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Deuteronomistic Concepts of Exile Interpreted in Jeremiah and Ezekiel

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Introduction

One of the most intriguing questions in pentateuchal studies, as well as in the study of prophetic literature, is the question of their mutual relationship. Beyond intertextual literary links, the concepts of exile in Deuteronomy and their re-presentations in Jeremiah and Ezekiel exemplify the tensions between concepts and reality.¹ My working hypothesis regarding these concepts of exile is that Deuteronomy presents mostly principles of thought, while the prophetic books apply to present circumstances what are already accepted concepts. The questions to be asked are: What did Jeremiah and Ezekiel (as well as disciples and redactors who contributed to the present form of the books) know of and accept from the deuteronomistic concepts of exile? How did they use these concepts in accordance with their personal experiences in the first decades of the 6th century B.C.E.? To answer these questions, I will first define *exile* and differentiate it from *concepts of exile*; second, I will proceed to the various conceptual references to exile within the book of Deuteronomy; and finally, on this basis, I will examine a few central prophecies in Jeremiah and Ezekiel that relate to this topic.

Author's note: It is a great privilege and pleasure to dedicate this essay to Shalom Paul, who opened my eyes, my ears, and my heart to Deutero-Isaiah and led me through Exile and exilic thought.

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1. Of the pentateuchal sources, only Deuteronomy and the Holiness Code mention Israel's Exile explicitly (in verbs, phrases, and themes). The prophetic allusions to and exegesis of the H concept of Exile will await a later discussion.

Exile and Concepts of Exile: Definitions

Exile was a military punishment forced upon individuals or groups of peoples. It was imposed by conquerors as part of the subjugation of occupied peoples and territories won in war. Hence, exile marks the last step of war, leading to the rearrangement of daily life in its aftermath.

Although exile is a known phenomenon in the history of the ancient Near East from as early as the third millennium and even more from the second,² it had become an international imperial policy in the Neo-Assyrian period and flourished under Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.E.) and his successors. The Neo-Assyrian kings used exile as their most severe strategy for controlling rebellious territories that had previously been subjected to the king of Assyria in vassal treaties. An Assyrian exile meant a massive two-way transfer of at least two subject populations and the establishment of an organized Assyrian bureaucracy in the periphery, aided by military forces.³ The Neo-Babylonian empire is considered to have carried on the Neo-Assyrian policy of exile, but the Babylonians differed from their predecessors in their interests and in their administrative organization. Thus, they did not bother to implement the two-way exile and settled for bringing exiles to Babylon and its vicinity.⁴ Deportations from Israel and Judah, reported in the biblical literature, accord with this international policy and the overall experience of peoples in the ancient Near East in the course of the 8th to the 6th centuries B.C.E. (see, for example, 2 Kings 15–17, 24–25).⁵

2. I. J. Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," *JNES* 32 (1973) 70–98; J. M. Sasson, *The Military Establishments at Mari* (Studia Pohl 3; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969) 48–49; S. Ahituv, "New Documents Pertaining to Deportation as a Political System in Ancient Egypt," *Beer Sheva* 1 (1973) 87–89.

3. B. Oded, *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1979) 18–32, 41–74; F. M. Fales and J. N. Postgate, *Imperial Administrative Records, Part II: Provincial and Military Administration* (SAA 11; Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1995) xxviii–xxx, 91–119.

4. D. S. Vanderhoof, *The Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets* (HSM 59; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) 81–114.

5. I. Eph'al, "Assyrian Dominion in Palestine," in *The World History of the Jewish People*, vol. 4/1: *The Age of the Monarchies: Political History* (ed. A. Malamat; Tel Aviv: Masada, 1979) 276–89; M. Cogan, "Judah under Assyrian Hegemony: A Re-examination of Imperialism and Religion," *JBL* 112 (1993) 406–8; P. Machinist, "Palestine, Administration of (Assyro-Babylonian)," *ABD* 5:69–81; N. Na'aman and R. Zadok, "Sargon II's Deportations to Israel and Philistia (716–708 B.C.)," *JCS* 40



Biblical sources in general and Deuteronomy in particular treat exile from a theological perspective. Exile is not (only) a historical event of war within an imperial international policy but a divine judgment upon a disobedient people (as in 2 Kgs 17:18-23, 24:20).⁶ Hence, the concept of exile is one example of many in Deuteronomy and in the Deuteronomistic History, wherein the metaphor of political suzerainty is transferred to the relationship between God and his people. Parallel to the human-political sphere, exile is presented theologically as a divine judgment threatened or executed against the disloyal people in reaction to their cultic misconduct and their transgressions against the covenant to which they were committed by God (as, for instance, in Deut 4:25-28).⁷ God is the agent of exile who will act justifiably according to his previously announced warnings (as in Deut 8:1, 19-20) and according to the stipulations of his treaty with the people (Deuteronomy 28). Hence, in my discussion of concepts of exile, the imperial policies serve only as background. Historiosophy is a discussion focused on the realm of ideological and theological perspectives.

The Theological Challenge of Exile: The Deuteronomic Concepts

The Gift of the Land and the Concept of Exile

Exile challenged the concept of land that had become central to the Israelite religion as one of the three points in the triangular relationship of

(1988) 36-46. See also studies of the Israelite and Judean existence in Exile: I. Eph'al, "The Samaritan(s) in the Assyrian Sources," in *Ah, Assyria . . . : Studies in Assyrian History and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography Presented to Hayim Tadmor* (ed. M. Cogan and I. Eph'al; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992) 36-45; idem, "The Western Minorities in Babylonia in the 6th-5th Centuries: Maintenance and Cohesion," *Or* 47 (1978) 74-90; B. Oded, "Observations on the Israelite/Judean Exiles in Mesopotamia during the Eighth-Sixth Centuries BCE," in *Immigration and Emigration within the Ancient Near East: Festschrift E. Lipiński* (ed. K. van Lerberghe and A. Schoors; OLA 65; Leuven: Peeters, 1995) 205-12; R. Zadok, *The Jews in Babylonia during the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods* (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 1979); idem, *The Earliest Diaspora: Israelites and Judeans in Pre-Hellenistic Mesopotamia* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2002).

6. The theological perception does not distinguish the people of God from other nations; see 2 Kgs 17:11 and, generally, the prophecies to the nations, such as Ezek 25:6-7, 30:20-26, etc.

7. This fully accords with the overall Deuteronomic concept of the God-people relationship, see M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972; repr. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992) 59-157.



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God-People-Land.⁸ According to the deuteronomic concept, the land is under God's sovereignty; thus, *he* allows his people to live in it; *he* gives them the land as possession (as in Deut 1:8).⁹ However, the land is a conditional gift, which either benefits the obedient people with long-lived existence upon it (Deut 11:8-9) or brings calamity (and exile) to the disobedient—those who violate God's covenant (Deut 11:16-17):¹⁰

(8) ושמרתם את כל המצוה אשר אנכי מצוך היום, למען תחזקו ובאתם וירשתם את הארץ אשר אתם עברים שמה לרשתה. (9) ולמען תאריכו ימים על האדמה אשר נשבע ה' לאבותיכם לתת להם ולזרעם. ארץ זבת חלב ודבש. . . .
(16) השמרו לכם פן יפתה לבבכם וסרתם ועבדתם אלהים אחרים והשתחיתם להם.
(17) וחרה אף ה' בכם ועצר את השמים ולא יהיה מטר והאדמה לא תתן את יכולה, ואברתם מהרה מעל הארץ הטובה אשר ה' נתן לכם.

This conditional gift, with its accompanying threats of dislocation, is fundamental to the deuteronomic concepts of exile. In this framework, exile is positioned in opposition to the concept of the land.

The Loss of the Land in Deuteronomy:

Four Perspectives on Exile

Dislocation and exile denote the loss of the land in ten relatively short passages in Deuteronomy (Deut 4:25-31; 6:10-15; 8:19-20; 11:13-21; 28:20-26, 36-37, 63-64; 29:21-27; 30:1-10, 15-20).¹¹ The literary and thematic contexts of these passages suggest that the conditional gift will be

8. D. I. Block, *The Gods and the Nations: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern National Theology* (ETS Monograph Series 2; Jackson, MS: Evangelical Theological Society, 1988) 5-6, 98-123; M. Weinfeld, "Inheritance of the Land-Privilege versus Obligation: The Concept of the 'Promise of the Land' in the Sources of the First and Second Temple Periods," *Zion* (1984) 115-37 [Hebrew].

9. G. von Rad, "The Promised Land and Yahweh's Land in the Hexateuch," *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1966) 79-93. J. Joosten (and others) correctly emphasize the "feudal relationship" of God, people, and land as a shared concept throughout the Pentateuch (*People and Land in the Holiness Code: An Exegetical Study of the Ideational Framework of the Law in Leviticus 17-26* [VTSup 67; Leiden: Brill, 1996] 169-92); cf. Exod 15:17; Priestly and Holiness Code: Exod 6:2-8; Josh 22:19; Lev 25:23; and Deut 1:8; 6:10, 18, 23, etc.

10. P. D. Miller, "The Gift of the Land: The Deuteronomic Theology of the Land," *Int* 23 (1969) 451-65; N. C. Habel, *The Land Is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies* (OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 36-53; and throughout the biblical literature in Weinfeld, "Inheritance of the Land," 115-26.

11. The passages mentioned refer only to dislocation of Israel from its land. Hence, reference restricted to the positive part of this conditional promise (למען תחיה)



taken away if the people violate the covenant. Dislocation is the divine retaliation for transgressions of loyalty, for disobedience, and for the worship of other gods. But beyond this common denominator, these passages do not present a unified perspective on exile.

In the study of Deuteronomy, references to exile have served the major argument for the literary-historical differentiation of layers within the book. Scholars have separated the book diachronically into a preexilic and an exilic layer, perceiving the latter as parallel to the Dtr² of the Deuteronomistic History and to the prophetic literature of the 6th century B.C.E., mainly Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Deutero-Isaiah.¹² The present study illuminates four *independent* perspectives of exile in Deuteronomy. A semantic differentiation illustrates the diversity: 13 verbal phrases designate dislocation in these texts, 3 denote divine initiative toward calamitous uproot within the land (אבד, כילה מעל פני האדמה, נשמד/השמיד), and 8 specify expulsion (גרש, הוליד, הדיח (נידח), ניהג, ניסח מעל, נתש מעל אדמתו, הפיץ, השליך).¹³ Thematically, these perspectives of exile parallel four stages in the process of dislocation resulting from defeat in war: (1) total calamity within the land, (2) deportation and dispersion, (3) continuous existence in exile, and (4) restoration (see table 1).

(1) *Total Calamity within the Land.* Five passages describe the loss of the land as the final calamitous punishment for the sinful people (Deut 6:10-15, 8:19-20, 11:13-17, 28:20-26, 30:15-20 [as well as 4:26]). No exile, and certainly no prospect for continuous existence outside the land of Canaan, is assumed in the following phrases: אבד תאבדון, לא תאריכון ימים, השמד תשמדון עליה, (4:26; 6:15; 8:19-20; 11:17; 28:20-26, 47-57; 30:18), עד השמדך ועד אבדך / עד כלתו אתך מעל האדמה אשר אתה בא שמה לרשתה / עד אבדך / עד השמדך (28:20-26).

Although these phrases are usually denied scholarly attention, they constitute an independent perspective on the loss of the land; the writer

לך וירשת את הארץ אשר ה' אלהיך נתן לך, Deut 16:20) is not included; neither is the poetic reference to expulsion of the Canaanite peoples in Deut 33:27.

12. G. von Rad, *Deuteronomy* (OTL; trans. D. Barton; London: SCM, 1966) 50-51, 183-84; J. D. Levenson, "Who Inserted the Book of the Torah?" *HTR* 68 (1975) 203-33; A. D. H. Mayes, "Deuteronomy 4 and the Literary Criticism of Deuteronomy," *JBL* 100 (1981) 23-51; W. Brueggeman, *Deuteronomy* (Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries; Nashville: Abingdon, 2001) 17-24.

13. By way of comparison, the Holiness Code mentions exile only in Leviticus 18, 20, and 26, and uses only four verbal phrases: אבד, זרה, נעזב מ-, שילח.



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of these phrases presents dislocation within the land itself and perceives annihilation, not exile, as the final consequence.¹⁴ Thematic as well as lexical arguments establish the independent position of this perspective. Lexically, the analogy between Israel and the foreign peoples in Deut 8:19-20 confirms the literal meaning of annihilation for the term אבד (along with the other verbal phrases mentioned above). Thematically, as exemplified in the catalog of curses in Deuteronomy 28, two separate descriptions of defeat in war lead to loss of the land.¹⁵ According to the first, defeat is portrayed as either widespread death in the land of Canaan (Deut 28:25-26) or as subjugation to an enemy in the homeland (28:30-34, 47-57). This subjugation causes loss of the personal and everyday components of economical and social independence (28:30-34, 49-57); it leads to calamity in the land (עד השמידו אתך, 28:48; עד השמדך, vv. 45, 51, 61), with no mention of deportation.¹⁶ A second description of defeat in Deuteronomy 28 depicts deportation to foreign and unknown lands as the final result (vv. 36-37, 62-68), without describing any other measures of subjugation in the homeland.¹⁷ It is clear from the distinctiveness of these two descriptions that concept (1) is an independent and separate concept of the loss of the land.

14. P. C. Craigie, *Deuteronomy* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976) 139 n. 4, 189-90; and regularly translated this way in the NJPSV. Compare this with the understanding of these phrases as mere hyperbole but actually referring to exile. So D. Z. Hoffman (*Deuteronomy* [trans. Z. Har-Sheffer; Tel Aviv: Nezach, 1959] 75, 102 [Hebrew]); and Tigay (*Deuteronomy* [JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996] 52-53, 262). Based on Deut 8:19-20, I avoid this line of interpretation, which seems to harmonize the sources.

15. D. R. Hillers emphasized the compositional character of the list of curses in Deuteronomy 28 and the tendency to combine traditional curses together (*Treaty Curses and the Old Testament Prophets* [BibOr 16; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964] 32-40). Hence, the logical progress defeat-subjugation-exile in Deut 28:25-26, 27-37 and vv. 58-68 illustrates the final editorial/compiler work of this chapter, motivated by diverse literary considerations (so Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 271, 489-92, 494-97).

16. Compare with Deut 20:5-7 and the blessings in 28:8, 11; see Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, 345; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 267-71.

17. Deut 28:62-68 brings together annihilation in the land (להאביד אתכם ולהשמיד, v. 63a) and exile (והפיצך ה' בכל העמים, v. 64). The phrase ונסחתם מעל האדמה joins the two descriptions, because נסח has both meanings (HALOT 702): 'tear down', designating destruction (Prov 15:25), and 'tear away', within the semantic field of exile (as is its Akkadian equivalent *nasāhu*, CAD N/2 3-4), such as מאהל ויטחך (Ps 52:7, where חתת and נתן designate destruction, and שרש and נסח expulsion and uproot); this proximity of meanings also appears in Prov 2:21-22, with נסח parallel to כרת and in opposition to נותר ב- and שכן.



(2) *Deportation and Dispersion*. Five passages present expulsion from the land (Deut 4:27-28; 28:36-37, 63-64; 29:21-27; 30:1-10): ויתשם ה' (29:27); מעל אדמתם יולך ה' אתך ואת מלכך אשר (29:27); וישלכם אל ארץ אחרת (29:27); תקים עליך אל גוי אשר לא ידעת אתה ואבתיך כגוים אשר ינהג ה' אתכם שמה (28:36); בכל העמים אשר ינהגך ה' שמה (4:27); בכל הגוים אשר הדיחך ה' אלהיך שמה (28:37); והפיץ ה' אתכם בעמים (30:1); מכל העמים אשר הפיץ ה' שמה (28:64); והפיץ ה' אתכם בעמים (30:3). The phrases illustrate exile using either agricultural language (נתש, השליך) or pastoral images of scattering (הפיץ, הדיח, גיהג, הולך, גיהג, הולך).¹⁸ As can be gathered from the repeated plurals, (מקצה הארץ ועד קצה הארץ), בכל העמים (with the exception of 28:36, which has גוי), exile could presumably be to a wide range of locations, without specific direction or destination.

(3) *Continuous Existence in Exile*. Nevertheless, these passages in Deuteronomy present a picture of continuity of life in exile (Deut 4:27-28; 28:36-37, 63-68; implemented in 29:21-28 and 30:1-10). The first three passages refer to two aspects of life among the peoples. First, exile is the place where the people will worship other gods of wood and stone (4:28; 28:36, 64). Second, the exiles' fate will be distress because of shame, mockery, annoyance, and fear (28:37, 64-67).¹⁹

(4) *Restoration*. Restoration appears in only two units in Deuteronomy (Deut 4:29-31, 30:1-10). However, these passages do not portray the restoration in similar ways. Deut 4:29-31 begins with the people's initiative to renew the connection with God and to repent. This repentance guarantees God's beneficial response in accordance with the forefathers' covenant (ברית אבתיך, v. 31), but there is no mention of ingathering and return to the land of Israel. Deut 30:1-10, on the other hand, begins with repentance (vv. 1-2) and goes into a detailed description of God's deeds in response, including ingathering and resettlement in the land (vv. 3-5), transformation of the heart to assure obedience (v. 6), and blessings in accord with divine commitments to salvation and agricultural blessings (vv. 7-9; see table 1).

With the exception of Deut 4:25-31, the deuteronomic passages clearly differentiate calamity, exile, and restoration.²⁰ This distinction, then, intensifies the literary questions concerning the amalgamated/complex nature

18. The agricultural meaning of נתש ('pull out') is still retained in Jer 24:6, 42:10, 45:4; Ezek 19:12 (HALOT 737); השליך 'to throw, dispose of' (HALOT 1528) has a wider usage, but in reference to plants it appears in Ezek 28:17; and along with נתש in Ezek 19:12.

19. Mental distress in exile characterizes Psalms 42-43, 137, and others.

20. Deut 28:63-64 presents an example of the fusion of concepts (1), (2), and (3); see n. 20 above.



Table 1. Perspectives on Exile in Deuteronomy

Passages in Deut	Calamity	Exile		Restoration
	(1) within the land	(2) dispersion	(3) existence in exile	(4) in/from exile
4:25-31	+ (25-26)	+ (27-28)	+ (27-28)	+ (29-31)
6:10-15	+			
8:19-20	+			
11:13-21	+			
28:20-26	+			
28:36-37		+	+	
28:63-64		+	+	
29:21-27		+	(+)	
30:15-20	+			

of Deut 4:25-31.²¹ But beyond these differences and their possible literary implications, several shared concepts in the four deuteronomistic perceptions of exile should be noted:

1. Theological context: Exile is one component of the deuteronomistic description of the loss of the land; it is a counterconcept to the concept of the land as a gift. The loss of the land is the most severe way that God punishes his people for violating his covenant.

2. Scope: The loss of the land is complete and final. Whether it denotes uprooting within the land or exile from it, the loss of the land designates dislocation of all the people. None of the texts mentions a remnant that will survive in the land of Canaan. According to the above-mentioned passages in Deuteronomy, survivors of the exile, if any, remain in *foreign* lands.

3. Future prospects: The four deuteronomistic concepts of exile demonstrate two major lines of thought concerning the future of the triangular God-People-Land relationship. According to perceptions (1), (2), and (3),

21. Opinions differ as to the extent of the exilic intrusion into Deuteronomy 4, ranging from comprising only vv. 29-31, as in G. A. Smith, *Deuteronomy* (CB; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950) 67-69; to comprising the whole passage, vv. 25-31 (or to v. 40), as in M. Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (JSOTSup 15; trans. and ed. D. J. A. Clines; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991) 14; to the most extensive evaluation, of the whole chapter as exilic; see Mayes, "Deuteronomy 4," 23-51; M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11* (AB 5; New York: Doubleday, 1991) 216-17; D. T. Olson, *Deuteronomy and the Death of Moses: A Theological Reading* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 29-37.



the loss of the land designates a terminal break in both the physical existence of the people and in their relationship with God, with no hope or expectation of return or religious-national continuation. The people are either doomed to death within the land (1) or doomed to suffer further physical annihilation in Exile (2) that will reduce them to a scant few; put them under emotional stress from the surrounding peoples in the new places of settlement; and end with religious calamity, meaning the worship of other gods in foreign lands. Dislocation cuts off the exiles from their religious-national identity as the people of God (3).²² Only perspective (4) suggests that out of this continuous distress there will emerge a minor hope for restoration of the covenant relationship with God, either while still in Exile or as part of an overall return to the land.

Hence, Deuteronomy presents a clear dichotomy between calamity and restoration that on the face of it, indeed reflects a chronological gap in the literary evolution of the book. While references to uprooting and exile as a final and total punishment could certainly be preexilic reflections based on the experiences of Neo-Assyrian exiles from the Northern Kingdom and the whole region;²³ prospects for restoration of the covenant with God in Exile (and for the return to the land of Israel) could only denote a (Neo-Babylonian) exilic or even postexilic layers within the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 4:25–31, 30:1–10; as well as 29:21–27).²⁴

In order to clarify further these four deuteronomic concepts, we can now add to the discussion prophetic sources that reflect the Babylonian Exile.²⁵

22. So Tigay, who specifies the danger as “religious assimilation” (*Deuteronomy*, 53).

23. The Assyrian exile of 701 may have also influenced Deuteronomy; see S. Stohlmann, “The Judean Exile after 701 B.C.E.,” in *Scripture in Context II* (ed. W. W. Hallo, J. C. Moyer, and L. G. Perdue; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983) 147–76.

24. The exilic dating of Deut 29:21–27 is widely acknowledged, based on the exilic perspective on the land of Canaan (הָאָרֶץ הַהִיא, vv. 21, 26), and the references to Jeremiah (so Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 282; and R. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History* [New York: Seabury, 1980] 1:69–71, 72). In addition, this passage illustrates the exiles’ physical and mental separation from and antagonism toward the land and the “people who remained” there (seen in the *third-person-plural* verbal forms and suffixes, in vv. 24–27). Nevertheless, in contrast with Deut 30:1–10, this passage does not project restoration.

25. Mayes had used this path in his presentation of the exilic layer in Deuteronomy (“Deuteronomy 4,” 50–51). However, Mayes did not discuss the differences within the book regarding the concepts of exile.



Concepts of Exile in Jeremiah and Ezekiel

Jeremiah and Ezekiel in Comparison with Deuteronomy

Biographical details concerning Jeremiah and Ezekiel open a window on one major difference between the two prophetic books and Deuteronomy in terms of their concepts of exile. While Deuteronomy (in its four perspectives) refers to exile as an encompassing event that includes the people as a whole, the prophetic books testify to a different historical reality, in which Exile is experienced as a partial event. This partial Exile indeed fits the Assyrian and Babylonian deportation policies, which consistently divided subject peoples into two communities: the community exiled and the community that remains in the homeland. Judah was no exception.²⁶ In their separate geographical locations and in their different messages concerning land and Exile, Jeremiah in Jerusalem and Ezekiel in Babylon represent the two communities. Moreover, the book of Jeremiah itself, presenting Jeremiah's words as compiled and expanded first in Judah and then in Exile, suggests two conflicting perceptions and thus adduces long-discussed historical-literary questions.

Ezekiel was among the Jerusalemite elite who were exiled with King Jehoiachin to Babylon. He started his prophetic career in the fifth year of Exile (592 B.C.E.) and remained in Babylon for the rest of his life (Ezek 1:1-2); his latest datable prophecy is from 570 B.C.E. (Ezek 29:17). Ezekiel's sympathy with the community of exiles is apparent throughout, and he is rightfully considered a major spokesperson for the exiles and the constructor of exilic ideology. To give one example, Ezekiel presents his inclination toward the exiles and against the "people who remained" in nine disputation-speeches included in the book.²⁷ Categorized according to the speakers of the quotations, these disputation-speeches fall into two groups: (1) refuta-

26. In contrast to the "stereotyped scribal exaggeration" (Oded, *Mass Deportations*, 21-22), the partial character of the Neo-Assyrian deportations can be gathered from both literary and archaeological evidence (see, for instance, Piepkorn, *Ashurbanipal*, 70:37-38). Partial deportation has become a common framework for understanding the Babylonian deportations from Judah, in contrast to the major historiographical point of view. D. L. Smith-Christopher correctly criticized this line of thought in *A Biblical Theology of Exile* (OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002) 30-73.

27. A. Graffy, *A Prophet Confronts His People* (AnBib 104; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1984) 105-29. Although Graffy pointed out Ezekiel's exilic orientation, he did not distinguish Ezekiel as making special ideological use of this genre (pp. 123-24, etc.).



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tions of Jerusalemite quotations spoken by *ישבי ירושלים* or *על אדמת ישראל* (11:1-13, 11:14-21, 12:21-25, 18:1-20, 33:23-29); and (2) refutations of exiles' pronouncements, in which the speakers are referred to as *בני עמך* or *בית ישראל* (12:26-28, 20:1-38, 33:10-20, 37:1-14). The quotations from Jerusalem/Judah are either sinful speeches (11:3, 11:15, 12:22, 33:24) or bitter protest (18:2), whereas Ezekiel quotes the exiles using words of embarrassment and desperation (12:27; 18:19; 18:25, 29; 20:32; 33:10; 33:17, 20; 37:11).²⁸ In the prophetic refutation, Ezekiel answers the sinful pronouncements with prophecies of judgment addressed to the people remaining in Judah (such as, for instance, Ezek 11:1-13); but he speaks with great consolation to his fellow exiles (as in Ezek 37:1-11 and also in 11:14-21).²⁹

Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem during the last decades before its fall to the Babylonians.³⁰ He remained in the city throughout the siege (Jer 21:1-10; 37-38) until Jerusalem's destruction (Jeremiah 39) and was given the chance—and chose—to remain in Judah under the governorship of Gedaliah (40:1-6). His personal choice augments his constant message regarding the loss of the land and Exile. Jeremiah, on the one hand, saw Jehoiachin exiled and prophesied his death in Exile, with no return (Jer 22:24-30; his attitude to Shalum was similar, 22:10-11); on the other hand, he repeatedly advised Zedekiah to accept the Babylonian regime in order to assure the nation's continuing existence in the land (Jer 27:10-15; chaps. 37-38). Similarly, he urged "those who remained" after 586 B.C.E., whom he called the "remnant of Judah,"³¹ to remain in the land, reiterating

28. Sinful sayings of exiles are rare in Ezekiel and appear as the words of false prophets, 13:6, 7. The status of the quotation in 12:26-28 that is related to "the House of Israel" is uncertain. In addition to its close similarity to the preceding passage, which referred to the land of Israel (12:21-25), Grafty suggests that the latter was said in "a less aggressive tone" (*ibid.*, 57-58).

29. This will be dealt with further below. See my "Ezekiel as the Voice of the Exiles and Constructor of Exilic Ideology," *HUCA* 76 (2005) 1-45; *idem*, "Exiles and Those Who Remained: Strategies of Exclusivity in the Early Sixth Century BCE," in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language* (ed. M. Bar-Asher et al.; Jerusalem: Bialik, 2007) 119-38 [Hebrew].

30. Cf. Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 25-35.

31. The phrase *שארית יהודה* designates the community that remained in Jeremiah 40-44. It appears in words of God or of the prophet (Jer 42:15, 19; 44:7, 12, 14, 28); in the author's words (40:11, 43:5); and in the words of Johanan, son of Kareah (40:15). Another term is *שארית העם* (Jer 41:10).



the death threat that awaited outside (42:9-17).³² However, against his constant advice and personal will, Jeremiah was taken to Egypt with all the “remnant of Judah” (Jer 43:1-7) and eventually died there.

It has long been suggested that Jeremiah’s prophecies reached Babylon and that the book evolved into its present form in the Babylonian arena, presumably during the 6th century B.C.E.³³ This geosociological change of place seems crucial to our present discussion and a major factor in explaining the coexistence of the two contradictory concepts of exile in Jeremiah. In contrast to the above-mentioned biographical and ideological data, several prophecies in Jeremiah present hope for the restoration of the exiles’ community only (Jeremiah 24).³⁴ I have argued elsewhere that these two locations accord with the two different major layers of the book, the Jerusalemite-Judahite layer of Jeremiah’s words and the exilic layer of tradition/writers or redactors.³⁵ The present discussion of the evidence in Jeremiah further substantiates this argument.³⁶

Hence, the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel hold the primary positions among the biblical sources in testifying to the emergence of a crucial con-

32. The same concept directs Jeremiah’s moral-social message in 7:3-15, which also seems in accord with the deuteronomic concept of the land, as in Deut 16:20.

33. E. W. Nicholson, *Preaching to the Exiles: A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah* (New York: Schocken, 1970) 117; C. R. Seitz, *Theology in Conflict: Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah* (BZAW 176; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989) 228-35.

34. Among the redactional references to exile are Jer 16:14-15; 23:7-8; 24; 29:8-14, 16-20; passages in 30-33; 32:36-41, 42-44; 50-51 (with the exception of Jer 51:46-52), etc.

35. D. Rom-Shiloni, *God in Times of Destruction and Exiles: Theology and Ideology in the Prophetic Literature and in the Poetry of the First Half of the Sixth Century B.C.E.* (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 2001) 17-23; idem, “The Prophecy for ‘Everlasting Covenant’ (Jeremiah 32:36-41): An Exilic Addition or a Deuteronomic Redaction?” *VT* 53 (2003) 201-23.

36. C. Sharp correctly opened her discussion with reference to the oversimplified nature of these sorts of categorizations that oppose the “authentic” with the “compositional-redactional” layers of the book (*Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah: Struggles for Authority in the Deutero-Jeremianic Prose* [London: T. & T. Clark, 2003] xi-xvi). Indeed, we should assume redactional activity with regard to Jeremiah’s prophecies already in Judah. However, regarding the concept of land and exile, the “Jeremiah tradition/writers” in Judah (or “the Judean deuteronomists”) would still have held pro-Judah perspectives, and thus the opposition remains. Therefore, although oversimplified, the phrase “Jeremiah’s words” in the present discussion stands for what can be assumed as authentic prophecies as well as the pro-Judah layers of redaction, in opposition to the exilic layers of redaction.



flict between the two separated Judean communities that was already taking shape during the first decades of the 6th century (597 B.C.E. and on).³⁷ In this next section, I aim to illuminate the central roles played by Jeremiah and Ezekiel (together with the redactional elements added to Jeremiah) in establishing separatist ideologies regarding the relationship between God and each of the two communities as his people, the Jehoiachin exiles on the one hand and “those who remained” on the other. Examination of the texts shows the way the two prophets applied the four deuteronomic concepts of exile to their ideological needs in face of the complicated reality.

Furthermore, this tension between concept and reality, between the perception of exile as total and the experience of it as partial and divisive, has two essential implications for our evaluation of the different attitudes to exile in Deuteronomy. First, passages in groups (1), (2), and (3) that perceive exile as a total uprooting of all the people and/or a calamity relocating the people outside the land with no return or restoration seem to present theological reflections that may be explained in one of two ways: either as disconnected from an actual historical setting due to their literary character, and/or as indeed preceding the historical events in time—hence, preexilic. Second, the exilic point of view in the restoration passages (perspective [4]: Deut 4:29–31, 30:1–10; as also in 29:21–27) is not merely a temporal outlook. In fact, this temporal aspect, which has gained most prominent scholarly attention, obscures the unique ideological proclamation of this perspective. In accordance with the sociogeographical realities of Exile, this perspective expects restoration of exiles only, ignoring the existence of any possible remnant in the land of Judah.³⁸

Jeremiah and Ezekiel's Use of Deuteronomy

Judging from common phraseology, literary allusions, and thematic resemblances, both Jeremiah and Ezekiel appear to have known of the four deuteronomic perspectives on exile and either accepted or refuted each of them. This general statement applies not only to authentic Jeremian prophecies but also to the redactional Deuteronomistic level of this book.

37. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration*; C. R. Seitz, “The Crisis of Interpretation over the Meaning and Purpose of the Exile,” *VT* 35 (1985) 78–97; idem, *Theology in Conflict: Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah* (BZAW 176; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989); Sharp, *Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah*, 157–59; D. Rom-Shiloni, “Ezekiel as the Voice of the Exiles,” 11–20; idem, “Exiles and Those Who Remained,” 119–38.

38. I have not yet found this observation anywhere in commentaries or scholarly studies.



Phraseology

More than all other prophetic books of the 8th-7th or the 6th-5th centuries, Jeremiah and Ezekiel hold the record for variety and intensity in their use of different verbal phrases to denote exile. Jeremiah uses 11 verbs, 5 of them also found in Deuteronomy: **אבד** (Jer 27:10, 15) designates calamity; **השליך** (Jer 7:15, 22:28; also **זרה**, which can be found in Lev 26:33) suggests dislocation, in an image taken from agriculture; **הוליק** (Jer 52:26 and 32:5), **הדיח** (and **נידח**, 27:10, 15, etc.), and **הפיץ** (as in Jer 9:15; also **פזר**, Jer 50:17) are pastoral images. In addition, Jeremiah uses verbs that do not appear in Deuteronomy and are probably taken from the political realm: **גלה** (as in Jer 20:4, etc.),³⁹ **הטיל** (Jer 16:13; 22:26, 28), **ריחק** (Jer 27:10), and **שילח** (Jer 24:5, 29:20). Ezekiel uses 6 of the same verbs, 3 from Deuteronomy: **הוליק** (Ezek 36:12), **הדיח** (Ezek 4:13), and **הפיץ** (as in Ezek 11:16, etc.); and 3 that are not deuteronomic: **גלה** (Ezek 39:18), **זרה** (as in Ezek 5:2, 10, 11, etc.), and **ריחק** (Ezek 11:16).⁴⁰

The Four Deuteronomic Concepts in Jeremiah

(1) *Total Calamity within the Land.* Jer 27:9-15 is one of almost two dozen prophetic units in Jeremiah that describe death and destruction as the final judgment upon Jerusalem, with no dispersion in view.⁴¹ The danger that Jeremiah sees in the false prophecy **לא תעברו את מלך בבל** (27:9, 14) is that it will bring calamity upon Judah. Rebelling against the Babylonians means rebelling against God, and it is God who will punish the disobedient vassals of Babylon (v. 8). God's judgment will include uprooting the people from the land, which in Jeremiah's prophecy implies calamity:

39. E. W. Heaton, "The Root **גלה** and the Doctrine of the Remnant," *JTS* n.s. 3 (1952) 27-39; H. J. Zobel, "**גלה** *gālāh*," *TDOT* 2:476-88.

40. Within prophecies of the 8th-7th centuries, **גלה** appears most prominently in Amos, usually referring to political-human measure (as in 1:5, 8, etc.) and once to God as agent of exile (5:27). The verb **גלה** also appears in Isaiah (as in 5:13), as well as in the Twelve—in Hosea (10:5) and Micah (1:16). Other verbs appear in Isaiah: **זרה** (30:24), **נידח** (as in 11:12, 16:4), and **ריחק** (6:12, 26:15); elsewhere in the Twelve: **עקר**, **גרש** (Zeph 2:4), **נידח** (Joel 2:20, Mic 4:6, Nah 1:9, Zeph 3:19), **הפיץ** (Nah 1:8). In the Persian period, Deutero-Isaiah uses **גלה** (Isa 49:21), **זרה** (41:16), and **שילח** (45:13, 50:1); Trito-Isaiah: **נידח** (Isa 56:8); and Zechariah (1-8): **זרה** (2:2, 4²).

41. A variety of verbs with God as subject illustrate the widespread calamity: **התם**, **איבד**, **החריים**, **כילה**, **הכרית**, **השביית**, **שיחת**, **שיכל**, **התם** (Jer 5:12-14; 7:16-20, 30-34; 9:9-10; 11:15-17; 13:12-14; 14:10-12, 15-16; 16:1-9; 21:3-7; 36:29); note also prophecies in which the catastrophe is brought about by human enemies within the land, and exile is not mentioned at all (Jer 5:10-11, 15-17; 6:1-5, 6-8; 8:16-17; 12:7-13; 16:16-18; 21:8-10; 34:20-22; 37:3-10).



(9) כי שקר הם נבאים לכם למען הרחיק אתכם מעל אדמתכם והדחתי אתכם ואבדתם
 (15) כי לא שלחתים נאם ה' והם נבאים בשמי לשקר, למען הדיחי אתכם ואבדתם אתם
 והנבאים הנבאים לכם

The verb *אבד* appears here with the meaning 'to perish', as in the deuteronomic passages of perspective (1), referring to the loss of the land (Deut 4:26, 8:19, 11:17, 28:20-26, 30:18).⁴² This meaning accords with Jeremiah's presentation of the opposition between two ideas: (a) on the one hand, continuous existence in the land depends directly on subjugation to Babylon (והגוי אשר יביא את צוארו בעל מלך כבל ועבדו, והנחתיו על אדמתו נאם ה' ועבדה וישב בה הביאו את), and (b) on the other hand, rebellion against Babylon will bring neither exile nor dispersion but death in the land (צואריכם בעל מלך כבל ועבדו אתו ועמו וחיו: למה תמותו אתה ועמך כחרב ברעב ובדבר, כאשר דבר ה' אל הגוי אשר לא יעבד את מלך כבל, vv. 12-13).

Jeremiah interprets political realities in light of the theological concept of loss of the land as a divine punishment and prophesies to Zedekiah and to the people an irrevocable and final death penalty, and, in so doing, he reinterprets deuteronomic concept (1) to suit his time. However, he deviates from Deuteronomy by not mentioning the religious-cultic sins that repeatedly exemplify the people's disobedience in Deuteronomy (Deut 6:12-15). By positing rebellion against Babylon as disobedience to God, Jeremiah widens the deuteronomic perspective on obedience and disobedience. In Jeremiah 27, transgression and disloyalty reside in the refusal to accept the central theological concept of God as Lord of history (27:4-8), for which Jeremiah considers calamity and loss of the land a suitable punishment.⁴³

(2) *Deportation and Dispersion*, without mention of specific destinations or any future existence as a people in Exile, characterizes several prophecies

42. The verb *אבד* as 'perish' appears in Jer 6:21, 12:17, 15:7; metaphorically in Jer 4:9 and in prophecies against the nations (10:15 and 51:18; 46:8, 51:55; in the Hiphil, 25:10, 49:38); parallelism of *אבד/נכרת* (Jer 7:28). Within the semantic field of physical destruction, *אבד* in Jeremiah designates the ecological catastrophe of the land, Jer 9:11 (compare with destruction of cultic places in Deut 12:2, 2 Kgs 19:18, Isa 37:19). In contrast, Lev 26:38, *ואבדתם בגוים ואכלה אתכם ארץ איביכם*, uses the other meaning of *אבד* 'be lost', 'wonder'; see J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 23-27* (AB 3B; New York: Doubleday, 2001) 2273, 2326. Other occurrences of this meaning are Deut 22:3, 26:5; Jer 23:1, 50:6; Ezek 34:4, 16; and Deut 32:28; Jer 18:18; Ezek 7:26.

43. Weinfeld lists moral-social misconduct (Jer 7:5-15) and failure to keep the Sabbath (17:21-27) as specific sins that Jeremiah considers to be reasons for the loss of the land in addition to the general transgression of the covenant ("Inheritance of the Land," 124-26); I suggest adding failure to acknowledge God as Lord of history to this list of conceptual and specific sins.



of doom in Jeremiah.⁴⁴ Jer 9:11–15, for instance, goes even further in describing the dispersion as a complement to calamity:

לכן כה אמר ה' צבאות אלהי ישראל הנני מאכילם את העם הזה לענה, והשקיתים מי ראש: והפיצותים בגרים אשר לא ידעו המה ואבותם, ושלחתי אחריהם את החרב עד כלותי אותם

Jer 9:15 alludes to Deut 28:36: **יולך ה' אתך אל גוי אשר לא ידעת אתה ואבתוך**.⁴⁵ Hence, Jeremiah extends the descriptions of Deut 28:36–37, 63–64; and 29:21–27 regarding the fate of the exiles, which is only vaguely referred to in deuteronomistic concept (2). Jeremiah specifically describes God's efforts to complete the calamitous measures taken against the people, who are doomed to slaughter among the nations (שלחתי אחריהם את החרב עד כלותי אותם).

Another clear allusion to this deuteronomistic perception—exile as death on foreign and unknown land without return—characterizes Jeremiah's repetitious prophecy to Jehoiachin, Jer 22:24–30:⁴⁶

(26) והטלתי אתך ואת אמך אשר ילדתך על הארץ אחרת אשר לא ילדתם שם ושם תמותו. ועל הארץ אשר הם מנשאים את נפשם לשוב שם, שמה לא ישובו:
(28) העצב נבזה נפוץ האיש הזה כניהו אם כלי אין חפץ בו, מדוע הוטלו הוא וזרעו השלכו על הארץ אשר לא ידעו.

(3) *Existence in Exile*. In two prophecies, Jer 16:10–13 and 5:19, which are similarly constructed in a question-and-answer pattern, Jeremiah suggests an interpretation of Deut 28:36 and 64. In a manner unparalleled in Deuteronomy (though it may be inferred), Jeremiah presents a full correlation between sin and punishment (מידה כנגד מידה) in his reply to the people's questions about the reasons for their distress:

ואמרת אליהם על אשר עזבו אבותיכם אותי נאם וה' וילכו אחרי אלהים אחרים ויעבדום וישתחוו להם, ואתי עזבו ואת תורתי לא שמרו . . .
והטלתי אתכם מעל הארץ הזאת על הארץ אשר לא ידעתם אתם ואבותיכם, ועבדתם שם את אלהים אחרים יומם ולילה אשר לא אתן לכם חנינה.

44. In prophecies in which God is the agent of destruction: Jer 7:1–15; 9:11–15; 10:19–21; 15:1–4, 5–9; and in which human enemies direct the catastrophe: Jer 18:13–17.

45. Less direct is the echo of Deut 28:64: **עץ לא ידעת אתה ואבתוך עץ** in Jer 9:15. **עם אשר לא ידעת** appears in Deut 28:33 regarding an enemy that subjugates the people in their homeland. The unknown character of the enemy is further elaborated in 28:49–50.

46. For a discussion of the imagery in **נפוץ נבזה** and **העצב נבזה** see M. Held, "Rhetorical Questions in Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew," *EI* 9 (1969) 71*–79*.



The same line of thought appears in Jer 5:19:⁴⁷

והיה כי תאמרו תחת מה עשה ה' אלהינו לנו את כל אלה, ואמרת אליהם כאשר
עזבתם אותי ותעבדו אלהי נכר בארצכם, כן תעבדו זרים בארץ לא לכם.

In this paraphrastic way, Jeremiah maintains the concept of Exile as calamity. Explained from the national-religious point of view, Jeremiah illustrates the deuteronomic perception in a logical equation:

Yahweh: land of Israel = Foreign gods: Foreign lands

Worshiping foreign gods in God's land will cause God to expel his people to an unknown land where worshiping other gods is expected (5:19, 16:13). The literal and thematic connections between Jer 16:13 and Deut 28:36, 64 are clear: הארץ אשר לא ידעתם אתם ואבותיכם (Jer 16:13) alludes to אל גוי אשר לא ידעת אתה ואבתיך (Deut 28:36); and ועבדתם שם את אלהים אחרים (Jer 16:13) repeats (Deut 28:36, 64) ועבדת שם אלהים אחרים עץ ואבן (Jer 16:13). Hence, Exile designates a clear break between God and the exiles, with no prospect of restoration (אשר לא אתן לכם חנינה) (Jer 16:13).⁴⁸

The two prophecies share another feature, which is their disregard of any warlike measures preceding the described Exile. This gives rise to two different assumptions concerning the possible dating of these prophecies; that is, they may be linked either to the period between the Jehoiachin exile and the destruction (597-586 B.C.E.)⁴⁹ or to the period of the Babylonian Exile (after 586 B.C.E.), because the existence of the nation was no longer projected.⁵⁰ I am inclined to accept the first suggestion, and thus I see in Jeremiah's words a special emphasis on the calamity awaiting the Jehoiachin exiles (in accordance with Jer 22:24-30). This observation, then,

47. The words אלהי נכר and עבד זרים are two unique phrases, brought together in Deut 32:12, 16; Ps 81:10; see also Jer 2:25. Cf. W. Holladay, "Jeremiah and Moses: Further Observations," *JBL* 85 (1966) 20-21.

48. The word חנינה is a hapax legomenon translated 'compassion', 'mercy'. The Septuagint reads the verb in the plural (יתנו), suggesting that the foreign gods are the subject (cf. R. P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* [OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986] 342-44).

49. Holladay based his assessment of the Jeremican authenticity of this prophecy on (1) the unique use of the verb הטיל in the phrase (על הארץ אחרת) (22:24, 28; compare with Ezek 32:4, where טול serves to describe the judgment without dispersion); (2) the attitude to foreign gods (as in Jer 2:28); and (3) the admonition to the present generation (Jer 7:26). Thus, he dated the prophecy to 598 B.C.E. (*Jeremiah* I, 474-75; and pp. 190-91 for 5:19).

50. So W. McKane, *Jeremiah 1-25* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986) 371-72.



may represent one of Jeremiah's major contributions to the conception of exile. The prophet reaffirms the traditional deuteronomistic concept in the context of his theological explanation and applies it in his attitude toward the Jehoiachin exiles prior to the coming destruction.

(4) *Restoration in Exile or from Exile* appears in Jeremiah in prophecies that present exilic perspectives, such as for instance, Jer 16:14-15:⁵¹

לכן הנה ימים באים נאם ה', ולא יאמר עוד חי ה' אשר העלה את בני ישראל מארץ מצרים: כי אם חי ה' אשר העלה את בני ישראל מארץ צפון ומכל הארצות אשר הדיחם שמה, והשבתי על אדמתם אשר נתתי לאבותם

This prophecy of consolation interrupts the context of prophecies of doom and appears with slight variations in Jer 23:7-8. Literary intrusion is but one argument for identifying the prophecy as non-Jeremian. Although Jer 16:14-15 does not explicitly allude to deuteronomistic passages (4), it clearly parallels exilic perspectives and phraseology.⁵² The projected restoration emphasizes two components: ingathering from a northern land and from all the other lands of expulsion; and reestablishment in the land given to the forefathers. Furthermore, salvation is portrayed as an even greater event than the Exodus. While the Exodus in Jeremiah appears only as part of the historical retrospective on the God-people relationship,⁵³ the analogy to a future, second Exodus from the north as a central component of consolation parallels the message of the exilic prophets Ezekiel (20:32-38) and, with greater emphasis, Deutero-Isaiah (as in Isa 48:20-21, 52:11-12).⁵⁴ Thus, Jer 16:14-15 appears as a corrective to Jer 16:10-13. It may be part of an addition by exilic Deuteronomistic redactors (as in Jeremiah 24, 29:16-20), or even by non-Deuteronomistic authors among the exiles (as in Jer 32:36-41).⁵⁵

51. Exilic perspectives characterize passages that were mentioned above, n. 35.

52. Deuteronomistic sources present the phrase *אל האדמה אשר* (ה' השיב את העם) in 1 Kgs 8:34; and as a threat of dislocation in 1 Kgs 21:8. In Jer 24:10, the reference to the land (האדמה) given to them and to their forefathers designates the calamity expected for "those who remained."

53. The phrase *העלה מארץ מצרים* appears in Jer 2:6, 11:7.

54. The second Exodus is usually considered a central motif in Deutero-Isaiah. Cf. C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969) 21-22; Y. Hoffman, *The Doctrine of the Exodus in the Bible* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1983) 60-66.

55. Cf. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 474, 621-23; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 344-45. The exilic contribution to the concept of Restoration with clear connections to Ezekiel and to



Thus, the book of Jeremiah presents all four deuteronomic concepts of exile. However, the diverse attitudes to the loss of the land in Jeremiah add an ideological argument to the distinction between layers in this book. By adding (a) the biographical data regarding the prophet to (b) Jeremiah's prophecies against Jehoiachin and the Jehoiachin exiles but (c) in favor of maintaining the settlement in the land by the "people who remained" in Jerusalem under Zedekiah before the destruction as well as in its aftermath, we can now supplement Jeremiah's pro-land/pro-Judah ideology with (d) his observations on and overall concept of exile. Jeremiah uses deuteronomic concepts (1), (2), and (3) to promote a pro-Judah perspective, and therefore, he proclaims that Exile means death and calamity. Before and after the destruction, the Judeans should insist on staying in the land. Leaving the land of Judah would bring annihilation, as he prophesies to Jehoiachin (Jer 22:24-30) and later to "the remnant of Judah" leaving for Egypt (Jer 42:13-17).⁵⁶

In contrast, the restoration passage, Jer 16:14-15, which thematically parallels exilic deuteronomic concept (4), seems to be a non-Jeremian "correction." In accordance with Ezekiel and subsequently Deutero-Isaiah, the exilic redactional level of the book of Jeremiah suggests that hope for restoration resides with the Jehoiachin exiles (such as clearly, for example, in Jer 24:5-7).

Ezekiel's Use of the Four Deuteronomic Concepts

Ezekiel also knows the four deuteronomic concepts, and he makes an even sharper contrast among them than Jeremiah. The calamitous perception of the total loss of the land (1) and dispersion among the peoples with no specific destination (2) are repeated time and again in Ezekiel's

Deutero-Isaiah is further seen in Jer 32:36-41; see my "Prophecy for 'Everlasting Covenant,'" 201-23.

56. Jer 29:1-7, Jeremiah's letter to the Jehoiachin exiles, implicitly reverses Deut 4:25-28. The prophet inverts the threat וּנְשַׂאתֶם מְתִי מִסַּעַר בְּגוֹיִם and encourages the exiles to settle down and to multiply: וּרְבוּ שָׁם וְאֵל תִּמְעַטוּ (Jer 29:6). Yet, Jeremiah does not prophesy restoration and return to the homeland when addressing the exiles. Hence, although Jer 29:1-7 deviates from the previous prophecies of annihilation suggested above, it does not conform to the exilic perspective in Jeremiah (as in Jer 29:10-14, etc.) that prophesies restoration of the relationship with God and return to the land with the clear influence of the deuteronomic passages Deut 4:29-31 and 30:1-10. For the authenticity of vv. 3-7, see Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 555-56.



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prophecies of judgment against *Jerusalem*.⁵⁷ One example is Ezek 11:1-13, in which the prophet projects removal of the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the city and from the land but does not prophesy their arrival in Exile. Rather, he asserts, they will be killed on the borders of the land of Israel: *והצאתי אתכם מתוכה ונתתי אתכם ביד זרים, ועשיתי בכם שפטים: בחרב תפלו על: גבול ישראל אשפוט אתכם, וידעתם כי אני ה'* (vv. 9-10).

In contrast, Ezekiel prophesies restoration to his brothers, the Jehoiachin exiles. Ezek 11:14-21 exemplifies the clear literal and thematic connections between Ezekiel's prophecy and deuteronomic perception (4), Deut 30:1-10:⁵⁸ (a) ingathering of the exiles—*אלהיך—ה' אשר הפיצך ה' אלהיך—ושב וקבצך מכל העמים אשר הפיצך ה' אלהיך—ואספתי אתכם מן הארצות אשר נפצתם שמה והביאך ה' אלהיך אל הארץ אשר—בהם (Ezek 11:17); (b) giving them the land—ירשו אבתך וירשתה ונתתי לכם את אדמת ישראל (Ezek 11:17); and (c) transformation of the heart to ensure obedience—ומל ה' אלהיך את—לבבך ואת לבב זרעך לאהבה את ה' אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך למען חיך ונתתי להם לב אחד ורוח חדשה אתן בקרבכם, והסרתי לב האבן מבשרם ונתתי להם לב בשר (Ezek 11:19).*

The most bothersome concept against which Ezekiel fights is concept (3)—the suggestion that existence in Exile means being cut off from God. Ezek 20:1-38 presents a disputation speech in which Ezekiel refutes the saying *נהיה כגוים כמשפחות הארצות לשרת עץ ואבן* ('We will be like the nations, like the families of the lands worshipping wood and stone', v. 32). This passage has prompted various interpretations based on different understandings of the content, the exact extent of the citation, and its place within the context.⁵⁹ Three different interpretations have been suggested by both medieval and modern exegetes. The first understands the quotation to express mutiny; the exiles intend to assimilate among the nations, and thus *לשרת עץ ואבן* reflects the prophet's reaction of mockery.⁶⁰ By contrast, the second

57. Other prophecies of calamity to Jerusalem in Ezekiel: chaps. 4-7; 16:1-48; 22:1-16, 17-22; chap. 23; 24:1-14; etc.

58. This similarity in language and theme may be more of an intertextual synchronic relationship than a relationship of diachronic allusions; see Holladay regarding late passages in Deuteronomy (*Jeremiah* 2, 61-63). Ezekiel's restoration prophecies (Ezek 34:17-31; chaps. 36, 37) allude to both Leviticus 26 and Deut 30:1-10; see M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37* (AB 22A; New York: Doubleday, 1997) 735-39, 760.

59. A full discussion of Ezek 20:1-38 appears in my "Facing Destruction and Exiles: Inner-Biblical Exegesis in Jeremiah and Ezekiel," *ZAW* 117 (2005) 194-202.

60. So the medieval exegetes Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Kimḥi, and Luzzato; and modern scholars such as W. Eichrodt (*Ezekiel* [OTL; trans. C. Quin; Philadelphia:



interpretation suggests that the elders are requesting permission to establish Yahwistic rituals in Exile, and “worshiping wood and stone” is the prophet’s sharp criticism of what could otherwise have been taken as a statement of loyalty to God.⁶¹ The third and most plausible explanation considers the words לשרת עץ ואבן to be genuine elements of the quotation, illustrating the exiles’ despair in the face of their dislocation.⁶² Both the language and the context of the saying indicate that the elders’ inquiry in Ezekiel 20 portrays their concern about their status as the people of God exiled in Babylon.⁶³ By way of analogy, the elders apply to themselves the threats of punishment depicted in Deuteronomy for disobedient people (Deut 28:36–37, 63–64). The elders interpret their presence in Exile as a fulfillment of the traditional deuteronomic threats of destruction and dislocation. The terminal break in their religionational identity and in their covenantal bond with God leads them to tremendous despair.⁶⁴

While the exiles’ despair (as quoted in v. 32) threatens their continued existence as the people of God, the prophet vigilantly presents his own perspective, vigorously refuting this line of thought: חי אני נאם אדני ה', אם לא (v. 33). Ezekiel paints a contrasting picture: the exiles do have hope. Although in Exile, they are still God’s people, and he is their king. Ezekiel bypasses the inherited deuteronomic concept of Exile with a different analogy based on Priestly (especially Exod 6:2–8) and deuteronomic Exodus traditions.⁶⁵ Accordingly, he

Westminster, 1970], 277), M. Greenberg (*Ezekiel 1–20* [AB; New York: Doubleday, 1983] 371, 386), and D. I. Block (*Ezekiel 1–24* [NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997] 648–49).

61. M. Ish-Shalom, *HaSiyyun, hu be'ur linvu'at Yehezqel siman 20* (Vienna: Knapfmacher, 1888) 1, 6b; and Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 386–88. G. Fohrer interpreted the phrase לשרת עץ ואבן as a reaction against the wish to make an idol of God (*Ezekiel* [HAT 13; Tübingen: Mohr, 1955] 108). See the criticism of this opinion in G. A. Cooke, *Ezekiel* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936) 213.

62. So Zimmerli (*Ezekiel 1* [Hermeneia; trans. J. D. Martin; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979] 414, 417–18), who considered the quotation a *reaction* to the prophet’s historical perspective and not the initial trigger to the latter; and Y. Kaufmann, *Toldot Ha-Emunah Ha-Israelit* (Jerusalem: Bialik-Dvir, 1952) 3:558–59.

63. So already Qara, Kimḥi, and Ibn Caspi, based on *b. Sanh.* 105b. However, they all found a rebellious tone in the quotation, not despair.

64. Despair on the part of the exiles of 597 in Babylon is further attested in Ezek 33:10, 37:11; cf. Graffy, *A Prophet Confronts His People*, 122–23.

65. R. L. Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul: Ezekiel, the Exile and the Torah* (JSOTSup 358; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 98–103.



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portrays the exiles as a direct continuation of the first generations in Egypt and in the desert (Ezek 20:5-26).⁶⁶ As before, God will restore the covenant relationship with the exiles in a powerful and unilateral initiative (vv. 33-38) that will take place outside the land of Canaan, במדבר העמים; במדבר ארץ מצרים (vv. 35-36).⁶⁷

Conclusions

1. Literary and thematic allusions establish the notions that Jeremiah and Ezekiel, as well as Jeremiah's tradition/writers and redactors, knew and cherished the dialectic deuteronomic concepts of the land given as a gift and the loss of the land as a punishment.

2. The major deviation between Deuteronomy and the prophetic books rests on what may be the literary character of Deuteronomy or its preexilic perspective, presenting exile as a total and inclusive event. Reality, in contrast, showed only partial waves of Exile, and the prophetic testimony illustrates the "fraternal" conflict between the two communities of exiles and "those who remained."

3. Jeremiah and Ezekiel both reinterpret the same deuteronomic perceptions of the loss of the land and exile. However, they use these perceptions to substantiate their counterpositions regarding each of the Judean communities after 597 B.C.E.

Jeremiah presents a consistent, unified perspective: Exile means calamity (Jer 27:9-15, 42:17-19); those who leave the land of Israel have no future of return and restoration (9:11-15, 16:13, 22:24-30, and 29:1-7); hence, the "remnant of Judah" is the community of "those who remained" (Jeremiah 40-42), and the prediction of restoration is oriented toward them only as long as they remain in the land (42:9-12). Jeremiah's first loyalty is to the land. Thus, he reinforces a general categorization of life in the land versus decline and death away from it. Exile, whether forced or voluntary, designates a physical and mental separation from God and from the

66. In a repetitious literary pattern, Ezek 20:5-26 presents God's establishment of the covenant with the first generation in Egypt (vv. 5-10), who were taken out of Egypt to the desert (vv. 11-17), and existed with their sons in the desert (vv. 18-26). Cf. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 376-78.

67. The geographical horizon away from the land of Israel and the eternal commitment of God to the covenant are the two main points Ezekiel emphasizes to his fellow exiles throughout the refutation in vv. 5-31 and in vv. 33-38. See my "Facing Destruction and Exiles," 199-202.



community of his people. Hence, Jeremiah's support of "those who remained" was conditioned by their stay in the land.

But the book of Jeremiah reached Babylon and was compiled and redacted by Deuteronomistic editors from the community of the exiles. What is somewhat surprising is that these tradition-writers/editors took the liberty of presenting their own point of view, which was in complete contradiction to the prophet's concept. In these secondary prophecies, we find parallels to Deuteronomy's concept (4), with descriptions of restoration, ingathering, and return to the land of Judah (as in Jer 32:37-41).⁶⁸

Hence, the concepts of *land* and *exile* seem to add the conclusive element that differentiates Jeremiah's assumed words and the pro-Judah layer(s) of his book from the pro-exilic, Jeremian traditions. These conflicting layers in Jeremiah indeed demonstrate a struggle over "the interpretation of the Jeremiah traditions," which had a life and death significance for both communities.⁶⁹

The exilic orientation is even more explicit in Ezekiel's use of Deuteronomy. In accordance with Deuteronomy's concepts (1) and (2), Ezekiel constricts the fate of the Jerusalemite community to annihilation in the land or outside it, with no remnant in Exile. Contrariwise, parallel to concept (4) of Deuteronomy, the prophet prophesies consolation and restoration to his fellows in the Jehoiachin Exile. Furthermore, Ezekiel is anxious to challenge the deuteronomic concept of exile as religious isolation from God, and thus he confronts perception (3). Ezekiel denies the validity of this perspective and suggests an alternative concept: Exile is not an end to the God-people relationship, and the foreign lands are not the domains of foreign gods. God remains dynamic, and he reaches his people in their places of exile. These themes parallel perception (4) in Deuteronomy (Deut 4:29-31, 30:1-10).

4. The different attitudes to the loss of the land and to exile set the two prophets on either side of the divide between the separated communities. Loyal to the communities they lived with in Judah or in Babylon, the two prophets adjusted deuteronomic concepts of exile to sociopolitical reality and paved the ideological ways for the ongoing debates between the exiles and the "people who remained" in the homeland.

68. Idem, "The Prophecy for 'Everlasting Covenant,'" 201-23.

69. Cited from Sharp (*Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah*, 166), who emphasized other themes in the conflict between these communities.

