

“In Many and Various Ways”

The title of this essay consists of the first two words which open the Letter to the Hebrews. Putting this into a larger context, vs. 1 runs in full as “In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets.” According to the **RSV**, verses one and two form a single sentence, the latter continuing as “but in these last days he has spoken to us by a son whom he appointed the heir of all things through whom also he created the world.”

The two adverbs *polumeros* and *polutropos* are rendered as “many and various ways” and easily can be passed by as more or less incidental. However, this article maintains otherwise and expands upon their significance. The root nouns *meros* and *tropos* (part, division, class, share and way, manner or fashion) are prefaced with the adjective *polus*, much or many. As for the use of *polus*, it’s taken as referring to fragmentary and partial revelations prior to Jesus Christ. True, of course, but in this essay these instances will be expanded upon as indicators of how God communicated with his people prior to Christ.

A number of references exists with regard to a special verb discussed below and can reveal quite a lot about God and how he relates to us. At the same time, looking at scripture for all traces of *meros* and *tropos* can be exhaustive. However, we can follow an important lead from Hebrews itself. The first verb to occur is *laleo* also as to address or to converse and used here with respect to God. As we’ll discover shortly, *laleo* turns out to be very important insofar as it sets the stage for all that follows, using the two adverbs as filters.

Note the context of *laleo: palai* or “of old,” referring to before the Incarnation which essentially means extending all the way back to the beginning, Genesis 1.1. Within this comprehensive time frame we have two groups, “fathers and prophets.” The latter obviously refers to those who are well known such as Isaiah and Jeremiah but also includes the so-called minor prophets. The former is a more general category in the sense of Dt 1.8: “A land which the Lord swore to your fathers.”

Ἄv or father, it seems, pertains to those primarily responsible for handing down the precepts and traditions of Judaism from one generation to the next. Fathers assumed a more essential role once Jacob’s sons went to Egypt and remained there some four hundred years followed by forty years of wandering in the Sinai wilderness.¹ Without

¹An interesting fact often overlooked, it seems, is the absolute silence with regard to these 400 years in Egypt, a country teeming with divinities of all shapes and sizes. When it comes to the

them Judaism would have fallen apart. More often than not such fathers have remained anonymous. Such anonymity is intentional, for it serves to emphasize that they are responsible for handing down and keeping not just families together but Israel as a nation. Without these fathers there'd be no tradition, they being its very embodiment.

As for a prophet (*navy*?; the verbal root also means to bubble up), he's someone who is in intimate contact with the Lord and thus his representative. The noun and verb *davar* are often associated with his mission, these terms of the same spelling meaning to speak in the sense of making the Lord present. *Davar* thus is the equivalent to the Greek *logos*, word-as-expression.

An important note with regard to the two categories of fathers and prophets: vs.1 literally reads "to fathers in (*en*) the prophets." In this instance *en* can be taken as "by" (the prophets). Yet if we take *en* in its basic sense (that is, as 'in'), the grouping of the former can be seen as situated within the more particular grouping of "prophets." After all, the prophets saw the fathers as primarily responsible for day-to-day maintenance of the people, so they went after them and rightly so.

Laleo is used a second time,² that is, in vs. 2 after reference to the fathers and prophets, namely, "by (literally, 'in') a son," Jesus Christ, who isn't mentioned by name until 2.6 as Jesus and 3.6 as Christ.

If *davar* is such an all-important word, perhaps we can divvy it up into the two categories of (*polu*)*meros* and (*polu*)*tropos*: *polus* with regard to the heritage or portion concerning God as he is speaking and *polus* with regard to the manner in which God is speaking. Because both are adverbs, they work with or modify *laleo*, *davar* being its equivalent. Because *davar* occurs so frequently, a representative sampling is in order. Of course, *davar* is a vital function among the prophets which means they are represented.³

relatively short 40 years in the Sinai wilderness early on the people went wild worshipping divinities they encountered. It extended to their presence in Canaan, a constant thorn in the side of prophets. This leads to a rhetorical question. What did the Israelites do right in Egypt for so long? Why weren't the lessons learned there handed down? Perhaps they were but inculcated by relatively few Israelites.

²Vs. 1 has "God spoke" whereas vs. 2 has "he has spoken," the latter being more definitive.

³Interestingly the first reference to the noun *davar* is in Gn 11.1 with regard to the tower of Babel: "Now the whole earth had one language and few words. At this early stage *davar* doesn't seem to be developed. It assumed greater importance after the Lord had scattered the people. "Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not

As for this twofold division with regard to *laleo* transferred to *davar*, we can consider it in light of vs. 2 or a continuation of the previous verse, the two essentially as one. This verse begins literally as “upon (*epi-*) the last of these days,”⁴ the preposition *epi-* suggestive of a certain imminence with regard to time or the time of Hebrew’s authorship (i.e., ‘these’ days). *Laleo* is quite direct, literally as “in (*en*) the son with regard to “us.” This son or Jesus Christ God had appointed as heir of all things, the verb *tithemi* simply as to place or to put and *kleronomos*. The noun is comprised of *kleros* and *nomos*, a casting of lots and custom, law or ordinance. In other words, Christ-as-*kleronomos* has received all that is due to him from the Lord. Not only that, by reason of being this *keronomos*, Christ is the one through whom the Lord had made the ages, *aion* not just time but all it contains.

To sum up, then, the color red for emphasis:

Vs. 1: *laleo (davar): to the fathers in (en) the prophets*

The means of this *laleo/davar: polu-meros and polu-tropos*

Vs. 2: *laleo (davar): with respect to a specific time, epi or literally upon the last of days*

Getting back to the *meros* of *polumeros*, when perusing excerpts relative to the verb *davar*, we can determine whether it has more of the former or more of the latter. Obviously this is an artificial distinction imposed from without. However, after having gone through a number of such verses, a pattern seems to emerge. With Hebrews in mind, then, *davar* is with respect literally “to the fathers *in* the prophets.” This “to-in” sequence is helpful insofar as the prophets standing apart from the fathers. They were more as a midwife to the nation as a whole, very much its conscience. A midwife is not part of the family and despite her invaluable contribution, may be treated with some hostility which certainly is the case with most of the prophets. With this in mind, the relationship between fathers and prophets is the milieu in which *davar* operates. Ideally this means centering upon biblical references where both prophets and fathers occur which may mean when the former addressed the latter.

As for references to fathers, Deuteronomy has an abundance which leads to the following observation. This covers the years after Israel left Egypt and wandered for forty years in the Sinai Desert. In a way, it was Israel’s best time in her entire history,

understand one another’s speech” [vs. 7].

⁴The plural “days” is used which is more than a twenty-four hour period but a way to intimate that time is short and that one must pay close attention to the *laleo* at hand.

recalled with great fondness by reason of the *Torah* given on Mount Horeb. Deuteronomy is followed by Joshua who leads Israel into Canaan, to re-possess the land which the people had well over four hundred years prior to their moving into Egypt. Deuteronomy thus is a vital crucible or training ground when Israel stood at a midway point: not just the lengthy time in Egypt but before that, when Abraham first entered Canaan. Now they are about to enter and do so fully equipped with stories and customs from the past. As for Egypt, despite its bad press, only the last Pharaoh trouble them, a great record when you come down to it. Prior to that, the people could have left but didn't because they had it so good.

References to fathers continues, of course, once Israel has taken possession of Canaan. Now more than ever what the fathers had taught in Deuteronomy must be kept alive. The people were exposed to all sorts of exotic gods after being purged of similar divinities from Egypt during the prolonged Sinai wandering. Thus from the Book of Joshua onward through Kings, etc., we have instances of constant backsliding and recovery. Thankfully what the fathers had taught and continued to teach saved the day.

With the advent of the monarchy and forward, there's a shift from the fathers to the prophets who, despite being fewer in number, came on the scene with greater force. The two worked hand-in-hand, but the prophets assumed ascendancy and kept it for the duration of Israel's existence. Thus at the end of Israel's existence at the hands of the Romans we have this neat little bundle of "fathers *en* the prophets" as Hebrews puts it. That time, of course, coincides with Jesus Christ and beginning of his church. In conclusion we could say the dividing point between fathers and prophets came about with Israel in Canaan or more specifically, with the constant back and forth between worship of native divinities and the Lord.

As for the references at hand, all are from the **RSV**. A brief fleshing out of each verse is given in the dark color red. While reading both a given verse and the notation, it's helpful to keep in mind how it leans more to the category of *polumeros* or to that of *polutropos* as discussed earlier. This is a bit artificial, of course, yet helps to keep in mind the first two words of the Book of Hebrews as well as what follows there.

Because of the super-abundance of references, especially of "fathers," a representative sampling follows below. "Prophets" are not as frequent. Despite their importance, they do not seem as intimately tied in with the identity of Israel. Instead, they play the role of an outsider.⁵ Both are underlined so the references stand out

⁵Because reference to fathers goes as far as the Book of Jeremiah, the same will apply with

more clearly.

Many verses repeat the same theme in different circumstances which is why all aren't given. Hopefully they present a fairly good idea of the references in light of the Book of Hebrews' opening two words. Note that while "fathers" is found in both Genesis and Exodus, with Deuteronomy we see the groundwork laid, as it were, for an understanding of how it ties in more readily with the theme of "in many and varied ways." And taking this a step further, we can see the preparations being made for the emergence of Jesus Christ against the backdrop of Israel's seemingly endless struggle between worship of the Lord and being drawn to false divinities.

Note the frequent references to land, inheritance, possession and the Lord swearing (as an oath, etc.). These three may be said to comprise the theme of Deuteronomy as the quotes stand relative to fathers. That is their source from which the other books take their cue, if you will.

Reference to Fathers and Prophets

Deuteronomy

This same paragraph will be inserted at the beginning of each book relative to the quotes, a way of stressing what this article is all about and not getting bogged down in the scriptural references. It's helpful to keep in mind whether the adverb *polumeros* or *polutropos* can tie in with each of the following verses, that is, as pertaining "to our fathers by the prophets." This distinction is artificial, of course, but more as an aide to gain better insight into the verses at hand.

Dt 1.8: Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them.

Set: *natan* or to give followed by a going-in; land: '*erets*: more than the physical earth but a place where one dwells; take possession: *yarash*: to occupy, usually by force; swore: *shavah*: verbal root for the sacred number seven. This is the first of twelve references to *shavah*, indicative of its overriding importance; fathers consisting of three patriarchs. The land or '*erets* isn't just for them but their descendants, literally regard to the prophets even though other books have references to them. The reason is to avoid an overload of references.

for their seed. Thus we have a divine setting of this *'erets* followed by an entering then followed by a taking of possession. These patriarchs, in turn, are to “switch” the original divine setting (*natan*) into their own giving (*natan*). I.e., one *natan* is transformed into another *natan*.

Dt 1.11: May the Lord, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are and bless you as he has promised you!

The verb *yasaph* (to add, increase) with the number one thousand, suggestive of limitlessness compared with Israel’s current situation just out of Egypt. Bless: *barak* or literally to bend the knee or give reverence which is in accord with the Lord’s promise rendered by the verb *davar*, to speak or give a word as presence. One such *davar*: “I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever” [Ex 32.13]. I.e., an example of *davar* relative to fathers.

Dt 1.35-6: Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land which I swore to give to your fathers except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and to his children I will give the land upon which he has trodden because he has wholly followed the Lord!

Second reference to the Lord swearing. A total generation is described as evil (*rah*), that is, Israel as having just come from Egypt or at the beginning of their forty years in Sinai, not a good prospect. Only Caleb and his family are singled out as worthy of seeing the land (*'erets*, cf. Dt 1.8) described as good. He is one of the spies Moses sent to reconnoiter Canaan (cf. Numbers 13) and despite dire reports of people living there, claimed that the Israelites could conquer them. Trodden and followed: *darak* and *male'*, the latter as literally “filled after” the Lord. Such a story is reminiscent of the single family of Noah surviving the flood. Caleb had the unique opportunity to adapt readily to Canaan, having become acquainted with it during his spying mission. More than that, he remained faithful to the Lord when so many Israelites abandoned worship of him.

Dt 4.31: For the Lord your God is a merciful God; he will not fail you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers which he swore to them.

Third reference to the Lord swearing. *Rachum* or merciful, the verb being the root for the noun bowels. Such *rachum* precludes the Lord from the following three: failing, destroying and forgetting or *raphah*, *shachat* and *shakach*. They apply to the covenant with Israel’s fathers. “Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples” [Ex 19.5].

Dt 4.37-8: And because he loved your fathers and chose their descendants after them

and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power, driving out before you nations greater and mightier than yourselves, to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance as at this day.

First reference to “as at that day” (‘this’ or ‘that’ being used variably) which is the key to this verse coming at the very end. In other words, it equates the present with the Exodus through the Lord’s own presence, literally “in his face.” This phrase is equivalent to his “great power,” *koach* implying the doing of anything. *Ahav* or love as to show affection is manifested by the Lord having chosen Israel’s descendants. The land (‘*erets*, cf. Dt 1.35-6) is Israel’s inheritance or *nachalah*, also as a taking possession.

Dt 5.3: Not with our fathers did the Lord make this covenant, but with us who are all of us here alive this day.

Second reference to “this day.” A distinction between fathers and the present generation after the Exodus or in the Sinai wilderness, implying Mount Horeb, actual place of giving the covenant. “Alive today” suggests survival of what Israel had just undergone.

Dt 5.9-10: You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Reference is to graven images either in heaven, on earth or beneath the earth (cf. vs. 8). *Shachah* and *havad* or bow down and serve, the latter also as to be a slave which is apt for the situation at hand. *Qana’* is the adjective for jealous, suggestive of burning anger. Here it’s manifested by the Lord visiting fathers’ iniquity up to the fourth generation, the verb *paqad* having military overtones with regard to *havon*, also guilt contract by sinning and related to hatred of the Lord, *sana’* often as to an enemy. Finally in the fifth generation this hatred will die out but its memory will abide. In contrast to *sana’* is the virtually untranslatable *chesed* with the verb *hasah* or to do, to make suggestive of making it active. *Shamar* and ‘*ahav* (cf. Dt 4.37-8) or to keep as keeping guard and love, the former with regard to divine commandments. I.e., *shamar* and ‘*ahav* associated with “thousands” contrast with the fourth generation relative to iniquity.

Dt 6.3: Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them; that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

First reference to a land flowing with milk and honey. Reference is to divine statutes

and commandments which require first a hearing followed by being careful, *shamah* and *shamar* (cf. Dt 5.9-10 for the latter). These two will have a direct result: *yatav* and *ravah* or to go well and multiply, the latter with the adverb *me'od* implying excessiveness. Both are in accord with the divine promise, the verb *davar* being used (cf. Dt 1.11) and in a specific location, a land (*'erets*, cf. Dt 4.37-8) as described.

Dt 6.11-12: "And when the Lord your God brings you into the land which he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give you with great and goodly cities which you did not build...then take heed lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Fourth reference to the Lord swearing. A contrast between two lands or *'erets* (cf. Dt 6.3), that of Canaan and that of Egypt. Israel is to take heed (*shamar*, cf. Dt 6.3) against forgetting (*shakach*, cf. Dt 4.31) the Lord who is responsible for this transfer of lands.

Dt 6.18-19: And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord that it may go well with you and that you may go in and take possession of the good land which the Lord swore to give to your fathers by thrusting out all your enemies from before you as the Lord has promised.

Fifth reference to the Lord swearing. *Yashar* and *tov* or right and good literally "in the eyes of the Lord" followed by the verb from which *tov* is derived, *yatov* or to do good. This *yatov* is bound up with first going in and then possessing (*yarash*, cf Dt 1.8) the land which is good or *tov*. Part of this three-fold *tov*, if you will, is thrusting out enemies, *hadaph* connoting a pushing action. This is in accord with the Lord's promise or his *davar* (cf Dt 6.3).

Dt 7.8: But it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath which he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Sixth reference to the Lord swearing. From divine love (*'ahav*, cf Dt 5.9-10) flows a keeping (*shamar*, cf 6.11-12) based upon swearing (*shavah*, cf Dt 1.8). The result? Bringing out->redeemed or *padah* which also means to let go, set free. *Heved* is the noun for bondage, also as slavery which is equated with Pharaoh.

Dt 7.12: And because you hearken to these ordinances and keep and do them, the Lord your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love which he swore to your fathers to keep.

Seventh reference to the Lord swearing. Note the "sh" sound in the following three: *shamah*, *shamar* and *hasah* or hearkening, keeping and doing (cf Dt 6.3, 7.8 and 5.9-

10). The reward? A *shamar* by God by means of his covenant and steadfast love or *chesed* (cf Dt 5.9-10). “To keep” is not in the Hebrew text.

Dt 8.1: All the commandment which I command you this day you shall be careful to do that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to give to your fathers.

Third reference to “this day” and eighth one to the Lord swearing. *Mitsvah* and *tsavah* or commandment and command, the former derived from the latter. The sequence of verbs: *shamar*->*hasah*->*chayah*->*ravah*->*bo'*->*yarash* or be careful, do, live, multiply, go in and possess, the last with regard to ‘*erets* or land (cf Dt 6.11-12).

Dt 8.16: Who fed you in the wilderness with manna which your fathers did not know that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end.

The ultimate aim for God feeding Israel with manna is for their own good (*yataav*, cf Dt 6.3). Before this, however, comes humbling and testing, *hanah* and *nasah*.

Dt 9.5: Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land; but because of the wickedness of these nations the Lord your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.

Ninth reference to the Lord swearing. The Lord is very clear that Israel is not above the people inhabiting the land she is about to take over. It seems that the wickedness of *rashah* (involves being liable to punishment) is barely one step worse than Israel’s. Concomitant with the Lord himself driving out these peoples is his confirming the *davar* which he had sworn (*qum*: fundamentally as to arise) to Israel’s three chief patriarchs.

Dt 10.14-15: Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it; yet the Lord set his heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day.

Fourth reference to “this day.” *Hen* or “behold,” a way of the Lord getting attention to what he is about to say. “Heaven of heavens” compared to “heaven” suggests his dwelling place apart from the earth or ‘*erets* (cf Dt 8.1). Compared *hen* with *raq* or “yet” which contrasts with divine transcendence. I.e., despite this transcendence, the Lord has set his heart upon Israel’s fathers, *chashaq* meaning to join together or cleave with the verb ‘*ahav* (cf Dt 7.8), to love.

Dt 10.22: Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons; and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven for multitude.

A reference to the time span between when Jacob, Joseph's father, and his sons went to Egypt and the present or just after the Exodus, a time span of some four hundred years. I.e., we have a growth from a small band to Israel as the stars of heaven during those four centuries.

Dt 11.21: That your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them as long as the heavens are above the earth.

Tenth reference to the Lord swearing. Two time frames considered as one: days of the present and days of future generations, the latter equivalent to eternity represented by the heavens above the earth. Land is *'adamah* which is more the physical ground and earth is *'erets* (cf Dt 10.14-15).

Dt 13.1-3: If a prophet arises among you or a dreamer of dreams and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder which he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, "Let us go after other gods" which you have not known "and let us serve them," you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or to that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

As for a prophet (*navy*' defined in the Introduction), the verbal root means to bubble up) and applies to someone in intimate contact with the Lord and thus his representative. Here it's taken negatively along with a dreamer (*chalam*) who give either a sign or wonder (*'oth* and *mopheth*) with regard to serving (*havah*, cf. Dt 5.9-10) or being subject to alien gods. Both have a purpose, of testing the people (*nasah*) to see if they love (*'ahav*, cf. Dt 10.14-15) him or not with heart and soul or *lev* and *nephesh*.

Dt 13.5: But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to make you leave the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.

The false prophet and dreamer are to be executed for having taught or more literally, having spoken (*davar*, cf. Dt 9.5) rebellion or *sarah* which is a turning aside literally "upon (hal-) the Lord." *Davar* is usually associated with a prophet which can deceive a person as is the case here. The verse continues with the Lord's most significant saving action was for Israel which both false advocates to leave the way (*derek*), *nadach* being the verb which also means to expel. This requires purging evil (*rah*, cf. Dt 31.5-6) or *bahar* connoting to consume with fire.

Dt 13.6: If your brother, the son of your mother or your son or your daughter or the wife of your bosom or your friend who is as your own soul, entices you secretly, saying, “Let us go and serve other gods” which neither you nor your fathers have known.”

Several close relatives and friends, the latter as one’s soul or *nephesh*. All have the potential of enticing secretly, *sut* and *seter*, the former meaning to stimulate or instigate and the latter referring to what is clandestine. The reason is to serve (*havad* (cf Dt 5.9-10) suggests being a slave as to gods not known to the fathers, implying Egypt.

Dt 13.17: None of the devoted things shall cleave to your hand; that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger and show you mercy and have compassion on you and multiply you as he swore to your fathers.

Eleventh reference to the Lord swearing. *Cherem* or devoted things or people consecrated to the Lord such as spoil. They are not to cling or *davaq* to one’s hand as in the case of Achan who stole items after the destruction of Ai (cf Jos 7.10+). If the people act on this *davaq*, the Lord’s fierce anger or *charon* (i.e., a burning) will relent. In its place will be mercy and compassion, *racham* and *rachamym*, the latter derived from the former which implies coming from one’s bowels.

Dt 18.15-16: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed—just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, “Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.”

Moses is speaking of someone like him to be his successor, *qerev* as among or in the very center of the people, not from outside. *Shamah* (cf. Dt 7.12) or to hear this successor (Joshua) is a requirement and can be traced back to Horeb when the people desired such a person from the Lord, *sha’al* meaning to ask for. The quote comes from Ex 20.19 which as from there as “You (Moses) speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us lest we die.” The verse at hand puts this in the context of the assembly, *qahal* meaning one with solemn intent.

Dt 18.18: I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

The Lord is speaking of Joshua who will come from Israel’s midst (*qerev* as in Dt 18.15-16), not from outside. He will put (*natan*, cf. Dt 1.8, to give) his *davar* (cf. Dt 13.5) in this successor’s mouth who then will *davar* them.

Dt 18.20: But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name which I have

not commanded him to speak or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.

Zud is the verb to presume or act proudly, here with regard to *davar* (cf. Dt 18.18) a *davar* in the Lord's name as well as other gods. To do so results in death, this showing the importance of *davar*.

Dt 26.7-9: Then we cried to the Lord the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror, with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Second reference to a land flowing with milk and honey. *Tsahaq* or cried, especially for help. Hearing (*shamah*, cf Dt 18.15-16) applies to the people's collective voice after which comes seeing their toil and oppression, *havaon* and *hamal*, the latter also as labor and vexation. The divine means of deliverance (*bo'*: the first of two, to bring) from Egypt: a hand which is mighty, an arm which is outstretched, terror which is great as well as signs and wonders. The latter two are *'oth* and *mopeth* or a portent and miracle, proof. The second use of *bo'* or to bring with respect to *maqom* and *'erets* (cf Dt 11.21), place and land; the former also as habitation.

Dt 27.3: And you shall write upon them all the words of this law when you pass over to enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you.

Third reference to a land flowing with milk and honey. This verse involves large stones on which the *davar* (cf Dt 18.20) of the *Torah* are to be written, large in so far as that everyone can't fail to see them, implying that they will be on public display. Perhaps the Lord has in mind a shrine to be made for this purpose.

Dt 28.36: "The Lord will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known; and there you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone.

Mention of a king is unusual, Israel not having one at the time but perhaps used in a general way as pertaining to Joshua, successor of Moses. Reference seems to be a future disobedience after the kingship is established and possible exile. Worship of alien gods proved to be a persistent problem for Israel both in Canaan and during her several exiles.

Dt 28.64: And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples from one end of the earth to the other; and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone which neither you nor your fathers have known.

A clearer reference to exile which the Lord sets before the Israelites as a consequence of being disobedient to him. In other words, the Lord is foretelling his people right now what will happen at a later time though they couldn't grasp it.

Dt 29.25: Then men would say, "It is because they forsook the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."

Reference seems to be a future time when Israel had entered Canaan and succumbed to worship of alien gods. At present when hearing these words the people were in a kind of exile though a beneficial one, that is, from Egypt.

Dt 30.5: And the Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed that you may possess it; and he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers.

This is welcome news for the Israelites, for the Lord is intimating possession or *yarash* (cf Dt 6.18.19) which also means inheritance of a land their fathers had some four hundred years ago or before Jacob and his sons entered Egypt at Joseph's request. This tradition had been kept alive all that time and was Israel's way of maintaining her identity in what seemed to be a welcomed of refuge except for the

Pharaoh involved with Moses.

Dt 31.7: Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and of good courage; for you shall go with this people into the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them; and you shall put them in possession of it.”

Twelfth reference to the Lord swearing. *Qara’* is the verb for summoned used in a deliberately public fashion literally “in the eyes” of all Israel meaning he is to address the nation as well as their newly appointed leader whom everyone knew by now would be the choice. *Chazaq* and *‘amats* or be strong and of good courage; the former implies a tying or binding fast while the latter, to be strong or fast-footed.

Dt 31.20: For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them and despise me and break my covenant.

Thirteenth and final reference to the Lord swearing and fourth and final reference to a land flowing with milk and honey. Despite the clear warning of what Israel will do in Canaan, he doesn’t renege on his intent. The people heard these words, of course, but realized them in a dim, incomplete fashion. Note the sequence which will become so familiar in Israel’s history: turn->serve->despise->break.

Dt 32.17: They sacrificed to demons which were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come in of late whom your fathers had never dreaded.

Shed or demons (also as idols) is found in only one other place relative to the one at hand, Ps 106.37. Reference is the Song of Moses shortly before his death and Israel’s entry into Canaan. He seems to be referring to Israel’s propensity to worship divinities she encountered in the Sinai Desert. Nothing is said of any carry-over from Egypt, a fact that remains strangely silent despite Israel having been there four hundred years.

Dt 34.10-12: And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses whom the Lord knew face to face, none like him for all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, and for all the mighty power and all the great and terrible deeds which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel.

These are Deuteronomy’s very last verses which say that Moses is unequal to any prophet by reason of having spoken face to face with the Lord. Compare the same signs and wonders (*‘oth* and *mopeth*, cf. Dt 26.7-9) done in Egypt with deeds both great and terrible done in Israel, the latter being *mora’* from the verb *yare’* (to fear). Note that both pairs are connected with the verb *hasah* (cf. Dt 7.12) whereas the

latter is “in the eyes of all Israel.”

Joshua

This same paragraph will be inserted at the beginning of each book relative to the quotes, a way of stressing what this article is all about and not getting bogged down in the scriptural references. It's helpful to keep in mind whether the adverb *polumeros* or *polutropos* can tie in with each of the following verses, that is, as pertaining “to our fathers by the prophets.” This distinction is artificial, of course, but more as an aide to gain better insight into the verses at hand.

Now that after some forty years Israel has left the Sinai Desert for the long anticipated land of Canaan, a shift of emphasis takes place with regard to fathers. The tone of the following verses are pretty much the same as in Deuteronomy, but the place has shifted. That has made all the difference. Now the fathers' task is to transmit what they have learned during the Sinai wilderness. Many may have looked back on those years with a certain longing, for they were caught in an in-between place: neither in Egypt nor in Canaan but wonderfully and directly dependent upon the Lord. Not all fathers and other Israelites had lived through the experience from beginning to end. Nevertheless, some must have and by reason of this, fell into the category of fathers. They were adjusting to the fact that the task of transmitting Israel's heritage has shifted to a new plane. It should be noted that all in all, there aren't that many references to fathers in Joshua and none for prophet.

Jos 1.6: Be strong and of good courage; for you shall cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

First reference to the Lord swearing. *Chazaq* and *'amats*: both found in Dt 31.7 but here with a greater urgency as Joshua encourages the people before entering Canaan. *Nachal* is the verb to inherit (not noted in the Deuteronomy verses) which connotes the making of a distribution. The object, of course, is *'erets* as sworn by Israel's fathers which means hearkening all the way back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Jos 4.21-22: And he said to the people of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, “What do these stones mean?” Then you shall let your children know, “Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.”

Joshua is speaking of the twelve stones taken from the Jordan River, *machar* as “time to come” also reading as “tomorrow.” This tomorrow suggests a certain proximity of time regardless of how many future generations are involved when it comes to the memorial of the twelve stones. Memory of Israel's passage across the Jordan as a second Exodus thus is insured of being subscribed in her collective memory.

Jos 5.6: For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness until all the nation, the men of war that came forth out of Egypt, perished because they did not hearken to the voice of the Lord; to them the Lord swore that he would not let them see the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Second reference to the Lord swearing. The verb for “walked” is *halak* also as to go with respect to Israel being in the Sinai for forty years. The “men of war” are singled out as having perished. If taken literally, Israel would not have been able to conquer Canaan which isn’t exactly true. Emphasis, however, is upon not listening (*shamah*, cf. Dt 26.7-9) to the word or *davar* (cf. Dt 27.3) of the Lord and less upon military prowess. That suggests that Israel, deprived of these warrior, can take Canaan provided they *shamah* the divine *davar*.

Jos 18.3: So Joshua said to the people of Israel, “How long will you be slack to go in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you?”

The context: seven tribes whose inheritance had not yet been apportioned. Joshua is rebuking these tribes for being slack or *rapha*’ which connotes a certain flaccidness and alternately means to be healed. It concerns their *yarash* (cf. Dt 30.5) or taking possession of Canaan.

Jos 21.43: Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land which he swore to give to their fathers; and having taken possession of it, they settled there.

Second reference to the Lord swearing. First comes a taking possession followed by a settling, *yarash* (cf. Jos 18.3) leading to *yashav*, the latter connoting a sitting down and therefore permanence.

Jos 22.28: And we thought, if this should be said to us or to our descendants in time to come we should say, “Behold the copy of the altar of the Lord which our fathers made not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifice but to be a witness between us and you.”

Note that the altar at hand is a copy or *tavnyth* which also means a pattern or image of the original one. It is to be a witness (*hed*) with respect to the Transjordanian tribes and those who were not of them, that the former remain loyal to the Lord. It’s almost as though this altar were a living thing watching all that which was transpiring.

Jos 24.2: And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, `Your fathers lived of old beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.

Joshua reminds the people that Abraham’s forebears had worship other gods (cf. Gn

11.27 and 11.32, both mentioned before the Lord called Abram to leave his own country.

Jos 24.14: "Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord.

Fear or *yare'* in the sense of giving reverence which here is concomitant with serving, *havad* also meaning to be a slave (cf. Dt 13.6). *Tamym* and *'emeth* or sincerity and faithfulness go hand-in-hand with these two verbs, the first connoting completion and the second, truth. Before this can happen, Joshua bids the people to put away the same gods their fathers had served, *havad* also used here but implies being slaves to them. *Havad* is noted a third time with regard to the Lord. As for gods in Egypt, it seems virtually nothing is known of them over a four hundred year period.

Jos 24.17: For it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed.

Egypt is called "house of bondage" or *heved* which here is in the plural perhaps to indicate its severity. Compare *heved* with the two forms of *havad* in the previous verse, it being derived from that verbal root. The "great signs" are mentioned specifically as being done "in our sight" or literally "to our eyes" implying that the Lord wanted to make sure they registered upon the people. In this way they might avoid being drawn to strange gods once settled in the land of Canaan. Similarly, the Lord preserved his people, *shamar* (cf. Dt 7.12) implying guarding as someone on a city wall protecting a city. Israel going through the lands of many peoples is a kind of test to their loyalty to the Lord, that is, worshiping him instead of native divinities.

First Kings

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The references to fathers in First Kings (Second Kings has nearly as many) are important insofar as they occur after the death of King David, extending through his descendants or when Israel had established itself firmly in what had been the land of

Canaan. Excerpts pertaining to prophet are lifted from **Expansions on First Kings**, also posted on this homepage.

1Kg 1.22: While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. And they told the king, "Here is Nathan the prophet." And when he came in before the king, he bowed before the king, with his face to the ground.

Nathan was the prophet who earlier had confronted King David as to having Uriah murdered in order to take his wife, Bathsheba who in this verse is speaking. Despite this, Nathan and Bathsheba had formed an alliance to ensure that Solomon would succeed him.

1Kg 2.10: Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David.

This is the first of many references in First and Second Kings with regard to a king's death. *Shakav* or slept fundamentally means to lay down or to rest. With regard to kings, they are resting with their fathers or the ones stemming all the way back to the patriarchs, then through Egypt followed by Sinai Israel's entrance to Canaan. As for "buried," *qarav* also means to bring near, to approach.

1Kg 8.21: And there I have provided a place for the ark in which is the covenant of the Lord which he made with our fathers when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."

Except for the first and last verses of this section, all other refer to King Solomon with regard to the dedication of the Jerusalem temple. Note the two similar sounding words '*asym sham*, "there I have provided." The divine placing and the earthly "there" are one and the same yet distinct. As for the words, *maqom* or place (cf. Dt 27.6-9 is "there" or Jerusalem, the verb *sum* as provided means to set or to establish. That which is involved is the ark or '*aron* or wooden chest in which the covenant (*beryth*) was kept. One example is Dt 9.9 with regard to the two tables of the covenant given to Moses by the Lord. Technically the Lord didn't make this covenant, rather, he cut it which is in accord with the verbal root *karath*. Although Moses isn't mentioned, certainly he is implied.

1Kg 8.33-34: "When your people Israel are defeated before the enemy because they have sinned against you, if they turn again to you and acknowledge your name and pray and make supplication to you in this house; then hear, you who are in heaven, and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them again to the land which you gave to their fathers.

Defeat and enemies here connote not so much losing a battle or war but more to exile which is the result of sin. Such sin as recounted many times in First and Second Kings as well as Joshua means worship gods, especially those in Canaan whom many of the

Israelites had adopted. A way to remedy this is through prayer and supplication, the verbs being *palal* and *chanan* (to intervene and to show favor, be gracious. Note house or *bayth* for the Jerusalem temple. Being on earth, it is the place where such pleas extend to the Lord in heaven. The result is first forgiving (*salach* also as to pardon) sin followed by return to the land or ‘*adamah* (cf. Dt 11.21) the Lord gave to Israel’s fathers. Note use of this noun which refers more to the physical place compared with ‘*erets* which suggests the people of Israel who inhabit ‘*adamah*.

1Kg 8.57-58: The Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he not leave us or forsake us; that he may incline our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments, his statutes and his ordinances which he commanded our fathers.

Note the correspondence between past (fathers) and the presence, the two being considered as one which is the essence of tradition. To leave or forsake, *hazav* and *natash*, are similar. The very sound of the former with the letter “z” gives it an extra force, if you will. Opposite to both is the Lord inclining (*natah*, to extend, stretch out) the collective heart (*lev*) of Israel to him. This involves what the fathers had done such as walking in his ways, etc., the actual means by which the correspondence between past and present is maintained.

1Kg 9.9: Then they will say, “Because they forsook the Lord their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore the Lord has brought all this evil upon them.”

Words of the Lord to Solomon in a dream at the beginning of his reign, words that unfortunately will prove true time and again with regard to Israel’s tendency to *hazav* (cf. 1Kg 8.57-58) or to forget the Lord. Forgetting is bound up with the fathers having left Egypt which means memory of that event must be kept central for Israel to maintain her identity. To forget leads to worship of alien gods. Even the sound of *chazaq* (cf. Jos 1.6) or to lay hold of has a certain violence and immediacy to it, here with regard to other gods. Note that serving them (*havad*, cf. Jos 24.17) is suggestive of being a slave to them. Such is the reason for the Lord bringing evil (*rah*, cf. Dt 13.5) upon Israel.

1Kg 11.28-29: The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph. And at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road.

When Jeroboam left Jerusalem, Ahijah the prophet came across him on the road, vs. 29 saying that they were in open country or literally “alone in the field.” Obviously this wasn’t a chance encounter but one Ahijah was inspired to arrange, he being

clothed in a new garment or *simplah*, usually a large outer piece of clothing. So there they were, two men on an isolated section of the road, Jeroboam not knowing if this man were a robber or the like. Without saying a word, Ahijah cuts *simplah* into twelve pieces. The number twelve was familiar to most people as pertaining to Israel's twelve tribes, so Jeroboam must have known it had political consequences.

Ahijah tells Jeroboam to take ten pieces of the garment, symbolic of the ten tribes over which he will rule, the other two along with the ten, not being described at this point (one tribe is Levi which has not territorial inheritance). And so the prophet leaves the choice up to Jeroboam, this in anticipation of the Lord about to tear the kingdom from Solomon. Actually Ahijah goes into some detail as to the prophecy related to what will happen, all the way through vs. 39. As for the verb to tear, it's *qarah* as noted in vs. 11 when the Lord is speaking to Solomon in reference to the yet to be identified servant. However, the Lord will leave the king one tribe (again, as yet to be identified) for the sake of David. Chances are when Solomon heard this he was enraged by the fact that the revolt is compounded by yet another reference to his father. It seems never can he escape from under his influence.

1Kg 13.11: Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel. And his sons came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words also which he had spoken to the king, they told to their father.

Vs. 11 introduces another anonymous person described as an "old prophet" who lived in Bethel, presumably prior to the kingdom being split up. His sons (the Hebrew text reads 'son') informed him of what the man of God had done, news of this dramatic event spreading quickly. Despite his age, the prophet saddled his ass and rode off to meet him. Even though the man of God must have kept his return route to Judah a secret, the prophet was able to divine it and catch up with him. The two finally met under an oak along the way, and the prophet invited the man of God to stay with him, but he refused. Words such as "in this place" in vs. 16 show his contempt for the newly broken off northern kingdom. In his mind, the old prophet is one who had abandoned the Lord and had gone over to worship of alien gods under Jeroboam. The man of God recounts the *davar* of the Lord saying that he's forbidden to remain in Bethel but leave at once. Thus the presence of this divine *davar* determines whether one is for or against the Lord. Next the prophet reminds his guest that the two are in fact prophets; supposedly an angel of the Lord had *davar* to him by the *davar* of the Lord, this focus upon *davar* being what's common and special between the two men.

1Kg 14.2-3: And Jeroboam said to his wife, "Arise, and disguise yourself, that it be not known that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, who said of me that I should be king over this people.

The son of Jeroboam, Abijah fell ill, *chalah* also as to be weak or exhausted. Apparently Abijah is relatively young which compels the king to seek a cure all the more. Jeroboam does this by asking his wife whose name remains anonymous, this fitting in well with Jeroboam wanting to conceal her identity while off to see Ahijah, *shanah* also as to change or to repeat. Most likely his wife donned the clothes of a common peasant so as not to attract attention as well as making the journey without a bodyguard or servants, a risky proposition for a woman. And so this woman—presumably a queen being her official title—headed off to Shiloh to meet the prophet Ahijah who had confronted Jeroboam on the road when he foretold the dividing of Israel, this prompting King Solomon to seek his death. Before leaving, Jeroboam tries to sooth her with Ahijah having told him that he'd be king. In addition to this, she's to bring what amounts to a modest gift of bread and honey. After all Ahijah is a prophet living a rather Spartan existence who wouldn't be insulted by such a gift. If it were too sumptuous, he might refuse to see her outrightly.

1Kg 14.14-15: Moreover the Lord will raise up for himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam today. And henceforth the Lord will smite Israel as a reed is shaken in the water and root up Israel out of this good land which he gave to their fathers and scatter them beyond the Euphrates because they have made their Asherim, provoking the Lord to anger.

“Today” is rendered literally as *gan-hatah* or “also now” or “also this present time” and intimates a more comprehensive view of time. The image of a reed in the water being smitten suggests that the blow effecting the action is done without hearing or seeing it, that is, under water. *Nakah* is the verb which means to break into small pieces which one can't reassemble. Next follows *natash* or to root up in the sense of plucking with regard to a land (*'adamah*, 1Kg 8.33-34) which is good. Such *'adamah* or the physical land the Lord had given to Israel's fathers. Following this double action of smiting and scattering comes a scattering (*zarah*, also as to disperse) beyond the Euphrates River by reason of having made (*hasah*, to do, to fashion; cf. Dt 34.10-12) Asherim, wooden images identified with the goddess of Canaan. Such worship provokes the Lord to anger, *kahas* connoting provocation.

1Kg 16.7:7: Moreover the word of the Lord came by the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he destroyed it.

Baasha's son Elah succeeded him when Jehu the prophet comes on the scene one more time, all the while observing the *davar* of the Lord unfolding before his eyes. He couldn't do anything except issue a warning after which he had to stand down and see if it would take effect. This waiting is the most difficult part of his prophetic role even

if he knew the final results well beforehand.

1Kg 18.19: Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel and the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

Elijah offers a proposal which he does partly in order to save his life, for if Ahab wanted to, he could slay him on the spot and be done with it. However, his proposal sounds attractive, a way to rid himself of this troubler before "all the people of Israel" [vs. 20]. Thus he'd have the nation as a collective witness and effect a wholesale conversion to worship of Baal. This would be a great opportunity to dispatch Elijah easily. As for Ahab, there's no mention of him being present. In fact, in vs. 41 Elijah bids him to go up to Mount Carmel after the dramatic event had unfolded there. As for the proposal, it consists of gathering "all Israel" at Mount Carmel along with the multitude of prophets who adhere to Baal and Asherah. The verb *qavats* involves collecting...a sorting, if you will. Such phrases as "all Israel" and the like aren't to be taken literally but may suggest a representation of the twelve tribes, still quite a multitude. Note too Elijah adds those who eat at Jezebel's table or those intimately connected with her.

1Kg 18.36: And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and that I have done all these things at your word.

Once the altar had been restored, Elijah goes through the motions of cutting up the bull and pouring water over it three times. In other words, everything was drenched thoroughly and on purpose. Then came the time of oblation at evening as was the case with the prophets' oblation in vs. 29. Perhaps the time of his oblation was the day after, given this apparent conflict. Now Elijah offers a prayer with the sun setting towards the west or into the Mediterranean, the twilight atmosphere adding to the drama. He claims to have done "all these things" or all these *davar* at the *davar* of the Lord. Interestingly at the end of his prayer Elijah says that the Lord has turned back the hearts of the people. After the disgraceful performance by the prophets of Baal and even before Elijah's offering, essentially the people have been converted. The only thing required was a manifestation of it. Surely the significance of the restored altar in and by itself played an important role.

1Kg 19.16: and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.

The unexpected turn consists in the Lord having Elijah going to Damascus with the

intent of anointing Hazael as king of Syria followed immediately by anointing Jehu as king over Israel. Despite both being arch-enemies, Elijah concurs to being an instrument of the Lord apparently without asking questions as to why this is so. Perhaps he was too embarrassed by his experience on Mount Horeb to ask the Lord. He was, to be sure in a delicate position of dealing with two arch enemies. In addition to these two rival monarchs, Elijah is to anoint someone hitherto unknown to become prophet in his place, Elisha. Again, no questioning on Elijah's part, his obedience to the Lord working in his favor. Note that the formal process of anointing applies equally to kings and to prophets. Although Elijah was sent for this purpose, but it turned out that a delegate of Elisha is the one who did the anointing as recounted in Chapter Nine of Second Kings.

1Kg 20.13: And behold, a prophet came near to Ahab king of Israel and said, "Thus says the Lord, Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will give it into your hand this day; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

The prophet confidently tells King Ahab that the multitude he sees from on top the city gates will be given into his hands. *Hamon* is the noun for "multitude" which connotes sound or noise, very appropriate for the present circumstance. It's easy to imagine this *hamon* or tumultuous sound emanating from the Syrian camp which was in besiege mode. "For there is a sound of the rushing of rain" [18.41]. This anonymous mystery-man reveals his authenticity when he adds typical of true prophets, "and you shall know (*yadah*, indicative of intimate knowledge) that I am the Lord."

1Kg 21.3: But Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

Naboth had the courage to refuse King Ahab's overtures to buy his land and paid for it with his life, this due to the interference of Jezebel. Naboth considers himself more a custodian of this inheritance or *nachalah* (Dt 4.37-38) rather than its owner whereas Ahab held the opposite. Naboth was the latest in the line of fathers, but his death would end this inheritance. Later Elijah cursed Ahab for coveting the vineyard/inheritance, but he repented. It seems possession of the vineyard stayed in the royal family until Ahab's son (cf. 1Kg 21.27-29) after which there's no further mention of it.

1Kg 22.6-7: Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I forbear?" And they said, "Go up; for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king." But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here another prophet of the Lord of whom we may inquire?"

Without missing a beat and to the dismay of Jehoshaphat, the king of Israel gathers some four hundred prophets. Chances are he opted for their consultation out of fear

of Jezebel whose prophets Elijah had slain after the contest on Mount Carmel. Apparently these prophets had their base in Bethel (cf. 12.28+). The question put to them: should I, that is, Ahab, go into battle or not? Their response was not only yes but ironically done in the name of the Lord.

Jehoshaphat felt something wasn't quite right with this overwhelming consensus plus the prophets bringing in the Lord which is why he asked if there was another prophet to consult. He knew the answer but wanted to lead on Ahab who almost sheepishly mentions Micaiah. It seems his introduction is independent of Elijah and Elisha. Chances are three knew each other, but nothing is said of this. What's important is the continued struggle between the Lord and alien gods in one form or another. Despite his unsavory character, Ahab reveals a straight-forward manner which isn't devious (like his wife). He admits to not liking Micaiah because never did he prophesy anything good on his behalf. And so Micaiah is brought before the two kings all decked out and holding court at the entrance of the gate of Samaria. Perhaps they were engaged in other business such as hammering out an alliance to go against Syria or to impress the four hundred prophets in their company. Vs. 10 says that they were prophesying before the two kings which must have been quite a sight, a kind of Babel in miniature. Jehoshaphat must have been annoyed and Ahab pretty much the same but then again, Jezebel's influence, while out of the picture, was lurking in the background.

The Psalms

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The Psalm verses differ from the other categories of fathers in this list insofar as they do not have direct historical connection with events. Instead, they are a poetic reflection upon such events and in this way can be more meaningful as well as easier to retain in one's memory for personal application.

Ps 22.4-5: In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and delivered them. To you they cried and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed.

Note the preposition *b-* or "in" and the letter "b" of *batach* which may be taken as an emphasis of trust by the fathers in God. It occurs three times in this verse. *Batach* is

carried over to deliverance, *palat* more as to escape, to flee. The second sentence shifts from *palat* to *zahaq* or to cry, the letter “z” indicative of urgency. This results in *malat* or being saved or to slip away, more stealthy than *palat*. The third instance of *batach* results in not being disappointed, *bosh* also as to be ashamed.

Ps 39.12: Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears! For I am your passing guest, a sojourner, like all my fathers.

Hear and give ear or *shamah* (cf. Jos 5.6) and ‘*azan*, the latter being a more focused type of hearing. The respective nouns are *tephilah* and *shavhah*, the former an entreaty and the latter a poignant outcry. *Charash* is the verb for hold (not) peace, fundamentally as to cut, engrave and thus the most desperate of the three. The psalmist equates himself to his fathers as a passing guest and sojourner, *ger* and *toshav* or a foreigner and literally as one who sits or dwells. Perhaps he has in mind those fathers in the Sinai wandering for forty years before entering Canaan. It was both a golden era of sorts as well as indicative of life’s transitory nature.

Ps 44.1: We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what deeds you performed in their days, in the days of old.

The preposition *b-* is prefaced to ears, literally as “in our ears” into which fathers have spoken, *saphar* more as to inscribe. What they write down permanently, if you will, in the ears of those listening are divine deeds done in days of old or the Exodus. *Pahal* (to prepare, to fabricate) is the verb, and the noun derived from it is *pohal*.

Ps 74.9: We do not see our signs; there is no longer any prophet, and there is none among us who knows how long.

The distress Israel feels is sought to be relieved by three means: 1) signs or ‘*oth*’ (cf. Dt 34.10-12, 2) prophet or *navy*’ (cf. Dt 13.1-3) and 3) how long (*had-mah*), that is, the duration of Israel’s distress. Cf. 1 Sam 3.20: “And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord.” Note the word established, ‘*aman*’ (from which ‘amen’ is derived). Thus in vs. 9 the people may be said to be looking for a person in whom to put their “amen” or trust.

Ps 78.2-3: I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known that our fathers have told us.

Opening of the mouth intimates a more solemn form of address than speaking, this with regard to a parable or *mashal* also as a song or poem. As for dark sayings or *chydah* (fundamentally as that which is twisted, involved), the verb is *navah* or to gush forth. The psalmist uses the first person plural, indicative of Israel as a whole, with regard to having heard and known (*shamah*, cf. 39.12) and *yadah*. The latter has a more intimate acquaintance of what fathers have passed down to the present

generation, *saphar* (cf. Ps 44.1). Implied is knowledge reserved for Israel only, no one else.

Ps 78.8: and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Sasar and *marah* or stubborn and rebellious as applied to fathers which the present generation is in danger of copying. The earlier generation had a collective heart (*lev*, cf. 1Kg 8.57-58) and spirit (*ruach*, also as wind), the former not *kun* and the latter not ‘*aman* (to establish and to believe) with respect to God.

Ps 78.56-57: Yet they tested and rebelled against the Most High God and did not observe his testimonies but turned away and acted treacherously like their fathers; they twisted like a deceitful bow.

Nasa' and *marah* (cf. Ps 78.8) may be taken as a unit which doesn't have the preposition “against” but directly is aimed at the Most High God, this in reference to the Israelites. Note four failures: 1) *shamar* (cf. Jos 24.17) or (not) to observe in the sense of guarding, 2) *sug* or having turned away, 3) *bagad* or acting treacherously (to diverge, to be disloyal and to act faithlessly) and 4) *haphak* or twisted (to change, to turn around). The last applies to a bow which is deceitful or *remyah* which connotes idleness.

Ps 95.8-9: Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness when your fathers tested me and put me to the proof though they had seen my work.

Reference is to Ex 17.1-7 shortly after the Lord had provided quail and manna, and that coming on the heels of the Exodus. Proximity to that momentous event is what irked the Lord, Israel having hardened their hearts (*lev*, cf. 78.8) then as well as now...and most likely many times in between. *Pohal* is the noun for work as in Ps 44.1.

Ps 106.6-7: Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. Our fathers, when they were in Egypt did not consider your wonderful works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love but rebelled against the Most High at the Red Sea.

This is the kind of acknowledgment that thrills the Lord more than those making it realize, a way of getting right to his heart. Israel realizes that her own sin and iniquity are identical to her fathers. Reference to fathers in Egypt seems inaccurate in that it was Pharaoh and his court who were guilty, the Israelites not being in a position to do much wrong since they had been enslaved. *Sakal* is the verb for (not) consider

meaning to look at in the sense of behold or pay close attention. With that in mind, the fathers had sinned mostly by way of omission, not intentionally. The second part of the second sentence is more to the point, not recalling not just the Lord's steadfast love (*chesed*, cf. Dt 7.12) but its abundance. *Zakar* is the verb to remember from which the noun "male" is derived, indicative that a male offspring is essential for ensuring remembrance of past events into the future. I.e., the offspring thus are a physical type of remembrance. As for the rebellion at the Red Sea, it's more after the Exodus to which Meribah and Massah above concerning Ps 78.56-57 speaks of.

Ps 109.14: May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out!

Reference concerns the psalmist's enemies, curses being leveled against this unspecified person from the beginning of the psalm. The verse is another instance of the importance of *zakar* or remembrance (cf. Ps 106.6-7 above) only with regard to past iniquity or *havon* (cf. Dt 5.9-10). 'El is the preposition for "before" which can be taken more directly as "to the Lord." The psalmist includes also the mother of his enemy, that her sin not be blotted out, *machah* also as to wipe clean. Although this verse is a heart-felt wish by the psalmist, there's no indication that the Lord will go through with it.

Jeremiah

This same paragraph will be inserted at the beginning of each book relative to the quotes, a way of stressing what this article is all about and not getting bogged down in the scriptural references. It's helpful to keep in mind whether the adverb *polumeros* or *polutropos* can tie in with each of the following verses, that is, as pertaining "to our fathers by the prophets." This distinction is artificial, of course, but more as an aide to gain better insight into the verses at hand.

Other prophets have reference to fathers, but Jeremiah has more than the rest. Hopefully they will suffice to bring the idea of fathers into the era of the prophets.

Jer 1.5-6: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth."

Here the Lord appoints (*natan*, the common verb to give) Jeremiah a prophet, *nave'*. Note

that Israel isn't specified but nations or *goy*...in other words, all peoples. This mission is in the Lord's mind before he had formed Jeremiah, *yatsar* as a potter fashions clay into a pot or the like. Furthermore, the Lord had consecrated him, *qadash* as to be holy or to set apart. Jeremiah may have had an inkling of this throughout his life or perhaps up to this point but was unable to articulate it adequately. Therefore he had been uneasy, in a state of waiting. Vs. 6 begins with the conjunctive *v-* translated as "then" which shows that Jeremiah responded immediately to this divine invitation. As one would expect, he begins with *'ahah* translated as "ah" which conveys his astonishment. It also intimates a sense of relief...relief insofar as at last that uneasy feeling which had been gnawing at him throughout life stopped. That latent knowledge of having been formed and appointed before his birth has come to fulfillment. In the same breath Jeremiah exclaims *hineh* or "behold," that he's unable to speak (the verb *davar*)—to respond to the divine *davar* with *davar* equal to it—because he's a mere youth or *nahar*, technically a male ready for marriage but not yet betrothed.

Jer 2.5: "What wrong did your fathers find in me that they went far from me and went after worthlessness and became worthless?"

A rhetorical question posed to the current generation by the Lord with regard to their fathers. *Havel* is the wrong they found in him, this also meaning depravity. This took the form of the people going far from the Lord (*rachaq*) with two prepositions as one, *min* and *hal* resulting in *mehalay*, literally "from upon me." *Rachaq* implies remoteness and is equal to that which is worthless and becoming as such. *Haval* is the verb which also means to be vain or empty.

Jer 3.24: But from our youth the shameful thing has devoured all for which our fathers labored.

Bosheth or shameful thing refers to worship of alien gods which have consumed all the effort of the fathers. *Yagah* is the verb and intimates a certain weariness. The phrase "from our youth" means that this *bosheth* had extended its tentacles to the present generation.

Jer 6.13-14: For from the least to the greatest of them, every one is greedy for unjust gain; and from prophet to priest, every one deals falsely. They have healed the wound of my people lightly saying, "Peace, peace" when there is no peace.

Vs. 13 in the **RSV** is a continuation of the previous verse, i.e., the two forming one sentence. Here the Lord laments an all pervasive greed or *betsah* which also means covetousness. As for those whom people would look up to for guidance—prophets and priests—they all deal falsely, *sheqer*. What's disheartening is that these leaders went through the motions of helping such as healing *rapha'* (cf. Jos 18.3) the wounded which they had done lightly, the

verb *qalal* being used. While doing this they cry out *shalom* or peace when it's absent.

Jer 7.7: Then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever.

The current verse is to be seen in light of vs. 5 beginning with a series of four “ifs” or amending one’s ways which runs through vs. 6 and are listed as follows:

1) Amend one’s ways (which reads literally “to make good you shall make good.” 2) Execute justice. 3) Do not oppress three vulnerable types of people along with one injunction: alien, fatherless, widow including murder. As for the last, it’s not to be done in this place or the Lord’s house. 4) Not to go after alien gods which will cause personal harm.

Vs. 7 contains the all important conjunctive *v-* translated as “then” or that which follows the four “ifs” just delineated. Provided the four are carried out, the Lord says that he will allow the Israelites to dwell in this place (*shakan* and *maqom*, 1Kg 8.21). Here he adds *‘erets* (cf. 1Kg 8.33-34) or land and fleshes it out by saying that he had given it to their fathers.

Jer 7.22: For in the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.

“Day” as associated with the Exodus shows its importance and continuation without diminishment into the present. *Davar* (cf. Dt 6.3) is the verb, to speak as to give expression and concerns obeying the Lord’s voice which will make Israel his people as the next verse recounts.

Jer 7.25: From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day.

Another reference to the importance of “day” with regard to remembrance of the Exodus as it continues into the present. During that time the Lord was persistent in sending prophets to the people. “Day after day” is a kind of re-enforcement of the day associated with the Exodus. It’s almost as though both are interchangeable. The verb *shakam* means to rise up early and is the adverb for persistently.

Jer 9.14: But have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals as they fathers taught them.

The verb *halak* (to go) is used once in the Hebrew but is associated with two actions: Israel’s hearts or *lev* (cf. Ps 95.8-9) and *shryroth* (also as hardness) and Baals. Fathers are responsible for having taught the current generation, *lamad* being the verb which connotes training.

Jer 9.16: I will scatter them among the nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known; and I will send the sword after them until I have consumed them."

Puts is the verb to scatter which also means to break or to dash into pieces. With reference to the nations or *goyim*, the Israelites will be so fractured they won’t be able to put themselves back together. Even worse, these *goyim*—a word with negative connotations compared to Israel-as-*‘erets*—were unknown to Israel’s fathers. In addition to this, the Lord will sent a sword to consume them, *kalah* meaning to finish

off completely.

Jer 11.7: For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, “Obey my voice.”

“Solemnly warned” is rendered by the double use of the verb *hud*, also as to testify or to give witness. The Lord foresaw Israel’s future temptation to worship alien gods, hence use of the verb *shakam* (cf. Jer 7.25), to rise early. It’s as though the Lord got up each day before sunrise to engage in this *hud* which lasts to the present or “this day.” In a sense, this *hud* is simple, to obey (*shamah*, to hear; cf. Ps 78.2-3) with regard to the Lord’s voice, the preposition *b-* literally as “in his voice.”

Jer 11.10: They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers who refused to hear my words; they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

Fathers and forefathers are the same in the Hebrew. *Havon* (cf. Ps 109.14) or iniquities consists in the forefathers refusing to hear (*shamah*, cf. Jer 11.7) the Lord’s words or *davar*, *ma’an* also as to be unwilling. This turning back means that the present generation has knowledge of such *havon* along with memory of the divine covenant also in this verse. Serving other gods or *havad* as in 1Kg 9.9 essentially becoming their slave and results in breaking the divine covenant, *haphar* implying to overthrown.

Jer 14.18: If I go out into the field, behold, those slain by the sword! And if I enter the city, behold, the diseases of famine! For both prophet and priest ply their trade through the land and have no knowledge.”

Everyone is affected whether outside or inside the city (Jerusalem). The prophet and priest seek to alleviate this but are powerless, *sachar* meaning to travel about but do so with a lack of knowledge of their respective professions, *yadah* (Ps 78.2-3).

Jer 14.20: We acknowledge our wickedness, O Lord and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against you.

Yadah (cf Ps 78.2-3) means to know in an intimate sense, here with regard to the present and the past. To the former belongs wickedness or *rashah* (cf. Dt 9.5) and to the latter, iniquity or *havon* (cf. Jer 11.10). Sin (the verb *chata*’, fundamentally as to miss the mark) has brought about this double *yadah*.

Jer 16.11-13: Because your fathers have forsaken me, says the Lord, and have gone after other gods and have served and worshiped them and have forsaken me and have not kept my law, and because you have done worse than your fathers...therefore I will hurl you out of this land into a land which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, for I will show you no favor.

Two uses of the verb *hazav* (cf. 1Kg 9.9) or to forsake resulting in slavery to alien gods as by the verb *havad* (cf. Jer 11.10). Both verbs lead into a third, if you will, not keeping (*shamar*, cf. Ps 78.56-57) the *Torah* (cf. Dt 27.3). Using fathers engaged in this as a model, the present generation have done worse resulting in the Lord hurling the people from their own land or *'erets* (cf. Jer 7.7) into an *'erets* unknown to both them and their fathers. A second use of *havad* with its implication of slavery concerns other gods in this alien land continuously or day and night. *Chanynah* or favor is the only use of this noun in the Bible.

Jer 16.19: O Lord, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble, to you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth and say: "Our fathers have inherited nought but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit."

The situation is "day of trouble" or *tsarah*, also as distress. To counter it, Jeremiah calls the Lord his strength, stronghold and refuge or *hoz*, *mahoz* and *manus*, the first and second being of the same verbal root. It seems that part of this *tsarah* comprises nations or *goyim* (cf. Jer 9.16) coming to Israel, most likely Jerusalem. They will mimic Israel by using the phrase "our fathers," throwing it back at them, as having bequeathed their sons—the present generation—nothing but lies and worthless things, *sheqer* and *hevel*; the former intimates what is false and the latter, that which is empty or vain.

Jer 18.18: Then they said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest nor counsel from the wise nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not heed any of his words."

Jeremiah became the object of revenge after his prophecy. The people decide to plot (*chashav*) against him claiming that already they have an existing source of support in their law, priests, wise men and prophets. They are correct historically speaking, but that's all they can do, using history as a false pretense. At least the people haven't said anything about killing Jeremiah, preferring to smite him with their tongue and not pay attention to his *davar* (Jer 11.10).

Jer 23.11: Both prophet and priest are ungodly; even in my house I have found their

wickedness, says the Lord.

Chanaph is a verb meaning to be profaned or defiled. House refers to the Jerusalem temple in which the Lord has come across wickedness or *rah* (cf. 1Kg 9.9), most likely due to the activities and behavior of the prophet and priest.

Jer 23.15-16: Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets: "Behold, I will feed them with wormwood and give them poisoned water to drink; for from the prophets of Jerusalem ungodliness has gone forth into all the land." Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes; they speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord.

Two verses with two rapid successions of the Lord speaking. He intends to punish false prophets by giving them what essentially is poisoned food and water. Reason: they are responsible for having promoted ungodliness or *chanupah*, a noun suggestive of what is profane or defiled. Those prophets the Lord has in mind are located in Jerusalem and most likely affiliated with the temple from which such *chanupah* spreads all over. The second utterance from the Lord is to the people, that they do not hear (*shamah*, cf. Jer 11.10) the *davar* (cf. Jer 18.18) of such prophets and their prophesying, the verb *nava'* from which the noun is derived suggesting the original sense of bubbling up or gushing forth without rhyme or reason. This takes the form of visions (*chazon*) from their minds or *lev* (cf. Jer 9.14), also as heart.

Jer 23.26-27: How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams which they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal?

A rhetorical question posed by the Lord for all to hear and to respond concerning prophets who tell lies and the deceit laying in their hearts (*lev*, cf. Jer 9.14), *sheqer* (cf. Jer 16.19) and *tarmym*. In this way they think (*charash*, cf. Ps 39.12) that they can make the people forget the Lord's name by the mediation of dream. Reference to a precedence for this, the fathers who had forgotten the Lord's name for Baal.

Jer 23.39: Behold, I will surely lift you up and cast you away from my presence, you and the city which I gave to you and your fathers.

Natash (cf. 1Kg 14.14-15) is the verb to cast away from the Lord's presence which reads literally "from upon my face." This lifting up and casting away applies to both

the people and the city (Jerusalem).

Jer 23.21: I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

Despite full knowledge of not being commissioned by the Lord, the prophets at hand ran or eagerly plied their trade. In other words, they prophesied (*nava'*, being implied as in Jer 23.15-16) despite the Lord *davar*, also in that reference.

Jer 26.4-6: You shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law which I have set before you and to heed the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently though you have not heeded, then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth."

Words addressed to Jeremiah to those in the court of the Lord's house which contain all the elements necessary to follow the Lord: listen, walk, heed: *shamah* (cf. Jer 23.15-16), *halak* (cf. Jer 9.14) and *shamah*. The first with respect to the Lord and the third with respect to *davar* (cf. Jer 23.21) of those prophets in the Lord's service. The second is sandwiched in between the two *shamah*, *Torah* (cf. Jer 16.11-13). These prophets were sent urgently, the verb *shakam* as in Jer 11.7. A third *shamah* is with respect to the prophets. As for Shiloh and "this city" (Jerusalem), cf. vs. 9, the latter being a curse or *qelalah*.

Jer 27.16: Then I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, "Thus says the Lord: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who are prophesying to you saying, 'Behold, the vessels of the Lord's house will now shortly be brought back from Babylon,' for it is a lie which they are prophesying to you.

A command by Jeremiah from the Lord with regard to not listening to (*shamah*, cf. Jer 26.4-6) the *davar* of prophets and their *nava'* (cf. Jer 23.21) or babbling. Such nonsense pertains to the false hope of having the temple's sacred vessels being returned from Babylon which boils down to a lie or *sheqer* (cf. Jer 23.26-27).

Jer 28.1-2: In that same year, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fifth month of the fourth year, Hananiah the son of Azzur, the prophet from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and all the people saying, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

The prophet Hananiah addresses Jeremiah in the temple of Jerusalem before the priests and people with the astounding news of intervening on their behalf with regard to Babylon.

Jer 28.8-9: The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. As for the prophet who prophesies peace when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the Lord has truly sent the prophet.

A comparison between two types of prophets: those from of old and those who prophesy peace or *shalom* (cf Jer 6.13-14). When the *davar* (cf. Jer 27.16) of that arrives, it will be proof (the verb *yadah*, cf. Jer 14.20) that the Lord himself has sent the prophet.

Jer 30.3: For behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will bring them back to the land which I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.

Shuv or to restore is the verbal root for the noun “fortunes” or *shevyth* which also means captivity. First the Lord must bring back Israel and Judah to their paternal land or ‘*erets* (cf. Jer 16.11-13). Once there, it becomes their possession or *yarash* (cf. Jos 21.43).

Jer 32.2: At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard which was in the palace of the king of Judah.

Jeremiah is both imprisoned yet tucked away safely and knows it.

Jer 32.22-23: And you gave them this land which you swore to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; and they entered and took possession of it. But they did not obey your voice or walk in your law; they did nothing of all you commanded them to do. Therefore you have made all this evil come upon them.

The Lord swears (*shavah*, cf. Dt 7.8) to give the land or ‘*erets* (cf. Jer 30.3) whose abundance is characterized by the verb *zuv* or to flow. Despite having possessed this unique land, the Israelites did not obey the Lord’s voice, *shamah* (cf. Jer 11.10) and did not walk in his *Torah* (cf. Jer 16.11-13). This plus not following any divine commands brought evil (*rah*, cf. 1Kg 9.9) upon the people.

Jer 34.14: At the end of six years each of you must set free the fellow Hebrew who has been sold to you and has served you six years; you must set him free from your service. But your fathers did not listen to me or incline their ears to me.

The common verb *shalach* is used to set free which the fathers did not do because they failed in two ways which essentially are one: they did not listen (*shamah*, cf Jer 32.22-23) nor incline their ears, the latter being a more intent form of attention.

Jer 34.15: I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, “Turn now every one of you from his evil way and amend your doings and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall dwell in the land which I gave to you and your fathers.” But you did not incline your ear or listen to me.

The adverb “persistently” is rendered by the verb *shakam* meaning to rise early. These prophets aren’t named but may be presumed to be those from Israel’s beginning to the present. They proclaim a familiar theme of repentance: turn, amend, and don’t go after (*shuv*, *yataw* and *halak*: Jer 30.3, Dt 8.16 and Jer 9.14). Such are the conditions for dwelling in the land or given to the fathers, ‘*adamah* (cf. 1Kg 14.14-15) being used here. As with Jer 34.14 failure with regard to the necessary twofold listening is noted.

Jer 37.2: But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of the Lord which he spoke through Jeremiah the prophet.

Reference is to King Zedekiah appointed by Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon along with all Israel who did not hear (*shamah*) the *davar* of the Lord (cf. Jer 34.14 and Jer 28.8-9 respectively).

Jer 42.1-2: Then all the commanders of the forces...and all the people from the least to the greatest, came near and said to Jeremiah the prophet, "Let our supplication come before you, and pray to the Lord your God for us, for all this remnant (for we are left but a few of many, as your eyes see us).

Nagash or to come near is with respect to military leaders and everyone else. They beseech Jeremiah for two requests: 1) to hear their supplication which is rendered by the verb *naphal* meaning to fall and the noun *techinah* which implies favor and compassion. 2) To pray or *palal* (cf. 1Kg 8.33-34) them. Their plight is desperate, being a remnant (*she’eryth*) which is right before Jeremiah.

Jer 44.9: Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, the wickedness of the kings of Judah, the wickedness of their wives, your own wickedness and the wickedness of your wives which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

Five types of wickedness (*rah*, cf. Jer 32.22-23) are singled out and put in a question which is both rhetorical and direct. Those whom the Lord is addressing must give an adequate response which although not given, safely can be presumed as impossible.

Jer 50.7: All who found them have devoured them, and their enemies have said, “We are not guilty, for they have sinned against the Lord, their true habitation, the Lord, the hope of their fathers.”

“All” and enemies can be taken as one and the same who don’t claim guilt because the Israelites have sinned against the Lord. For those who speak thus show greater knowledge of the Lord than his own people. This is made all the more embarrassing by calling the Lord the people’s habitation and hope, *navah* and *miqveh*, the former suggestive of that which is becoming and the latter of expectation as pertaining to fathers.

The Gospel according to Matthew

This same paragraph will be inserted at the beginning of each book relative to the quotes, a way of stressing what this article is all about and not getting bogged down in the scriptural references. It’s helpful to keep in mind whether the adverb *polumeros* or *polutropos* can tie in with each of the following verses, that is, as pertaining “to our fathers by the prophets.” This distinction is artificial, of course, but more as an aide to gain better insight into the verses at hand.

Mt 2.23: And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

By dwelling in Nazareth, Jesus fulfills (*pleroo*: to complete) what the prophets said about him being called a Nazarene. This word isn’t found in the Old Testament; a footnote in the RSV notes the similarity between the Aramaic word for Nazareth and the Hebrew word for branch.

Mt 5.12: Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Chairo and *agalliaomai*: the latter is an intensification of the former as it pertains to a reward or *misthos* in heaven. This is tied in with persecution (*dioko*: to chase, to hunt) of the prophets who preceded those whom Jesus is addressing. Perhaps they can imitate them.

Mt 5.17: Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them.

The verb for think is *nomizo* which connotes holding as a custom or a belief. Note the contrast between abolishing and fulfilling, *luo* and *pleroo*. The former implies loosening and the latter completion (cf. Mt 2.23).

Mt 7.12: So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

Poieo or to do, to make which here is reciprocal and reflective of both law (Torah) and prophets.

Mt 7.15: Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Prosecho: the common verb *echo* or to have prefaced with the preposition *pros* which is indicative of direction-towards-which; i.e., to have in a particular direction or to have one's attention directed a given way. Here it pertains to those prophets who essentially are ravenous wolves, *harpazo* also as to take by force, and attempt to usurp the role of Israel's prophets

Mt 11.13-14: For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.

John the Baptist signals the end of both prophets and law (Torah) or rather, their completion. Jesus identifies him directly as the prophet Elijah who is one of the just mentioned prophets whose mission is fulfilled. Jesus is referring to Mal 4.5: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes." I.e., that "day" is Jesus Christ. Note that Jesus conditions this; one doesn't have to accept John as Elijah or better, the fulfillment of all that Elijah stands for.

Mt 13.17: Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see and did not see it and to hear what you hear and did not hear it.

Dikaios is the adjective for righteous, those sympathetic with their message, and lived in accord with their prophecy. *Epithumeo* or literally to have intense longing upon (*epi-*) so characteristic of both. Chances are few if any could understand this association. Jesus seems to have in mind a fuller understanding of this which will be given at Pentecost.

Mt 16.14: And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

A response by those whom Jesus is addressing when he asked what they thought about his identity. Note that reference Elijah stands out as with the MT 11.13-14, for he is the only prophet to have ascended into heaven (cf. 2Kg 2.11-12).

Mt 22.40: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets."

Reference is to Dt 6.5 or "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." Compare the Hebrew words with the Greek: *lev* (cf. Jer 23.26-27) & *kardia*, *nepshesh* (cf. Dt 13.6) & *psuche*) and *kal-me'od* (literally, 'all excessiveness') & *dianoia* (*dia-* or through prefaced to *noos* or mind, perception. *Kerannumi* is the verb to depend, literally as to hang or to suspend.

Mt 23.29-32: Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous saying, "If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets." Thus you witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers.

Three references to prophets and two to fathers. "Sons" can mean descendants or those of a similar character. Jesus says that by identifying themselves falsely with the prophets, the scribes and Pharisees are witnessing against themselves (*martureo*: also as to give evidence). Both groups are filling up (*pleroo*, cf. Mt 5.17) the *metron* or measure of their fathers, that is, they are treating Jesus as their forefathers treated the prophets.

The Gospel According to Mark

This same paragraph will be inserted at the beginning of each book relative to the quotes, a way of stressing what this article is all about and not getting bogged down in the scriptural references. It's helpful to keep in mind whether the adverb *polumeros* or *polutropos* can tie in with each of the following verses, that is, as pertaining "to our fathers by the prophets." This distinction is artificial, of course, but more as an aide to gain better insight into the verses at hand.

Mk 6.4: And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and among his own kin and in his own house."

Atimos or lacking honor or respect as applied to a prophet from his country, kin and house; all three are one and the same. Implied is that *time* (honor, esteem) for such a person is by those with no personal knowledge (i.e., 'dirt').

Mk 6.15: But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet like one of the prophets of old."

Another reference to Elijah as in Mt 16.14, the only prophet who had ascended into heaven (cf. 2Kg 2.11-12).

Mk 8.28-29: And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say Elijah; and others one of the prophets." And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ."

This verse shows the high esteem John and Elijah were held among the people. However, Peter calls Jesus the Christ or anointed one who is more important than a prophet.

Mk 13.22: False Christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

The adjective *pseudos* is prefaced to Christs and prophets. *Semeion* and *teras* or omen and marvel, both being used to lead astray the elect. The verb is *apoplano*, literally to wander from; the noun *eklektos* mentioned earlier with regard to Jesus' words on the end of the age, this shortly before being arrested.

The Gospel according to Luke

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Lk 1.16-17: And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.

A reference to the prophet Elijah and the prophecy of Malachi 4.5 (cf. Mt.11.13-14): “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.” Jesus is to share in this same spirit and power or *pneuma* and *dunamis* or breath and the capacity to do something. Note that the verb *epistrepho* or to turn (literally, to turn upon) is threefold: 1) fathers->children, 2) disobedient->wisdom of just and 3) make ready-> people prepared. The last suggests a preparedness that will come to completion.

Lk 1.54-55: He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity for ever.

Antilambano or to help or to lay hold of with regard to Israel. Note the importance of remembrance, the verb *mnemoneuo* concerning mercy or *eleos*. Such remembrance/mercy extends to the first father, if you will, Abraham. “Servant” and posterity” (literally seed) here are one and the same.

Lk 1.70-71: as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

The idea of speaking through prophets is associated with the verb *davar* noted often in the Old Testament references above, that is, speaking as to make present or to give expression. Here it concerns being saved from current enemies and those who hate Israel (Rome possibly included). Note the adjective “holy” which is in contrast to false prophets as in Mt 13.22 above.

Lk 1.72-73: to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham.

Eleos and *mnemoneuo* (cf. Lk 1.54-55 for both) or mercy and to remember here are one and the same with respect to the fathers (the past) and the covenant/oath sworn to Abraham. Reference is to Gn 22.16-18 when he was about to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Lk 6.23: Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

An association of being hated for Jesus' sake with "that day" which is synonymous with the time of fathers who did the same to the prophets. *Chairo* (cf. Mt 5.12) and *skirtao*, the latter also as to bound much as lambs.

Lk 9.8: by some that Elijah had appeared and by others that one of the old prophets had risen.

Reference to John the Baptist recently put to death by King Herod which again shows the reverence bestowed upon Elijah, more so than any other prophet.

Lk 10.24: For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see and did not see it, and to hear what you hear and did not hear it.

Two verbs relative to sight, *blepo* and *eido*. The former refers to seeing or having the power of sight and the latter to seeing in the sense of acquiring knowledge. As for hearing, *akouo* applies to both suggesting listening to the Torah which is fulfilled, not abolished, in the person of Jesus Christ.

Lk 11.47-48: Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. So you are witnesses and consent to the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and you build their tombs.

These verses parallel Mt 23.29-32, the verse at hand being addressed to lawyers.

Lk 11.49: Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, "I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute" that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation.

The **RSV** calls "Wisdom (*sophia*) of God" the title of an unknown book or personification of wisdom as in 7.35. Reference to prophets intimates the passion and death of Jesus. *Katabole* or literally a throwing down with respect to foundation. The first blood shed can refer to Cain's murder of his brother Abel (cf. Gn 4.8). His blood

which seeped into the earth (cf vs 11) is crying out to “this generation.”

Lk 13.28: There you will weep and gnash your teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves thrust out.

The verb *horao* (to see) implies the looking towards an object. Compare with *blepo* and *eido* of Lk 10.24. Such a directed looking takes place after being thrust out by the householder (cf. vs. 25) and is aimed at the kingdom of God within the house. To experience this means one has been in the house with the prophets but no longer is there.

Lk 13.34: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!

Jerusalem, the capitol of Israel, is singled out where Jesus uses the image of a hen gathering her brood. The verb *episunago* or to gather consists of two prepositions, *epi* and *sun* or upon and with, in this incidence both indicative of tender care.

Lk 16.16: The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and every one enters it violently.

John the Baptist is the embodiment of both law and prophets meaning they won't continue after him because he is the take-off point for preaching of the good news. Those listening to it enter the kingdom of God violently, *biazo* also as to be hard pressed. Note the passive “is preached” which is suggestive of others engaged in it as well as Jesus.

Lk 16.29: But Abraham said, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.”

Moses is singled out by reason of having received the Torah on Mount Horeb. To hear is to pay attention not just the Torah but to what the prophets (all without exception) have to say. This will prevent the rich man's brothers from enduring the same fate of being in Hades (cf vs 23). The way it's presented, however, suggests that they won't listen and end up like him.

Lk 18.31: And taking the twelve, he said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished.”

Teleo or accomplished suggests bringing not just to an end but to fulfillment. Compare with *pleroo* noted in Mt 5.17. The disciples would have grasped better Jesus' words if they paid attention to the prophets such as Is 53.13 and Zech 13.7. It was only after Jesus' resurrection that they understood this. "And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" [Lk 24.27].

Lk 24.25: And he said to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"

Anoetos and *bradus* or foolish and slow with regard to the heart or *kardia*. Both are dissolved when the disciples say "Did not our hearts burn within us...when he opened to us the scriptures" [vs.32]? *Dianoigo* is the verb to open, *dia* or through corresponding to the *dia* in *diermeneuo* (to interpret) in the next excerpt.

Lk 24.27: And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Refer to Lk 18.31 above where Jesus interprets scriptures, *diermeneuo* being a verb used to explain a foreign language which is not far from the situation at hand. The preposition *dia* or through suggests a thorough explanation.

Lk 24.44: Then he said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled."

Jesus spoke with the disciples while with them but only after Pentecost did they realize the meaning and scope of his words. This is noted a number of times throughout the Gospels. "For the Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men.' But they did not understand the saying, and it was concealed from them that they should not perceive it" [Lk 9.44-45]. In the verse at hand, the psalms are mentioned, number twenty-two standing out.

The Gospel according to John

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or *polutropos* can tie in with each of the following verses, that is, as pertaining “to our fathers by the prophets.” This distinction is artificial, of course, but more as an aide to gain better insight into the verses at hand.

Jn 1.45: Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Philip reveals knowledge that seems divinely given about Jesus Christ. That is to say, upon having met Jesus, he saw in him something that rang true in his reading as well as listening to the Torah. Perhaps later among all the disciples Philip was keen enough to realize events pertaining to Jesus as similarly having been foretold...a kind of pre-Pentecostal experience.

Jn 4.20: Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Two conflicting mountains, Gerizim and Zion. As for the former, the fathers are those belonging to the Samaritans.

Jn 6.31: Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, “He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

A clear reference to Ex 16 with regard to manna. It should be noted that quails (vs. 13) are included though rarely if ever mentioned when speaking of manna.

Jn 6.45: It is written in the prophets, “And they shall all be taught by God.” Every one who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.

A reference to Is 54.13 which reads in full as “All your sons shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the prosperity of your sons.” *Lamad* is the verb for taught and connotes being chastised or made accustomed to and hence to become a disciple. The Hebrew text doesn't have the preposition “by” and reads literally, “they shall be taught the Lord.” *Shalom* translates here as prosperity.

Jn 6.58: This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live for ever.

Jesus speaks of himself objectively, *houtos* or this which puts him squarely as food before those listening to him.

Jn 7.22: Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man upon the Sabbath.

The law or Torah allows circumcision even when the eighth day falls on the Sabbath. “And on th eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised” [Lev 12.3].

Jn 8.52: The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died as did the prophets; and you say, ‘If any one keeps my word, he will never taste death.’”

The Jews throw back Jesus’ own words as to keeping his word or *logos*, the verb *tereo* also as to protect or to guard. *Geuo* or to taste suggests having experience of something. I.e., *tereo* precludes *geuo* or *logos* precludes *thanatos* or death.

Acts of the Apostles

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As for Acts, mention of fathers and prophets are of special interest because they are in between the Gospels and the epistles of St Paul. In other words, both references come on the heels of Jesus’ ministry and words as they had impacted the early Christian communities relative to both Jews and Gentiles.

Acts 3.18: But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled.

A chief source of this foretelling (*prokataggello*) is found in Is 53.7-8. Note reference to the singular (not plural) mouth, as though all the prophets were united in foretelling one message. *Pleroo* (cf. Lk 18.31) as to fulfill implies bringing to completion.

Acts 3.24-25: And all the prophets who have spoken from Samuel and those who came afterwards also proclaimed these days. You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God gave to your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your posterity shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

Prophets prior to Samuel aren't included, he being implied as the beginning of prophecy as it came to be understood. The reason: his prophecy with regard to Jesus Christ took on a more definite shape concerning King David. "These days" are the ones associated with Pentecost. Those whom Peter are addressing are heirs (to Samuel, for example) as well as extending all the way back to Abraham. The quote is from Gn 22.18 where future generations will have the same blessing as Abraham; i.e., no time extension or separation exists between the two.

Acts 7.39-40: Our fathers refused to obey him but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt, saying to Aaron, "Make for us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."

Stephen refers frequently to fathers as he is making his defense shortly before being stoned to death. Reference here is to Moses whom our fathers (first person plural, indicative of corporate responsibility). The sequence of Moses' rejection: did not obey, thrust aside and turned to Egypt. Yet the people..."our fathers"...required a leader, so they chose Aaron to make ersatz gods for their guidance. The quote at hand is Ex 32.23.

Acts 7.52-53: Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.

Stephen poses a rhetorical question to his accuser in order to put them on the spot. He identifies them with their fathers who persecuted the prophets like they are persecuting him. "Your fathers" (second person plural used to show them contempt) killed the prophets who announced beforehand (*prokataggello*, cf. Acts 3.18) the Righteous One (*Dikaios*; cf. Acts 3.14). In sum, the prophets and Righteous One suffered the same fate just as Stephen is doing right now. As for angels, compare with Acts 7.38: "This is he (Moses) who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai."

Acts 10.43: To him all the prophets bear witness that every one who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Martureo or to give witness (cf. Mt 23.29-32) with regard to three references pertaining to prophets: "And no inhabitant will say, 'I am sick;' the people who dwell

there will be forgiven their iniquity” [Is 33.24]. “And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” [Jer 31.34]. “Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet and to anoint a most holy place” [Dn 9.24].

Acts 13.17: The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it.

Eklego followed by *hupsoo* or to choose and then exalt. The first applies to fathers and the second to Israel while in Egypt before the Exodus, that is, totaling some four hundred years. Note the adjective *hupselos* (uplifted) derived from the verb *hupsoo*. *Paroikia* or stay literally means a being at home beside or in a place not one’s own.

Acts 13.27: For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning him.

Inhabitants of Jerusalem and their rulers are singled out by reason of their proximity to the temple. Such proximity had no effect on them, having failed in two respects: 1) They didn’t recognize the “messenger of this salvation” [vs. 26], the verb being *agnoeo* implies ignorance. 2) They lacked *anagignosko*, the preposition *ana* suggestive of increase and a more comprehensive knowing. I.e., in similar fashion they failed in this. Both verbs pertain to weekly Sabbath readings of the prophets which contributed to fulfilling (*pleroo*, cf. Acts 3.18) their condemnation or *krino*, also to judge.

Acts 13.32-33: And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you.”

Euaggelizo or to bring good news which is the same as the promise (*epaggelia*) made by Israel’s fathers, that is, fulfilled (*ekpleroo*: the preposition *ek* or from signifying to fulfil completely) by raising Jesus. Ps 2.7 serves to back this up. Note emphasis upon “today” addressed to a son who is fully grown up, indicative of a purpose God has in mind.

Acts 13.40-41: Beware, therefore, lest there come upon you what is said in the

prophets: “Behold, you scoffers and wonder and perish; for I do a deed in your days, a deed you will never believe, if one declares it to you.”

Paul quotes from Hab 1.5 which from the Hebrew reads “Look among the nations and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told.” The subject at hand pertains to the Chaldeans coming “to seize habitations not their own” [vs. 6].

Acts 22.3: I am a Jew born at Tarsus in Cilicia but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as you all are this day.

As for Gamaliel, refer to Acts 5.34+ who counsels not taking action against the early apostles. One wonders what this Jewish sage thought of Paul’s conversion which took place shortly afterwards and if the two ever met again.

Acts 24.14-15: But this I admit to you that according to the Way which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the law or written in the prophets, having a hope in God which these themselves accept that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.

As for Christianity in its early stages as the Way (*Hodos*: also as path, track, journey, voyage), see Acts 9.2: “And asked him (high priest) for letters to the synagogues at Damascus so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.” In the verses at hand Paul subscribes to the *Hodos* as being in accord with the fathers and prophets.

Acts 26.22-23: To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer and that by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles."

Epikouria or help, also as a mercenary or auxiliary force from God enabling Paul to testify (*martureo*, cf. Acts 10.43) to the prophets in what they say concerning Christ’s death and resurrection. The NIV has a reference to Is 49.6: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

Acts 28.23: When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in great numbers. And he expounded the matter to them from morning till evening, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets.

Ektithemi or to expound or to lay out (*ek*: from). *Diamartureo* or to testify in a more thorough sense signified by the preposition *dia* or through prefaced to the verb. *Peitho* or to persuade suggests an effort to persuade which here is borne out by the next verse: “some were convinced by what he said while others disbelieved.”

Acts 28.25-26: So, as they disagreed among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet: ‘Go to this people and say, You shall indeed hear but never understand, and you shall indeed see but never perceive.’”

The partial success of Paul’s preaching noted in the previous entry prompted him to equate them with their fathers whom Isaiah had addressed, that is 6.9-10 which reads in full: “Go and say to this people: ‘Hear and hear but do not understand; see and see but do not perceive.’ Make the heart of this people fat and their ears heavy and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn and be healed.”

Epistles of St. Paul, First and Second Peter, James and Revelation

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Romans 1.1-2: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures.

Note the sequence of prepositions: *eis* the gospel -> *proepaggello* (*pro* & *epi*, before & upon) or promised beforehand -> *dia* prophets -> *en* the scriptures.

⁶Because references to fathers and prophets aren’t as numerous, these references will suffice for the remainder of New Testament books.

Romans 3.21: But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it.

A contrast and parallel: divine righteousness (*dikaiosune*) vs. the law. Note that prophets are added with the law after the contrast is made. These two bear witness to (*martureo*, cf. Acts 26.22-23) the manifestation of righteousness apart from the law.

First Corinthians 10.1: I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food, and all drank the same supernatural drink.

Note the sequence of prepositions: *hupo* the cloud -> *dia* the sea -> *eis* Moses -> *en* the cloud -> *en* the sea. *Pneumatikos* (of the spirit, breath) is the adjective for spiritual pertaining to food and drink.

Ephesians 2.19: So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.

Xenos and *paroikos* or strangers and sojourners. The former also as guest or refugee and the latter as dwelling beside (*para*) a permanent home or house (*oikos*). Compare these two with *sumpolites* and *oikeios* or with (*sum*) the city or *polis* and of the household. What distinguishes the second pair from the first is the foundation and cornerstone, the former being the apostles who are associated with the prophets and the latter, Christ Jesus. Despite prophets having lived in the past, Paul equates them as being on the same plane as apostles who are living as he writes this.

Ephesians 3.4-5: When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

Reference to the mystery (*musterion*: a hidden secret thing made known by a process of initiation) of vs. 3 was revealed to Paul about which he had given a brief written account. *Sunesis* as insight means literally a being together with respect to Christ-as-*musterion*. Although hidden from previous generations, he is revealed (*anakalupto* implies being uncovered) by the *Pneuma* to both apostles and prophets.

James 5.10: As an example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the prophets who

spoke in the name of the Lord.

Hypodeigma or example also means figure or copy in reference to the prophets. Here it's with respect to *kakopatheia* and *makrothumia* or suffering and patience. *Pathos* refers to a passive state or misfortune prefaced with the adjective *kakos*, evil. *Thumos* refers to soul, breath or life and is prefaced with the adjective *makros*, large.

First Peter 1.10: The prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired about this salvation;

Charis or grace also means favor about which the prophets knew beforehand. This knowledge came from their searching and inquiring, *exetazo* and *exereunao*. Both verbs are prefaced with the preposition *ex* (from), suggestive of intense scrutiny.

First Peter 1.18-19: You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Lutruo or to ransom, procure a release with regard to *mataios*, an adjective meaning vain as well as futile associated with the fathers of those whom Peter is addressing and therefore implies the Torah compared with the death of Jesus Christ.

Second Peter 3.2: that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles.

Mimnesko or to remember in the sense of bringing to mind or bringing into the present. It has two objects, *rhema* (utterance or thing said compared with *logos* or word as expression) which were spoken beforehand and Jesus' commandment or *entole*. As for both prophets and apostles, the genitive case is used.

Second Peter 3.3-4: First of all you must understand this, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own passions and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation."

Empaiymone or scoffing, making fun through mockery which is associated with "last days," the same time reference associated with Heb 1.1-2 which forms the theme of this text "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a son whom he appointed the heir of all things through whom also he created the world." *Empaiymone* seems to be in the

context of Christ not having returned by now; if so, he won't return at all. Also there is no change with respect to creation nor will there ever be, this in conjunction with fathers. I.e., their deeds as well as Christ's coming are useless. Note that such a view comes from the scoffers' passions or *epithumia* also as desire or intense longing.

Revelation 10.7: but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God, as he announced to his servants the prophets, should be fulfilled.

A use of the preposition *en* (in) with respect to "days of the trumpet call" (*phone*: sound, voice). The sacred number seven is found with respect to the siege and fall of Jericho where the priests sounded the trumpet (cf. Josh 6.8). *Hotan* (when) in the Greek text is used here to show the simultaneity of the days, trumpet call and the angel. It serves to introduce the fulfillment (*teleo*) or completion of temporal extension noted in the last verse by the word *chronos*. *Musterion* (cf. Eph 3.4-5) as a secret, hidden purpose known only to initiates here belongs to God and refers to the prophets.

Revelation 16.6: For men have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. It is their due!

Here the third angel is speaking who in vs. 4 poured his bowl into rivers and fountains causing them to become blood which corresponds to that of the saints and prophets. Those responsible for shedding such holy blood are due or *axios* which also means worthy.

Revelation 18.20: Rejoice over her, O heaven, O saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!"

After the lamentation of vss. 9 through 19 comes an interlude of sorts, most likely from the "voice from heaven" of vs. 4 which also had recounted the downfall of Babylon/Rome. The verse at hand is directed to heaven or God's dwelling place as though it were a personal being watching the drama unfold on earth below. Presumably situated there are saints, apostles and prophets who are similarly addressed. The reason for such rejoicing (*euphrainomai*) is divine judgment against Babylon/Rome.

Revelation 22.6: And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

Words uttered by either one of the seven angels of 21.9, the unidentified “one who talked to me” of 21.15 or the one who showed John the water of life of 22.1. “These words” (*logos*, cf. Jn 8.52) refer to the Book of Revelation as a whole. Their trustworthiness and truth is emphasized by identifying the Lord with the prophets’ spirits (*pneuma*, cf. Lk 1.16-17). That is to say, Revelation recapitulates the prophetic tradition of Israel. The Lord who is identified with the prophetic tradition sent his angel; note the third person personal pronoun which sets this angel apart from the others in Revelation. His purpose is to show the servants of God that which must (dei: shows necessity) transpire soon or *en tachei* (from *tachos* (quick with *en* or *in*), this emphasizing an impending future reality.

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