact vocabulary from Genesis 1 is repeated in Zeph 1.3a-b, in reverse order (see Table 5.3 below).

Table 5.3: Animal lists in Zeph 1.3a-b and Gen 1.26

Gen. 1.26	אָדָם	דַּגַּת הַיָּם	עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם	בַּהֲמָה
Zeph.1.3a-b	אָדָם	בַּהֲמָה	עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם	דְּגֵי הַיָּם

Some commentators deny that this constitutes an allusion to the creation account in Genesis 1. Vlaardingerbroek represents the most common objection that “enumerations such as in 3a” are common in the OT and gives a number of examples,²² concluding that such lists “probably derive from wisdom (1 Kgs 5.13, tr. 4.33) and in every case intend to capture the whole of the created world in concrete terms” (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 56). He may well be correct that these lists ultimately come from the wisdom tradition but his assertion is far too general. None of the texts he mentions have the same degree of similarity as there is between Zeph 1.3a-b and the Genesis 1 texts (see Table 5.4 below).

Ben Zvi denies allusion to the Genesis texts on the grounds that Zeph 1.3a-b is a merism, אָדָם וּבַהֲמָה (human and animal), complemented by עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּדְגֵי הַיָּם (the birds of

²¹ Reading רֶמֶשׂ here as “everything that moves and lives” (see *HALOT*, p. 1246), as in v.28 and Gen 9.3.

²² Gen 1.26, 28; 2.19, 20; 6.7, 20; Deut 4.16-18; Lev 11.46; Ps 8.8-9; Job 12.7-8; Hos 4.3; Ezek 38.20.

Table 5.4: Animals in prophetic judgment speeches compared with Gen 1.26

Gen 1.26	[אדם]	דגת הים	עוף השמים	בהמה	
Zeph 1.3	אדם	בהמה	עוף השמים	דגי הים	
Ezek 38.20	דגי הים	עוף השמים	חית השדה	רמש	אדם
Hos 4.3	יושב (-האריך)	חית השדה	עוף השמים	דגי הים	

the heavens and the fish of the sea). “The addition of ‘the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea’ to the usual ‘(hu)man and beast’ (in v.3) accommodates the sense of ‘completeness’ given by ‘(hu)man and beast’ to a tripartite vision of the world” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 56). The phrase **בהמה ואדם** does commonly appear as a merism but when it does, it stands alone.²³ If indeed “merism is the art of expressing a totality by mentioning the parts, usually the two extremes” (Krasovec, 1983, p. 232) then Ben Zvi’s argument that another clause has been added to achieve totality is unconvincing. Rather, Zeph 1.3 expresses totality in the same manner as Gen 1.26, **אדם** plus three categories of creatures from the three biospheres of the world. As D. Clark writes, “Indeed, Zephaniah 1.3 specifies the destruction of four creatures whose origins are depicted in Genesis 1: humankind (Gn 1.26-27), animals *en masse* (Gn 1.24-25, birds (Gn 1.20-21), and fish (Gn 1.20-21)” (Clark, 2012, p. 167).

2. Animal lists in the flood story: Genesis 6-9

The flood story takes up the lists of animals in Gen 1 in order to express the totality of living things to be destroyed by, or saved from, God’s judgment (Gen 6.7, 20; 7.14, 21, 23; 8.1, 17, 19). The first of these lists occurs with the declaration of God’s intention to destroy life on earth because of the wickedness of human beings (Gen 6.7). The life God will destroy is **אדם** (people), **בהמה** (animals), **רמש** (creeping things) **עוף השמים** (birds of the air). Significantly the animals are listed in the reverse order in which they were created and in the same order as Zeph 1.3a-b (see Table 5.5 below).

The absence of sea creatures from these lists in Genesis 6-9 is treated by a number of commentators as proof positive that Zephaniah cannot be alluding to the flood story.²⁴ Sweeney, for example, argues of the listing of human, beast, bird and fish in Zeph 1.3, “Instead of textual dependence (i.e. on the flood story), these references convey the totality of creation that YHWH intends to destroy” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 63). Yet this also

²³ E.g., Ezek 14.13, 17, 19, 21; 25.13; 29.8; Jer 21.6; 27.5; 31.27; 32.43.

²⁴ Roberts, 1991, p. 169; Rudolph, 1975, p. 261; Sweeney, 2003, p. 63; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 56.

Table 5.5: Animal lists in Gen 1.26; 6.7; Zeph 1.3

Gen 1.26	[אדם] ²⁵	דגת הים	עוף השמים	בהמה
Gen 6.7	אדם	בהמה	רמש	עוף השמים
Zeph 1.3	אדם	בהמה	עוף השמים	דגי הים

is true of the flood story: “And God said to Noah, ‘I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth’” (Gen 6.13).

The survival of the fish in the Genesis flood is a quirk of intertextuality, the adaptation of an existing mythology, the flood story, to the purposes of the writer who wants to show that God destroys what he had previously created.²⁶ This traditional instrument of global destruction, the mythological flood, cannot be accommodated to destroy the sea creatures. God’s all-consuming wrath is thus constrained by ANE tradition and the representative listing of אדם plus three categories of animals (sea, air, land) is adjusted. As the sea creatures cannot be destroyed two types of land creatures are brought into the formula and the sky creatures are pushed out to the last category. It appears the pattern of אדם plus three categories of animals is deliberately maintained.

Thus there is no reason why the presence of fish in Zeph 1.3 and their absence in the flood story should be an argument against the intertextual relationship of the texts. Certainly this has not been an issue for commentators who argue for intertextual links between the creation stories and the flood in Genesis. For example, in Gen 7.21-22 G.J. Wenham points out that “The dying creatures are listed in the order of creation, and therefore the list ends with a mention of man” (Wenham, 1987, p. 183), continuing,

The flood destroyed the old world, God’s original creation, and out of it was born a new world. Genesis brings out fully the correspondences and contrasts between creation and the flood (Wenham, 1987, p. 206).

D.J.A. Clines has noted the “creation – uncreation – re-creation” theme formed through intertextuality between the first creation account and the flood story. “And significantly, the destruction follows much the same sequence as the creation: earth, birds, cattle, wild animals, swarming creatures, humans (7.21)” (Clines, 1997, p. 80). Clines finds “much

²⁵ In Genesis 1.26 אדם appears first but is not part of the list as such.

²⁶ “Unlike the world that the Flood destroyed, the biblical account of the Flood was not created *ex nihilo*. In the biblical era it was believed that a great flood had occurred in the distant past” (Sherwin, 1984, p. 469).

the same” to be perfectly acceptable, and rightly so because literary reuse of language is not slavishly chained to rigid rules. G. Coats also writes of the P flood story that “the narrative pattern is tied closely to the traditions of creation” (Coats, 1983, p. 75). There is much variation in the lists of animals destroyed in the flood and the order in which they are destroyed throughout the flood story.²⁷ This does not detract from the impression that the flood story and the first creation story are interrelated and none of the Genesis commentators have any angst about the fish! Through these lists of אדם and the animals Zeph 1.3a-b makes allusion to the first creation story and the flood story.

“Ungrammaticality”

In the MT Zeph 1.2 begins with the phrase אֶסְכֵּךְ אֶסְכֵּךְ which is grammatically difficult because it combines the Qal inf. abs. of אָסַף (take away, exterminate) with the Hiphil 1 per. impf. of סָוֶה (make an end of). This irregular construction, also found in Jer 8.13, has exercised interpreters from the time of the ancient versions to the present era with diverse emendations (for a comprehensive overview see Sweeney, 2003, pp. 58-61). The suggested emendations create more problems than they solve and ultimately it is difficult to improve on the Masoretic reading. Neither do the emendations make a significant change to the meaning from the MT. Roberts, who emends the second verb from סָוֶה to אֶסְכֵּךְ, for example, writes that “even if the MT’s pointing were correct, the translation would differ only slightly; the general sense of the passage would remain the same” (Roberts, 1991, p. 167). Thus, in spite of emending the text, Roberts effectively defends the reading of the MT. Irsigler is similar:

MT will mit der Lesung אֶסְכֵּךְ „ich will ein Ende machen“ (Präfixkonjugation-Kurzform 1. ps. ist sehr selten statt der erwarteten Kohortativform belegt) am ehesten den Ausdruck von Untergang und Vernichtung sicherstellen bzw. unterstreichen. Dasselbe leistet aber auch das Verb אָסַף.

With the reading אֶסְכֵּךְ, “I will make an end” (impf. shortened form 1st p. is very seldom attested in place of the expected cohortative form), the MT wants to guarantee and emphasise most of all the expression of ruin and destruction. But the verb אָסַף also achieves the same thing. (Irsigler, 2002, p. 95).

The difficulty of the construction may be a key to understanding it. Riffaterre describes his concept of “ungrammaticality” as an element in the text that does not quite make sense “until the discovery is made that there is another text in which the word is grammatical; the moment the other text is identified, the dual sign becomes significant because of its

²⁷ Gen 6.7, 20; 7.8, 14, 21, 23; 8.1, 17, 19, 20; 9.2, 3, 10.

shape, which alone alludes to that other code” (Riffaterre, 1978, p. 82). The difficult phrase **אֶסְףְּ אֶסְףְּ** that resists emendation and which the Masoretes pointed in such a peculiar manner does indeed stand in the text as an “ungrammaticality.” The text as it stands creates two words with the same consonants, **אֶסְףְּ**, from two different verbs, **אֶסְףְּ/סֹף**. A word with the very same consonantal spelling occurs twice in Gen 8.21. After the flood had receded and God had called Noah out from the ark Noah made a sacrifice:

Gen 8.21	וירח יהוה את־ריח הניחח ויאמר יהוה אל־לבו לא־אֶסְףְּ לקלל עוד את־האדמה בעבור האדם כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעריו ולא־אֶסְףְּ עוד להכות את־כל־חי כאשר עשיתי	And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, " <u>I will never again</u> curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither <u>will</u> <u>I ever again</u> strike down every living creature as I have done.
----------	---	---

The “never again” in Hebrew is expressed by combining the negative particle **לֹא** with the finite verb **יִסֹף** and (usually) the inf. const. of another verb. In this case the Hiphil impf. 1 per. sg. **יִסֹף** forms the word **אֶסְףְּ**. The consonants are the same as those of the opening phrase in Zeph 1.2 and this creates allusion to Gen 8.21. By itself this would not be a strong enough case for demonstrating that there is a deliberate allusion. However, the other much stronger markers discussed above make this allusion discernible. There is also a strong thematic similarity between the two texts that strengthens the relationship between the texts. In Gen 8.21 God promises never again to destroy the world while Zeph 1.2-3 announces that God is about to do just that.

Sabottka attempted to make the same connection between these two texts by offering

einen neuen Vorschlag...ohne Änderung des Konsonantentextes, jedoch ebenfalls mit anderer Vokalisation, *'ōsēp* *ʿsōp* = „ich werde wiederum hinwegraffen“ lesen.

a new proposal...without amendment of the consonantal text, but with a different vocalisation to read אֶסְףְּ אֶסְףְּ = “I will again wipe out” (Sabottka, 1972, p. 6).

Sabottka thus reads the first verb in Zeph 1.2 as **יִסֹף** Qal impf. 1 sg., **אֶסְףְּ**, “I will again (verb).” He then reads the two occurrences of **אֶסְףְּ** in Zeph 1.3 also as **אֶסְףְּ** but no longer as Qal impf. **יִסֹף** but as Qal impf. of **אֶסְףְּ** (to take away, exterminate) writing, “Tatsächlich kann die Form *'ōsēp* von beiden Verben herkommen” (*Certainly the form 'ōsēp can come*

from both verbs) (Sabottka, 1972, p. 7). Sabottka goes on to note the intertextual markers that link Zeph 1.2-3 to Genesis 6-8 concluding that,

“Schließlich scheint das einleitende *’ōsēp! ’sōp! kōl* – „Noch einmal werde ich alles hinwegraffen“ direkt auf Gen 8,21 anzuspielen.

Ultimately it appears that the introductory ’ōsēp! ’sōp! kōl – “Yet again I will wipe out everything” alludes directly to Gen 8.21 (Sabottka, 1972, p. 11).

Vlaardingerbroek’s description of Sabottka’s proposal as “somewhat contrived” (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 58) is justified but such textual gymnastics are not necessary because Riffaterre’s concept of ungrammaticality helps to recognise allusion to God’s promise in Gen 8.21 (so also Melvin, 2013, p. 274).

Intertextual relationship between Zephaniah 1.2-3 and Genesis 1-9

This section has argued that Zeph 1.2-3 is shot through with allusion to the creation and flood story from the book of Genesis. The theme of complete destruction, the shared vocabulary and the “ungrammaticality” of the opening phrase all signal this intertextuality which has been widely recognised.²⁸ However, the effect of this intertextuality is often either ignored or treated as a rhetorical flourish (see “Rhetorical impact”, p.51). Few commentators go on to consider what intertextual patterns are created by the allusion, or in Hollander’s terminology, what material is transumed into the alluding text from the evoked text and the signifying effect this creates in Zephaniah. The following section looks at some attempts to understand the intertextual effect the allusion to the Genesis creation-flood account has on Zeph 1.2-3 and the wider text of Zephaniah before making some new suggestions.

5.2.3 The effect of the allusion to Genesis 1-9

Some scholars have attempted to solve the problem of holding together the universal judgment of Zeph 1.2-3 and the concrete judgment oracles against Judah and Jerusalem with an intertextual reading. M. de Roche’s short but influential article explores the intertextuality between Zeph 1.2-3 and the early chapters of Genesis. He argues that allusions to the flood story in Zeph 1.2-3 are of secondary importance and the main allusion is to the creation stories:

Thus, Zephaniah is not simply announcing judgment on mankind, nor is he only disqualifying Yahweh’s promise of Genesis 8.21. Zephaniah is proclaiming man’s loss of dominion over the earth, and more importantly, *the*

²⁸ E.g., Deissler, 1964, p. 443; Edler, 1984, p. 76; Irsigler, 2002, p. 101; Keller, 1971, p. 188; Robertson, 1990, p. 258; Perlitt, 2004, p. 103; Renaud, 1987, pp. 198-199; Smith, 1984, p. 126; Széles, 1987, p. 75.

reversal of creation. The allusion to the flood remains, but it is secondary to the allusion to creation (de Roche, 1980, p. 106).

The author's intended effect with this allusion, according to de Roche, is not to announce

a universal judgement in this oracle. He is reaching far back into the epic traditions of Israel for the purpose of announcing Yahweh's judgement upon his people. Since Zephaniah is alluding to (indeed reversing) creation, Yahweh's first act in establishing his people Israel, the oracle naturally has a universal tone to it. However, first and foremost this passage is an oracle of judgement against Israel (de Roche, 1980, p. 107).

While de Roche's description of the intertextual linkages between the texts is good his argument that the allusion is primarily to the creation account and not the flood story is not convincing, especially as he then admits that there is allusion to the flood story.²⁹ Furthermore, he is unable to explain the relationship between the universal judgment and the judgment on Judah and Jerusalem other than saying that Zeph 1.2-3 is not a universal judgment at all but only a judgment upon God's people. This is not self-evident from the text which presents judgment in starkly universal terms.

Berlin sees allusion to the creation and flood stories, writing that in these verses "Zephaniah abrogates God's covenant with Noah", and then asking, "What is the implication of such a powerful statement?" (Berlin, 1994, p. 82). She answers this question by drawing on J.D. Levenson's argument³⁰ that the cult upholds creation and therefore the corruption of the cult (Zeph 1.4-6) will cause the breakdown of creation. Thus "the religious failure of Judah means the end of the world order" (Berlin, 1994, p. 83). Berlin's approach recognises that the allusion in vv.2-3 has an ongoing effect on the subsequent text and she seeks to make sense of the entire text. However, the argument is flawed because the concrete accusations against Judah are only related to the cultic sphere in Zeph 1.4-6. If chapter one is read as the first major unit of Zephaniah, marked with an *inclusio* formed by the threat of universal judgment (1.2-3 and 1.18b), then the judgment introduced in 1.2-3 is against much more than the corruption of the cult. The judgment oracles of Zeph 1 are against "religiöser, politischer und wirtschaftlicher Schäden und Vergehen (4-6. 8f. 10f. 12f.)" (*religious, political and economic misconducts and offences [4-6, 8f, 10f, 12f]*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 102).

²⁹ Berlin also criticises de Roche on this point (Berlin, 1994, p. 81).

³⁰ Berlin notes that Levenson did not involve Zephaniah in his argument.

Another commentator sensitive to intertextuality is Floyd who also sees in Zeph 1.2-3 significant intertextuality with the creation and flood stories. Floyd highlights the order in which Zeph 1.2-3 alludes first to Gen 8.21 and God's promise not to destroy again, followed by the description of the destruction of **מַדְאָ** and animal life and then the mention of the wicked. According to Floyd this reverses the order of the flood story which begins with the wicked, moves to destruction of **מַדְאָ** and animal life, and ends with God's promise. This creates "an antitype of the entire primeval history" which "recasts the role that human wickedness plays in the stability of the world" (Floyd, 2000, p. 189). This "recasting" is in relation to God's promise (Gen 8.21) which protects the world from divine destruction because of human wickedness. Against this Zeph 1.2-3 shows "that the world can, however, be at least partly undone through a divine reaction to the failure of humanity to accept its collective responsibility for maintaining justice" (Floyd, 2000, p. 190). The story of the flood shows how the wickedness of some caused the destruction of everything so "(b)y analogy, some of Jerusalem's inhabitants who have been unfaithful can bring about the destruction of the underlying religious and socioeconomic relationships on which Judah's total existence depends (vv.4-6)" (Floyd, 2000, p. 190). Floyd also sees this striking introduction as providing the background to chapters one and two of Zephaniah. The cosmic judgments of Zeph 1.2-3 represent the breaking down of the world order and what this would mean in the ancient world is expressed in the oracles against Judah and the nations in Zephaniah chapter two (Floyd, 2000, pp. 190-191).

Floyd is correct in seeing the universal introduction of Zephaniah as providing a backdrop or theme for the entire book, and in linking it with the specific judgment oracles that follow. However, neither he nor the other exegetes surveyed above have succeeded in giving a satisfactory explanation that will hold the two parts, Zeph 1.2-3 and 1.4-18, and the entire book of Zephaniah, together. Nevertheless they have headed in the right direction and the following section will attempt to bring these beginnings to a conclusion.

Zephaniah 1.2-3 as an introduction

Floyd commented that Zeph 1.2-3 provides a "conceptual basis" for what follows (Floyd, 2000, p. 190). The verses are, in effect, an introduction. Plett contends that quotations or allusions in the initial and final positions "are important for the understanding of the entire work" (Plett, 1991, p. 11). Aristotle wrote that the introduction prepares the way for what is to follow, like the prelude in music it is the "tonic key." (Aristotle, 1991, p. 246). "The most necessary function, then, of the introduction, and special to it, is to show what is the

purpose of the speech...” (Aristotle, 1991, p. 248). Zephaniah 1.2-3 provides such an introduction, an “overture”, to the book that sets the tone for what is to follow. Through allusion to the creation-flood account a number of themes are brought into the text of Zephaniah but by far the most important theme that will continue throughout the entire book of Zephaniah, is the representative role that the people of God plays in the world.

Israel/Judah as God’s representative in the world

The theme of representation in both the Genesis creation and flood stories is crystal clear. **אדם** alone was created in God’s image to have dominion over all else, as God’s representative within the entire creation. **אדם** stands in God’s place as God’s vice-regent on the earth (Gen 1.26-28). The representative role is also key in the flood story (Gen 6.5-7, 13; 8.21), but with a different angle than Gen 1.26-28. In the flood story the failure of **אדם** means that all of creation must suffer the judgment of destruction, showing that **אדם** also represents the world to God. The primacy of **אדם** is likewise highlighted in the structure of Zeph 1.2-3 which climaxes with the declaration “and I will cut off humanity (**אדם**) from upon the face of the earth” (1.3d-e). Some commentators have tried to understand this representative role from the early chapters of Genesis in the context of Zeph 1.2-3. E.M. Széles, for example, writes that the Primeval History shows us that “man is responsible for the ruin that has come upon the created world” and in Zeph 1.2-3 “Yahweh has not only elected his people and become the God of the Covenant, but also as its rightful Creator he is Lord of all creation and the prosecuting Judge of all peoples” (Széles, 1987, pp. 75-76). This is true enough but such a general description does not make a connection with the following judgment oracles against Judah and Jerusalem other than that Judah and Jerusalem cannot escape “from such a world-encompassing and wholly sweeping judgment” (Széles, 1987, p. 76). O’Brien is on a better path when she writes, “perhaps Zephaniah more subtly intertwines the fates of Judah and the world.” However, her explanation of how they are intertwined is not convincing: “In 1.3, the vocabulary inspired by Genesis is interrupted by the mention of the wicked, suggesting even in the ‘universal’ opening frame of the chapter that the wicked are not only in Judah” (O’Brien, 2007, p. 108). Again this does not bring the two parts together other than to say that God will judge the entire world because everyone is wicked (Zeph 1.2-3) and God will judge Judah and Jerusalem because they are also wicked (Zeph 1.4ff.)

As O’Brien writes, “the fates of Judah and the world” are intertwined, but in a different way than she suggests. Just as **אדם** represented God to creation, and just as the corruption

of ׀דא led to the judgment and destruction of the world, so now the people of God, Israel/Judah, represent God within and to the world and their corruption likewise means judgment and destruction for the entire world. With this interpretation 1.2-3 flows naturally into 1.4ff. The entire world will be destroyed (vv.2-3) because the people of God have completely failed in their commission to represent God to the world (1.4-13). The remainder of Zephaniah 1 outlines the comprehensiveness of this failure: religious apostasy (vv.4-6); failure of the divinely appointed political leadership (vv.7-9); economic injustice and oppression (vv.10-11); the complacency of functional atheism (v.12). The chapter goes on to describe the terrible judgment of Judah and Jerusalem (vv.14-16) and finishes again on a universal note (vv.17-18). The failure of God's people results in not only their judgment but the judgment of the whole world. This representative function re-emerges again in Zephaniah 3 in a mirror image. The sins of Jerusalem are laid out (3.1-7), culminating in judgment on the whole world. This has also caused much confusion amongst the commentators (see 7.2.2 below) but is understandable once the representative role of the people of God is understood in the book of Zephaniah. Finally, just as the corruption of God's people leads to the judgment of the entire world, so the purification and restoration of that people will lead to the purification and restoration of the whole world (3.9-13). This representative function of God's people is a strong theme in the final triumphant section of the book of Zephaniah (3.14-20; see 7.4 below).

The reading suggested here answers a number of questions. As seen above ("Redactional explanation", p. 52), Edler understands that because vv.2-3 give no reasons for this global judgment the grounds for the judgment must lie in vv.4ff, but this creates a problem because the judgment speeches in vv.4-13 find their punishment in the Day of Yahweh. He writes,

daß Zefanja das Kommen des Tages Jahwes ankündigen wollte und seine ganze Gerichtsdrohung ab Zef 1,4ff unter dieses Thema stellte.

that Zephaniah wanted to announce the coming of the Day of Yahweh and put his entire threat of judgment from Zeph 1.4ff under this theme (Edler, 1984, p. 77).

Thus Edler finds a "Spannung zwischen dem klassischen Text über das Kommen Jahwes in Zef 1,7. 14-16 und den Versen Zef 1,2ß3aß.b" (*tension between the classic text about the coming of Yahweh in Zeph 1.7, 14-16 and the verses 1.2-3aß,b*) (Edler, 1984, p. 77). However, once the signifying effect of the intertextuality with the creation-flood account is understood there is no perceived tension. Global judgment is announced because of

Judah's failure in its representative role as God's people in the created order. The rest of chapter one lays out the comprehensive nature of their failures and shortcomings and describes the nature of the destruction, the Day of Yahweh. This understanding overturns the reading of Irsigler, who writes,

1,2-3 stellen dann die universale Wirkung der ab 1,4 geschilderten Verderbtheit von Menschen, geschichtlich konkret von Juda und Jerusalem, vor.

1.2-3 suggests therefore the universal effect of the depravity of humans depicted from 1.4, historically concrete for Judah and Jerusalem (Irsigler, 2002, p. 94).

Irsigler suggests that the concrete sins of Judah are examples of human sin generally which has led to the announcement of global judgment in 1.2-3. On the contrary, the reading suggested here is that the whole world must be judged because Judah has failed in its God-ordained representative role, just as humanity had failed in its representative role in the primeval history leading to the judgment of the whole earth. While this is the key aspect that intertextuality with the creation-flood account brings into Zephaniah there are also other intertextual patterns that are created by this introduction or "overture."

God's freedom

One of the major themes of the flood story is the freedom of God to act. God was not bound by any obligation to God's creation when humans, God's crowning creative act, became morally unacceptable. God was free to change (Gen 6.5-7). The allusion to the flood in Zephaniah's announcement of global judgment (1.2-3) also announces that God has decided to abrogate the promise to never "again destroy every living creature" (Gen 8.21). Sweeney refers to this promise to deny allusion to the flood on theological grounds: "Furthermore, the Genesis tradition preserves YHWH's promise never to bring such destruction again (Genesis 9:8-17). If Zephaniah is indeed dependent on the Genesis traditions, this would be an egregious oversight" (Sweeney, 2003, p. 60). Yet this is the point that Zephaniah appears to be making. In Jerusalem the prevailing belief seems to have been that God would not judge his covenant people (c.f. Amos 6.1) along with a misplaced trust in the inviolability of Zion.³¹ This kind of complacency is one of the issues explicitly addressed in Zephaniah (Zeph 1.12). Through allusion to the creation-flood story the people of Jerusalem and Judah are warned that the sovereign God will not be constrained by anything in the face of human wickedness. Neither God's own declaration

³¹ E.g., Pss 46; 48; 76; Isa 10.24-34; 33.20-22c.f. Jer 7.4. See Hayes, 1963; Roberts, 1973.

to never again destroy all life (Gen 8.21), nor God's promises to David and Zion, can be used as guarantees against judgment. The old text is rewritten to address the new situation, "Das Wort der Genesis ist so durch ein neues Gotteswort aufgehoben." (*Thus the word of Genesis is reversed through a new divine word*) (Sabottka, 1972, p. 12). God is sovereignly free to bring judgment against wickedness, corruption and violence.

The extent of Judah's corruption

The allusion to the creation-flood story also highlights the cause for judgment: wickedness (Gen 6.5), corruption and violence (Gen 6.11, 12, 13). Genesis 6.11 begins in the passive voice, "Now the earth was corrupt (שחת Niphal) in God's sight, and the earth was filled (מלא Niphal) with violence (חמס)" (NRSV). Genesis 6.12-13 then moves to God's point of view where the reason why the earth is filled with corruption is given: "for all flesh had corrupted (שחת Hiphil) its way upon the earth" (Gen 6.12). The meaning of שחת Hiphil is "to ruin deliberately, wish to destroy, be able to destroy" (*HALOT*, p. 1470). The outcome of this deliberate human corruption is that "the earth is filled with violence (חמס) because of them" (i.e. אדם; Gen 6.13). As a result God determines "to destroy (שחת Hiphil) them along with the earth" (Gen 6.13; see also Forrest, 1994, p. 6ff). This theme of deliberate violence is also a feature in the passages leading up to the flood story. Cain's violence (Gen 4.8) is magnified in his descendant Lamech (Gen 4.23-24) and Gen 6.1-4, enigmatic as it is, represents the power of brute force, "the violent and polygamous lust of the 'sons of God'...royal violence and despotic authority over other humans" (Clines, 1979, pp. 36, 37).

This theme of violence is also present in Zephaniah. The upper classes of Jerusalem fill (מלא) their master's house with violence (חמס) and fraud (Zeph 1.9). The priests of Jerusalem have even "done violence (חמס Qal) to the Torah" (Zeph 3.4). The allusion to the creation-flood story at the outset of Zephaniah brings these themes into the book as a whole. The people of Jerusalem are characterised as being the same as the people of the flood generation, deliberately corrupt and violent. God's reaction to them is the same as God's reaction to the flood generation, catastrophic judgment. However, the freedom of God to change God's mind remains. Nothing constrains God from withholding judgment but God is free to have mercy as well. Just as in the judgment of the flood God saved some so there may also be some saved from this coming judgment. This possibility is held out in Zeph 2.4: "...perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the Lord's wrath."

5.2.4 Summary of Zephaniah 1.2-3

Allusion to the creation-flood story in Zeph 1.2-3 forms an introduction to the entire book. It is a strongly marked allusion and has been recognised by a number of commentators. This exegesis, however, makes new proposals about the effect of the allusion. Of the themes that are transmuted into Zephaniah through this intertextuality the most important is the representative role of God's people. Zephaniah has radicalised this concept and made the fate of all peoples and the entire world dependent upon God's people. This is a major theme that will continue throughout the book of Zephaniah. Other themes also become present in the book through this allusion to the Genesis creation-flood story, namely the freedom of God to bring judgment and the extent of Judah's corruption. These themes are more specifically elaborated in the verses following Zeph 1.2-3. This does not deny the rhetorical effect that a number of commentators see in the announcement of global judgment at the beginning of the book but there is more than just that. This exegesis has also attempted to hold vv.2-3 together with the material that follows as opposed to a number of commentators who claim it can only be made sense of if the redactional history of the text is recovered. This exegesis argues that the text does make sense in which case 1.2-3 may be attributed to the prophet Zephaniah along with the material which follows it (1.4-18), which fits a pre-exilic context. That said there is no way of ever truly knowing exactly when this material was written or by whom, thus Berlin suggests reading the book "as though" it was written by Zephaniah in the late monarchic period. In any case the stunning first oracle of the book of Zephaniah has set the stage for the specific judgment oracles that follow.

5.3 Zephaniah 1.4-6

- 4a I will stretch out my hand against Judah
- 4b and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- 4c I will strike from this place the remnant of Baal,
- 4d and the name of the idolatrous priests with the priests.
- 5a And those who bow down upon the rooftops to the heavenly bodies,
- 5b those who bow down and swear to Yahweh and who swear to Milkom.
- 6a Those who have turned away from following Yahweh,
- 6b who do not seek Yahweh,
- 6c and do not search for him.

Unlike the opening pericope, 1.2-3, many scholars consider Zeph 1.4-6 to be, either in its entirety or the majority of it, the authentic words of the late seventh century Judean

prophet, Zephaniah.³² What is interesting about this pericope is that while nearly every colon is the subject of uncertainty and debate, the overall meaning is clear. The pericope paints a picture of the religious syncretism and unfaithfulness to Yahweh of the people of Judah who had been under the political control and religious influence of Assyria for one hundred years or more. The following brief survey highlights the issues that are the subject of disagreement. After this the main focus of the section will be on the intertextual effect of “Yahweh’s outstretched hand” in this pericope.

“This place”

In 4c does **הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה** (this place) refer to Judah and Jerusalem,³³ to Jerusalem,³⁴ or to the Jerusalem temple?³⁵ Some omit the phrase altogether as a later addition.³⁶ The force of the phrase is clear, regardless of the exact location. It is the place where God’s people reside, but the focus is probably on Jerusalem, rather than Judah, and on the Temple in Jerusalem where the unacceptable worship takes place.

“The remnant of Baal”

In the same line, commentators do not agree on the meaning of the phrase **אַת־שֹׂאֵר הַבֶּעַל** (the remnant of Baal; v.4c). Is it what remained of the Baal cult after Josiah’s reform (Robertson, 1990, p. 262) or is it rather an idiomatic expression to describe people groups, e.g., “the remnant of Moab”³⁷ and thus a “précis for the following references to the cultic attendants and priests” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 68)? Following the Peshitta, Sabottka repoints **שֹׂאֵר** (remnant) to **שָׂאֵר** (flesh) to read **אַת־שֹׂאֵר הַבֶּעַל** as “die Sippe des Baal” (*the family/clan of Baal*), translating **שֹׂאֵר** as “Fleisch, Blutsverwandter, Blutsverwandtschaft, Sippe” (*flesh, blood relation, blood relationship, family/clan*) (Sabottka, 1972, p. 16). Read in this way **אַת־שֹׂאֵר הַבֶּעַל** “sind die Vereher des Baal” (*are the worshipers of Baal*) (Sabottka, 1972, p. 16). Or is **שֹׂאֵר** (remnant) deliberately used in parallel with **שֵׁם** (name) to mean that “Yahweh’s destruction will be so thorough that it will leave both Baal and his priests without descendants or adherents to preserve their memory after the judgment is passed” (c.f. Isa 14.22; 2 Sam 14.7) (Roberts, 1991, p. 171)? Once again, regardless of

³² E.g., Deissler, 1964, p. 446; Edler, 1984, p. 113; Irsigler, 2002, p. 105; Keller, 1971, pp. 188-189; Renaud, 1987, p. 199; Roberts, 1991, p. 169; Rudolph, 1975, p. 265; Smith, 1911, p. 186; Striek, 1999, p. 104; Sweeney, 2003; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 62ff. Perlitt, 2004, p. 105, and Seybold, 1991, p. 95, are in the minority as they see vv.4-6 coming from the exilic or post-exilic period.

³³ So Ball, 1988, p. 59; Berlin, 1994, p. 80; Roberts, 1991, p. 171; Smith, 1984, p. 127.

³⁴ So Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 62; Robertson, 1990, p. 263; Smith, 1911, p. 187.

³⁵ So Keller, 1971, p. 189; Seybold, 1991, p. 94; Sweeney, 2003, p. 66.

³⁶ Edler, 1984, pp. 101-102; Rudolph, 1975, p. 262.

³⁷ Isa 16.14; c.f. Isa 17.3; 21.17; 10.20, 21, 22; 11.1, 20; Esth 9.16.

the exact details, it is clearly an announcement of judgment against the worship of Baal by God's people.³⁸

“With the priests” and star worship

A number of commentators, following the LXX which omits the phrase, consider עִם הַכֹּהֲנִים (with the priests) to be a later gloss added to clarify the unusual word הַכֹּרִים (the idolatrous priests).³⁹ If the phrase is authentic an interpretive question is whether the line should be read “the idolatrous priests along with the priests” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 71) or “the idolatrous priests from among the priests” (Berlin, 1994, p. 75; Sweeney, 2003, p. 69). This second reading is perhaps too irenic as Zephaniah 1 is not describing a purge but rather a judgment of wholesale destruction. The worship of the host of the heavens is generally considered to have come from the association with Assyria. Vlaardingerbroek proposes that Baal and Asherah worship together with astral worship later in Israel's history, after 750BC, represent a coming together of Canaanite and Assyrian practices (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 68).

“Milcom” / “their king”

The meaning of the word מִלְכָּם (milkam; 5b) has produced a variety of suggestions. The MT reads מִלְכָּם (their king) but most English translations render it as “Milcom”, the national god of the Ammonites.⁴⁰ Berlin opts for Molek (Berlin, 1994, p. 77),⁴¹ while Ben Zvi, on the assumption that other gods were not worshiped at this time, suggests it is an image of Yahweh which is denounced because of the Deuteronomic prohibition on images (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 78). Unconvincingly Sweeney argues that the MT “their king” means the king of Judah: “...and those who prostrate themselves upon the rooftops to the host of heaven, and those who prostrate themselves who are sworn to YHWH and who are sworn to their king” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 55). Roberts understands it to be “a pagan god worshiped alongside Yahweh, but whether it was the Ammonite Milkom or the Canaanite Molech...it is impossible to decide” (Roberts, 1991, p. 168). Equally possible

³⁸ Both Ben Zvi and Sweeney argue that Baal was not worshiped at all in Judah because theophoric names from this period are only Yahwistic, and thus the threat is actually against the illegitimate worship of Yahweh (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 68-69; Sweeney, 2003, p. 67). Against this As M.C. Korpel writes, “Even Ahab and Jezebel named their children after YHWH and not after Asherah and Baal. Apparently it was *not done* to admit one's sympathy for other deities” (Korpel, 2001, p. 147). See also McCarter, 2000; Meshel, 1992.

³⁹ E.g., Edler, 1984, pp. 102-103; Perlitt, 2004, p. 104; Roberts, 1991, pp. 167-168; Rudolph, 1975, p. 262; Seybold, 1991, p. 95; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 63; refuted on textual grounds by Sweeney, 2003, p. 69.

⁴⁰ E.g., NRSV, ESV, NAU, NJB; c.f. 2 Kgs 23.13; so Keller, 1971; Seybold, 1991, p. 95; Smith, 1911; Széles, 1987.

⁴¹ C.f. 2 Kgs 17.16-17; 21.3-6; 23.4-10; Jer 19.3; 32.29-35.

is Robertson's suggestion (Robertson, 1990, p. 265) that מלכּם does mean "their king" but refers, not to the Judean king, but to Baal (v.4).⁴²

Verse 6

The final verse, v.6 is considered by some commentators to be a later addition,⁴³ but this is far from unanimous.⁴⁴ While Edler sees it as "eine ergänzende Glosse, die Zeph 1,4a,באָד-5 nochmals allgemein zusammenfasst, und sich von daher als inauthentisch erweist" (*a supplementary gloss which once more generally summarises Zeph 1.4a,באָד-5, and therefore is shown to be inauthentic*) (Edler, 1984, p. 113), it can just as well be read as an apt and authentic summary to the pericope. The oracle is directed against those who have mixed the worship of Yahweh with the worship of other deities and as a result they are not devoted to Yahweh in any meaningful way.⁴⁵

Summary of exegetical uncertainties in 1.4-6

In spite of the uncertainty over the details the meaning of the pericope is remarkably clear. The oracle is against the people of Judah and Jerusalem for their religious unfaithfulness to Yahweh. They worshiped a variety of other deities alongside Yahweh and for this Zephaniah announces judgment against the people of God. It is significant that the series of oracles which shows how God's people have failed in their calling (Zeph 1.4-13) begins with the foundational sin of abandoning God.

5.3.1 Intertextuality with 2 Kings 21 and 23?

Within these verses there is a striking amount of common vocabulary with 2 Kings 21, which recounts Manasseh's idolatries, and 2 Kings 23, which recounts Josiah's reform and eradication of these idolatries:

- Baal worship (Zeph 1.4; 2 Kgs 21.3; 23.4).
- Idolatrous priests (כמרים) (Zeph 1.4; 2 Kgs 23.5).
- Bowing down/worshipping the host of the heavens on rooftops (Zeph 1.5; 2 Kgs 21.3, 5; 2 Kgs 23.4, 5, 12).
- Worship of Milcom (see "Milcom" / "their king", p. 72).

⁴² Similarly Irsigler, 2002, p. 114; Perlitt, 2004, p. 106; Sabottka, 1972, p. 25; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 70.

⁴³ Edler, 1984, p. 113; Irsigler, 2002, p. 105; Keller, 1971, p. 187.

⁴⁴ In spite of Keller's sweeping claim: "Le v.6 est manifestement une glose (de l'avis de presque tous les exégètes)." (*Verse 6 is manifestly a gloss [in the opinion of nearly every exegete]*), p.187.

⁴⁵ E.g., Ball, 1988, p. 58; Floyd, 2000, pp. 191-192; Robertson, 1990, p. 265; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 77.

The “rule of thumb” for such cases is that when there are similarities between two texts it is assumed that one is borrowing from the other (Edenburg, 1998, p. 71; Johnstone, 1990, p. 77).⁴⁶ Moreover, it is considered more likely that a larger text, such as the narrative in 2 Kings, would generate an allusion in a brief saying, such as Zeph 1.4-6, than vice-versa (Leonard, 2008, p. 260). Thus some scholars understand that Zeph 1.4-6 has been shaped by the report of Josiah’s reform in 2 Kings in the exilic or post-exilic period.⁴⁷ However, most commentators consider Zeph 1.4-6, or significant parts of it, to be authentic to Zephaniah. The material in 2 Kings 21 and 23 carries a great deal of editorial comment explaining Yahweh’s decision to bring the judgment of exile upon Judah (1 Kgs 21.10-15; 2 Kgs 23.26-27) which indicates that these sections were shaped in the exilic period.⁴⁸ This exegesis assumes that Zeph 1.4-6 is authentic to Zephaniah in late-monarchic Judah and not textually dependent upon 2 Kings. Rather both texts are referring to an actual historical context, namely “the idolatries of the mid-eighth through seventh centuries, which Josiah sought to eradicate, with only partial success” (Berlin, 1994, p. 77). This is what Irsigler argues of Zeph 1.4-6:

Der Text verdeutlicht auf seine Weise die religiösen Zustände vor der Reform Joschias...,die in dem Bericht 2 Kön 23 gewiss auf der Basis älteren Materials, aber aus späterer deuteronomistischer Sicht ausdrücklich vorgestellt werden.

The text makes clear in its own way the religious conditions before the reform of Josiah...which in the report of 2 Kgs 23 are certainly based upon older materials, but are explicitly presented from a later deuteronomistic perspective (Irsigler, 2002, p. 106).

While considerable discussion has been generated by the similarity between the report in 2 Kgs 21-23 and Zeph 1.4-6 there is an intertextuality in Zeph 1.4 that has elicited little interest from the commentators. This is the opening declaration of Yahweh, “I will stretch out my hand.” The exegesis for Zeph 1.4-6 will focus upon this intertextuality.

5.3.2 “I will stretch out my hand”

The second major subsection of Zeph 1.2-18, vv.4-6, begins with the declaration וְנִטִּיתִי יָדִי עַל־יְהוּדָה וְעַל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם (I will stretch out my hand against Judah, and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, 1.4a). This terminology of the “outstretched

⁴⁶ However, even when there are two texts where there is obvious textual dependency the assumption that one is reusing the other can be too simplistic. Klein demonstrates that in the MT the Chronicler’s *Vorlage* was not always the MT of Samuel-Kings (Klein, 2006).

⁴⁷ Perlitt, 2004, p. 105; Seybold, 1991, p. 95; Levin, 2011, pp. 126-127; Hagedorn, 2011, p. 464; Ben Zvi, 1999, p. 252.

⁴⁸ 2 Kgs 25.27 shows that the final form of 1-2 Kings must have been later than 560BC.

hand” is what Bakhtin describes as a “word image...an image completely shot through with dialogized overtones” (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 277-278).

נָטָה (stretch out)

The verb נָטָה is used 214 times in the OT and has a wide range of meaning. In the Qal stem the two basic meanings are “to reach out” and “to spread out/stretch out.” The “spread out” aspect is used to describe “pitching” a tent (e.g., Gen 12.8; 26.25; 2 Sam 6.17; Hiphil stem only 2 Sam 16.22). The “stretch out” aspect can be used to describe God stretching out the heavens (e.g., Job 9.8; Ps 104.2; Isa 40.22; 42.5; Jer 10.12). In the Hiphil stem נָטָה can be translated as “turning aside” i.e. “perverting” justice (e.g., Exod 23.2; Deut 16.9; c.f. Amos 5.12). In wisdom contexts the Hiphil stem of נָטָה is often used to describe “inclining” one’s ear to instruction (e.g., Prov 2.2; 5.1) and in the psalms it is used to implore Yahweh to “incline” his ear to one’s cry (Pss 88.3; 102.3). Apart from these and other meanings there are a number of texts in which Yahweh stretches out his hand, his hand is outstretched, or he commands someone else to stretch out their hand on his behalf. The texts in which this language appears are the commissioning of Moses (Exod 6.2-7.7); the Plagues Narrative (Exod 7.8-11.10); the deliverance at the sea (13.17-14.31); the Song of the Sea (Exod 15.1-21); the Deuteronomic formula “a mighty hand and an outstretched arm”; and finally in the prophets Isaiah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Approaches to Yahweh’s “outstretched hand”

In a small but influential study published in 1962 Paul Humbert compared the OT usage of two different phrases, שָׁלַח יָד and נָטָה יָד, which from ancient times until today in any given language have usually been translated into the same phrase, which in English is “to stretch out the hand” (Humbert, 1962, p. 383). After investigating the different texts in which the two phrases are used Humbert concludes that

le geste de *nāṭā yād*, contrairement à celui de *šālah yād*, est réservé, dans usage de l’AT, exclusivement à Dieu ou à son délégué.

the gesture of נָטָה יָד, contrary to that of שָׁלַח יָד, is reserved, in the OT usage, exclusively for God or for his delegate (Humbert, 1962, p. 390).

Furthermore, the stretching out of the hand of Yahweh, or of his delegate, signifies “la portée, non seulement surnaturelle, mais funeste du geste” (*the not only supernatural but disastrous consequences of the gesture*) (Humbert, 1962, p. 391). Humbert’s reading is

sometimes referred to in relation to Zeph 1.4,⁴⁹ while other commentators describe the meaning of Yahweh's "outstretched hand" in similar terms. Thus Robertson writes, "In God's case, he 'stretches out his hand' when he intervenes dramatically, employing means 'beyond what is common'" (Robertson, 1990, pp. 261, quoting John Calvin), while Sweeney asserts that the stretching out of the hand is common in the OT "to express YHWH's punitive action against a particular party" (Sweeney, 2003, p. 66).

Looking for a more specific meaning for the phrase in Zeph 1.4 Edler writes,

Wie KRINETZKI richtig bemerkt, dürfte diese Formulierung von dem Gestus des Magiers herrühren, der durch das Ausstrecken seiner Hand in eine bestimmte Richtung dort etwas bewirken wollte.

As Krinetzki rightly remarks, this formula may come from the gesture of the magician who through the outstretching of his hand in a certain direction wanted to bring about something there (Edler, 1984, p. 114).

In the same way Striek suggests that the "out-stretching of the hand" "scheint ein ehemals magischer Ritus gewesen zu sein (vgl. Ex. 7.5 u.ö.)" (*appears to have earlier been a magical ritual [c.f. Exod 7.5 among others]*) (Striek, 1999, pp. 92-93). This view is influenced by the use of the phrase in the plagues narrative where, for example, Aaron's actions appear to be those of a magician (Exod 7.19). Humbert had suggested that there is a magical aspect to the gesture in the plagues narrative but that the magical aspect is peculiar to the specific P tradition in Exodus which is later than the expressions themselves.

Le caractère magique n'est point inhérent aux deux tournures elles-mêmes, mais leur est imprimé à l'une et à l'autre vraisemblablement par la seule tradition de l'exode.

The magic character is not inherent to the two phrases themselves, but is impressed on them both probably only by the tradition of the exodus (Humbert, 1962, p. 395).

Thus the magical character is not "essential et primordial" for the meaning of the expression (Humbert, 1962, p. 395).

Irsigler offers another explanation of Yahweh's outstretched hand in Zeph 1.4. Noting the apparently magical aspects in the Exodus and plagues tradition (Irsigler, 2002, pp. 107-108), Irsigler also suggests another level of signification:

⁴⁹ Roberts, 1991, pp. 170-171; Sabottka, 1972, p. 15; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 72.

Die Zusammenstellung von „austrecken“ und „austilgen“ (כרת-נטה-H) ist ebenso in Ez 25,13,16 belegt, scheint also eine gewisse Prägung zu verraten. In Satz 4b treffen wir mit dem Verbum כרת-H auf die Reminiszenz einer alten kultisch-sakralen Bannformel, die im Heiligkeitgesetz und in der Priesterschrift besonders belegt ist. Ganz ähnlich wird sie in Ez 14,8-9 gegen götzendienerische Praktiken verwendet (vgl. Jes 14,22; Sach 13,2).

The putting together of “to stretch out” and “to obliterate” (כרת-נטה-Hiph.) is thus also documented in Ezek 25.13,16, thus appearing to reveal a certain pattern. In line 4b we meet with the verb כרת-Hif which is reminiscent of an ancient cultic-sacral curse formula (Bannformel) which is especially documented in the Holiness Law and in the Priestly Document. Entirely similar are those used in Ezek. 14.8-9 against the practitioners of idolatry (c.f. Isa 14.22; Zech 13.2) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 108).

Irsigler does not, however, support his argument. He gives no examples from the Holiness Law or the Priestly Document and furthermore, as he believes that Zeph 1.4 is authentic to Zephaniah, the texts to which he refers in the above quotation are all later than Zeph 1.4.

These explanations of Yahweh’s outstretched hand all assume an extrinsic significance attached to the gesture of the outstretched hand which brings signification into the text, (e.g., threatening gesture; magical motion). However, this argument can be turned on its head. The “essential et primordial” signification of the gesture of Yahweh stretching out (נטה) his hand comes from its association with the Exodus itself. That is, throughout the OT Yahweh’s outstretched (נטה) hand carries an association of the Exodus event itself.

Yahweh’s outstretched hand and the Exodus

The language of Yahweh stretching out (נטה) his hand can be organised into three distinct categories in the OT. In canonical order the first category occurs in the story of God bringing Israel out of Egypt in the book of Exodus.

Exodus 6-15

In the story of Yahweh delivering his people from Egypt the language of the “stretching out (נטה) the hand” (and/or another object) occurs repeatedly in chapters 7-15. This includes the plagues narrative, the deliverance at the sea, and the Song of the Sea. Within this block of occurrences it is only the hand of Yahweh himself in Exod 6.6; 7.5 and 15.12 (“right hand”). In between these two occurrences it is first Aaron (7.19; 8.1 [8.5], 2 [6], 12 [16], 13 [17]) and then Moses (9.22, 23; 10.12, 13, 21, 22; 14.16, 21, 26, 27) who stretch out their hand and/or staff at Yahweh’s instruction to carry out Yahweh’s deliverance and judgment. This extended passage in Exodus shows that there is a strong

relationship between Yahweh, the verb נטה (to stretch out) the hand or right hand, and the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.⁵⁰

The dating of this material entails entering the field of Pentateuchal source criticism. More recent scholarship in this area has moved away from dividing this material in Exodus 6-15 into multiple sources (see Table 5.7 below). There has also been a tendency towards much later dating of the sources of the Pentateuch (e.g., Levin, 2007). Thus van Seters, for example, writes, “There is no primary and secondary material, no ancient oral tradition behind the text. The plagues narrative did not exist as a specific tradition before the Yahwist’s work and is, therefore, no older than the exilic period” (van Seters, 1986, p. 38). However, the use of the “stretched out hand” material in this Exodus block indicates that van Seters has overstated this case. While this exegesis remains agnostic about the final date of the composition of Exodus 7-15 it assumes that the traditions come from earlier times in Israel’s history, particularly the tradition that associates Yahweh’s outstretched hand with his judgment of Egypt and deliverance of Israel. This assertion is supported by the second cluster of occurrences in which Yahweh’s outstretched hand is integrally related to the exodus.

Deuteronomistic Phraseology

The second cluster of occurrences that associate Yahweh’s outstretched (נטה) hand with his deliverance of Israel from Egypt comes with the distinctive “Deuteronomistic” phrase.⁵¹ This phrase has a basic pattern and a variation thereof (see Table 5.6 below).

Table 5.6: Deuteronomistic phraseology

Basic pattern			
Deut 4.34; 5.15; 26.8	בִּיד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרֹעַ נְטוּיָה	by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm	
Deut 7.19	הַיָּד הַחֲזָקָה וְהַזֵּרֹעַ הַנְטוּיָה	the mighty hand and the outstretched arm	
Deut 11.2	יָדוֹ הַחֲזָקָה וְזֵרְעוֹ הַנְטוּיָה	his mighty hand and his outstretched arm	
Variation			
Deut 9.29	בְּכַחַךְ הַגָּדֹל וּבְזֵרֹעַךְ הַנְטוּיָה	by your great power and by your outstretched arm	

⁵⁰ The only other block of this language occurs in Josh 8.18,19, 26 where it is mimicking the language of the Plague Narrative in order to identify Joshua as Moses’ legitimate successor (see e.g., Dillard & Longman, 1995, p. 115).

⁵¹ Deut 4.34; 5.15; 7.19; 9.29; 11.2; 26.8; 1 Kgs 8.42//2 Chr 6.32; 2 Kg 17.36; Ps 136.12; Jer 32.21; Exod 6.6.

Table 5.7: Source critical analysis of “outstretched hand/staff” texts in Exodus 6-15

Source	Eissfeldt, 1965	Fohrer, 1968	Childs, 1974	Friedman, 1997	Coats, 1999	van Seters, 1986 ⁵²	Zevit, 1976 ⁵³
P	6.6 7.5, 19 8.1[5], 2[6], 12[16], 13[17]	6.6; 7.5, 19; 8.1,2, 12, 13;	6.6; 7.5, 19; 8.1, 2, 12, 13 14.16, 21, 26, 27;	6.6; 7.5, 19; 8.1,2, 12, 13; 14.16, 21a, 26-27a	6.6; 7.5, 19 8.1, 2, 12, 13 9.22, 23 10.12, 13, 21, 22 14.16, 21, 26, 27	7.15, 17, 20 8.1-3. 8.12-15 9.8-12 9.22-23a 10.21-32	7.14-12.36
E	9.22, 23; 10.12, 13, 21, 22;	9.22, 23; 10.12, 13, 21, 22	9.22, 23; 10.12, 13, 21, 22	9.22, 23; 10.12, 13, 21, 22			
J					15.12	7.15-18, 20, 21a, 23, 24. 7.25-29; 8.4-11a. 8.16-28. 9.1-7. 9.13-21, 23b-34. 10.1-19, 24-27 11.1-8a; 10.28-29; 11.89b; 12.25-32	
E/L	14.16, 21, 26, 27						
J/E/N		14.16, 21, 26, 27					
Other	15.12	15.12	15.12 (Used by P but not originating from P).	15.12 (Used by J but not originating from J).			

⁵² Van Seters only deals with the Plague Narrative.⁵³ Zevit only deals with the Plagues Narrative.

Karen Martens points out that the adjectives “strong” and “outstretched” are only found in parallel within this Deuteronomistic phrase and, furthermore, the verb “outstretched” (נָטָה) only occurs with “arm” in this Deuteronomistic formula. “By contrast it is used of ‘the right (hand)’ (Exod 15,12) and often of ‘hand’” (Martens, 2001, p. 126). Thus she suggests that two independent collocations have been brought together, “a strong hand” and “an outstretched hand”, and then “arm” has replaced “hand” to avoid repetition in the phrase (Martens, 2001, p. 126). Martens offers an explanation for the variations in the phrase in terms of its development over time. She suggests that first “with a strong hand” would have existed independently. Secondly, a parallel expression was added, “outstretched arm.” Finally, one of the metaphorical elements was replaced by a more literal expression, “with great might” (e.g., Deut 9.29; Martens, 2001, pp. 126-127). If this explanation is correct then “one would expect the forms consisting of one component alone to be the only ones occurring in the traditions forming the original context of the expression” (Martens, 2001, pp. 127-128). This, therefore, strengthens the argument that in Israel’s textual memory the expression “Yahweh’s outstretched hand” is firmly associated with the deliverance from Egypt. Every one of the occurrences of the phrase in Deuteronomy and the other texts listed above are part of an explicit description of how God brought Israel out of Egypt. The only exception is 1 Kgs 8.42 par. 2 Chr 6.32. However, an association with the Exodus traditions could be implicit in 1 Kgs 8.42 par. 2 Chr 6.32 (c.f. 1 Kgs 8.16, 21; Martens, 2001, p. 139).

Texts which allude to the Exodus

A third block of texts, to which Zeph 1.4 belongs, uses the outstretching (נָטָה) of Yahweh’s hand, or sometimes another object, in order to evoke the Exodus.⁵⁴ For example, Jer 21.5 assumes the Exodus tradition as it brings the Deuteronomistic formula to bear upon Israel. Holladay considers Jer 21.5 to be authentic, i.e. not a later addition from the Deuteronomistic editor, which would give a date of about 587/6 BC for the oracle (Holladay, 1986, pp. 569-570). The reversal of the Exodus tradition is also central in Ezek 20.33-38, with Yahweh bringing his people out of the nations and into the desert for judgment “with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm” (Ezek 20.33, 34). Zimmerli considers this an authentic oracle of Ezekiel in “the early exilic age” (Zimmerli, 1979, p.

⁵⁴ 2 Kgs 21.13; 1 Chr 21.16; Isa 5.25; 9.11, 16, 20; 10.4; 14.26, 27; 23.11; 31.3; Jer 6.12; 15.6; 21.5; 27.5; 32.17; 32.21; 51.25; Lam 2.8; Ezek 6.14; 14.9, 13; 16.27; 20.33, 34; 25.7, 13, 16; 30.25; 35.3; Zeph 1.4; 2.13.

415) which demonstrates that the connection between Yahweh's outstretched hand and the Exodus was well established by this time.

Initial conclusions about Yahweh's outstretched hand

Although the dating of Exodus 6-15 is debated and inconclusive, in these texts there is a strong relationship between Yahweh's "stretched out hand" and his deliverance of Israel from Egypt. This relationship is also foundational to the Deuteronomistic phrase which was well established by the time of the exile, as shown by its usage in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. A number of texts play upon this association with the Exodus in different ways when they take up the language of Yahweh's outstretched hand (or other object). The widespread assumption that the language of Yahweh's outstretched hand is a generally threatening gesture is not specific enough. Rather, throughout the OT Yahweh's outstretched hand is associated with the deliverance from Egypt. Thus when Zephaniah declares that Yahweh will stretch out his hand against Judah and Jerusalem the Exodus deliverance becomes intertextually transumed into the text. Zephaniah 1.4 is widely accepted by scholars as authentic to Zephaniah and thus would belong to the late seventh century (see 5.3 above). Two texts which feature Yahweh's outstretched hand would have been well known at this time: the Song of the Sea (Exod 15.1-18) and Isa 9.7-20; 5.25-30. The echo of these texts produces signification that may be heard in Zeph 1.4-6.

5.3.3 Exodus 15.1-18: The Song of the Sea

Source critics have long recognised that the Song of the Sea is different from the material surrounding it (see Table 5.7, p.79). For the dating of the Song of the Sea "the widest divergence can be found in the various treatments" from eleventh century to the second half of the fifth century (Hyatt, 1971, p. 162). Childs, however, asserts that "many of the older arguments for a post-exilic dating...have collapsed" (Childs, 1974, p. 245).⁵⁵ Although Cross and Freedman argue for a very early date, tenth century or earlier (Cross, 1973b, p. 123; Cross, & Freedman, 1955, p. 240) the second part of the Song (15.13-18) indicates a date for the final form of the Song after Israel had become established in Canaan.⁵⁶ There is no scholarly consensus on the form of the Song as it is "a poem of mixed type" (Durham, 1998, p. 203). This lack of "any one genre in its form which would give the key to its function within the early life of the nation" (Childs, 1974, p. 244) means

⁵⁵ E.g. Haupt, "...it is evidently a late psalm incorporated into the Pentateuch...Moses' Song of Triumph seems to be a post-Exilic liturgical hymn for the Passover, celebrating JHVH's glorious deeds in times of yore" (Haupt, 1904, p. 152).

⁵⁶ Childs, 1974, p. 246; Durham, 1998, p. 203; Fretheim, 1991, p. 162; Hyatt, 1971, p. 163.

that there is no agreement on the exact *Sitz im Leben* (suggestions include Passover celebration, Enthronement Festival, “autumnal festival”, New Year festival; Durham, 1998, pp. 203-204).⁵⁷ One area of scholarly consensus is that the Song of the Sea belongs to the cult. Durham is probably correct in writing,

the likelihood is that the poem was used on a regular basis, throughout the cultic year, not just as Passover or at some other holy occasion. The deliverance the poem celebrates is far too basic to Israel’s faith and far too pervasive in OT theology for so splendid an account of it to have had so restricted a usage (Durham, 1998, p. 204).

Exodus 15.1-18 recounts the foundational redemptive event in Israel’s memory and its far-reaching consequences.⁵⁸ Verses 1b-12 recount in poetic form the same events as the prose version (Exod 14),⁵⁹ in which Pharaoh and his army pursue the fleeing Israelites, intent on destruction, only to be met by Yahweh’s judgment. Three times in the Song Yahweh’s ימין (right hand) is mentioned (v.6 twice, v.12), each time referring to Yahweh’s vanquishing of the Egyptians. Verse 12 is the climactic declaration for the first section of the Song, נטית ימינך תבלעמו ארץ (You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them). This memory of Yahweh’s dramatic salvation of Israel from the oppressor Pharaoh and from slavery in Egypt was formative for Israel’s identity. R. Albertz describes the shaping effect of this liberation from Egypt. “The origin of Yahweh religion is indissolubly connected with the process of the political liberation of the Exodus group” (Albertz, 1994, p. 46). As a result Israel’s “world of religious symbols is therefore directly related to the process of historical and political liberation” (Albertz, 1994, p. 47). Thus Yahweh religion cannot be used to legitimise the social hierarchy and political status quo.

Rather, as the symbolic world of a social outsider group fighting for its right to life, it serves to provide internal solidarity for this group and to detach it from a social order which was felt to be unjust, in the direction of a future social integration which makes possible a freer and more equitable social life (Albertz, 1994, p. 47).

⁵⁷ Not only does Rozelaar believe the Song was part of the Passover celebration he even gives an imaginative reconstruction of how it may have been sung (Rozelaar, 1952, pp. 227-228).

⁵⁸ “The exodus from Egypt is a focal point of ancient Israelite religion” (Hendel, 2001, p. 601). See also (Childs, 1970, p. 406).

⁵⁹ Some scholars claim the poetry and prose accounts are not describing the same events, e.g. (Cross, 1973b). This lacks appreciation of the text’s poetic genre and is dealt with convincingly by Childs (Childs, 1974, p. 251).

The remainder of the Song (vv.13-18) describes the results of this redemptive “stretching out” of Yahweh’s right hand. Israel has become **גְּאֻלָּת עַם־יִזְרָאֵל** (the people whom you redeemed; v.13) and **עַם־יִזְרָאֵל קָנִיתָ** (the people whom you acquired; v.16). The conquest of Palestine is remembered and the climactic conclusion of the Song is the establishment of Yahweh’s temple and his redeemed people worshipping him (vv.17-18) (Childs, 1974, p. 252; Watts, 1957, p. 377). All of this is a result of Yahweh stretching out his right hand in judgment.

Echoes of the Song in Zephaniah 1.4-6

The rich content of the Song of the Sea becomes “transumed” material when Zeph 1.4 declares that Yahweh is about to stretch his hand out against Judah and Jerusalem. The same hand that brought Israel into being will now turn against them. Zephaniah 1.2-3 threatens to reverse the creation of the world and retracts Yahweh’s promise never again to destroy the world and all living creatures. This declaration of Yahweh stretching out his hand against Judah and Jerusalem threatens to reverse the process that created the people of God and thereby retracts God’s promises to them. Moreover, Judah is now recast in the mould of Pharaoh and Egypt. In the OT Pharaoh is the archetypal figure who repeatedly resists Yahweh and refuses to obey him, resulting in Yahweh’s hand being stretched out against him. Now Judah is presented in that mould, so stubbornly resistant to Yahweh’s instruction that finally the mighty hand of judgment must be stretched out against her. In the OT Pharaoh and Egypt are also ciphers for oppression and slavery which, as the Exodus narrative reveals, are antithetical to Yahweh’s will for human existence. If Israel is Yahweh’s enemy as Pharaoh was, it must be because they too oppose God’s will for an ethical and just society. This is exactly what the following oracles condemn (Zeph 1.9-13; c.f. 3.1-4). Therefore the result of Yahweh’s deliverance at the sea will be undone. From that deliverance Israel was brought into the land, its enemies were defeated, and Yahweh’s temple was established in their midst. Now there is an implicit threat of Judah losing their land, their temple and their status as Yahweh’s redeemed people. The setting of the Song of the Sea, as well as its content, is also significant. The Song of the Sea was probably repeatedly sung at the Temple, the very place where the proper worship of Yahweh was supposed to take place. Zephaniah 1.4-6 condemns the improper worship that was taking place in Jerusalem and Judah and threatens judgment as a result.

The shock of realising that Yahweh's hand was about to be stretched out against them would be even more appalling in the light of what had happened to the Northern Kingdom. That same outstretched hand that had redeemed Israel at the Sea of Reeds had already been stretched out against the Northern Kingdom, causing its destruction. We hear about this in the prophecy of Zephaniah's Jerusalem predecessor, Isaiah.

5.3.4 Isaiah 9.7-20; 5.25-30

The second text that echoes in Zeph 1.4-6 is Isa 9.7-20; 5.25-30. These verses come from what are considered the core authentic Isaianic passages, namely Isaiah 1-12 and 28-31, recognising that there may be authentic fragments elsewhere and secondary material within these core passages (Barton, 1995, p. 19). Isaiah 5.25-30 and 9.7-20 share a common refrain, *בכל־זאת לא־שב אִפּוֹ וְעוֹד יָדוֹ נְטוּיָה* (For all this his anger has not turned away; his hand is stretched out still; Isa 5.25; 9.11[12], 16[17], 20[21]; 10.4).⁶⁰ The reason for the disjointedness of the text is that with Isa 6.1-9.6 a "separate tradition block...appears to have been set down in the middle of a relatively well connected section of text" (Seitz, 1993, p. 46). The earlier verses, 5.25-30, appear to be the conclusion of the original pericope, thus 9.7-20[8-21]; 5.25-30 (Clements, 1980, p. 66; Wildberger, 1991, p. 224). There is scholarly consensus that this section comes from early in Isaiah's career because the object of the oracles is Israel, the Northern Kingdom.⁶¹ Although Wildberger describes the form rather neatly as "historical paranesis" (Wildberger, 1991, p. 225), there is no unanimity about exactly which historical events are being referred to. It is related to the terminal stages of the Northern Kingdom as it came under pressure from Assyria, but whether the pericope is describing this short period (Clements, 1980, pp. 66-67, the final decade) or taking a much longer view (Wildberger, 1991, p. 228, e.g., 9.7-11 referring to Aramean oppression in the ninth century), is not clear. However, the exact historical references are not of primary importance. What is important is that the pericope is early and would have been available to Zephaniah (Ahn, 2009). The echo of this Isaiah text in Zephaniah's announcement that Yahweh is now about to stretch out his hand against Judah and Jerusalem produces ominous overtones.

⁶⁰ The phrase in Isaiah 10.4 is generally considered to be an addition as 10.1-4a continues the series of woe oracles from 5.8-24 (Clements, 1980, p. 62; Gray, 1912, p. 180; Wildberger, 1991, pp. 223-224).

⁶¹ "Jacob", "Israel", 9.7; "Ephraim", "Samaria", 9.8; "Manasseh", "Ephraim", "together they were against Judah", 9.21.

Echoes of Isaiah 9.7-20; 5.25-30 in Zephaniah 1.4-6

A number of themes in the Isaiah passage resonate in this pericope of Zephaniah. First of all, the object of Yahweh's outstretched hand in Isaiah's oracle is explicitly the Northern Kingdom, "Ephraim" and "Samaria" (Isa 9.8). Zephaniah now declares that this same hand is about to be stretched out against Judah and Jerusalem (Zeph 1.4). The implication is that Judah is now threatened with the same fate as the Northern Kingdom which ceased to exist in 722 BC.

The reason for the Northern Kingdom's destruction, as a result of Yahweh's judgment, was their refusal to "turn to him who struck them" and their refusal to "seek (דרש) Yahweh of hosts" (Isa 9.12). Yahweh's desire for the Northern Kingdom was for them to turn back to him (Isa 9.12[13]) but they refused to respond to his chastisements because of their "pride and arrogance of heart" (Isa 9.8[9]). In Zeph 1.4-6 "Judah" and "all the inhabitants of Jerusalem" likewise do not turn to Yahweh or seek him. Instead they worship Baal with a pagan priesthood (הכמרים; 1.4). Instead of seeking יהוה צבאות (the Lord of hosts, Isa 9.13) they "bow down on the roofs to צבא השמים" (the hosts of heaven; Zeph. 1.5). Zephaniah describes his Jerusalem generation as "Those who have turned back from following the Lord, who have not sought the Lord or enquired (דרש) of him" (1.6). The Isaiah oracle reveals an attitude of optimism and complacency in the people of Israel: "The bricks have fallen, but we will build with dressed stones; the sycamores have been cut down, but we will put cedars in their place" (Isa 9.9[10]). Although the OT that we have ultimately presents Judah's perspective on Israel's history, it was the Northern Kingdom which was the more powerful and also possessed the more ancient Yahwistic traditions and shrines. Perhaps they too had an "inviolability" complex similar to that of the people of Jerusalem (c.f. Jer 7.4). In Zephaniah's Jerusalem complacency was one of the things Yahweh was about to punish: "At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their heart, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do harm'" (Zeph 1.12). They are the same as the Northern Kingdom was and now the same hand of judgment is stretched out upon them.

The Isaiah oracle also identifies social injustice and wickedness (רשעה) as one the defining characteristics of the Northern Kingdom (9.17-20[18-21]). "Wickedness burned like a fire...no one spared another...they devoured the flesh of their own kindred." The same was true of Jerusalem in Zephaniah's time. They "fill their master's house with

violence and fraud” (1.9b). Jerusalem is a “soiled, defiled, oppressing city” (3.1). Its officials “are roaring lions, its judges are evening wolves that leave nothing until morning” (3.3). With his own “historical paranesis” Zephaniah recounts Yahweh’s efforts to bring Judah to repentance (3.6-7a) which, as with the Northern Kingdom, had no effect: “But they were more eager to make all their deeds corrupt” (Zeph 3.7b). The result of Israel’s wickedness and refusal to repent was God’s judgment through catastrophe, presaged by Yahweh having “stretched out his hand against them” (Isa 5.25). The actual nature of the catastrophe is unspecified and scholars variously suggest such things as warfare or earthquake. Yet this time the oracle reaches its climax. There will be no more chances and now a distant powerful nation is being summoned (Isa 5.26-30). Although originally a future threat for the Northern Kingdom of the coming of the Assyrians (Wildberger, 1991, p. 239), from the perspective of late seventh century Judah it was all too clear what had happened as a result of Yahweh’s judgment. The Northern Kingdom had ceased to exist and Zephaniah declares that the same fate is in store for Judah and Jerusalem.

5.3.5 Summary of the echoes of Yahweh’s outstretched hand

This section has looked at two specific texts from Exodus and Isaiah that, it may be assumed, were known to Zephaniah. Meaning from these earlier texts is “transumed” or transferred into Zephaniah’s text, what Hollander calls *metalepsis*. Yahweh’s outstretched hand was associated with his simultaneous judgment of Egypt and deliverance of Israel at the Sea of Reeds, and his subsequent creation of Israel as God’s people. By the late seventh century and early sixth century this association was strongly established, witnessed to, for example, by the Deuteronomistic phrase as well as the Jeremiah and Ezekiel texts (see “Deuteronomistic Phraseology” and “Texts which allude to the Exodus” above). Whether Isaiah, in the eighth century, assumes this association is less certain, as there is a paucity of references to the Exodus in these writings. Nevertheless, such is the strength of the association of Yahweh’s outstretched arm with the Exodus deliverance by the time of Zephaniah that, arguably, this association would have been perceived. Through Zephaniah’s declaration this foundational event in Israel’s historical consciousness, in which Yahweh was stamped as the God who does “justice for the orphan and the oppressed” (Ps 10.18), is reversed upon those who were delivered and created as God’s people. Roles are reversed: Yahweh becomes judge instead of saviour; Israel becomes the oppressor instead of the innocent oppressed. This intertextual reading

helps to understand the text better than generalisations such as Yahweh's outstretched hand is a threatening gesture.

Hollander's image of an echo bouncing through consecutive chambers or caves is a helpful way to describe the way in which "Yahweh's outstretched hand" arrives in Zephaniah's text. As it passes each chamber the timbre of the echo is altered or enriched. This is not the first time that the outstretched hand of the Exodus has been brought to bear upon God's own people. Isaiah had already declared it against the Northern Kingdom and that kingdom had suffered exactly the reversal of the Exodus; the people of God became no people at all, as Zephaniah's audience knew all too well. Thus the language of the outstretched hand, used against Judah and Jerusalem, carries with it ominous implications.

5.3.6 Summary

This oracle is the opening salvo in a series of specific charges against Judah, the people of God, and gives the reason for the global judgment of the first oracle, Zeph 1.2-3. This first oracle raises the question, why will God destroy everything? The answer is because of the failure of God's chosen people. The theme of representation from the early chapters of Genesis is linked to the theme of representation that comes from the book of Exodus. God rescued Israel with an outstretched hand so that she would be God's representative nation in and for the world. As through the failure of אדם in Genesis all life was destroyed so through the failure of God's people shall all life once again be destroyed. Zephaniah 1.2-3 serves as an introduction to the whole book of Zephaniah and vv.4-6 serve as an introduction to the remainder of chapter 1. Through allusion to the Exodus deliverance at the beginning of this pericope the focus falls upon the failure of God's people to fulfil their calling. The hand that delivered them from slavery and created them as God's people is now stretched out against them. Their failures as God's people, and thus the reasons for their judgment, begin to be recounted in this pericope. Verses 4-6 recount people of God's religious unfaithfulness to the God who had delivered them and created them, the one to whom in the Song of the Sea they had declared, "Who is like you, O Yahweh, amongst the gods?" (Exod 15.11). This first sin of abandoning God is foundational and has a domino effect as the following verses highlight the ethical and moral failure to live as God's people. Thus their status as God's people is threatened.

5.4 Zephaniah 1.7-9

- 7a Silence before the Lord Yahweh,
- 7b for the Day of Yahweh is near,
- 7c for Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice,
- 7d he has dedicated his invited ones.⁶²
- 8a It shall come to pass on the day of Yahweh's sacrifice,
- 8b I will punish the officials,
- 8c and the sons of the king,
- 8d and all those who wear foreign clothing.
- 9a And I will punish all those who jump over the threshold,
- 9b in that day,
- 9c those who fill the house of their master,
- 9d with violence and deceit.

Generally this section is considered to be authentic to the late monarchic prophet, Zephaniah, notwithstanding the various glosses and additions suggested by a number of commentators. Some argue that v.7 was at some time moved from its original position with vv.14-16 and emend the text accordingly (Deissler, 1964, p. 447; Edler, 1984, p. 184). Yet insisting that the “Day of Yahweh” that is introduced in v.7 must go with the “Day of Yahweh” material in vv.14-16 rests on fairly rigid assumptions about how texts must be written and most commentators do not follow this direction. This pericope takes up other texts and deploys them in different ways to create its unique message. Echoes from Amos bring the danger of Yahweh's presence into Zephaniah. A close examination of the scenario “Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice, he has dedicated his invited ones” (v.7c-d) reveals a number of intertextualities that bode ill for the leadership of Judah. The focus on Judah's leadership becomes sharper in the final two verses of the pericope which continues, in the manner of vv.2-3 and 4-6, an historical deconstruction of God's people.

5.4.1 Reuse of Amos

The writings of Amos, who prophesied in the Northern Kingdom, were preserved in Judah and it seems logical that Zephaniah, a highly literate person, would have known them. Apart from this deductive conclusion there are several places where Zephaniah uses language that also occurs in Amos. The most obvious of these cases is Zeph 1.13b which follows Amos 5.11 more closely in both vocabulary and word order than any other text in the OT (5.7.2 below). Within Zeph 1.7-9 a case can also be made for allusion to Amos 5.18-20; 6.8-11; 8.1-3. The availability of these texts for Zephaniah is supported by Wolff

⁶² The awkward phrase is used to convey the sense of the Hebrew.

who, in his well-known (if somewhat fanciful) analysis of six levels of redaction in Amos, assigns these pericopes to eighth century (Wolff, 1977, pp. 106-111), and Shalom Paul who ascribes most of the book of Amos to Amos the eighth century prophet (Paul, 1991).

Hush!

It would be difficult to prove allusion to a text on the basis of a single word. However, an argument can be made in this case for two reasons. First, the particle שׁוֹת is quite rare in the OT (Judg 3:19; Neh 8:11; Amos 6:10; 8:3; Hab 2:20; Zeph 1:7; Zech 2:17). Nehemiah and Zechariah are later than Zephaniah and thus not candidates for allusion by this text of Zephaniah. Likewise Habakkuk is also here considered to be later than Zeph 1.7. The dating of Judges is more complicated but as there are no other markers linking Zephaniah 1.7 to the story of Ehud. Also, because the occurrence of שׁוֹת in that story does not produce any striking intertextual patterns between the texts, Judg 3.15-29 is not here considered as an intertext. This leaves only the two texts in Amos in which שׁוֹת occurs (Amos 6.10; 8.3). The second reason is that it appears that Zephaniah was familiar with the oracles of Amos, in whatever shape and form these oracles were compiled in at the time, because of the number of allusions that are made to Amos, especially in this first chapter of Zephaniah. Thus a case can be made that Amos 6.8-11 and 8.1-3 lurk behind Zeph 1.7, imbuing the text with more than its “lawful meaning” (Barthes, 1981, p. 40).

Amos 6.8-11

The first occurrence of שׁוֹת (“silence!”) is in Amos 6.8-11, whose content is so dire that Stuart entitles it “The extent of the coming destruction” (Stuart, 2002, p. 361). Within this pericope there is a short prose paragraph which contains שׁוֹת (vv.9-10). While there are some difficulties with the exact meaning of the Hebrew in Amos 6.10 (see Paul, 1991, pp. 214-216) the overall meaning is clear. As a result of Yahweh’s judgment there is widespread death. When bodies are being removed from the houses, probably by a relative and an undertaker, it is of utmost importance that the name of Yahweh is not invoked. “Given all that Amos has proclaimed, Yahweh’s presence can only mean fatal danger (5:17; 9:4)” (Wolff, 1977, p. 283).

Amos 8.1-3

The second occurrence of שׁוֹת (“silence!”) is in Amos 8.1-3 which is the fourth of a series of five “vision reports” (Amos 7.1-3, 4-6, 7-9; 8.1-3; 9.1-4). Although the vision reports are interspersed with other material Paul writes that “Ideationally they are a single unit,

tied together not only by formal literary characteristics but also by a graduated development of severity” (Paul, 1991, p. 223). This “development of severity” means there is escape from disaster in the first two vision reports but inescapability in the final three. Furthermore, there is external threat in the first two visions (7.1-3, locusts; 7.4-6, fire) but in the final three visions the threat is Yahweh himself (7.7-9; 8.1-3; 9.1-4). This threat of Yahweh’s presence is blatant in Amos 8.2: “I will never again pass them by” says Yahweh. The result of his not passing them by is his presence: “The songs of the temple shall become wailing on that day, declaration of the Lord Yahweh. The corpses are many! Cast out in every place! Hush! (הם)” (Amos 8.3, AT).

Intertextual patterns

The opening phrase of Zeph 1.7, הם מפני אדני יהוה (Silence before the Lord Yahweh), is widely understood by commentators, along with the usage in Hab 2.20 and Zech 2.17[13], to belong to cultic ritual. Edler, for example, writes that “Dieser Aufruf...war der Aufruf des Priesters zu ehrfürchtiger Stille vor der Theophanie Jahwes im Tempel.” (*This call...was the call of the priest for reverent silence before the theophany of Yahweh in the Temple*) (Edler, 1984, p. 189).⁶³ This may be correct but it is conjectural, and Sweeney strongly rejects it: “The term (הם) is apparently used commonly in Hebrew for situations in which one might call for silence. Its appearance in contexts related to sacrifice does not appear to identify it as any sort of technical language” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 79). The Amos texts, on the other hand, provide a concrete intertextuality, admittedly only one of the many intertexts that form the background to this Zephaniah text, most of which are now lost. This exegesis makes the assumption that Zeph 1.7a alludes to Amos 6.10 and 8.3, based on the infrequent use of the word הם and on the fact that Zephaniah alludes to other Amos texts. The allusion to these texts in Amos is productive, a productivity that is well described by Tull: “Allusions recall for audiences what they already know, making connections between the ‘already read’ and the ‘now being read,’ so that the new word partakes of qualities already inherent in the previous text” (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 62).

Understood in this way the opening word הם in Zeph 1.7, the call for silence in the presence of Yahweh, carries signification from the passages in Amos. Amos 6.8-11 and 8.1-3 are veritable texts of terror with their announcement that the very presence of

⁶³ Similarly Deissler, 1964, p. 447; Keller, 1971, pp. 190-191; Rudolph, 1975, p. 266; Sabottka, 1972, p. 31; Seybold, 1991, p. 95; Széles, 1987, p. 80; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 82.

Yahweh himself will bring about the inescapable slaughter of his own people. These ominous overtones of inescapable disaster caused by the presence of Yahweh cast a dreadful shadow at the very beginning of Zeph 1.7 which commands silence because of this very presence of Yahweh. Zephaniah 1.7a could indeed be seen as the opening of a “counter-liturgy” (so Irsigler, 2002, p. 131; Renaud, 1987, p. 205), although commentators have not considered the effect of these Amos texts. Through the intertextuality with Amos 6.8-11 and 8.1-3 the very announcement of Yahweh’s presence bears in itself overtones of terrible consequences. This opening colon casts a dark shadow over the pericope. The scene is set for yet more bad news for the hearers/readers, which also comes through intertextuality with Amos.

The Day of Yahweh is at hand

יְהוָה יוֹם (the day of Yahweh) is a well-known phrase that occurs only in the OT prophets: Isa 13:9; Ezek 13.5; Joel 2:1, 11; 3:4; Amos 5:18 (twice), 20; Zeph 1:14; Mal 3:23. The modified phrase יְהוָה יוֹם קָרוֹב (the day of Yahweh is near) occurs in Isa 13.6; Joel 1.15; 4.14; Obad 15; Zeph 1.7, 14.⁶⁴ Of these passages only Amos can be considered to be an older text than Zephaniah⁶⁵ and is the earliest literary appearance of the phrase, “the Day of Yahweh” (Levin, 2011, p. 132). While some think that Amos may have coined the term (e.g., Paul, 1991, p. 182) Wolff is probably correct that it already existed because it appears in Amos 5.18-20 as a contested concept (Wolff, 1977, p. 255).

In Amos 5.18-20 the prophet reverses Israel’s hopes for the Day of the Lord. The exact expectations that the people of the Northern Kingdom had for the Day of Yahweh are nowhere spelled out and remain a matter of conjecture among scholars (e.g., Edler, 1984, pp. 190-191). However, it appears to have been related to the expectation that “the Lord will appear (or has appeared) in order to render judgment and destroy his enemies” (Paul, 1991, p. 184). Amos 5.18-20 is in the midst of oracles which indict Israel for social injustice and corruption (5.10-13, 14-15, 21-24). Along with the following verses (5.21-27) Amos fiercely reverses the hopes and assumptions of Israel (Paul, 1991, p. 182) and the Day of Yahweh means “devastation, not deliverance” for Israel (Stuart, 2002, p. 354). Amos 5.18-20 shares two common themes with Amos 6.8-11 and 8.1-3. First, these

⁶⁴ A variation of the phrase, לַיְהוָה יוֹם לַיְהוָה (Isa 2.12) לַיְהוָה יוֹם קָרוֹב (Ezek 30.3), which should be translated “a day of Yahweh /is near” (Seow, 1987, p. 71) or “a day for Yahweh /is near” (Irsigler, 2002, p. 127), is not considered here because of the different meaning of the phrase.

⁶⁵ Obadiah and Ezekiel are exilic, as are Isa 13 (Barton, 1995, p. 18) and Joel (Mason, 1994; Wolff, 1977).

pericopes emphasise the inescapability of the impending doom and, second, it is the very presence of Yahweh that will bring this terrifying judgment.

Intertextual patterns

The phrase “the Day of Yahweh” in Zeph 1.7 continues the ominous double-voicing from Amos. The theme of impending and inescapable judgment, brought by the very presence of Yahweh, lurks behind the words. Amos’ indictments against social injustice, closely connected to all three of the Amos oracles discussed above, are also transumed into, or become present in, Zeph 1.7. This theme of social injustice is explicitly taken up in the following verses, Zeph 1.8-13. Reading Zeph 1.7 in the light, or shadow, of Amos produces a much different reading than, for example, Roberts who suggests that in Zephaniah’s day the phrase “Day of Yahweh” still had positive expectations “so the implications of Zephaniah’s announcement of the nearness of the day of Yahweh would have been initially heard as a positive or, at worst, an ambiguous announcement” (Roberts, 1991, p. 77). The echoes from Amos have set this pericope off to a much darker start, as Smith recognised when he wrote that in using the phrase “Day of Yahweh” Zephaniah “agrees with Amos...in making it a day of judgment” (Smith, 1911, p. 194). These intertextual echoes set the mood for the second line which continues to build the threat in veiled or inexplicit terms.

5.4.2 Yahweh’s sacrifice

כִּי הֵכִין יְהוָה זֶבַח הַקָּדִישׁ קְרָאיו (For Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice, he has dedicated his invited ones; Zeph 1.7c-d).

This line has some strikingly unique features which highlight intertextual possibilities; there are “ungrammaticalities.” An ungrammaticality is as an element in the text that does not quite make sense “until the discovery is made that there is another text in which the word is grammatical; the moment the other text is identified, the dual sign becomes significant because of its shape, which alone alludes to that other code” (Riffaterre, 1978, p. 82). Many commentators compare Zeph 1.7 with three other texts in which Yahweh sacrifices (Isa 34.6; Jer 46.10; Ezek 39.17, 19). The vocabulary and context of these texts, however, are quite different from those of Zeph 1.7. These three other texts are about Yahweh destroying Israel’s enemies. There is no holiness language, Isa 34.6 and Jer 46.10 are verbless clauses (זֶבַח לַיהוָה “Yahweh has a sacrifice”) while Ezek 39.17 and 19 use the verb זָבַח (Qal stem) to describe Yahweh holding a sacrifice. These three texts use זֶבַח

(“sacrifice”) as a metaphor for Yahweh’s slaughter of Israel’s enemies whereas Zeph 1.7 artfully paints a picture of an actual sacrificial meal with some alarming irregularities. Moreover, Zeph 1.7 is the earliest of these texts (Ball, 1988, p. 66), thus Szeles’ claim that Zephaniah turns “this well-known prophetic tradition”, i.e. Yahweh’s sacrifice as the vanquishing of Israel’s enemies, on its head (Széles, 1987, p. 80), is not at all certain. In fact, a close observation of the texts does not bear this out.

“Establishing” Yahweh’s sacrifice כִּי הֵכִין יְהוָה זֶבַח

The first faintly unusual feature in this line is the verb “has prepared” (כִּין Hiphil). This verb is common in the OT, occurring 219 times, predominantly in the Hiphil (110) and Niphal (68) stems.⁶⁶ The most common meanings of the verb, across the verbal stems, are “to prepare/make ready” and “to establish.” However, in the entire OT, only here does the verb כִּין, in any of its stems, occur with the object זֶבַח (sacrifice). This unusual feature is not generally noticed and amongst the commentators is highlighted only by Perlitt (Perlitt, 2004, p. 107, without further comment) and Irsigler (Irsigler, 2002, p. 131, see below). By itself the unique occurrence of two words together is not necessarily meaningful. The same is true, for example, of Isa 30.33, כִּין Hophal with תַּפְתָּה (burning place/ funeral pyre), and Amos 5.25 נִגַּשׁ-Hiphil (to bring near) with זֶבַח. However, תַּפְתָּה (burning place) is a *hapax legomenon* whereas זֶבַח is a very common word in the OT, and נִגַּשׁ Hiphil (to bring near) is commonly used in sacrificial (e.g., Exod 32.6; Lev 2.8; 8.14) and other cultic contexts (e.g., Exod 19.15; 28.43; Lev 21.21; Deut 20.20). כִּין-Hiphil, on the other hand occurs in only two other passages related to sacrifice (Num 23.1, 29; 2 Chr 35.6). Thus the evidence is rather thin for E. Martins’ assertion that “The hi. form of the vb. in the sense of ‘making preparations’ (e.g., meals, Gen 43.6) comes close to being a technical cultic term for readying sacrifices (Num 23.1; Zeph 1.7)” (*NIDOTT*, 2.616). Were that the case then presumably כִּין Hiphil would be paired with the very common noun זֶבַח regularly in the OT, not only once. A case in point is Ezek 39.17, 19 where the verb זֶבַח is translated as “preparing” a sacrifice (NRSV; ESV; NIV; NJB “making for you”). Indeed, the most common verb with the noun זֶבַח as its object is the verb זָבַח (to slaughter, sacrifice).⁶⁷ Irsigler’s discussion of the unusual phrasing in Zeph 1.7c also indicates that Martins’ definition oversteps the evidence:

⁶⁶ Otherwise Polel, 29; Hophal, 6; Hithpolal, 4; Polal, 2.

⁶⁷ Gen 31.54; Exod 23.18; 34.15; Lev 19.5; 22.29; Deut 18.3; Judg 16.23; 1 Sam 1.21; 2.13, 19; 16.5; 1 Kgs 8.62f; 2 Chr 7.4f; Ps 116.17; Isa 57.7; Ezek 39.17, 19; Jonah 1.16.

Nicht ganz eindeutig lässt der Kontextsinn von Zef 1.7c bestimmen. Die Suffixkonjugation of the verb כּוֹן-H im Sinne von „zurüsten, bereiten“, könnte statt der häufigen Formulierung „ein Schlachtopfer schlachten“ gewählt sein, um nicht schon die Schlachtung als vollzogen hinzustellen. Allerdings zeigen Analogien mit in Gen 43,16d-e und 2 Chr 35,6a,c, dass dieses Verb auch schon Teilaspekte des Schlachtopfers selbst bezeichnen kann: die letzte, vollständige Zurüstung des schon geschlachteten Opfertieres zum Opfermahl.

The contextual meaning of Zeph 1.7c cannot be entirely clearly defined. The suffix conjugation of the verb כּוֹן-Hiphil in the sense of “to prepare, make ready” could be chosen instead of the frequent formula “to sacrifice a sacrifice” to make out the slaughtering as not yet complete. However, analogies with Gen 43.16d-e and 2 Chr 35.6a,c show that this verb can also describe some aspects of the sacrifice itself: the final, complete preparation of the already slaughtered sacrificial animal for the offering meal (Irsigler, 2002, p. 131).

It is undeniable that the verb makes sense in Zeph 1.7. The use of כּוֹן Hiphil instead of זָבַח (sacrifice, slaughter) may also indicate that, over and against Irsigler, the preparations have been made but the victim has not yet been sacrificed. Yet perhaps this unusual usage in Zeph 1.7 is also signaling something more. כּוֹן Hiphil with Yahweh as subject is limited in scope in the OT, occurring only twenty times (plus another ten times with אֱלֹהִים [God] as subject). Ten of the occurrences are used to describe establishing or preparing various things⁶⁸ while the other ten occurrences all describe Yahweh establishing David’s dynasty.⁶⁹ These texts show that כּוֹן Hiphil (to establish) was closely associated with Yahweh establishing David’s dynasty. Its use in Chronicles, one of the latest books in the OT, testifies that Yahweh “establishing” David’s dynasty left a deep and lasting impression in Israel’s consciousness.

Among these texts which speak of Yahweh establishing David’s dynasty the key text is 2 Sam 7.1-17, Nathan’s oracle in which Yahweh promises to establish David’s dynasty forever. R. Gordon considers it to be “a peak in the books of Samuel and in the Old Testament as a whole” (Gordon, 1998, p. 77), and A.A. Anderson “the theological highlight of the Books of Samuel...if not of the Deuteronomistic History as a whole” (Anderson, 2002, p. 112). Would this text have been available to Zephaniah? The pericope belongs to the DH, the final form of which is later than 12 March, 560 BC, the date King Jehoiachin of Judah was released from prison in Babylon (2 Kgs 25.27). The history of 2 Sam 7.1-17 before it was incorporated into the DH has been the subject of

⁶⁸ Exod 23.20; Pss 89.3; 103.19; 147.8; Prov 8.27; 16.9; Jer 10.12; 33.2; 51.15; Zeph 1.7.

⁶⁹ 1 Sam 13.13, 14; 2 Sam 5.12 par. 1 Chr 14.2; 2 Sam 7.12 par. 1 Chr 17.11; 1 Kg 2.24; Ps 89.4; 1 Chr 22.10; 28.7; 2 Chr 17.5.

much study. According to Albertz, its “tradition history...is so complicated that a generally accepted literary and chronological context for it has yet to be found” (Albertz, 1994, p. 117). However, 2 Sam 7.1-17, or rather sections of it, continues to be regarded as old (tenth-, ninth- or eighth-century) by many scholars, although the same cannot be said for David’s prayer (2 Sam 7.18-29) which immediately follows.⁷⁰ Even some scholars who consider 2 Samuel 7 to be an exilic or post-exilic composition nevertheless see some sections of it as earlier (see Albertz, 1994, p. 289). Albertz himself considers vv.8-9, 12, 14-15, 16 to belong to the “version of the promise of Nathan” conceivably coming from “the middle or perhaps late period of the monarchy” (Albertz, 1994, p. 118). Based on the pervasiveness of the theme in the OT and with the support of the scholars cited above it is assumed here that Zephaniah and his hearers were familiar with 2 Sam 7.1-17 and the concept of Yahweh “establishing” David’s dynasty and that it resonates as an intertext of Zeph 1.7.

Although the word “covenant” is never mentioned 2 Sam 7.1-17 belongs to “the world of promissory covenant” (Gordon, 1998, p. 71). The pericope is built around a wordplay based upon בית (house). David, having settled in his house and been given rest from all of his enemies (2 Sam 7.1) is concerned that he lives in a house of cedar while Yahweh still lives in a tent (v.2). Yahweh’s response is that David will not build him a house but rather Yahweh will “make” David a house (v.11b). When David dies Yahweh shall “establish” (בִּנָּה Hiphil) the kingdom of David’s זרע (seed, offspring; v.12). As a result of Yahweh establishing David’s house (i.e. dynasty), “Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established (בִּנָּה Niphal) forever” (v.16).

It is impossible to know now whether Zeph 1.7c, כִּי הִכִּין יְהוָה זֶבַח (For Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice) would have constituted an “ungrammaticality”, something that did not sound quite right. While the verb בִּנָּה does not take זֶבַח as its object anywhere else in the Bible it does make sense in this context, but there may also be double voicing. The use of בִּנָּה Hiphil in Zeph 1.7 echoes Yahweh’s promise to “establish” David’s dynasty forever (2 Sam 7.12).

The significance of this text (i.e. 2 Sam 7) cannot be understated: This is an extraordinary declaration, a genuine *novum* in Israel’s faith. In one sweeping

⁷⁰ Anderson, 2002, pp. 112-114, 126; Campbell, 2005, pp. 75-76; Cross, 1973a, pp. 241-264; see the survey in Gordon, 1998, pp. 71-72.

assurance, the conditional “if” of the Mosaic Torah (Exod 19:5-6) is overridden, and David is made a vehicle and carrier of Yahweh’s unqualified grace in Israel (Brueggemann, 1997, p. 605).

Yahweh’s promise to David was filled with optimism: “What lay ahead was empire and renown (cf. 2 Sam 8). At the core of that was the promise of dynasty and security.” (Campbell, 2005, p. 74). This was not only security for David’s dynasty but also for the people of Israel (2 Sam 7.10). This is shown in David’s prayer, even if it is later. Gordon writes of 2 Sam 7.22-24,

the covenant (i.e. with David) is seen as having significance for the whole people of Israel, who form the third party in a covenantal trio consisting of Yahweh, the house of David, and Israel. In this way the national covenant of Sinai is both fulfilled and superseded as Israel receives a means of grace in its ruling house and through that house participates in a covenant relationship which is not bounded by conditions (Gordon, 1998, p. 77).

In Zeph 1.7 echoes of this foundational text, 2 Samuel 7, reverberate in a new but very pessimistic context. If Yahweh in grace established David’s house in the past, he is now instead establishing a sacrifice which will have disastrous consequences for the house of David and therefore also for the people of Israel.

It may well be objected that this is reading far too much into a single word and this would be undeniable were it not for the fact that there is a much “louder” allusion to David’s election in this same line (see “1 Samuel 16.5”, p.99). Tull points out that recognising more obvious instances of reuse alerts the reader to fainter allusions that might not otherwise be recognised. Furthermore,

While the proximity of overlapping brief echoes to much clearer allusions enables modern readers to discern at least some of the fainter echoes...they also heighten awareness that such faint echoes may sometimes occur in ways that modern readers cannot easily discern (Tull Willey, 1997, p. 142).

This is because intertextuality is intricately tied to the context of the reader-writer, a context from which we are removed in every conceivable way (time, culture, language). In some cases allusions are more obvious but in cases such as this they can be only be proposed but not proven. These proposals are open to criticism, such as Beker’s severe treatment of Hays’ work (Hays, 1989), which he considered to be “fanciful” (Beker, 1993). Yet as Hays stated from the outset, “Precision in such judgment calls is unattainable, because exegesis is a modest imaginative craft, not an exact science” (Hays, 1989, p. 29).

Dedicating the guests

Zephaniah 1.7d, **קִדְּשׁוּ קְרָאִיו** (he has dedicated his invited ones), through a concentration of common vocabulary and a distinct ungrammaticality, also alludes to David's dynasty. An ungrammaticality is produced by the unusual use of the Hiphil stem of the verb **קִדְּשׁ** (to consecrate) in the second colon.

קִדְּשׁ in the Hiphil and Piel stems

The verb translated “he has dedicated” in Zeph 1.7d is **קִדְּשׁ** Hiphil. Commentators assume that **קִדְּשׁ** Hiphil in this context means the guests have been sanctified, i.e. brought into a state of holiness in order to participate in the cultic activity.⁷¹ This reveals a peculiar, and pervasive, blind spot about the way that the Piel and Hiphil stems of **קִדְּשׁ** operate. T. Muraoka's assertion that “some verbs, such as **אָבַד** and **קִדְּשׁ**, do occur in both Piel and Hiphil with scarcely discernible difference in meaning or nuance” (Jouon & Muraoka, 1993, p. 156), is generally assumed by scholars. L. Harris, for example, writes of **קִדְּשׁ**, “in the Piel and Hiphil it connotes the act by which the distinction (between the sacred and the profane) is effected” (*TWOT*, p. 786). However, close examination of the verb's use in the OT reveals that the Hiphil and Piel stems of **קִדְּשׁ** signify different aspects of holiness.

Whereas previously the Piel was (mis)understood to be an “intensifying” of the verb (e.g., *GKC*, p. 141), subsequent research has shown that its primary meaning is factitive, that is, to cause a state.⁷² “The *Piel*...expresses a notion of effecting or causing a state corresponding to the basic meaning of the root...the bringing about of a state” (Waltke & O'Connor, 1990, pp. 398, 400). Thus the Piel, along with its reflexive, the Hitpaël, are the stems that are always used with **קִדְּשׁ** to describe people, places or things entering a temporary state of holiness in order to participate in cultic or sacred activity. Thereafter these objects return to the profane state appropriate for the mundane world.⁷³ The Hiphil stem of **קִדְּשׁ**, however, is never used in this way. In the Hiphil stem the object actually becomes holy, not in a temporary state, but in an enduring reality. Having become holy it

⁷¹ Berlin, 1994, p. 79; Deissler, 1964, pp. 447-448; Edler, 1984, p. 194; Elliger, 1964, p. 63; Irsigler, 2002, p. 131; Keller, 1971, pp. 191-192; Robertson, 1990, pp. 270-271; Perlitt, 2004, p. 107; Roberts, 1991, pp. 177-178; Rudolph, 1975, p. 266; Sabottka, 1972, pp. 34-35; Seybold, 1991, p. 96; Smith, 1911, p. 195; Sweeney, 2003, p. 81; Széles, 1987, pp. 80-81.

⁷² Discussed in Waltke & O'Connor, 1990, pp. 396-400; see also Jouon & Muraoka, 1993, p. 156.

⁷³ E.g., Exod 19.10, 14; Num 11.8; Josh 3.5; Isa 13.1ff; Joel 4.9ff; Jer 6.4; 51.27; 1 Sam 21.6[5].

now belongs exclusively to Yahweh. Hence קדש Hiphil means “to dedicate to Yahweh.”⁷⁴ Thus Waltke and O’Connor comment that “the *Piel* tends to be habitual, while the *Hiphil* tends to refer to occasional or one-time situations” (Waltke & O’Connor, 1990, p. 435). Not once in the OT does קדש Hiphil refer to bringing something or someone into a state of holiness in order to participate in cultic activity, although *BDB* offers this meaning for 2 Chr 29.19; 30.17 and Zeph 1.7 (*BDB*, p. 873). This venerable lexicon was written before the factitive notion of the *Piel* stem was understood and one of the examples, 2 Chr 30.17, actually illustrates the difference between קדש Hiphil and קדש Piel/Hitpael: “For there were many in the assembly who had not sanctified themselves (קדש Hitpael); therefore the Levites had to slaughter the Passover lamb for everyone who was not clean, to make it holy (קדש Hiphil) to the LORD” (2 Chr 30.17). This shows that because these participants were not in a temporary state of holiness, described by the *Piel*/Hitpael stem, they were unable to participate in the cultic activity of dedicating (קדש Hiphil) the Passover lamb to Yahweh (which was for the lamb in question certainly not a temporary condition). Again, to quote Waltke and O’Connor, “With the *Piel*, the object is transposed passively into a new state or condition... With the *Hiphil*, however, the object participates in the event expressed by the verbal root” (Waltke & O’Connor, 1990, p. 435). Such participation in קדש is one and the same as belonging to the source of holiness, Yahweh, hence “dedicated.”

This distinction between קדש Hiphil and קדש Piel is consistently overlooked in the commentaries on Zeph 1.7. Irsigler’s argument is typical:

Die beiden abschließenden Sätze Zef 1,7c-d explizieren den Sinn des Tages JHWHs von 7b und setzen ganz selbstverständlich die Kenntnis des Schlachtopferritus (זבח) voraus. Die Situation des Schlachtopfermahles ist am klarsten in 1 Sam 16,2-5 beschrieben. Samuel veranstaltet ein זבח für JHWH. Er heiligt Isai und seine Söhne als die Teilnehmer bzw. Gäste und lädt sie zum Opfermahl ein. Die charakteristischen Verbalbasen von Zef 1,7d קדש-H „heiligen“ und קרא „rufen / einladen“ (Partizip passiv in 7d) begegnen auch hier in 1 Sam 16,5d.f (D- bzw. tD-Stamm von קדש) und in 1 Sam 16,3a.5g (קרא), vgl. zum „Einladen“ noch 1Kön 1,9.41.49; auch 2 Sam 15,11; Est 5,12.

The two concluding lines Zeph 1.7c-d explain the meaning of the Day of Yahweh from 7b and quite naturally assume knowledge of the sacrificial offering ritual (זבח). The situation of the sacrificial meal is most clearly described in 1 Sam 16.2-5. Samuel arranges a זבח for Yahweh. He sanctifies Jesse and his sons as the participants or guests and invites them to the sacrificial meal. The characteristic verbal-bases of Zeph 1.7d קדש-Hiphil “to

⁷⁴ E.g., Exod 28.38; Lev 27.14-25; Deut 15.19; 2 Sam 8.11; 1 Chr 26.28.

sanctify” and קרא ‘to call/invite’ (passive participle in 7d) also occur here in 1 Sam 16.5d,f (Piel and Hitp. stem of קדש) and in 1 Sam 16.3a,5g (קרא), c.f. to the “inviting” also 1 Kgs 1.9, 41, 49; also 2 Sam 15.11; Esth 5.12 (Irsigler, 2002, pp. 130-131).

The fact that Zeph 1.7 does not use קדש Piel, as do the examples Irsigler and so many others cite, is entirely overlooked. Similarly, some commentators suggest that the guests at Yahweh’s sacrificial meal are sanctified in order to carry out “Holy War” against Judah, on the basis of texts such as Isa 13.1ff; Joel 4.9ff; Jer 6.4; 51.27.⁷⁵ This also misses the fact that in all of these texts it is always and only through קדש Piel that Yahweh’s agents are brought into a state of holiness in which they can carry out Yahweh’s commission.

Thus, against all the commentators,⁷⁶ it is argued here that Zeph 1.7 can only mean “Yahweh has dedicated his guests.” The implication is that the guests are at the same time the sacrificial victim although this is not stated explicitly.⁷⁷ It is an unexpected and disturbing twist of what normally happens at a sacrificial banquet. However, it is not a generic sacrificial banquet but rather one particular and very significant sacrificial meal to which Zeph 1.7 alludes.

1 Samuel 16.5

Within the OT the only other text where the noun זבח (sacrifice) and the verbs קדש (holy) and קרא (“call”, “invite”) occur together is 1 Sam 16.5 (see Table 5.8 below).

Table 5.8: Lexical similarities in Zeph 1.7b and 1 Sam 16.5

Zeph 1.7b	כי הכין יהוה זבח הקדש קראיו	for Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his invited ones
1 Sam 16.5	ויאמר שלום לזבח ליהוה באתי התקדש ובאתם אתי בזבח ויקדש אתישי ואת בניו ויקרא להם לזבח	He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

Moreover, in the first five verses of 1 Samuel 16 there is a cluster of vocabulary that resonates with Zeph 1.7-9: בן (sons) in vv.1, 5; זבח (sacrifice) as verb in vv.2, 5; as noun vv.3, 5; קרא (invite) in vv.3, 4, 5; קדש (sanctify) twice in v.5. In v.2 and v.5 the phrase

⁷⁵ Berlin, 1994, p. 79; Edler, 1984, p. 194; Sabottka, 1972, pp. 34-35.

⁷⁶ H.L. Wiley does understand קדש Hiphil in Zeph 1.7 as “the notion of the victims being ‘consecrated’”. However, she does not discuss the term and seems to see it in terms of Judah being “rededicated to YHWH through this sacrifice” in the manner of the *herem* (Wiley, 2004, p. 182).

⁷⁷ Ben Zvi, (1991, pp. 82-83), Sweeney, (2003, p. 81), and Vlaardingerbroek, (1999, p. 84) mention this as a possibility but do not consider the significance of the Hiphil stem.

לִזְבַּח לַיהוָה (to sacrifice to Yahweh) is similar to זֶבַח יְהוָה (Yahweh's sacrifice; a phrase that occurs only in Zeph 1.8).

That this clustering of vocabulary, common only to these two texts, marks the texts as intertextually related is inadvertently supported by the frequent reference to 1 Sam 16.1-13 by the commentators on Zeph 1.7, at times in quite some detail.⁷⁸ All of these discussions, however, treat 1 Sam 16.1-5 as the prime example of what happened at a sacrificial meal, without considering that Zephaniah may allude to this text.

The pericope to which these verses belong is 1 Sam 16.1-13 which, in the Hebrew Bible, contains the first explicit appearance of David.⁷⁹ Like 2 Samuel 7 this story is very positive. After the final rejection of Saul (1 Samuel 15) Yahweh sends Samuel to anoint one of the sons of Jesse, who is revealed to be David (1 Sam 16.11-13). The sacrifice is actually a front which is somehow meant to prevent Saul from understanding what is really happening (1 Sam 16.2). To prepare for the sacrifice the elders are told to sanctify themselves (קִדְּשׁ Hitpael; 16.5a) and then Samuel himself “sanctified (קִדְּשׁ Piel) Jesse and his sons and invited (קָרָא) them to the sacrifice” (16.5b). This is the humble beginning of the great house of David. Would this text have been available to Zephaniah in the time of Josiah? According to Gordon's survey many scholars have dated the pericope early, either to Solomon's reign or even to David's reign (Gordon, 1998, p. 66). Campbell suggests that the pericope was written in prophetic circles that preceded the classical writing prophets (Campbell, 2003, p. 134). It is assumed here that, like 2 Sam 7.1-17, this story was known by Zephaniah and his listeners. In fact, 2 Sam 7.1-17 assumes this earlier pericope (Albertz, 1994, p. 290). R.W. Klein suggests that 1 Sam 16.1-13 has been prefixed to the “History of David's Rise” (1 Sam 16.14-2 Sam 5.10) and achieves the effect of placing “the whole following context under an umbrella of divine promise and blessing” (Klein, 2002, p. 159). It is a foundational text in the development of the image of David as Yahweh's anointed ideal king.

Through the cluster of common vocabulary this story is echoed in Zeph 1.7c-d and enters into the text, but with a savage twist on the original, positive narrative. Just as with a

⁷⁸ E.g., Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 82; Deissler, 1964, pp. 447-448; Irsigler, 2002, p. 131; Keller, 1971, p. 191; Perlitt, 2004, p. 107; Roberts, 1991, pp. 177-178; Rudolph, 1975, p. 256; Sabottka, 1972, p. 35; Seybold, 1991, p. 96; Smith, 1911; Sweeney, 2003, p. 81; Széles, 1987, p. 81.

⁷⁹ In the OT David is mentioned in Ruth 4.17, 22 which is found in the later Writings section of the Hebrew Bible. David is anticipated e.g. 1 Sam 2.10 and in fact the stories of Samuel and Saul all serve as an extended introduction to David's story.

sacrifice Yahweh chose David's family for blessing, now with a sacrifice Yahweh is about to judge the same family. God's prophet, Samuel, sanctified (קדש Piel) and invited (קרא) the sons of Jesse to a sacrifice that would begin Yahweh's plans for good. Now Yahweh himself will dedicate (קדש Hiphil) the "invited ones" (קראיו) at a new sacrifice. The change of stem, from קדש Piel to קדש Hiphil, is a subtle but important part of this reversal that has been consistently overlooked by the interpreters (see "קדש in the Hiphil and Piel stems", p. 97). Rudolph, for example, refers to 1 Sam 16.5 to explain that "הקדיש ist die Voraussetzung für die Teilnahme am Kultmahl." (הקדיש [i.e. קדש Hiphil] is the requirement for participation at the cultic meal) (Rudolph, 1975, p. 266). To the contrary קדש Hiphil, instead of the expected קדש Piel, creates a jarring effect. Rather than being sanctified for the sacral meal, the guests are dedicated, which carries the implication that they have been prepared as the sacrifice. The good plans that were set in motion at the first sacrifice will be reversed at the second sacrifice.

Verses 8-9

The implicit allusion to David's house becomes more explicit in Zeph 1.8-9. On the day of Yahweh's sacrifice he will punish the officials and the sons of the king (8a-c). Parallel with "officials" and "sons of the king" Yahweh's punishment will also fall upon "all those who wear foreign clothing" (8d). מלבוש ("clothing") is a word that appears few times in the OT.⁸⁰ Although some commentators see an association with cultic garments of foreign gods⁸¹ the word conveys rather the idea of fine, expensive garments, moreover, of a foreign (נכרי) style. Ben Zvi writes that "'foreign' may also convey a sense of 'inappropriate for you' (e.g., 1 Kgs 11.1, 8; Ezra 10.2, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 44), and this is clearly the case in Zeph 1.8" (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 94). Judgment is threatened against the royal house of Judah because it is not fulfilling its duties and obligations. It is involved in behaviours that are inappropriate to its calling.

This line of thought is continued in verse nine where Yahweh's judgment will fall upon "those who jump over the threshold...those who fill the house of their master with violence and deceit" (v.9 a, c-d). The meaning of "all who leap over the threshold" is not clear. "Leaping over the threshold" may come from a foreign religious superstition about demons who lurk at the door or live under the threshold,⁸² perhaps even one derived from

⁸⁰ 1 Kgs 10.5 par. 2 Chr 9.4; 2 Kgs 10.22; Job 27.16; Isa 63.3; Ezek 16.13.

⁸¹ Robertson, 1990, p. 276; Perlitt, 2004, p. 109; Roberts, 1991, p. 179.

⁸² Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 97; Perlitt, 2004, p. 109.

1 Sam 5.5.⁸³ Sweeney, however, notes that apart from this verse **דגל** only otherwise occurs in the Piel stem where it is translated as “leap” (2 Sam 22.30/ Ps 18.30; Song 2.8; Isa 35.6). Thus this sole Qal stem occurrence of the verb in Zeph 1.9 may simply mean to cross over, i.e. enter the building (Sweeney, 2003, pp. 87-88). The meaning of “their masters’/master’s house” (**אדניהם**) is also not agreed upon. It could be the temple⁸⁴ or the royal palace.⁸⁵ From the allusion to the anointing of David and the declaration of judgment upon the officials and sons of the king “their master’s house” seems more likely to refer to the royal court, the house of David.

The Davidic house was established by Yahweh to lead God’s people in God’s ways. This is emphasised in the royal psalms.⁸⁶ Psalm 72 is a good example:

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son. May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice!...May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!...For he delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy. From oppression and violence he redeems their life, and precious in their sight is his blood (Ps 72.1-2, 4, 12-14).

Yet by Zephaniah’s time this house had not fulfilled its commission. Instead, all of its functionaries, that is, everyone who goes in and out of the royal court, fill this house with “violence and deceit ” (**חמס ומרמה**; v.9d). This phrase, like the opening verses of Zephaniah (1.2-3), echoes the flood story where the whole earth was “filled with violence (**חמס**)” (Gen 6.11, 13). The two nouns, **חמס** and **מרמה**, occur together several times in the OT, most notably Ps 55.9,11 and Mic 6.11, 12:

Destroy, O Lord, divide their tongues; for I see violence (**חמס**) and strife in the city. Day and night they go around it on its walls, and iniquity and trouble are within it; ruin is in its midst; oppression and fraud (**מרמה**) do not depart from its marketplace (Ps 55.9-11).

Shall I acquit the man with wicked scales and with a bag of deceitful (**מרמה**) weights? Your rich men are full of violence (**חמס**); your inhabitants speak lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth (Mic 6.11-12).

⁸³ Roberts, 1991, p. 179; Széles, 1987, p. 82.

⁸⁴ Ball, 1988, p. 70; Robertson, 1990, p. 278; Sweeney, 2003, p. 88; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 90.

⁸⁵ Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 100; Edler, 1984, pp. 131-132; Irsigler, 2002, p. 144; Keller, 1971, p. 192; Perlitt, 2004, p. 109; Rudolph, 1975, p. 262; Smith, 1911, p. 196; Smith, 1984, p. 130; Széles, 1987, p. 82.

⁸⁶ Psalms 2; 18; 20; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; 144.1-11.

These words together describe social corruption, the exploitation of the many by the few rich and powerful. The sons of the king are dressed in sumptuous clothes and their administration is typified by “violence” and “deceit.” “Here and in 1.13, 18 Zephaniah shows that he too, like his great predecessors, was sensitive to the miseries and wrongs of the poor” (Smith, 1911, pp. 196-197). Therefore the house that Yahweh promised to establish forever is now zoned for destruction because of its failure to fulfil the purposes for which it was created.

5.4.3 Summary

Zephaniah 1.7-9 draws upon a variety of texts to create its message of judgment. Echoes from Amos of the call for silence before Yahweh’s presence bring to mind the danger of this presence in judgment and the impossibility of any escape from it. The announcement of the Day of Yahweh is likewise filled with ominous overtones through its allusion to Amos 5.18-20. Although it is impossible to be sure, the unusual usage of the verb כִּוֵּן Hiphil to describe Yahweh’s preparation of the sacrifice may echo Yahweh’s promise to David to establish his house/dynasty. Allusion to the house of David is louder with the evoking of Samuel anointing David. This allusion is strongly marked by the common vocabulary and thematic coherence. The strength of the marking is further indicated by the number of scholars who have recognised similarities between the two texts, although without exploring the possibility that Zephaniah alludes to 1 Samuel 16. The play on the verb קָדַשׁ subverts the story to make the guests not sanctified in order to participate in the cultic activity but rather dedicated to Yahweh in a telic sense, because of the dynasty’s failure to live up to its commission. From the time of David’s anointing as Yahweh’s king and then David’s establishment as Yahweh’s king, Israel and Judah’s destiny was bound together with the house of David. Zephaniah now declares judgment upon that house, a judgment which must inevitably affect the whole nation. With this pericope Zephaniah brings the reversal of Yahweh’s blessings to his people to a climax.

5.5 Summary of Zephaniah 1.2-9

Zephaniah 1.2-9 threatens to dismantle Judah one significant block at a time. Creation will be undone (vv.2-3); the Exodus will be undone (vv.4-6); and the Davidic dynasty will be undone (vv.7-9). The unit begins with judgment for all the earth (vv.2-3), narrows to judgment for Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (vv.4-6), and concludes with judgment for the ruling class, the house of David itself (vv.7-9). The first pericope, through echoes from the flood story, suggests that the people of God have utterly failed

to fulfil their representative duties. The second pericope develops this by revealing their comprehensive religious apostasy. The third pericope shows how this abandonment of the true God has worked out in social oppression and violence in which the ruling class, the house of David, has taken a leading role. Each pericope involves the undoing of God's creative work of blessing in Israel's history. First, such is the level of corruption and violence that even God's promise never to destroy the earth again will be abrogated (Gen 8.21) because nothing short of total destruction is required (vv.2-3). In the second pericope God's redemptive work of the Exodus, and the resulting formation of Israel is to be reversed (vv.4-6). Finally, because of injustice and corruption the eternal promises made to David and his house will be overturned (vv.7-9).

5.6 Zephaniah 1.10-11

- 10a And it will come to pass on that day, a declaration of Yahweh:
- 10b A cry of distress from the Fish Gate;
- 10c and a wailing from the Second Quarter.
- 10d A great crash from the Hills.
- 11a Wail, inhabitants of the Mortar;
- 11b for all the merchants have been destroyed,
- 11c all those who weigh out silver have been cut off.

In this section the presentation of specific locations is striking. The Fish Gate, the Second Quarter, the Hills and the Mortar and the significance attached to these places, their signification, is key to understanding the pericope. Presumably for natives of late-monarchic Jerusalem and Judah these place names carried meanings in the same way that Wall Street, Downing Street and the Kremlin do to many modern ears (see Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 105). These are intertextualities that are now lost, indeed, even some of the locations are no longer known with certainty. To understand the pericope the significations attached to these places must be reimagined, along with the role the merchants and "weighers of silver" played in these places.

Among suggestions for the significance of the place names M. Bič is alone in his claim that these locations were sites of idolatrous worship (Bič, 1968, p. 57). This is a weak explanation which does not, as Edler points out, explain the role of the merchants in this pericope (Edler, 1984, pp. 137-138). Perlitt reads the pericope within the structure of Zeph 1.2-11 and sees a circle that is narrowed from the whole earth (v.2f.), to Jerusalem and Judah (v.4f), to the leadership (v.8f), to the merchant quarters and 'small people' (vv.10-11) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 110). Yet rather than a narrowing down from greatest to smallest this exegesis reads Zephaniah as cause and effect. The effect is judgment upon

the whole earth (1.2-3, 17-18) and the cause is the failure of God's people. This pericope is part of the description of that failure.

There is widespread agreement that the first place mentioned, the Fish Gate, was significant because that was the point where Jerusalem was the most vulnerable to enemy attack.⁸⁷ According to this line of interpretation the pericope describes an enemy invasion of Jerusalem which begins at the Fish Gate and follows "die Spur des Verderbens" (*the trail of destruction*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 149). From this perspective the locations in the pericope represent the city of Jerusalem as a whole: "the general situation of the city is described by references to the severe distress in particular geographic points that belong to the mentioned geographico-political unit."⁸⁸ With this reading, the merchants represent the entire society in which Yahweh "is dissatisfied with every possible kind of citizen" (House, 1989, p. 63). Robertson is more nuanced in his view of the representative role of the merchants, suggesting that the merchants are singled out to show that "the city as a centre of culture, trade, luxury, beauty, and craftsmanship would come to an end" (Robertson, 1990, p. 279).

However, the specific place names coupled with the concluding two parallel cola which announce judgment against the "traders" and "weighers of silver" suggest that this pericope is not to be read in general terms as representative of the entire city and people of the city. As Irsigler rightly states,

Das eigentliche Ziel des feindlichen Einfalls in Jerusalem wird erst am Ende in 1,11b-c genannt, in den Sätzen, die den Klageaufruf an die Bewohner des »Mörsers« in 11a begründen: »das ganze Kanaansvolk«, »alle, die reich sind an Silber« bzw. »alle Silber-Schweren.«

The actual aim of the invasion of Jerusalem is only finally stated in 1.11 b-c, in the sentences which give the reason for the call to mourn to the inhabitants of the "Mortar" in 11a: "all the Canaanites" [traders],⁸⁹ "all those rich in silver", or "all silver-loaded" (Irsigler, 2002, p. 152).

Hence some commentators see more specific significance in the places and the people involved, i.e. the merchants. Thus Smith sees the "traders" (כל-עם כנען) as "the

⁸⁷ E.g., Deissler, 1964, p. 445; Rudolph, 1975, p. 268.

⁸⁸ Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 105; so also Floyd, 2000, p. 194; Robertson, 1990, pp. 278-279; Seybold, 1991, p. 98; Smith, 1984, p. 131; Sweeney, 2003, p. 89; Széles, 1987, pp. 83-84.

⁸⁹ "Das Kanaansvolk in Zef 1,11b ist kontextuell hier gewiss metaphorisch das Händlervolk." (*The Canaanites in Zeph 1.11b is contextually here certainly metaphorical for the traders*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 153).

merchant class among the Jews themselves which enriches itself by unjust measures and trickery of every sort” (Smith, 1911, p. 200). Similarly, Edler writes,

Auf die Zuverlässigkeit und Genauigkeit der Waagen war kein Verlaß, sie waren meist so eingestellt, dass der Geldwäger schon im voraus einigen Nutzen hatte.

The reliability and accuracy of the scales were not trustworthy, they were usually set so that the money-weigher already in advance had some profit (Edler, 1984, p. 138).

Yet such a dramatic judgment oracle indicates there must have been more to their iniquity than simply overcharging. Ball’s assertion that the judgment was “undoubtedly condemning the economic exploitation being practiced there” (Ball, 1988, p. 72) is better, but he does not elaborate further upon this economic exploitation. The object of this judgment oracle should be understood as an integral part of the wider literary context of Zephaniah 1 and also of the socio-political context of late-monarchic Jerusalem and Judah. The specific locations mentioned in vv.10-11 point towards this particular reading.

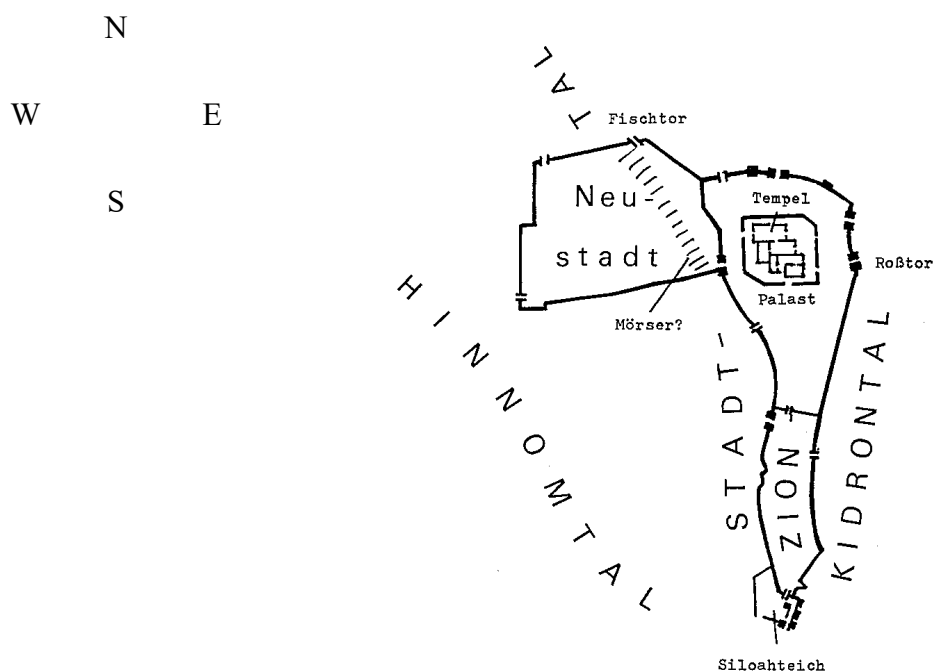
It is likely that the places named were all in the northern part of Jerusalem, to the west of the Temple and palace complex.⁹⁰ Figure 5.1 (below) shows the possible locations of the places named in Zeph 1.10-11. This map does not show “the hills” (הגבעות), whose location is uncertain, here taken to mean the ridges just west of the Second Quarter (Neustadt).⁹¹ The places named in this pericope are in close vicinity to the temple-palace complex. J. Gray writes that the Second Quarter (Mishneh/Neustadt) “probably developed as a residential area for palace and Temple personnel after the building of the Temple” (Gray, 1970, p. 727; see also Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 93). If this reconstruction is correct all of the locations mentioned in vv.10-11 are in close geographic proximity to the objects of the preceding judgment oracle, the ruling classes who lived in the palace and Temple complex (1.7-9).

The previous pericope (vv.7-9) announced judgment against the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, accusing them of filling the royal palace with “violence and fraud” (1.8-9). This filling with violence and fraud could not be carried out by these leaders on their own. An economic and financial system that could be manipulated to their advantage was also required. It may be suggested that it was this sector of society, the merchants and

⁹⁰ Renaud, 1987, p. 208; Roberts, 1991, p. 180; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 94.

⁹¹ Irsigler, 2002, p. 151; Roberts, 1991, p. 180.

Figure 5.1 Possible locations of the Fish Gate, Second Quarter (Neustadt) and Mortar (adapted from Edler, 1984, p. 136)



financiers, who were the means by which the royal court was able to be filled with “violence and fraud” (1.9). The merchant-financiers represented the apparatus by which social and economic injustice was carried out by the leadership of Jerusalem. Thus the judgment is declared upon the leaders (vv.7-9) and the merchant-financiers (vv.10-11) who were in a symbiotic relationship.

The judgment oracle is so strong because the merchant-financiers were part of a corrupt social system that constitutes **חמס** (violence; Zeph 1.9). The places that are named were all related to the merchant-financiers and these places, indeed the institution itself, shall be utterly destroyed. Thus the pericope is not describing in general terms a terrible calamity that Yahweh will bring upon everyone in Jerusalem, but rather it is aimed at a specific group of people within the Jerusalem society, the merchant-financiers. This continues the theme of the chapter in which judgment falls upon the people of God for not living up to their mandate to represent God to the world as his special people. Instead of a just society the ruling class and their economic supporters sustain a society that is violent and fraudulent (1.9). The incompatibility of this state with God’s call on his people is described with the final phrase in the pericope, “cut off.”

5.6.1 “Cut off”

The judgment upon the merchant-financiers may be given specific intertextual force through the verb כרת Niphal which occurs in the final line of the pericope, “For all the merchants have been destroyed, All those who weigh out silver have been cut off (נכרתו).” As Edler writes, the behaviour of the merchants “in den Augen Jahwes ein Greuel ist” (*is an abomination in Yahweh’s eyes*) (Edler, 1984, p. 139), which is what this intertextuality may signify in a subtle and surprising way. The word, “to be cut off” (כרת Niphal), occurs seventy-three times in the OT with a number of different usages. The waters of the Jordan were “cut off” when Joshua led Israel into Canaan (Josh 3.13, 16; 4.7). It describes the fate of someone’s descendants, e.g., of the Gibeonites, “...some of you shall always be slaves” (ולא־יכרת מכם עבד; Josh 9.23).⁹² Names,⁹³ hope,⁹⁴ hostility,⁹⁵ trees,⁹⁶ and even wine⁹⁷ can be “cut off.” Psalm 37 sees the fate of the wicked to be cut off.⁹⁸

Yet by far the largest block of uniform usage of כרת Niphal is in twenty-four verses which belong to what are traditionally considered “Priestly” texts in the Pentateuch.⁹⁹ All of these texts refer to people who must “be cut off” as a result of transgressing Yahweh’s Torah, a penalty called *karet* in later Rabbinic literature (Levine, 1989, p. 240). According to Baruch Levine there are five areas of law breaking which incur being “cut off”:

(1) violation of the Sabbath and improper observance of festivals and holy days; (2) violations of certain laws of purity; (3) certain prohibited sexual unions, also regarded as a form of impurity; (4) cultic offenses, such as eating blood and fat and mishandling sacrificial substances; (5) failure to circumcise one’s male children at the age of eight days, as ordained in Genesis 17:14 and Leviticus 12:3 (Levine, 1989, p. 242).

Assuming that the date of Zephaniah is no earlier than the reign of Josiah it is likely that this so-called Priestly material would have been in circulation at the time Zephaniah was written. Even those who date the P source to the sixth or fifth century, i.e. exilic or post-exilic, concede that it contains “a great mass of legislative and ritual material much of

⁹² Also 2 Sam 3.29; 1 Kgs 2.4; Jer 33.18; 35.19.

⁹³ Ruth 4.10; Isa 48.19; 56.5.

⁹⁴ Prov 23.18; 24.14.

⁹⁵ Isa 11.13.

⁹⁶ Job 14.7.

⁹⁷ Joel 1.15.

⁹⁸ Ps 37.9, 22, 28, 34, 38; so also Prov 2.22.

⁹⁹ Gen 17:14; Exod 12.15, 19; 30.33, 38; 31.14; Lev 7.20, 21, 25, 27; 17.4, 9, 14; 18.29; 19.8; 20.17, 18; 22.3, 29; Num 9.13; 15.30, 31; 19.13, 20.

which is of high antiquity” (Blenkinsopp, 1976, p. 275). Ziony Zevit argues “that the P source with both its literary and cultic components is basically a pre-exilic composition” and challenges that “the burden of proof is properly borne now by those advocating a late chronology for any given element [within P]” (Zevit, 1982, p. 510). Although arguments for the date of the P source assume that a P source actually existed, which is far from a settled question (see e.g., Grabbe, 1997, p. 18), there is a good case for these *karet* texts, usually attributed to P, being pre-exilic.

Those who incur “being cut off” (כרת Niphal) are an abomination to Yahweh because they transgress his commands and become unclean. The “cutting off” is apparently something that is done by Yahweh and not carried out by humans¹⁰⁰ and came to be called “death at the hands of heaven” by the Rabbis (Levine, 1989, p. 240). When Zephaniah declares that “all who weigh out silver are cut off” this term characterizes the merchant-financiers as people who are abominable to Yahweh because they have deliberately transgressed his Torah and become unclean. This signification from the *karet* texts becomes present in Zeph 1.11 through the use of כרת Niphal. In Green’s words, “Utterances, composed of words and texts, will bring to their context a residue of their past adventures” (Green, 2000, p. 53). While this cannot be considered a strongly marked allusion, a connection between “cut off” and these *karet* texts may have been recognised by Zephaniah’s audience.

An argument can be made for a more specific echo. In the *karet* texts כרת Niphal appears most commonly in a feminine form of the verb because the object of the “cutting off” is usually the נפש (nefesh; “soul”, “life force”), a feminine noun (e.g., Lev 7.20, “that *nefesh* shall be cut off from its people”; ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מעמך). Thus, of all of the *karet* texts only three contain the same form as the כרת Niphal in Zeph 1.11, נכרתו (Niphal pf. 3 per. common pl.): Lev 18.29; 20.17, 18. Outside of these texts this particular form of כרת Niphal is uncommon in the OT, otherwise only in Josh 3.16; 4.7 (twice); and Isa 29.20. These verses in Leviticus belong to what scholars identify as the Holiness Code or Holiness Source (H) (Lev 17-27). Scholars consider these chapters to have developed separately from Leviticus 1-16, which has traditionally been identified as P (the Priestly source), or the “Priestly Torah” (Knohl, 1987). J. Milgrom dates almost all of H, with the exception of only a few verses, to the eighth century (Milgrom, 2000, p. 1345). J. Joosten

¹⁰⁰ Discussed by Hartley, 1998, p. 100; so Levine, 1989, pp. 240-242; Milgrom, 1991, pp. 457-460.

also argues that “the Holiness Code can best be understood against the background of a rural milieu in Judah of the pre-exilic period” and that “the type of legal exposition incorporated in Lev 17-26 may have emanated from priests connected to the Jerusalem Temple” (Joosten, 1996, p. 203).

If the Holiness Code was in circulation in the pre-exilic period then it may be assumed that Zephaniah, a reader-writer of texts, was familiar with it. A specific intertextuality with Lev 18.29; 20.17, 18 gives נכרתו in Zeph 1.11 a more powerful effect. Milgrom writes of these particular chapters in Leviticus,

Chapters 18 and 20 flank chap. 19, thereby projecting it as the pinnacle of Leviticus and, possibly, of the entire Torah...These two chapters, 18 and 20, contain identical prohibitions (20:9-21; 18:6-23) and parallel final exhortations (20:22-26; 18:24-30), and the prohibitions are headed by kerygmatic exhortations (20:7-8; 18:2b-5) (Milgrom, 2000, p. 1346).

The presence of fragments of chapters 18 and 20, which form a unit with chapter 19, to use Hollander’s approach, creates the hidden presence of the whole complex of Lev 18-20 within the text of Zeph 1.11 (Hollander, 1981, p. 115). This unit in Leviticus begins with exhorting Israel to obey Yahweh’s “statutes and ordinances” when they enter the land (Lev 18.1-5). After this there is a series of prohibitions mainly against various sexual relationships (18.6-23), then another exhortation featuring the verb נכרתו (18.24-30): “Do not defile yourselves...commit none of these abominations...otherwise the land will vomit you out...whoever commits any of these abominations will be cut off (נכרתו) from their people.” The following chapter, Leviticus 19, is characterised by its lack of a unified theme other than its stated purpose in 19.2, “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.” That is, “the purpose of all the enumerated laws is to set the people of Israel on the road to holiness” (Milgrom, 2000, p. 1596). Milgrom continues, “The laws incorporated into chap. 19 were chosen for their aptness to be subsumed under the rubric of holiness or its negation, impurity and desecration” (Milgrom, 2000, p. 1596). Leviticus 20 repeats most of the prohibitions of chapter 18, expanding some of them. The verb נכרתו features again in 20.17, 18 as a consequence of prohibited sexual relationships. Like chapter 18 this chapter also ends with an exhortation (20.22-26) but unlike the negative exhortation in 18.24-30 it is positive: “You shall keep all my statutes and ordinances...You shall not follow the practices of the nation I am driving out before you...You shall inherit the land...” The final line of the exhortation summarises Yahweh’s will for this “centrepiece of the Torah”: “You shall be holy to me, for I the

LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine” (20.26). This is God’s intention for the people of God.

5.6.2 Summary

Although not strongly marked as an allusion, an argument can be made for an echo of these *karet* texts in Zeph 1.11 through the shared use of נכרתו, which is quite rare, and also the thematic coherence of the passages. The effect of the allusion is to present the merchant-financiers as abhorrent to Yahweh and representing everything Israel should not to be. They are fit only for “being cut off” as those who are obstinately committed to transgressing Yahweh’s laws and causing the land to be defiled. This is a good example of Ben-Porat’s description of common elements in two texts resulting in “unpredictable intertextual patterns” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 127). Ben Zvi notes of Zeph 1.10-11, “Remarkably, there is no reference in these verses to any cultic sin” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 106). Yet in this reading of Zeph 1.10-11 institutionalised economic injustice is subtly redefined as the worst of cultic sin. The enigmatic fate of being “cut off” means that the guilty people have disqualified themselves from being members of the people of God, the underlying theme of this opening chapter of Zephaniah. The people of God have failed to fulfil their high calling and the economic exploitation is one important manifestation of this failing.

5.7 Zephaniah 1.12-13

- 12a And it shall come to pass in that time,
- 12b I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
- 12c and I will punish those thickening upon their dregs,
- 12d who say in their hearts, “Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do evil.”
- 13a Their wealth shall become plundering, and their houses deserted,
- 13b they shall build houses but not live in them,
- 13c and they shall plant vineyards but they shall not drink their wine.

This pericope is a finely crafted literary unit, beginning with a temporal formula (v.12a) and concluding emphatically with the “futility curse” (v.13b-c). A number of commentators, however, question its literary integrity. While some consider the temporal formula to be a later addition (e.g., Deissler, 1964, p. 445), it is not illogical that the prophet himself would use a standard prophetic form¹⁰¹ and it may be considered

¹⁰¹ Temporal formula followed by a phrase beginning with an imperfect verb (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 107).

authentic.¹⁰² Many commentators also consider the final two lines in the pericope, the “futility curse”, to be secondary.¹⁰³ Sabottka disagrees:

Trotz der großen Ähnlichkeit von Vers 13b mit Am 5,11 sollte man ihn nicht streichen, wie es öfters geschieht. Denn immerhin, taucht hier am Schluß das Motiv des Weintrinkens noch einmal auf, wodurch sich eine Inklusion mit v.12b ergibt.

In spite of the great similarity between v.13b and Amos 5.11 one should not discard it, as so often happens. After all, here at the conclusion the motif of wine drinking emerges once again, creating an inclusio with v.12b (Sabottka, 1972, p. 50).

Sabottka’s argument that the futility curse is an integral part of the pericope is strengthened when the intertextualities are considered. After noting the similarity with Amos 5.11, however, Sabottka does not discuss the intertextual effect in this pericope.

It is not immediately clear whether this pericope addresses the same people as the previous pericopes (i.e. 1.8-9, 10-11) or whether it addresses yet another group of people. Edler, for example, understands the pericope to be addressing a different group of people than the preceding pericopes, a group who are identified not by their profession (as in v.11) but by their attitude to Yahweh “die bestimmend wurde für ihren Lebenswandel” (*which was determinative for their lifestyle*) (Edler, 1984, p. 141). According to Edler their sin is self-confidence which comes from material prosperity. The punishment of taking away “wealth” and “houses” “ist demnach die Ausrottung des GrundüBELS” (*is therefore the eradication of the basic evil*) (Edler, 1984, p. 140). However, it is better to read this pericope as developing the judgment upon the same groups of addressees as in the preceding pericopes, as does Roberts: “The people threatened in v.12 are the wealthy, precisely those who have profited from all the economic activity whose end was threatened in vs.10-11” (Roberts, 1991, p. 180). This reading is also strengthened by the intertextuality with Amos (see 5.7.2 below).

The exact meaning of the phrase האנשים הקפים על-שמריהם (those thickening upon their dregs) is difficult. B. Renaud is no doubt correct when he writes, “On soupçonne ici un jeu de mots” (*One suspects a wordplay here*) (Renaud, 1987, p. 211), but the difficulty is in understanding the wordplay. This is another example of an intertextuality constructed of texts that are no longer available. However, while exactness of

¹⁰² So e.g., Roberts, 1991, p. 180; Sweeney, 2003, p. 93.

¹⁰³ Edler, 1984, pp. 140-141; Elliger, 1964, p. 65; Irsigler, 2002, p. 157; Renaud, 1987, p. 210; Seybold, 1991, p. 99; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 97.

interpretation may not be possible the general nuance of the imagery can be recognised, something like an inactive and immobile people (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 111), sluggish people (Sweeney, 2003, p. 94), people who are undergoing “a spiritual process of growing rigid and dull caused by longlasting undisturbed prosperity” (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 100). Yet these sluggish, immobilised people who think that Yahweh is inactive (“Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do evil”, v.12d) are about to be judged by an active deity indeed who will dash about Jerusalem with lamps searching out and punishing the sinners. Thus Irsigler rightly calls this “ein sarkastisches Drohwort Zefanjas” (*a sarcastic threat of Zephaniah*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 163).

Finally, there are significant intertextualities in this pericope. Commentators recognise two obvious intertextualities, Zeph 1.12 with Amos 9.1-4, and Zeph 1.13 with Amos 5.11. Some commentators consider this intertextual reuse to be an indication of later interpolation. This is not necessarily wrong but most commentators who do this do not go on to consider the intertextual effects that are produced by the reuse. Awareness of intertextuality helps to understand the effect of the allusive elements in the text.

5.7.1 Zephaniah 1.12 and Amos 9.1-4

Textual relationship between these texts is indicated, as Perlitt points out (Perlitt, 2004, p. 111), by the verb **חפש** (to search) in the first person imperfect Piel form which occurs only in Zeph 1.12 and Amos 9.3. Moreover, these two verses are the only occurrences in the OT of **חפש** with Yahweh as subject. A second indication that these texts are related is the thematic and lexical similarities between Zeph 1.12d, where people in Jerusalem say, “Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do harm” and Amos 9.4 where Yahweh says, “And I will fix my eyes on them for evil and not for good” (Table 5.9 below) A further indication that Zephaniah alludes to this Amos text is that already in Zephaniah 1 allusion has been made to other texts from Amos (see 5.4.1 above). This strengthens the claim for an allusion to Amos 9.4.

Table 5.9: “Good and evil” in Zeph 1.12d and Amos 9.4

Zeph 1.12d	לא־יִיטֵב יְהוָה וְלֹא יַרְעַ	Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do evil.
Amos 9.4	וְשָׁמַתִּי עֵינַי עֲלֵיהֶם לְרָעָה וְלֹא לְטוֹבָה	I will fix my eyes on them for evil and not for good.

The similarities between these two texts are noted by the commentators but none explore the effects created through the intertextuality. Some commentators refer to Amos 9.3 without further comment.¹⁰⁴ Others make a generalised statement such as Roberts, “As Amos had indicated earlier (Amos 9.3), there can be no hiding from Yahweh’s search and no escape from his judgment” (Roberts, 1991, p. 180).¹⁰⁵ These comments are good as far as they go but the markers in Zeph 1.12 create an intertextual relationship between the texts that produces more than a comparison of one element in both texts. Other elements in the evoked text also become present in the text through the allusion (Hollander, 1981, p. 115). Thus the occurrence of **חפש** Piel with Yahweh as subject, together with the combination of “good” and “evil”, creates an intertextual nexus between the texts, Zeph 1.12-13 and Amos’ fifth and final vision report (Amos 9.1-4). Through this intertextual nexus more than just the idea of Yahweh searching becomes present in this Zephaniah text.

Amos 9.1-4 is the capstone of Amos’ vision reports and makes the inescapability of Yahweh’s judgment against Israel complete. Shalom Paul writes that it

constitutes the climactic conclusion of the prior four (vision reports). Whereas the fourth announced the “end” of Israel (8:2), the fifth describes the coup de grâce in minute detail. Whereas the third and fourth pertained to the inalterability of destruction, the final vision adds the dimension of the absolute inescapability from the forthcoming disaster (Paul, 1991, p. 273).

In the Amos vision Yahweh is standing by “the altar”, possibly the altar of Bethel. He declares his judgment of destroying the temple and killing “all the people” (Amos 9.1), with no survivors. The oracle is very specific that “not one of them shall flee away, not one of them shall escape” (Amos 9.1). This is illustrated in vv.2-4 by six futile “fleeing” scenarios. These futile fleeing scenarios are presented using a pattern of **אם...משם**. “If” (**אם**), followed by a place of fleeing, “from there” (**משם**) Yahweh will find them in order to judge them. The third scenario involves those fleeing Yahweh’s judgment hiding themselves upon the top of Mt Carmel, from where Yahweh “will search out (**אחפש**) and take them” (9.3). This is the same and only other occurrence of the verb as Zeph 1.12b. In the final scenario Yahweh commands the sword to kill the people even when they are being led into captivity, stressing the impossibility of escaping Yahweh’s judgment of death. The concluding line of the oracle breaks the **אם...משם** pattern with the statement

¹⁰⁴ E.g., Edler, 1984, p. 141; Perlitt, 2004, p. 111.

¹⁰⁵ Similarly Irsigler, 2002, p. 158; Robertson, 1990, p. 279; Renaud, 1987, p. 211.

“and I will fix my eyes on them for evil and not for good” (וּשְׁמַתִּי עֵינַי עֲלֵיהֶם לְרָעָה) (9.4). This declaration sums up the entire pericope. The result of Yahweh fixing his eyes upon a people for evil and not for good is judgment from which there is no escape.

Through two markers in Zeph 1.12, the verb “to search out” and the use of the words “good” and “evil”, Amos 9.1-4 becomes an evoked text. From Amos 9.1-4 the inescapability of Yahweh’s judgment is brought to bear upon a new audience who, as argued above (5.4.1 above) knew Amos’ prophecies and what had happened to the original recipients of this oracle. Zephaniah prophesies that once again Yahweh will “search out” and therefore escape will be futile. This theme resonates with the futility curse which follows in Zeph 1.13b. Furthermore, Zephaniah’s addressees are functional atheists. Their attitude, “Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do evil.” (1.12c), means that they feel at ease to do whatever they wish. Most commentators consider “good and evil” to be a merism, meaning “Yahweh will do nothing at all.”¹⁰⁶ This is true but the intertextuality with Amos 9.1-4 also creates a double-voicing. These words reveal the people’s attitude to Yahweh, “he will do nothing”, but they also echo Amos’ declaration of the exact opposite, that Yahweh can cause evil and not good upon those whom he judges. Following Hollander (above), through the two marked elements, wider signification from the evoked text is transumed into the alluding text. This is similar to Ben-Porat’s description that through markers “in the alluding text, the presence of elements in both texts...can be linked together in unfixed, unpredictable intertextual patterns” (Ben-Porat, 1976, p. 127).

5.7.2 Allusion to the futility curses in Amos 5.1-17 and Deut 28.30

The combination of “building houses” and “planting vineyards” occurs in seven texts in the OT.¹⁰⁷ Of these texts there is strong similarity between Zeph 1.13 and Amos 5.11. Zephaniah 1.13 follows Amos 5.11 more closely in both vocabulary and word order than it does any of the other texts (see Table 5.10 below). There are some differences. Zeph 1.13 is written in the third person while Amos 5.11 is in the second person, the word order in each half-colon is different (Zephaniah: verb-object; Amos: object-verb), Amos has an extra adjectival element in each half-colon, and the tense of the verbs are different,

¹⁰⁶ E.g., Sweeney, 2003, p. 95; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 100.

¹⁰⁷ Zeph 1.13; Amos 5.11; Deut 28.30; Eccl 2.4; Isa 65.21; Ezek 28.26; Jer 35.7.

Table 5.10: Zeph 1.13 and Amos 5.11

Zeph 1.13	<u>וְנִטְעוּ בְּרִמִּים</u> <u>וְלֹא יִשְׁתּוּ אֶת־יַיִנָּם</u> <u>וּבְנוּ בָתִּים</u> <u>וְלֹא יִשְׁבוּ</u>	They will build houses but will not live (in them), they will plant vineyards but will not drink their wine
Amos 5.11	<u>בְּתֵי גִזִּית בְּנִיתֶם</u> <u>וְלֹא־תִשְׁבוּ בָּם</u> <u>כְּרַמֵּי־חֶמֶד נִטַּעְתֶּם</u> <u>וְלֹא תִשְׁתּוּ אֶת־יַיִנָּם</u>	Houses of hewn stone you have built, but you will not live in them, Vineyards of beauty you have planted, but you shall not drink their wine.

* AT

(Amos perfect, Zephaniah imperfect). Nevertheless the correspondences between the texts are striking and greater than the similarities between Zeph 1.13 and the other “building houses” and “planting vineyards” texts. From amongst these other texts only Deut 28.30 shares similarity with Zeph 1.13 (see Table 5.11 below).

Table 5.11: Zeph 1.13 and Deut 28.30

Zeph 1.13	<u>וּבְנוּ בָתִּים וְלֹא יִשְׁבוּ</u> <u>וְנִטְעוּ בְּרִמִּים</u> <u>וְלֹא יִשְׁתּוּ אֶת־יַיִנָּם</u>	They will build houses but will not live (in them), they will plant vineyards but will not drink their wine
Deut 28.30	<u>בֵּית תִּבְנֶה וְלֹא־תִשָּׁב בּוֹ</u> <u>כְּרֶם תִּטַּע וְלֹא תַחֲלִלְנוּ</u>	A house you will build but you will not live in it, a vineyard you will plant but you will not make use of it.

*AT

In both texts the verbs are future tense, the vocabulary is similar except for the final verb in the Deuteronomy text. This indicates that Zeph 1.13 has an intertextual relationship with both Amos 5.11 and Deut 28.30. The allusion to Amos is strong due to the identical vocabulary while the allusion to Deuteronomy is recognised through the same theme, shared but not identical vocabulary, and also the proverbial form that both share. Simultaneous allusion to both texts by Zeph 1.13 creates a powerful effect.

Most commentators perceive some kind of relationship between Zeph 1.13b and Amos 5.11, although they understand the relationship in different ways. A number see a general intertextuality as opposed to specific allusion to Amos and/or Deuteronomy. Vlaardingerbroek takes this approach: “These words constitute a (probably proverbial, cf. Amos 5:11; somewhat less exact, Mic. 6:14, 15; even somewhat farther removed, Hos. 4:10) formulation of a divine judgment which consists in rendering all human effort

meaningless and fruitless” (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, pp. 101-102).¹⁰⁸ Another common approach is to see v.13b-c as a later addition, based on Amos 5.11, which contradicts the authentic oracle of Zephaniah. The perceived problem is that the future tense verbs seem to indicate there will be an opportunity to rebuild after the judgment of Zeph 1.12-13a takes place. Elliger epitomises this approach, writing,

Der schon metrisch überschießende v.13b zerstört die Pointe, indem er die Drohung mit dem Nichts verharmlost als ob nach der Katastrophe noch wieder Häuser gebaut werden könnten.

The already metrically excessive v.13b destroys the point in that it downplays the threat of oblivion as if houses could be built again even after the disaster (Elliger, 1964, p. 65).

Based on this perceived contradiction Elliger concludes that “er ist Glosse, vielleicht im Gedanken an Amos 5,11 formuliert” (*it is a gloss, maybe formulated with Amos 5.11 in mind*) (Elliger, 1964, p. 65). This approach is taken by a number of commentators,¹⁰⁹ and Roberts is rightly critical: “their logic reflects a wooden literalism that is unconvincing” (Roberts, 1991, p. 181). Ben Zvi is correct in writing, “To the contrary...instead of thematic contradiction one finds thematic completion. The wealth of the indicted is to be destroyed and their efforts to restore it will be in vain” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 116; see also Keller, 1971, p. 194)

Most commentators do not explore the effect of the reuse of Amos 5.11 in the text of Zeph 1.13, regardless of whether it is judged as authentic or secondary. A. Deissler moves in this direction with his comment, “13b dépeint l'inutilité de leurs efforts en développant l'avertissement d'Amos 5.11, mais avec des couleurs semble-t-il, moins vives” (*13b depicts the futility of their efforts by developing the warning of Amos 5.11, but with colours which seem less vivid*) (Deissler, 1964, p. 446). This shows some appreciation of intertextuality in recognising that the text is taking up another text and using it for its own ends. However, rather than seeing this as a potent element of text creation, Deissler judges Zephaniah as an epigone, an undistinguished imitator, follower, or successor of an important writer, a term used by Polaski (Polaski, 1998, p. 56).

Irsigler shows more appreciation of the effects of intertextuality even though he does not think v.13b is compatible with the rest of the pericope (see above). Irsigler sees v.13b as a “Deuteronomistic oriented” addition to the authentic Zephaniah pericope. He argues

¹⁰⁸ Similarly Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 116; Seybold, 1991, p. 99; Sweeney, 2003, p. 95.

¹⁰⁹ E.g., Edler, 1984, pp. 140-141; Irsigler, 2002, p. 157; Renaud, 1987, p. 210.

that v.13b establishes a relation not only with Amos 5.11 but especially recalls the curse-regulations in Deut 28.30, 39. He writes: “Der Bearbeiter will das unheilvolle Zefanjawort als Einlösung der Fluchandrohung des Buches Deuteronomium verstanden wissen” (*The editor wants the calamitous word of Zephaniah to be understood as fulfilment of the curse threat of the book of Deuteronomy*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 157). He notes that the “Vergeblichkeits- oder Nichtigkeitsfluches” (futility- or nullity-curse) formulas were widespread in the ANE, but this use in the Zephaniah text, which he considers a late addition, does not merely reflect a widespread motif, “sondern dürfte bereits schriftlich vorliegende Texte referieren” (*rather, it might refer to already written and available texts*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 162). Irsigler identifies these texts as above all Amos 5.11 but also the covenant curse texts Deut 28.30c-f and 28.39 (Irsigler, 2002, p. 162). Irsigler writes:

Der Bearbeiter Zefanjas hat sich einerseits von einem Prophetenwort des Amos inspirieren lassen und hat diese Vergeblichkeitsaussage passend an ein sarkastisches Drohwort Zefajnas angefügt. Andererseits erkennt der Bearbeiter im Zefanjawort das Eintreffen des Bundesfluches, wie er in Dtn 28 für den Fall der Missachtung der Bundesforderungen formuliert ist.

The editor of Zephaniah has on the one hand been inspired by a prophetic word from Amos and has joined this futility statement appropriately to a sarcastic prophecy of warning by Zephaniah. On the other hand, the editor recognises in the Zephaniah saying the arrival of the covenant-curses, as it is formulated in Dt. 28 in case of disdain for the covenant requirements (Irsigler, 2002, p. 163).

The positive aspect of Irsigler’s exegesis is that he attempts to understand how specific intertexts bring wider signification into the text. Negatively, however, his reading denies that the text makes sense as it stands.

Aber 13a lässt nicht mehr an ein neues Pflanzen von Weinbergen denken, der gesamte Besitz verfällt ja der Plünderung.

But 13a does not allow a new planting of vineyards to be considered, the entire property will fall to the pillage (Irsigler, 2002, p. 157).

Irsigler seems to be saying that the history of the text must be reconstructed in order for it to be comprehensible, yet the text makes sense as it stands if his literal reading is rejected. This exegesis will follow Irsigler in seeing that v.13b alludes to both Amos 5.11 and the futility curse in Deut 28.30. These allusions are an integral part of the text of Zephaniah that not only make sense in their immediate context, Zeph 1.12-13, but also contribute to the wider context of Zephaniah 1.

Amos 5.1-17

Through the futility curse in Zeph 1.13b the futility curse in Amos 5.11 is evoked, and this in turn activates the entire evoked text (Ben-Porat, 1976, pp. 110-111). This evoked text is at one level the judgment oracle (Amos 5.7-13), but at another level it is the wider literary unit which is constituted by Amos 5.1-17.¹¹⁰ If the evoked text is Amos 5.1-17 the question of its availability to Zephaniah must be considered. In terms of authenticity Amos 5.1-17 fares quite well amongst the commentators.¹¹¹ However, there have been various attempts to remove secondary material and/or rearrange the oracles in Amos 5.1-17 to a more pristine order.¹¹² The apparent problems in the text that have led to these proposed emendations have been addressed in an influential article by J. de Waard (de Waard, 1977). Far from the pericopes in the unit having been disrupted and in need of rearrangement, de Waard suggests that 5.1-17 forms a carefully structured chiasm (de Waard, 1977, p. 176); (see Table 5.12 below).

Table 5.12: De Waard's chiasmic structure of Amos 5.1-17

A vv.1-3 Funerary lament – death
B vv.4-6 Call to seek Yahweh – life
C v.7 Accusation of injustice
D v.8a,b,c Yahweh's mighty deeds
E v.8d Declaration of Yahweh ("Yahweh is his name")
D' v.9 Yahweh's mighty deeds
C' vv.10-13 Accusation of injustice
B' vv.14-15 Call to seek Yahweh – life
A' vv.16-17 Funerary lament – death

De Waard's overall structure for Amos 5.1-17 is convincing but other suggestions have also been proposed. J. Jeremias, for example, makes the entire doxology (5.8-9) the hinge of the chiasm (Jeremias, 1998, pp. 84-85). Paul, by contrast, discards the doxology altogether as interrupting the original structure and makes the breach of justice the hinge of the chiasm (5.7, 10-12, 13) (Paul, 1991, p. 159). Other commentators consider the

¹¹⁰ Auld, 1995, p. 50ff; de Waard, 1977; Paul, 1991, pp. 158-159; Stuart, 2002, p. 344.

¹¹¹ E.g., Hammershaimb, 1970, p. 14; Mays, 1969, p. 12.

¹¹² Hammershaimb, 1970, pp. 80-84; Mays, 1969, p. 13; Wolff, 1977, pp. 233-235.

doxology authentic to Amos,¹¹³ or to be an early addition to the original text.¹¹⁴ Notwithstanding the difficulty of answering this question definitively, it is assumed here that the doxology was part of the text by the time of late pre-exilic Judah, the earliest possible *terminus a quo* for Zephaniah. Furthermore, in distinction to Wolff's suggestion that doxology was originally marginalia that was, through scribal error, incorporated into the text (Wolff, 1977, p. 233), the doxology is a deliberate and integral part of this text. Hence the structure of the unit may be expressed as follows (see Table 5.13 below):

Table 5.13: Structure of Amos 5.1-17

A vv.1-3 Funerary lament – death
B vv.4-6 Call to seek Yahweh – life
C vv.7-13 Breach of justice and doxology
B' vv.14-15 Call to seek Yahweh – life
A' vv.16-17 Funerary lament – death

This structure makes vv.7-13 the central panel of Amos 5.1-17. Amos 5.1-17 itself is a significant unit in the book of Amos, of which Jeremias writes, “this chapter speaks far more generally and fundamentally about Israel's relationship with God than do its surroundings; faith and life constitute its predominant key words, worship and justice its predominant themes” (Jeremias, 1998, p. 84). It is this text that is evoked in Zeph 1.13b.

Amos 5.1-17 and its centre vv.7-13

Amos 5.1-17 begins and ends with funerary laments (vv.1-3; 16-17), giving the entire unit the theme of death for Israel. The central panel (vv.7-13) gives the reason for this looming death, injustice among the people of God. Amos 5.7-13 portrays a corrupt society in which the wealthy control the law courts and exploit the common people. Powerful images are employed in this pericope. Justice (משפט) and righteousness (צדקה) are subverted in the “gate” (שער, i.e. the law court), where judicial decisions can be purchased (כפר). The leaders abound with transgressions (פשע) and sins (חטאת), and those who must suffer the resulting judicial and economic oppression are the poor (דל), the innocent (צדיק) and the needy (אביון). The leaders of Israel use their power to deny justice to those without power (Amos 5.7, 10, 12). J. Mays writes of v.7, “justice” (משפט)

¹¹³ Anderson & Freedman, 1989, p. 144; Hammershaimb, 1970, p. 74.

¹¹⁴ Mays, 1969, p. 84; Wolff, 1977, pp. 111-112; Jeremias, 1998, pp. 76-77, is in the minority with his opinion that the doxology is exilic or post-exilic.

and “righteousness” (צדקה) are the “comprehensive notions” used to accuse Israel of completely perverting justice, and “could stand as summations for all of Amos’ complaints against Israel’s social order” (Mays, 1969, p. 92). This injustice stands in irreconcilable contrast to the nature of Yahweh which is represented by the judgment-doxology that is embedded within the judgment oracle. This judgment-doxology shows that God is present and powerful and stands over and against the sinful leaders as the one who loves the justice (משפט) and righteousness (צדקה) that they turn to wormwood and bring to the ground (Amos 5.7). Through their injustice the powerful have luxury homes and vineyards but this exploitation of the poor will lead to their judgment (Amos 5.11b), the “futility curse” which is echoed in Zeph 1.13b. It is this powerful text that becomes present in Zephaniah through the reuse of Amos 5.11b in Zeph 1.13b-c.

Intertextual patterns between Zephaniah 1.13 and Amos 5

The statement, “Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them” (Zeph 1.13b), alludes to Amos 5.7-13, and by extension to Amos 5.1-17. The larger unit (5.1-17) has the theme of death as a result of God’s judgment and the smaller unit within it (5.7-13) gives the explicit reasons for this judgment. Themes from this Amos pericope are transumed into Zeph 1.12-13. Zephaniah 1.12-13 is a transitional pericope which gathers up the material in Zeph 1.4-13 and bridges into the final pericope of Zephaniah 1, the description of the terrifying Day of Yahweh (1.14-18). The allusion to Amos 5.11 is strongly marked by the shared distinctive language and also by the thematic coherence of the passages.

Amos 5.7-13 presents a society where judicial and economic corruption is endemic and the upper classes oppress the common people for their own gain. Embedded within the pericope is the doxology which presents Yahweh as all powerful and opposed to this corruption, and thus imminent in judgment. This picture resonates with Zephaniah’s presentation of his society. Zephaniah 1.4-6 presents the people of God as those who have abandoned God and put their trust in other gods. The following judgment oracle, 1.7-9, is against the ruling class who fill their administration with “violence and fraud” (1.9). Their partners in crime, the merchant-financiers, have become so unclean through their sin that the only recourse is the penalty of *karet* (to be cut off; 1.10-11). Through the allusion to Amos this picture is strengthened. Just as in Amos’ time the poor were denied justice and were oppressed so it is in Zephaniah’s time. Just as in Amos’ time the elite of society lived in luxury with stone houses and vineyards, so it is in Zephaniah’s time. And,

although not explicitly mentioned in Zephaniah but made present through the allusion to Amos 5.7-13, the poor, the innocent and the needy suffer in Jerusalem and Judah. As Levin writes of the futility curse, “In the book of Amos the curse is directed against the wicked who oppress the pious poor. This is true of the book of Zephaniah also...” (Levin, 2011, p. 130). This is not what God created the people of God to be and they have failed in their calling to represent God to the world. The Jerusalem and Judah of Zephaniah’s generation was as much the polar opposite of what it should be as was Jeroboam II’s Israel to whom Amos prophesied. They had no fears that God would do anything about their rejection of him and his requirements (1.12d). Yet Yahweh was not oblivious to this social situation and his intentions also become present through the allusion. The power of Yahweh, which even the natural order is unable to resist (Amos 5.8), will break out against this corrupt society (Amos 5.9). Their power and their fortresses will melt before this onslaught of divine judgment (Amos 5.9b). Late-monarchic Judeans knew the fate of Amos’ original audience. These wider themes in Amos 5.1-17 also echo within Zeph 1.13b-c through the allusion to Amos and to Yahweh’s imminent judgment.

Deuteronomy 28.30

There is also a close similarity between the futility curse in Zeph 13b and the one in Deut 28.30. This raises the question of whether Deut 28.30 would have been available in the late seventh century to Zephaniah. Much work has been done on reconstructing the literary pre-history of the book of Deuteronomy with, predictably, varying results. Some scholars, such as J. Pakkala, argue that the earliest stage of Deuteronomy, the *Urdeuteronomium*, “is essentially of post-586 BCE origin” (Pakkala, 2009, p. 388).¹¹⁵ Conversely, a number of scholars argue that the *Urdeuteronomium* developed in the seventh century under the Neo-Assyrian domination.¹¹⁶ Chapter 28 is considered to be part of this original edition of Deuteronomy, in fact, modelled off the “ideas and language from the Assyrian loyalty oath” (Nelson, 2002, p. 6), albeit with exilic expansions, e.g., vv.36f, 49, 64f (Nicholson, 1967, pp. 34-35). For this exegesis it is assumed that Deuteronomy had reached a substantial form by the late seventh century that included chapter 28, although exilic expansions may have been added to this chapter.

That Zeph 1.13b also alludes to Deut 28.30 is signalled by the common vocabulary, theme, and the shared future tense of the verbs (see Table 5.11: Zeph 1.13 and Deut 28.30

¹¹⁵ See also MacDonald, 2010; Pakkala, 2011.

¹¹⁶ Clifford, 1982, pp. 1-6; Tigay, 1996, p. xxii.

above). Furthermore, there are other allusions to Deuteronomy in Zephaniah, which strengthens the argument for allusion in this verse (see 5.8.2; 5.8.3; 5.9 below). Allusion to the curses of Deuteronomy 28 achieves a similar effect to the echo of the *karet* texts. The curses in Deuteronomy 28 are a result of not obeying “the Lord your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees” (Deut 28.15; NRSV). This allusion to Deut 28.30 portrays the Jerusalem elite and their supporters as flagrant violators of Yahweh’s Torah. As a result of violating God’s will for his people they will suffer the Covenant Curses, the nature of which are captured in the futility curse.

5.7.3 Summary

Zephaniah 1.13b stands in an important position. It brings to a conclusion the charges against the Jerusalem elite for using their power to create an unjust society, charges which began in Zeph 1.7 but are rooted in the first judgment oracle against Judah and Jerusalem in the abandonment of God by the people of God (1.4-6). This final verse of the pericope (1.12-13) also serves as the transition to Zeph 1.14-18 which describes Yahweh’s arrival in judgment for all of these sins, “the great Day of Yahweh.”

5.8 Zephaniah 1.14-16

- 14a The great Day of Yahweh is near,
- 14b near and hastening fast.
- 14c The sound of the Day of Yahweh is bitter,
- 14d the warrior cries aloud there.
- 15a That day is a day of wrath,
- 15b a day of distress and anguish,
- 15c a day of ruin and devastation,
- 15d a day of darkness and gloom,
- 15e a day of clouds and thick darkness,
- 16a a day of trumpet blast and battle cry,
- 16b against the fortified cities,
- 16c and against the lofty battlements.

This final section of Zeph 1 turns from the description of the sins of Judah and Jerusalem and portrays the imminent judgment described as the Day of Yahweh. This section includes vv.15-16, a poem “of great beauty” (Ball, 1988, p. 84; so also Sabottka, 1972, p. 54), famous for v.15a providing the first line and title for the hymn *Dies Irae* (“*Dies irae, dies illa*”; *that day is a day of wrath*), used in the requiem mass.¹¹⁷ The section is replete with words and phrases that evoke other OT texts.

¹¹⁷ Robertson, 1990, p. 283; Seybold, 1991, p. 100; Sweeney, 2003, p. 98.

5.8.1 Isaiah 9

The introductory line of the poem (14a), קרוב יום יהוה הגדול (The great day of Yahweh is near) repeats the phrase in Zeph 1.7 but adds the adjective “great.” The basic phrase (The great day of Yahweh is near) is also found in Isa 13.6; Joel 1.15; 4.14 and Obad 15, and in a modified form in Ezek 30.3. These texts are here considered to be later than Zeph 1.7-18 and thus not treated as texts which Zephaniah took up in the creation of his text.¹¹⁸ Following the introduction to the “great Day of Yahweh” in v.14 the description of the “day of Yahweh” in vv.15-16 begins with the statement, “That day will be a day of wrath” (עברה) followed by a dense conglomeration of word pairs which describe the Day of Yahweh. This opening line of the poem (v.15a), יום עברה היום ההוא (That day will be a day of wrath) corresponds to the conclusion of chapter 1, v.18c ביום עברת יהוה (on the day of Yahweh’s wrath). The latter phrase is found in Isa 9.19, a text that Zephaniah has already alluded to (Zeph 1.4; 5.3.4 above). This Isaiah text is about God’s judgment on the Northern Kingdom: “Through the wrath of the Lord (עברת יהוה) of hosts the land was burned...” (Isa 9.19). The echo of Isa 9.19 with the idea of Yahweh’s wrath turned against the people of God is a devastating prospect given that it spelled the end of the Northern Kingdom.

The next phrases in Zephaniah are similar to Isa 8.22 (see Table 5.14 below).

Table 5.14: Lexical similarities between Zeph 1.15b-d and Isa 8.22

Zeph 1.15b-d	יום צרה ומצוקה	a day of distress and anguish,
	יום שאה ומשואה	a day of ruin and devastation,
	יום חשך ואפלה	a day of darkness and gloom,
Isa 8.22	והנה צרה וחשכה	but behold, distress and darkness,
	מעורף צוקה	the gloom of anguish.
	ואפלה מנדה	And they will be thrust into thick darkness.

The similar vocabulary here, rather than representing a direct allusion, is more a case of the same imagery being employed. The use of this imagery is also seen in Ps 25.17, “distress” and “anguish” (צרה; מצוקה); Job 30.3 and 38.27 “ruin and devastation” (שאה ומשואה). Zephaniah is drawing on stock words and phrases in order to express how terrible will be the Day of Yahweh. These words and phrases gain power from their

¹¹⁸ Obadiah and Ezekiel are exilic. For the later dating of Isaiah 13 see Barton (1995, p. 18) and for Joel see Mason and Wolff (Mason, 1994; Wolff, 1977).

participation in other texts from Israel's life and history but it is not allusion to specific texts. Rather, the intertextuality is that described by Barthes, an "intertextual resonance" (Barthes, 1981, p. 40), a reuse of unidentified texts in ancient Israel's life, rather than allusion to specific texts.

5.8.2 Horeb/Sinai theophany

A more specific allusion can be identified in the third and fourth word pairs:

Zeph 15d-e	יום חשך ואפלה	a day of clouds and thick darkness,
	יום ענן וערפל	a day of darkness and gloom,

The first line of Joel 2.2 is the same word for word as Zeph 1.15d-e as Joel, written in the time of the post-exilic temple, is reusing Zephaniah.¹¹⁹ A number of commentators draw attention to the similar language in Amos' description of the Day of Yahweh (Amos 5.18, 20):¹²⁰

Amos 5.18d, 20	הוא-חשך ולא-אור...	it is darkness not light...
	הלא-חשך יום יהוה	Is not the day of Yahweh darkness and
	ולא-אור	not light,
	ואפל ולא-נגה לו	gloom with no brightness in it?

However, while Zephaniah has taken up Amos' Day of Yahweh text and developed it in the creation of his own text, the language of darkness in Zeph 1.15, "Darkness and gloom...clouds and thick darkness" is here more evocative of theophanic language, e.g., Ps 97.2 ענן וערפל סביביו (Clouds and thick darkness surround him).¹²¹ As Vlaardingerbroek writes, ערפל (not used in Amos 5.18-20) has "a more or less 'numinous' sense, in connection with YHWH's dwelling or appearance" (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 109). The most common association of this theophanic language is with the self-revelation of Yahweh on Mt Sinai/Horeb (see Table 5.15 below).¹²²

¹¹⁹ So also Irsigler, 2002, p. 169; Strazicich, 2007, pp. 117-118; Sweeney, 2003, p. 100.

¹²⁰ E.g., Roberts, 1991, p. 184; Sweeney, 2003, p. 99; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 109.

¹²¹ See Renaud, 1987, p. 213; Smith, 1984, p. 132; Sweeney, 2003, p. 100.

¹²² So also Irsigler, 2002, p. 169; King, 1996, p. 59; Robertson, 1990, pp. 283-284; Perlitt, 2004, p. 115.

Table 5.15: Theophanic language in Deut 4.11b; 5.22

Deut 4.11b	ותקרבוֹן ותעמדוֹן תחת ההר וההר בער באש עד־לב השמים חשך ענן וערפל	And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in <u>darkness</u> , <u>cloud</u> and <u>gloom</u> .
Deut 5.22	את־הדברים האלה דבר יהוה אל־כל־קהלכם בהר מתוך האש הענן והערפל קול גדול ולא יסף ויכתבם על־שני לחת אבנים ויתנם אלי	These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the <u>cloud</u> , and the <u>thick darkness</u> , with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

This language is not used as much in the Sinai theophany in the book of Exodus but is present as Exod 19.9, 16 uses the same word ענן (clouds) (see Table 5.16 below).

Table 5.16: Theophanic language in Exod 19.9, 16

Exod 19.9	ויאמר יהוה אל־משה הנה אנכי בא אליך בעת הענן בעבור ישמע העם בדבי עמך וגם־בך יאמינו לעולם	And the LORD said to Moses. "Behold, I am coming to you in a <u>thick cloud</u> , that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever."
Exod 19.16	ויהי ביום השלישי בהית הבקר ויהי קלת וברקים וענן כבד על־ההר וקל שפר חזק מאד ויחרד כל־העם אשר במחנה	On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a <u>thick</u> <u>cloud</u> on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled.

As the “outstretched hand” is intimately tied in with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Zeph 1.4; 5.3.2 above) so this language of “darkness, cloud and gloom” is associated with the theophany at Sinai/Horeb and the covenant making through which the people of God were created. The effect of this echo is similar to that of the outstretched hand. Yahweh’s awesome power, expressed through the language of theophany, which brought about the creation of the people of God at Sinai, is about to be wielded for the opposite purpose, the judgment and destruction of the people of God. It is a reversal of the good which Yahweh brought about long ago. Ben Zvi, noting the association of ענן וערפל with Deut 4.11 and 5.22, rejects any relationship between the texts on the grounds that the expression is not “related to the dreadful acts of YHWH in DOY [Day of Yahweh] but to the contrary, to YHWH’s merciful deeds toward Israel” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 124).

Yet this is one way that intertextuality operates. The reuse of these Sinai covenant intertexts signals a shocking reversal of God's salvific acts for the people of God.

5.8.3 Conquest reversed

The final verse in the Day of Wrath poem also carries echoes of the reversal of the creation of the people of God. **יום שופר ותרועה** (a day of trumpet blast and battle cry; 16a) is the imagery of a battle charge **על הערים הבצורות ועל הפנות הגבהות** (against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements; 16b-c). The words **שופר** (trumpet blast) and **תרועה** (battle cry) occur together twice in the account of the conquest of Jericho (Josh 6.5, 20). Within the book of Joshua the conquest of Jericho “stands at the heart of chs. 1-12” (Curtis, 1998, p. 23) which show how God fought for Israel to give them the land of Canaan. As A.H.W. Curtis writes, “It is not impossible, and is perhaps even likely, that much of chs. 2-11 had already been assembled into something like their present form before being incorporated into the Deuteronomistic History” (Curtis, 1998, p. 32). Thus it is possible that within this line of Zephaniah there is an echo of this archetypal conquest story (so also Berlin, 1994, p. 90). In Zeph 1.16 it signifies a “reverse conquest” as Yahweh's power is now threatened against the people of God. Vlaardingerbroek grasps the intertextual effect of this echo:

This implication must have had a shocking effect on the people who heard this prophecy. That which at one time took place as a miracle of salvation history will one day, as a miracle of end-time history, be directed against the strong cities of Judah (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 110).

There is also an echo of Deut 9.1 in Zeph 1.16b-c:

Table 5.17: Lexical similarities in Zeph 1.16b-c and Deut 9.1

Zeph 1.16b-c	על הערים הבצורות ועל הפנות הגבהות	against the <u>fortified cities</u> and against the lofty battlements
Deut 9.1	שמע ישראל אתה עבר היום את־הידן לבא לרשת גוים גדלים ועצמים ממך ערים גדלים ובצרת בשמים	Hear, O Israel: you are to cross over the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves, <u>cities</u> great and <u>fortified</u> up to heaven.

Deuteronomy 1.28 also uses the phrase **ערים גדלים ובצרת בשמים** (great cities fortified to the heavens) and Deut 3.5, recounting the conquest of King Og of Bashan, describes the cities of that land in language that is most similar to Zeph 1.16b-c:

Table 5.18: Lexical similarities in Zeph 1.16 and Deut 3.5

Zeph 1.16b-c	<u>על הערים הבצורות</u> <u>ועל הפנות הגבהות</u>	against the <u>fortified cities</u> and against the lofty battlements
Deut 3.5	<u>ערים בצורות חומה גבהה</u>	Fortified cities (with) high walls

* AT

At the heart of these texts from Deuteronomy are two ideas. First, there is the promise that Yahweh himself will bring Israel into the land and defeat their enemies before them. Second, Israel must be obedient to Yahweh in order both to receive and to continue to live in the land (e.g., Deut 5.33; 6.15; 7.4, 26). The use of this language in Zeph 1.16 brings into the text the image of the people of God now facing Yahweh's power to destroy them and dispossess them of the land that he once gave to them because of their failure to heed his warnings and follow his ways.

5.8.4 Summary

The hymn declares devastating judgment upon God's people using echoes of the Sinai theophany and Conquest texts. It was in Yahweh's indescribable presence that Israel entered covenant relationship with God and became God's people. This same presence and power is now threatened against them in judgment that will destroy them as a people. Echoes from the Conquest also carry the theme of God reversing what had been done for Israel at the beginning of their history. Embedded within the Conquest accounts, as in the Sinai covenant texts, is the expectation that God requires Israel to live according to God's ways. This continues the theme that undergirds Zephaniah 1 of the people of God having failed in their calling. Therefore the power that created Israel at Sinai and gave them the Land will be turned against them. This penultimate pericope in Zephaniah 1 is similar to the second pericope in the chapter (vv.4-6) which reverses the creation of the people of God through the Exodus. The final pericope, 1.17-18, similarly corresponds to the theme with which the chapter began, the judgment and destruction upon all of humanity and the entire created order, because of the failure of the people of God.

5.9 Zephaniah 1.17-18

- 17a I will bring distress against humanity,
- 17b and they will walk like the blind,
- 17c because they have sinned against Yahweh.
- 17d Their blood will be poured out like dust,
- 17e and their flesh like dung.
- 18a Neither their silver nor their gold
- 18b will be able to save them

- 18c on the day of Yahweh's wrath.
 18d In the fire of his passion the whole earth will be consumed,
 18e for indeed he will make a terrifying annihilation
 18f upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

The final pericope in Zephaniah 1 returns to the theme of the opening oracle (1.2-3), the destruction of the entire creation because of the corruption and failure of the people of God. The first line declares God's intention to bring "distress against humanity" (לְאָדָם), that is, all people of the earth. This understanding of אָדָם is based on the overall interpretation of the first chapter of Zephaniah, as opposed to reading אָדָם as referring only to the people of Judah.¹²³ The following two lines, the threat of walking like the blind, echoes Deut 28.29, part of the same section of Covenant Curses to which Zeph 1.13 alluded (see 5.7.2 above). This creates an ambiguous effect because the Covenant Curses are punishments for those who have broken the conditions of the Sinai Covenant. Yet here the curses are universalised to all of humanity because of the failure of the people of God to fulfil their calling as God's representative nation, the radical concept that underlies Zephaniah 1. Once again this shows how intertwined is the fate of the people of God and the peoples of the world.

Terrifying judgment is promised, namely wholesale slaughter (17d-e), before 18a-b refers refers to the underlying reason for the judgment: "Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath." The people of God has failed in its calling to be the society that models God's ways to the world because of corruption and greed (c.f. Zeph 1.9, 10-11). Once again, at the close of chapter 1 as at the beginning, the sins of the people of God are the basis for global judgment. There is nearly word for word repetition of 1.18a-b in Ezek 7.19 (see Table 5.19 below). This section of Zephaniah is here considered to be late pre-exilic while Ezekiel is exilic and thus Zephaniah is not reusing this Ezekiel text.¹²⁴

Table 5.19: Similarity of Zeph 1.18 and Ezek 7.19

Ezek 7.19	כַּסְפָּם וְזָהָבָם לֹא-יִשְׁלֹם לְהַצִּילָם בְּיוֹם עֲבֵרַת יְהוָה
Zeph 1.18	גַּם-כַּסְפָּם גַּם-זָהָבָם לֹא-יִשְׁלֹם לְהַצִּילָם בְּיוֹם עֲבֵרַת יְהוָה

¹²³ As do, e.g., Berlin, 1994, pp. 90-91; Roberts, 1991, p. 182.

¹²⁴ So also Berlin, 1994, p. 91; Sweeney, 2003, p. 104; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 112.

Chapter 1.18d-f connects back to 1.2-3 and brings the chapter to a shrill crescendo. The comprehensive failings of the people of God means that all humanity and all creation will be destroyed. Some commentators consider that כָּל־הָאָרֶץ (18d) should be translated “the entire land” i.e., of Judah, rather than “the whole earth”; similarly כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ (18f) should be translated “all the inhabitants of the land” rather than “all the inhabitants of the earth”, because the judgment oracles are against Judah and Jerusalem.¹²⁵ The word אָרֶץ itself offers no help¹²⁶ but the reading developed here holds together the sin of the people of God and the judgment against the entire world. With this reading there is no need to attribute this universal outlook to a later apocalyptic editor whose addition contradicts the meaning of the “original” text.¹²⁷ This reading also stands in contrast with Ben Zvi who concludes that the context of Zeph 1.18 does not clarify whether “land” or “earth” is intended. He argues that the meaning is deliberately left ambiguous both “as a sophisticated literary double entendre” and also as “an expression of the feelings and thoughts of Judeans for whom their annihilation...is subjectively tantamount to a total destruction” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 136). The reading offered in this exegesis understands אָרֶץ unambiguously as the “world” whose fate is inextricably intertwined with the fate of the people of God.

5.10 Summary of Zephaniah 1.10-18

Like the preceding oracles in the chapter these verses take up earlier texts from Israel’s history and press them into the service of creating a new text. Verses 10-11 follow the oracle against the leadership of Jerusalem and announce judgment against those involved in unjust economic practices. These unjust economic practices represent yet another dimension in which the people of God do not follow God’s will for a just and equitable society. The climatic announcement of this oracle, “All those who weigh out silver have been cut off” (v.11c) may echo the *karet* texts which lay out the judgment for those whose sins have made them an abomination to Yahweh. If so, a more specific echo of the central panel of Leviticus, chapters 18-20, would underline the accusation that they are part of a society that is everything the people of God should not be. This allusion is not as clearly marked as others in the Zephaniah 1 but it can be suggested as an echo in the

¹²⁵ Roberts, 1991, p. 185; Sweeney, 2003, p. 104; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 113.

¹²⁶ "...it is not always easy to decide which", Berlin, 1994, pp. 91-92.

¹²⁷ So e.g., Rudolph, 1975, p. 270; Seybold, 1991, p. 102.

text on the basis of both shared language and the thematic coherence of text and intertext. Both texts describe behaviour which makes God's people unacceptable to God.

The announcement of punishment in Zeph 1.12-13 echoes Amos 9.1-4, emphasising the impossibility of escaping God's punishment in spite of the conviction that God will do nothing. Zephaniah 1.13 echoes both Amos 5.7-13 and Deut 28.30 to powerful effect. Amos 5.7-13, and its wider context 5.1-17, present a completely corrupt society which has not simply abandoned justice and righteousness but has actively suppressed them in the acquisition of wealth and power. Yet the God of justice and righteousness and power is ready to bring judgment (Amos 5.8-9). These themes become present in Zephaniah's text, once again presenting Jerusalem and Judah as all that it should not be and ripe for God's imminent judgment. Deuteronomy 28.30 is also evoked by the futility curse and portrays the people of God as covenant breakers deserving of the covenant curses in which they will lose everything they have unjustly acquired, and more.

In Zeph 1.14-16 the indescribable presence and power of God is presented through echoes of the Sinai theophany. Just as the people of God were created through God's power at Sinai so this text threatens their destruction by the same power and presence. It signals a reversal of Israel's history in the same way that the allusion to the "outstretched hand" did at the beginning of the judgment speeches against Judah (1.4). Hints of this reversal are present in the text by echoes of the promise of Conquest and the Conquest itself (1.16). These verses threaten the reversal of Yahweh's acts of power in the creation of Israel and bringing them into the land.

Finally vv.17-18 return to the theme with which the chapter opened, global judgment because of the failure of the people of God to fulfil their calling. The people of God are God's representatives in the world just as אדם was in Genesis 1-11 and the fate of the world is intertwined with them. This logic underlies not only Zephaniah 1 but also the entire book of Zephaniah.

5.11 Conclusion for Zephaniah 1

The opening oracle of Zephaniah 1 (1.2-3) declares God's judgment upon all creation on the basis of the failure of God's people to fulfil their calling as God's representative nation. Allusion to the creation-flood account in Genesis 1-9 brings this theme of representation into the text of Zephaniah. At the foundational level this failure is rooted in their abandonment of God, shown by the second oracle (1.4-6). This abandonment of

God is incompatible with their status as the people of God and the oracle begins with allusion to the deliverance from Egypt through the language of the “outstretched hand.” In this deliverance through God’s power Israel was called as God’s representative nation and the intertextuality signals the reversal of this power to destroy them. The same outstretched hand had already been turned against the Northern Kingdom to their destruction and this background is also present through allusion to Isa 9.7-20; 5.25-30. The third oracle (1.7-9) addresses the Davidic house explicitly: “I will punish the officials and the king’s sons...who fill their master’s house with violence and fraud” (1.8, 9). The judgment against the Davidic house also becomes present in the text through the strongly marked allusion to the anointing of David by Samuel in 1 Samuel 16. There may also be an echo of Yahweh establishing David’s house through the phrase “Yahweh has prepared (כִּוֵּן Hiphil) a sacrifice” (1.7), although this is not as clearly marked. As God chose Israel to show God and God’s ways to the world, so David was chosen to lead them in this calling. Yet the dynasty chosen for righteousness and justice was given over to violence and deceit and therefore threatened with dire punishment. The ruling class alone was not able to derail God’s intentions for God’s people and so the merchants and financiers come into the judgment sights in the fourth oracle (1.10-11). Their unjust economic practices are so antithetical to God’s will for God’s society that the financial sector must be “cut off” as the most obdurate transgressors of God’s Torah. This may allude to the *karet* texts, but it is not as clearly marked as an allusion and can only be suggested. It does, however, fit the theme of Zephaniah 1. The inescapability of God’s judgment is stressed in the following oracle (1.12-13), in which echoes from Amos highlight the utter corruption of the society and echoes from Deuteronomy the extent to which they have opposed God. The penultimate oracle (1.14-16) announces the punishment for rejecting God’s vision of society and failing to represent God to the world. Like the second oracle (vv.4-6), texts concerning Israel’s creation – Sinai covenant and Conquest – are echoed to show how God’s creative power will be turned against God’s people to uncreate them. The final oracle returns to the theme with which Zephaniah 1 began, global judgment because of the failure of God’s people.

Two main patterns of intertextual reuse emerge from this reading of Zephaniah 1. The first, and most prominent pattern, is the reversing of key texts related to God’s creation and establishment of Israel/Judah. Indeed, the first pericope refers to the undoing of creation itself. The second pattern is applying to Judah previous texts of judgment. This is done in two ways. First, judgment oracles which were first announced against the

Northern Kingdom are echoed to show that God's judgment is now against Judah. Judgment comes for the same reasons as it came to Israel, namely Judah's failure to live as God's people. Instead their societies were characterised by oppression and corruption. The second way is by alluding to texts which threaten judgment for covenant disobedience. These allusions also characterise Judah as having failed in their commitment to God's demands, and therefore facing judgment.

The first chapter of Zephaniah creates the theme and underlying logic of the entire book. God created Israel as a representative people for the sake of the world and the fate of God's people is intertwined with the fate of the peoples of the world. This theme holds the book together and emerges again especially in Zephaniah 3 where God's desire to redeem both God's people and the peoples of the world becomes evident. Yet this desire is absent from Zephaniah 1 which presents judgment, of God's people and all peoples, in stark and unmitigated terms. This however, has a purpose. It is not a foretelling for the sake of knowing future events but rather is intended to bring God's people to repentance. The call to repentance is the subject matter of the two sections of Zephaniah 2.

Chapter 6

Zephaniah 2: Repentance

Zephaniah 2 presents a change from the unmitigated judgment oracles of Zephaniah 1 to a call for repentance and a vision for the future of God's people. The chapter is dealt with in two parts. First, 2.1-3 presents a call for God's people to adopt the attitude and behaviour that God requires from them. In this pericope there are no strongly marked allusions to specific texts. There are more general intertextual echoes of texts which show the ideal attitudes of God's people, particularly from Psalms and Proverbs. A specific allusion to Psalm 45 may be present in the text. The second section of the chapter, 2.4-15 is a series of oracles against various nations that has as its intertextual background the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. Zephaniah uses this intertextuality to portray a future in which the right order of things is restored for those who have escaped judgment through responding to the call to repentance.

6.1 Zephaniah 2.1-3

- 1a Gather yourselves together, gather,
- 1b the people without desire.
- 2a Before the decree takes effect,
- 2b (before) the day passes away like chaff,
- 2c before Yahweh's burning anger comes upon you,
- 2d before the day of Yahweh's anger comes upon you.¹²⁸
- 3a Seek Yahweh,
- 3b all you humble of the land,
- 3c who do his commands.
- 3d Seek righteousness, seek humility.
- 3e Perhaps you may be hidden on the day of Yahweh's anger.

Beginning with Zeph 2.1 there is a sudden change from the judgment speeches in Zephaniah 1 to a call to repentance with an equivocal ray of hope (v.3e "perhaps you may be hidden") for escape from God's imminent wrathful judgment. Commentators do not agree on whether 2.4 concludes the opening pericope of chapter 2 or marks the beginning of the next section, the oracles against the nations (OAN). Most scholars see 2.1-3 as a

¹²⁸ In the construction **לֹא יִבּוֹא עֲלֵיכֶם בְּתֵרֵם** the **לֹא** is "pleonastic" (redundant); (Jouon & Muraoka, 1993, p. 160).

discrete unit¹²⁹ although some follow the Masoretic division (*setuma* [ס]) which marks v.4 as closing the literary unit (Sweeney, 2003, pp. 111-112). It is a difficult case to decide upon and both Berlin and O'Brien hedge their bets in seeing v.4 as a bridge or transitional verse between 2.1-3 and 2.5-15.¹³⁰ In this exegesis 2.1-3 will be treated as a pericope and v.4 will be treated as part of Zeph 2.4-15, the OAN. Sweeney rightly considers this opening pericope of Zephaniah 2 to be “the formal core of Zephaniah, on which the overall syntactical and rhetorical structure of the book as well as its generic character are based” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 111). That is to say, the goal of the entire book of Zephaniah is to bring its hearers/readers to repentance and return to obedience to God, and these verses are the explicit call to that goal. Be that as it may, due to our distance from the original context and its texts, these opening verses of Zephaniah 2 are “the most difficult to translate in the book of Zephaniah” (Ball, 1988, p. 114). This becomes immediately obvious with v.1.

6.1.1 Zephaniah 2.1

Wellhausen shows the difficulties of v.1: “Der Wortlaut...lässt sich...nicht verstehen.” (*The wording is not able to be understood*) (quoted by Perlitt, 2004, p. 118). Similarly Vlaardingerbroek, “unable to offer a somewhat convincing translation” (1999, p. 117), renders the entire verse “.....” (p. 114). Verse 1 consists of two difficult cola:

Zeph 2.1	התקושו וקושו הגוי לא נכסף	Gather yourselves together, gather, the nation without desire.
----------	------------------------------	---

The first colon has two peculiarities. The first is the double use of the imperative קשש in two different stems, Hitpoel (Hitpael form of double-‘*ayin*/geminate verbs) and Qal. Ben Zvi explains that “The use of two verbal forms of the same root but in two different patterns (e.g., *qal* and *niphal*, *piel* and *pual*, *qal* and *hitpael*, etc) as pair words, either in parallel versets or in juxtaposition, is a common stylistic feature in the OT” (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 137-138). Similarly Berlin discusses such occurrences in the OT, concluding that the mixing of stems (or conjugations, as she refers to them) “is, at times, more effective than using totally different roots because it produces the assonance and play on words which is so much a part of biblical rhetoric” (Berlin, 1985, pp. 36-40). This is no

¹²⁹ E.g., Ball, 1988, p. 114; Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 296; Edler, 1984, p. 205; Hadjiev, 2014, p. 511; Keller, 1971, p. 198; Renaud, 1987, p. 218; Roberts, 1991, p. 189; Smith, 1984, p. 132.

¹³⁰ Berlin, 1994, p. 99; O'Brien, 2004, p. 112.

doubt in operation in Zeph 2.1 but the verbs discussed by Berlin are used numerous times in the OT.¹³¹ In contrast the verbal construction in Zeph 2.1 and its late monarchic contemporary Hab 1.5, וְהִתְמַדְהוּ תַמְדוּ (Be astonished! Be astounded; root תַמַד) are the solitary instances in the OT which contain the only Hitpael occurrence of their respective verb, in both cases in imperative form and in both cases the same root is repeated in the Qal imperative.¹³² Both texts seem to be effectively coining a word because the verbal root would not normally be used in Hitpael. Perlitt comes close to this conclusion when he suggests that the sole Hitpoel usage of קָשַׁשׁ in Zeph 2.1 “scheint um der Paronomasie willen ‘erfunden’ zu sein” (*seems to be “invented” for the sake of paronomasia*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 118).¹³³ This is the second time that Zephaniah mixes verb stems in an unusual way (see “Ungrammaticality” p.61).

In addition to this unusual verbal construction a second peculiarity is with the verb קָשַׁשׁ itself. It occurs in only three other texts, all of which are narratives, and in each case the verb occurs in the Poel stem (Piel form of double- ‘ayin/geminate verbs) and in each case refers to “gathering” straw (קָשַׁשׁ) (Exod 5.7, 12) or sticks (עֲצִים) (Num 15.32, 33; 1 Kgs 17.10, 12). As mentioned above, Zeph 2.1 has the only occurrence of קָשַׁשׁ in either Hitpoel or Qal, both imperatives. *HALOT* sees קָשַׁשׁ as certainly derived from the noun קָשׁ (straw, stubble, i.e. denominative) in its narrative occurrences (Exod 5.7, 12; Num 15.32, 33; 1 Kgs 17.10, 12), and probably denominative in Zeph 1.2. *HALOT* supports a translation like “get together and assemble”, “muster yourselves and stay mustered” (pp. 1154-1155). This is preferable to the suggestion of *BDB* to amend the text to הִתְבּוֹשְׁשׁוּ וְבוֹשׁוּ (“Be ashamed, be shamed”) (p. 905) for which there is no textual support. Other attempts to amend the text with a different verb are also unconvincing, for example, Rudolph, “Bücket euch und krümmt den Rücken” (*Bow down and bend your back*); Seybold “Bückt euch und stoppelt zusammen” (*Bend over and glean together*) (Rudolph, 1975, p. 271; Seybold, 1991, p. 102); “Stellt nur weiterhin Fallen und werdet darin gefangen.” (*Lay yet more traps and be trapped in them*) (Sabottka, 1972, p. 60). Roberts’ criticism that this “offers no improvement over the traditional derivation of the verb forms” (Roberts, 1991, p. 187) is true but moreover it seems that “the use of the verb and

¹³¹ The one exception is Ps 38.3 where נָחַת occurs in the Niphal stem only in this verse (Berlin, 1985, p. 36).

¹³² Isaiah 29.9, with שַׁעַע in Hitpael (Hitpael, see Jouon & Muraoka, 1993, p. 169] and Qal, which Deissler, 1964, p. 451, offers as analogous to Zeph 2.1 and Hab 1.5, may be the same phenomenon. However, there are some textual difficulties in identifying the verbal roots (see Watts, 1985, p. 384).

¹³³ Paronomasia is similar to punning.

its inherent relation to the gathering of sticks or chaff appears to be a deliberate choice in this context” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 114). The problem, however, is identifying exactly what the verb is intended to signify. Suggestions include the image of sacrifice carried over from chapter 1.7 in which it is the people themselves who are gathered like “the very sticks that are to be burned up as part of the sacrifice on the Day of YHWH”;¹³⁴ Judah’s worthlessness, like “stubble”;¹³⁵ the flammability of straw in the context of the announcement of Zeph 1.18 that Yahweh is about to consume the whole world like fire and Judah, like straw, is ready to burst into flame.¹³⁶ D.H. Ryou’s suggestion that “the use of the problematic verb (קָשַׁשׁ) is intentional to evoke all the possible connotations it might carry” (Ryou, 1995, p. 195) does not help to understand the text. The uncertainty about the exact force of the metaphor is another example of lost intertextuality. What is clear, however, is the idea of gathering together as a nation, shown by the second colon.

The second colon of Zeph 2.1 is also difficult with its use of כָּסַף Niphal. This verb occurs in two other texts in the Niphal stem (Gen 31.30; Ps 84.3) and twice in the Qal stem (Job 14.15; Ps 17.12). In these texts the Niphal stem of the verb conveys an active rather than passive voice so in all four texts both Niphal and Qal כָּסַף have the same meaning, “to long for”, “to desire.” Thus the passive voice of the KJV translation of Zeph 1b, “O nation not desired”, is incorrect. However, the majority of modern translations give a quite different English rendering of the verb than of the other occurrences in the OT, “O shameless nation.”¹³⁷ This is based on the Jewish Aramaic meaning of כָּסַף, “to be ashamed” (*HALOT*, p. 490). As Ben Zvi argues, however, although the Aramaic root כָּסַף can have the meaning “be ashamed” this “meaning is not only unattested elsewhere in Biblical Hebrew, but also the Targum provides a different rendering” [of the verb in Zeph 2.1b],¹³⁸ and neither do any other of the ancient versions support the reading of “be ashamed” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 141).

The best reading, then, is the most straightforward one, “The people who have not desired.” There are two suggestions on the nuance of this. The German translation E11 reads, “Du gleichgültiges Volk” (*You apathetic nation*).¹³⁹ This could continue the theme

¹³⁴ Sweeney, 2003, pp. 114-115.

¹³⁵ Robertson, 1990, p. 290; similarly Roberts, 1991, p. 189.

¹³⁶ Berlin, 1994, p. 96.

¹³⁷ NRSV, ESV, NJB, NASB, NIV, NJPS.

¹³⁸ “Gather and come and come closer, a nation (of) a generation who does not desire [Aramaic חָמַד] to return to the Torah!” Ahuva Ho’s translation of Targum Jonathan (Ho, 2009, p. 252).

¹³⁹ Similarly Irsigler, 2002, p. 189; Renaud, 1987, p. 216; Sabottka, 1972, p. 62.

of spiritual apathy from Zeph 1.12. However, the suggestions of Perlitt, “Volk, das sich nicht (nach Jahwe?) sehnt.” (*Nation that does not desire [Yahweh?]*)” (Perlitt, 2004, p. 119), and Ben Zvi, “the people who do not long for YHWH” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 142), similar to Ps 84.3[2], fit the overall theme from Zephaniah 1. The global judgment threatened in chapter 1 is because of the failure of the people of God to fulfil their calling. It is this failed people, or nation, of God that Zephaniah 2 calls to repentance. Viewed in this way Perlitt’s suggestion answers his own uncertainty about the significance of גוי (nation):

Die Anrede *gôj* „Nation“ kann sich nicht auf „die Völker“, sondern im Anschluss an Kap. 1 nur auf Juda oder eine Gruppe der Judäer beziehen...Was aber hier vom *gôj* gesagt wird, bleibt unerklärlich.

The title gôy “nation” cannot refer to “the nations” but in connection with chapter 1 can only refer to Judah or a group of Judahites...But what is meant here by gôy remains inexplicable (Perlitt, 2004, p. 119).

What is meant by גוי is the nation that is God’s people. Zephaniah 2.1 calls this people who have been indicted in Zephaniah 1 to gather together, perhaps in the manner of sticks or straw, although the intertextualities that constitute this metaphor are lost to us. The people of God are called to muster in response to the announcement of judgment in chapter 1.

6.1.2 Zephaniah 2.2

While Berlin states fairly that this verse is “probably a corrupt text” and that it “is impossible...to ascertain exactly what the MT sought to communicate” (Berlin, 1994, p. 97), the overall meaning is self-evident. It is an exhortation not to procrastinate in the process of repentance as the Day of Yahweh which was prophesied in chapter 1 approaches. As Ben Zvi writes, it is the “sense of ‘the time is quickly running out’ that governs the entire verse” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 143). There are no obvious intertextual connections in this verse but the *intra*-textual relationship to chapter 1 is integral, namely that the Day of Yahweh is fast approaching and thus repentance is urgent.

6.1.3 Zephaniah 2.3

Verse 3 is the climax of the pericope in which “all you humble of the land” (כל-ענוי) are exhorted to seek Yahweh (בקשו את-יהוה). To the command “Seek Yahweh” is added the command to seek righteousness (צדק) and humility (ענוה). The prophet offers those who seek Yahweh in this manner the possibility of avoiding destruction on

the day of Yahweh: “Perhaps (אולי) you may be hidden on the day of Yahweh’s anger” (v.3c). The importance of seeking Yahweh is quite common in the OT, especially in the Psalms, although in the OT the verb דרש is used more often (35 times) than the verb used in Zeph 2.3, בקש (25 times). Both verbs are used in Zeph 1.6 to characterise the people of Jerusalem, “who have not sought (בקש) Yahweh and have not searched (דרש) for him.” This common usage makes the identification of intertextual relationships with other texts difficult. However, several texts may be suggested as “marked” intertexts for Zeph 2.3.

Amos 5

There are several indications that Zeph 2.3 may echo Amos 5.14-15, texts which Ryou describes as “very close in spirit” (Ryou, 1995, p. 203); (see Table 6.1 below).

Table 6.1: Zeph 2.3 and Amos 5.14-15

Zeph 2.3	בקשו את־יהוה כל־ענוי הארץ אשר משפטו פעלו בקשו־צדק בקשו ענוה אולי תסתרו ביום אף־יהוה	Seek Yahweh, all you humble of the land, who do his commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps you may be hidden on the day of Yahweh’s anger.
Amos 5.14-15	דרשו־טוב ואל־רע למן תחיו ויהי־כן יהוה אלהי־צבאות אתכם כאשר אמרתם שנאו־רע ואהבו טוב והציגו בשער משפט אולי יחנן יהוה אלהי־צבאות שארי־ת יוסף	Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; And so Yahweh, the God of hosts, will be with you as you have said. Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate; perhaps Yahweh, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph

* AT

The shape of both texts is similar. Both begin with the imperative “Seek!” Amos uses a different Hebrew word (דרש) than the one used in Zeph 2.3 (בקש), but the words are commonly paired together in the OT,¹⁴⁰ sharing a “close semantic connection” (Ryou, 1995) In the broader context of Amos 5 the theme of seeking emerges several times: “Seek me and live” (v.4); “Seek Yahweh and live” (v.6); and “seek good and not evil” (v.14) (all occurrences use the verb דרש [seek], not the verb בקש that is in Zeph 2.3). Both texts also conclude with the possibility of Yahweh having mercy if the hearers repent and change their ways, signalled with אולי (perhaps). As argued above, it is likely that Zephaniah was intimately familiar with this Amos text (see 5.7.2 above). The echo of Amos 5.14-15 makes the possibility of deliverance from judgment appear even more

¹⁴⁰ Deut 4.29; Judg 6.29; 1 Sam 28.7; 1 Chr 16.11; 2 Chr 22.9; Job 10.6; Ps 24.6; 38.13; 105.4; Prov 11.27; Isa 65.1; Jer 29.13; Ezek 34.6; Zeph 1.6.

provisional in Zeph 2.1-3. The people of Judah had historical knowledge of Yahweh's judgment upon the Northern Kingdom in the form of the Assyrians. The subsequent arrival of refugees in Judah from that catastrophe were those who had, to some extent, escaped Yahweh's judgment. The fact that most did not escape underlines the uncertain nature of אִילִי (perhaps).

“All the humble of the land”

It is “all the humble of the land” (כָּל-עֲנִי הָאָרֶץ) who are exhorted to seek Yahweh, to seek righteousness and humility. עֲנִי (“humble”) is an adjective which occurs twenty-five times in the OT, thirteen of which are in Psalms, and has two related senses. First, it can describe those who are “humble” or “meek”¹⁴¹ and it can also describe those who are “poor”, “afflicted” or “oppressed.”¹⁴² It is sometimes difficult to discern which sense of עֲנִי is intended, e.g.,

- Ps 10.17 “you will hear the desire of the meek (NRSV)/afflicted (ESV).”
- Ps 69.33 “Let the oppressed (NRSV)/humble (ESV) see it and be glad; you who seek God, let your hearts revive.”
- Ps 76.10 “when God rose up to establish judgment, to save all the oppressed (NRSV)/humble (ESV) of the earth.”
- Ps 147.6 “The Lord lifts up the downtrodden (NRSV)/humble (ESV); he casts the wicked to the ground.”

This highlights the relationship between the two senses of the word. The “humble/meek” are those who are obedient to God, who are oriented toward God's ways and the “oppressed/afflicted” are those who suffer injustice from those who reject God's ways. Thus the “humble” and the “afflicted” are both objects of God's favour and saving action while those who afflict and oppress are objects of God's judgment (e.g., Pss 9.13, 19-21; 10.12). Given these two senses it is not surprising that commentators differ on what עֲנִי means in Zeph 3b. Some understand it to refer to the lower socio-economic class, the “afflicted”, for example, Keller, “Ce sermon, Sophonie l'adresse aux *indigents du pays*.” (*Zephaniah addresses this sermon to the poor of the land*) (Keller, 1971, p. 199). It is probably better, however, to understand the meaning of כָּל-עֲנִי הָאָרֶץ in this climatic

¹⁴¹ Num 12.3; Ps 25.9; 34.3; 37.11; 149.4; Prov 3.34; Isa 11.4; 29.19.

¹⁴² Ps 9.13, 19; 10.12; 22.27; 76.10; Prov 14.21; 16.19; Isa 32.7; 61.1; Amos 2.7; 8.4.

verse as primarily all the “humble” of the land, rather than all the “afflicted” of the land.¹⁴³ This is because it is a call to repentance, a call to become people who are oriented to God’s ways.

Some scholars consider the two cola “all you humble of the land, who do his commands” (2.3b-c) to be a later addition because telling the humble to seek humility is illogical.¹⁴⁴ This perceived contradiction is analogous to viewing Zeph 1.13b-c as contradicting the “original text” (5.7.2 above) and, as Sweeney writes, “The problem is engendered...by some rather wooden readings of these verses” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 118). It is an exhortation for anyone among the people of God who will respond to the prophetic message to be people who are oriented towards God and God’s ways. Effectively Zephaniah is saying, “You who are God’s people, be who you are created to be!” Following Zephaniah 1, which announced judgment upon everyone and even the entire created order because of the sins of the people of God, the people of God are now exhorted to change from being those who reject Yahweh and his ways to becoming people who are oriented towards Yahweh and his ways.

“seek righteousness (צִדִּיק), seek humility (עֲנוּה)”

The “humble” who do God’s commands are exhorted to “seek righteousness (צִדִּיק), seek humility (עֲנוּה)” so that they may have a chance to avoid God’s coming wrath. Some scholars think the appearance of עֲנוּה indicates that Zeph 2.1-3 is a later addition.¹⁴⁵ Yet this standpoint is not accepted by all, or even most, scholars and Deissler writes “*anawah* est un terme extrêmement rare, mais irrécusable du point de vue de la critique textuelle” (עֲנוּה is an extremely rare term but unimpeachable from the point of view of textual criticism) (Deissler, 1964, p. 452). עֲנוּה (humility) only occurs five times in the OT.¹⁴⁶

Proverbs

It is likely that Zephaniah was aware of the proverbs in which עֲנוּה occurs (15.33; 18.12; 22.4), which belong to what is considered a pre-exilic collection of proverbs, namely Proverbs 10-29 (Murphy, 1998, p. xx). In these occurrences in Proverbs עֲנוּה (humility) is closely associated with the “fear of Yahweh” (Prov 15.33; 22.4) and leads to riches,

¹⁴³ So, e.g., O’Brien, 2004, p. 114; Robertson, 1990, p. 294; Roberts, 1991, p. 190.

¹⁴⁴ E.g., Hadjiev, 2011, pp. 571-572; Perlitt, 2004, p. 119; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, pp. 115-116.

¹⁴⁵ E.g., Smith, 1911, p. 214; Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 148.

¹⁴⁶ Ps 45.5; Prov 15.33; 18.12; 22.4; Zeph 2.3. Ps 18.36 is not included because עֲנוּה appears to be a textual corruption (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 148).

honour and life (Prov 22.4). The opposite of humility is “a haughty heart” which leads to destruction (Prov 18.12). These associations fit well with Zeph 2.3 which exhorts its readers to seek righteousness and humility (ענוה) in order to avoid destruction. The reason for imminent threat of destruction in chapter 1 is because the people of God have no fear of Yahweh, neither explicitly (Zeph 1.4-6, 12) nor in their actions and lifestyles (Zeph 1.8-9). In these proverbs ענוה (humility) is considered a key attribute required of people in relationship with Yahweh in order for them to both live and prosper and this signification is transumed into Zeph 1.3 with its exhortation to “seek humility.”

Psalm 45

Psalm 45.5[4] is a more strongly marked intertext of Zeph 2.3 because it is the only other text where צדק (righteousness) and ענוה (humility) occur together in the OT. צדק is widely used in the OT (119 times) and is used in parallel construction with a number of other terms.¹⁴⁷ The collocation of צדק and ענוה, occurring only in Zeph 2.3 and Ps 45.5, proves to be an unusual pairing. In other texts which contain צדק the parallel elements are commensurate with צדק in a way that ענוה (humility) is not. This is demonstrated in the way that these other terms paired with צדק could be used to describe Yahweh whereas ענוה cannot.¹⁴⁸ Thus the rare vocabulary (ענוה) and the unusual collocation (צדק and ענוה) which is unique to these two texts is an indication that there may be an intentional textual relationship between them.

Of the scholars consulted in this research only Ben Zvi discusses Ps 45.5 in relation to Zeph 2.3 but he rejects allusion on the basis that Psalm 45 may be late and that it addresses the king whereas Zeph 2.1-3 addresses the poor ” (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 147-148). Psalm 45, however, is not widely considered to be late.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, a direct correlation between addressees in both texts is not required for intertextual reuse of one text by another. In any case, the leadership of Jerusalem are still among the addressees of Zeph 2.1-3 as the text is addressing everyone from the amongst the people of God to respond to the call to repentance, just as Zephaniah 1 announced judgment against the people of God in their entirety. As Edler writes, “Die Aufforderung, Jahwe zu suchen, ergeht also

¹⁴⁷ See also Job 29.14; Ps 9.5; 72.2; 89.14; 94.15; 97.2; 119.75, 121; Isa 1.21; 16.5; 26.9; 32.1; 58.2; Jer 22.13; Hos 2.21. Pss 9.9; 58.1; 98.9; Isa 11.4; 45.19; Pss 15.2; 17.1; 45.8; 85.11; 85.12; 96.13b; Isa 11.5; 59.4; Ps 119.142; Prov 1.3; 2.9; Isa 1.26b; 26.10; 45.8; Jer 31.23b; Hos 2.21b.

¹⁴⁸ Hence the problems ancient and modern readers have had with Ps 18.36. See LXX, NRSV, ESV, Craigie (1983, p. 168).

¹⁴⁹ E.g., Craigie, 2002, p. 338; Eaton, 1986, p. 118; Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 190; Kraus, 1988, p. 453.

gerade an jene, die im ersten Kapitel...angeklagt wurden.” (*The challenge to seek Yahweh was made therefore exactly to those who were indicted in the first chapter*) (Edler, 1984, pp. 217-218).

Background to Psalm 45

Psalm 45 is unique for two reasons. First, it “opens and closes in the voice of its composer” (Ps 45.1-2, 18; Mays, 1994, p. 181) and second, it is the only psalm in which the king is the sole object of praise.¹⁵⁰ Thus it has been described as “the only example of a profane lyric in the Psalter” (Weiser, 1962, p. 361). This kind of praise of a living monarch was common in the ancient Near East and may provide a background to Psalm 45.¹⁵¹

The psalm was evidently written for a royal wedding but scholarly confidence in identifying the exact setting has decreased with time. Briggs and Briggs stated categorically, “Ps 45 is a song celebrating the marriage of Jehu” (Briggs & Briggs, 1906, p. 383). Weiser was less sure, “Presumably the song was dedicated to a king of the northern kingdom...It is no longer possible to ascertain who the king in question was” (Weiser, 1962, p. 362). Most modern commentators have abandoned this question as futile, recognising instead that the psalm was originally written for a particular royal wedding and used thereafter for other royal weddings.¹⁵² Rather than emphasise the importance of the original setting for understanding the psalm¹⁵³ scholars now recognise rather that its preservation in Judah, regardless of its origins, means that it is now connected to the Davidic dynasty (Eaton, 1986, p. 118). Kraus proposes that the prophecy of Nathan (2 Samuel 7) has been combined with “idealized conceptions of the ancient Near Eastern cult of kings...(to) form a background for Psalm 45” (Kraus, 1988, p. 454). Along these lines Gerstenberger sees in Ps 45.17-18 “not only a good wish but something like a divine promise” (Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 189).

Following these scholars it may be suggested that Psalm 45 was written sometime during the monarchic period, either in Israel or Judah. Whatever its provenance it was ultimately preserved in Judah where its good wishes to the king (vv.17-18) gained the significance of promises to the king, similar to Nathan’s oracle in 2 Samuel 7. This text would have

¹⁵⁰ Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 187; Kraus, 1988, p. 453; Mays, 1994, p. 180.

¹⁵¹ Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 187; Kraus, 1988, p. 454.

¹⁵² Craigie, 1983, p. 338; Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 190; Kraus, 1988, p. 453.

¹⁵³ As do, e.g., Briggs & Briggs, 1906, pp. 384-385.

been available for Zephaniah, a reader-writer in late monarchic Judah, to allude to in the production of his text.

Intertextuality between Psalm 45 and Zephaniah 2.1-3

Zephaniah 2.3 and Ps 45.5 share the only two occurrences in the OT where **עֲנוּה** and **צֶדֶק** are brought together and this unusual vocabulary creates a connection between the texts. In Ps 45.5 the noun **עֲנוּה** is brought into a close relationship with **צֶדֶק** through the use of *maqeph* yet remains in the absolute state. This is unusual but possible in Biblical Hebrew (see Jouon & Muraoka, 1993, p. 59). The vowels are shortened due to the loss of accent caused by the *maqeph* (*proclisis*) resulting in the unfamiliar spelling of **עֲנוּה־צֶדֶק**.¹⁵⁴ This phrase stands in parallel with the construct chain phrase **דְּבַר־אֱמֶת** (the cause of truth), making v.5 somewhat complicated: “In your majesty ride on victoriously for **דְּבַר־אֱמֶת** (the cause of truth) and **עֲנוּה־צֶדֶק**.”¹⁵⁵ The unusual syntax has led some scholars to reject **עֲנוּה** as a corruption,¹⁵⁶ but this is an unconvincing claim as the LXX, most modern English translations, and other Psalms scholars follow the MT.¹⁵⁷

The presentation of the king in this psalm certainly does “overreach any historical portrait of a king” (Kraus, 1988, p. 453). Psalm 45.3-8a heaps up the attributes of the king (vv.1-7a) that are the grounds for his blessing and prosperity from God’s hand (vv.3b, 8b). The king is handsome and eloquent (v.3), a mighty warrior with glory and majesty (v.4), victorious in his campaign for truth (**אֱמֶת**), humility (**עֲנוּה**), and righteousness (**צֶדֶק**), an instrument of “dread/awesome deeds” (v.5). He conquers his enemies (v.6), his throne endures, his sceptre is a sceptre of equity (**מִישֹׁר**) (v.7), he loves righteousness (**צֶדֶק**) and hates wickedness (**רָשָׁע**). As Mays writes, “All these compliments are features of the ideal of kingship and describe the persona that is appropriate to the office” (Mays, 1994, p. 180).

It is this ideal picture of the king, and implicitly the entire ruling class of Judah, and by extension the whole society of God’s people, that comes into view with the echo of Psalm 45 in Zeph 2.3. In his pursuit of “the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness” (v.4), as his “royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity” (v.6), and in his love of “righteousness” and his hatred of “wickedness” (v.7) this ideal king “appears as the helper of all the

¹⁵⁴ In construct chain the spelling would be **עֲנוּה־צֶדֶק**.

¹⁵⁵ NRSV note “the meekness of the right”; ESV “meekness and righteousness”.

¹⁵⁶ Briggs & Briggs, 1906, p. 384; Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 187; NRSV.

¹⁵⁷ Craigie, 1983, p. 336; Kidner, 1973, p. 171; Kraus, 1988, p. 455; Weiser, 1962, p. 360.

disfranchised and as the protector of the mode of existence that is faithful to the community” (Kraus, 1988, p. 455). This image of the ideal king stands in complete contradistinction to everything Zephaniah has written about the people of Judah and Jerusalem up to this point. The leadership of Judah and Jerusalem is unjust, oppressive, on the side of wickedness and against Yahweh, and the entire people of God are stamped in this image. Just as the ideal king is blessed by Yahweh (Ps 45.3, 8) and promised success and posterity (Ps 45.17-18) the people of Judah and Jerusalem have been promised the opposite: curse and extermination. In Zeph 2.1-3, however, a sliver of hope is held out. By turning from their rejection of Yahweh and his ways to adopting the behaviour (צדק) and attitude (ענוה) that is acceptable to Yahweh there is the chance that they may escape the judgment (Zeph 2.3e).

If indeed Zephaniah does allude to Psalm 45 it provides an interesting case of “inner-biblical exegesis.” Psalm 45 became the subject of Messianic interpretation by late Judaism and in the early church allegorical interpretation of the church (bride) and Christ (king/bridegroom). Kraus comments that these post-monarchic interpretations come from the way in which the psalm portrays the “beauty of the eternal kingdom (2 Sam 7.16) that has sloughed off all traces of transience, hiddenness, and disfigurement (c.f. Isa. 53.2) and brings with it only joy and celebration, stringed music and perfect happiness” (Kraus, 1988, p. 457). For Zephaniah this portrayal of the psalm functions not as a future hope but rather as a mirror by which to contrast the ugly reality of the kingdom as it really was. Zephaniah’s allusion to Psalm 45 highlights the vast difference between what Judah’s leadership, and the people of Judah, should be and what it actually is. Throughout chapter one Zephaniah has condemned the leadership of Judah and the entire people of God for being unjust and corrupt. They have no “humility” (ענוה) and are the opposite of ענו (“humble”), objects not of Yahweh’s saving action but of his judgment. Zephaniah 2.3 is a call to become humble, that is, to become oriented to Yahweh’s ways, if there is to be any hope of avoiding Yahweh’s judgment.

Zeph 1.12; Amos 9.3

The concluding line of the pericope, “Perhaps you may be hidden on the day of Yahweh’s anger” (v.3e), echoes Zeph 1.12 and its intertext Amos 9.1-4. Zephaniah 1.12 portrays Yahweh searching Jerusalem with lamps and its echo of Amos 9.3 emphasises the utter impossibility of escape. The same verb used in Amos 9.3, “and if they hide (סתר Niphal) from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite

them”, is also used in Zeph 2.3e, “Perhaps you may be hidden (סתר Niphal) on the day of Yahweh’s anger.” This *intra*-textuality with Zeph 1.12 and intertextuality with Amos 9.3 brings into the text the idea that the only possible way to escape Yahweh’s wrath is by seeking Yahweh himself. There is no other way and even this at best offers only the possibility of escape.

6.1.4 Summary

The first literary unit in Zeph 2, vv.1-3, turns from the announcement of judgment upon God’s people, for their failure to be the people of God, to a call to repentance. Unlike Zephaniah 1, there are no strong markers in this pericope through which an allusion can be confidently identified. Several allusions can be suggested, however, on the basis of less definite markers. Verse 1 summons the nation which does not desire Yahweh to a great assembly. The identification of Judah as “the nation which does not desire Yahweh” continues the logic of chapter 1 in which God’s people are indicted for not fulfilling their calling as living as the people of God. Verse 2, difficult to understand in its exact details, is nevertheless straight forward in its overall meaning. The people of God have no time to procrastinate but must repent immediately before the judgment of God in the form of the Day of Yahweh, announced in Zephaniah 1, arrives.

The oracle reaches its climax in v.3 which calls the people of God to return to what they should be if they are to have any hope at all of escaping God’s terrible judgment. The uncertain nature of this possibility of deliverance is underlined through the possible echo of Amos 5.14-15 and the historical knowledge that it was only some who escaped the judgment of Yahweh. The call for repentance is directed to the ענו (humble), that is, those who are oriented to Yahweh and his ways. This looks back to Zephaniah 1 where Judah and Jerusalem, the very people of God and the city of God, are – incredibly – not oriented to Yahweh and his ways. Those who are willing to seek Yahweh are exhorted to seek צדק (righteousness), a common word in the OT, and ענוה (humility), a rare word. This word, ענוה (humility), brings with it signification from Prov 15.33; 18.12 and 22.4 where it is considered a key attribute required of people living in relationship with Yahweh. This is a more general intertextual allusion to a concept which is articulated in these texts. Apart from Zeph 2.3 צדק (righteousness) and ענוה (humility) occur together only in Ps 45.5, which suggests a possible allusion to Psalm 45. This psalm presents an ideal picture of the king and by extension of the people of God. This king, and by extension people, who is approved by God stands in stark contrast to the picture of the rulers and people of

Jerusalem and Judah that Zephaniah 1 presents. This ideal picture resonates in the background as Zeph 2.1-3 calls the people of God to turn from what they should not be and to pursue what they should be. The offer of deliverance is an uncertain one, “Perhaps you may be hidden on the day of Yahweh’s anger” (v.3e) but it is unequivocal that the only possibility of being “hidden” (סתר Niphal) from this judgment is by seeking Yahweh himself (c.f. Zeph 1.12; Amos 9.3). Zephaniah now turns from this uncertain possibility of deliverance from the consequences of present sins to a vision of the future for those who do escape the coming judgment in the following oracles against the nations (Zeph 2.4-16).

6.2 Zephaniah 2.4-15: Oracles against the nations

- 4a For Gaza shall be abandoned,
- 4b and Ashkelon a desolation,
- 4c Ashdod, at midday they shall drive her out,
- 4d and Ekron shall be uprooted.
- 5a Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast,
- 5b the nation of the Cherethites.
- 5c The word of Yahweh is against you,
- 5d Canaan, land of the Philistines,
- 5e I shall destroy you, without inhabitant.
- 6a And you shall become, O seacoast,
- 6b shepherds’ pastures and sheep’s pens.
- 7a And the seacoast shall belong to the remnant of the house of Judah,
- 7b they shall graze upon them.
- 7c In the houses of Ashkelon they will lie down in the evening,
- 7d for Yahweh their God will be mindful of them,
- 7e and restore their fortunes.

- 8a I have heard the scorn of Moab,
- 8b and the revilings of the Ammonites,
- 8c with which they reviled my people,
- 8d and magnified themselves against their territory.
- 9a Therefore, as I live, declaration of Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel,
- 9b for Moab will become like Sodom,
- 9c and the Ammonites like Gomorrah,
- 9d a weed infested ground and salt-pit,
- 9e and a desolation forever.
- 9f The remnant of my people will plunder them,
- 9g and the remainder of my nation will possess them.
- 10a This shall be for them in place of their pride,
- 10b for they have reviled and boasted against the people of Yahweh of Hosts.

- 11a Yahweh will be terrible against them,
- 11b for he will shrivel all the gods of the world.
- 11c And they shall bow to him,
- 11d each from its place,

- 11e all the inhabitants of the coastland regions among the nations.¹⁵⁸
 12a Even you, O Cushites,
 12b they are pierced by my sword.
- 13a And he shall stretch out his hand against the north,
 13b and destroy Assyria.
 13c He will turn Nineveh to desolation,
 13d a dry waste like the wilderness.
 14a And herds shall lie down in her midst,
 14b every wild beast,¹⁵⁹
 14c even the owl, even the short-eared owl¹⁶⁰
 14d shall lodge in her capitals (of the columns).
 14e Noise shall resound in her windows,
 14f dry heat in her threshold,
 14g for her panelling shall be laid bare.
 15a This is the exultant city,
 15b who lived securely,
 15c who said in her heart,
 15d “I am and there is no other.”
 15e Lo, she has become a horror,
 15f a lair for wild animals.
 15g Everyone who pass by her hisses,
 15h and shakes his hand.

Zephaniah 2.4-15 consists of a series of oracles against the nations (OAN):¹⁶¹ vv.4-7, the Philistines; vv.8-11 Moab and the Ammonites; v.12 the Cushites; vv.13-15 Assyria and Nineveh. It is likely that OAN emerged as a literary form from the prophets’ involvement in warfare which is thought to be one of the earliest roles of Israelite prophets.¹⁶² This role in warfare is shown by Samuel’s role in Israel’s battles (1 Sam 13.8ff), Elijah’s title “The chariots of Israel and its horsemen” (2 Kgs 2.12) and Elisha’s participation in the campaign against Moab (2 Kgs 3.9ff). The story of Balaam also shows this association of the prophet with warfare (Num 22.1ff). The earliest series of OAN in the classical prophets is Amos (Amos 1.3-2.16) who uses the OAN to turn the tables against his audience, Israel. This indicates that the OAN were an established literary tradition by this time. As Hayes writes, “The usage of such nation oracles by the classical prophets and their employment at the beginning of the classical period in the eighth century would

¹⁵⁸ The construct state is here understood as partitive (e.g., “slice of bacon”), advised in personal communication with Prof. T. Muraoka.

¹⁵⁹ כָּל־חַיַּת־גּוֹי “every animal of a nation”; meaning uncertain.

¹⁶⁰ It is uncertain which animals are referred to in this line.

¹⁶¹ Geyer’s point that “oracles about the nations” is a better description than “oracles against the nations” (Geyer, 2009, p. 82) is generally true within the OT prophets. In Zeph 2.4-15, however, the oracles are all “against” the nations, with the partial exception of 2.11.

¹⁶² Blenkinsopp, 1996, pp. 53-54; see also Paul, 1991, pp. 7-11.

suggest that the practice of delivering such oracles had a long history within ancient Israel” (Hayes, 1968, p. 81).

The OAN in the book of the Zephaniah are unique among the book of the Twelve. Amos does have an extended series of OAN but it is an atypical usage of the genre as Amos uses them to lead into oracles against Israel (1.3-2.16). Other books within the Twelve have minor elements of OAN (Joel 3.4-8, 19; Mic 5.5-6) while the books of Obadiah and Nahum are constituted almost entirely of oracles against Edom and Assyria respectively. Yet within the Twelve only the book of Zephaniah has a collection of OAN that resembles the great collections in Isaiah (10.12-19; 13.1-23.18), Jeremiah (46.1-51.64) and Ezekiel (25.1-32.21). Hayes comments that “These speeches against foreign powers represent a major problem-area for exegetes and commentators since they sit like extraneous literary and theological blocks within the prophetic books” (Hayes, 1968, p. 81). Initially this appears to be the case in Zephaniah as the OAN seem to interrupt oracles that address Judah and Jerusalem (2.1-3; 3.1-5). A closer reading, however, reveals that Zephaniah’s OAN form an integral part of the overall message of the book.

6.2.1 The purpose of the OAN in Zephaniah: Motivation to repent

The 12 verses that make up the OAN constitute a substantial portion of this small prophetic book, indicating they have a significant purpose in the overall message of the book of Zephaniah. This purpose is understood differently by different scholars. A number of scholars argue that the OAN have been artificially brought into relationship with the preceding judgment speeches and call to repentance in Zeph 1.2-2.3.¹⁶³ Perlitt has a particularly negative view of the OAN in Zephaniah, considering them to be vastly inferior to those of Amos 1-2 in terms of quality of language (*Sprachqualität*) and precision of reasoning (*Begründungspräzision*) and to fall far short of the OAN in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel in terms of length and poetic quality (Perlitt, 2004, p. 121). Furthermore, Perlitt argues that the OAN have no relationship with the preceding material and were added, on the one hand to give the book of Zephaniah the conventional tripartite structure (judgment against Israel, judgment against the nations, salvation for Israel) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 98), and on the other hand as an attempt to universalise Zephaniah’s authentic oracles, which were only addressed to Judah:

¹⁶³ Edler, 1984, p. 206; Perlitt, 2004, p. 121; Roberts, 1991, p. 195; Rudolph, 1975, p. 279.

Weil auch Zephania die große Welt im Blick gehabt haben muss, findet dieses name-dropping statt - denn viel mehr ist es nicht.

Because also Zephaniah must have had the entire world in view this name dropping occurs – because it is not much more (p. 121).

Thus the difficulty from Zephaniah 1 continues into Zephaniah 2, namely understanding the relationship between the people of God and the peoples of the world. Perlitt sees no relationship between the OAN and the preceding material:

Sieht man 4-15 im Zusammenhang der ganzen zephanianischen Sammlung, so ist es verblüffend, wie unbekümmert der Sammler der Völkersprüche um 1,2-2,3 waren: Das dort beschuldigte und mit dem ‚Tag Jahwes‘ bedrohte Juda ist in 2,4ff kein Thema mehr.

If one sees 4-15 in the context of the whole Zephaniah collection it is amazing how unconcerned the collectors of the OAN were about 1.2-2.3. The Judah that is indicted there and threatened with the Day of Yahweh is no longer a theme in 2.4ff. (p. 121).

Edler similarly struggles with understanding the OAN within the wider context of Zephaniah. Seeing Zeph 2.3 as the goal of Zephaniah's prophecy, he sees no connection between 2.1-3 and 2.4-15:

Die folgenden Verse Zef 2,4ff sind deutlich von unserer Einheit (i.e. 2.1-3) abgesetzt. Es handelt sich dort um sogenannte Fremdvölkersprüche, während in Zef 2,3 sinnvollerweise nur Juda/Jerusalem, d.h. das Gottesvolk angesprochen sein kann.

The following verses of Zeph 2.4ff are clearly contrasted to our pericope. It is about the so-called OAN, while Zeph 2.3 can only be addressing, for obvious reasons, Judah/Jerusalem, i.e. the people of God (Edler, 1984, p. 206).

Rudolph also sees Zeph 2.4-15 as an originally separate section that has nothing to do with the preceding Day of Yahweh (Rudolph, 1975, p. 279). The כִּי (“for”) that begins v.4 is, for Rudolph, a purely secondary addition that attempts to connect the two otherwise unrelated pericopes. Rudolph tries to find some sense in the addition of the OAN and argues that it shows that escape to a foreign land is no way to avoid the Day of Yahweh because Yahweh's power will be shown there as well.

These approaches see the OAN as a later non-Zephanic addition that does not intrinsically have anything to do with the preceding oracles of judgment and call to repentance. A variation of this approach is taken by Vlaardingerbroek who suggests that Zephaniah initially prophesied the OAN in support of Josiah's reform and expansion, but on seeing little change, Zephaniah later prophesied 1.2-2.3, meaning “only a remnant of Judah would be left”, possibly also adding the remnant clauses (2.7a, c, 9d) at this time

(Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 129). Yet is such a speculative reading required in order to make sense of Zephaniah?

Sweeney presents a more straightforward approach, describing the entire book of Zephaniah (1.2-3.20) as “a parenetic address that is designed to persuade its audience to seek YHWH and to avoid the consequences that will befall those who fail to do so” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 50). Since Zephaniah is essentially a parenetic address Sweeney understands that “Zephaniah 2.1-3 constitutes the rhetorical centre of the book in that it defines and expresses its basic premise or purpose” (p. 50), namely for the addressees to change their attitudes and behaviour. “Zephaniah 2.1-3 is thereby formulated to insure that the people in the audience realize that the consequences will apply to them if they do not make the correct decision now” (p. 51). The following material, 2.4-3.20, connected by כִּי, “lays out the reasons why the people should gather themselves to seek YHWH” (p. 51).¹⁶⁴ This approach understands the different sections of Zephaniah working together to form one coherent message and rightly sees the OAN as a motivation for the people of God to repent.

6.2.2 Function of the OAN in Zephaniah: Promise of salvation for Judah

Robertson sees 2.1-15 as a literary unit which gives motivation for Judah to repent (Robertson, 1990, p. 288). The key question is how the OAN function in motivating Judah to repent. Robertson sees God’s judgment of the nations, in addition to the threat of God’s judgment upon herself, as another motivation for Judah to repent. The judgment of the nations is for their sin: “Wherever unrighteousness is found, it shall be punished” (Robertson, 1990, p. 314), which would reinforce the warning to Judah that God will also judge its sin. However, the function of the OAN in Zephaniah is not primarily to highlight the wickedness of the nations but rather to promise salvation to Judah. A key clue to this function is the promises to the remnant in 2.7a, שְׁאֲרִית בֵּית יְהוּדָה (the remnant of the house of Judah), and 2.9f-g, שְׁאֲרִית עַמִּי/יְהוָה גִּי (the remnant of my people/the survivors of my nation). The OAN function as a promise of salvation for Judah. The judgment against the nations will be nothing other than a blessing for Judah, or rather “the remnant of the house of Judah” (Zeph 2.7, 9). After the warning of God’s judgment, “stick”, the

¹⁶⁴ This statement undermines Sweeney’s later assertion that v.4 belongs with 2.1-3 and vv.5-15 constitutes a separate pericope.

OAN are an incentive to repent and be among the recipients of God's blessing when the nations are judged, "carrot."

Many commentators see references to the remnant in these verses as necessarily exilic or post-exilic. Edler, for example, writes,

In den authentischen Spruch 2,4-7 (mit Abstrichen; vgl. die Glossen und Erweiterungen) gibt es in der geschichtlichen Situation Zefanjas keinerlei Anlaß, von einem ‚Rest Judas‘ zu reden.

In the authentic oracle 2.4-7 (with excisions, c.f. the glosses and additions) there is no reason whatsoever in the historical situation of Zephaniah to speak of a "remnant of Judah" (Edler, 1984, p. 89).

Similarly in v.9, "Auch hier ist die Katastrophe des Untergangs Jerusalem schon vorausgesetzt." (*Also here the catastrophe of the destruction of Jerusalem is already assumed*) (Edler, 1984, p. 89). Edler, however, argues strongly for the authenticity of Zeph 2.1-3, in spite of the fact that,

Die Authentizität des Verses Zef 2,3 wird gelegentlich noch isoliert in Frage gestellt, da das dort angeschnittene Thema der Demütigen in nachexilischer Zeit besonders hervortritt.

The authenticity of Zeph 2.3, in isolation, is occasionally still questioned, given that its brief theme of the humble was especially prominent in the post-exilic period (Edler, 1984, p. 207).

This argument against the authenticity of 2.3, with which Edler disagrees, is similar to the argument Edler himself makes against the authenticity of the remnant clauses in vv.7 and 9, namely that they are exilic and post-exilic themes. Yet the slim hope of survival held out in 2.1-3 logically leads to the idea that there will be a remnant left after the Day of Yahweh. Thus 2.4-15 functions to support the call to repentance in 2.1-3 as an oracle of salvation for those who respond. After the Day of Yahweh the "humble of the land" (2.3), the purified remnant of Judah, will be blessed and restored by Yahweh. Judah will once again take possession of Canaan (2.5-11) and the great powers that oppress it will be destroyed (2.12-15). Hayes highlights this as one of the functions of OAN in which a *Heilsorakel* (salvation oracle) is given in response to "lamentation ritual."¹⁶⁵ In this way the series of OAN in Zeph 2.4-15 looks forward to the time when Yahweh will restore the purified remnant of Judah.

¹⁶⁵ E.g., Psalm 60; Lam 4.21-22; 2 Kgs 19.14-28 (Hayes, 1968, p. 88).

6.2.3 Selection of the nations

One of the biggest puzzles in Zeph 2.4-15 is why these particular nations have been selected, and others omitted, to constitute Zephaniah's OAN. Although a large number of conflicting answers have been offered for this question, one area of near consensus is that Zephaniah's OAN constitute "a generally anti-Assyrian speech" (Berlin, 1994, p. 118) which reaches its climax with the final oracle against Assyria (vv.13-15). Seybold, for example, writes, "Der letzte Spruch gegen Ninive bildet zweifellos Ziel und Höhepunkt dieses tour d'horizon." (*The last oracle against Nineveh without doubt forms the goal and highpoint of this 'tour d'horizon'*) (Seybold, 1991, p. 104).¹⁶⁶ The inclusion of Assyria, the world power of the seventh century, is understandable, but the rationale behind the selection of the other nations in these OAN and the omission of others, particularly Egypt and Edom, is not so clear. Perlitt, who takes a particularly jaundiced view of this section of Zephaniah, sees no organizing principle for the OAN at all: "Es fehlt der lockeren Sammlung an konkretem Material und an Anschauung." (*The loose collection is lacking concrete substance and perspective*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 123). Other scholars, however, have suggested reasons for the selection of the particular nations in Zephaniah's OAN.

Points of the compass

One popular proposal is the "four points of the compass", presented with various nuances.¹⁶⁷ Kapelrud, for example, sees the arrangement of the OAN in simple geographical terms: first west, Philistines, then east, Moabites and Ammonites, then south, Cushites, then north, Assyrians (Kapelrud, 1975, p. 33). Rudolph offers a slightly more nuanced perspective, suggesting that the oracles are arranged according to the neighbouring peoples in the west and the east, then the great powers in the South and the North (Rudolph, 1975, p. 279). Irsigler understands the nations in the final form of the composition of 2.4-15 to represent the four points of the compass. He sees the oracle against Cush (2.12) as originally an oracle relating to the decline of the Cushite Egyptian dynasty at 664/3 BC (c.f. Nah 3.8-9) which has been reused as an announcement against Egypt. Thus Egypt and Assyria represent south and north with the Philistines and Moab/Ammon representing west and east. Irsigler sees this as the reason for the omission of Edom which was situated to the south of Judah, not immediately to the east (Irsigler, 2002, p. 216).

¹⁶⁶ See also e.g. Irsigler, 2002, p. 213; Keller, 1971, p. 200; Rudolph, 1975, p. 279; Sweeney, 2003, p. 107.

¹⁶⁷ Floyd, 2000, pp. 211-212; Irsigler, 2002, pp. 211-212; Robertson, 1990, p. 296; Renaud, 1987, p. 222.

Historical circumstances

A number of commentators read Zephaniah's OAN as reflecting the historical and political context of late-monarchic Judah. Christensen's 1984 article forms the starting point for much discussion of this approach to Zephaniah's OAN (Christensen, 1984). Christensen argues that the

historical setting of Zephaniah 2-3 is the reign of Josiah...probably before or perhaps during the early stages of his great religious reform in 622/21. In its original form Zeph 2.4-15 presents a theological basis for Josiah's program of political expansion at the expense of Assyria, particularly in Philistia and Transjordan...(Christensen, 1984, p. 678).

Vlaardingerbroek follows this approach of understanding the OAN in the context of Josiah's era: Philistia, Moab and Ammon were objects of Josiah's expansionism and Assyria and Egypt were the imperial enemies (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 128). Sweeney, like Christensen, dates the OAN, along with 2.1-3.20 as a whole, to the early years of Josiah's reign. He sees their purpose as encouraging "the Jerusalemite and Judean audience to support the program of King Josiah for Judean religious reform and national restoration" (Sweeney, 2003, p. 108) and also outlines historical reasons for the oracles. For example, the Philistines are included because they were under pressure from Egypt, as were Moab and Ammon from nomadic Arab tribes; Cush is mentioned because of the defeat of Ethiopian Dynasty by Assyria in 663BC (Sweeney, 2003, p. 107). Floyd, however, points out that Christensen's argument (and by extension those of Vlaardingerbroek and Sweeney) is circular because the only evidence of Josiah's plans to take Philistia and Moab-Ammon are deduced from Zephaniah's oracles themselves (Floyd, 2000, p. 205). There is neither biblical nor historical evidence that Josiah attempted to expand to the west and east (Irsigler, 2002, p. 214). Moreover, Judah is presented in the Zephaniah OAN not as a victorious and resurgent nation under the conquering King Josiah but as a remnant (Floyd, 2000, pp. 205-206).

Ben Zvi offers a different historical explanation for why these particular nations are included in Zeph 2.4-15. Ben Zvi argues that the selection of the nations cannot be explained in terms of the most prominent of Judah's enemies at the time. If this were the case then Egypt would be included in these OAN if they were written in the time of Josiah. Egypt was a significant imperial threat to Judah in this time, and an ally of Assyria (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 300-301). Equally, the absence of Edom from Zephaniah's OAN leads Ben Zvi to conclude that neither was it exilic attitudes that were a factor in the selection of the

nations, “for at that time there was a tendency to single out Edom for judgment (c.f. Isa 34.1-17; Ezek 35.1-15; Obad 1.1-21; Lam 4.22)” (p. 301). Rather, Ben Zvi argues that the nations were chosen on the basis of their having been already vanquished by the early exilic period (pp. 302-305). Ben Zvi argues this was true for the nations included in 2.4-15 but not so for Egypt and Edom, hence their exclusion (p. 305). Thus, for Ben Zvi, the purpose of the OAN and the reason for the selection of the specific nations therein is “a conscious attempt to show that what Zephaniah announced has been fulfilled” (p. 305). On this basis Ben Zvi posits “an early post-monarchic date for the composition of the OAN section of the Book of Zephaniah” (p. 306). Ben Zvi’s argument has not been widely accepted and his historical argumentation is tenuous in parts, for example, appealing to Josephus for information and dates about Nebuchadnezzar making war against the Moabites (p. 304). His argument that Edom came to an end ca. 553 BC (p. 305) and therefore was not included in Zephaniah’s OAN which were written at an earlier stage of the exile could also be accused of being circular, not to mention fragile. Irsigler, while sympathetic to much of Ben Zvi’s argument, concludes,

Der interessante Vorschlag *E. Ben Zvis*, von der historischen Erfüllung der Prophetie Zefanjas her die Fremdvölkerkomposition zu verstehen, erscheint plausibel, kann aber noch nicht hinreichend erklären, weshalb die Redaktion in der Exilszeit des 6. Jhs. ein Moab- und Ammon-Wort ergänzt, aber Ägypten und Edom im Zefanjabuch nicht erwähnt (anders als in Jer 46; 49,7-22; Ez 25.12-14; 29-32; 35).

The interesting proposal of Ben Zvi, of understanding the OAN from the historical fulfilment of the prophecies of Zephaniah, seems plausible but yet cannot adequately explain why the redaction in the exilic period of the 6th century adds a Moab and Ammon oracle but in the book of Zephaniah Egypt and Edom are not mentioned (differently than in Jer 46; 49.7-22; Ez 25.12-14; 29-32; 35) (p. 216).

Arguments for purely historical reasons being the basis for the selection of which nations are included in Zephaniah’s OAN have not been conclusive. There is no agreement among scholars about to which historical period the OAN belong, and in any case there is a scarcity of historical information about the periods of Josiah, the exile, and the post-exilic period. This makes it difficult to convincingly place these OAN into an exact historical setting.

6.2.4 Intertextuality in Zephaniah’s OAN

Another approach to understanding the OAN is through intertextuality. Intertextuality can offer answers to many of the questions raised above, such as why certain nations were or were not selected and how the OAN function in the overall structure of Zephaniah. The

intertextual approach outlined below also allows the present text of Zephaniah to be understood without relying on particular details of a speculative historical reconstruction. However, as with so much else in the text of Zephaniah, there are a number of conflicting ideas about what intertextuality is operating in 2.4-15.

Intertextuality with Amos 1.3-2.15

Irsigler suggests that Amos 1.3-2.16 originally provided a model (*Vorbild*) for Zeph 2.4-3.5:

Für die kompositionelle Anordnung der Fremdvölkerworte in Zef 2,4-15, vor allem aber für die Anfügung eines Wehewortes gegen Jerusalem in Zef 3,1-5 (mit 3,6-8) scheint jedoch *die Völkerwortkomposition in Am 1,3-2,16* das unmittelbare Vorbild abgegeben zu haben.

For the compositional arrangement of the OAN in Zeph 2.4-15, but above all for the attachment of a woe oracle against Jerusalem in Zeph 3.1-5 (with 3.6-8) the OAN in Am 1.3-2.16 seems however to have provided the direct model (Irsigler, 2002, p. 212; similarly, Keller, 1971, p. 199; Ryou, 1995, pp. 325-326).

Thus Irsigler understands the OAN in both Amos and Zephaniah to culminate in judgment oracles against Israel and Judah respectively. Irsigler believes that Amos 1.3-2.16, which now contains oracles against seven nations plus one against Israel, was originally constituted by oracles against only four nations (Aram, Philistia, Ammonites, Moab), like Zeph 2.4-15, and thus the OAN in Zephaniah were modelled off this earlier stage of the OAN in Amos. Moreover, according to Irsigler, the OAN in Zephaniah have also undergone expansion and change since their modelling off the hypothetical original text of Amos 1.3-2.16.

Im Zefanjabuch jedoch sind die Fremdvölkerworte in 2,4-15 zu einer eigenständigen Komposition ausgebaut, die gegenüber dem nachfolgenden Jerusalem-Wort ihr eigenes Gewicht erhält.

In the book of Zephaniah, however, the OAN in 2.4-15 are developed into a self-contained composition which has its own significance in relation to the following Jerusalem oracle (Irsigler, 2002, pp. 212-213).

Irsigler's hypothesis is open to critique at two points. First, the hypothetical nature of the reconstruction does not inspire confidence. The suggestion that Zeph 2.4-3.5 was originally modelled off Amos 1.3-2.16, which at the time was composed of four OAN plus an Israel oracle, but that the Zephanian OAN were then altered so that they no longer resemble the pattern of the (hypothetically) original Amos OAN, becomes less and less likely with each subsequent assertion. Secondly, and more importantly, is the intertextual

model Irsigler assumes, which treats Zephaniah as an epigone who has imitated Amos. This is the influence model in which reuse of and allusion to other texts is thought to gain its force through the reflected glory of the great predecessor rather than focusing on what the text is doing with its intertext. Clayton and Rothstein describe the operation of intertextuality over and against influence as “not an author’s source but the textual shaping of the materials at hand, not debt but the leverage that the appropriation of resources might offer” (Clayton & Rothstein, 1991a, p. 13). The weakness of the influence model is shown in the way that no interpretive gain is made by Irsigler’s assertion that Zephaniah has imitated Amos. To the contrary, according to Irsigler the message of the OAN in Zephaniah is now quite different from that of Amos.

Intertextuality with Genesis 11.1-9

Another attempt at discerning intertextuality with Zephaniah’s OAN comes from Floyd who argues that Zeph 2.4-15 and 3.1ff make allusion to the Tower of Babel story (Gen 11.1-9) because the cities are destroyed as a result of pride (Floyd, 2000, p. 209). “Yahweh’s purpose thus entails a reversal of the human tendency to hubris, a tendency whose etiology is recounted in terms of building a proud city in the story of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11.1-9)” (p. 209). Floyd sees the allusion in Zeph 3.9 to the tower story as underlying the whole of Zeph 2.1-3.13:

Thus the overall transformation of the world order described in Zeph 2.1-3.13 that serves as the basis for urging Yahweh’s people to be transformed in the process is to be understood as an antitype of the Tower of Babel...just as the exhortation in 1.2-18 to prepare for this divine initiative is based on an antitype of the Flood (p. 209).

In this reading the “ruined urban sites in this section of Zephaniah correspond typologically to the unfinished city on the plain of Shinar (Gen 11.8b)” (p. 209). This proposal is tenuous because of the lack of intertextual markers in Zeph 2.4-15 that point to the tower story. Furthermore, Zephaniah’s prophetic condemnation of Jerusalem and Judah (1.2-18; 3.1-8) is not specifically for hubris but rather for religious infidelity along with corruption and injustice. On the other hand, following Berlin’s proposal, Zephaniah’s OAN contains a glut of intertextual markers that point to Genesis 10, the Table of Nations (see Table 6.2 below). The Table of Nations constitutes an intertext that is both identifiable and also contributes to the signification of the text. Floyd’s criticism that “the allusions to Gen 10 found by Berlin seem somewhat forced” (Floyd, 2000, p. 207) might be levelled at his own suggestion of allusion to the Tower story.

Allusion to Genesis 10, the Table of Nations

Berlin offers a more convincing intertextual proposal for Zephaniah's OAN, proposing that Zeph 2.4-15 draws upon the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 (Berlin, 1994, p. 120ff). There is evidence for this as many of the nations mentioned in Zeph 2.4-15 are also named in Genesis 10 (see Table 6.2 below).

Table 6.2: Nations/places appearing in both Zeph 2.4-15 and Gen 10.6-20

Zeph 2	Nations/places	Gen 10	Descendants of Ham/places
4	עֲזָה (Gaza)	19	עֲזָה (Gaza)
5	כְּנָעַן (Canaan)	6,15,18, 19	כְּנָעַן (Canaan)
5	פְּלִשְׁתִּים (Philistines)	14	פְּלִשְׁתִּים (Philistines)
9	סְדֹם (Sodom)	19	סְדֹם (Sodom)
9	עֲמֹרָה (Gomorraḥ)	19	עֲמֹרָה (Gomorraḥ)
11	אֲיֵי הַגְּוִיִּם (the inhabitants of the coastland regions among the nations)	5	אֲיֵי הַגְּוִיִּם (the inhabitants of the coastland regions among the nations)
12	כּוּשִׁים (Cushites)	6,7,8	כּוּשׁ (Cush)
13	אַשּׁוּר (Assyria)	11	אַשּׁוּר (Assyria)
13	נִינְוָה (Nineveh)	11,12	נִינְוָה (Nineveh)

The similarities of vocabulary are particularly pronounced in the final four names which occur in the same order in both Genesis 10 and Zephaniah 2.¹⁶⁸

The Table of Nations in Genesis 10 depicts all the nations on the earth stemming from the three sons of Noah and so consists of three main sections: the descendants of Japheth (10.2-5); the descendants of Ham (10.6-20); and the descendants of Shem (10.21-31). The nations mentioned in Zeph 2.4-15 that are also in Genesis 10 nearly all come from the second section of the Table of nations, Gen 10.6-20, the descendants of Ham. The sole exception is אֲיֵי הַגְּוִיִּם (the inhabitants of the coastland regions among the nations). There are also several nations mentioned in Zephaniah's OAN that do not appear in the Table of Nations: the Philistine city-states of Ashkelon, Ashdod and Ekron (Zeph 2.4; Gaza is mentioned in both texts) along with Moab and the Ammonites (Zeph 2.8-11).

The inclusion by Zephaniah of the Philistine city-states can be understood as part of an expanded oracle against the Philistines who are mentioned in Gen 10.14. The reason why Moab and Ammon have been included is not clear but there was a long history of

¹⁶⁸ This is noted by Irsigler, 2002, p. 214, although he denies any significant relationship between the two texts.

animosity between them and Judah.¹⁶⁹ Keller sees these “rivalités qui étaient de tous les temps” (*constant rivalries*) as the reason that Moab and Ammon have been included (Keller, 1971, p. 200). Berlin suggests that Moab and Ammon “must have been sufficiently important for the contemporary scene for Zephaniah to have worked them into his discourse” (Berlin, 1994, p. 121). Thus the text of Zephaniah’s OAN was produced in its specific shape because “Zephaniah has taken the conventional genre (*Gattung*) of ‘prophecy against the nations,’ has tailored it to his own geopolitical reality, and has evoked an older traditional conception of the relationships among the nations of the world” (Berlin, 1994, pp. 120-121). This is a good description of how intertextuality operates with the later text taking up the earlier text and pressing it into the service of its own discourse intentions (see e.g., Leonard, 2008).

Effect of the allusion to the Table of Nations

The organising principle for the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 comes from the text that immediately precedes it, Gen 9.20-28. In this text, after the flood, Noah invents wine, drinks too much of it and passes out. While he is unconscious his son Ham commits some kind of lewd act which is euphemistically described as “seeing the nakedness of his father” (Gen 9.22). The puzzling part of the story is that when Noah revives and finds out “what his youngest son had done to him” (9.24) he curses, not Ham, but Ham’s future son Canaan, “Lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers” (9.25).¹⁷⁰ Thereafter Noah blesses Yahweh as the God of Shem, Japheth is blessed and Canaan’s destiny as slave of both of them is reasserted. The Table of Nations follows immediately after this story and describes how all peoples of the earth are descended from these three sons. It is this text which undergirds the salvation-oracle for Judah that is constituted by the OAN in Zephaniah and significantly most of the nations are from the second section of the Table of Nations, the descendants of Ham, who are, implicitly, under God’s curse.

Zephaniah’s first oracle declares the destruction of the Philistine city states and the entire sea coast region of Philistia (2.4-6) which will become the possession of “the remnant of the house of Judah” whose fortunes will be restored by God at this time (2.7). This region is called “Canaan, land of the Philistines” (Zeph 2.5d). In the Table of Nations Canaan was the fourth son of Ham (Gen 10.6) and the Philistines are said to be descended from

¹⁶⁹ E.g., 1 Sam 11; 2 Sam 8.2; 12.26 ff; 2 Kgs 3.4 ff; see also the Mesha Stele; Smelik, 1991, pp. 29-50.

¹⁷⁰ Why Canaan is cursed, not Ham, “has baffled commentators for centuries, and there is no obvious answer” (Wenham, 1987, p. 201).

Egypt (Gen 10.14), the second son of Ham (Gen 10.6). The city states Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron are mentioned by Zephaniah but only Gaza is mentioned in the Table of Nations (Gen 10.19). This first oracle presents the complete conquest of the Philistine peoples by the purified people of God in the future time.

The next oracle is against Moab and the Ammonites (2.8-10). These two peoples are not mentioned in the Table of Nations but are brought into connection with it through the prediction that they will become like Sodom and Gomorrah (Zeph 2.9; Gen 10.19). Floyd criticises Berlin for making a connection between Moab and the Ammonites with the Table of Nations, accusing her of claiming,

that the comparison of Moab and Ammon with the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah associates these two nations with Canaan because these two cities are said to mark the borders of Canaan in Gen 10.19, thus identifying them virtually as ‘western Canaanites’ and hence descendants of Ham. It is difficult to see how such a comparison can turn the Moabites and Ammonites from Shemites into ersatz Canaanites (Floyd, 2000, p. 208).

Apart from the fact that Moab and Ammon are nowhere mentioned in Genesis 10 as descendants of Shem, Berlin’s intertextual argument is more nuanced than Floyd indicates. Intertextuality is not a mechanical process in which A must correspond to A’, and B to B’ but is rather a creative reuse of other texts in the production of a new text. Thus Berlin writes, “The comparison of Moab and Ammon to Sodom and Gomorrah...nevertheless helps to draw these countries into the orbit of Canaan” (Berlin, 1994, p. 121). She qualifies this with a description of how intertextuality operates:

The point is that the prophet made the reality of his time fit the pattern in Genesis 10 by choosing the countries from Genesis 10 that were important (Philistia, Assyria), omitting those that were obscure (e.g. Put), and adding crucial ones, lacking in Genesis 10, in terminological equivalents to those in Genesis (Moab, Ammon) (Berlin, 1994, p. 121).

This second oracle against Moab and the Ammonites places them with the cursed line of Ham to be subjugated to the purified and restored remnant of the people of God who responded to the call of repentance in Zeph 2.1-3.

The next oracle is about the **אֵי הַגִּימָּה** (the inhabitants of the coastland regions among the nations; Zeph 2.11). This allusion to the Table of Nations is unique amongst Zephaniah’s OAN because it is the only reference to peoples who are not descended from Ham. They are the descendants of Japheth and their fate in Zephaniah’s OAN, unlike the descendants of Ham, is not ultimately destruction and subjugation. Zephaniah’s

intertextual reuse of Gen 10.5 is not only constituted by the common noun phrase **אִיִּי הַגּוֹיִם** but there are also syntactical and thematic similarities (see Table 6.3 below).

Table 6.3: Similarities between Zeph 2.11c and Gen 10.5

Zeph 2.11c	וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ-לּוֹ אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ כָּל אִיִּי הַגּוֹיִם	and to him they will bow, each from his own place, all the inhabitants of the coastland regions among the nations.
Gen 10.5	מֵאֵלֶּה נִפְרְדּוּ אִיִּי הַגּוֹיִם בְּאַרְצֵתָם אִישׁ לְלִשְׁנוֹ לְמִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ בְּגוֹיָהֶם	From these spread out the inhabitants of the coastland regions among the nations in their lands, each to his own language, by their clans, in their nations.

* AT

The phrases “each to his own language” (Gen 10.5) and “each from his own place” (Zeph 2.11c) are syntactically similar. The prepositions לְ (to) and מִן (from) have been translated very literally to emphasise both the syntactical and the thematic similarity of these two passages. In Gen 10.5 the descendants of Japheth spread out “each to his own language (אִישׁ לְלִשְׁנוֹ), to their clans, in their nations”, a dispersal into ethnic diversity. In Zeph 2.11c these diverse peoples will worship Yahweh, “each from his own place (אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ).” The orientation of these “islands of the nations” will no longer be “away from” but “towards.” This will be through a terrible judgment (Zeph 2.11a) but will result in the restoration of their relationship with God. This small oracle also continues the main theme of Zephaniah so far, that of the intertwining of the fate of the people of God and the peoples of the world. It also anticipates the climax of the entire book of Zephaniah where the terrible judgment of Yahweh will result in the return of the nations to Yahweh as the people of God are renewed and restored (Zeph 3.8ff).

Irsigler rejects this intertextual analysis, insisting, “Jedoch ist der Sinn dieses Ausdrucks an den beiden Textstellen verschieden.” (*However, the meaning of this term in the two passages in the text is different*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 214). In Gen 10.5 the term **אִיִּי הַגּוֹיִם** (“the islands of the nations”) means “Greeks” in general, but “kaum alle Jafetiter” (*hardly all Japhethites*) (p. 214). Zephaniah 2.11, on the other hand, Irsigler argues, is not specific to the Japhethites but announces the universal twilight for “all gods of the earth”. “Dann kann der Folgesatz 2,11c nur steigernd die universale JHWH-Verehrung sogar auf den fernen ‚Inseln der Völker‘ intendieren.” (*Then the following sentence 2.11c can only climatically intend the universal worship of Yahweh, even on the distant “islands of the*

nations”) (p. 214). Irsigler makes a good point about the meaning of the term in Zeph 2.11c but this does not rule out intertextual reuse of Gen 10.5. Intertextual reuse is not historical-critical exegesis in which the original intended meaning of the intertext must be carefully laid out. The text takes up other texts for its own purposes. Furthermore, Zeph 2.11c may look forward to universal worship of Yahweh but it is not completely universal. Before this world-wide worship occurs the Philistines will be destroyed “until no inhabitant is left” (2.5), Moab and Ammon shall become “a waste forever” (2.9), Cush “shall be killed by my sword” (2.12), Yahweh will “destroy Assyria” (2.13) and Nineveh will be “a desolation” (2.15). As Berlin writes of Zeph 2.4-15 “political reality is set within the framework of an accepted myth” (Berlin, 1994, p. 124) and according to this myth all ethnic groups go back to three progenitors: Shem, Ham and Japheth. The status of these three progenitors is laid out in Gen 9.25-27: Japheth will dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan (and by extension, all the Hamites) will suffer God’s curse and be subjugated to Shem. Zephaniah 2.4-15 constitutes a salvation oracle which echoes this proper order of things.

The fourth and very short oracle is against Cush (2.12). In Zeph 2.12 Cush must refer to the Ethiopians (Irsigler, 2002, p. 214), rather than Mesopotamia as Berlin argues (Berlin, 1994, pp. 112-113). Yet in spite of their geographical distance Cush and Assyria are closely related in the Table of Nations. In Gen 10.6 Cush is the firstborn son of Ham and the father of Nimrod who “went into Assyria and built Nineveh” (Gen 10.11). Bič connects the mention of Cush and Assyria in Zephaniah with the Table of Nations:

Rapprochement étrange, mais qui se rattache à une ancienne tradition biblique : « Cush engendra Nimrod » et celui-ci « bâtit Ninive » (Gn. 10, 8,11).

A strange combination, but one which links to an ancient biblical tradition: ‘Cush begat Nimrod’ and the latter ‘built Nineveh’ (Gen 10.8, 11) (Bič, 1968, p. 63).

The conclusion that Bič draws from this is that,

Les hommes de l’Ancien Testament savaient tout comme nous qu’entre l’Éthiopie ou l’Égypte, et l’Assyrie, n’existait aucun lien de race ou de langue, mais leur attitude à l’égard de YHWH et de son peuple créait entre eux une parenté spirituelle.

The peoples of the Old Testament knew as well as us that between Ethiopia or Egypt and Assyria there was no link of race or language, but their attitude in regard to Yahweh and his people created a spiritual relationship between them (Bič, 1968, p. 63).

Whether Bič is correct or not in this conclusion is beyond the scope of this thesis but he is correct in his observation that in Zeph 2.13 the relationship defined in Genesis 10 between Cush and Assyria is in view. Cush, a powerful nation and a descendant of Ham will be destroyed by Yahweh and will no longer be a threat to the restored people of God in this future time.

The final and longest oracle (Zeph 2.13-15) is against Assyria and Nineveh, the imperial power that had dominated Israel and the entire ancient Near East for more than 100 years. Irsigler considers this to be proof against any intertextuality between Zephaniah's OAN and the Table of Nations because "Assur ist nach Gen 10,22 eindeutig ein Nachfahre Sems, nicht Hams" (*Asshur is according to Gen 10.22 clearly a descendant of Shem, not Ham*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 214).¹⁷¹ Genesis 10.22 does indeed list Asshur (אֲשׁוּר) as a descendent of Shem but Assyria (אַשּׁוּר) is also mentioned in Gen 10.11. In both Gen 10.11 and Zeph 2.13-15 Assyria and Nineveh are presented as places rather than ethnic groups. In Gen 10.22, by contrast, Asshur is presented as a person, thus the different rendering of אֲשׁוּר as "Assyria" in Gen 10.11 but "Asshur" in Gen 10.22.¹⁷² Assyria, the imperial power, and Nineveh, its principal seat, constitute the climax of Zephaniah's OAN. Along with its fellow descendants of the cursed line of Ham, Assyria shall suffer extermination and subjugation as a result of the judgment of God which will at the same time restore the purified remnant of the people of God.

6.2.5 Summary

Berlin makes an important contribution with her assertion that the Table of Nations in Gen 10 brings to Zeph 2.4-15 "an older traditional conception of the relationships among the nations of the world" (Berlin, 1994, pp. 120-121). However, her explanation of this "conception of the relationships among the nations of the world", is not as convincing. Berlin argues for Canaanite urban sedentists versus Israelite pastoral nomads, based on B. Oded's proposal that "in the Biblical Table of Nations human society is divided into three types of communities, each with a distinct life-style, each operating in a different setting." The paradigm for this tripartite "socio-cultural principle of classification" is Gen 4.20-22, "Lamech's list", in which each of Lamech's sons is אבי (father/ancestor of) or כל אבי (father/ancestor of all) of a particular socio-cultural group. (Oded, 1986, pp. 17-19). Oded argues that the original text of the Table of Nations "goes back to the

¹⁷¹ A point also noted by Floyd, (2000, pp. 207-208).

¹⁷² E.g., NRSV, ESV, NAU, NIV, NKJV.

conventional archetype preserved in Gen 4”, namely, Shem “the father of all the children of ‘bene Eber’” (i.e. nomads, semi-nomads), Ham, “the father of all the dwellers of city and kingdom” and Japheth, “the father of all the isles of the Gentiles/Nations” (p. 30). This is the basis of Berlin’s argument that Zephaniah’s intertextuality with the Table of Nations has the effect of “‘we, the shepherds’ will triumph over ‘them, the city-dwellers’” (Berlin, 1994, p. 123). However, according to Oded, the “original nuclear record, based on the socio-cultural criterion” of the Table of Nations has been “enriched or diminished with names with the consequence that many changes do not fit into the author’s original intention, thus obscuring the basic pattern and hampering our correct interpretation of the text” (Oded, 1986, p. 30). Without commenting on the assumption the “correct interpretation of the text” is what a hypothetical earlier stage of the text meant, Oded indicates that the socio-cultural criterion of the “Lamech list” (Gen 4.20-22) is no longer the explicit organising principle in the final form of the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. In effect Berlin is arguing for an intertextuality between Zeph 2.4-15 and a hypothetical original text of Genesis 10 whose meaning has since changed. Yet the strong correlation between Zeph 2.4-15 and the Table of Nations in its present form would be improbable if such drastic development of the text had taken place after Zephaniah had drawn upon it.

It appears rather that the key organising principle for the Table of Nations comes from the preceding pericope which culminated with Canaan, and by extension all the descendants of Ham, coming under God’s curse (Gen 9.26). In that text the descendants of Shem received special blessing from Yahweh and were to be masters over Canaan, and by extension all of Ham’s descendants (Gen 9.26), and the descendants of Japheth were to share with Shem in God’s blessing and also be masters over Canaan/Ham (Gen 9.27). Zephaniah’s OAN draw on this taxonomy of the Table of the Nations in Genesis 10 to cast a future vision of the establishment of what should be. D. Melvin supports this conclusion, writing, “Thus, in Zeph 2.4-15, we find a prophetic (and perhaps eschatological?) reprisal of Gen 9.25-27” (Melvin, 2013, p. 278).

6.3 Conclusion for Zephaniah 2

At the beginning of Zephaniah 2 a sliver of hope is offered to Judah (2.1-3). There is a possibility of deliverance from the terrible judgment promised in Zephaniah 1, a chance of being hidden from Yahweh’s wrath. It hardly constitutes a salvation oracle, more the announcement of an outside chance, but the only chance, of survival. Less definite, or

“less loudly” announced, allusions may be present in this call to repentance. These allusions bring into the text images of what God requires of God’s people, which is righteousness and humility, key aspects of what it means to be orientated to God’s ways. The echo of these texts serves to contrast what God’s people should be like with the reality of Judah’s current condition. Following this the OAN (2.4-15) look forward to a time that is after the Day of Yahweh and promises salvation for the purified remnant of Judah that were able to escape through the repentance called for in 2.1-3. In this future time Assyria, the oppressor of Judah, will be destroyed, along with all the enemies of Judah. Judah will be blessed by Yahweh, accompanied by the sons of Japheth, and the sons of Ham will be subjugated to it, according to the mythology of Gen 9.18-10.32. This future vision acts as a motivation for Judah to repent. The vision, however, is for a future time that stands in contrast with the current reality.

Zephaniah 2 is the centre of the book in several ways. Obviously it is the middle of the three chapters, but as Sweeney asserts, Zeph 2.1-3¹⁷³ is the rhetorical centre of book in that it calls Judah to repent, which is the overall purpose of Zephaniah (Sweeney, 2003, p. 111). The OAN (2.4-15) support this call to repent by offering a future vision of restoration for the purified remnant who respond to Zephaniah’s challenge. In this way chapter 2, from a rhetorical perspective, could be considered the most important section of the book. On the other hand, in terms of its theological content it is also the simplest part of Zephaniah. Chapters 1 and 3 are more complex and weighty. Zephaniah 1 presents the problem of Judah’s failure and extends the consequences of this to all peoples and the entire world. Chapter 3 continues this theme and eventually brings it to a resolution. Both chapters 1 and 3 draw on a large range of texts from Israel’s life and history in order to create this message about God’s people and the peoples of the world. Zephaniah 2, on the other hand, has relatively fewer intertexts that are still available, and the message is simpler: God will restore a purified remnant from those in Judah who repent. For this reason the exegesis of Zephaniah 2 is considerably shorter than that of Zephaniah 1 and 3. From this future vision of the restored people of God Zephaniah returns to their present and depressing condition at the beginning of chapter 3.

¹⁷³ Although Sweeney reads the first pericope as 2.1-4.

Chapter 7

Zephaniah 3: Restoration

The beginning of Zephaniah 3 returns to the present condition of God's people after the vision in 2.4-15 of a restored remnant. Whereas Zephaniah 1 began with universal judgment and moved onto accusations against Judah, Zephaniah 3 moves in the opposite direction. The opening pericope, 3.1-5, outlines Judah's complete failure to live as God's people, echoing texts from the Torah¹⁷⁴ and Mic 3.9-11, along with the inserted genre of psalms and specific allusion to Psalm 46. The next pericope then moves to universal judgment (3.6-8), following the logic of chapter 1 where the failure of God's representative people means judgment for all people. This judgment oracle against the nations (3.6-8), however, echoes judgment oracles against God's people (Isa 5.9; 6.11) and a number of texts which describe God's saving deeds for God's people.¹⁷⁵ This creates ambiguity in the judgment oracle. This ambiguity looks forward to the remainder of the book, Zeph 3.9-20, where the judgment is revealed to be the means of purification and renewal. In a surprising development of the main theme of the book thus far, in which Judah's failure has meant judgment for the entire world, the restoration of God's people also means the restoration of all peoples to relationship with God (3.9-10). Allusion to the Tower of Babel story (Gen 11.1-9), Gen 4.1-26 and Isaiah 18 is employed to portray the resolution of humanity's primeval alienation from God as the nations come to God in worship. Yet most of the focus of Zeph 3.9-20 is firmly on God's people as God restores them to be what God always intended for them, that they represent God to the nations. Zephaniah draws upon a number of texts in this section. Allusion to Isa 13.3 and Jer 14.9 signal that the judgment is over. The psalmic genre of praise is employed as a response to this and Mic 4.6-7 is evoked in looking forward to God regathering and restoring God's people. The book of Zephaniah finishes as it began, with a striking allusion to a text which is foundational for Israel's identity, Deut 26.16-19 (Zeph 3.19). In the final verse of the book God's people are described with God's own attributes, "renown and praise."¹⁷⁶ In

¹⁷⁴ Exod 22.20; Lev 19.33; 25.14, 17; Deut 23.17.

¹⁷⁵ Deut 12.29; 19.1; Josh 23.4; Ps 33.20; Isa 8.17; 30.18; Micah 2.12; 4.6; Isa 11.12.

¹⁷⁶ Pss 48.11; 61.1b-2; 102.22-23; 145.21.

keeping with the theme of Zephaniah, the future vision looks forward to God's people truly representing God in the world.

7.1 Zephaniah 3.1-5

- 1a Woe to the rebellious, the defiled,
- 1b the oppressing city.
- 2a She has not listened to any voice,
- 2b she has not accepted any correction,
- 2c In Yahweh she has not trusted,
- 2d she has not drawn near to her God.
- 3a Her officials in her midst are roaring lions,
- 3b her judges evening wolves,
- 3c they leave nothing for the morning.
- 4a Her prophets are reckless,
- 4b treacherous men.
- 4c Her priests profane what is holy,
- 4d they do violence to the Torah.
- 5a Yahweh is righteous in her midst,
- 5b he performs no wickedness.
- 5c Every morning he gives his judgment,
- 5d at the break of dawn it is not lacking.
- 5e But the evildoer knows no shame!

There is widespread agreement that Zephaniah 3 consists of two major sections, vv.1-13 and vv.14-20 but the delimitation of the first pericope in Zephaniah 3 is much less certain. The following limits have been suggested: 3.1-4;¹⁷⁷ 3.1-5;¹⁷⁸ 3.1-7;¹⁷⁹ 3.1-8;¹⁸⁰ 3.1-13.¹⁸¹ Verses 1-4 present themselves as a possible unit because they address Jerusalem while v.5 suddenly changes to a quite different style. However, v.5 continues to address Jerusalem, contrasting righteous Yahweh to the sinful city and in this way brings the preceding verses to the climax of a literary subunit. In v.6 the focus turns to what Yahweh has done to other nations and thus is considered the beginning of another subunit. Therefore this exegetical section treats Zeph 3.1-5 as the first pericope of Zephaniah 3.

Zephaniah 3.1-5 is a woe-oracle against Jerusalem. Following the OAN (Zeph 2.4-15) which promise salvation for the remnant of Judah in the future, verses 3.1-5 return to the present time situation of Jerusalem. The majority of scholars consider these verses to be authentic to Zephaniah and his late-monarchic context although some suggest v.5 may be

¹⁷⁷ Sweeney, 2003, p. 156.

¹⁷⁸ Kapelrud, 1975, p. 35; Keller, 1971, p. 205; Perlitt, 2004, p. 132; Sabottka, 1972, p. 102; Smith, 1984, p. 137.

¹⁷⁹ Ball, 1988, p. 199; Floyd, 2000, p. 229.

¹⁸⁰ Renaud, 1987, p. 236; Rudolph, 1975, p. 287; Széles, 1987, p. 100; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 166.

¹⁸¹ Berlin, 1994; Deissler, 1964, p. 459; Roberts, 1991, p. 204.

a later addition. The first verse echoes texts from Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy which contrast God's requirements for God's people with the present reality. Verses 2-4 allude to Mic 3.9-11 and present the Jerusalem leadership as even further degraded than in the time of Micah. The inserted "psalm" genre of Zeph 3.5 contrasts both God with God's people and the ideal of God's people with the current reality of God's people.

7.1.1 Intertextuality in verse 1

The ancient versions struggled with the meaning of the verbs in Zeph 3.1, e.g., LXX "Alas the glorious and ransomed city" (see Sweeney's textual notes, 2003, p. 156). Sweeney suggests that there is a deliberate ambiguity in the text in order "to signal...that the negative characteristics of the city will shift into far more positive images" (2003, p. 159) as chapter three later shifts to oracles of salvation that promise a cleansed and redeemed Jerusalem. When these verbs are seen in their intertextual context, however, this reading is not compelling. Zephaniah 3.1 explodes with a devastating blast as the five words that make up the verse reverberate with intertextual resonances that create "more than their lawful meaning" (Barthes, 1981, p. 40).

Typical of the "woe oracle" the *הוי* (woe) is followed by verbs in participle form, in this case two verbs standing alone as substantives followed by another participial verb acting as an adjective. The first participle is a rare verb in the OT, *מרא*, only otherwise occurring in Job 39.18 where the meaning is uncertain. *HALOT* (p. 630) points out, without conviction, that the verb has traditionally been understood as a by-form of *מרה* "recalcitrant", which is quite common in the OT (e.g., Num 20.24; 27.14; Deut 1.26). A number of commentators follow this understanding.¹⁸² Whether this is true or not, because the form of the verb is not the same it does not clearly mark those other texts as intertexts so does not invite an intertextual analysis.¹⁸³ The other two verbs in this verse are quite different in this regard.

נאל Niphal, a homonym of the more common verb "to be redeemed", means "to be defiled" and occurs in only three texts (Isa 59:3; Lam 4:14; Zeph 3:1).¹⁸⁴ Both Isa 59.3 and Lam 4.14 share the expression *ננאלו בדם* (defiled with blood) in texts which

¹⁸² E.g., Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 184; Sweeney, 2003, p. 159.

¹⁸³ The occurrence in Job 39.18 is of uncertain meaning and in any case Job is generally considered to be a late text.

¹⁸⁴ The MT points both Isa 59.3 and Lam 4.14 to show a hybrid Niphal-Pual form of the perfect verb, *HALOT* (pp. 169-170).

denounce the injustice of Jerusalem (Isa 59.1-8; Lam 4.11-16). There is a strong thematic similarity between these three texts which criticise Jerusalem's social sins. While Isa 59.1-8 and Lam 4.11-16 are both later texts than Zeph 3.1-5, the collocation of נִפְּלָה (defiled) and בָּדָם (with blood) in both of these texts suggests that defilement through the spilling of innocent blood is implicit in Zephaniah's use of the verb נִפְּלָה. This argument is strengthened by the fact that Lamentations is not much later than Zephaniah. It may be suggested that through the occurrence of נִפְּלָה in Zeph 3.1 "blood", or murder, lurks behind the text, characterising the city as violently unjust. This hint of דָּם (blood) also makes a connection with Mic 3.10, a text Zeph 3.1-5 alludes to (see below), which accuses the leadership of בְּנֵה צִיּוֹן בַּדָּמִים (building Zion with blood).

This characterisation of violent oppression is developed further, in stark brevity, by the next phrase, הָעִיר הַיּוֹנָה (the oppressing city). The verb יָנָה (to be violent, to oppress) occurs in a collection of texts dealing with justice and mercy which are foundational for the OT vision of what is required of the people of God. Apart from the following Torah texts the verb יָנָה occurs only in texts that are later than Zeph 3.1-5.¹⁸⁵

Exodus 22.20

"You shall not wrong (יָנָה Hiphil)¹⁸⁶ a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt" (Exod 22.20 [21]).

This verse occurs in Exod 20.22-23.33, the "Book of the Covenant" or "Covenant Code", and more specifically in Exod 22.20-26 [21-27], a pericope which treats "various forms of oppression against the poor and weak" (Childs, 1974, p. 478). In this pericope abuses against the widow, the orphan and the poor are also prohibited. The variegated laws in the Book of the Covenant appear to be very old, pre-monarchic according to Childs and Hyatt.¹⁸⁷ This pericope appears at the beginning of the second major section of the Book of the Covenant which consists of a series of apodictic laws (Exod 22.17f) (Childs, 1974, p. 455). Childs suggests that these apodictic laws were used in the Israelite cult and that they are "permeated with covenant theology" (Childs, 1974, p. 455). Durham subordinates form critical and historical critical questions and findings to the function of

¹⁸⁵ Ps 74.8; Isa 49.26; Jer 22.3; 25.38; 46.16; 50.16; Ezek 18.7, 12, 16; 22.7, 29; 45.8; 46.18; Zeph 3.1

¹⁸⁶ The verb יָנָה occurs in Hiphil stem in Exod 22.20 but Qal stem in Zeph 3.1. For this verb the Hiphil and Qal stems seem to carry the same meaning.

¹⁸⁷ Childs, 1974, p. 456; Hyatt, 1971, p. 218.

the laws in their present context: “These laws, whatever their point of origin and their form, must be seen first in the context of their present setting, as specific attempts to focus Yahweh’s principles for those who are struggling to bring their living into conformity with Yahweh’s covenant” (Durham, 1998, p. 316). The setting of these laws within the framework of the Sinai narrative makes it explicit that “these laws are Yahweh’s requirements for those who would be his special people” (Durham, 1998, p. 318).

Based on the above viewpoints this exegesis assumes that by the time of the late monarchic period the laws that now appear in Exod 22.20-26 would have been familiar to Zephaniah. These laws were not intended to constitute a comprehensive body of law (a “law code”) for Israelite society (see Walton, 2006, pp. 287-302). Rather they were examples of what it meant to be God’s people. The appearance of the verb יָנָה in Zeph 3.1 carries with it resonances of Exod 22.20-26. הָעִיר הַיּוֹנָה (the oppressing city) represents that which God warns his people not be and the warnings of judgment (Exod 22.22-23, 25, 26) are also implicitly echoed in the phrase.

Leviticus 19.33

“When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong (יָנָה Hiphil)” (Lev 19.33).

The review of historical-critical views on the literary history of Leviticus (see 5.6.1 above) concluded that the Holiness Code (Lev 17-27) was in circulation in the pre-exilic period and therefore would have been available to Zephaniah. As in Exod 22.20, the verb יָנָה Hiphil occurs in a prohibition against oppressing the foreigner. Milgrom considers Leviticus 19 to be “the intended climactic center for the book of Leviticus and even for the Torah as a whole” (Milgrom, 2000, p. 1320). Similar to the Book of the Covenant, Leviticus 19 contains a variety of laws that appear to have no structuring principle other than “You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy” (Lev 19.2). Just as the Book of the Covenant was intended to demonstrate what God requires of God’s people so the purpose of Leviticus 19 was “to set the people of Israel on the road to holiness” (Milgrom, 2000, p. 1596). As with Exod 22.20-26 these commands also come with a threat. Leviticus 19 forms a unit with chapters 18 and 20, both of which declare that disobeying Yahweh’s statutes and ordinances will defile the land and lead to God’s people being “vomited out” of the land (Lev 18.24-30; 20.22). Thus the occurrence of the verb יָנָה Hiphil in Zeph 3.1

carries with it echoes of this central Torah text with its instruction on how Yahweh's people should live and also echoes of the consequences of not living up to this calling.

Leviticus 25.14, 17

“And if you make a sale to your neighbour or buy from your neighbour, you shall not wrong (יִנֶּה) one another... You shall not wrong (יִנֶּה) one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God” (Lev 25.14, 17).

These verses belong to the Year of Jubilee instructions (Lev 25.8-55). While this institution is considered late by some scholars,¹⁸⁸ an early date is argued by others.¹⁸⁹ Milgrom assigns virtually all of the material in the Holiness Code to the eighth century (Milgrom, 2000, p. 1345). If Leviticus 25 is from a pre-exilic date then the verb יִנֶּה carries into Zeph 3.1 a powerful resonance. At the heart of the Year of Jubilee is “liberty” and “return” (Lev 25.10) as the Year of Jubilee was a mechanism to maintain egalitarianism within the covenant community. Thus the phrase הָעִיר הַיּוֹנָה pronounces a stark contrast between Yahweh's intentions for his people and the actual state of Zephaniah's Jerusalem. Instead of a community that cares for its members in accordance with God's will it is a community that takes advantage of the powerless and oppresses the needy within it.

Deuteronomy 23.17

“You shall not give up to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you. He shall dwell with you, in your midst, in the place that he shall choose within one of your towns, wherever it suits him. You shall not wrong (יִנֶּה) him” (Deut 23.16-17 [15-16]).

Deuteronomy 23 belongs to what many scholars consider to be the earliest core of Deuteronomy which was completed by the time of Josiah, although the exact limits of this core are not entirely agreed upon.¹⁹⁰ According to Tigay most commentators have treated this law as offering safety to slaves that had escaped from foreign nations, hence “They shall reside with you, in your midst” (Deut 23.17). This contrasts with ANE law which demanded the extradition of slaves to their owners, leading Tigay to write that this law “treats the whole land of Israel as a sanctuary offering permanent asylum” (Tigay, 1996, p. 215). Christensen's description of the law as “a form of social idealism”

¹⁸⁸ Grabbe, 1997, pp. 94-97; Levine, 1989, pp. 270-274.

¹⁸⁹ E.g., Hartley, 1998, pp. 427-430.

¹⁹⁰ E.g., Deut 4.44-26.68 (Clifford, 1982, pp. 1-3); Deut 6-26, 28 (Nelson, 2002, p. 5); see 5.7.2 above.

(Christensen, 2002, p. 547) is apt. Mayes describes the wider literary context, Deut 23.1-25.19 as being dominated by two concerns, “(a) the purity of the people of Yahweh: and (b) the humanitarian behaviour which is required of the people of Yahweh” (Mayes, 1981, p. 313). This particular law calls for mercy to oppressed people. Again, by calling Jerusalem **הַעִיר הַיוֹנָה** Zephaniah portrays the city as diametrically and violently opposed to God’s will for God’s people.

Summary

The first verse of Zephaniah is brief but it carries powerful intertextual resonances. Coming from the highs of the future hope promised for the purified remnant of Judah this pericope dashes the reader back to present reality. Picking up strands from Zephaniah 1 (Zeph 1.9) Jerusalem is presented as a city that is defiled by innocent blood (**נִגְאָלָה**). Moreover, the adjectival phrase **הַעִיר הַיוֹנָה** (the oppressing city) echoes Torah texts that are central to Israel’s identity. The verb **יָנָה** is used in texts that exhort Israel to justice and mercy which are not abstract ideals but define what it means for a people to be in covenant relationship with Yahweh. The specific verses in which **יָנָה** occurs are all negative commands, “You shall not...” This short verse keys into this ethical bedrock of Israel to deliver a devastating critique of Jerusalem. It is a city, and a people, that is everything that it should not be. These intertextual echoes continue to develop the major theme of the book of Zephaniah: the people of God have failed in their calling.

7.1.2 Similarities with Micah, Lamentations and Ezekiel

Zephaniah 3.1-5 shares striking similarity with two exilic texts, Ezek 22.23-31 and Lam 4.11-16, as well as with the much earlier text of Mic 3.9-12. The subject matter of all the texts is the same, prophetic denunciation of the corruption of Jerusalem. For both Ezekiel and Lamentations, God’s judgment has already come to pass while for both Micah and Zephaniah God’s judgment is yet to come. Along with this thematic similarity there is a cluster of common vocabulary, some of which occurs only within these texts. This exegesis assumes that the texts from Ezekiel and Lamentations are later than Zephaniah, i.e., Zeph 3.1-5 is from the late monarchic period (so e.g., Edler, 1984). As Leslie Allen writes, Ezek 22.23-31 “seems to have been composed with consultation of a scroll of Zephaniah” (Allen, 1998, p. 35).¹⁹¹ Conversely it is assumed here that Zephaniah was aware of Mic 3.9-11 and that Zeph 3.1-5 engages with this text. As this thesis is studying

¹⁹¹ So also, e.g., Roberts, 1991, p. 216; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 169. Fishbane assesses the reuse of Zeph 3.1-4 in Ezek 22.24-28 (Fishbane, 1985, pp. 461-463).

the way in which Zephaniah takes up earlier texts Mic 3.9-11 will be the object of closer attention.

Allusion to Micah 3.9-11

Roberts refers to the accusations of Zeph 3.3-4 as a “well-attested prophetic convention (Mic 3.1-12; Jer. 2.8; 5.31; 23.1-32; Ezek. 22.23-32)” which Zephaniah follows when he “singles out specific leadership groups for criticism” (Roberts, 1991, p. 213). Similarly, Rudolph writes of Zeph 1.3-4 that,

Eine solche Art ‚Ständepredigt‘ ...ist bei den Propheten nichts Neues, vgl. Mi 3,1ff.; 7.2-4; Jer 2,8; 5,31; 21,11-23, 32, etwas später Ez 22,23-31.

Such a kind of “sermon directed at a specific audience” ...is not new for the prophets, c.f. Mic. 3.1ff; 7.2-4; Jer 2.8; 5.31; 21.11-23. 32, somewhat later Ez 22.23-31 (Rudolph, 1975, p. 287).

Of the texts listed by these scholars Jeremiah is considered later than Zephaniah and moreover does not share the same specific vocabulary and themes that occur in the texts from Lamentations and Ezekiel. Thus it is not marked as an intertext for the production of Zeph 3.1-5. If Ezek 22.23-31 and Lam 4.11-16 are excluded as later than Zephaniah then, of this “well-attested prophetic convention”, only Mic 3.9-12 remains as a text which has a number of lexical and thematic similarities with Zeph 3.1-5 (see Table 7.1 below). It is assumed that Zephaniah knew this text from Micah, as did Jeremiah (Jer. 26.18). Generally speaking, Mic 3.1-12 has been considered to be part of the authentic core of Micah¹⁹² and therefore would have been an established text by the time of Zephaniah nearly one hundred years later. Micah 3.1-12 is a powerful prophetic critique of Judah’s leadership which comes to a climax in 3.9-12. Moreover, Mic 3.9-12 can reasonably be read as bringing to a conclusion the series of specific accusations against the leadership of Jerusalem and Judah that began in Mic 2.1. All of this content of Micah 2-3 can be seen as transumed into Zeph 3.1-5 through the allusion to Mic 3.9-12.

Intertextual patterns between Micah 3.9-12 and Zephaniah 3.1-5

Zephaniah 3.1 provides a powerful introduction to the pericope, producing echoes of texts which demand justice and mercy as requisites for being God’s people, and thus showing how Jerusalem has failed in this calling. The following verses add substance to this initial denunciation, echoing Micah’s text from nearly one hundred years earlier to show that

¹⁹² Hillers, 1984, p. 3; Mason, 1991, pp. 27-41.

Table 7.1: Lexical similarities between Zeph 3.1-5 and Mic 3.9-11

Zeph 3.1-5			Mic 3.9-12
<p>Woe to the rebellious, the defiled, the oppressing city. She has not <u>listened</u> to any voice, she has not accepted any correction, In Yahweh she has not trusted, she has not drawn near to her God.</p> <p>Her officials in her midst are roaring lions, her <u>judges</u> evening wolves, they leave nothing for the morning.</p> <p><u>Her prophets</u> are reckless, treacherous men. <u>Her priests</u> profane what is holy, they do violence to the <u>Torah</u>. Yahweh is righteous <u>in her midst</u>, he performs no <u>wickedness</u>.</p> <p>Every morning he gives his judgment, at the break of dawn it is not lacking.</p> <p>But the evildoer knows no shame!</p>	<p>הוי מראה ונגאלה העיר היונה לא <u>שמעה</u> בקול לא לקחה מוסר ביהוה לא בטחה אל-אלהיה לא קרבה שריה בקרבה אריות שאגים <u>שפטיה</u> זאבי ערב לא גרמו לבקר <u>נביאיה</u> פחזים אנשי בגדות <u>כהניה</u> חללו-קדש חמסו תורה יהוה צדיק <u>בקרבה</u> לא יעשה <u>עולה</u> בבקר בבקר משפטו יתן לאור לא נעדר ולא-יודע עול בשת</p>	<p><u>שמעו-נא</u> זאת ראשי בית יעקב וקציני בית ישראל המתעבים משפט ואת כל-הישרה יעקשו בנה ציון בדמים וירושלם <u>בעולה</u> ראשיה בשחד <u>ישפטו</u> <u>כהניה</u> במחיד יורו <u>ונביאיה</u> בכסף יקסמו ועל-יהוה ישענו לאמר הלוא יהוה <u>בקרבנו</u> לא-תבוא עלינו רעה לכן בגללכם ציון שדה תרש וירושלם עיין תהיה והר הבית לבמות יער</p>	<p>Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who detest justice and make crooked all that is straight, who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with <u>wickedness</u>. Her heads give <u>judgment</u> for a bribe; <u>her priests teach</u> for a price; <u>her prophets</u> practice divination for money; yet they lean on the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD <u>in the midst of us</u>? No disaster shall come upon us." ¹² Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height.</p>

the people of God had deteriorated even further from their moral calling. Micah had called the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem to “hear” or “listen” (שמעו־נא) to the message that Yahweh’s prophet was delivering (Mic 3.9). By Zephaniah’s time they had failed to do this, as Jerusalem “has not listened (לא שמעה) to any voice, she has not accepted any correction” (Zeph 3.2a-b). In Micah’s time the leadership of Jerusalem relied on a kind of “cheap grace”: “Is not Yahweh in our midst (בקרבהנו)? No harm shall come to us” (Mic 3.11c). By the time of Zephaniah even this misled reliance on God had disappeared. Now Zephaniah could write, “In Yahweh she has not trusted, she has not drawn near (לא קרבה) to her God” (2.c-d; the root is the same for the verb “draw near” and the noun “midst”, קרב). It was the prophet himself who now had to insist that Yahweh was indeed “in her midst (בקרבה)” (Zeph. 3.5a.), the very claim the leaders of Jerusalem made in Mic 3.11c. In contrast to Micah’s leaders who claimed Yahweh’s blessing but built Zion with blood and wickedness (עולה) (Mic 3.10), Zephaniah states explicitly that Yahweh, in their midst, committed no wickedness (עולה) (Zeph 3.5b), another lexical link between the texts.

Zephaniah 3.3-4 denounces Jerusalem’s leadership at four levels: “her officials” (שריה), “her judges” (שבטיה), “her prophets” (נביאה) and “her priests” (כהניה). Micah 3.9-11 also denounces the leadership of Jerusalem: 3.9-10 is a summary accusation against the leadership of Jerusalem, followed by 3.11 which succinctly portrays the activities of three different kinds of leaders in Jerusalem. This unjust and blood-stained leadership (Mic 3.9-10) is echoed in Zephaniah’s description of Jerusalem’s ruling officials (שריה) as “roaring lions” (Zeph. 3.3), fearsome creatures of irresistible power which cruelly rend and kill with bloodshed. In Micah’s time Jerusalem’s leaders (ראשיה) בשחד ישפטו (give judgment for a bribe). Zephaniah expands and intensifies the accusation against those responsible for upholding justice: “Her judges (שפטים) evening wolves, they leave nothing for the morning” (3.3bc). In Micah’s time they took a bribe but in Zephaniah’s time like savage wolves they devour the entire carcass, leaving nothing. The root שפט is the same for both verb and noun, strengthening the intertextual connection. Both of these metaphorical depictions, lions and wolves, also evoke Micah’s graphic description of the leaders of Judah’s systematic cannibalisation of their own people (Mic 3.1-4). This is part of the wider text which Mic 3.9-12 brings to a climactic conclusion and becomes part of the “transumed material” that is activated by the allusion in Zeph 3.1-5.

Micah's Jerusalem priests (כהנייה) likewise receive terse treatment: במחיר יורו (they teach for a price). Zephaniah gives an expanded characterisation of this same group (כהנייה): "They have profaned what is sacred, they have done violence to the Torah." The root ירה is the same for תורה (Torah; Zeph 3.4d) and ירה Hiphil (teach; Mic 3.11), making the intertextual connection stronger than is indicated by the English. Zephaniah's accusation is stronger than Micah's but closely related. The shaping of theology for a price, granting God's blessing upon that which God's Torah rejects in Micah's time had developed into a completely retrograde priestly ministry by Zephaniah's time. The priests, who alone among Israel were required to maintain a holy state,¹⁹³ can now only defile, and instead of teaching the Torah they do violence to it.

The prophets of Micah's time are also judged: they (נביאיה) "give oracles for money." In Zephaniah, once again, they have become much worse than this: "Her prophets (נביאיה) are reckless; treacherous men" (Zeph 3.4ab). Again there is a progression from corrupt behaviour to total corruption. Reading Zeph 3.1-5 with Mic 3.9-11 in the background shows that the leaders of Zephaniah's time have become much worse than those of Micah's time, complete in their debasement. By echoing or alluding to Mic 3.9-12 Zephaniah shows that if Judah was ripe for judgment in the time of Micah it is now much worse. However, at this point Zephaniah makes a departure from the direction of Micah's oracle.

Micah brings his oracle to a conclusion with a pronouncement of judgment: "Therefore because of you Zion shall be ploughed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height" (Mic 3.12). Zephaniah, however, changes tack at this juncture. Instead of a declaration of judgment to conclude the pericope, expected for a woe oracle, Zephaniah introduces a different metre and style with a hymn of praise to Yahweh:

- 5a Yahweh is righteous in her midst,
- 5b he performs no wickedness.
- 5c Every morning he gives his judgment,
- 5d at the break of dawn it is not lacking,
- 5e but the evildoer knows no shame!

¹⁹³ The Nazarite was in a voluntary state of holiness.

This is a surprising divergence from the expected announcement of judgment. This divergence evokes a specific genre from within the life of ancient Israel, the psalm, and also a specific text from within that genre, Psalm 46.

7.1.3 Intertextuality with Psalms and with Psalm 46

A number of commentators think that v.5 is a later addition to vv.1-4 or has been inserted in between what was originally a single literary unit, vv.1-4 and vv.6-8 (e.g., Renaud, 1987, p. 236). The principal reason for this are the differences between vv.1-4 and v.5. Edler, for example, although cautious with his suggestion that v.5 may be a later addition, writes that the metre and style of v.5 militate against it coming from Zephaniah, to whom he attributes vv.1-4 (Edler, 1984, p. 95). He states,

Zef 3,5 erinnert an einen hymnischen Lobpreis der immerwährenden Gerechtigkeit Jawhes und steht somit isoliert hinter den konkreten Anklagen der Verse 3,1-4, die anstelle eines hymnischen Lobpreises eher eine Strafandrohung erwarten lassen, welche in Zef 3,8 dann auch zu finden ist.

Zeph 3.5 is evocative of a hymn of praise of the everlasting justice of Yahweh, and thus stands isolated behind the concrete accusations of verses 3.1-4, which instead of a hymn of praise rather foreshadows a threat of punishment, which is then found in Zeph 3.8 (Edler, 1984, p. 95).

Perlitt is more adamant than Edler with his assertion that v.5 does not fit and that “er ist darum das hinzugefügte, aber hier unpassende Bekenntnis einer frommen Seele” (*it is therefore the added but, here, out of place confession of a pious soul*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 136). Yet do the obvious differences between vv.1-4 and v.5 necessarily require it to be considered an addition to the original text? Appreciation of intertextuality allows the pericope (3.1-5) to be read as an integral unity. There are two aspects of intertextuality that can be explored with this text, “genre intertextuality” and “specific intertextuality.” These two aspects of intertextuality are described by Bakhtin who wrote that

the expressiveness of individual words is not inherent in the words themselves as units of language, nor does it issue directly from the meaning of these words: it is either typical generic expression or it is an echo of another’s individual expression, which makes the word, as it were, representative of another’s whole utterance from a particular evaluative position (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 89).

Zephaniah 3.5 can be analysed intertextually from both angles, “generic expression” and “another’s individual expression.”

An “incorporated genre”

Zephaniah 3.5 in its present context fits the description of an “incorporated” or “inserted” genre (see “Incorporated genres” p.9). This is supported by the way commentators have recognised its generic language. As seen above, Edler describes it as “evocative of a hymn of praise”,¹⁹⁴ and Perlitt as “Das hymnische Gotteslob” (*The hymn of praise to God*).¹⁹⁵ Renaud notes that “v 5 emprunte un certain nombre de ses expressions au langage psalmique” (v.5 borrows a certain number of its expressions from psalmic language)¹⁹⁶ and Irsigler describes the verse as “doxological.”¹⁹⁷ Yet rather than exploring the effect of this inserted genre within the text, for all of these scholars the psalm-like quality of the verse indicates its inauthenticity, with the corollary that it disrupts the flow and meaning of the text. Following Bakhtin’s lead the question may be posed as to what is the effect of this psalm-genre unexpectedly appearing in the place where an announcement of judgment is expected.

As all commentators mention, Zeph 3.5 explicitly contrasts Yahweh to the corrupt leadership of Jerusalem. They are corrupt, Yahweh is righteous. Yet there is also double-voicing in this text. It is Zephaniah’s voice but it is also a voice that belongs to Israel’s worship, the psalms. By analogy, what Bakhtin wrote of the power of double-voicing in prose, that it “draws its energy, its dialogized ambiguity, not from *individual* dissonances, misunderstandings or contradictions...(but from) a fundamental, socio-linguistic speech diversity and multi-languagedness” (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 325-326), can be a viewpoint from which to understand Zeph 3.5. The sudden and unexpected appearance of this doxological fragment evokes an entire sphere of Israel’s life, the world of the worship of Yahweh that became enshrined in the book of Psalms. In the psalms Yahweh is indeed “righteous” (צַדִּיק יְהוָה Zeph 3.5), but in the psalms there is also a clearly defined and constantly reinforced view of what God requires of his people¹⁹⁸ and of God’s response to those who do not measure up to these requirements.¹⁹⁹ Thus Zeph 3.5 contrasts not only God and the Jerusalem elite but there is also an implicit but palpable contrast between what God’s people, and the leaders of God’s people, should be like and what they are actually like (Zeph. 3.1-4). The psalms assume that humans in relationship with

¹⁹⁴ Edler, 1984, p. 95

¹⁹⁵ Perlitt, 2004, p. 135.

¹⁹⁶ Renaud, 1987, p. 240.

¹⁹⁷ Irsigler, 2002, p. 323.

¹⁹⁸ E.g., Pss 1.1-3; 5.7- 8; 7.3ff; 15; etc.

¹⁹⁹ Pss 1.4-6; 5.4-6; 7.9 etc.

God should be, using Psalm 15 as one example of many, “blameless”, “right” in actions, “truthful”, “not lend money at interest”, “not take a bribe against the innocent.” Every page of the book of Psalms flows with this discourse of required righteousness and this expectation becomes present in Zeph 3.5 through this “inserted genre.” Zephaniah 3.5 contrasts Yahweh with Judah but also contrasts God’s people with what God’s people should be.

Specific intertextuality: Psalm 46

As well as this generic intertextuality there is also specific intertextuality with Ps 46.6 [5]. Zephaniah 3.5 has more lexical connections with Ps 46.6 than with any other psalm (see Table 7.2 below).

Table 7.2: Lexical similarities between Zeph 3.5a-d and Ps 46.6

Zeph 3.5a-d	יהוה צדיק <u>בקרבה</u> לא יעשה עולה <u>בבקר בבקר</u> משפטו יתן לאור לא נעדר	Yahweh is righteous <u>in her midst</u> , He performs no wickedness. <u>Every morning</u> he gives his judgment, In the morning it is not lacking.
Ps 46.6 [5]	<u>אלהים בקרבה</u> בלתמוט יעזרה אלים לפנות בקר	God is <u>in her midst</u> , She shall not be moved; God will help her, When <u>the morning</u> dawns.

* AT

Perlitt also calls attention to the connection with Ps 46.6: “Dass Jahwe „in ihrer Mitte“ sei, wird Ps 46,6 auch von der „Gottesstadt“ gesagt.” (*That Yahweh is “in her midst” Ps 46.6 is also said of the City of God [in] Ps 46.6*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 135). He makes no further comment about the effect or significance of this intertextuality, yet if Psalm 46 is evoked by Zeph 3.5 intertextual patterns are created.

Psalm 46

Although Gerstenberger considers Psalm 46 to be from the post-exilic period²⁰⁰ other commentators believe it is from early in the monarchic period.²⁰¹ The way it takes up Canaanite mythology may support the early date. The Canaanite chaos mythology has been adapted to Israel’s theology (vv.3-4 [2-3]), seen by the way God’s dwelling place is the centre from which blessing proceeds to the entire world: “There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High” (Ps 46.5 [4]).

²⁰⁰ Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 194.

²⁰¹ Craigie, 1983, p. 344; Kraus, 1988, p. 461.

This concept can be seen, for example, in the description of El's abode in the Ugaritic Baal and Yam legend:

[Then] indeed he set (his) face
towards El at the source(s) [of the rivers],
[amid the springs of the two oceans];
[he penetrated] the mountain(s) of El
and entered the massif of the king, [fathers of years];
[he did homage at El's feet] and fell down,
he prostrated himself and did [him] honour (Gibson & Driver, 2004, p. 37).

The fact that no river runs through Jerusalem demonstrates the mythological element in the psalm. This exegesis will assume that the psalm is early and was known and available when Zeph 3.1-5 was written.

Although the genre of Psalm 46 has traditionally been seen as a "Song of Zion",²⁰² some scholars reclassify the psalm as a "psalm of confidence."²⁰³ Weiser writes, "The keynote of the psalm, which is sounded in every strophe, is the intrepid confession of faith in God" (Weiser, 1962, p. 367). Thus in the face of the nature-forces of chaos (vv.3-4), and in the face of enemy nations (v.7) the inhabitants of Jerusalem will trust in God and in his mighty works on their behalf (vv.9-10). The conclusion of the psalm sees both "the 'nations' and the 'earth' (v 11), which earlier were depicted as posing a threat to orderly existence, are now harnessed in service to the exaltation of God" (Craigie, 1983, p. 345). Thus trust in God who is in the midst of Jerusalem results in protection from outside threats to the city's existence.

Zephaniah 3.5 keys into the heart of Psalm 46. Like Ps 46.6, Zephaniah portrays God as in the midst of the city, acting beneficially on its behalf every morning. The allusion to this Psalm throws into stark relief the difference between the "city of God" and Zephaniah's Jerusalem. Although God is in the midst of the city, the people do not trust and they do not draw near to God (Zeph. 3.2). Even though the God who is sovereign over the earth and all of its peoples (Ps. 46.11) is in their midst, the very city of God is in unyielding rebellion against him. The intertextuality with Psalm 46 highlights that the problems of Jerusalem are internal. Even though God's presence would safeguard them against threats from the outside, Jerusalem's troubles are all from within.

²⁰² So, e.g., Mays, 1994, p. 182.

²⁰³ Craigie, 1983, p. 342; Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 194.

7.1.4 Summary

Zephaniah 3.3-4 shares a number of similarities with Mic 3.9-11. These similarities could come simply from shared genre but there are several reasons to suggest that Zephaniah may be alluding to Mic 3.9-11. First, if Zephaniah is considered to come from late monarchic Judah, then Mic 3.9-11 is the only other text that is structurally and lexically similar to Zeph 3.3-4, rather than a well attested or common genre. Furthermore, Jer 26.18 indicates that Mic 3.9-11 was a text that was known in this period. Thus a case can be made that Zephaniah alludes to this Micah text. The allusion develops the theme of just how corrupt God's people have become, even more so than in Micah's time, and therefore how deserving they are of judgment. The pattern of allusion is similar to that of Zeph 1.13 to Amos 5.1-17 in that Judah is likened to God's people of an earlier time who were the objects of prophetic denunciation for their failure to live in faithfulness with God.

Zephaniah 3.5 brings the pericope to a conclusion. It seems to be out of place because an announcement of judgment is expected, as in Mic 3.12. Thus v.5 could be described, following Riffaterre, as an ungrammaticality that requires another text or texts in order to make sense of it. This ungrammaticality of Zeph 3.5 points first to the "speech genre" or "heteroglot" of the Psalms, and also more specifically to Psalm 46. These intertextualities highlight the stark contrast between what God's people and God's city should be like, and what they are actually like, as portrayed by vv.1-4. The people of God are endangered, not by any external threat, but by their own disobedience and rebellion against their God. Verse 5 sums up vv.1-4 and concludes the pericope in an unexpected way but continues the theme that runs through the book of Zephaniah of the failure of God's people to fulfil their responsibilities and calling, and consequently the threat of judgment because of their failure.

7.2 Zephaniah 3.6-8

- 6a I have cut off nations, their battlements are deserted;
- 6b I have devastated their streets; no one passes through;
- 6c their cities are deserted, without people, without inhabitant.
- 7a I said, "Surely you will fear me, you will accept correction,
- 7b her dwelling will not be cut off (because of) all that I have appointed against her."
- 7c However, they were eager to corrupt all their deeds.
- 8a Therefore wait for me – an announcement of Yahweh – for the day I arise as an accuser.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ עַד is pointed by the MT as "prey" or "booty" (עַד), thus the ESV, "'Therefore wait for me", declares the LORD, "for the day when I rise up to seize the prey." The translation "witness"/"accuser" of most

- 8b For my decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms,
 8c to pour upon them my wrath, all of my burning anger.
 8d For in the fire of my jealousy the whole earth shall be consumed.

An ambiguous pericope

This pericope has been interpreted in a variety of different ways: as a judgment oracle and as a salvation oracle; predicting judgment on Judah, on the nations, and on both Judah and the nations. Different commentators argue for each of these scenarios, indicating there are ambiguities in the pericope. This exegesis will argue that it is a judgment oracle which threatens judgment upon both Judah and the nations. Intertextualities within this judgment oracle, however, create subversions that point towards salvation. Indeed, it is the final judgment oracle in the book of Zephaniah whose concluding material (3.9-20) envisions future transformation and salvation for Judah and the nations. Thus the ambiguities in the pericope point towards this future hope of salvation. As well as intertextuality there is also significant *intra*-textuality as this final oracle of judgment gathers up all that has gone before it, especially from the judgment speech of 1.2-2.3.

Delimitation

The delimitation of the pericope is difficult (see above section on 3.1-5). This exegesis will treat 3.6-8 as a pericope because of the change of voice in v.6 from Yahweh in third person in 3.1-5 to first person in vv.6-8 and because of the change of tone between vv.6-8 (judgment) and vv.9-13 (salvation). A number of commentators support this delimitation.²⁰⁵

Authenticity

For the question of whether 3.6-8 came from Zephaniah in the late-monarchic period there are, predictably, a range of answers. Ben Zvi, for example, considers vv.6-7 to be post-monarchic rather than late-monarchic (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 318). Seybold argues that vv.6-7 were written after the exile had taken place but considers parts of vv.8-10 to come from Zephaniah himself (Seybold, 1991, pp. 112-113). Edler, on the other hand, represents the view of many that the cumulative indications in the text “lassen keinen Zweifel daran, daß uns hier ein authentischer Spruch des Propheten vorliegt” (*leave no doubt that before*

modern translations (תנ"ך) follows the LXX. See Ben Zvi (1991, pp. 221-223) and Schenker (2013) for discussion.

²⁰⁵ Bič, 1968, p. 70; Edler, 1984, p. 162; Irsigler, 2002, p. 315; Kapelrud, 1975, p. 36; Perlitt, 2004, p. 136; Sabottka, 1972, p. 109; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 165.

us lies an authentic saying of the prophet) (Edler, 1984, p. 162).²⁰⁶ This is the position which is followed in this exegesis. Questions of authorship can be difficult and are ultimately unprovable, hence so many and varying redactional proposals. In this pericope there is no compelling evidence to indicate a setting different from Zephaniah's historical setting, although this cannot be proven.

7.2.1 Intertextualities in 3.6-8

“Cut off nations”

The first intertextuality in this passage presents itself in the first colon of v.6 with Yahweh's declaration, **הכרתי גוים** (I have cut off nations). The collocation of the verb **כרת** (cut off) with **גוים** (nations) as its object is surprisingly infrequent in the OT, otherwise only Deut 12.29; 19.1; Josh 23.4 and Isa 10.7. Of these texts the two in Deuteronomy are very similar to each other and give instructions for what Israel is to do after “Yahweh your God has cut off the nations” in the land they will possess. Joshua 23.4 belongs to Joshua's farewell speech in which he mentions “all the nations which I (Joshua) have cut off”, closely related thematically to the Deuteronomy texts. The texts from Deuteronomy come from the central core of the book (see 5.7.2 above) and can be considered to have been available to Zephaniah. These texts resonate in the background of Zeph 3.6. It is Yahweh who cuts off nations and in the past Yahweh cut off the nations in order to give the Land to his chosen people. Here, however, the cutting off of nations was an example and a warning for Judah that if it did not repent it would suffer the same fate. This echo, however, is secondary to a louder echo from Isa 10.7. This verse shares not only the common lexical elements which mark it as intertextually related to Zeph 3.6, but it also shares genre similarities, a prophetic judgment speech, and thematic similarities, namely the role of the nations in Yahweh's judgment upon his people.

Isaiah 10.7 belongs to a woe oracle against Assyria (10.5-11), which is “the rod of my anger” (Isa 10.5). Yahweh uses Assyria to carry out his judgment but Assyria is unaware of his divine commission, rather, “it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations (**להכרית גוים**) not a few.” While the exact setting and date of this oracle is not agreed upon by scholars it comes from the period of Assyrian expansionist activity in Syria and Palestine in the last quarter of the eighth century. Its authenticity is widely accepted:

²⁰⁶ Although Edler considers v.8d to be a later addition (see 7.2.2 below).

“Disregarding vv.10-12, no one has questioned this as an authentic passage from Isaiah, except for v.15” (Wildberger, 1991, p. 415).²⁰⁷

Irsigler’s attempt to identify the nations that Yahweh has “cut off” in Zeph 3.6 with those listed in the OAN (Zeph 2.4-15) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 350) is unconvincing. Zephaniah 3.6 is better seen as a reference to the general ANE history leading up to the time of the late seventh century. Deissler describes this well,

On verra dans ce verset une allusion historique aux campagnes des Assyriens qui, à partir de 734 et durant un siècle, intervinrent constamment dans l’histoire syro-palestinienne et qu’Amos, Osée, Isaïe ou Michée présentent mainte et mainte fois comme les instruments de la vengeance divine.

One will see in this verse a historical allusion to the campaigns of the Assyrians who, beginning from 734 and for a century, constantly intervened in Syro-Palestinian history and which Amos, Hosea, Isaiah or Micah presented time and time again as instruments of divine vengeance (Deissler, 1964, p. 462).

From the time of the late seventh century Assyrian imperial conquests there had been a great deal of “cutting off” of nations, ruined battlements and desolate streets (Zeph 3.6). This included the Northern Kingdom. The allusion to Isaiah’s oracle about the Assyrians creates an echo of the threat of desolation at the hands of imperial super powers, but also carries the idea that it is Yahweh who is behind all of this. The echo of this text, with its rare shared vocabulary, brings into the text of Zephaniah the pervasive threat, for late monarchic Judah, of imperial conquest under the control of Yahweh.

“Without inhabitants”

The last colon of v.6, **מֵאִין יִישָׁב** (without inhabitants), appears to be a collocation that only occurs in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zephaniah (Isa 5.9; 6.11 [x2]; Jer 44.22; 48.9; 51.29, 37; Zeph 2.5; 3.6). While the occurrences in Jeremiah are here considered to be later than Zephaniah, both Isa 5.9²⁰⁸ and Isa 6.11²⁰⁹ belong to what are considered to be authentic texts coming from Isaiah of Jerusalem. Moreover, these texts are also of central thematic importance for Isaiah. Isaiah 5.8-10, following the Song of the Vineyard (Isa 5.1-7), is a denunciation of the wealthy land owning class who have dispossessed the other members

²⁰⁷ So also Barton, 1995, p. 19; Clements, 1980, p. 110; Sweeney, 1996, p. 205.

²⁰⁸ See Barton, 1995, p. 21; Clements, 1980, p. 61; Seitz, 1993, p. 50; Sweeney, 1996, p. 116; Watts, 1985, p. 9; Wildberger, 1991, p. 197.

²⁰⁹ See Clements, 1980, p. 70; Seitz, 1993, p. 55; Sweeney, 1996, p. 116; Watts, 1985, p. 9; Wildberger, 1991, p. 256.

of the covenant community. Their judgment shall be the loss and devastation of their vast land holdings and wealth (Isa 5.9-10). Their sprawling estates and mansions shall be “without inhabitant” (מֵאִין יוֹשֵׁב). Isaiah 6.1-13 is Isaiah’s commissioning to the prophetic ministry in which he is to preach “so that” God’s people cannot understand and therefore be unable to repent and be delivered (Isa 6.10). The result of their lack of repentance will be that their “cities will lie waste without inhabitant (מֵאִין יוֹשֵׁב), and houses without people and the land is utterly desolate” (Isa 6.11), imagery that “pictures the devastation that would be caused by war” (Clements, 1980, p. 77).

These two important Isaiah texts use the phrase מֵאִין יוֹשֵׁב (without inhabitant) to threaten what will happen to Israel as a result of Yahweh’s judgment. Yet Zephaniah uses the phrase to describe what has already happened, not to Judah, but to the nations who have experienced Yahweh’s judgment. In this way the echo of the Isaiah texts creates a slight dissonance because the phrase carries echoes of Yahweh’s judgment upon Israel/Judah, but is here used to describe what Yahweh has done to the nations. It also hints towards the end of the pericope, v.8, where the judgment that is due Judah because of its obstinacy and refusal to repent will be extended to the entire world. This is the first of several echoes that create hints of ambiguity in the pericope.

“Eager to make their ways corrupt”

In spite of Yahweh’s warnings to Judah through his devastation of the nations around her (Zeph 3.6) they did not repent, but to the contrary “they were eager to corrupt (שָׁחַת Hiphil) all their deeds” (v.7c). Here is an echo from the flood story, specifically Gen 6.11-13, in which the verb שָׁחַת (to corrupt) plays a prominent role:

Gen 6.11-13	וַתִּשְׁחַת הָאָרֶץ לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ חָמָס: וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־ הָאָרֶץ וְהִנֵּה נִשְׁחָתָה כִּי־ הִשְׁחִית כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֶת־דַּרְכּוֹ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים לִנְח קֵץ כָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּא לִפְנֵי כִּי־מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ חָמָס מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְהִנְנִי מִשְׁחִיתָהּ אֶת־ הָאָרֶץ:	Now the earth was corrupt (שָׁחַת Niphal) in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt (שָׁחַת Niphal), for all flesh had corrupted (שָׁחַת Hiphil) their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy (שָׁחַת Hiphil) them with the earth
-------------	---	---

In particular the phrase **השכימו השחיתו כל עלילותם** (they were eager to corrupt all their deeds; Zeph 3.7c) is similar to **כי־השחית כל־בשר את־דרכו על־הארץ** (for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth; Gen. 6.12). This echo is strengthened in Zeph 3.7 by the extended allusion to the flood narrative in Zeph 1.2-3. The allusion in Zephaniah not only emphasises the depth of Judah's corruption but also hints towards the universalising effect of Judah's sin. It will affect the entire earth and all peoples. This becomes explicit in the following verse (v.8).

לכן (Therefore)

Verse 8 begins with **לכן** (therefore) which follows the classical form of the prophetic judgment speech. This form consists of accusations followed by the declaration of punishment for those transgressions, usually (but not always)²¹⁰ introduced by **לכן** (e.g., Mic 2.1-3; 3.5-7; 6.9-15).²¹¹ Following Bakhtin's "genre intertextuality" this word in itself, in this literary context of following the accusations, can only signal a declaration of the judgment. This declaration of judgment, however, is immediately complicated by the imperative **חכו־לי** (wait for me), another ambiguous signal in this pericope.

Wait for Yahweh

The verb **חכה** (wait) in the first colon of v.8, **לכן חכו־לי** (Therefore wait for me), occurs fourteen times in the OT but only five times with Yahweh as the object of the verb (Ps 33.20; Isa 8.17; 30.18; 64.3; Zeph 3.8). Apart from Zeph 3.8 in these texts waiting for Yahweh is a positive thing.

- "Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and shield" (Ps 33.20).
- "I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him" (Isa 8.17).
- "For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him." (Isa 30.18).²¹²
- "From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him." (Isa 64.3 [4]).

²¹⁰ The judgment can be introduced with other conjunctions, e.g., Mic 3.4 **אז** (then); Mic 2.10, no conjunction.

²¹¹ The occurrences are multitudinous in the prophets, e.g., Isa 1.24; 5.24; 8.27; 10.16; Amos 3.11; 4.12; 5.11 etc.

²¹² The verb **חכה** in all the texts occurs in the Piel stem except for Isa 30.18 where it is a Qal participle.

Of these texts Isa 64.3 can be considered later than Zephaniah.²¹³ Of the other passages Isa 8.17 is widely accepted as authentic to Isaiah. Wildberger, for example, states categorically that “There has never been any question that vv.16-18 come from Isaiah” (Wildberger, 1991, p. 365; Clements, 1980, p. 100). The positive meaning of *חכה* in Isa 8.17 is plain to see. Sweeney sees the setting as the announcement of “Isaiah’s intention to withdraw from public debate on the Syro-Ephraimite War and to wait for YHWH’s actions to materialize” (Sweeney, 1996, p. 177). The waiting is until Yahweh’s predicted judgment in Isa 8.1-4 has come to pass, i.e. Damascus and Samaria are destroyed. Watts points out that in v.17 “wait” and “hope” are closely related (Watts, 1985, p. 123).

There is not such unanimity with Isa 30.18. Generally speaking Isaiah 28-31²¹⁴ or Isaiah 28-32; 33,²¹⁵ allowing for later interpolations and editing, along with chapters 1-12 are seen to constitute the authentic core of Isaiah. However, some scholars include v.18 with Isa 30.18ff and consider it to be post-exilic.²¹⁶ Other scholars include v.18 as concluding Isa 30.1-18 which Watts considers to be from the time before Assyria’s fall but after Egypt had begun interfering in Palestine, during the period of Josiah (Watts, 1985, p. 395). Sweeney and Seitz consider v.18 to be from Isaiah in the eighth century (Seitz, 1993, p. 204; Sweeney, 1996, p. 395). Certainly *חכה* (wait) in Isa 30.18 is an expression of waiting hopefully for Yahweh’s intervention. Seitz reads v.18 as summarising vv.1-18 where “God continues to wait for a generation that prefers quiet trust and strength to confidence in human schemes for salvation” (c.f. 30.15) (Seitz, 1993, p. 219).

It is impossible to know whether Psalm 33 would have been available to Zephaniah in the late seventh century simply because there are no real clues to either its setting or date. Its use of creation motifs (Ps 33.6-7) leads most scholars to assume it is post-exilic.²¹⁷ Terrien is more nuanced, suggesting that “its oral formation and growth began and continued during the monarchy” (Terrien, 2003, p. 300), while Craigie concludes that “there are no overwhelming reasons to oppose a general setting in the cult as practiced during the period of the Hebrew monarchy” (Craigie, 1983, p. 271).

²¹³ C.f. 64.10 with its reference to the burnt temple, indicating it is before 515BC but after the destruction of Jerusalem (Watts, 1998, p. 331).

²¹⁴ Barton, 1995, p. 19.

²¹⁵ Seitz, 1993, p. 204.

²¹⁶ Clements, 1980, pp. 249-250; Wildberger, 2002, p. 171.

²¹⁷ Anderson, 1972, p. 260; Gerstenberger, 1988, p. 146; Kraus, 1988, p. 375.

From this it may be concluded that Zephaniah would have been aware of Isa 8.17, was arguably aware of Isa 30.18, and may have known Psalm 33. Zephaniah's usage of the verb **חכה** (wait) is unique among these texts. In the OT as a whole, not to mention only the texts Zephaniah may have been familiar with, waiting for Yahweh is a positive thing. It is to adopt an attitude of hope and trust in Yahweh's intervention on behalf of the one waiting. Yahweh will act and it will be to the benefit of the one waiting. Zephaniah, however, uses the verb in what appears to be a judgment oracle. This creates ambiguity which has led to a number of different approaches among the commentators on Zephaniah.

Some commentators understand **חכה** to have a purely neutral sense. Vlaadingerbroek, for example, points to 2 Kgs 7.9 and 9.3 as examples of this neutral sense of the word (Vlaadingerbroek, 1999, p. 184). Deissler also follows this approach, adding Job 32.4 to Vlaadingerbroek's examples. According to this line of thought the word can be used in a positive or negative sense. However, this misses the intertextual connections of **חכה**, especially with Yahweh as the object of the verb and with the genre of exhortation to God's people to await God. No doubt this is why most commentators have not understood **חכה** to have a neutral sense of "waiting." Instead, two general approaches are followed.

The first is to see **חכה** as carrying the positive meaning of waiting in trust for Yahweh. Roberts, for example, notes that the 2.m.pl. impv. form of **חכה** is the same form as the imperative **בקשו** (seek!) in Zeph 2.3, which is addressed to "you humble of the land who do his commands." Roberts concludes that the subjects of the imperative are the oppressed people of Judah who are exhorted to wait trustingly for Yahweh to bring judgment upon their oppressors, the corrupt rulers of Jerusalem. Thus Roberts sees "wait" as having the same sense as Isa 8.16, i.e. trusting waiting (Roberts, 1991, pp. 215-216). Sweeney also understands **חכה** in a positive sense of trusting but quite differently than Roberts. He sees it as an exhortation for the righteous remnant in Jerusalem to wait for Yahweh "to bring punishment on the nations, prompt them to acknowledge YHWH, and thereby restore Jerusalem to its place at the center of creation" (Sweeney, 2003, pp. 179-180). Ben Zvi and Robertson also see **חכה** as an exhortation to wait trustingly for Yahweh's intervention.²¹⁸

²¹⁸ Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 219-220; Robertson, 1990, pp. 225-226.

The second approach is to acknowledge the unusual usage of חכה but understand it nevertheless to be used in this context in a threatening sense. Thus Irsigler notes that the object of the imperative חכה introduced by ל is not only Yahweh but also the parallel “for the day when I arise as a witness.” For Irsigler this leaves no doubt that the introductory לבן which follows the accusations of vv.6-7,

nur die Strafansage für das uneinsichtige böse Verhalten der Jerusalemer (V 7) einleiten kann, sowie im Hinblick auf den angekündigten Gerichtstag JHWHs, da er als ‚Richter-Zeuge‘...aufsteht, einen sarkastischen Unterton: ‚Wartet mir nur...!‘

can only introduce the announcement of punishment for the unrepentant wicked behaviour of the Jerusalemites (v.7), as well as in view of the announced judgment day of Yahweh, in which he as “judge-witness”...arises, a sarcastic undertone of “Just wait for me...!” (Irsigler, 2002, p. 342).

Thus Irsigler acknowledges that the use of חכה is unusual in this context in which there cannot be hope and understands that the command to “wait” “zeigt ihre ironisch-sarkastische Schärfe” (*shows its ironic-sarcastic edge*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 353). Renaud also sees an ironic use of חכה:

Cet avertissement solennel reçoit dans ce contexte, une note de cruelle ironie. D’ordinaire, ce verbe traduit l’attente confiante en la venue favorable de YHWH. Celui-ci va bien passer mais...c’est pour détruire.

This solemn warning takes, in this context, a note of cruel irony. Ordinarily this verb expresses confident expectation of the favourable arrival of Yahweh. That will indeed come but...it is for destruction (Renaud, 1987, p. 243).

This second approach appreciates that חכה is deliberately employed for a rhetorical purpose but “irony” or “sarcasm” may not be the best explanation. Zephaniah 3.6-8 has a number of unusual elements which produce not irony but rather ambiguity. This is the effect that is created by the usage of חכה in Zeph 3.8. Sabottka suggests this effect in his discussion of the problem of חכה in this verse. He writes,

Einerseits beginnt mit *lākēn* typisch die eigentliche Ankündigung des Gerichts, so daß von daher gar nichts Positives zu erwarten ist, das positive *ḥkh* also selbst schon die Überraschung wäre, da es in einem fremden Kontext steht. Andererseits aber hat es auf Grund von v.9 den Anschein, daß das in v.8 angekündigte Gericht auch (!) einen heilvollen Aspekt hat, also nicht total vernichtendes, vielmehr läuterndes Gericht ist. Diese positive Seite könnte vielleicht den Gebrauch von *ḥkh* hier rechtfertigen.

*On the one hand the actual announcement of judgment typically begins with *lākēn*, so that from there on nothing positive is to be expected, the positive *ḥkh* thus in itself would be a surprise, since it stands in an alien context. Yet on the other hand on the basis of v.9 it gives the semblance that the announced*

judgment of v.8 also [!] has a salvific aspect, therefore is not a total annihilation, rather it is a refining judgment. This positive side could possibly justify the usage here of חכה (Sabottka, 1972, p. 113).

Sabottka shows a valuable insight into the ambiguity created by the use of חכה. In its context it appears to mean “Wait for the judgment.” Yet the intertextual resonances of the word subvert this meaning and create a dissonance or ambiguity with an echo of hope for salvation. This reading is strengthened because there are a number of such ambiguities in this pericope and especially in v.8.

אסף and קבץ (Gathering and assembling)

A similar effect to the “wait” in the first line of v.8 is created by the pairing of the verbs אסף and קבץ in the next line, “For my decision is to gather (לאסף) nations, to assemble (לקבץ) kingdoms.” These verbs occur together in parallel eleven times in the OT.²¹⁹ If Zeph 3.6-8 is considered to be authentic to Zephaniah in the late monarchic period then of these texts only Isa 11.12 and Mic 2.12; 4.6 could possibly have been available and known to Zephaniah. However, the dating of these texts is a contentious issue among scholars because Isa 11.12 and Mic 2.12; 4.6 refer to the gathering of dispersed and scattered Israel and Judah from the nations. Some scholars consider this theme fits an exilic or post-exilic setting better than an eighth century setting.

Micah 2.12

“I will surely gather (אסף) all of you, O Jacob, I will gather (קבץ) the remnant of Israel; I will set them together like sheep in a fold, like flock in its pasture, a noisy multitude of men” (Mic 2.12).

This is one of two salvation oracles (v.12 and v.13) which suddenly interrupt the first series of specific judgment oracles against Judah in the book of Micah (2.1-5, 6-11). The historical setting of these two judgment oracles is disputed because the imagery of gathering the scattered survivors seems to fit an exilic or post-exilic setting so well. Thus both Wolff and Mays consider 2.12-13 to be a later addition to Micah (Mays, 1976, p. 74; Wolff, 1990, p. 76). On the other hand, a number of commentators suggest that the historical setting could be Sennacherib’s 701BC campaign.²²⁰ Imperial conquest and exile was a regular experience in the history of small nations like Israel and Judah (see e.g.,

²¹⁹ Isa 11:12; 43:9; 62:9; Ezek 11:17; 29:5; 39:17; Joel 2:16; Mic 2:12; 4:6; Hab 2:5; Zeph 3:8.

²²⁰ Allen, 1976, pp. 301-303; Hillers, 1984, p. 39; Smith, 1984, p. 28.

Deissler on page 184). B. Waltke argues at length for the authenticity of the pericope (Waltke, 2007, pp. 138-142), and Andersen and Freedman conclude their discussion of the issues by stating, “The possibility that Micah saw out beyond the judgments of chapters 1-3 to some kind of recovery, as described in 2.12-13, cannot be ruled out *a priori*” (Andersen & Freedman, 2000, p. 334). For a case such as this, certainty is unattainable but treating Mic 2.12 as authentic to Micah, and therefore known to Zephaniah, is not unreasonable.

Micah 4.6

“In that day, declares the Lord, I will assemble (אסף) the lame, and gather (קבץ) those who have been driven away and those whom I have afflicted” (Mic 4.6).

Micah 4.6-7 is also a salvation oracle but fits its literary setting more smoothly than Mic 2.12 as it appears in a series of oracles about the future salvation of Judah and Jerusalem. Once again opinion is divided on the authenticity of the pericope. Hillers and Waltke, consistent with their view of Mic 2.12, consider Mic 4.6-7 to be authentic, describing the period of Assyrian devastation of Israel and Judah in the late seventh century.²²¹ Smith is unsure but leans towards the exilic period,²²² and Andersen and Freedman, also in distinction to their view of Mic 2.12, see the pericope as exilic or post-exilic,²²³ as do Mays and Wolff.²²⁴ The overall content of the salvation oracles in Mic 4-5 does fit a late seventh century setting. These oracles envision a Judah and Jerusalem that stands in complete contrast to its condition in Micah’s time in two important ways: the corrupt city will be cleansed (e.g., 4.1-5 c.f. 3.9-12; 5.10-15) and it will be delivered from the Assyrian imperialism (e.g., 4.6-7, 8, 11-13; 5.1-4 [2-5]). On the other hand, the mention of Babylon in Mic 4.10 may indicate later editing in this passage. While it is impossible to answer this question with certainty, for this exegesis Mic 4.6-7 will be treated as authentic and available to Zephaniah.

Isaiah 11.12

“He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble (אסף) the banished of Israel, and gather (קבץ) the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”

²²¹ Hillers, 1984, pp. 54-55; Waltke, 2007, pp. 228-229.

²²² Smith, 1984, p. 39.

²²³ Andersen & Freedman, 2000, p. 434.

²²⁴ Mays, 1976, p. 100; Wolff, 1990, pp. 116-117.

There is widespread disagreement about the dating of this pericope. A post-exilic setting is supported by some scholars²²⁵ but Wildberger overstates the case: “In the modern study of the text, there has been almost universal agreement that vv.11-16 do not originate with Isaiah” (Wildberger, 1991, p. 489). Watts argues that Isa 11.11-14 fits integrally into the larger literary unit of Isa 10.24-12.6 (Watts, 1985, p. 154). He sets the larger unit in the aftermath of the Syro-Ephraimic War in which the kingdom of Damascus and the Northern Kingdom of Israel attacked Judah and Jerusalem in order to force Judah into joining an anti-Assyrian coalition. According to the biblical account, rather than joining the coalition, King Ahaz of Judah offered vassalage to Assyria who then conquered Damascus and Samaria (2 Kgs 16.5ff). Accordingly Isa 11.11-14 would be dated to a time shortly after 722 BC. Similarly, Seitz insists that Isa 11.12-16 “fits firmly into Isaiah’s own historical period. The emphasis on exiles in Assyria is certainly within the historical range of Isaiah’s own activity” (Seitz, 1993, p. 109). Thus a late seventh century date can be offered as a convincing setting for Isa 11.12 which means it would have been available to Zephaniah.

Effect of the allusion

The three texts discussed above and Zeph 3.8 all use the two verbs **אסף** and **קבץ** in parallel, in the same word order, and all with Yahweh as the subject of the verbs. The Micah and Isaiah texts are all salvation oracles in which the object of this collocation of verbs is the remnant of Judah/Israel. Thus the collocation of **אסף** and **קבץ** carries with it the impression of Yahweh’s re-gathering and reconstitution of a purified Israel in the time after judgment. In Zeph 3.8, however, this collocation appears, not in a salvation oracle, but as part of a judgment oracle, albeit one that has already been subverted by dissident intertextual echoes. Furthermore, the object of the verbs is not “Judah” and “Israel” but “nations” and “kingdoms.” Once again in this pericope there is an unusual deployment of words and, once again, this creates an ambiguity or dissonance. Zephaniah is announcing judgment upon the nations but the specific words that are employed carry in themselves echoes of salvation and restoration for God’s own people, Israel and Judah. These echoes continue to develop the theme of the intertwined fates of the peoples of the world and the people of God that dominates the book of Zephaniah.

²²⁵ E.g., Clements, 1980, p. 125; Kaiser, 1983, p. 266.

This intertextual effect of אסף and קבץ used together is generally missed by the commentators. Rather, a canonical survey is often presented. For example, Ben Zvi observes,

The pair קבץ-אסף is well attested in the OT (e.g., Isa 43.9; Ezek 29.5; Joel 2.16; Mic 2.12; Hab 2.5). The pair ממלכות-גוים is attested in Jer 1.10 (c.f. Ps 102:23; Isa 14.16), and the expression לקבץ ממלכות resembles Hab 2.5, although in the latter the gatherer is not YHWH (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 223-224).

This observation, without further comment or reflection, does not contribute to an understanding of the text. For the most part, however, the discussion of these verbs centres upon who will be “gathered” and “assembled” to suffer Yahweh’s judgment in Zeph 3.8.

7.2.2 Who will be judged?

The closest to the position arrived at above is Sweeney who surveys the usage of אסף and קבץ as individual words, not as a collocation, and without regard to the dating of the texts and concludes that they can mean

destruction...judgment by YHWH...the verb קבץ is also frequently employed in the Hebrew Bible in reference to YHWH’s gathering the dispersed or exiled people of Israel and Judah (Mic 1.12; 4.6; Jer 31.10; Zech 10.8; Isa 54.7; 56.8; Deut 30.3, 4; Jer 23.3; 29.14; 31.8; etc; cf Isa 40.11), sometimes in combination with אסף (e.g., Mic 2.12; 4.6; Isa 11.12)...to express Jerusalem’s/Israel’s restoration (Sweeney, 2003, p. 181).

From this survey Sweeney concludes “Thus the announcement that YHWH will ‘gather/assemble’ nations expresses both judgment and restoration” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 181). What he means by this, though, is that Yahweh is gathering the nations to judge them, not the righteous of Israel, and through this judgment of the nations Israel will be saved.

Diametrically opposite to this interpretation is Irsigler who writes,

Die ‚Völker‘ und ‚Königreiche‘ aber von Zef 3,8c bleiben nicht nur inaktives Forum des Gerichts. Der richtende Gott bezieht sie darüber hinaus als Ausführungsorgane, als Strafwerkzeuge in sein ‚Rechtsurteil‘ ein, das die Gottesspruchformel in 8b bekräftigt.

But the ‘nations’ and ‘kingdoms’ in Zeph 3.8c do not remain simply inactive observers of the judgment. The judging God includes them moreover as the implementers of judgment, as instruments of punishment in his judgment decision, which is reinforced by the “God says” formula in 8b (Irsigler, 2002, p. 354).

According to this line of thought the nations are gathered as the instruments of God's judgment upon Jerusalem. Following this reading some commentators simply take עליהם (upon them; 8c) to refer to the same 3 m. pl. subjects as 7c, i.e. the inhabitants of Jerusalem.²²⁶ Others, however, consider it necessary to amend 8c to support this reading, changing עליהם (upon them) to עליך or עליכם (upon you, singular or plural, i.e. upon Jerusalem).²²⁷ Deissler, for example, considers עליך (upon you) to have been the original reading that had been changed by a later redactor after the fall of Jerusalem and following Ezek 38 and Joel 4 “donner à notre texte une note plus actuelle, plus eschatologique” (*to give our text a more up to date and more eschatological feel*) (Deissler, 1964, p. 463). The fact that there is no textual support for such an emendation (*BHS* nevertheless suggests כם- for ה-) means that this suggestion is pure speculation.²²⁸

While Sweeney sees the nations being judged and Jerusalem saved and others the nations being the instruments to judge Jerusalem, a number of commentators understand the judgment of v.8 to be upon Israel and the nations. That is, the nations are gathered and judged along with Jerusalem.²²⁹ Thus there is an astonishing difference of opinion over who will be the object of judgment in v.8.

Those who contend that Yahweh will gather the nations as instruments of judgment for Jerusalem and Judah argue that the judgment of the nations makes no sense in this context, e.g., “the context gives good grounds for Yahweh pouring out his wrath on Jerusalem, but none at all for punishing the other nations” (Roberts, 1991, p. 216; so also Rudolph, 1975, p. 290). Jeremiah 1.15-16²³⁰ and Ezek 22.23-31²³¹ are cited as support for this view. However, these texts, while sharing similarity with Zeph 3.8, are different in important respects. Unlike Zeph 3.8, Jer 1.15-16 is unambiguous in its assertion that Yahweh's gathering of the nations is for judgment. Moreover, Ezek 22.23-31 addresses the time after the destruction of Jerusalem, looking back on what Yahweh has done. Indeed, this Ezekiel text takes up Zeph 3.1-8 in a new reading for its very different context (7.1.2 above). The final line of Zeph 3.8, “For in the fire of my jealousy the whole earth shall be consumed”, does not fit with this reading of the nations being gathered as instruments

²²⁶ Irsigler, 2002, p. 343; Roberts, 1991, p. 216.

²²⁷ Deissler, 1964, p. 463; Edler, 1984, p. 161; Renaud, 1987, p. 243; Rudolph, 1975, p. 290.

²²⁸ See Sabottka's strong critique of this emendation, 1972, p. 115.

²²⁹ Ball, 1988, pp. 232-233; Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 319; Berlin, 1994, p. 133; Bič, 1968, p. 70; Floyd, 2000, p. 234; Robertson, 1990, p. 324; Sabottka, 1972, p. 115; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 187.

²³⁰ Irsigler, 2002, p. 355; Renaud, 1987, p. 244.

²³¹ Roberts, 1991, p. 216.

of judgment for Jerusalem. Therefore Roberts reads אֶרֶץ (earth) as “land” (Roberts, 1991, p. 216), i.e., “the whole land (of Judah) shall be consumed.” However, a more common suggestion is that the later editors who allegedly changed עֲלֵיךָ/עֲלֵיכֶם (upon you [pl./sg.]) to עֲלֵיהֶם (upon them, i.e. the nations) also added the final line to universalise the meaning of the verse,²³² or more specifically, according to Rudolph,

Der Text wurde geändert, um den göttlichen Zorn von dem auserwählten Volk auf die Heidenwelt abzuleiten, zumal da deren Vernichtung im eschatologischen Gericht dem späteren Judentum bei Zephania nicht deutlich genug ausgesprochen erschien.

The text was changed to divert the divine wrath from the chosen people to the pagan world, especially since their destruction in the eschatological judgment of later Judaism did not seem to be clearly enough pronounced by Zephaniah (Rudolph, 1975, p. 290).

Over and against this Sweeney insists that v.8d “should be viewed as intrinsic to this text” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 182) and Kapelrud finds the declaration of *BHS*, without any textual evidence, that v.8d is added “astonishing” (Kapelrud, 1975, p. 36). Yet, nevertheless, the question remains: why are the nations judged in an extended oracle (3.1-8) that outlines at length the sins and faults of Jerusalem and Judah? Robertson writes that “The persistent rebellion of Jerusalem will lead to the destruction of all peoples, not merely to the punishment of Judah” (Robertson, 1990, p. 324), but gives no explanation why this should be the case. Yet this is a key issue around which the entire book of Zephaniah revolves, the relationship of the people of God with all the peoples of the world.

Zephaniah 3.6-8 occupies a crucial position within the book of Zephaniah because it is the final oracle of judgment and it ends on a note of universal judgment. The reason why the nations are to be judged along with Jerusalem and Judah is not stated, and this has contributed to the interpretive confusion. However, from the beginning of the book of Zephaniah the sin of Judah and Jerusalem, the people of God, is grounds for the judgment of the entire world (Zeph 1.2-3, 16-18). The reason for this, as has been argued above, is because of the priestly, representative role of the people of God. In Exod 19.6 Yahweh offers Israel the opportunity to be מְמַלְכֵת כֹּהֲנִים, “a priestly kingdom” (NRSV) or “a kingdom of priests” (ESV; NJB; NASB; NIV; NJPS). According to Zephaniah 1 and 3.1-8, the corruption of the people of God who bear the representative function for all of humanity, and even all of creation, means that all peoples of the earth, and even the entire

²³² Deissler, 1964, p. 463; Irsigler, 2002, p. 357; Renaud, 1987, p. 245, “une relecture intentionnelle” (*an intentional rereading*).

creation, must also suffer judgment. This is the reason for the universal judgment in 3.8, already announced in 1.2-3, 17-18. However, this final and climactic declaration of judgment in Zeph 3.8 also marks the turning point in the book of Zephaniah which now takes up the restoration, not only of Judah, but of all humanity.

7.2.3 *Intra-textuality*

Along with intertextuality Zeph 3.6-8 also shares vocabulary and themes with what has preceded in the book of Zephaniah, *intra-textuality*, especially with the judgment speech of 1.2-18 and the call to repentance 2.1-3. In this way the oracle gathers up that which has preceded in the entire book of Zephaniah. The pericope begins with Yahweh looking back on his wasted efforts to bring his people back to himself:

הכרתי גוים (I have cut off nations; v.6aα). This is the same verb (with the same stem, form, person, number and subject, i.e. Yahweh) from the first judgment oracle in the book, והכרתי את האדם מעל פני האדמה (And I will cut off humanity from the face of the earth; 1.3), with which the book of Zephaniah began. Verse 6 is recounting a time before the global judgment announced in Zeph 1.2-3 became necessary. The same is true for the other usage of הכרתי in the book of Zephaniah, 1.4, והכרתי מן-המקום מזה את- (And I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal).

Yahweh's past action against the nations, נשמו פנותם (Their battlements are deserted; 3.6), brings to mind Yahweh's promised action against Judah and Jerusalem in 1.16 when his judgment will come על הפנות הגבהות (against the lofty battlements). Similarly 3.6cα נצדו עריהם (their cities are deserted) evokes the coming judgment of Yahweh against Judah in 1.16 על הערים הבצורות (against the fortified cities).

The nations which Yahweh has judged in an effort to bring his people back to himself are יושב מאין (without inhabitant; 3.6cγ). Yahweh's imminent judgment, coming because of his people's failure to respond to his efforts to bring them back through these actions against the nations, will be against כל-יושב ירושלם (all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; 1.4); ישובי המכתש (the inhabitants of the Mortar; 1.11); and ultimately against כל-ישובי הארץ (all the inhabitants of the earth; 1.18).

Zephaniah 3.7 again shows Yahweh reminiscing about his expectation that his people מוסר תחדי (will accept correction), a dashed hope as shown by the assessment of 3.2b לא לקחה מוסר (it has accepted no correction). Yahweh had hoped that his efforts to

bring his people to repentance would mean that ולא יכרת מעונה (her dwelling will not be cut off [because of] all that I have appointed against her; 3.7b). The judgment speech of Zeph 1, however, declares that נכרתו כל-נטילי כסף (all who weigh out silver are cut off). In 3.7 the reason for her dwelling being cut off, an avoidable fate in the past if Judah had repented, was כל אשר-פקדתי עליה ([because of] all that I have appointed against her). This possibility of avoidance is gone, shown by the three repetitions of the verb (to visit, to appoint) in Zephaniah 1: ופקדתי על-השרים ועל-בני המלך (I will punish the officials and the king's sons; 1.8); ופקדתי על כל-הדולג על-המפתן (I will punish all who leap over the threshold; 1.9); ופקדתי על-האנשים הקפאים על-שמריהם (and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs; 1.12).

The declaration of judgment, 3.8, has at the beginning the phrase נאם-יהוה (an announcement of Yahweh; 3.8aβ). This phrase only occurs otherwise in the judgment oracles of Zephaniah 1 (1.2, 3, 10) so its appearance in this climactic judgment oracle makes a connection back to the global judgment threatened in chapter 1. This connection back to the earlier judgment speeches of Zephaniah becomes deafening with Yahweh's declaration to wait ליום קומי לעד (for the day I arise as an accuser; 3.8aγ). This יום (day) of Yahweh's judgment is a major theme in the book of Zephaniah but this is the first time the word reappears since 2.3. From Zeph 1.7-2.3 the word יום is used 16 times in reference to Yahweh's imminent judgment.²³³ On this terrible day Yahweh will ושפך עליהם זעמי (pour upon them my wrath; 3.8c), the same verb used in 1.17 where in the judgment of the Day of Yahweh ושפך דמם כעפר (their blood shall be poured out like dust). The phrase כל חרון אפי (all of my burning anger; 3.8cβ) is also a characteristic of the Day of Yahweh in Zeph 2.2 אפי-יהוה חרון (the fierce anger of Yahweh).

The reuse of the vocabulary and themes from earlier in the book becomes explicit in the final line of the oracle which repeats nearly word for word the conclusion of the judgment speech in Zeph 1.18 (see Table 7.3 below). Through this recapitulation of so much of the earlier material in the book of Zephaniah Zeph 3.6-8 gathers up and brings the preceding judgment material to a climax before moving on to the salvation section of the book. There is, however, a significant omission in this *intra*-textuality. Although the final line of the pericope, 8d, "For in the fire of my jealousy the whole earth shall be consumed",

²³³ Zeph 1.7, 8, 9, 10, 14 (twice), 15 (6 times), 16, 18; 2.2, 3. There is an additional use of יום in 2.2 but it appears to refer to a day rather than the day of Yahweh, although the verse is very difficult to understand.

Table 7.3: Repetition of Zeph 1.18 in Zeph 3.8d

Zeph 1.18	ובאש קנאתו תאכל כל-הארץ	in the fire of his jealousy the whole earth shall be consumed.
Zeph 3.8d	כי באש קנאתי תאכל כל-הארץ	For in the fire of my jealousy the whole earth shall be consumed.

virtually repeats word for word (allowing for the first person versus third person voice) the penultimate line of chapter 1, (v.18d), the final line (1.18e), “For a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth”, is not repeated. Renaud suggests that the absence of this final line “laisse ouverte la possibilité d’un au-delà du jugement” (*leaves open the possibility of something beyond the judgment*) (Renaud, 1987, p. 245). This is a fitting end to the pericope which is filled with ambiguous signals.

7.2.4 Summary

The pericope begins with an echo of Isa 10.7 which speaks of imperial conquest under the control of Yahweh. The following verses utilise language that appears in other texts, but in an unusual way. The phrase מאין יושב (without inhabitants) is previously used only in Isa 5.9 and 6.11 in oracles which threaten future judgment on Israel. In this context it is used to describe what Yahweh has brought not upon Israel but upon the nations. This continues the interplay that is throughout the book of Zephaniah between the fate of the nations and the fate of God’s people. The verb חכה, which otherwise always refers to waiting in hope for Yahweh’s deliverance, is employed in v.8 in a judgment oracle, creating a discord, a feeling that something does not quite fit. Similarly the collocation of the verbs אסף and קבץ (“gather” and “assemble”) was used in texts prior to Zephaniah to describe the gathering of the remnant of Israel for salvation in the future. Zephaniah uses them to describe Yahweh’s intention to gather the nations for judgment, once again highlighting the relationship between the people of God and the peoples of the world. This judgment will be universal and cataclysmic: “For in the fire of my passion all the earth shall be consumed” (Zeph. 3.8). The reuse of these verbs creates an underlying ambiguity in the pericope. In form and content the judgment oracle seems to be clear, but the intertextualities create subtle subversions of the oracle and raise questions about what it really means. This final judgment pericope also harks back, through the reuse of vocabulary and themes, to the preceding judgment oracles in the book of Zephaniah and in so doing brings the entire judgment upon God’s people and all the nations to a climax. The concluding line of 3.6-8 reuses the penultimate line of the judgment speech of

Zephaniah 1, but not the final line. This, along with the ambiguities created through the intertextualities in the pericope, is another hint that judgment will not be the final word. In this way the final judgment oracle in the book of Zephaniah prepares for the salvation oracles that constitute the remainder of the book.

7.3 Zephaniah 3.9-13

- 9a For then I will change (them) to peoples of pure speech,
- 9b for all of them to call on the name of Yahweh,
- 9c to serve him with one accord.²³⁴
- 10a From beyond the rivers of Cush,
- 10b my worshipers, daughter of my dispersed ones,
- 10c shall bring my offering.
- 11a On that day, you will not be ashamed because of all your deeds
- 11b with which you have transgressed against me,
- 11c for then I will remove from your midst
- 11d your proudly exultant ones,
- 11e and you will no longer be haughty
- 11f on my holy mountain.
- 12a And I will preserve alive in your midst
- 12b a people humble and lowly,
- 12c and they will take refuge in the name of Yahweh.
- 13a The remnant of Israel,
- 13b they will not commit injustice;²³⁵
- 13c they will not speak lies
- 13d and their mouths will not be filled
- 13e with a deceitful tongue.
- 13f For they will graze and lie down,
- 13g and none will make afraid.

Typically for Zephaniah 3 there is little agreement on the delimitation of the pericopes. For example, Seybold reads 3.8-10 as a pericope while Ball and Sweeney see it as 3.8-13.²³⁶ However, Zeph 3.9-13 presents itself as a discrete unit with its unfolding of a new future vision after the universal judgment of v.8 and a number of commentators treat it as such.²³⁷ There are two sections in this pericope which deals with the other side of the

²³⁴ “with a single shoulder.”

²³⁵ A number of commentators depart from the verse division of the MT and read שְׂאֲרֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל (the remnant of Israel) as the subject for the last line of v.12, hence “And the remnant of Israel will take refuge in the name of Yahweh.” Following this reading: the NRSV, ESV, NJB, Elliger, 1964, p. 78; Irsigler, 2002, p. 363; Renaud, 1987, p. 250; Roberts, 1991, p. 210; Sabottka, 1972, p. 116; Seybold, 1991, p. 115; following the MT: NJPS, JPS, KJV, NAU, NIV, NKJV, BFC, NEG, TOB, EIN, ELB, LUT, SCH, Berlin, 1994, p. 126; Perlitt, 2004, p. 141; Sweeney, 2003, pp. 190-191, who argues at length for his position; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 189.

²³⁶ Seybold, 1991, p. 113; Ball, 1988, p. 230; Sweeney, 2003, p. 179.

²³⁷ Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 320; Elliger, 1964, p. 78; Floyd, 2000, pp. 233-234; Irsigler, 2002, p. 365; Robertson, 1990, p. 326; Renaud, 1987, p. 245; Rudolph, 1975, p. 295; R. L. Smith, 1984, p. 140; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 193.

universal judgment of Zeph 3.8: vv.9-10 which treats the nations and vv.11-13 which focuses on Judah and Jerusalem.

7.3.1 Zephaniah 3.9-10: The nations

As with much of the book of Zephaniah there are divergent interpretations of these verses. Some scholars argue, albeit with no textual support, that vv.9-10 was originally an oracle about only Judah but the text of v.9 was later changed from עמי (my people) to עמים (peoples) in order to universalise the meaning.²³⁸ Others argue that vv.9-10 were always universal in scope.²³⁹ Perlitt and Renaud even contend that בת־פוצי (my scattered ones) in v.10 is a later addition that seeks to curb the universalism of vv.9-10, “der Einschub eines jüdischen Partikularisten” (*the expression of a Jewish particularism*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 140; Renaud, 1987, p. 249). Edler, on the other hand, suggests that the entirety of vv.9-10 was added later in order to universalise both the judgment of v.8, which he considers to have originally been limited to Judah but was universalised by later additions (7.2.2 above), and the restoration of Judah in vv.11-13, which he considers authentic (Edler, 1984, p. 57; similarly, Irsigler, 2002, p. 372).

All of this illustrates the problem that Zephaniah’s oracles about the peoples of the world present to interpreters. These oracles about the nations are one of the principal reasons for redactional reconstructions of the book of Zephaniah. The weakness of these reconstructions is not only their speculative nature²⁴⁰ but, and more importantly, the inability or unwillingness of the commentators to read Zephaniah as a coherent text. Edler presents a case in point when he reads vv.9-10, rightfully so, as speaking of “die Bekehrung der Heiden durch Jahwe selbst und deren Erfolg” (*the conversion of the heathens through Yahweh himself and their success*) (Edler, 1984, p. 57). This, however, necessitates a clear consequence for Edler:

Damit sondert sich die Einheit offensichtlich aus dem Kontext aus, da sowohl Zef 3,6-8 als auch 3,11-13 nicht von den Heiden, sondern von den Jerusalemern sprechen.”

This means that this pericope obviously separates itself from the context since both Zeph 3.6-8 and 3.11-13 speak not of the heathen but of Jerusalemites (Edler, 1984, p. 57).²⁴¹

²³⁸ Deissler, 1964, p. 464; Elliger, 1964, p. 79; Roberts, 1991, p. 210; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 192.

²³⁹ Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 320; Floyd, 2000, p. 233; Seybold, 1991, p. 113; Smith, 1984, p. 141.

²⁴⁰ See especially Seybold, 1991, pp. 113-114.

²⁴¹ Yet Edler has to amend v.8 to make it speak only of Jerusalem (see 7.2.2 above).

According to this logic an oracle about the nations has no place in this section of Zephaniah. This is the difficulty that commentators struggle with throughout the book, nowhere more so than Zeph 1.2-3 where an oracle of universal judgment introduces the judgment oracles against Judah and Jerusalem (5.2.1 above). Commentators typically conclude that the nations-oracles do not fit this context and must have been added at a later time. However, such difficulties in the reading are not required if Judah and the nations can be held together in the book of Zephaniah. This is possible if the priestly or representative role of Israel is understood. Genesis 12.3 and Exod 19.6 are expressions of this self-identity of Israel, an identity which is also expressed in the book of Zephaniah. Accordingly, because this representative people of God are in such a corrupt state the entire world must be judged (Zeph 1.2-3, 17-18; 3.8), just as it had been judged when humanity as a whole was God's representative (Gen 3-8; 5.2.3 above). Conversely, according to Zephaniah, the eschatological redemption of the people of God will also affect the entire world, which is expressed so neatly in Zeph 3.9-13. In order to express this relationship between Judah and the nations Zeph 3.9-10 employs some striking intertextualities.

Verse 9 “I will change...”

The pericope begins with Yahweh's promise, “For then I will change (them) to peoples of pure speech.” The verb **הִפֵּךְ** (to change) is common in the OT and has a broad range of meaning, e.g., to overthrow (Jonah 3.4); spin around (Gen 3.24); change (Jer 31.13) or turn into something else (Exod 7.20); change one's mind (Exod 14.5); turn away (2 Sam 25.12); to turn against someone (Job 19.19). Yet when Yahweh is the subject, or cause,²⁴² of the verb it is used to describe his mighty acts, for example, the destruction, literally “overthrowing”, of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19.21, 25, 29; Deut 29.23); the turning of the Nile into blood (Exod 7.17); changing Balaam's curses into blessing (Deut 23.5); Yahweh's power over creation (Job 9.5; 12.15) and over the rulers of the earth (Job 34.25). It can also describe Yahweh's salvific action for his people (Pss 30.12; 41.4), particularly in relation to the Exodus deliverance (Pss 66.6; 78.44; 105.25; 29; 114.8). Thus, without being able to identify any specific allusion, the declaration by Yahweh, **אֶהְפֹּךְ** (I will turn), signifies that Yahweh is about to do something momentous.

²⁴² In the case of Niphal stem occurrences, e.g. Exod 7.17.

Changed speech

This momentous event is the changing of the nations into peoples of “pure speech” (שפה לְקָרָא, literally “a pure lip”) “for all of them to call on the name of Yahweh” (בְּרוּרָה, כלם בשם יהוה). This changing of the peoples will enable them to come from the farthest corners of the world to worship and serve Yahweh. In making this promise for the future Zeph 3.9-10 alludes to the Tower of Babel story (Gen 11.1-9), the narrative of Genesis 4, and Isaiah 18. The grounds for this argument will be contained in the exegesis but before that a brief discussion of the availability of Gen 4.1-26 and 11.1-9 is in order.

Availability of Gen 4.1-26; 11.1-9

To ask whether these texts were available and known to Zephaniah would have been much more straightforward in the mid-twentieth century. The classic source criticism of Eissfeldt, for example, considered Gen 4.1-26 to be a combination of the Lay source (L) and the Yahwistic source (J), and the Tower story (Gen 11.1-9) to come from L (Eissfeldt, 1965, p. 194). Eissfeldt saw the latest date for L as being before Amos and Hosea, early eighth century at the latest (Eissfeldt, 1965, p. 198), and J to have come from the before the fall of the Northern Kingdom, i.e. pre-722 BC (Eissfeldt, 1965, p. 200). Along similar lines von Rad saw the entire primeval history as a unified composition by the Yahwist and dates it to ca. 950 BC (von Rad, 1972, p. 25). Were this the case it could be taken as read that Zephaniah was intimately familiar with Gen 4.1-26 and 11.1-9. However, much has happened in pentateuchal criticism since these mid-twentieth century scholars. Some scholars maintain an early dating of J,²⁴³ while others shift the date of J from early to late, e.g., van Seters who places J in the late exilic period.²⁴⁴ Yet others abandon the Documentary Hypothesis altogether and see the entire Pentateuch as the work of an ancient Israelite historian in the post-exilic period (Whybray, 1987). Therefore Sweeney’s assertion that Zephaniah must have known the Tower of Babel story because it belongs to J “which most scholars date to the earliest stage of pentateuchal composition, that is, the tenth-ninth centuries BCE” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 183), can no longer claim scholarly consensus. Indeed, in Pentateuchal studies there is no longer a consensus position for these matters.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to undertake an in depth exploration of Pentateuchal literary criticism. However, the exegesis of Zephaniah 1 (5.2.2 above) argued that there

²⁴³ Hendel, 1992, p. 934; Wenham, 1987, p. xliii.

²⁴⁴ See discussion in Nicholson, 1998, p. 136.

is significant allusion to the flood story which had already been combined into a literary work with the creation story of Gen 1.1-2.3/4, as well as echoes of Yahweh's promise to "never again destroy every living creature" (Gen 8.21). The exegesis of Zeph 2.4-15 argued that there is extensive intertextuality with the Table of Nations (Gen 10). In the present section (Zeph 3.9-10) allusion to Gen 11.1-9 and 4.1-26 is another indication that the Primeval History existed in its present form, or similar to its present form, by such a time that it was well known to Zephaniah and his hearers. This argument is strengthened by the literary unity that the Primeval History exhibits (Hamilton, 1990, pp. 29-30). The position of this exegesis, without confirming or denying the Documentary Hypothesis, comes closer to Rendtorff's view that Genesis 1-11 constitutes "the first larger unit" in the Pentateuch (Rendtorff, 1990, p. 33). For dating, however, Rendtorff writes that,

it must be conceded that we really do not possess reliable criteria for dating the pentateuchal literature. Each dating of the pentateuchal 'sources' relies on purely hypothetical assumptions which in the long run have their continued existence because of the consensus of scholars (Rendtorff, 1990, pp. 201-202).

In the absence of reliable absolute dating for the Primeval History (Gen 1-11) this exegesis assumes, on the basis of the allusions and echoes noted above, that at the time Zephaniah was written the Primeval History existed as a unity.

The Tower story (Genesis 11.1-9)

The connection between Zeph 3.9-10 and the Tower of Babel story is noted by a number of commentators.²⁴⁵ In Zeph 3.9 Yahweh promises to change the peoples (of the world) into peoples of שפה ברורה (pure speech). Although the noun שפה (lip) is common in the OT with 178 occurrences and is most often used as a metaphor for "speech" or "language", it plays a key role in the Tower story, occurring five times in Gen 11.1-9. The verb in the phrase in Zeph 3.10, בת-פוצי (daughter of my dispersed ones), פוצ (to disperse), is also used three times in the Tower story. Other key words in the Tower story are the adjective אחד (one) and the noun כלם (all of them) which are also used in Zeph 3.9-10 (see also Ball, 1988, p. 236). The importance of these particular words is highlighted in the following annotated text of the Tower story (Gen 11.1-9):

¹Now the whole earth (כל-הארץ c.f. Zeph 3.8) had one language (שפה אחת) and the same (אחד) words. ²And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³And they said to one another,

²⁴⁵ Ball, 1988, p. 236; Floyd, 2000, p. 235; O'Brien, 2004, p. 123; Pinker, 2000; Smith, 1984, p. 141; Sweeney, 2003, p. 184; Westermann, 1984, pp. 556-557.

“Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed (פּוֹרֵץ) over the face of the whole earth.” ⁵ And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men had built. ⁶ And the LORD said, “Behold, they are one (אֶחָד) people, and they all have one language (שִׁפְהָ אֶחָת לְכָל־ם); and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down there and confuse their language (שִׁפְהָ), so that they may not understand one another’s speech (שִׁפְהָ). ⁸ So the LORD dispersed (פּוֹרֵץ) them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹ Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language (שִׁפְהָ) of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed (פּוֹרֵץ) them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Exposition of the Tower story

The Tower story stands at a pivotal point in the OT, marking the end of the Primeval History in which God deals with humanity as a whole. In the Tower story humanity is scattered across the earth and thereafter God begins God’s dealings with one branch of humanity, Shem (Gen 11.10), one particular group of descendants of Shem, Terah (Gen.11.27), and one family from Terah’s children, Abraham (Gen 12.1ff), and thus the nation of Israel. In this way the Tower Story transitions from the universal to the particular which is the opposite direction to which Zeph 3.1-10 moves. Zephaniah 3.1-8 brings Yahweh’s accusations against Judah and Jerusalem to a climax, culminating in universal judgment. Zephaniah 3.9-10 then promises the universal restoration of humanity in united worship of Yahweh. This is done through allusion to the Tower Story and also with an allusion to earlier in the Primeval History, Gen 4.25-26.²⁴⁶

The Tower of Babel Story, so well known, is nevertheless enigmatic because the actual sin of the people is never named. Coats, for example, describes God’s decision to intervene against the builders (Gen 11.6) as “preventative action against further abuse” (Coats, 1983, p. 95), but does not suggest what this abuse entails. The story is often understood to be about the sin of hubris, hence the “builders are megalomaniacs” (Hamilton, 1990, p. 353) and “a threat to the divine will and rule” (Hamilton, 1990, p. 355). They represent humanity “arrogating to himself essentially divine prerogatives” (Wenham, 1987, p. 242), wanting “to force their way into the realm of the gods or God” (Westermann, 1984, p. 552). If this is the basic thrust of the story then God does indeed come across “as a somewhat peevish local deity, afraid of being outshone by a group of

²⁴⁶ As well as allusion to Isaiah 18, see below.

ambitious humans” (Bell, 2011, p. 533). However, God’s concern in Gen 11.6b, that “this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them” (Gen 11.6b), is not a concern for God’s welfare, but rather for the welfare of humanity.

Thus many scholars, including those who see hubris as the main sin, suggest that the sin is the refusal to obey the divine commission to “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth” (Gen 1.28; 9.1).²⁴⁷ God’s action, therefore, is not a punitive judgment *per se* but a remedial action in order to put humanity back on the correct path. F. Maudlin understands the story along similar lines:

The scattering of the makers of a name and the builders of the tower was redemptive, for the scattering prevented man from continuing the vain attempt to become as God, possessing universal knowledge and absolute prerogative, and turned man to God’s original intention of a human life characterized by the repeatable events of history and unique creatureliness (Maudlin, 1983, p. 49).

Grace is shown in God’s evaluation that “this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them” (Gen 11.6b). In the context of the Primeval History these would be plans for violence (Gen 6.5, 11; 8.21). Thus God’s judgment is not to prevent humanity from storming heaven but to save them from themselves. On this basis Bell argues that the Tower story is not an unmitigated disaster for humanity but had positive outcomes. It is “a charter for linguistic diversity, a manifesto for multilingualism rather than a lament for lost monolingualism” (Bell, 2011, p. 557). This interpretation stands at odds with von Rad’s now classic exegesis in which the “story about the Tower of Babel concludes with God’s judgment on mankind; there is no word of grace” (von Rad, 1972, p. 153). God’s intervention was to save humanity from itself as well as for itself to be what God intended it to be. Bell’s reflections on monolingualism and imperial oppression offer insight into the danger inherent in the plans of the Tower builders and hence also the grace inherent in God’s intervention (Bell, 2011, pp. 554-558).

Grace is present in the story, but judgment is also present. The Tower story cannot simply be read “as benevolent or matter-of-fact rather than condemnatory” (Bell, 2011, p. 561). Von Rad is correct when he writes, “The story in its present form must be understood primarily from the great primeval context into which the Yahwist has placed it” (von Rad,

²⁴⁷ Brueggemann, 1982, p. 99; Hamilton, 1990, p. 353; Sarna, 1989, pp. 83, 84; Wenham, 1987, p. 240.

1972, p. 151) and within the Primeval History the Tower story is presented as an act of judgment. The introduction to the story shows this with the description of the people's migration: **ויהי בנסעם מקדם** (And as they migrated from the east; Gen 11.2). This English translation is misleading in the context of the Primeval History where **קדם** (east) has a special significance. In Gen 2.8 God "planted a garden in Eden, in the east (**מקדם**).” After the sin of Eve and Adam God drove them out, “and at the east (**מקדם**) of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim...to guard the way to the tree of life” (Gen 3.24). In the story directly following this, as a result of Cain's sin and God's judgment, “Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden (**קדמת־ערן**).” Thus v.2 of the Tower story should be translated, “And as they migrated to the east”, exactly as it is Gen 13.11, “and Lot journeyed east” (**ויסע לוט מקדם**). Thus in the Primeval History this continuous movement to the East signifies further alienation from God. The Tower story begins with the “whole earth” alienated from God and refusing to fulfil God's command to “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth” (Gen 1.28; 9.1). God's intervention is judgment, but this judgment is in order to save humanity from its own machinations. The result of this judgment was the scattering of humanity but the problem of their alienation from God was not resolved. This very problem is inherent in the succeeding chapter of God's story with humanity, the calling of Abraham (Gen 12.3). As Sarna writes, the Tower of Babel story

is immediately followed by a genealogy that issues in Abraham, the founder of a new nation that is to have a special relationship with God and is to become the divinely wrought instrument for the mediation of His demands to a wayward humanity (Sarna, 1989, p. 81).

The crucial question, then, is what effect this allusion to the Tower story has in Zeph 3.9-10. It does not envision a return to one language, as though the Tower Story were “a lament for lost monolingualism” (Bell, 2011, p. 557). Irsigler is correct, “Zef 3,9 verheißt nicht, dass die Nationen JHWH in ein und derselben Sprache dienen werden” (*Zeph 3.9 does not promise that the nations will serve Yahweh in one and the same language*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 376). However, this does not necessarily lead to his assertion:

Der Vers greift sprachlich nicht unmittelbar auf Gen 11,1 zurück, wonach die Erdenbewohner in der Urzeit vor der sog. babylonischen Sprachverwirrung alle **שפה אחת** „eine Lippe (Sprache/Rede)” hatten und dieselben Worte gebrauchten.

The verse does not linguistically directly harken back to Gen 11.1 whereby the earth-dwellers in the primeval time before the so-called Babylonian

confusion all had שפה אחת, “one lip [language/speech]” and used the same words (Irsigler, 2002, p. 376).

Zephaniah’s allusion to the Tower story does not envision a return to one language and one people. Rather it is a vision of the reunification of humanity in the worship and service of Yahweh as a resolution of the ever increasing alienation of the Primeval History that reached its climax in the Tower story. It was immediately after this event that God chose one people out of all the peoples to be God’s representative people in the world. In Zeph 3.9, after and through God’s universal and refining judgment, the many peoples (עמים), with their own languages and ethnicities, who are the result of the divine scattering through confused speech, will be reunited with a pure speech. Here ברור (pure) signifies morally acceptable to God as opposed to corrupt and unacceptable. Whereas the unity of the people in the Tower story was a problem in the past because of the effect of sin, a malevolent effect which was showcased throughout the Primeval History, the purified people, with a pure speech, will be able “all of them to call on the name of Yahweh, to serve him with one accord.” They will be able to worship Yahweh together even as they remain many peoples.

The phrase לקרא בשם יהוה (for all of them to call upon the name of Yahweh; Zeph 3.9b) echoes Gen 4.26, “To Seth also a son was born, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to invoke the name of the LORD (לקרא בשם יהוה).” These are the only two occurrences of this almost identical phrase in the OT (see Table 7.4 below).

Table 7.4: Similarity of clause in Gen 4.26 and Zeph 3.9

Gen 4.26	לקרא בשם יהוה	to call on the name of Yahweh
Zeph 3.9	לקרא כלם בשם יהוה	all of them to call on the name of Yahweh

This allusion carries substantial signification into Zephaniah’s text. Genesis 4.25-26 brings to a conclusion the story that begins with Cain and Abel and develops into the story of Cain’s descendants, reaching a climax, or rather nadir, with Lamech (Gen 4.19-24). The story portrays the devastating effect of sin on humanity and in particular its manifestation in violence (Gen 4.8, 23-24). Yet just when it appears that all hope is lost a godly line suddenly appears through Adam and Eve’s son Seth, like a light shining in the midst of the darkness. This allusion brings the text of Zephaniah full circle. Zephaniah 1.2-3 recapitulates the creation and flood stories because the corruption of God’s people has reached such proportions that nothing short of another universal destruction is in

order. Now Zephaniah leads us back into the Primeval History, not to recapitulate the expansion of sin and its consequences but, to the contrary, to promise the redemption of humanity from the effects of that sin and the resulting alienation from God. In Gen 4.26 there were some who called upon the name of Yahweh even in the midst of corruption and sin. Zephaniah 3.9 looks forward to a time when all of humanity will call upon the name of Yahweh. The כָּלָם (all of them) from Gen 11.6 (“and they all have one language” [שָׁפָה אֶחָת לְכָלָם]) is added to the phrase from Gen 4.26: “that all of them may call on the name of Yahweh” (לִקְרָא כָּלָם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה; Zeph 3.9b). The unity of humanity, expressed by the adjective אֶחָד (one), which in the Tower Story constituted such a problem because of sin, will also be re-established: this renewed humanity will be able לַעֲבֹדוֹ שְׂכָם אֶחָד “to serve him with one (אֶחָד) accord” (Zeph 3.9c). This future unity will not be an ethnic and linguistic unity but rather a unity of all humanity in relationship with God. Thus Zephaniah does not envision a return to a pristine primeval situation but rather he sees the redemption of the post-Tower of Babel humanity. Perlitt grasps this aspect of Zeph 3.9-10, commenting that in this future time the nations will be able “den Namen Jahwes anrufen – seit Abraham (Gen 12,8) ein Privileg Israels – und ihm ,dienen“” (*to call upon the name of Yahweh – since Abraham (Gen 12.8) a privilege of Israel – and “serve” him*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 139). The call of Abraham was God’s response to the scattering of humanity at Babel.

Sabottka writes of the phrase בַּת־פֹּצִי (daughter of my dispersed ones; v.10b), “In *bat-pûšaj* liegt die Hauptschwierigkeit dieses Verses. Eine befriedigende Lösung ist bisher dafür nicht gefunden worden.” (*The chief difficulty of this verse lies in בַּת־פֹּצִי. A satisfactory solution has not be found to this time*) (Sabottka, 1972, p. 119). Certainly his own suggestion, בַּת־פֹּצִי as “Byssosgewänder” (garments from Byssos), has not carried the day (Sabottka, 1972, pp. 119-121). If there is, as argued here, allusion to the Tower story in which the verb פָּוַץ plays an important role, then the “scattered ones” are the nations scattered from Babel. It was the stated intention of the people not to be “scattered upon the face of the whole earth” (Gen 11.4), but this is exactly what Yahweh did (Gen 11.8, 9). Zephaniah 3.10 echoes this scattering with this phrase בַּת־פֹּצִי (daughter of my scattered ones). This scattering of all the peoples of the earth marked the point when God turned from direct relationship with all of humanity to direct relationship with only one of the peoples of the earth, Abraham’s descendants. Zephaniah looks to the future time

when these “scattered ones” will return to special relationship with God in worship and service and bring to Yahweh מנחתי (my gift).

Isaiah 18

Woven into Zeph 3.9-10, already heavily laden with intertextual resonances, is an allusion to Isaiah 18. Zephaniah 3.10 begins with the phrase מעבר לנהרי־כוש (from beyond the rivers of Cush/Ethiopia), the exact phrase with which Isaiah 18, an oracle against Cush/Ethiopia, opens (Isa 18.1). Moreover, Zeph 3.10 concludes with יובלון מנחתי (shall bring my offering/gift), echoing the final verse of the same Isaiah oracle, 18.7, יובל־שי (gifts will be brought). According to the methodology outlined in chapter 3 (above), it is more likely that Zephaniah is making use of the Isaiah oracle than vice-versa. This is because it is more probable that the common vocabulary in the two passages comes from the extended oracle of Isaiah 18 against Cush than from their brief mention in Zeph 3.10. Moreover, Zephaniah makes allusion to the beginning and end of the Isaiah oracle. From the other direction it is unlikely that the entire oracle of Isaiah 18 would have been produced from these two brief phrases in Zeph 3.10.

Assuming that Zeph 3.10 alludes to Isaiah 18 the next step is to consider the effect of this allusion, or as Hollander describes, to recover the transumed material. A problem arises at this point because Isaiah 18 is itself an enigmatic passage; according to Ball, Isa 18.1-7 “is perhaps one of the most difficult and obscure passages in the Old Testament”! (Ball, 1988, p. 245). The reference to Cush (18.1), and to the diplomatic missions that were sent from that nation (18.2a) is clear enough. After that, however, there is little agreement on the meaning and intention of the oracle. Does it form an extended unit with Isaiah 17,²⁴⁸ or with Isaiah 19 and 20?²⁴⁹ Are the “swift messengers” of v.2 the Cushite ambassadors themselves being sent back from Jerusalem to their homeland,²⁵⁰ or are they being referred on by the Judean king to Assyria?²⁵¹ Are they emissaries from King Hoshea in the Northern Kingdom sent to Cush,²⁵² or divine messengers being sent to tell the

²⁴⁸ Oswalt, p. 359; Sweeney, 1996, p. 254.

²⁴⁹ Clements, 1980, p. 163; Seitz, 1993, p. 145.

²⁵⁰ Wildberger, 1997, p. 216.

²⁵¹ Watts, 1985, p. 247.

²⁵² Sweeney, 1996, p. 257.

Assyrian king of plans for rebellion?²⁵³ Is the judgment of vv.5-6 against Ethiopia,²⁵⁴ Ethiopia and Egypt,²⁵⁵ Israel,²⁵⁶ or Assyria?²⁵⁷

Most commentators attempt to reconstruct the historic setting for what is considered an authentic Isaiah oracle. This setting is seen, for the most part, to be in the late eighth century where envoys from the Ethiopian rulers of Egypt (25th Dynasty) were encouraging rebellion against Assyria amongst the small nations of Palestine and Syria. This much is probably true, although some of the historical reconstructions may be a little too ambitious.²⁵⁸ Moreover, according to this approach Isa 18.7 must be considered not only a later addition but also a complete misunderstanding of the original oracle. Clements, for example, sees v.7 as “certainly the work of a post-exilic redactor who has introduced an entirely different perspective to the original prophecy by mentioning that gifts will be brought to Yahweh in Jerusalem by the Ethiopians” (Clements, 1980, p. 166). Similarly Wildberger considers v.7 to be a “reinterpretation” that “directly contradicts what has just been said” (Wildberger, 1997, p. 209). Zephaniah 3.10, however, alludes to the entire oracle, vv.1-7, widely recognised by commentators,²⁵⁹ indicating that it was in its present form when Zeph 3.10 was written.

Seitz brings an important corrective to the historicist approach to Isaiah 18. Looking at the larger context in Isaiah, the Oracles against the Nations,²⁶⁰ Seitz sees a pattern, beginning with Isaiah 13, whereby Isaiah’s original oracles

have been recast so as to accommodate a larger world judgment perspective now introducing the entire nations section (chaps. 13-14), one that lies in the future but is soon to come. This pattern is also to be detected in chapters 18 and 19 (Seitz, 1993, p. 145).

Seitz also makes the point that in the usual readings of Isaiah 18 “the final emphasis is really shifted away from Ethiopia, despite the opening superscription and the final interpretive verse” (Seitz, 1993, p. 147). Placing the focus back on Ethiopia, Seitz sees the “swift messengers” as probably sent from the divine council itself to declare judgment upon Cush (Seitz, 1993, p. 148). Verse 3 reiterates the central theme of the extended

²⁵³ Clements, 1980, p. 164.

²⁵⁴ Seitz, 1993, p. 148; Wildberger, 1997, p. 222.

²⁵⁵ Clements, 1980, p. 165.

²⁵⁶ Sweeney, 1996, p. 257.

²⁵⁷ Oswalt, p. 263.

²⁵⁸ E.g., Sweeney, 1996; Watts, 1985.

²⁵⁹ E.g., Irsigler, 2002, p. 372; Robertson, 1990, p. 329; Perlitt, 2004, p. 140; Sweeney, 2003, pp. 184-185.

²⁶⁰ For most commentators Isaiah 13-23, to which Seitz adds chapters 24-27.

nations-oracles section, to inform all the inhabitants of the world that “a terrible world judgment is upon them” (Seitz, 1993, p. 148). Verses 4-6 then go on to describe that judgment, while v.7 describes the time after that judgment. Seitz sees that “the entire nations section is now under the influence of a later Babylonian-period redaction” (Seitz, 1993, p. 147). Zephaniah alludes to this later nations section, as opposed to the “original” Isaiah oracle.²⁶¹ This is supported by the fact that the very next verse, Zeph 3.11, echoes Isa 13.3 with the phrase unique to these two texts alone, “your/my proudly exultant ones”, which is explicitly an “oracle concerning Babylon” (Isa 13.1; see exegesis below). It is apparent, therefore, that this section of Zephaniah was written later than the Josianic setting of the prophet Zephaniah (see 4.3 above).

Through the allusion to Isaiah 18 several layers of signification are created within Zephaniah. First, Zeph 3.9-10 combines the allusion to Isaiah 18, an oracle against Cush, with the allusions to Genesis 11 and 4 (see above). In the ANE the Cushites were an exotic and striking people, “tall and smooth” (Isa 18.2, 7), and their conquest of Egypt in 715BC “would undoubtedly have brought with it a respect for Cush from the surrounding countries that was commensurate with its power” (Wildberger, 1997, p. 218). Hence they were “a people feared near and far” (Isa 18.2, 7). Thus Irsigler writes,

Der Zusatz nimmt die Beschreibung der ‚gefürchteten‘ Nation der Kuschiter von 18.2 her auf und verkündet, dass von eben diesem Volk ‚Huldigungsgeschenke‘ (hier שׂי statt מנחה), gebracht werden (יכל-H wie in Zef 3,10).

The addition (i.e. Isaiah 18.7) takes up the description of the “dreaded” nation of the Cushites from 18.2 and announces that from precisely this nation tribute gifts (here שׂי instead of מנחה) “will be brought” (יכל H stem as in Zeph 3.10) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 373).

Ethiopia, lying beyond Egypt, was a “nation far out on the edge of inhabited lands” (Wildberger, 1997, p. 223),²⁶² perhaps signifying the farthest-flung, most remote known land.²⁶³ Therefore this nation may represent the peoples scattered the farthest from Babel, certainly the farthest from Shinar in Mesopotamia.²⁶⁴ Their re-gathering shows how

²⁶¹ Sweeney, on the other hand, considers the late-monarchic Zephaniah himself to have read Isaiah 18, which he dates to the reigns of King Hoshea and King Manasseh (Sweeney, 2003, p. 183).

²⁶² Berlin, following Ball (Ball, 1988, p. 249), argues for “the rivers of Cush” referring to the Mesopotamian Cush (Gen 10.7-8) and actually meaning “the rivers of paradise.” However, her conclusion that the point of the phrase is “to evoke a far off place” and therefore Eden would be the farthest place imaginable is unconvincing (Berlin, 1994, p. 134). It is simpler to see Cush itself fulfilling that function.

²⁶³ So Edler, 1984, p. 58; Floyd, 2000, p. 235; Renaud, 1987, p. 248; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, pp. 197-198.
²⁶⁴ Both Ben Zvi and Perlitt are unsure whether actual Ethiopians are meant or they represent people from the furthest corners of the earth (Perlitt, 2004, p. 140) while Ben Zvi is unsure whether “my dispersed ones” refers to the nations or the Jewish diaspora (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 227-228).

comprehensive will be the reconstitution of purified humanity in renewed relationship with God.

Zephaniah 3.10, however, seems to make a deliberate change from the Isaiah text. While in Isa 18.7 “tribute will be brought (יובל־שי) to the Lord of hosts”, Zeph 3.10 reads, “they shall bring my offering” (יובל־לון מנחה). In the OT the verb יבל occurs only in the Hiphil stem to mean “to bring”,²⁶⁵ and the Hophal stem, “to be brought.”²⁶⁶ The change from the passive Hophal in Isa 18.7 to the active Hiphil in Zeph 3.10 does not seem to be significant as both texts envision these far off peoples acknowledging the sovereignty of Yahweh after a worldwide judgment through the presentation of gifts. However, the change from שי to מנחה may be more significant. Both words are similar, meaning “gift” or “tribute” from a subordinate to a superior. While מנחה is common in the OT (211 occurrences) שי is uncommon, occurring only three times (Isa 18.7; Ps 68.30 [29]; Ps 76.12), each time with the verb יבל in Hiphil stem (to bring). Psalm 68.30²⁶⁷ and Ps 76.12²⁶⁸ both belong to the pre-exilic Jerusalem tradition and Isa 18.7 continues to use this established or traditional collocation. Zephaniah, on the other hand, in reusing Isa 18.7 has deliberately altered this conventional collocation by changing the noun from שי to מנחה and this indicates allusion to another text.²⁶⁹ מנחה is used three times in the Cain and Abel story (Gen 4):

³ In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering (מנחה) of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering (מנחה),
⁵ but for Cain and his offering (מנחה) he had no regard. So Cain was very angry and his countenance fell.

Although מנחה is a common word in the OT, the allusion to Gen 4.26 in Zeph 3.9 establishes a basis for also seeing in Zeph 3.10 an allusion to the beginning of that story (Gen 4.1ff). This allusion once again serves Zephaniah’s vision of a renewed humanity joining together in the worship of Yahweh. In this renewed humanity there will be no

²⁶⁵ Pss 60.11; 68.30; 76.12; 108.11; Isa 23.7; Jer 31.9; Zeph 3.10

²⁶⁶ Job 10.19; 21.30, 32; Ps 45.15, 16; Isa 18.7; 53.7; 55.12; Jer 11.19; Hos 10.6; 12.2.

²⁶⁷ Hossfeld & Zenger, 2005, p. 163; Tate, 1998, p. 174.

²⁶⁸ Hossfeld & Zenger, 2005, pp. 262-264; Tate, 1998, pp. 263-264.

²⁶⁹ The only other combination of מנחה and יבל is Hos 10.6 where the calf of Beth-aven will be carried away as tribute to the king of Assyria. In this text the object of יבל (it will be taken) is אורתו (it), i.e., the calf of Beth-Aven from the previous verse. It shall be taken מנחה “(as) tribute.” This difference in usage makes intertextual connections between Hos 10.6 and Zeph 3.10 less certain whereas the intertextual connection between Zeph 3.10 and Isa 18.7 are clearer because of the cumulative number of markers.

reasons for the rejection of worship because the peoples will be purified from the effects of sin and corruption. Once again Zephaniah comes full circle. Just as the corruption of God's representatives, humanity, led to universal judgment in the Primeval History, so the corruption of God's representative people in Zephaniah's time necessitates once again universal judgment (Zeph 1.2-3). But in the time after this judgment the effect of sin, which made the *מנחה* of the earliest son unacceptable to God, will be dealt with. This same effect of sin which led to humanity being given over to violence (Gen 4.23-24), even filling earth with violence and corruption (Gen 6.11-13), and eventually being scattered over the earth in alienation from God, will be dealt with in this future time. In the future time that Zephaniah looks towards, humanity will no longer be alienated from God but will come to God in worship and the *מנחה* of all of them will be acceptable to God.

This leads to the second layer of signification achieved through Zephaniah's allusion to Isaiah 18, which is related to the wider framework of Isaiah's nations section. Seitz sees the purpose of the oracles against the nations to "make clear that God's sovereignty over human pride and arrogance reaches to every nation on earth" (Seitz, 1993, p. 122). As a result of this purpose "it is not surprising to see within the nations section oracles that speak of the final worship of Israel's God by foreign nations" (Seitz, 1993, p. 126). Renaud writes exactly of this effect of Zephaniah's allusion to Isaiah 18, "Par leur démarche, les peuples, mis en scène en So 3,9-10, reconnaîtraient la souveraineté unique de YHWH sur le monde." (*By their approach, the peoples, presented in Zeph 3.9-10, recognise the unique sovereignty of Yahweh over the world*) (Renaud, 1987, p. 249). Like Zeph 3.8; 9-10, Isaiah chapters 13-23²⁷⁰ are about universal judgment but they also have a vision of the universal renewal that follows the judgment. The allusion to Isaiah 18 brings this wider context into the text of Zephaniah, that is, global judgment but also the other side of that judgment. This great judgment is the means and not the end. Through this judgment God will achieve God's purposes of bringing about a renewed world. This allusion to Isaiah's nations section, and to the Cushites in particular, underlines that these verses (Zeph 3.9-10) are talking about the nations and not, as some commentators argue, about Judah/Jerusalem.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Isaiah 13-27 according to Seitz.

²⁷¹ E.g., Roberts, 1991, pp. 217-218; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 193.

7.3.2 Zephaniah 3.11-13: The people of God

This pericope mirrors the logic with which the book of Zephaniah began. Zephaniah 1.2-3 announces cataclysmic judgment for the entire world because of the failure of God's people to fulfil their calling as God's representatives amongst the peoples of the world (Zeph 1.4-13). God's representatives have fallen into such corruption and violence that all of humanity and even all of creation must suffer judgment just as in the time when, before there was a "people of God", humanity's corruption was the grounds for such a universal destruction (Genesis 6-9). Zephaniah 3.9-13 looks towards the time after this cataclysmic judgment. In this future time all of humanity which was scattered from God because of the ongoing effects of sin (Gen 11.1-9), an event which precipitated the calling of one people by God from amongst all peoples (Gen 12.1-3), will be restored to relationship with the one true God and will come to him in worship (Zeph 3.9-10). According to the logic of Zephaniah, just as all of humanity is judged because of the failure of God's people, so they shall be restored to God through the renewal of God's people (3.11-13).

Allusion to Isaiah 13.3

The concluding phrase of Zeph 3.11-13, **וְאֵין מַחְרִיד** (and no one shall make them afraid; v.13g), appears in a number of other texts.²⁷² It is used in a variety of ways, e.g., an assurance for rest after God's punishment (Lev 26.6), a threat of God's punishment (Deut 28.26), a description of the safety of lions' cubs (Nah 2.11). This is a common phrase in the OT and does not contribute much to an intertextual analysis.

The very opposite is true of the phrase in v.11, **עֲלִיזֵי גְאוּתְךָ** (your proudly exultant ones). This phrase only occurs in one other place in the OT, Isa 13.3, where it is almost exactly the same, **עֲלִיזֵי גְאוּתִי** (my proudly exultant ones). Surprisingly, especially considering the scholarly attention concentrated on Zephaniah's allusion to Isaiah 18, while a number commentators mention the common vocabulary,²⁷³ they do not consider the implications. Edler, who thinks that Zeph 3.9-10 is a later addition, discusses the intertextuality with Isaiah 18. However, he considers Zeph 3.11-13 to be authentic, i.e., from late monarchic Judah, but ignores the common vocabulary with Isa 13.3, which like Isaiah 18 is from the Babylonian period (Edler, 1984, pp. 59-60). This is inconsistent. The allusion in Zeph

²⁷² Lev 26.6; Deut 28.26; Job 11.19; Isa 17.2; Jer 7.33; 30.10; 46.27; Ezek 34.28; 39.26; Mic 4.4; Nah 2.12; Zeph 3.13.

²⁷³ Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 231-232; Irsigler, 2002, p. 390; Sweeney, 2003, p. 187; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 202.

3.10 to Isaiah 18 means the uniquely shared vocabulary between Zeph 3.11 and Isa 13.3 is likely to also flow in the same direction, i.e. Zephaniah is alluding to Isa 13.3. Isaiah 13.3 belongs to the same larger unit as Isaiah 18, the nations section of Isaiah 13-23, to which Zeph 3.10 alludes. Isaiah 13-14 introduces this “nations” section of the book of Isaiah and presents Babylon in the context of global judgment, e.g., 13.5; 14.26 (Seitz, 1993, p. 130). While some commentators rightly see the possibility that Isa 13.2-5 may originally have come from Isaiah, Isaiah’s prophecies have been combined with a variety of other oracles to form this large nations section which belongs to the Babylonian period. Zephaniah 3.11 alludes to texts from this section and therefore it appears that this section of Zephaniah was written later than the period of Josiah (see 4.3 above).

Isaiah 13.2-3, similar to Isaiah 18, is an enigmatic oracle evoking a variety of interpretations. For example, Wildberger considers it to be an oracle against Babylon²⁷⁴ whereas Clements and Seitz consider Babylon to be the instruments of God’s judgment in Isa 13.2-3.²⁷⁵ What is clear, and relevant to this exegesis, is that this nation in Isa 13.2-3, Yahweh’s “consecrated ones”, “warriors” and “proudly exulting ones”, probably correctly identified in the wider context as Babylon, are sent not simply to judge God’s people but “to destroy the whole earth” (13.5). This is the same theme, world judgment, which Zeph 3.8, 9-13 has in view. The term, “proudly exulting ones”, is associated with Yahweh’s instruments of judgment and appears at the very beginning of this process of universal judgment in the nations section of Isaiah.

What intertextual patterns are created when Zephaniah takes up this term? Within the context of Zephaniah it is unlikely that “your proudly exulting ones” refers to Babylon or the instruments of God’s judgment in Isa 13.3. Most commentators understand the term in Zeph 3.11 to refer to the rebellious and corrupt leadership of Jerusalem who need to be removed in order for God to create a “people humble and lowly” (Zeph 3.12).²⁷⁶ This interpretation makes good sense in this context. Indeed, it may be this obvious difference in the way the term “proudly exulting ones” is used in the two texts that discourages commentators from exploring the intertextual relationship between them. Irsigler, for example, notes the positive sense of the phrase in Isa 13.3, writing that for Zephaniah 3 “Einen solch positiven Beiklang schließt indes der Kontext (11a und 11c) wie die Ankündigung selbst für 11b aus” (*Such a positive overtone is excluded by the context*

²⁷⁴ Wildberger, 1997, p. 19.

²⁷⁵ Clements, 1980, p. 133; Seitz, 1993, p. 128.

²⁷⁶ E.g., Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 232; Berlin, 1994, p. 136; Roberts, 1991, p. 218.

(11a and 11c) as well as by the announcement itself in 11b) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 390). Berlin, too, noting the shared vocabulary, states that the phrase “proudly exulting ones” in Isa 13.3 “has a rather different nuance” (Berlin, 1994, p. 136). Yet these differences (different subjects, positive and negative appraisals) notwithstanding, the intertextuality with Isa 13.3 does contribute further signification to the text of Zephaniah. The “proudly exulting ones” from Isa 13.3 were Yahweh’s chosen ones, but then became objects of judgment because of their pride and arrogance (Isa 14.4ff.), in the pattern of Assyria before them (Seitz, 1993, p. 124). In the same way the leadership of Judah, claiming divine election and blessing for its position (see Zeph 1.7; 5.4.2 above), is likewise designated for judgment for the same reasons, namely pride and arrogance. A further effect of this intertextuality is a “before and after” picture. The “proudly exulting ones” of Isa 13.3 are chosen by Yahweh to “destroy the whole world” (Isa 13.5). Zephaniah 3.11 envisions the time after that cataclysmic judgment, when there will no longer be any place for “proudly exulting ones.” After the judgment, all “proudly exultant ones” will be removed, leaving only “a people lowly and humble” (Zeph 3.12).

7.3.3 *Intra-textuality*

Zephaniah 3.9-13 brings the wider section of Zeph 3.1-13 to a resolution as is demonstrated by its chiastic structure (see Table 7.5 below).

Table 7.5: Chiastic structure of Zeph 3.1-13

vv.1-5	Corrupt, impure, ungodly city of God.
vv.6-7	The nations judged but to no avail.
v.8	God’s decision for climatic judgment of Judah and the nations.
vv.9-10	The nations redeemed and purified.
vv.11-13	Redeemed and purified people and mountain of God.

More than this, in Zeph 3.11-13 there is also *intra*-textuality which shows how the faults and failings of the people of God that had been catalogued in the earlier sections of Zephaniah shall all be made right in this future time.

Zephaniah 3.11 begins with the declaration that ביום ההוא לא תבוש מכל עליליך (On that day, you will not be ashamed because of all your deeds). This future state stands in contrast with the present condition of the people of God as presented in Zeph 3.5, ולא-השכימו השחיתו כל עלילותם (but the unjust knows no shame) and 3.7 כי-השכימו השחיתו כל עלילותם (they were the more eager to make all their deeds corrupt). Zephaniah 3.11 promises

אז אסיר מקרבך עליזי גאותך (for then I will remove from your midst your proudly exultant ones), a promise which will resolve the current problem represented in Zeph 3.3 שריה בקרבה אריות שאנים (The officials within it are roaring lions).

God's declaration in Zeph 3.12 והשארתני בקרבך עם עני ודל (For I will leave in the midst of you a people humble and lowly) will fulfil the call to repentance of Zeph 2.3, בקשו את־יהוה כל־עוי הארץ אשר משפטו פעלו בקשו צדק בקשו ענוה אולי תסתרו ביום א־יְהוָה (Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his commands; seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be hidden on the day of the Lord's wrath). Although there is no exact lexical correspondence between these texts the conceptual correspondence is exacting. Moreover, there is a high degree of assonance as well as conceptual overlap between ענו (humble) and ענוה (humility) in Zeph 2.3 and עני (humble) in Zeph 3.12.

Zephaniah 3.12c envisions a future time when it will be said of God's people that וחסו בשם יהוה (they will take refuge in the name of Yahweh). This stands in contrast to the current state of affairs as portrayed in the book of Zeph 1.6 in which God's people are הנסוגים מאחרי יהוה ואשר לש־בקשו את־יהוה ולא דרשהו (those who have turned back from following the Lord, who do not seek the Lord or inquire of him), and of the city of God it is written in Zeph 3.2 לא בטחה אל־אלהיה לא קרבה (It has not trusted in the Lord; it has not drawn near to its God).

The entire book of Zephaniah is concerned with the failings of the people of God but in this future time the people of God will be conformed to the ways of their God as shown by the similarity between Zeph 3.13a-b, לא־יעשו עולה, שארית ישראל (the remnant of Israel, they will not commit injustice) and Zeph 3.5 לא יעשה עולה יהוה צדיק בקרבה (The Lord within it is righteous; he commits no injustice). The contrast between the future condition of this people of God who will seek their God and their current condition is shown by the contrasting descriptions of 3.13c-e ולא־ידברו כזב ולא־ימצא בפיהם לשון תרמית (They will not speak lies and their mouths will not be filled with a deceitful tongue) and 1.9 which describes them as people ומרמה חמס בית אדניהם (who fill their master's house with violence and fraud). In 3.13e תרמית (deceitfulness, betrayal) is derived from the same root as מרמה (trick, fraud) in 1.9 (רמה). The assonance, verbal root and the conceptual correspondence within the same text forms an *intra*-textual connection within the text of Zephaniah.

The final line of this pericope, 3.13f-g, וְרָבְצוּ וְאֵין מַחְרִיד (For they will graze and lie down, and none will make afraid) shares close similarity between Zeph 2.7, וְהָיָה חֶבֶל לִישְׁאָרֵי בֵּית יְהוּדָה יִרְעוּן בְּבֵתִי אֲשַׁקְלוֹן בְּעֶרְבַּי יִרְבְּצוּן כִּי יִפְקֹדֵם יְהוָה (And the seacoast shall belong to the remnant of the house of Judah, they shall graze upon them. In the houses of Ashkelon they will lie down in the evening, for Yahweh their God will be mindful of them, and restore their fortunes). Both texts have the verbs רָעָה (to graze) and רָבַץ (to lie down). Both texts also look forward to the time after God's judgment and present a contrast to that judgment, promising security and prosperity, described in pastoral terms. This future vision stands in contrast with, for example, the futility curse of Zeph 1.13: וְהָיָה חֵילָם לְמַשְׁסָה וּבִתְיָהֶם לְשִׁמְמָה וּבָנוּ בָתִּים וְלֹא יִשְׁתּוּ אֶת־יַיִנָּם וְלֹא יֵשְׁבוּ וְנִטְעוּ כֶרְמִים וְלֹא יִשְׁתּוּ אֶת־יַיִנָּם (Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them), which promises not peace and security but only loss.

Through *intra*-textual lexical and thematic connections Zeph 3.11-13 presents a future for God's people in which the problems and failings of the present will be made right. As Renaud writes of Zeph 3.11-13, "Le tableau de la Jérusalem future contraste avec celui de la Jérusalem de l'histoire." (*The picture of the future Jerusalem contrasts with that of the historical Jerusalem*) (Renaud, 1987, p. 250).

7.3.4 Summary

Zephaniah 3.9-13, following the judgment oracle of Zeph 3.8, looks beyond Yahweh's universal and cataclysmic judgment to a new world in which the effects of sin which alienate humanity from God will be overcome. The ongoing theme in the book of Zephaniah, the intertwined relationship of the people of God and the peoples of the world, is given a new twist in this section. Throughout the book of Zephaniah the corruption of God's people has meant judgment for all peoples (1.2-3, 18; 3.8). Here the flip side comes into view; the renewal of the people of God will also mean renewal and blessing for all the peoples of the world.

This new section of the book of Zephaniah which brings hope and redemption, rather than judgment and curse, begins with a vision for the restoration of relationship between God and the peoples of the world (3.9-10). The Tower of Babel story forms a conclusion to the Primeval History in which humanity is scattered and alienated from God through the

effect of sin. By alluding to this story Zephaniah presents the resolution of this alienation as the farthest flung people coming to Yahweh in worship, emphasised by allusion to Isaiah 18. All people will call upon Yahweh's name and bring gifts that will no longer be unacceptable because of the corruption of their bearers, as was Cain's. With allusion to the Tower story and to the narrative of Genesis 4, Zephaniah shows how the ancient problem and effects of sin shall be overcome.

Following the pattern with which the book of Zephaniah began, judgment for all the nations (1.2-3) and then judgment for God's people (1.4ff.), the second part of this section, 3.11-13, turns to the redemption of God's people after the redemption of the nations. The beginning of this section, 3.11, takes up a phrase from Isa 13.3, "proudly exultant ones", to show how in this future time after the global judgment there will no longer be those who exult themselves against God's ways. Instead there will only be "a people humble and lowly" (3.12b). Within 3.11-13 there is also allusion to much that has preceded within the book of Zephaniah itself, *intra*-textuality. Through this *intra*-textuality the pericope shows how the causes for judgment that have been heaped up throughout the preceding text will be dealt with and will no longer be definitive for this renewed people of God.

Finally, the exegesis argued that Zeph 3.10 and 11 allude to Isaiah 18 and 13 respectively. These Isaiah texts belong to the Babylonian era and thus this part of Zephaniah must have been written later than the literary setting of the book according to Zeph 1.1, the reign of King Josiah in late monarchic Judah. This raises difficult questions about the history and formation of the book of Zephaniah. The position taken here is that although these sections were written later, they have been formed into one integral text with the rest of the book of Zephaniah. Therefore these verses cannot be considered to be a "later addition" or "an appendix" in the sense of being added on to an already complete "proto-Zephaniah" (see 4.3 above). Rather they form part of one coherent text, the book of Zephaniah, in which a major theme is the fate of the peoples and the people of God.

7.4 Zephaniah 3.14-20

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| v.14 | a | Rejoice, Daughter Zion, |
| | b | shout in triumph, Israel, |
| | c | exult and triumph with all (your) heart, |
| | d | Daughter Jerusalem. |

- v.15 a Yahweh has removed your judgments,
 b he has cleared your enemies,²⁷⁷
 c the king of Israel,
 d Yahweh, is in your midst,
 e fear disaster no longer.
- v.16 a On that day it will be said to Jerusalem,
 b “Do not fear, Zion,
 c do not let your hands grow slack.”²⁷⁸
- v.17 a Yahweh your God is in your midst,
 b a mighty one who saves,
 c he will rejoice over you with joy,
 d he will be silent in his love,²⁷⁹
 e he will shout in exultation over you with a cry of jubilation.
- v.18 a The afflicted ones from the feast day²⁸⁰
 b I will take from you;
 c there has been a lifting (from) upon her (of) disgrace.²⁸¹
- v.19 a Behold, I will deal with all your oppressors,
 b in that time,
 c I will save the lame
 d and the scattered I will gather.
 e I will change them to praise and renown
 f in all the earth (for) their shame.
- v.20 a In that time I will bring you,
 b and in the time when I gather you,
 c when I will give to you renown and praise,
 d among all the peoples of the earth,
 e when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,
 f says Yahweh.

Zephaniah 3.14-20, the triumphant conclusion to the book of Zephaniah, is widely recognised by commentators to constitute a literary unit. Most scholars consider it to be either exilic or post-exilic, with some exceptions.²⁸² The argument for the exilic or post-exilic provenance is based on the subject matter, namely return and restoration, an argument which scholars maintaining the authenticity of the pericope claim is applicable to the late monarchic era because of the oppression and exiles imposed by the Assyrians. The previous exegetical section argued that Zeph 3.9-13 alludes to prophecies in the book of Isaiah which are from the Babylonian period. Since this current section, 3.14-20, brings

²⁷⁷ MT “your enemy”

²⁷⁸ יִירָפוּ אֶל-יָרֵפוֹ meaning “let not your courage fail.”

²⁷⁹ BHS “prb l אֶהְיֶה לְיָדָיו” “he will restore in his love”; LXX “he shall refresh (καὶνίξω) thee with his love”. Roberts reads the verb as causative, “‘he will bring to silence,’ i.e., ‘he will soothe’ those who are crying in anguish” (Roberts, 1991, p. 220).

²⁸⁰ BHS/HALOT reads this phrase as כִּיּוֹם מוֹעֵד “as on the day of festivity”, apparently following some LXX MSS; Bibleworks parses נִגְיָי as Niphal participle for יָגַד “afflicted.”

²⁸¹ Very difficult line.

²⁸² Ball, 1988, p. 198; Kapelrud, 1975, p. 40; Keller, 1971, p. 212; O’Brien, 2004, pp. 128-129; Robertson, 1990, pp. 334-335; Sweeney, 2003, p. 194.

that which precedes it to a glorious conclusion it is also considered to be from that same or later period. In this pericope 3.17d, “he will be silent in his love” is difficult to understand, but 3.18 in its entirety is so difficult that many commentators consider it to be not only “the most difficult verse in the Book of Zephaniah to translate” (Ball, 1988, p. 188) but entirely unintelligible.²⁸³ In this final section of Zephaniah God promises to make God’s people what they were always intended to be, the nation which shows God to the world.

7.4.1 Verse 14

Verses 14-15 are generally seen to form the first subunit of the larger pericope. It is quite obviously an “Aufrufes zur Freude” (*call to joy*) (Striek, 1999, p. 211).²⁸⁴ The reason for rejoicing is the promise that Yahweh will bring the judgment to an end (Zeph. 3.15). The verbs that call Zion/Jerusalem/Israel to rejoice are typical of this genre which is found predominantly in the book of Psalms but also, to a lesser extent, within the prophetic books.²⁸⁵ Different commentators call attention to different passages in which they see significant similarity to Zeph 3.14-15. Perlitt, for example, sees Zech 2.14a (Eng. 2.10a) and 9.9 as “Die wichtigsten Parallelen zu V.14” (*the most important parallels to v.14*) (Perlitt, 2004, pp. 143-144), with the same imperatives and addressee (see Table 7.6 below).

Table 7.6: Lexical and genre similarities in Zeph 3.14; Zech 2.14a; 9.9

Zech 2.14a	<u>רני ושמחי בת־ציון</u>	<u>Shout and rejoice, O daughter Zion</u>
Zech 9.9	<u>גילי מאד בת־ציון</u> <u>הריעי בת ירושלם</u>	Rejoice greatly, O <u>daughter Zion!</u> <u>Shout</u> <u>aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!</u>
Zeph 3.14	<u>רני בת־ציון הריעו ישראל</u> <u>שמחי ועלוי בכל־לב</u> <u>בת ירושלם</u>	<u>Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!</u> <u>Rejoice and exult with all your heart,</u> <u>O daughter of Jerusalem!</u>

* AT

The only significance that Perlitt draws from this, however, is that Deutero-Zechariah dates to the late fourth century, “in welche Zeit diese Zeph-Nachträge gehören” (*to which time this Zephaniah addition belongs*) (Perlitt, 2004, p. 144). Others draw attention to the similarity with psalms which extol Yahweh’s kingship. Deissler writes of Zeph 3.14-15,

²⁸³ E.g., Berlin, 1994, p. 145; Edler, 1984, p. 65; O’Brien, 2004, p. 126; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 216.

²⁸⁴ “...a well attested genre: call to praise YHWH (e.g., Exod 15.21; Jer 20.13; Ps 9.12-13; 106.1; 107.1; 117.1-2; 118.1; 136.1)” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 238).

²⁸⁵ See, e.g., Perlitt, 2004, p. 143; Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 206.

“Ces deux versets constituent un hymne assez bref, analogue aux Psaumes sur la royauté de Yahweh.” (*These two verses constitute a rather short hymn, analogous to the psalms about the kingship of Yahweh*) (Deissler, 1964, p. 468)²⁸⁶ (see Table 7.7 below).

Table 7.7: Lexical and genre similarities in Zeph 3.14; Pss 47.2; 95.1; 98.4

Ps 47.2	כל־העמים תקעו־כף הריעו לאלהים בקול רנה	Clap your hands, all you peoples; <u>shout</u> to God with loud songs of joy.
Ps 95.1	לכו נרננה ליהוה נריעה לצור ישענו	O come, <u>let us sing</u> to the Lord; <u>let us make a joyful noise</u> to the rock of our salvation.
Ps 98.4	הריעו ליהוה כל־הארץ פצחו ורננו וזמרו	<u>Make a joyful noise</u> to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into <u>joyous song</u> and sing praises
Zeph 3.14	רני בת־ציון הריעו ישראל שמחי ועלזי בכל־לב בת ירושלם	<u>Sing aloud</u> , O daughter Zion; <u>shout</u> , O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! (ESV)

There are definite similarities in the use of the imperative verbs and Edler observes,

Wir haben in Zef 3,14-15 einen psalmartigen Hymnus vorliegen (vgl. die Jahwe-Königs-Psalmen, Ps 47, 93, 99) dessen Stil anthologisch ist.

We have before us in Zeph 3,14-15 a psalm-like hymn (c.f. the Royal Psalms, Pss 47, 93, 99) whose style is anthological (Edler, 1984, p. 61).

Even more than this, Zeph 3.14 is not simply anthological, it is excessively so. In the search for parallel texts, as seen above, different texts turn up which contain elements of Zeph 3.14 but no text contains all of its elements. This is because the combination of the four verbs in imperative form, רנן (shout in triumph); רוע (rejoice); שמח (rejoice); עלז (exult), and of the three different forms for God’s people as the objects of the imperatives, בת־ציון (daughter Zion); ישראל (Israel); בת ירושלם (daughter Jerusalem) is unique to this verse.²⁸⁷ Zephaniah 3.14 is the only verse in the entire OT which contains these four

imperative verbs which are typically used in the call to praise Yahweh. This can be demonstrated by the way these verbs are used much more often in the Psalms than anywhere else (see Table 7.8 below).

²⁸⁶ Deissler gives as examples Pss 47.2; 95.1; 98.4. So also Keller, 1971, pp. 213-214; Renaud, 1987, pp. 254-255.

²⁸⁷ The three names occur together in three other verses (1 Kgs 8.1; 2 Chr 5.2; Joel 4.16) but not in the same way as in Zeph 3.14.

Table 7.8: OT occurrences of the four verbs in Zeph 3.14

Verb	No. of occurrences	No. in Psalms	Next highest no.
רָנַן shout in triumph	53	25	14 in Isaiah
רָוַע shout for joy	44	12	4 in both Isaiah and Joshua
שָׂמַח rejoice	156	52	16 in Proverbs
עָלָז exult	17	7	4 in Jeremiah

Apart from Zeph 3.14 none of these verbs occur together in combinations of more than two anywhere else in the OT, which makes the combination of all four in Zephaniah all the more striking.²⁸⁸ This distinctiveness speaks against any specific reuse of other texts. Rather the author is taking up a well-known genre and using it in an exaggerated manner, stretching it to its very limits. The effect is palpable. It is “a summons to joy and (especially) overt rejoicing” (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 206), “a grand summons to rejoice” through “piling up every available expression for joy” (Robertson, 1990, pp. 335-336). Zephaniah, whose text has painted judgment in the most ultimate and dire terms possible, now looks forward to the salvation and restoration of a redeemed people of God in the same extreme manner.

Dieses neue „Israel“ spricht der Autor und „prophetische“ Sprecher in 3,14 als „Tochter Zion / Jerusalem“ direkt an und fordert es in den vier Imperativen, die Totalität und Intensität signalisieren, zu überschäumendem Jubel auf.

The author and “prophetic” speaker addresses directly this new “Israel” as “Daughter Zion / Jerusalem”, and invites it in the four imperatives, which signify totality and intensity, to overflowing jubilation (Irsigler, 2002, p. 413).

This is an embedded genre, to use Bakhtin’s terminology, in which the people are called to a Psalmic praise of Yahweh for the anticipated salvation that is recounted in the following verses. The four-fold combination usage of these stereotypical verbs creates an exaggerated or hyperbolic call to rejoice in praise of Yahweh. The promise that Yahweh will bring an eschatological salvation for God’s people calls for an excess of rejoicing and exulting.

7.4.2 Zephaniah 3.17 and Jeremiah 14.9

The reasons for this call to extreme rejoicing are given in the following verses: Yahweh has taken away the judgments against Jerusalem (v. 15a), he has turned away their enemies

²⁸⁸ This unique combination of the verbs is not commonly mentioned by the commentators. In the commentaries consulted it is only specifically noted by Irsigler, (2002, pp. 413-414).

(v.15b), he is in their midst (v.15c). Therefore Jerusalem need fear no more (v.15d, 16) because “Yahweh your God is in your midst, the mighty one will save” (17ab). At this point there is a strongly marked allusion to Jer 14.9 (see Table 7.9 below).

Table 7.9: Similarity of Zeph 3.17 and Jer 14.9

Zeph 3.17	יהוה אלהיך בקרבך גבור יושיע	Yahweh your God is in your midst, a mighty one who saves
Jer 14.9	למה תהיה כאיש נדהם כגבור לא-יוכל להושיע ואתה בקרבנו יהוה ושמך עלינו נקרא אל-תנחנו	Why should you be like a man confused, like a <u>mighty warrior</u> who <u>cannot save</u> ? Yet you, O LORD, <u>are in the</u> <u>midst of us</u> , and we are called by your name; do not leave us!

The common vocabulary marks Zeph 3.17 as an allusion to Jer 14.9. The shared vocabulary is striking. In the entire OT the verb ישע Hiphil (to save, deliver) and noun קרב (midst) occur together in only four verses: 1 Sam 4.3; Ps 138.7; Jer 14.9 and Zeph 3.17. Of these only Jeremiah and Zephaniah share a similar theme and only in these two verses does the combined vocabulary ישע Hiphil (to save, deliver) and קרב (midst) occur with Yahweh (יהוה) who is portrayed as גבור (“mighty one”, “mighty warrior”).

It is interesting to observe what the commentators make of this similarity between the two texts. Berlin notes the similarity with Jer 14.7 without any further comment,²⁸⁹ while Smith mentions it, along with Isa 9.6 (Heb. 9.5); 42.13 and Jer 20.11, as examples of Yahweh as a warrior bringing deliverance.²⁹⁰ Ben Zvi comments,

Significantly, Jer 14.9 points to the conception that the presence of YHWH in the midst of the city, or the people, is not synonymous with salvation (c.f. Zeph 3.5), for salvation is dependent on the attitude of YHWH, and YHWH may act as a hero who cannot – or do not (*sic.*) – save. The same perspective is probably implied in Zeph 3.15, 17, for a clarifying phrase is added in both cases to the statement concerning the presence of YHWH in Jerusalem (i.e., לא תיראי רע עוד and גבור יושיע) (“do not fear evil any longer” and “the mighty one will save”) (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 249).

This comment is good as far as it goes but it does not appreciate the intertextual effect because it treats Jer 14.9 in isolation from its literary context and as a receptacle of propositional information, i.e. what it means for Yahweh to be “in our/your midst.” He

²⁸⁹ Berlin, 1994, p. 145.

²⁹⁰ Smith, 1911, p. 257.

does not consider what Hollander describes as “transumed material” from the wider text of Jeremiah, what Sarna and Fishbane describe as “inner-biblical exegesis”, or what Ben-Porat calls “intertextual patterns” that emerge from the texts. Perlitt heads in this direction:

V.17a ist in der Gebetsfrage Jer 14,9 geradezu vorgezeichnet: „Warum bist du wie ein Held, der nicht zu retten vermag – und bist doch in unserer Mitte?“

V.17a is virtually predicted in this prayer of Jer 14.9, questioning God: “Why are you like a hero who is not able to save – and yet you are in our midst” (Perlitt, 2004, p. 145).²⁹¹

However, Perlitt makes no further comment about what signification this allusion has within the text of Zephaniah. Irsigler makes slightly more progress with his comment,

Der behauptende Heilszuspruch Zef 3,17a-b „JHWH, dein Gott ist in deiner Mitte, *als ein Held der siegreich hilft* (גִּבּוֹר יוֹשִׁיעַ)!“ antwortet geradz auf die schwere Klage und Anklage von Jer 14,9 (s.o.!), JHWH sei für Juda und Jerusalem „wie ein Held (גִּבּוֹר), der nicht (siegreich) zu helfen (לְהוֹשִׁיעַ) vermag“! Der Zuspruch unterstreicht: JHWH ist doch wirkmächtig da. Wenn er „rettet / hilft“, befreit er von Angst und eröffnet Zukunft, die Freiheit neuen Lebens, neuer Liebe.

The assertive promise of salvation of Zeph 3.17a-b “Yahweh your God is your midst, as a hero who helps victoriously (גִּבּוֹר יוֹשִׁיעַ)!” responds exactly to the grave lament and accusation of Jer 14.9 (see above!) that Yahweh should be for Judah and Jerusalem “like a hero (גִּבּוֹר) who does not seem able to help (לְהוֹשִׁיעַ) (victoriously)”! The encouragement emphasises that: Yahweh is nevertheless powerfully effective there. When he “saves / helps” he liberates from anxiety and opens up the future, the freedom of new life, new love (Irsigler, 2002, p. 422).

This is better because it reads Zeph 3.17 in the light of Jer 14.9 which imbues the text with greater signification through the allusion. Nevertheless Irsigler still treats Jer 14.9 in isolation from its wider context. According to the theory and methodology adopted in this thesis allusive markers are fragments of the inter-texts which make the larger inter-text become present in the alluding text. Rather than reading Zeph 3.17 in the light of Jer 14.9 it is more fruitful to read it in the light, or shadow, of the wider text to which Jer 14.9 belongs, namely 14.1-15.9.

Before embarking on such a reading one might be daunted by the prospect of dating the Jeremiah text, a book which is “long, complex, and difficult” (Carroll, 1997, p. 9). Earlier modern scholarship on Jeremiah understood the poetic oracles of the book as more likely

²⁹¹ A.J Lieber, who considers Zeph 3.14-20 an authentic oracle, sees in Jer 14.9 “an echo of Zephaniah’s words but with reverse accentuation” (Lieber, 1997, p. 195).

to be authentic to Jeremiah, the biographical prose to be written by someone else, perhaps Baruch, and a third body of prose to be later and influenced by Deuteronomistic language and theology (Lundbom, 1992, p. 709). This scheme has come under criticism by some later scholars who have argued the prose and poetic oracles are similar in their theology and the so-called Deuteronomistic language may actually be the prose of sixth century Judah (Craigie, 1998, p. xxxv). Jeremiah 14.9 is part of a carefully structured wider literary unit (Jer 14.1-15.9) that includes both poetry and prose, the two styles used in corresponding parts of the literary structure. This intricate structure suggests that the whole was composed at one time rather than a number of disparate oracles being stitched together at a later time. As it contains poetic oracles that seem to be Jeremiah himself pouring out his heart, a number of scholars consider it to be authentic to Jeremiah, perhaps “during or after the first deportation and before the second deportation, thus during the reign of Jehoiachin or perhaps Zedekiah, about 597 B.C.” (Craigie, 1998, p. 200). Holladay is much more precise: “November/ December 601” (Holladay, 1986, p. 427). Whatever the precise dating may be, if it is authentic to Jeremiah then it would have been available to the exilic or post-exilic writer of Zeph 3.14-20.

Jeremiah 14.1-15.9 consists of what looks like two parallel laments, 14.1-16 and 14.17-15.4, followed by a divine lament, 15.5-9 (Craigie, 1998, p. 200). However, they are laments with a difference, as both Craigie and Holladay emphasise. The standard lament expects to be answered by an assurance of deliverance or salvation from Yahweh which is either recorded (e.g., Joel 2.19ff) or, more often, assumed (e.g., Pss 6; 22). Yahweh’s responses to the twin laments in Jer 14.1-15.4, however, are not salvation oracles but judgment oracles (14.10-17; 15.1-4). Hence it appears that Jeremiah has written an “imitation liturgy”²⁹² or a “counter-liturgy”²⁹³ as a way to express Yahweh’s judgment.

The echo of Jer 14.1-15.9 in Zeph 3.17 produces substantial signification. Jeremiah 14.1-15.9 is a proclamation of unmitigated and inescapable judgment against Judah. Even though, according to the counter-liturgy, Judah repents (Jer 14.7) and calls upon Yahweh to save them (Jer 14.8-9), Yahweh completely rejects them and promises only judgment (14.10ff). The pattern then repeats in Jer 14.17-15.4. Zephaniah’s echo of Jer 14.9 reverses this whole complex of judgment. At the time of Jeremiah, Yahweh’s decision to punish Judah was irrevocable but in the time that Zeph 3.14-20 addresses, this terrible

²⁹² Craigie, 1998, p. 200.

²⁹³ Holladay, 1986, p. 422.

judgment had already taken place. In the Jeremiah text Yahweh had refused Judah's plea, depicted by Jeremiah in his "pseudo-lament", not to be **לא־יוכל להושיע** (like a mighty warrior who cannot give victory), even though **וְאַתָּה בְּקִרְבָּנוּ** (you are in the midst of us; Jer 14.9). In a complete reversal Zeph 3.17a declares **יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּקִרְבְּךָ גִּבּוֹר יוֹשִׁיעַ** (Yahweh your God is in your midst, a mighty warrior who will give victory). This echo signifies that the judgment Jeremiah prophesied is over and that Yahweh no longer rejects Judah. Through the allusion Zephaniah reverses Jeremiah's judgment speech (14.1-15.9), or perhaps better than reversal, brings closure to this dire prophecy of Jeremiah.

Sommer sees in Second Isaiah a number of reversals of Jeremiah's oracles of judgment.²⁹⁴ "The hermeneutic of reversal, the move from tropes of woe to tropes of joy, appears in many of Deutero-Isaiah's allusions to Isaiah and Jeremiah" (Sommer, 1998, p. 43). This is exactly what Zephaniah does in 3.17. In fact there are a number of similarities between Zeph 3.14-20 and Deutero/Trito-Isaiah.²⁹⁵ Edler writes of Zeph 3.16-17,

Unsere Einheit weist sich durch ihre literarischen Parallelen mit Tritojesaja wie auch durch ihren Kontext offensichtlich als aus der nachexilischen Zeit stammend aus.

Our unit identifies itself through its literary parallels with Trito-Isaiah as well as through its context as obviously coming from the post-exilic period (Edler, 1984, p. 64).

Edler gives Isa 62.5; 63.9; 65.18f. as examples. One of these texts, Isa 62.5, shares a very similar phrase with Zeph 3.17:

Table 7.10: Similarity of Zeph 3.17 and Isa 62.5

Isa 62.5	יְשִׁישׁ עֲלֶיךָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ	Your God shall rejoice over you
Zeph 3.17	יְשִׁישׁ עֲלֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה	He will rejoice over you with joy
* AT		

The phrase in Zephaniah appears in a highly stylised poetic section of three cola describing Yahweh's joy over the redeemed Jerusalem (3.17c,d,e):

²⁹⁴ E.g., Isa 54.1-3,5 reversing Jer 10.17-25 (Sommer, 1998, pp. 38-39).

²⁹⁵ Scholars disagree whether Isaiah 40-66 is one work, Deutero-/Second-Isaiah, or two, Deutero- and Trito-/Third-Isaiah.

ישיש עליך בשמחה	He will rejoice over you with joy
יחריש באהבתו	he will be silent in his love
יגיל עליך ברנה	He will shout in exultation over you with a cry of jubilation

The careful structure, notwithstanding the difficulty of what the middle colon actually means, indicates that Zephaniah has not borrowed from Isaiah. Yet, as Edler indicates, Deutero/Trito-Isaiah and Zeph 3.14-20 share the same attitude towards the same historical context, namely that Yahweh's judgment is over and he intends to restore his people in a restored and glorified Zion/Jerusalem.

7.4.3 Verse 18

O'Brien represents most commentators when she writes of Zeph 3.18, "Despite numerous attempts to solve this textual puzzle...none remains convincing, leaving the verse unintelligible" (O'Brien, 2004, p. 126).²⁹⁶ In the context of vv.14-20 the gist is understandable. The first line is difficult: נוגי ממועד, "The afflicted ones from the feast day" does not make much sense, but that is of course the problem with the verse. The second line is more comprehensible, אספתי ממך, "I will take from you", reading the perfect verb as a future in this context. The third line, הירו משאת עליה חרפה, is complicated by the plural הירו at the beginning, literally "they have." If this word is read as "there has been" the line seems to say something like "there has been a lifting (from) upon her (of) disgrace." Difficulties notwithstanding, in the context of 3.14-20 the sense seems to be Yahweh changing the situation of the people of God from disgrace to renewal. However, exegetical analysis of the verse is virtually impossible, let alone intertextual analysis, so this exegesis will move on to the more perspicuous v.19.

7.4.4 The lame and the outcast: Zephaniah 3.19 and Micah 4.6-7

There are similarities between Zeph 3.19 and Mic 4.6-7 (see Table 7.11 below). Once again, some commentators note the similarity between the passages without exploring the intertextual effects.²⁹⁷ The dating of the Micah oracle is contentious (see "קבץ and אסף" [Gathering and assembling]" above) but it was treated as authentic to Micah in that exegetical section and so shall be here as well. Yet even commentators who consider Mic

²⁹⁶ C.f. Hadjiev's recent attempt to make sense of the verse by historical-critical analysis (Hadjiev, 2012).

²⁹⁷ E.g., Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 256; Berlin, 1994, p. 147; Edler, 1984, p. 66.

4.6-7 to be a later addition nevertheless tend to see Zephaniah as the one who draws upon this Micah text.²⁹⁸

Table 7.11: Similarity of Zeph 3.19 and Mic 4.6-7

Zeph 3.19	הנני עשה את־כל־מעניך בעת ההיא והושעתי את־הצלעה והנדחה אֶקבץ שְׁמֵתִים לְתִהְלָה וְלִשְׁם בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ בְּשֵׁמָם	Behold, I will deal with all your oppressors, in that time, I will save <u>the lame</u> <u>and the scattered I will gather.</u> <u>I will turn them to praise and renown</u> in all the earth (for) their shame.
Mic 4.6-7	ביום ההוא נאם יהוה אספה הצלעה והנדחה אֶקבצה ואשר הרעתי ושמתי את־הצלעה לשארית והנהלאה לגוי עצום ומלך יהוה עליהם בהר ציון מעתה ועד עולם	On that day, declaration of Yahweh, I will gather <u>the lame</u> , <u>and the scattered I will gather</u> , and those whom I have afflicted. <u>And I will turn the lame into a remnant</u> and those who were cast off into a strong nation, and Yahweh will reign over them on Mount Zion from now and forevermore.

* AT

The important question is what effect is produced by alluding to this Micah text. Perlitt takes a negative approach to this question:

Das Zentrum der Heilsankündigung bildet das Handeln Jahwes in 19bα, und dieses hat seine Entsprechung oder sogar sein Vorbild (Irsigler) in dem mit Mi 2,12 verwandten Jahwespruch Mi 4,6-7a: „An jenem Tage...will ich das Lahme sammeln (*sp*) und das Zerstreute zusammenbringen (*qbs*)...“ In Zeph 3,18f. finden sich dieselben Verben in der 1. P. sg. In beiden Prophetenbüchern wurde also ganz „verschiedenartiges Spruchgut ohne irgendeine systematisierende Tendenz, eher anthologisch“ zusammengefügt.”

Yahweh's action forms the centre of the announcement of salvation in 19bα, and this has its parallel or even its model (Irsigler) in the Yahweh saying of Micah 4.6-7a, related to Micah 2.12: “On that day...I will gather (אסף) the lame and bring together (קבץ) the scattered...” In Zeph 3.18f. these same verbs are found in the 1st person singular. In both prophetic books a number of “very different sayings were put together in a rather anthological way without any systemising tendency” (Perlitt, 2004, pp. 147, quotation from Wolff, ET p. 119; Wolff, 1990).

This is not dissimilar to the idea of Zephaniah as a “prophetic compendium.” To the contrary, this exegesis maintains that if the text alludes to Micah then it does so for a purpose rather than inserting a random “feel good” text, as Perlitt implies. Irsigler argues at length that Zephaniah is alluding to Micah, concluding that,

²⁹⁸ E.g., Edler, 1984, p. 66; Nogalski, 2000, p. 216; Perlitt, 2004, p. 119; Renaud, 1987, p. 259.

Derart enge und exklusive Entsprechung bei gleichzeitigen Differenzen zwischen dem Zefanja- und Mica-Text deutet auf literarische Abhängigkeit, weniger wahrscheinlich auf identische redaktionelle Verfasserschaft.

Such close and exclusive equivalence with simultaneous differences between the Zephaniah- and Micah-text points to literary dependence, less probably to identical redactional authorship (Irsigler, 2002, p. 431).

However, in spite of an extended discussion to establish the relationship between Mic 4.6-7 and Zeph 3.18, Irsigler does not go on to consider intertextual patterns that might emerge from this reuse. Rather he suggests that

Das Bild vom Hirten JHWH, der seine Herde sammelt, geht in Zef 3,19b-c wie in Mi 4,6-7 (und 2,12) am wahrscheinlichsten auf die breit ausgeführte Hirten-Rede JHWHs in Ez 34 (V 1-22.30, sekundär vom messianischen Hirten David V 23f.) zurück (...vgl. auch Jer 23,1-5).

The picture of the shepherd Yahweh who gathers his flock, most likely harks back to the expanded elaborate shepherd speech of Yahweh in Ezek 34 (vv. 1-22, 30, secondarily from the messianic Davidic shepherd v.23f; ...c.f. also Jer 23.1-5) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 432; so also Renaud, 1987, p. 259).

Thus, after a long and convincing argument that Zephaniah has reused Micah, Irsigler suddenly asserts, without any argument whatsoever, that both texts are actually dependent upon Ezekiel. He then leaves this text altogether without exploring the intertextual effects.

Admittedly the effect of Zephaniah's allusion to Mic 4.6-7 is not as immediately obvious as many of the other allusions and echoes in Zephaniah. According to the methodology followed in this exegesis when a text alludes to another text it does so to produce signification within the text. Perhaps in this particular case, similar to the exaggerated psalmic language with which this final unit of Zephaniah began, Zephaniah is amplifying Micah's oracle. Both oracles promise the gathering of God's wounded and scattered people. Yet while in Mic 4.7 Yahweh promises to make (שִׁים) them into a "remnant" (שְׁאֵרִית) and "a strong nation" (גֹּי עֲצוּם) over which Yahweh will reign in Mount Zion, Zephaniah pushes these promises much further. Yahweh will make (שִׁים) them into "praise and renown in all the earth (for) their shame" (Zeph 3.19e-f). Zephaniah pushes the promise of salvation to greater heights than Micah, more in keeping with the language and mood of Deutero-/Trito-Isaiah. This promise to exult God's people from a defeated remnant to the foremost people in the world is the highpoint of the book of Zephaniah.

7.4.5 “Praise and renown”

Verse 19

Zeph 3.19c	ושמתים לתהלה ולשם בכל־הארץ בשתם	I will change them to <u>praise and renown</u> in all the earth (for) their shame..
------------	------------------------------------	--

The phrase לתהלה ולשם (to praise and a name/fame/renown) is a good example of Hollander’s image of a literary echo bouncing through a series of texts like an echo through a series of caves (Hollander, 1981, p. 114). As it bounces through different texts the echo gains new signification. This phrase, לתהלה ולשם, is found initially in a key passage in Deut 26.19:

Deut 26.19	ולתתך עליון על כל־הגוים אשר עשה לתהלה ולשם ולתפארת ולהיותך עם־קדש ליהוה אלהיך כאשר דבר	...for him to set you high above all nations that he has made, <u>for praise and renown</u> and honour; and for you to be a people holy to Yahweh your God, as he promised.
------------	--	---

* AT

This text shares with Zeph 3.19 (and 3.20) vocabulary and the theme of Yahweh making Israel לתהלה ולשם (for praise and fame) above the nations of the earth. Assuming that Zeph 3.14-20 is either exilic or post-exilic and that Deuteronomy was largely produced in the seventh century, including Deut 26.16-19, the text would have been available for Zephaniah to take up.²⁹⁹ According to Lundbom the central section in the first edition of Deuteronomy, which he sees as chapters 1-28, is the Deuteronomic Code, chapters 12-26. Deuteronomy 26.16-19 is, therefore, a key text because it constitutes the summary of the Deuteronomic Code, and the interpretive matrix by which to understand the Deuteronomic Code. The laws that have been recited in Deuteronomy 12-26 are to be understood in the context of Israel’s covenant relationship with Yahweh, shown in Deut 26.17: “Today you have obtained the Lord’s agreement: to be your God; and for you to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes and commandments, and his ordinances, and to obey him.” This pericope is already intertextually charged as vv.18-19 allude to Exod 19.5-6, which has already been alluded to in Deut 7.6 (see Table 7.12 below).³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ See discussion in Clements, 1997; Lundbom, 2013; Tigay, 1996.

³⁰⁰ See also Fishbane, 1985, p. 121.

Table 7.12: Intertextual relationship between Deut 26.18-19; 7.6; Exod 19.5-6.

Deut 26.18-19	<p>ויהוה האמריך היום להיות לו לעם סגלה כאשר דבר-לך ולשמר כל-מצותיו: ולתתך עליון על כל-הגוים אשר עשה לתהלה ולשם ולתפארת ולהיתך עם-קדש ליהוה אלהיך כאשר דבר:</p>	<p>And the LORD has declared today that you are <u>a people for his treasured possession</u>, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high <u>above all nations</u> that he has made, and that you shall be <u>a people holy to the LORD</u> your God, as he promised."</p>
Deut 7.6	<p>כי עם קדוש אתה ליהוה אלהיך בך בחר יהוה אלהיך להיות לו לעם סגלה מכל העמים אשר על-פני האדמה:</p>	<p>For you are <u>a people holy to the LORD</u> your God. The LORD your God has chosen you <u>to be a people for his treasured possession</u>, <u>out of all the peoples</u> who are on the face of the earth.</p>
Exod 19.5-6	<p>ועתה אמ-שמוע תשמעו בקלי ושמרתם את-בריתי והייתם לי סגלה מכל-העמים כי-לי כל- הארץ: ואתם תהיו-לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש אלה הדברים אשר תדבר אל-בני ישראל:</p>	<p>Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be <u>my treasured possession among all peoples</u>, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a <u>holy nation</u>. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel</p>

In these three texts the people of God are described as Yahweh's סגלה (treasured possession), set apart from מכל העמים / כל-הגוים (all nations / all peoples), to be a עם-קדש (holy people / holy nation). Inherent within Deut 26.16-19 is Israel's representative role amongst all peoples. Deuteronomy 26.18-19 declares what will be the result of Israel obeying this Law which has just been presented, and thereby enacting their faithfulness to Yahweh: "praise", "fame", "honour" above all nations as a "holy people." For Israel to be Yahweh's holy and treasured nation, Yahweh's kingdom of priests, Israel must live as such, that is, be faithful to Yahweh's requirements for their life. In this way Deut 26.16-19 "sums up Israel's duty to obey them (the laws/commandments) wholeheartedly and underscores the fact that they are more than details of a legal code. They are the basis of the mutual relationship that God and Israel have established" (Tigay, 1996, p. 244).

Deuteronomy 26.16-19 presents the promise of what covenant faithfulness will achieve for Israel. However, the wonderful potential of this promise had become bitter ashes in

the next allusion to this verse. Jeremiah 13.11, which is later than Deut 26.16-19,³⁰¹ alludes to Deut 26.19:

Jer 13.11	<p>כי כאשר ידבק האזור אל- מתני-איש כן הדבקתי אלי את-כל-בית ישראל ואת-כל- בית יהודה נאם יהוה להיות לי לעם ולשם ולתהלה ולתפארת ולא שמעו</p>	<p>For as the loincloth clings to the waste of a man, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, declares the LORD, that they might be for me a <u>people</u>, a <u>name</u>, a <u>praise</u>, and a <u>glory</u>, but they would not listen.</p>
-----------	---	--

The context is the enacted prophecy of the ruined loincloth which represented the ruined state of God's people (Jer 13.1-11). Allusion to Deut 26.19 is made by the shared vocabulary לתהלה, לשם, לעם (for a people, for renown, for praise, for glory), but also through the grounds for Israel not achieving this state: "This evil people, who refuse to hear my words, who stubbornly follow their own will and have gone after other gods to serve them and worship them" (Jer 13.10). They have not observed Yahweh's "statutes" and "ordinances" and "commandments" and have not "obeyed him" (Deut 26.16-17). For this reason the promised "name, praise and glory" of Deut 26.19 have not come to pass, but rather judgment is imminent because of Israel's unfaithfulness to Yahweh.

Zephaniah picks up these echoes in 3.19c. Now Yahweh himself declares again that he will give the people of God "renown and praise in all the earth." The disintegration of Yahweh's promise in Jeremiah has been put aside and the original promise from Deuteronomy, itself echoing Exodus 19, is re-established. Judah will become what it was always intended to be, Yahweh's representative nation in the earth. As a result of the purifying judgment in Zeph 3.8, God's people will be transformed into an obedient and faithful remnant. In this way Yahweh will have accomplished what Israel was unable to do, make them a faithful nation and Yahweh's own treasure in the world.

Some Zephaniah commentators note the intertextuality with Deut 26.19 and/or Jer 13.11 but do not reflect upon the intertextual effect.³⁰² Keller, Ben Zvi and Irsigler also include Jer 33.9 with Deut 26.19 and Jer 13.11.³⁰³ This passage is undoubtedly an intertextual development of Deut 26.19 and probably also Jer 13.9. However, dating is uncertain and

³⁰¹ See Craigie, 1998, pp. 189-190; Holladay, 1986, pp. 395-396.

³⁰² E.g., Robertson, 1990, p. 345; Széles, 1987, pp. 114-115.

³⁰³ E.g., Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 258; Irsigler, 2002, p. 432; Keller, 1971, p. 216.

Jer 33.9 could be contemporary with or later than Zeph 3.19.³⁰⁴ Also, the terms are slightly changed from those in Deut 26.19; Jer 13.9 and Zeph 3.19. In Jer 33.9 the subject is “the city” rather than the people and the noun שֵׁם (name/fame) is modified by the adjective שִׂשׂוֹן (joy), thus, “And this city shall be to be a name of joy, a praise (תְּהִלָּה) and a glory before all the nations of the earth...” (Jer 33.9). These changes are not great but for this exegesis Jer 33.9 is considered to be intertextual development of Deut 26.19 and Jer 13.11 but not a text that contributed to the formation of Zeph 3.19.

While Irsigler puts aside both Jer 13.11 and 33.9 as “ein nachjeremianisches und spätdeuteronomisches Gegenstück” (*a post-Jeremianic and late-deuteronomistic counterpart [to Zeph 3.19]*) (Irsigler, 2002, p. 432) he discusses Deut 26.16-19 as an intertext of Zeph 3.19. He understands that the promise of Zeph 3.19ef,

beruft sich auf die erweiterte „Bundesformel“ von Dtn 26,17-19 und insbesondere auf die deuteronomische Erwählungszusage von Dtn 26.19, nach der Israel zum „Ruhm / Lob, zum Namen /Ansehen und zur Zierde“ (תְּפָאָרָה) werden soll, wenn JHWH es über alle Völker, die er geschaffen hat, erhebt als ihm „heiliges Volk.“

refers to the extended “covenant formula” of Dt 26.17-19 and particularly to the deuteronomistic election promise of Dt 26.19 according to which Israel should come to “glory / praise, to name / reputation and to splendour” (תְּפָאָרָה) when Yahweh raises him as his “holy people” over all nations which he has created (Irsigler, 2002, p. 432).

Although Irsigler identifies the connection with Deut 26.16-19 the only thing that he takes from it is that Yahweh will now fulfil this promise. This highlights the importance of Hollander’s insights into “transumed” material, that is, how the quoted or echoed fragments give the wider intertext a presence within the alluding text. Deuteronomy 26.16-19 is not simply an isolated promise of Yahweh to exalt his people over all the world which Zeph 3.19 reifies, as Irsigler suggests. Deuteronomy 26.16-19 sums all of the covenant expectation that precedes it. Yahweh’s exalting of Israel is shot through with expectations of what and who Israel is and this becomes present in Zeph 3.19. The text is not simply addressing what Yahweh will do but also what Israel will finally become: the faithful and representative people of God that she was always intended to be.

³⁰⁴ Holladay, 1989, pp. 222-224; Keown, Scalise, & Smothers, 1995, pp. 167-169.

Grammatical difficulty

To conclude this section the grammatical difficulty in 3.19e-f needs to be briefly addressed:

Zeph 3.19e-f	שמתים לתהלה ולשם בכל-הארץ בשתם	And I will change them to praise and renown in all the earth (for) their shame.
--------------	-----------------------------------	--

The verb שים has a broad range of meaning in Hebrew, including “to place”, “to give”, “to make/do” and “to change/turn into.” The final meaning fits well in this context but the problem is that the sentence reads as though the verb has two objects: “them”, signified by what looks like a 3 per. masc. pl. pron. suf. on the verb itself, *mem* (ם), and “their shame” (בשתם). A straight forward reading appears to be “And I will change them to praise and renown in all the earth their shame.” A number of suggestions have been made to explain this difficulty. Ben Zvi, for example, proposes,

since the occurrence of כל before a noun has led to the ‘mechanical’ addition of the definite article in places where it was not supposed to be (see Jos 8.11; 1 Kgs 14.24; Jer 25.26, 31.40; Ezek 45.16), the occurrence of the definite article in בכל הארץ (v.19) may be explained as due to either the influence of כל or of the well attested expression בכל הארץ or both (Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 258-259).

Thus Ben Zvi emends הארץ to be read anarthrously as ארץ in construct state with the absolute noun “בשתם”, giving ארץ בשתם בכל ארץ ולשם לתהלה ולשם (I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame) (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 258). However, כל-הארץ plays an important role in Zephaniah (Zeph 1:18; 2:3, 11; 3:8, 19f) as the object of Yahweh’s all-consuming judgment. Here, in 3.19, in a great reversal, it is now the location of Yahweh’s mercy and restoration. Furthermore, as with the intertexts Deut 26.19 (על כל-הגוים [over all the nations]) and Exod 19.5 (והייתם לי) (סגלה מכל-העמים כי-לי כל-הארץ [you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine]; Deut 7.6 (מכל העמים אשר על-פני האדמה) [from all the peoples who are on the face of the earth]), “in all the earth” is also fundamental to the text. The “praise and renown” that Israel/Judah will be given is defined by its being over and above all other nations of the world. Thus there are *intra*-textual and intertextual arguments against Ben Zvi’s suggestion. Ball offers a solution by analogy to Mic 4.7, an intertext which is lurking in and around Zeph 3.19. Ball believes Zeph 3.19e-f should be read in the same way as Mic 4.7 (Ball, 1988, p. 196) (see Table 7.13 below).

Table 7.13: Ball's analogy between Zeph 3.19e-f and Mic 4.7

Zeph 3.19e-f	ושמתי לתהלה ולשם בכל־הארץ בשתם	And I will transform them into a praise, and their shame into a name in all the earth
Mic 4.7	ושמתי את־הצלעה לשארית והנהלאה לגוי עצום	And I will transform the lame into a remnant, and those who were cast off into a strong nation

Ball shows how the one verb governs the two subsequent colons but the syntax is quite different than Zeph 3.19ef. Micah 4.7 is unambiguous due to the definite object marker **את**, the preposition **ל** (to, into), used twice in Mic 4.7, and the repeated structure (“I will change this to that, and this to that”). Micah 4.7 can only be read as rendered above whereas this is not the case with Zeph 3.19ef. In fact, the syntax of Mic 4.7 supports the reading that is suggested in this exegesis. If the *mem* suffixed to the verb **שׁים** (change) marks the object, “them”, then the preposition **ל** shows what the object shall be changed into, which in Zeph 3.19 is **תִּלְלָה** (renown) and **שֵׁם** (name). In any case, the alternative readings, such as those suggested by Ball and Ben Zvi, must explain away the *mem* that is suffixed to the verb **שׁים**. This is done by calling it an “enclitic *mem*” (Ben Zvi, 1991, p. 259) which is an archaic particle, the meaning of which “was lost in the course of the text’s long transmission” (Waltke & O'Connor, 1990, p. 159).

In support of the translation given here, in the intertexts **שֵׁם** (name) and **תְּהִלָּה** (praise) form a collocation describing what Yahweh intends his people to be (Deut 26.19; Jer 13.11). Zephaniah 3.19 describes a future when Yahweh will accomplish this for his people. This supports reading the *mem* suffixed to the verb **שׁים** (**וְשִׁמְתִּים**) as “them” rather than an enclitic *mem*. Furthermore, “I will change them to praise and renown” is supported by the parallel colon in 20c (see Table 7.14 below).

Table 7.14: Parallelism of Zeph 3.19e-f and 3.20c-d

3.19e-f	שמתי לתהלה ולשם בכל־הארץ בשתם	And I will change them to praise and renown in all the earth (for) their shame
3.20c-d	כי־אתן אתכם לשם ולתהלה בכל עמי האץ	When I will give to you renown and praise, among all the peoples of the earth

This English translation requires the inclusion of the preposition “for” or “instead of.” This meaning is commonly expressed with the preposition **תַּחַת**.³⁰⁵ Using this preposition,

³⁰⁵ E.g., Gen 4.25; 22.13; Job 31.40; 34.26; Ps 35.12; 38.21; 109.5.

a close parallel to Zeph 3.19ef is Isa 61.7: **תחת בשתכם משנה** (Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion). The noun **בשת** (shame) is used with a variety of prepositions, for example, **לבשתך** “to your shame” (1 Sam 20.30); **בבשת פנים** “with shame of face” (2 Chr 32.21); **על-עקב בשתם** “because of their shame” (Ps 70.4); **למען בשת** “to their own shame” (Jer 7.19). On a few occasions in the Hebrew text, **בשת** requires the addition of a preposition in English translation. One example is Mic 1.11a **עריח-בשת** (Pass on your way, inhabitants of Shaphir, [in] nakedness and shame), which occurs in the very difficult pericope of Mic 1.10-16, “which brought from St. Jerome a fervent prayer for illumination” (Hillers, 1984, p. 24). Another example is Job 8.22a, **שנאיך ילבשו-בשת** (Those who hate you will be clothed [with] shame), which appears to be an idiomatic expression that also occurs in Pss 35.26 and 132.18. The only other such occurrence is Isa 42.17, **נסגו אחר יבשו בשת** (They shall be turned back and be ashamed [with] shame; AT). While there is no parallel usage of the noun **בשת** that has been given in this translation there are similar constructions in the OT. Psalm 105.32 is similar with its lack of a preposition: **נתן גשמייהם ברד** (He gave them hail [for] rain). For these reasons Zeph 3.19e-f can be read, “I will turn them to praise and renown in all the earth (for/instead of) their shame.”

Verse 20

Zephaniah 3.20 repeats the promises of homecoming and exaltation made in the previous verse. Some commentators take a jaundiced view of v.20, none more so than Keller,

C'est une simple paraphrase du verset précédent, paraphrase qui annonce déjà, par son style maladroit, les commentaires bibliques de Qumran.

It is a simple paraphrase of the preceding verse, a paraphrase which anticipates, by its clumsy style, the biblical commentaries of Qumran (Keller, 1971, p. 216).

Vlaardingerbroek writes that,

Vs. 20 contains nothing that has not already been said in the preceding text, except for the emphasis that those who read this prophecy or hear it read...will now also experience, or are even in the process of experiencing, the fulfilment” (Vlaardingerbroek, 1999, p. 217).

The emphasis on “those who read the prophecy or hear it” is achieved through the change from third to second person addressees in v.20, a point which Irsigler also emphasises (Irsigler, 2002, p. 433). However, v.20 may develop the promises of v.19 more than Vlaardingerbroek allows as there are some more subtle changes besides the change of addressees (see Table 7.15 below).

Table 7.15: Changes in Zeph 3.20c-d from 3.19e-f

Zeph 3.19e-f	שְׁמֵתֵם לְתִהְלָה וְלִשְׁם בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ בְּשֵׁמֶם	And I will turn them to <u>praise and renown</u> <u>in all the earth</u> (for) their shame.
Zeph 3.20c-d	כִּי־אֶתֶן אֲתֶכֶם לִשְׁם וּלְתִהְלָה בְּכָל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ	When I will give to you <u>renown and praise</u> , <u>among all the peoples of the earth</u> .

There are two changes from v.19. First, the order of the phrases לְתִהְלָה and וְלִשְׁם is reversed. Second, v.20c-d changes the final colon of v.19 from בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ (in all the earth) to בְּכָל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ (among all the peoples of the earth). In this way it echoes the text behind Deut 26.16-19, namely Exod 19.5-6, where Yahweh says to Israel, וְהִיִּיתֶם לִי סִגְלָה מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים כִּי־לִי כָל־הָאָרֶץ (you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine; Exod 19.5b). This text from Exodus 19 has “bounced” through Deut 7.6 and into Deut 26.19, carrying with it a strong emphasis on Israel’s function as Yahweh’s representative amongst all the peoples of the earth. As this thesis has argued, the representative function of Israel is the very idea with which the book of Zephaniah begins, and a theme which continues throughout the book. At the beginning of the book of Zephaniah because of Israel’s failure to be God’s priestly nation, or representative to the world, the entire world must suffer judgment. At the end of the book, after Israel’s judgment and purifying, she is to be re-established in the role God always intended for her. In his comments on this final section of Zephaniah, 3.14-20, Bič underscores this exact point:

Il n'y a nullement réhabilitation au sens habituel. Juda n'y avait aucun droit, puisqu'il avait été infidèle à YHWH et méritait le châtement. Mais YHWH est fidèle, et sa parole ne sort pas en vain de sa bouche (Is. 55, 11). Il a choisi son peuple pour qu'il soit un « royaume de prêtres » (Ex. 19,6, cf. Is. 61,6, ainsi que 1 P. 2,9). Ceci signifie qu'Israël doit accomplir à l'égard du reste du monde les devoirs d'un prêtre, d'un intermédiaire entre Dieu et les hommes. Israël a donc été chargé du sacerdoce universel mais il a gravement négligé cette vocation, il s'est même mis à la remorque du monde. Néanmoins, dans l'ère qui s'annonce, tout sera renouvelé, et le Reste d'Israël sera enfin ce que toujours il aurait dû être.

There is no rehabilitation in the usual sense. Judah had no right to it at all, since they had been unfaithful to Yahweh and deserving of punishment. But Yahweh is faithful and his word does not leave his mouth in vain (Isa 55.11). He chose his people for them to be a “kingdom of priests” (Ex 19.6; c.f. Isa 61.6, as well as 1 Pet 2.9). This signifies that Israel ought to perform in regards to the rest of the world the duties of a priest, of an intermediary between God and humanity. Israel has then been charged with universal priesthood but it gravely neglected this vocation, it even trailed behind the world. Nevertheless, in the era which is announced all will be renewed and

the remnant of Israel will finally be what it always ought to have been (Bič, 1968, pp. 72-73).

This representative role of Israel is also indicated in Zeph 3.20 with the reversal of לתהלה and ולשם. In some psalms universal or world wide שם (name/renown) and תהלה (praise) are attributes of Yahweh himself (see Table 7.16 below).

Table 7.16: “Name” and “praise” in Pss 48.11; 66.1b-2; 102.22-23; 145.21

Ps 48.11	<u>כשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כֵּן תִּהְיֶה</u> <u>עַל־קְצוֹי־אָרֶץ</u> <u>צֶדֶק מְלָאָה יְמִינְךָ</u>	As your <u>name</u> , O God, so your <u>praise</u> reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with righteousness
Ps 66.1b-2	<u>הֲרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים כָּל־הָאָרֶץ</u> <u>זָמְרוּ כְבוֹד־שְׁמוֹ</u> <u>שִׁמּוּ כְבוֹד תִּהְיֶה</u>	Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his <u>name</u> ; give to him glorious <u>praise</u> .
Ps 102.22-23 [21-22]	<u>לְסַפֵּר בְּצִיּוֹן שֵׁם יְהוָה</u> <u>וּתְהַלְלוּ בִירוּשָׁלַם</u> <u>בְּהִקְבֹּץ עַמִּים יַחַד</u> <u>וּמַמְלָכוֹת לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה</u>	that they may declare in Zion the <u>name</u> of the LORD, and in Jerusalem his <u>praise</u> , when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the LORD.
Ps 145.21	<u>תִּהְיֶה יְהוָה יִדְבַּר־פִּי</u> <u>וַיְבָרֶךְ כָּל־שֵׁר שֵׁם פִּדְשׁוּ</u> <u>לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד</u>	My mouth will speak the <u>praise</u> of the LORD, and let all flesh bless his holy <u>name</u> forever and ever.

These various psalms are dated differently by the different commentators. Gerstenberger³⁰⁶ sees them all as late/post-exilic while Weiser³⁰⁷ takes the opposite view that they are all pre-exilic. In between there are a variety of views. Craigie, Kraus and Mays judge Psalm 48 to be pre-exilic;³⁰⁸ Kraus judges Psalm 66 to be possibly preexilic³⁰⁹ while Tate considers dating to be “scarcely possible” but is sympathetic to exilic or post-exilic arguments.³¹⁰ Kraus sees Psalm 102 as exilic³¹¹ while both Mays³¹² and Allen consider it either exilic or post-exilic.³¹³ Kraus considers Psalm 145 to be very late,

³⁰⁶ Gerstenberger, 1988, 2001.

³⁰⁷ Weiser, 1962.

³⁰⁸ Craigie, 1983, p. 352; Kraus, 1988, p. 474; Mays, 1994, p. 188.

³⁰⁹ Kraus, 1989, p. 36.

³¹⁰ Tate, 1998, p. 148.

³¹¹ Kraus, 1989, p. 283.

³¹² Mays, 1994, p. 326.

³¹³ Allen, 2002, pp. 16-18.

although “ancient themes and traditions have a residual effect”³¹⁴ and Allen also sees it as postexilic.³¹⁵

No doubt the dating of psalms is a difficult business but based on the conclusions of these scholars the psalms listed above cover a period of time from before the exile to the late exilic period. Each of these psalms speaks of Yahweh’s שם (name/renown) and תהלה (praise) in the context of global recognition and worship. In this way universal שם and תהלה are attributes of Yahweh. In each of the psalms, except for the last and possibly latest one (Ps 145), these attributes are always listed in the same order, שם and תהלה. This is the same order as in Zeph 3.20 which reverses the order of Zeph 3.19. This subtle change may add another nuance to the image of Israel as God’s representative nation in the world. Through echoing these psalms in Zeph 3.20 Yahweh promises to give his attributes of universal שם and תהלה to his people as he re-establishes them in their role of his “treasured possession out of all peoples...a priestly kingdom and a holy nation” (Exod 19.5-6).

Finally, the allusions to the Primeval History that from the beginning have played a significant role in the formation of the book of Zephaniah are also brought to a positive conclusion. At the end of the book of Zephaniah, Yahweh will do what the city and tower builders tried but failed to do when he makes a name (שם) for his people (c.f. Gen 11.4).

7.4.6 Summary

Zephaniah 3.14-20 brings the book to a conclusion. In v.14 a number of phrases commonly used in the Psalms are piled together to form an incorporated genre which calls God’s people to rejoice exceedingly because of what God has done. The allusion to Jer 14.9, and by extension to the wider text of Jer 14.1-15.9, is strongly marked and constitutes a reversal of Jeremiah’s earlier judgment speech. It signals that the judgment is over and that God will now show mercy to Judah. In this way it is similar to Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah. The allusion to Mic 4.6-7 in Zeph 3.19 is strongly marked and has been recognized by a number of commentators. The effect of the allusion, however, is not so obvious, and I have suggested that, similar to the exaggerated call to rejoicing in Zeph 3.14, Zephaniah amplifies Micah’s prophecy, promising a more exalted future than Micah did. This future is portrayed in vv.19-20 as “praise and renown in all the earth”, an

³¹⁴ Kraus, 1989, p. 547.

³¹⁵ Allen, 2002, p. 371.

allusion primarily to Deut 26.16-19, but also to Jer 13.11. The allusion signals that God will bring about God's intentions for Israel/Judah, in spite of their failure to live up to their calling, also present through the echo of Jer 13.11. The reversed order of the terms "renown and praise" in Zeph 3.20 may allude to a small number of Psalms (48; 66; 102; 145) where "renown and praise", in that order, are attributes of God. This would fit the theme of Judah representing God in the world.

7.5 Conclusion for Zephaniah 3

This final chapter of Zephaniah resolves the problem with which the book began and which forms the main theme throughout of the book of Zephaniah, the failure of God's people to fulfil their calling. As God's chosen and representative nation from amongst all the nations of the earth, the failure of God's people has ramifications for all the peoples of the world. Zephaniah 1 begins and ends with global judgment (1.2-3, 17-18), and the cause of this judgment is the failure of God's people (1.4-16). Zephaniah 3.1-8 begins with the failure of God's people (3.1-5) and then moves to global judgment. Like Zephaniah 1, Zeph 3.1-5 echoes both Torah texts³¹⁶ and a judgment oracle that was given to an earlier generation of God's people (Mic 3.9-11), in its portrayal of Judah's failure to live as God's people. The pericope concludes, however, in an unexpected manner because in the place of an announcement of judgment there is praise of God (v.5). The insertion of this psalmic "heteroglot" contrasts Judah both with God and also with the ideal people of God that is continually presented in the Psalms. Specific allusion to Psalm 46 also contrasts the ideal "city of God" with the corrupt city of Jerusalem as it really is, once again emphasising how far Judah has fallen short of its expectations.

In keeping with the logic of Zephaniah, Judah's failure means global judgment, described in Zeph 3.6-8. Within this judgment oracle, however, there are unusual echoes of other texts. The "cutting off of nations" echoes Conquest texts in which God "cuts off" the nations of the land in order to give it to Israel.³¹⁷ In Zeph 3.6 they are cut off as a warning to God's people. The phrase "without inhabitants", referring to the cities of the nations, echoes Isa 5.9 and 6.11 which threaten this judgment on Judah, intertwining, as Zephaniah does throughout, the fate of the nations with that of Judah. This intertwining of fates is also hinted at with the echo of Gen 6.11-13 where the corruption (שִׁדְהָת) of humanity brought global destruction (Zeph 3.7). The command to "wait" for Yahweh (Zeph 3.8) is

³¹⁶ Exod 22.20; Lev 19.33; 25.14, 17; Deut 23.17.

³¹⁷ Deut 12.29; 19.1; Josh 23.4.

also unusual in this context as elsewhere it always refers to trustfully awaiting God's saving action.³¹⁸ The declaration that God will “gather” (אסף) and “assemble” (קבץ) the nations (3.8) uses verbs that are only otherwise employed together for the promise of God restoring God's people after judgment.³¹⁹ These unusual echoes of previous texts create ambiguity within the judgment oracle and hint that judgment will not be the end, thus pointing towards the concluding section of the book (3.11-20).

The concluding section of the book shows that the global judgment is not the end of the world but rather the beginning of a renewed one. First, with allusion to the Tower of Babel story, Gen 4.1-26 and Isaiah 18, the nations are presented as coming to God in worship and service (Zeph 3.9-10). This represents a resolution of the effects of sin that wrought such disruption in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Humanity that is alienated from God shall be brought back into relationship with God in this future vision. Yet most of this future vision is dedicated, not to the nations, but to the people of God (3.11-20). Zephaniah 3.11 alludes to Isa 13.3, which belongs to the same block of Isaiah material as Isaiah 18. Through this allusion the wider context of Isaiah 13-23 is transumed into the text of Zephaniah, which looks forward to a time after global judgment in which Yahweh rules over all the nations. Generic language from the psalms of praise is heaped up in Zeph 3.14 to signify how great this future salvation shall be. The strong allusion to Jer 14.9 (Zeph 3.17) signals that the judgment Jeremiah announced is over. Micah 4.6-7 is evoked (Zeph 3.19) but Zephaniah announces a greater salvation than the original Micah oracle. In this future time Judah shall be transformed into the people that God always intended them to be, a stature to which they had never attained. Key terms from Deut 26.19, תהלה (praise) and שם (name/renown) are used to demonstrate how God will bring about the fulfilment of the covenant intentions for God's people. Through intertextuality with the foundational Sinai Covenant text of Deut 26.16-19, which already has Exodus 19 in its background, Zeph 3.14-20 presents Judah as re-created by God to be God's representatives to all peoples and the entire world. The reversal of the terms “praise and renown” in Zeph 3.20 may evoke Psalms 48, 61, 102 and 145, in which these are attributes of God, attributes God will bestow upon Judah. The logic of Zephaniah comes full circle in this final section. Just as the failure of God's people means judgment for all, so the restoration and renewal of God's people will mean blessing for all.

³¹⁸ Ps 33.20; Isa 8.17; 30.18.

³¹⁹ Mic 2.12; 4.6; Isa 11.12.

Chapter 8

Conclusion: Zephaniah Makes Sense

Martin Bucer's 1554³²⁰ description of Zephaniah as "a 'compendium' of prophetic preaching" is often cited favourably by scholars.³²¹ Bucer's description implies that Zephaniah is a pale imitation of great predecessors which lacks originality, a loose collection of genres haphazardly shovelled together to create the form of a prophetic text: judgment of the entire world; judgment oracles against God's people; oracles against the nations; salvation oracles for God's people; salvation oracles for all peoples. Some scholars treat at least parts of Zephaniah in this way. According to some the oracles against the nations were added simply to give Zephaniah the pattern of a prophetic book, as though the writer thought that any prophetic book worth its salt must have a section of oracles against the nations (see 6.2.1 above). As a direct corollary of this assessment certain elements in Zephaniah are assumed not to make sense. This assumption is most evident in the way the relationship between the people of God and the peoples of the world in Zephaniah is often described.

The assumption that the oracles concerning the peoples of the world and the oracles concerning Judah do not logically fit together has led to both emending the text and proposing redactional histories of Zephaniah. For example, a number of scholars consider Zeph 1.2-3 and 1.18b to be later additions because they concern the entire world whereas the original Zephaniah oracles are considered to have been only directed against Judah and Jerusalem (see 5.2.1; 5.9 above). Similarly, Yahweh's intention "to pour upon them my wrath" (Zeph 3.8c) has been amended to "pour upon you my wrath", i.e., upon Jerusalem and Judah, because scholars struggle to understand why the nations would be judged in an oracle against Jerusalem (see 7.2.2 above). Some scholars amend "peoples" (עַמִּים) to "my people" (עַמִּי) in Zeph 3.9, arguing that at some stage the original oracle concerning Judah was universalised (see 7.2.2 above). Hadjiev does not amend this word but sees the sudden appearance of worldwide conversion following the judgment in 3.6-8 "to argue in favour of the view that 3.9-10 were subsequently added after 3.8 since nothing in the preceding material prepares the reader for their appearance and message"

³²⁰ A posthumous publication.

³²¹ E.g., Childs, 1979, p. 460; Irsigler, 2002, p. 33.

(Hadjiev, 2011, p. 575). Similarly Gärtner considers the way in which Zeph 3.9-10 portrays the salvation of the nations “transcends the horizon of the book of Zephaniah” (Gärtner, 2012, p. 273; 278), and thus must be a later addition. These observations show how the relationship between the people of God and the peoples of the world is the interpretive crux of the book of Zephaniah. The exegesis in this thesis has demonstrated how a reading attuned to intertextuality can overcome the difficulty presented by the relationship between Judah and the nations in the book of Zephaniah.

8.1 Intertextuality in Zephaniah

Intertextual allusion and echo create signification through the fragments of the intertext that are used in the creation of a new text. Yet not all intertextualities are equal. Plett places great emphasis on the distribution of intertextual reuse. Quotation or allusion create greater signification when they are deployed in

the most prominent positions of the quotation text: beginning, end, middle. The initial position is identical with the title, the motto or the first sentence, the final position can be a concluding aphorism...(T)hese structural positions (i.e. the initial and final), when furnished with quotations, are important for the understanding of the entire work... (Plett, 1991, pp. 10-11).

Plett’s hypothesis is borne out in the book of Zephaniah through the way allusion to the Genesis creation-flood account in Zeph 1.2-3 provides the interpretive key for the entire book.

8.1.1 Zephaniah 1: Reproach for the failure of God’s people

The allusion in Zeph 1.2-3 to the creation-flood account of Genesis 1-9 transumes into the text the idea of representation (see “Israel/Judah as God’s representative in the world”, p. 66). In the Primeval History, Genesis 1-11, God deals with humanity as a whole. It is humanity, **אדם**, who was made in God’s image as God’s representative in the created order (Gen 1.26-30). As a result of the sin of Adam and Eve the creation itself suffered (Gen 3.17-18) and as a result of the complete corruption of humanity all living things were destroyed (Gen 6.7, 11-13), except for Noah and those with him. A decisive change takes place in God’s dealing with humanity beginning at Genesis 12 and the calling of Abraham. From this time one family and eventually one people (Exod 19.5-6) will be God’s representatives from among all peoples of the world. The concept of representation is carried into the text of Zephaniah through the allusion to the creation-flood account. This reading offers a solution to the problem in Zephaniah of the relationship between the

oracles of universal judgment (1.2-3, 17-18; 3.8) and the specific judgment oracles against the people of God (1.4-16; 3.1-7). Just as the failure of God's representative in the Primeval History resulted in judgment for all, so in the time of Zephaniah the failure of God's representative, the people of God, will also result in judgment for all. Zephaniah radicalises the representative role of the people of God, pushing the implications of representation further than they hitherto had been expressed. In Deuteronomy, for example, the failure of God's people results in their judgment (e.g., Deut 28). Zephaniah now extends this judgment to the entire world, just as the failure of God's representative had global consequences in Genesis 1-11. This intertextuality at the beginning of Zephaniah establishes the logic that continues throughout the book and holds together the relationship of the people of God and the peoples of the world. The representative nature of the people of God and the effect this representative role has on the peoples of the world, and even the entire created order, continues as a theme throughout Zephaniah.

The theme of representation, which connects the opening oracle of universal judgment (1.2-3) with the specific judgment oracles against Judah in Zeph 1.4-16, is strengthened by the first oracle in this series (1.4-6). The phrase, "I will stretch out my hand" (4a), echoes texts about God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the definitive saving act in Israel's memory and self-identity, through which the people of God came into existence. Hence a significant intertextuality sets the scene for the ensuing extended judgment speech against God's people (1.4-16). The power with which God created Israel will now be turned against them. A similar effect is produced by the echoes and allusions to the Davidic dynasty in 1.7-9. God will undo the establishment of Judah's leadership because of their failure to lead the people of God in God's ways. Numerous other intertextual echoes are employed in the charges against Judah (1.9-13) which emphasise how the people of God have become everything God abhors and are now due for a judgment from which they cannot escape. Towards the end of this judgment speech against Judah, Zeph 1.14-16 again echoes texts that are foundational to Israel's self-identity. Allusions to God's awesome presence at the making of the Sinai Covenant³²² have a similar effect to the "outstretched hand" of Zeph 1.4. The power which created the people of God will now be turned against them in destruction. Similarly, echoes of the conquest of Canaan³²³ strengthen this theme of the undoing of God's work that brought about blessing for Israel. Underlying all of these intertexts, and Zephaniah 1 itself, is the understanding that the

³²² Deut 4.11; 5.22; Exod 19.9, 16.

³²³ Josh 6.5,20; Deut 3.5; 9.1.

great works God undertook for Israel were in order to create a people who represent God to the world as a “kingdom of priests” (Exod 19.6). Zephaniah 1 presents the complete failure of the people of God to fulfil their calling. The first chapter of Zephaniah finishes as it began, with global judgment (1.17-18), following the logic already established in the book. The failure of the people of God means judgment for the entire world.

8.1.2 Zephaniah 2: Repentance and hope for escape from judgment

Chapter 2 of Zephaniah turns from God’s reproach against the people of God for their failure, to a call to repentance (2.1-3). It is hardly a bold promise of full assurance, but rather holds out the possibility of deliverance for those who are oriented towards God and God’s ways. These verses echo texts which present the importance of seeking God³²⁴ and of assuming the ideal attitudes and lifestyles of those who are faithful to God, in order to escape the judgment.³²⁵

The remainder of Zephaniah 2, vv.4-15, are the oracles against the nations which form an extended intertextuality with the Table of Nations (Gen 10.1-32) and its preceding story of Noah’s drunkenness which led to the blessing of Shem and cursing of Canaan (Gen 9.20-29). Those who responded to the call to repentance in Zeph 2.1-3 shall enjoy a time when things will be “made right” according to the “proper” order of Gen 9.20-29; 10.1-32. The special relationship between Yahweh and the descendants of Shem will be restored, the descendants of Japheth will share in the blessings of Shem, but the descendants of Ham, cursed, will be under the power of Shem’s descendants, who will rule over their ancient land in peace. This call to repentance is of central importance to the book of Zephaniah. The judgment oracles of chapter 1, although presented in stark and absolute terms, were intended to move God’s people to repentance. Chapter 2 both calls the people to repentance (vv.1-3) and also offers an incentive to repent by casting a vision of a restored future for the remnant who repent and survive the judgment (vv.4-15).

8.1.3 Zephaniah 3: Restoration of the people and the peoples

In Zephaniah 3 the problems presented in the book are finally resolved, albeit in a vision of a future time. The chapter begins with an oracle against Jerusalem which echoes texts that show how short Judah has fallen of its calling.³²⁶ The city of God (Ps 46.4) is “the

³²⁴ Amos 5.14-15; 9.3.

³²⁵ Pss 10.17; 69.33; 76.10; 147.6; Prov 15.33; 18.12; 22.4; Psalm 45.

³²⁶ Exod 22.20; Lev 19.33; 25.14; Deut 23.17; Mic 3.9-12; Psalm 46; Psalmic genre.

rebellious, the defiled, the oppressing city” (Zeph 3.1). The people of God is everything it should not be. This continues the theme from Zephaniah 1 and in like manner moves from the people of God to the peoples of the world in the ensuing oracle, Zeph 3.6-8. In 3.6-7 the language describing what God has done to the nations in order to bring God’s people to repentance echoes texts about God’s dealings with Israel.³²⁷ In this way the relationship between the fate of the nations and the fate of God’s people continues to be teased out. The conclusion of v.7, that in spite of God’s warnings the people of God “were eager to corrupt all their deeds”, echoes the flood story, especially Gen 6.12-13, in which the verb שָׁחַת (to corrupt) plays a prominent role. As in Zeph 1.2-3, this intertextual connection not only emphasises the depth of Judah’s corruption but also hints towards the universalising effect of Judah’s sin. It will affect the entire earth and all peoples. The next verse, Zeph 3.8, makes this explicit, announcing judgment upon the nations and Judah. The corruption and sin of God’s people means judgment for all the peoples, indeed, “the whole earth shall be consumed” (3.8d). Yet the language which expresses this global judgment echoes salvific texts from the OT: “Wait” for Yahweh,³²⁸ “gathering” and “assembling.”³²⁹ These echoes create ambiguity in this judgment oracle, a hint of salvation in the midst of such seemingly unmitigated doom.

A dramatic change takes place in Zeph 3.9 with the salvation of the nations, and interpreters have struggled to understand why the nations should “suddenly” appear here. Yet, according to the theme running throughout Zephaniah, this vision of the nations returning to God may be surprising but it is not illogical. As the failure of God’s people brings judgment upon all peoples, Zephaniah now declares that their restoration will likewise bring restoration of relationship with God to all peoples. Zephaniah 3.9-10 alludes to the Tower of Babel story as it foresees the scattered peoples returning to God, thus resolving the problem of alienation from God with which the Primeval History ended. The phrase לְקַרְא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה (to call on the name of Yahweh) evokes Gen 4.1-26. Once again the reader is led back into the Primeval History, not for the announcement of universal destruction as in Zephaniah 1, but for the promise of redemption from the deleterious effects of the sin presented in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. The extent of the restoration is strengthened by allusion to Isaiah 18 which shows powerful peoples from the farthest corners of the earth acknowledging the sovereignty of Yahweh. There

³²⁷ Deut 12.29; 19.1; Isa 10.7; 5.9; 6.11.

³²⁸ Ps 33.20; Isa 8.17; Isa 30.18.

³²⁹ Mic 2.12; 4.16; Isa 11.12.

is also allusion to Isa 13.3, through which a major theme of Isaiah 13-23, universal renewal after Yahweh's judgment, is transumed into the text of Zephaniah. The text visualises a future when there will be no more "proudly exultant ones" (Isa 13.3) among the people of God, only "a people humble and lowly" (Zeph 3.12). The call to repentance in Zeph 2.1-3 will be fulfilled through God's intervention.

Zephaniah 3.14-20 focuses, not on the nations, but on a restored and purified people of God who will stand apart from and above the nations. These verses use a hyperbolic excess of phrases from the praise genre of the Psalms to express the wonder of this future time which God will bring about (Zeph 3.14). Zephaniah 3.17 answers the complaint of Jer 14.9 to show that God no longer rejects God's people. Allusion is made to Mic 4.6-7 but Zephaniah promises a greater future salvation than Micah's original vision, similar to Second Isaiah's exalted visions of Zion's future.³³⁰ Finally, in line with Plett's contention that intertextualities at the beginning and end of a text bear a special interpretive role for the entire work, Zephaniah uses the words "praise and renown in all the earth" (3.19). These words evoke Deut 26.19, and by extension Deut 7.6 and Exod 19.5-6, key texts in Israel's identity as the people of God. Jeremiah 13.11, which shows how Israel had failed in their calling to be God's special people, is also present in the allusion. Zephaniah sees a future when their failure is overcome and the people of God will finally be all God intended them to be. The reversed order of the key words "renown" and "praise" in the final verse, Zeph 3.20, is the same order as Pss 48.11[10]; 66.1b-2; 102.22 [21], where they are attributes of God. At that time God will bestow these attributes upon the restored people of God. This emphasises their identity as God's representatives who show God and God's character to the whole world. This brings a positive conclusion to the theme and logic which underlies the entire book of Zephaniah, a theme and logic wrought and emphasised by the opening and closing intertextualities.

8.1.4 Patterns of intertextual reuse in Zephaniah

The theory of intertextuality shows how allusion gives the intertext a signifying presence within the text. This signification is controlled by the text as it uses the intertext in any number of different ways in the service of its message. This is true of the book of Zephaniah which, as we have seen, takes up a number different texts in a variety of ways.

³³⁰ E.g., Isa 52.1-12; 54.1-3; 60.1-3.

From the foregoing exegetical analysis six main patterns of intertextual reuse can be discerned in Zephaniah.

1. The most striking form of intertextual reuse is allusion to texts which recount foundational events in Israel/Judah's history and identity, texts which are reversed, or perhaps better, undone by Zephaniah. This pattern of reuse is particularly prominent in the judgement speech of Zephaniah 1, which has allusions to the creation and flood account, the exodus deliverance, the anointing of David, the Sinai/Horeb theophany and covenant, and the conquest of Canaan. In the context of Zephaniah 1 these texts are implicitly reversed in two ways: God's power which was exerted on Israel's behalf in these texts will now be turned against it, and that which was originally achieved through this power (creation, deliverance, covenant, peoplehood, land) will be undone. These foundational texts, all connected to Israel/Judah's identity, develop the theme that Zephaniah 1 introduces, that Israel/Judah is God's people, bearing a representative role for God in the world. The most explicit reversal in Zephaniah 1, that of creation itself (Zeph 1.2-3), introduces this theme for the entire book: because of the failure of God's representative all of creation must suffer judgment. Apart from the judgment speech of Zephaniah 1 there is also an explicit reversal of Jer 14.9 in the salvation oracle of Zeph 3.17, which is used to show that God's judgment, declared in Jer 14.1-15.9, is over.
2. Related to this reversal of texts which are foundational for Judah's identity, Zephaniah also alludes to texts that describe covenant disobedience.³³¹ Allusion to these texts highlights the failure of Judah to live up to their covenant responsibilities, further developing the theme of Judah not fulfilling their calling as the people of God.
3. Another pattern of intertextual reuse in Zephaniah is allusion to previous texts of judgment against both Israel and Judah.³³² Through these allusions and echoes Zephaniah creates a number of specific intertextual patterns within the respective texts but the basic effect is to create an analogy between Zephaniah's Judah and

³³¹ Zeph 1.11c to *karet* texts; Zeph 1.13 to Deut 28.30; Zeph 1.17b to Deut 28.29; Zeph 3.1 to Exod 22.20; Lev 19.33; 25.14, 17; Deut 23.17.

³³² Zeph 1.4 to Isa 9.7-20; 5.25-30; Zeph 1.7a to Amos 6.8-11; 8.1-3; Zeph 1.7b to Amos 5.18-20; Zeph 1.12 to Amos 9.1-4; Zeph 1.13 to Amos 5.1-17; Zeph 1.14, 18 to Isa 9.19; Zeph 3.1-5 to Mic 3.9-12.

Jerusalem and the earlier recipients of these judgment texts. Zephaniah's audience are as bad, or worse, than their forebears and, like them, are also ripe for judgment.

4. On the other hand, within Zephaniah there are also texts which are echoed or alluded to in order to contrast the present condition of Judah with an ideal picture of the people of God.³³³ Zephaniah uses these texts like a mirror to show what God's people should be like and at the same time, how much Judah falls short of this ideal.
5. Zephaniah also uses not only allusion to specific texts but also genre intertextuality, or incorporated genres. This is employed in Zeph 3.5 where the genre of judgment speech is subverted by the sudden change to the genre of hymn of praise, evoking the psalms and, by extension, the ideal image of the worshipper of God. Another instance of genre intertextuality is Zeph 3.14 which heaps up phrases of rejoicing and praise which are typically used in the book of psalms. This incorporated genre highlights the greatness of the deliverance that God is about to bring about for Judah. Genre intertextuality is also present in Zeph 3.6-8 where elements used in salvation oracles are employed in this final oracle of judgment in the book. This creates a measure of ambiguity within the judgment oracle and hints towards the last section of Zephaniah, the promise of salvation for God's people and all people.
6. A final pattern of intertextual reuse is found in Zephaniah's oracles which promise future salvation. These oracles allude to texts which present God's intention for what God's people should be. Zephaniah alludes to these texts to show that God will do for Judah what they have failed to do; God will form them into the people they should be.³³⁴ This pattern of allusion promises resolution to the problem that Zephaniah has presented throughout the book, the failure of God's people. The resolution, however, reaches far beyond Judah alone as it promises salvation to all the peoples, mirroring Zephaniah's threats of judgment for all peoples because Judah's failures.

³³³ Zeph 2.3 to Amos 5.14-15; Prov 15.33; 18.12; 22.4; Psalm 45; Zeph 3.5 to Psalm 46.

³³⁴ Zeph 2.4-15 to Gen 9.18-10.32; Zeph 3.9-10 to Gen 4.1-26; 11.1-9; Isaiah 18; Zeph 3.11-13 to Isa 13.3; Zeph 3.19 to Deut 26.16-19; Zeph 3.20 to Pss 48.11; 66.1b-2; 102.22-23; 145.21.

8.2 The gains of an intertextual reading

The thesis has asked the question, “How does an intertextual reading affect the interpretation of the book of Zephaniah?” In answering that question, considerable interpretive gains have been made. Through an intertextual approach the exegesis has read Zephaniah as a cohesive and coherent text. G. King set out to demonstrate this with his presentation of three main themes in Zephaniah: the Day of the Lord, the remnant, and the conversion of the nations (King, 1996, pp. 46-47). King did not show, however, how the judgment of the nations relates to the judgment of Judah (pp. 65-78), nor how the conversion of the nations relates to the restoration of the people of God (pp. 152-165). Thus while he shows the presence of the themes he does not demonstrate their coherence within Zephaniah. Through an intertextual reading this thesis has presented the representative nature of the people of God as the interpretive key that holds the message of Zephaniah together and also reveals the main theme of the book. While it is true that the book brims with imminent and cataclysmic divine judgment, Zephaniah cannot be described as, for example, “a structured treatise on the theme of ‘the day of the Lord’” (Motyer, 1998, p. 901). Rather, the key theme of Zephaniah is an impassioned demand for those called by God to fulfil the ethical and moral responsibilities of their call and privilege. This theme underlies the book of Zephaniah and is strengthened by the numerous intertextualities deployed in the text. The importance of reading Zephaniah intertextually is demonstrated by the way a new understanding of the book has emerged. Rather than a “prophetic compendium”, which implies a loose if not slipshod collection of genres, the book of Zephaniah, as it brings together the relationship between the people of God and the peoples of the world, marshals key themes from throughout the OT.

8.3 Reflection upon theory and methodology

Intertextuality describes how all texts emerge from other texts, or “intertexts.” This thesis has focused on the intertexts that were read and rewritten in the creation of the text of Zephaniah, one of a number of possible intertextual angles that could be pursued (see 2.2.2 above). Analysis of allusion and echo is an important part of exegesis because they are ways that meaning is created in a text. However, most OT intertexts are no longer available to us. Market place gossip, proverbial sayings, royal court whisperings, jokes about political figures, local historical events, and so on all constitute intertexts which the contemporary hearer/reader would implicitly have understood. We are far removed from the world of the OT texts, or rather the worlds of a particular text as it bounced through

multiple historical contexts, and for the most part the only intertexts available to us are within the OT. Therefore the intertextual analysis of echo and allusion undertaken in this thesis is limited to the written intertexts that have been preserved within the OT.

OT intertextual analyses are mainly undertaken on later biblical books in which allusions and echoes to earlier texts can be discerned (see 3.2 above). I. Kalimi's work on one of the last OT texts to be written, Chronicles, shows how the later the book, the more straightforward such analysis becomes: "(T)he Chronicler worked from the full range of 'biblical' sources – to mention some of them: the complete Torah, early historical writings, early and late prophetic sources, Psalms, and even Ezra-Nehemiah" (Kalimi, 2005, p. 412). Two common problems are encountered in OT intertextual analysis. First, the dating of OT texts is problematic and highly contentious. Ultimately a relative chronology is more important for this kind of exegesis than is the absolute dating of the texts. It is more important to establish that a particular text is alluding to another than it is to establish the precise dates in which they were written. The various criteria laid out in the methodology section can offer substantial assistance in making these decisions (see 3.3 above).

The second problem is more difficult. Intertextuality largely operates at the implicit or tacit level. We "get" the effect of the intertextuality because of our common participation in the textual universe of speaker/writer and hearer/reader. Our distance in time from the production of the OT texts, and the subsequent paucity of intertexts, means we have to recover the allusion or echo rather than understand it at a tacit level. Thus, while we are able to perceive the more obvious allusions and echoes, we will also inevitably miss a number of intertextual signifiers because the (inter-) texts to which they belong are now lost to us. On the other hand, we cannot always be sure if a proposed allusion or echo was actually intended as such in the production of the text. An example is in Zeph 2.3 where the words צִדִּיק (righteousness) and עֲנוּה (humility) may echo Ps 45.5. Ultimately we have no way of knowing whether the reader/writer would have implicitly made this connection. Another issue also emerges. Even if we can convincingly demonstrate an allusion to another text we cannot always be sure if we understand the effect in the same way as the original recipients of the text. These difficulties, however, are not grounds for rejecting intertextuality as part of OT exegesis. Rather, they highlight the importance of what Hollander describes as "recovering" the intertextualities in order to understand the text more fully (Hollander, 1981, p. 115).

Another limitation to intertextual analysis of OT texts is the limited corpus of ancient Israelite Hebrew, which is effectively the Hebrew Bible, along with some graffiti and some letters, inscriptions and fragments of other texts.³³⁵ The “outstretched hand” (Zeph 1.4) presents a strong case for intertextual signification because of the consistent way Yahweh’s outstretched hand or arm is associated with the exodus event throughout the OT. On the other hand, the argument that “establishing” (כִּוֵּן Hiphil) a sacrifice (Zeph 1.7) echoes the “establishing” (כִּוֵּן Hiphil) of the Davidic dynasty (2 Sam 7) is less assured. While the joining of the noun “sacrifice” (זֶבַח) with the verb “establish, prepare” (כִּוֵּן-Hiphil) occurs only in Zeph 1.7 within the OT, it may have been a common enough usage in seventh-century Judah. This shows how some proposed allusions and echoes in the exegesis can be considered as more clearly established than others.

The danger of over-interpretation must be acknowledged. Two factors, however, help to safeguard against this danger in an intertextually sensitive exegesis. First, the text itself signals allusional intertextualities so there is not an open season on regarding any text as an intertext. Such an approach would be exploring different aspects of a text’s intertextuality than this thesis explores. Second, according to the theory of intertextuality, the text controls proceedings and this prevents uncontrolled claims for signification. A text draws upon intertexts in order to create its own message so the intertextual significations suggested by the exegete must be seen to (literally) make sense within the discourse of the text.

8.4 Conclusion

This thesis has demonstrated how understanding and identifying intertextuality contributes significantly to interpreting Zephaniah. While identifying and interpreting OT intertextualities presents challenges, it is nevertheless important for OT exegesis because all texts are intertextual constructs.

An intertextual reading has given a greater understanding of Zephaniah. Much more than a “compendium”, Zephaniah is a carefully crafted text which moves from problem to solution, interacting with numerous intertexts to achieve its rhetorical purpose. The understanding gained contributes to appreciating Zephaniah theologically, pastorally, and in terms of the mission of the people of God. Theologically, through the intertextualities, themes from the wider OT are brought into dialogue within Zephaniah. Apart from the

³³⁵ See, e.g., Davies, 1991, 2004; Lindenberger, 2003; Smelik, 1991.

theme of representation, others include God's freedom to act; the inescapability of God's judgment; Judah's responsibility to live faithfully to God; the moral and ethical dimensions of this obedience; the ideal attitudes and lifestyle of God's people; the purpose of the Sinai covenant to create a people who live in obedience to God and thus represent God to the nations. These intertextual significations add depth to Zephaniah and make it a more interesting book than has often been suggested. In canonical context, Zephaniah's radicalisation of the concept of representation can be read back against the Sinai texts of Exodus 19 and Deut 26.16-19 in consideration of the purpose of the covenant. The reversal or annulment of God's promises never again to destroy the earth and to establish David's house forever invites reflection about what relationship with God entails. From the perspective of the Christian canon the exegesis in this thesis suggests potential Christological readings. For example, how is the theme of the global judgment, which culminates in 3.8, read in light of Jesus Christ? How does the ideal people of God relate to Jesus? The pilgrimage of the nations in 3.9-10 becomes theologically double-voiced in the light of the NT where the people of God now includes people from these nations.

Pastorally this reading of Zephaniah challenges us about the nature of the people of God. The judgment speeches are not simply because of sins *per se*, but more specifically because of the failure of God's people to obey their calling. Those who identify themselves as God's people have great responsibility to represent God through their orientation to God's ways. Zephaniah warns that forsaking this responsibility risks forfeiting the identity of God's people. On the other hand, Zephaniah never lets go of God's faithfulness and work to form the people of God into what they were always intended to be. By extension, Zephaniah invites reflection on the nature and role of the people of God in the *missio Dei*. According to Zephaniah the redemption of the peoples of the world is tied up with the redemption of the people of God. The way in which the people of God conduct themselves, in relation to God, to each other and to the peoples of the world, has global implications.

These themes emerge from just three short chapters of Zephaniah, a total of 767 Hebrew words, but these words by themselves could not express so much. Depth and signification is produced by the intertextualities, through which the book of Zephaniah makes sense. The understanding gained demonstrates the importance of considering intertextual allusion and echo in all biblical exegesis. Commentaries regularly draw attention to how a word or combination of words occurs only in one or several other texts, but often

without any further comment.³³⁶ Yet because intertextuality creates meaning it is important to explore whether these similarities in language may be intertextual markers which can lead to a fuller understanding of the text. All texts are intertextual constructs and therefore the recovery of intertextual allusion and echo is an important aspect of interpretation. Exploring the intertextuality of biblical texts proceeds on a case by case, line by line basis. It rewards the exegete with unexpected returns in recovering signification and the making of sense in OT texts, including the text of Zephaniah. Far from being an epigone, far from constituting a prophetic compendium, Zephaniah presents a theology that boldly pushes the implications of what it means to be the people of God. Zephaniah is a genuine prophetic book and makes a distinctive theological contribution.

³³⁶ E.g., see above p. 91, Perlitt, 2004, p. 107; p. 112, Edler, 1984, p. 141; p. 189, Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 223-224; p. 230, Robertson, 1990, p. 345; Széles, 1987, pp. 114-115.

References

- Ahn, J. (2009). Zephaniah, a disciple of Isaiah? In J. J. Ahn & S. L. Cook (Eds.), *Thus says the Lord: Essays on the former and latter prophets in honor of Robert R. Wilson* (pp. 292-307). New York: T & T Clark.
- Aichele, G., & Phillips, G. (1995). Introduction: Exegesis, eisegesis, intergenesis. *Semeia*, 69-70, 7-18.
- Albertz, R. (1994). *A history of Israelite religion in the Old Testament. Volume 1: From the beginnings to the end of the monarchy* (J. Bowden, Trans.). London: SCM.
- Albertz, R. (2003). *Israel in exile: The history and literature of the sixth century B.C.E.* (D. Green, Trans.). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Albright, W. F. (1957). *From the stone age to Christianity*. New York: Doubleday.
- Alexander, P. H., Kutsko, J. F., Ernest, J. D., Decker-Lucke, S. A., & Petersen, D. L. (Eds.). (1999). *The SBL handbook of style*. Peabody: Hendrickson.
- Alkier, S. (2009). Intertextuality and the semiotics of biblical texts. In R. B. Hays, et al (Ed.), *Reading the Bible intertextually* (pp. 3-21). Waco: Baylor University Press.
- Allen, L. C. (1976). *The books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids.
- Allen, L. C. (1998). *Ezekiel 20-48*. Dallas: Word.
- Allen, L. C. (2002). *Psalms 101-150* (revised ed.). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.
- Alter, R. (1981). *The art of biblical narrative*. New York: Basic Books.
- Andersen, F. I., & Freedman, D. N. (2000). *Micah*. New York: Doubleday.
- Anderson, A. A. (1972). *The book of Psalms* (Vol. 1). London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott.
- Anderson, A. A. (2002). *2 Samuel*. Dallas: Word.
- Anderson, F. I., & Freedman, D. N. (1989). *Amos*. New York: Doubleday.
- Aristotle. (1991). *The art of rhetoric* (H. C. Lawson-Tancred, Trans.). London: Penguin Books.
- Aschkenasy, N. (2007). Reading Ruth through a Bakhtinian lens: The carnivalesque in a biblical tale. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 126(3), 437-453.
- Auld, A. G. (1995). *Amos*. London; New York: T&T Clark.
- Bailey, D. W. (1999). Zephaniah. In K. L. Barker & D. W. Bailey (Eds.), *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah* (pp. 379-500). Nashville: Broadman & Holman.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). Discourse in the novel (C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). In M. Holquist (Ed.), *The dialogic imagination* (pp. 259-422). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M. (1986). The problem of speech genres (V. McGee, Trans.). In C. Emerson & M. Holquist (Eds.), *Speech genres and other late essays* (pp. 60-102). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Ball, I. J. (1988). *A rhetorical study of Zephaniah*. Berkeley: BIBAL.
- Barmash, P., & Sommer, B. D. (2002). Review of *A prophet reads scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. *Association of Jewish Studies Review*, 26(2), 350-352.
- Barthes, R. (1981). Theory of the text. In R. Young (Ed.), *Untying the text: A post-structuralist reader* (pp. 31-47). Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Barton, J. (1995). *Isaiah 1-39*. London; New York: T&T Clark.
- Beker, J. C. (1993). Echoes and intertextuality: On the role of scripture in Paul's theology. In C. A. Evans & J. A. Sanders (Eds.), *Paul and the scriptures of Israel* (pp. 64-69). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

- Bell, A. (2007). Style in dialogue: Bakhtin and sociolinguistic theory. In R. Bayley & C. Lucas (Eds.), *Sociolinguistic variation: Theories, methods and applications* (pp. 90-109). New York/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bell, A. (2011). Re-constructing Babel: Discourse analysis, hermeneutics and the interpretive arc. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 519-568.
- Ben-Porat, Z. (1976). The poetics of literary allusion. *Poetics and Theory of Literature*, 1, 105-128.
- Ben Zvi, E. (1991). *A historical-critical study of the book of Zephaniah*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Ben Zvi, E. (1999). A Deuteronomistic redaction in/among 'The Twelve'? A contribution from the standpoint of the books of Micah, Zephaniah, and Obadiah. In L. S. Schearing & S. L. McKenzie (Eds.), *Those elusive Deuteronomists: The phenomenon of pan-Deuteronomism* (pp. 232-261). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Bergey, R. (2003). The Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32.1-43) and Isaianic prophecies: A case of early intertextuality? *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 28(1), 33-54.
- Berlin, A. (1985). *The dynamics of biblical parallelism*. Bloomington: Indiana University.
- Berlin, A. (1994). *Zephaniah: A new translation with introduction and commentary*. New York: Doubleday.
- Bič, M. (1968). *Trois prophètes dans un temps de ténèbres, Sophonie, Nahum, Habacuc*. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.
- Blenkinsopp, J. (1976). The structure of P. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 38, 275-292.
- Blenkinsopp, J. (1996). *A history of prophecy in Israel* (revised and enlarged). Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Boer, R. (1995). Slippage and ideological structures in Schwarzenegger's Terminator. *Semeia*, 69-70, 165-193.
- Boer, R. (Ed.). (2007). *Bakhtin and genre theory in biblical studies*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Briggs, C. A., & Briggs, E. G. (1906). *The book of Psalms* (Vol. 1). Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
- Brown, F., Driver, S. R., & Briggs, C. (1907). *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Brueggemann, W. (1982). *Genesis*. Atlanta: John Knox.
- Brueggemann, W. (1997). *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, dispute, advocacy*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Campbell, A. F. (2003). *1 Samuel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Campbell, A. F. (2005). *2 Samuel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Carroll, R. P. (1997). *Jeremiah*. London; New York: T&T Clark.
- Childs, B. S. (1970). A traditio-historical study of the Reed Sea tradition. *Vetus Testamentum*, 20(4), 406-418.
- Childs, B. S. (1974). *Exodus*. London: SCM.
- Childs, B. S. (1979). *Introduction to the Old Testament as scripture*. Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Cho, P. K.-K., & Fu, J. (2013). Death and feasting in the Isaiah Apocalypse (Isaiah 25.6-8). In J. T. Hibbard & H. C. P. Kim (Eds.), *Formation and intertextuality in Isaiah 24-27* (pp. 117-142). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Christensen, D. L. (1984). Zephaniah 2:4-15: A theological basis for Josiah's program of political expansion. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 46(4), 669-682.
- Christensen, D. L. (2002). *Deuteronomy 21.10-34.12*. Dallas: Word.

- Claassens, L. (2005). Laughter and tears: Carnivalistic overtones in the stories of Sarah and Hagar. *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, 32(3), 295-308.
- Claassens, L. (2003). Biblical theology as dialogue: Continuing the conversation on Mikhail Bakhtin and biblical theology. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 122(1), 127-144.
- Clark, D. A. R. (2012). Reversing Genesis: A Theological reading of creation undone in Zephaniah. *Expository Times*, 123(4), 166-170.
- Clark, W. (1968). Animal series in the primeval history. *Vetus Testamentum*, 18, 433-449.
- Clayton, J., & Rothstein, E. (1991a). Figures in the corpus: Theories of influence and intertextuality. In J. Clayton & E. Rothstein (Eds.), *Influence and intertextuality in literary history* (pp. 3-36). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Clayton, J., & Rothstein, E. (Eds.). (1991b). *Influence and intertextuality in literary history*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Clements, R. E. (1980). *Isaiah 1-39*. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott.
- Clements, R. E. (1997). *Deuteronomy*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Clifford, R. (1982). *Deuteronomy*. Delaware: Michael Glazier.
- Clines, D. J. A. (1979). The significance of the "Sons of God" episode (Genesis 6:1-4) in the context of the "Primeval History" (Genesis 1-11). *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 13, 33-46.
- Clines, D. J. A. (1997). *The theme of the Pentateuch* (2nd ed.). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Coats, G. (1999). *Exodus 1-18*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Coats, G. (1983). *Genesis with an introduction to narrative literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Cowley, A. E. (1910). *Gesenius' Hebrew grammar as edited and enlarged by the late E. Kautzsch* (2nd English ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Craigie, P. C. (1983). *Psalms 1-50*. Dallas: Word.
- Craigie, P. C. (1998). *Jeremiah 1-25*. Dallas: Word.
- Cross, F. M. (1973a). The ideologies of kingship in the era of the empire. In *Canaanite myth and Hebrew epic: Essays in the history of the religion of Israel* (pp. 219-273). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cross, F. M. (1973b). The Song of the Sea and Canaanite myth. In *Canaanite myth and Hebrew epic: Essays in the history of the religion of Israel* (pp. 112-144). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cross, F. M., Jr., & Freedman, D. N. (1955). The song of Miriam. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 14(4), 237-250.
- Culler, J. (2001a). In pursuit of signs. In *The pursuit of signs* (pp. 20-50). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Culler, J. (2001). Presupposition and intertextuality. In *The pursuit of signs* (pp. 110-131). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Culler, J. (2001b). *The pursuit of signs*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Curtis, A. H. W. (1998). *Joshua*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Curtis, B. G. (2000). The Zion-Daughter oracles: Evidence on the identity and ideology of the late redactors of the Book of the Twelve. In J. D. Nogalski, & Sweeney, M. (Ed.), *Reading and hearing the book of the Twelve* (pp. 166-184). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Davies, G. I. (1991). *Ancient Hebrew inscriptions: Corpus and concordance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, G. I. (2004). *Ancient Hebrew inscriptions, volume 2: Corpus and concordance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- de Roche, M. (1980). Zephaniah 1:2-3: The "sweeping" of creation. *Vetus Testamentum*, 30(1), 104-109.
- de Waard, J. (1977). The chiastic structure of Amos V 1-17. *Vetus Testamentum*, 27(2), 170-177.
- Deissler, A. (1964). *Sophonie*. Paris: Letouzey & Ane.
- Dentith, S. (1995). *Bakhtinian thought: An introductory reader*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Dietrich, W. (2012). Three minor prophets and the major empires: Synchronic and diachronic perspectives on Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. In R. Albertz, et al (Ed.), *Perspectives on the formation of the book of the Twelve* (pp. 147-156). Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter.
- Dillard, R. B., & Longman, T., III. (1995). *An introduction to the Old Testament*. Leicester: Apollos.
- Dinneen, F. P. (1995). *General linguistics*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Dozeman, T. (1989). Inner-biblical interpretation of Yahweh's gracious and compassionate character. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 108(2), 207-223.
- Durham, J. I. (1998). *Exodus*. Dallas: Word.
- Eaton, J. H. (1986). *Kingship and the Psalms* (2nd ed.). Sheffield: JSOT Press.
- Edenburg, C. (1998). How (not) to murder a king: Variations on a theme in 1 Sam 24; 26. *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*, 12(1), 64-85.
- Edler, R. (1984). *Das Kerygma des Propheten Zefanja*. Freiburg: Herder.
- Eissfeldt, O. (1965). *The Old Testament: An introduction* (P. R. Ackroyd, Trans.). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Elliger, K. (1964). *Das Buch der zwölf Kleinen Propheten. II. Die propheten Nahum, Habakuk, Zephania, Haggai, Sacharja, Maleachi*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Emerson, C., & Holquist, M. (Eds.). (1986). *Speech genres and other late essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Eslinger, L. (1992). Inner-biblical exegesis and inner-biblical allusion: The question of category. *Vetus Testamentum*, 42(1), 47-58.
- Evans, C. A. (1993). Listening for echoes of interpreted scripture. In C. A. Evans & J. A. Sanders (Eds.), *Paul and the scriptures of Israel* (pp. 47-51). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Fishbane, M. (1980). Revelation and tradition: Aspects of inner-biblical exegesis. *JBL*, 99(3), 343-361.
- Fishbane, M. (1985). *Biblical interpretation in ancient Israel*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Floyd, M. (2000). *Minor Prophets: Part 2*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Floyd, M. (2003). Deutero-Zechariah and types of intertextuality. In M. J. Boda & M. H. Floyd (Eds.), *Bringing out the treasure: Inner biblical allusion in Zechariah 9-14* (pp. 225-244). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Fohrer, G. (1968). *Introduction to the Old Testament* (D. Green, Trans.). London: SPCK.
- Forman, M. (2011). *The politics of inheritance in Romans*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Forrest, R. (1994). Paradise lost again: Violence and obedience in the flood narrative. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 62(3), 3-18.
- Fretheim, T. E. (1991). *Exodus*. Louisville: John Knox.
- Friedman, R. E. (1997). *Who wrote the Bible?* New York: HarperCollins.
- Gärtner, J. (2012). Jerusalem - City of God for Israel and for the nations in Zeph 3:8, 9-10, 11-13. In R. Albertz, et al. (Ed.), *Perspectives on the formation of the Book of the Twelve* (pp. 269-283). Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter.

- Gerstenberger, E. (1988). *Psalms part 1: With an introduction to cultic poetry*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Gerstenberger, E. (2001). *Psalms part 2, and Lamentations*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Geyer, J. B. (2009). Another look at the oracles about the nations in the Hebrew Bible. A response to A. C. Hagedorn. *Vetus Testamentum*, 59(1), 80-87.
- Gibson, J. C. L., & Driver, G. R. (2004). *Canaanite myths and legends: Translation* (2nd ed.). London; New York: T & T Clark.
- Gordon, R. P. (1998). *1 & 2 Samuel*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Gowan, D. E. (1998). *Theology of the prophetic books: The death and resurrection of Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Grabbe, L. L. (1997). *Leviticus*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Gray, G. B. (1912). *Isaiah 1-27*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
- Gray, J. (1970). *1 & 2 Kings*. London: SCM.
- Green, B. (2000). *Mikhail Bakhtin and biblical scholarship: An introduction*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Green, B. (2005). Mikhail Bakhtin and biblical studies. *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, 32(3), 241-248.
- Green, W. S. (1993). Doing the text's work for it: Richard Hays on Paul's use of scripture. In C. A. Evans & J. A. Sanders (Eds.), *Paul and the scriptures of Israel* (pp. 58-63). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Hadjiev, T. S. (2010). Zephaniah and the 'Book of the Twelve' hypothesis. In J. Day (Ed.), *Prophecy and the prophets in ancient Israel* (pp. 325-338). London: T&T Clark.
- Hadjiev, T. S. (2011). Survival, conversion and restoration: Reflections on the redaction history of the book of Zephaniah. *Vetus Testamentum*, 61(4), 570-581.
- Hadjiev, T. S. (2012). The translation problems of Zephaniah 3,18: A diachronic solution. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 124(3), 416-420.
- Hadjiev, T. S. (2014). The theological transformations of Zephaniah's proclamation of doom. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 126(4), 506-520.
- Hagedorn, A. C. (2011). When did Zephaniah become a supporter of Josiah's reform? *Journal of Theological Studies*, 62(2), 453-475.
- Hagelia, H., & Polaski, D. (2003). Review of Donald C. Polaski, *Authorizing an end: The Isaiah Apocalypse and intertextuality*. *Review of Biblical Literature*. doi: http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/2936_2975.pdf
- Hallo, W. W., & Younger, K. L. (Eds.). (2000). *The context of scripture*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Halpern, B. (1998). The new names of Isaiah 62.4: Jeremiah's reception in the restoration and the politics of "Third Isaiah". *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 117(4), 623-643.
- Hamilton, V. P. (1990). *The book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Hammershaimb, E. (1970). *The book of Amos* (J. Sturdy, Trans.). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Hanson, P. D., & Willey, P. T. (1999). Review of *Remember the former things: The recollection of previous texts in Second Isaiah*. *The Journal of Religion*, 79(3), 463-464.
- Harris, R. L. (Ed.). (1980). *Theological wordbook of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press.
- Hartley, J. E. (1998). *Leviticus*. Dallas: Word.
- Haupt, P. (1904). Moses' song of triumph. *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 20(3), 149-172.

- Hayes, J. H. (1963). Tradition of Zion's inviolability. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 82(4), 419-426.
- Hayes, J. H. (1968). The usage of oracles against foreign nations in ancient Israel. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 87(1), 81-92.
- Hays, C. B. (2008). Echoes of the ancient Near East? Intertextuality and the comparative study of the Old Testament. In J. R. Wagner, C. K. Rowe & A. K. Grieb (Eds.), *The word leaps the gap* (pp. 20-43). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Hays, R. B. (1989). *Echoes of scripture in the letters of Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hays, R. B. (1993b). On the rebound: A response to critiques of *Echoes of scripture in the letters of Paul*. In C. A. Evans & J. A. Sanders (Eds.), *Paul and the scriptures of Israel* (pp. 70-96). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Hendel, R. (2001). The Exodus in biblical memory. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 120(4), 601-622.
- Hendel, R. S. (1992). Genesis, book of. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.), *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (Vol. 2, pp. 933-941). New York: Doubleday.
- Hepner, G. (2001). Verbal resonance in the bible and intertextuality. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 96, 3-27.
- Hibbard, J. T. (2006). *Intertextuality in Isaiah 24-27: The reuse and evocation of earlier texts and traditions*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.
- Hibbard, J. T., & Kim, H. C. P. (Eds.). (2013). *Formation and intertextuality in Isaiah 24-27*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Hillers, D. R. (1984). *Micah*. Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Ho, A. (2009). *The targum of Zephaniah: Manuscripts and commentary*. Leiden: Brill.
- Holladay, W. L. (1986). *Jeremiah 1: A commentary on the book of the prophet Jeremiah, chapters 1-25*. Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Holladay, W. L. (1989). *Jeremiah 2: A commentary on the book of the prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 26-52*. Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Hollander, J. (1981). *The figure of echo: A mode of allusion in Milton and after*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Holquist, M. (1981). Introduction. In M. Holquist (Ed.), *The dialogic imagination* (pp. xv-xxxiv). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Holquist, M. (2002). *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Hossfeld, F.-L., & Zenger, E. (2005). *Psalms 2: A commentary on Psalms 51-100* (L. M. Maloney, Trans.). Minneapolis: Fortress.
- House, P. R. (1989). *Zephaniah: A prophetic drama*. Sheffield: Almond.
- Houston, W. J., & Sommer, B. D. (2001). Review of *A prophet reads scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. *Vetus Testamentum*, 51(3), 422.
- Humbert, P. (1962). 'Entendre la main' (Note de lexicographie hebraïque). *VT*, 12(4), 383-395.
- Hyatt, J. P. (1971). *Exodus*. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott.
- Irsigler, H. (2002). *Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament. Zefanja*. Freiburg im Breisgau; Basel; Wien: Herder.
- Jeremias, J. (1998). *The book of Amos* (D. W. Stott, Trans.). Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Johnstone, W. (1990). *Exodus*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Joosten, J. (1996). *People and land in the Holiness Code*. Leiden: Brill.
- Jouon, P., & Muraoka, T. (1993). *A grammar of biblical Hebrew*. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute.
- Kaiser, O. (1983). *Isaiah 1-12* (J. Bowden, Trans. 2nd ed.). London: SCM.

- Kalimi, I. (2005). *The reshaping of ancient Israelite history in Chronicles*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Kapelrud, A. S. (1975). *The message of the prophet Zephaniah: Morphology and ideas*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Keller, C. A. (1971). Nahoum, Habacuc, Sophonie. In C. A. Keller & R. Vuilleumier (Eds.), *Michée Nahoum, Habacuc, Sophonie*. Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé.
- Kelly, J. R. (2014). *Intertextuality and allusion in the study of the Hebrew Bible*. (PhD), The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kentucky.
- Keown, G. J., Scalise, P. J., & Smothers, T. G. (1995). *Jeremiah 26-52*. Dallas: Word.
- Kidner, D. (1973). *Psalms 1-72*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.
- Kim, H. C. P. (2007). Jonah read intertextually. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 126(3), 497-528.
- King, G. A. (1996). *The theological coherence of the book of Zephaniah*. (Ph.D.), Union Theological Seminary, Virginia.
- Klein, R. W. (2002). *1 Samuel*. Dallas: Word.
- Klein, R. W. (2006). *1 Chronicles: A commentary*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Klingbeil, G. A., & Willey, P. T. (2001). Review of *Remember the former things: The recollection of previous texts in Second Isaiah*. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 60(2), 159-160.
- Knight, D. (1975). *Rediscovering the traditions of Israel*. Missoula: Scholars Press.
- Knohl, I. (1987). The Priestly Torah versus the Holiness School: Sabbath and the festivals. *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 58, 65-117.
- Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., & Stamm, J. J. (1994-2000). *The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament. Volumes 1-4 combined in one electronic edition* M. Richardson (Ed.)
- Korpel, M. C. (2001). Asherah outside Israel. In B. Becking, M. Dijkstra, M. C. Korpel & K. J. Vriezen (Eds.), *Only one God?: Monotheism in ancient Israel and the veneration of the goddess Asherah*. London: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Krasovec, J. (1983). Merism - polar expression in biblical Hebrew. *Biblica*, 64(2), 231-239.
- Kraus, H.-J. (1988). *Psalms 1-59* (H. C. Oswald, Trans.). Minneapolis: Augsburg.
- Kraus, H.-J. (1989). *Psalms 60-150*. Minneapolis: Augsburg.
- Kristeva, J. (1980a). *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art* (T. Gora, A. Jardine & L. Roudiez, Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kristeva, J. (1980b). Word, dialogue, and novel *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (pp. 64-91). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kristeva, J. (2002). Nous deux or a (hi)story of intertextuality. *Romanic Review*, 93(1/2), 7-13.
- Kugel, J. L. (1987). The Bible's earliest interpreters. *Prooftexts*, 7(3), 269-305.
- Leonard, J.M. (2008). Identifying inner-biblical allusions: Psalm 78 as a test case. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 127(2), 241-265.
- Leonard, J. M., & Hibbard, J. T. (2008). Review of *Intertextuality in Isaiah 24-27: The reuse and evocation of earlier texts and traditions*. *Review of Biblical Literature*. doi: http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/5795_6118.pdf
- Levin, C. (2007). The Yahwist: The earliest editor in the Pentateuch. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 126(2), 209-230.
- Levin, C. (2011). Zephaniah: How this book became a prophecy. In L. L. Grabbe & M. Nissinen (Eds.), *Constructs of prophecy in the Former and Latter Prophets and other texts* (pp. 117-139). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Levine, B. A. (1989). *Leviticus*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.

- Lieber, A. J. (1997). *The motif of joy in Hebrew Bible prophecies: A rhetorical analysis of Zephaniah 3.14-20 and Jeremiah 31.1-13 (Hebrew versions)*. (PhD), Indiana University, Indiana.
- Linafelt, T., & Sommer, B. D. (2000). Review of *A prophet reads scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 119(1), 122-123.
- Lindenberger, J. M. (2003). *Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew letters* (2nd ed.). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Lundbom, J. R. (1992). Jeremiah, book of. In F. D.N. (Ed.), *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (Vol. 3, pp. 706-721). New York: Doubleday.
- Lundbom, J. R. (2013). *Deuteronomy: A commentary*. Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans.
- MacDonald, N. (2010). Issues in the dating of Deuteronomy: A response to Juha Pakkala. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 122(3), 431-435.
- Martens, K. (2001). "With a strong hand and an outstretched arm": The meaning of the expression *byd hzqh wbyrw' ntwyh*. *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*, 15, 123-141.
- Mason, R. (1991). *Micah, Nahum, Obadiah*. London: T&T Clark.
- Mason, R. (1994). *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel*. Sheffield: JSOT Press.
- Mauldin, F. (1983). Singularity and a pattern of sin, punishment, and forgiveness. *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, 10(1), 41-50.
- Mayes, A. D. H. (1981). *Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Mays, J. L. (1969). *Amos*. Philadelphia: Westminster.
- Mays, J. L. (1976). *Micah*. London: SCM.
- Mays, J. L. (1994). *Psalms*. Louisville: John Knox.
- McCarter, P. K. (2000). Kuntillet 'Ajrud (2.47). In W. W. Hallo & K. L. Younger (Eds.), *The Context of Scripture* (pp. 171-173). Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Melvin, D. (2013). Making all things new again: Zephaniah's eschatological vision of a return to primeval time. In R. H. Beal & J. A. Scurlock (Eds.), *Creation and chaos: A reconsideration of Hermann Gunkel's Chaosthesis hypothesis* (pp. 269-281). Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Meshel, Z. (1992). Kuntillet 'ajrud. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (Vol. 4, pp. 103-109). New York: Doubleday.
- Milgrom, J. (1991). *Leviticus 1-16*. Garden City: Doubleday.
- Milgrom, J. (2000). *Leviticus 17-22*. New York: Doubleday.
- Mitchell, C. (2001). *The ideal ruler as intertext in 1-2 Chronicles and the Cyropaedia*. (PhD), Carleton University, Ontario.
- Mitchell, C. (2007). Power, eros, and biblical genres. In R. Boer (Ed.), *Bakhtin and genre theory in biblical studies* (pp. 31-42). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Moore, M., & Polaski, D. (2003). Review of *Authorizing an end: The Isaiah Apocalypse and intertextuality*. *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, 13(2), 294-296.
- Morson, G. S., & Emerson, C. (1990). *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a poetics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Motyer, J. A. (1998). Zephaniah. In T. E. McComiskey (Ed.), *An exegetical and expositional commentary: The minor prophets* (Vol. 3, pp. 897-962). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Muraoka, T. (2012). A case of diglossia in the book of Jonah? *Vetus Testamentum*, 62, 129-131.
- Murphy, R. E. (1998). *Proverbs*. Dallas: Word.
- Nelson, R. (2002). *Deuteronomy*. Louisville; London: Westminster John Knox.

- Newsom, C. (2002). The book of Job as polyphonic text. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 97, 87-108.
- Newsom, C. (2007). Re-considering Job. *Currents in Biblical Research*, 5(2), 155-182.
- Nicholson, E. (1967). *Deuteronomy and tradition*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Nicholson, E. (1998). *The Pentateuch in the twentieth century: The legacy of Julius Wellhausen*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Noble, P. R. (2002). Esau, Tamar, and Joseph: criteria for identifying inner-biblical allusions. *Vetus Testamentum*, 52(2), 219-252.
- Nogalski, J. D. (2000). Zephaniah 3: A redactional text for a developing corpus. In R. Kratz (Ed.), *Schriftauslegung in der Schrift* (pp. 207-218). Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- O'Brien, J. M. (2007). Nahum - Habakkuk - Zephaniah: reading the "Former Prophets" in the Persian period. *Interpretation*, 61(2), 168-183.
- O'Brien, J. M. (2004). *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Oded, B. (1986). The table of nations (Genesis 10) - A socio-cultural approach. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 98, 14-31.
- Oswalt, J. N. *The book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Pakkala, J. (2009). The date of the oldest edition of Deuteronomy. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 121(3), 388-401.
- Pakkala, J. (2011). The dating of Deuteronomy: a response to Nathan MacDonald. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 123(3), 431-436.
- Paul, S. M. (1991). *Amos*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Perlitt, L. (2004). *Die Propheten Nahum, Habakuk, Zephania*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Person, R. F., Jr. (2002). *The Deuteronomic school: History, social setting, and literature*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Petersen, D.L. (2000). A book of the Twelve? In J. D. Nogalski & M. Sweeney (Eds.), *Reading and hearing the book of the Twelve*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Peterson, D. L. (2003). Zechariah 9-14: Methodological reflections. In M. J. Boda & M. H. Floyd (Eds.), *Bringing out the treasure: Inner biblical allusion in Zechariah 9-14* (pp. 210-224). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Pinker, A. (2000). The book of Zephaniah: Allusions to the Tower of Babel. *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, 28(1), 3-11.
- Plett, H. F. (1991). Intertextualities. In H. F. Plett. (Ed.), *Intertextuality* (pp. 3-29). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Polaski, D. (1998). Reflections on a Mosaic covenant: The eternal covenant (Isaiah 24:5) and intertextuality. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 77, 55-73.
- Polaski, D. (2001). *Authorizing an end: The Isaiah Apocalypse and intertextuality*. Leiden: Brill.
- Porter, S. (2008). Allusions and echoes. In S. Porter & C. Stanley (Eds.), *As it is written* (pp. 29-40). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Poythress, V. S. (2014). Dispensing with merely human meaning: Gains and losses from focusing on the human author, illustrated by Zephaniah 1:2-3. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 57(3), 481-499.
- Pyeon, Y., & Sommer, B. (2001). A review of *A prophet reads scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. *Review of Biblical Literature*. doi: http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/125_722.pdf

- Rajan, T. (1991). Intertextuality and the subject of reading/writing. In J. Clayton & E. Rothstein (Eds.), *Influence and intertextuality in literary history* (pp. 61-74). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Renaud, B. (1987). *Michée, Sophonie, Nahum*. Paris: J. Gabalda.
- Rendtorff, R. (1990). *The problem of the process of transmission in the Pentateuch* (J. J. Scullion, Trans.). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Rice, G. (1979). The African roots of the prophet Zephaniah. *Journal of Religious Thought*, 36(1), 21-31.
- Ricoeur, P. (1976). *Interpretation theory: Discourse and the surplus of meaning*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press.
- Riffaterre, M. (1978). *Semiotics of poetry*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Roberts, J. J. M. (1973). The Davidic origin of the Zion tradition. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 92(3), 329-344.
- Roberts, J. J. M. (1991). *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah: A commentary*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Robertson, O.P. (1990). *The books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Rozelaar, M. (1952). The Song of the Sea (Exodus XV, 1b-18). *Vetus Testamentum*, 2(3), 221-228.
- Rudolph, W. (1975). *Micha-Nahum-Habakuk-Zephania*. Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag.
- Ryou, D. H. (1995). *Zephaniah's oracles against the nations: A synchronic and diachronic study of Zephaniah 2.1-3.8*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Sabottka, L. (1972). *Zephania: Versuch einer Neuübersetzung mit philologischem Kommentar*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press.
- Sarna, N. (1963). Psalm 89: A study in inner biblical exegesis. In A. Altmann (Ed.), *Biblical and other studies* (pp. 29-46). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Sarna, N. (1989). *Genesis*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.
- Schenker, A. (2013). Israelite or universal horizon: Zephaniah 3.8-10 in the Hebrew and Greek Bibles. *The Bible Translator*, 64(2), 151-158.
- Schniedewind, W. M., & Sommer, B. D. (2001). Review of *A prophet reads scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. *The Journal of Religion*, 81(1), 108-109.
- Seitz, C. R. (1993). *Isaiah 1-39*. Louisville: John Knox.
- Seow, C. L. (1987). *A grammar for biblical Hebrew*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Seybold, K. (1991). *Nahum, Habakuk, Zephania*. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag.
- Sherwin, B. (1984). Portrait of God as a young artist: The flood revisited. *Judaism*, 33(4), 469-478.
- Skemp, V. (2005). Avenues of intertextuality between Tobit and the New Testament. In J. A. Corley & V. Skemp (Eds.), *Intertextual studies in Ben Sira and Tobit: Essays in honor of Alexander A. Di Lella, O.F.M.* (pp. 43-70). Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America.
- Smelik, K. A. D. (1991). *Writings from ancient Israel* (G. I. Davies, Trans.). Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press.
- Smith, J. M. P. (1911). Zephaniah. In J. M. P. Smith, W. H. Ward & J. A. Bewer (Eds.), *A critical and exegetical commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel* (pp. 159-283). Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.
- Smith, R. L. (1984). *Micah-Malachi*. Dallas: Word.
- Sommer, B. (1996a). Exegesis, allusion and intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A response to Lyle Eslinger. *Vetus Testamentum*, 46(4), 479-489.
- Sommer, B. (1998). *A prophet reads scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Stead, M. R. (2009). *The intertextuality of Zechariah 1-8*. New York: T&T Clark.

- Steen, G. (2009). Metaphor: Stylistic approaches. In J. L. Mey (Ed.), *Concise encyclopedia of pragmatics* (Second ed., pp. 608-614). Oxford: Elsevier.
- Stoller, N. (Writer). (2012). *The Five Year Engagement*. USA: Universal Pictures.
- Strazicich, J. (2007). *Joel's use of scripture and the scripture's use of Joel*. Leiden: Brill.
- Striek, M. (1999). *Das vordeuteronomistische Zephanjabuch*. Frankfurt am Main: Lang.
- Stuart, D. (2002). *Hosea-Jonah*. Dallas: Word.
- Sweeney, M. A. (1996). *Isaiah 1-39: With an introduction to prophetic literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Sweeney, M. A. (2003). *Zephaniah*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Sweeney, M. A. (2007). Dating prophetic texts. *Hebrew Studies*, 48, 55-73.
- Sykes, S. (1997). Time and space in Haggai-Zechariah 1-8: A Bakhtinian analysis of a prophetic chronicle. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 76, 97-124.
- Széles, E. M. (1987). *Wrath and mercy: A commentary on the books of Habakkuk and Zephaniah* (G. A. F. Knight, Trans.). Grand Rapids; Edinburgh: Eerdmans; Handsel.
- Tate, M. E. (1998). *Psalms 51-100*. Dallas: Word.
- Terrien, S. (2003). *The Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Tiemeyer, L.-S., & Stead, M. R. (2010). Zechariah and intertextuality: Review of *The intertextuality of Zechariah 1-8*. *Expository Times*, 121(5), 251.
- Tigay, J. H. (1996). *Deuteronomy*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.
- Tull, P. (2000). Intertextuality and the Hebrew scriptures. *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*, 8, 59-90.
- Tull Willey, P. (1997). *Remember the former things: The recollection of previous texts in Second Isaiah*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.
- van Gemeren, W. A. (Ed.). (1997). *New international dictionary of Old Testament theology and exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- van Seters, J. (1986). The plagues of Egypt: Ancient tradition or literary invention? *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 98, 31-39.
- van Wolde, E. (1997). Intertextuality: Ruth in dialogue with Tamar. In A. Brenner & C. Fontaine (Eds.), *A feminist companion to reading the Bible: Approaches, methods and strategies* (pp. 426-451). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Vlaardingerbroek, J. (1999). *Zephaniah* (J. Vriend, Trans.). Leuven: Peeters.
- von Rad, G. (1968). *The Message of the Prophets* (D. M. G. Stalker, Trans.). London: SCM.
- von Rad, G. (1972). *Genesis* (J. Bowden, Trans.). London: SCM Press.
- Waltke, B. K. (2007). *A commentary on Micah*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Waltke, B. K., & O'Connor, M. (1990). *An introduction to biblical Hebrew syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Walton, J. H. (2006). *Ancient Near Eastern thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the conceptual world of the Hebrew Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Watson, D. (2010). Review of John Strazicich, *Joel's use of scripture and scripture's use of Joel*. *Review of Biblical Literature*. doi: http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/7194_8434.pdf
- Watts, J. D. W. (1957). The Song of the Sea: Ex. XV. *Vetus Testamentum*, 7(4), 371-380.
- Watts, J. D. W. (1985). *Isaiah 1-33*. Dallas: Word.
- Watts, J. D. W. (1998). *Isaiah 34-66*. Dallas: Word.
- Weiser, A. (1962). *The Psalms* (H. Hartwell, Trans.). London: SCM.
- Wenham, G. J. (1987). *Genesis 1-15* (Vol. 1). Dallas: Word.

- Westermann, C. (1984). *Genesis 1-11* (J. J. Scullion, Trans.). Minneapolis; London: Augsburg; SPCK.
- Whybray, R. N. (1987). *The making of the Pentateuch: A methodological study*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Wildberger, H. (1991). *Isaiah 1-12* (T. H. Trapp, Trans.). Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Wildberger, H. (1997). *Isaiah 13-27* (T. H. Trapp, Trans.). Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Wildberger, H. (2002). *Isaiah 28-39* (T. H. Trapp, Trans.). Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Wiley, H. L. (2004). *Gather to my feast: YHWH as sacrificer in the biblical prophets*. (PhD), Harvard University, Massachusetts.
- Williamson, H. G. M. (1998). *Ezra, Nehemiah*. Dallas: Word.
- Williamson, H. G. M. (2000). Isaiah 62.4 and the problem of inner-biblical allusions. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 119, 734-739.
- Williamson, H. G. M., & Tull Willey, P. (2000). Review of *Remember the former things: The recollection of previous texts in Second Isaiah*. *Vetus Testamentum*, 50(2), 283.
- Wolff, H. W. (1977). *Joel and Amos* (W. Janzen, S. D. McBride & C. A. Muenchow, Trans.). Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Wolff, H. W. (1990). *Micah* (G. Stansell, Trans.). Minneapolis: Augsburg.
- Zevit, Z. (1976). The priestly redaction and interpretation of the plague narrative in Exodus. *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 66(4), 193-211.
- Zevit, Z. (1982). Converging lines of evidence bearing on the date of P. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 94(4), 481-511.
- Zimmerli, W. (1979). *Ezekiel 1: A commentary on the book of the prophet Ezekiel, chapters 1-24* (R. E. Clements, Trans.). Philadelphia: Fortress.