THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN

OBADIAH AND JEREMIAH 49

by

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The relationship that exists between Obadiah 1-9 and Jeremiah 49 is very intriguing. At times these two passages are almost parallel, and at times they seem so diverse that there is almost no correlation between them. It is the purpose of this author to investigate the relationship between Obadiah and Jeremiah 49. This will be done by a textual comparison of the two Hebrew texts, side by side, and phrase by phrase. An investigation of the three proposed views will also be necessary in order to understand fully the relationship of Obadiah and Jeremiah 49.

A textual comparison of the two Hebrew texts reveals the relationship that exists between them. There are times at which the two texts are parallel, such as in Obadiah 4b and Jeremiah 49:16b. At times the texts seem so diverse as to question any relationship at all. For the most part the first five verses of Obadiah are almost exactly paralleled by Jeremiah 49:7ff. There are some striking points of deviation in this section; for example, Obadiah has a couple of phrases of which Jeremiah has no representative. Looking at the rhythmic structure and the unity of both texts also helps in determining the relationship between the two texts.

There are three views that are commonly proposed in attempting to solve the relationship between Obadiah and Jeremiah 49. The first view says that Jeremiah is the original text and Obadiah borrowed from him. This view has very little support and is the weakest of the three. The second view says that Obadiah's text is the original and Jeremiah borrowed from him. This view is the strongest and is the most consistent in the light of the textual and historical evidence. This view also is less problematic than the other two. The third view says that there was a common text that both Obadiah and Jeremiah shared. This view has a lot of supporters, yet it lacks the physical evidence that is needed to be believable. This view also leaves more questions than it answers.

It is the conclusion of this author that Obadiah's text is the original and Jeremiah quoted and adopted it to his own style and time, as he saw fit under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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INTRODUCTION

Obadiah is the smallest book of the Old Testament, yet it is plagued with problems from every side. The date and authorship of Obadiah are under constant combat. The text of Obadiah and many of its readings are constantly being denied by critics. Even the purpose for its writing is often questioned. It seems that this small book has become a common battle ground for those that question the validity of the Word of God.

One of the major areas of attack is in the relationship that exists between Obadiah 1-9 and Jeremiah 49. At times these two passages are almost parallel, and at times they seem so diverse that there is almost no correlation between them.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between Obadiah and Jeremiah. In doing this, this author will first make a textual comparison of the two Hebrew texts, side by side and phrase by phrase.[1] Attention will also be paid to how the Septuagint renders the two texts.[2]

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[1]This paper will be following the Hebrew Text of Rudolf Kittel, ed., Biblia Hebraica (Stuttgart: Württenbergische Bibelanstalt, 1973).

[2]All references to the Septuagint will come from Alfred Rahlfs, ed., Septuaginta, Vol. II (New York: American Bible Society, 1935).

Secondly, this author will investigate three views that have been proposed to explain the existing relationship between these two texts. The strong and weak points of these three views will be presented in the light of the textual comparison that has been made. This will enable the author to arrive at a satisfactory solution, which explains the relationship that exists between Obadiah and Jeremiah.

CHAPTER I

A TEXTUAL COMPARISON OF OBADIAH
AND JEREMIAH 49

A simple reading of Obadiah's oracle against Edom
(vv. 1-9) and Jeremiah's oracle (49:7ff) shows the striking
similarities between these two prophetical declarations.
The similarities between these two prophetic writers are
more than just accidental. When the two Hebrew texts are
set side by side, the close relationship of these two can
be seen much clearer than in the English text.[1]

The similarities that exist between the texts of
Obadiah and Jeremiah demand an in depth investigation in
order to determine the origination of these two prophetic
declarations against the same people. In order to do this,
one must compare the two texts, phrase by phrase, the rhyth-
mic structure of the two, and also the unity of structure
within the two texts.

A Comparison of the Hebrew Text

This paper will be following the textual arrangement
of Obadiah and with it comparing those corresponding phrases

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[1]For a side by side comparison of the Hebrew text of
Obadiah 1-5 and the corresponding portions of the text of
Jeremiah 49, see Appendix I.

in Jeremiah 49 which are arranged in a different order.

Obadiah 1

Obadiah 1a

As Obadiah begins his prophetic declaration, he
identifies it as a declaration coming directly from God
and being pronounced against Edom. Jeremiah also declares
his prophetic declaration to be from God, but he first pro-
nounced Edom as the recipient, then gave the Divine author-
ity. He reverses the order of elements from that of Obadiah.
Jeremiah also uses an expanded name for God:

1a   כה־אמר אדני יהוה לאדום

49:7a לאדום כה אמר יהוה צבאות

The formula that Obadiah and Jeremiah both use is
a common formula that is used to identify a communication
that comes from God. William Green states, "This introduc-
tory formula is elsewhere invariably followed by language
in which God is himself the speaker; here however, it is
used to denote that what comes after is a communication
from God, even though he does not throughout speak in the
first person."[1]

The normal arrangement of this formula is that
which is found in Obadiah where the verb occurs first, then
the subject of the verb, then the prepositional phrase which

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[1]William H. Green, A Hebrew Chrestomathy (New York:
John Wiley and Son, Publishers, 1870), p. 177.

identifies the ones to whom this declaration is pronounced.[1]
Jeremiah changes this order around and begins with the pre-
positional phrase and then the verb and subject. This is a
very awkward arrangement.[2]

The name that Jeremiah uses for God, צבאות, is a
name that did not become common until the time of David.
It became very predominant during the Divided Monarchy
period.[3] In its earliest usage it was accompanied by the
article, but later the article was dropped and the name
became definite by its usage, as can be observed in Jeremiah
and elsewhere.[4]

On the other hand, the name that Obadiah uses for
God, אדני, is identified historically as one of the earli-
est and most common names associated with a position of
authority, whether divine or human.[5]

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[1]Cf. 2 Ki. 19:32; 2 Chr. 20:15; Isa. 48:22; 56:4;
Jer. 4:3; 12:14; 13:1; 14:10, 15; 16:3; 22:6, 18; 23:2, 15;
29:31; Ezek. 6:3; 7:2; 21:28; 26:15; 34:2, 20; 36:4; 37:5;
Amos 5:4; Mic. 3:5; and Mal. 1:6.

[2]Jeremiah 49:7 is the only occurrence of such a
structured formula.

[3]Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs,
A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (herein-
after referred to as Lexicon) (Oxford: Clarendon Press,
1974), p. 839.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

Obadiah 1b

The first phrase of Obadiah's prophetic declaration against Edom is almost parallel with Jeremiah's first phrase of verse 14. When the two Hebrew texts are compared, there are only two minor variations between the two readings.

1b   שמועה שמענו מאת־יהוה   וציר בגוים שלח

49:14a   שמועה שמעתי מאת־יהוה   וציר בגוים שלוח

The first of these two variations is found in the second word of both texts. In Obadiah the word is a first person plural, and in Jeremiah the same word is singular. The Septuagint (LXX) renders the Obadiah text as a singular person in agreement with Jeremiah. Bewer remarks that "since the phrase 'from Yahweh' has its full force only if a prophetic audition is intended, the singular may be original. The plural of Obadiah may be due to textual corruption since G (LXX) has the singular here also."[1] The subject of the verb under question is the prophetical audience of which Obadiah includes himself in the nation of Israel, which has heard the tidings in him and through him.[2] Jeremiah does not mention this expanded character, but cites

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[1] Julius A. Bewer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Obadiah and Joel (hereinafter referred to as Obadiah and Joel), in The International Critical Commentary, ed. by S. R. Drivers, A. Plummer, and C. A. Briggs (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), p. 34.

[2] C. F. Keil, Minor Prophets, in Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Vol. X (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), p. 351.

himself as the recipient of this prophetical declaration.
It has been suggested that the only way that Jeremiah could
alone be the recipient is if he were the first and only one
to receive this prophecy. This will be shown to be an
untrue assumption.

The second variation is found in the last word of
both texts. Jeremiah has one additional vowel letter, which
causes the word to be pointed as a Qal passive participle,
instead of a Pual perfect as in Obadiah. The LXX preserves
Obadiah's reading in both Obadiah and Jeremiah, while the
Vulgate follows the Masoretic Text.[1]

It is important to understand that the word
was not vocalized as a passive participle, and therefore
had not yet the <u>waw</u> which appears in the Masoretic Text of
Jeremiah.[2] "The perfect 'shullach' with 'qamets' in the
pause, which is changed by Jeremiah into the less appropri-
ate passive participle Qal, corresponds to שֻׁלְּחוּ and
expresses in prophetic form, the certainty of the accomp-
lishment of the purpose of God."[3]

The Pual stem is an intensive passive verb, while

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[1]W. Rudolph, "Obadja," <u>Zeitschrift Fur Die Alttesta-
mentliche Wissenschaft</u>, IL (1931), 223.

[2]T. H. Robinson, "The Structure of the Book of Oba-
diah" (hereinafter referred to as "Structure of Obadiah"),
<u>The Journal of Theological Studies</u>, VVII (July, 1916), 403.

[3]Keil, <u>Minor Prophets</u>, pp. 351-352.

the Qal stem is a simple active.[1] In the phrase under
investigation the action of the verb is best suited as that
of an intensive passive sense. The sending of the assembly
is done by not the assembly itself, but by an outside power,
such as the Lord.

Neither of these minor variations effect the meaning
of the phrase very significantly, yet the reading of Obadiah
is probably to be preferred over Jeremiah. This is because
of the preference of the Pual stem over the Qal of Jeremiah.
The LXX also supports the reading and even changes Jeremiah's
reading to agree with Obadiah. Although the LXX changes
the first variation in favor of Jeremiah, there is still a
strong rational possibility for holding on to Obadiah's
reading as the preferred one.

Obadiah 1c

The third phrase of Obadiah 1 presents some real
striking differences between the corresponding phrase of
Jeremiah 49:14b.

1c קומו ונקומה עליה   למלחמה

49:14b התקבצו ובאו עליה   וקומו למלחמה

John M. P. Smith feels that this phrase of Obadiah
is too long, that it is repetitious and lacks the descriptive

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[1]J. Weingreen, A Practical Grammer for Classical
Hebrew (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 100.

quality of the line in Jeremiah.[1] Thus he discards it and
adopts the reading of Jeremiah as the original reading.
Watts also disregards the reading of Obadiah for that of
Jeremiah, because Obadiah is metrically difficult and
duplicates its one verb in two forms, "which though gramma-
tically possible is stylistically awkward."[2] He feels that
"Obadiah gives the appearance of a text that was corrupted
and then reconstructed."[3]

The meaning of the two readings are similar, and
Jeremiah does include all three key words, yet the order is
different. Obadiah begins with the verb which he duplicates
in a different form, the cohortative. Greenberg says that
"the cohortative expresses volition on the part of the first
person."[4] When the cohortative is connected with an imper-
ative, it adds an element of encouragement to the command,
thus making the summons more urgent (cf. Jer. 4:5).[5] This
is a very appropriate construction in the light of the

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[1]John M. P. Smith, "The Structure of Obadiah,"
American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature, XX
(1906), 135.

[2]John D. W. Watts, Obadiah: A Critical Exegetical
Commentary (hereinafter referred to as Obadiah) (Grand
Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company,
1969), p. 32.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Moshe Greenberg, Introduction to Hebrew (Englewood
Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 51.

[5]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 38.

prophetic declaration against Edom.

Jeremiah uses the simple imperative form of the verb and introduces it with a <u>waw</u>, only at a later place in the phrase than Obadiah. The LXX drops the <u>waw</u> from Jeremiah's reading in agreement with the reading of Obadiah, although the LXX retains the order of the Masoretic Text in Jeremiah.

Some scholars[1] would like to change the word עֶלֶיהָ (feminine) to עֶלָיו (masculine). They prefer this change because the preposition commonly occurs with the masculine pronominal suffix, and would seem to be in better agreement with the antecedent Edom (masculine). This change is not essential, because in Obadiah Edom may not necessarily be the antecedent of this word. It may refer rather to the land (feminine). In Jeremiah, the antecedent may also refer to the land (feminine) instead of Bozrah (masculine).

Jeremiah adds two words to his declaration that are not found in Obadiah. The addition of these two seems rather cumbersome and repetitive, because both of them can be summed up in the word קוּם, "to arise (out of inaction)."[2]

Obadiah 2

Obadiah 2 is almost exactly paralleled in Jeremiah 49:15, with the exception of two minor deviations; one at

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[1]The key supporters of this idea are: Wellhausen, Nowach, Duham, and Marti.

[2]Brown, Driver, and Briggs, <u>Lexicon</u>, p. 878.

the beginning and one at the end of the verse.

2   הנה קטן נתתיך בגוים בזוי אתה מאד

49:15 כי הנה קטן נתתיך בגוים בזוי באדם

At the beginning of the verse, Jeremiah adds the
word כי to connect verse 14 and 15 together. Bewer proposed
that the connective was added by one who overlooked the
sentences "and a messenger . . . battle" as being a paren-
thesis.[1] In the LXX the connective is lacking and הנה is
also omitted. Keil feels that the connective should be there,
because it tells the reason for the attack upon Edom.[2] This
may be logically so, but textually there is very little
support for it.

The ending of this phrase also shows a variation of
reading. Obadiah adds the personal pronoun אתה to the word
מאד thus making it a new clause. In Jeremiah באדם is
dependent upon the previous clause, "I have made thee," and
is not a new clause but a dependent clause.

There is valid proof for both readings. Obadiah's
rendering of אתה מאד completes the meter of 3-3, but
Jeremiah's rendering באדם parallels בגוים.[3] Robinson feels
that " אתה superfluous and מאד corrupted from אדם which is

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[1]Bewer, <u>Obadiah and Joel</u>, p. 34.

[2]Keil, <u>Minor Prophets</u>, p. 352.

[3]Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 135.

certified by the parallelism with בגוים."[1] He goes on to say that "the ב in the text of Jeremiah is probably due to a desire to complete the parallel."[2]

One of these textual variations must be incorrect, considering the emphasis in Hebrew poetry is upon proper parallelism and not as much upon the meter. It seems best to agree with Bewer when he says, "Obadiah's 'exceedingly' was the original text which was changed by a scribe who neglected the meter and only observed the parallelism."[3] It seems hard to rationalize a scribe changing parallelism in Hebrew poetry in order to achieve meter, especially since Obadiah's meter is so varied and not consistent. It is much easier to see how one could change an inconsistent meter in order to achieve parallelism. Thus the text of Obadiah is to be preferred over that of Jeremiah.

Obadiah 3

Obadiah 3a

The first phrase of Obadiah 3 presents some very striking differences from its corresponding phrase in Jeremiah 49:16a.

3a   זדון לבך השיאך

49:16a   תפלצתך השיא אתך   זדון לבך

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[1]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 34.

Obadiah has a single stichos of only three words, while Jeremiah has a full line of 2-3 measure with one more word and the separate reading of a pronominal suffix.[1] The three words of Obadiah can be identified in Jeremiah, but they are in a different order.

At the beginning of Jeremiah's phrase, he adds the word תפלצתך. This is the only occurrence of this word as it appears in the Masoretic Text. Robinson proposes that this almost unintelligible word should be better read רפארתך which is better parralleled with זדון than תפלצתך.[2] This would change the meaning of the word from "horror or shuddering" to that of "glory" which would provide a logical parallel to "presumptuous."

Bewer proposed another solution to this problem:

> The difficulty of תפלעתך appears to be satisfactorily solved by reading the Norbert Peters תִּפְלָתָך (cf. Jer. 23:13), following the Septuagint, ἡ παιγνία σου and the Vulgate, "arrogantia tua." Duhm's ingenious explanation of תפלצתך as a marginal note on באדם "through Edom" בָּאָדֹם, "Thine abomination," i.e., idol (cf. מפלצת I Kings 15:13 and Obed-Edom from the divine name) destroys the meter symmetry. It helps, however, to explain the origin of the corruption of תפלתך to תפלצתך.[3]

Neither of these proposed solutions is completely convincing, because of their lack of textual evidence. They remain in the realm of conjuncture, and the reader is left

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[1]Watts, Obadiah, p. 32.

[2]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

[3]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 34.

with Jeremiah's problematic reading.

Obadiah begins his phrase with the noun and a prepositional phrase, then the verb, while Jeremiah takes the noun and its prepositional phrase and makes them almost an after-thought of the verb in parallel with the preceding subject, thereby making it a descriptive phrase and not the subject.

One other worthy note of variation between these two is that Obadiah connects a pronominal suffix to the verb, while Jeremiah attaches a personal suffix to the pronominal indicator. Robinson asserts that the suffix of Obadiah looks more naturally Hebrew than the construction of Jeremiah.[1]

Bewer presents a worthy argument when he writes:

> It seems more natural that Obadiah omitted "thy folly," which had already been expressed by "the pride of thy heart," and joined the suffix to the verb than that Jeremiah should have added the noun and made the other necessary changes in order to produce the strictly meter line required at this point.[2]

Bewer's point is well noted, yet he presents it from the presupposition that Obadiah is not the original but only a fellow copier as Jeremiah. If Jeremiah was a copy, then what would limit him from arranging the text to fit the meter better than the original? Considering the work involved in writing, it seems proper to assume that the older

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[1]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

[2]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

text would be less wordy and less polished than its copies.
If this assumption is proper, then Jeremiah would be the
copyist, not Obadiah. Watts admits that the only reason that
he prefers Jeremiah's reading is because the meter is better.[1]

Obadiah 3b

The second phrase in Obadiah 3 is closely paralleled
by the second phrase of Jeremiah 49:16. These two phrases
are diverse from each other in three points:

3b שכני בחגוי סלע מרום שבתו

49:16b שכני בחגוי הסלע תפשי מרום גבעה

This first phrase is a very interesting one and pre-
sents us with the first diversity between the two texts.
Jeremiah adds the definite article to סלע, while Obadiah
does not. This is a very minor point of difference and one
not worthy of much development, except to observe that the
definitude of סלע is evident by the context even without the
supplying of an article. The same phrase, בחגוי סלע, also
appears in Song of Solomon 2:14, where סלע is accompanied by
the article.

Jeremiah adds the word תפשי to the text which does
not appear in Obadiah, thus causing the second deviation in
the two texts. Smith opts to add this word to Obadiah's
text and explains "that it is required as a parallel to
שכני: moreover, it completes the meter and the sense of

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[1] Watts, _Obadiah_, p. 32.

verse 3."[1] By the addition of this word, Jeremiah's reading
forms the regular double trimeter, while Obadiah has a
pentameter.[2] The meter of Obadiah is just as sound as
Jeremiah, if not more consistently represented in both
Obadiah and Jeremiah.[3]

The last word is different in the two readings.
Obadiah has שבתו while Jeremiah has גבעה. Robinson proposes
that שבתו of Obadiah looks like a corruption of the תפשי of
Jeremiah and גבעה of Jeremiah is probably a gloss on מרום.[4]
This is rather difficult to prove since the word שבתו is
derived from the root ישב meaning "a dwelling place,"[5] and
תפשי comes from תפש which means "to lay hold of (occupy-
ing)."[6] Although the meanings are similar, the radicals of
the roots are so diverse that it is hard to imagine that
one is a corruption of the other. On the other hand, Robin-
son may very well be correct in that גבעה (hill) may be a
gloss of מרום (high, exalted place). Even if that is so,
the reader is still left with a problem of harmonizing these
two readings.

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[1]Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 135.

[2]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

[3]Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 135.

[4]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

[5]Watts, Obadiah, p. 32.

[6]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

Smith feels that Jeremiah's reading is to be pre-
ferred because "it makes the traditional pointing of מרום
intelligible, it furnishes a better parallel for סלע, and
it seems to have suggested the term תגביה in verse 4."[1]
These are good arguments and worthy of notation.

One other notable item is that Obadiah has a subject
change in this phrase. Obadiah has a third person suffix of
the last word while Jeremiah continues his prophetic declar-
ation in the second person. Paul Kleinert says that "the
sudden change to the third person of the suffix expresses
more strongly the prophet's scorn."[2]

The second phrase of Obadiah's third verse and its
parallel in Jeremiah has presented some very difficult prob-
lems of argument. It seems impossible from these phrases
alone to build a case for the superiority of either Obadiah
or Jeremiah. Even the commentators admit the lack of support
and thus rely on the meter which can also support either.
Bewer says that the meter favors Jeremiah,[3] while Watts says
that it favors Obadiah.[4] One must look to the context to
find the answer to the primary text.

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[1]Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 135.

[2]Paul Kleinert, The Book of Obadiah, in The Commentary
on the Holy Scriptures, ed. by John Peter Lange, VII (Grand
Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1976), p. 8.

[3]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

[4]Watts, Obadiah, p. 32.

Obadiah 3c

The third phrase of Obadiah 3 has no parallel in Jeremiah's prophetical declaration against Edom, yet it is worthy of notation.

3c אמר בלבו מי יורדני ארץ

Robinson, while commenting on verse 3, says, "Obadiah 3c has no representation in Jeremiah, and though in itself it conforms to the dominant rhythm, yet the structure of the poem as a whole shows that it is probably a gloss derived from a comparison of 4b with such passages as Isaiah 47:7-8."[1] By saying that this phrase is a gloss from 4b, Robinson is assuming that it precedes 4b in writing. There is no reason to assume this. In reality the reverse, 4b is a gloss of 3c, seems more probable, because 3c asks a question and 4b answers it.

The meter of 3c is good, although it is reversed from the normal pattern. Instead of a meter of 3-2, as in the second phrase of verse three, the third phrase reverses the meter to be a 2-3 meter. This does not cause a problem metrically, because it fits well in the context.[2]

It is interesting to note that the third phrase, along with the second phrase of verse 3, has a third person singular suffix. Bewer says that this shift from the second

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[1]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

[2]Watts, Obadiah, pp. 32-33.

person suffix to the third is common in relative and parti-
cipal clauses (cf. Mic. 1:2; Isa. 22:16; 47:8; 54:1;
63:19).[1] This reoccurrence of the third person suffix
helps give stability to the previous one in the second phrase,
thus adding support to the superiority of Obadiah's reading.
Even the critics accept this third phrase as part of Obadiah's
text.[2]

Obadiah 4

Obadiah 4a

The first part of Obadiah 4 is almost parallel with
the third phrase of Jeremiah 49:16, with the exception that
the opening words differ and that Obadiah has an extra clause
of four words.

4a אם תגביה כנשר ואם בין כוכבים שים קנך משם אורידך

49:16c כי תגביה כנשר קנך משם אורידך

The first word that begins the two phrases is differ-
ent. Obadiah introduces his phrase with the adverbial con-
junction אם (if) which presents a conditional promise on
God's part. Obadiah has two elements that he introduces
with אם . These are the conditions that Edom has entered
into in opposition to God. Obadiah says that if these two
conditions are met, then God will respond to them in

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[1]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 38.

[2]Such men as Julius Bewer (Obadiah and Joel, p. 38),
W. Rudolph ("Obedja," 223), and John M. P. Smith ("Structure
of Obadiah," 135).

fulfillment of the conditional statement, although it is a disciplinary response.

Jeremiah introduces the same phrase with the conjunction כי (when). This beginning also presents the phrase in a conditional light, yet it looks more at the time of fulfillment than the potential of fulfillment. These two words are actual synonyms. The meaning of this phrase does not change no matter which word is used.

Obadiah's text does deviate from the parallel text of Jeremiah when he introduces an entire clause that is lacking in Jeremiah (אם בין כוכבים שים). Watts feels that this phrase is a gloss from the previous phrase and must be omitted.[1] He says that it crept into the text from a devotional comment that some scribe originally put in the margin.[2] Robinson says that these words "may have been inserted from a desire to give a more obvious antecedent to משם than the text of Jeremiah supplies."[3] This questionable clause does supply a more obvious antecedent than the first clause which is lacking a specific antecedent which משם seems to require.

Bewer, however, feels that this additional clause is not necessary in order to supply an antecedent for משם

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[1]Watts, Obadiah, p. 34.

[2]Ibid., p. 33.

[3]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

because "it refers to the cliffs on which Edom dwells."[1]
The cliffs of Edom are mentioned in verse three, but that
makes the antecedent of משם three clauses before the refer-
ence word. This leaves Jeremiah's text without an obvious
antecedent unless one wants to jump over three clauses to
supply an antecedent and call it obvious.

The addition of Obadiah's clause seems to destroy
the meter of this verse. Robinson in commenting on the
meter says:

> Obadiah four can hardly be reduced to the elegiac rhythm,
> for while 4a might be squeezed into a 2:2 line it would
> be more naturally scanned 2:3, and 4b as it stands can
> be nothing but 2:2:2. Jeremiah xlix 6c, however, is
> beyond criticism on metrical grounds, and escapes the
> somewhat clumsy construction of Obadiah 4.[2]

This clause does make the meter cumbersome, yet it increases
the contrast in the comparison and presents a second proof
against Edom, whereby God should bring them down.

The word חגביה , which is found in the first clause,
is in the absolute state and in Job 39:27-28. When the ad-
ditional clause is added, as in Obadiah, this word is seem-
ingly left without an object while when the clause is left
out, as in Jeremiah, the object appears clearly to be the
word קנך . Keil feels that even with the addition of
this clause קנך can still be the object of חגביה although
it does not follow until the second clause. He says:

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[1]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

[2]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

This thought (the first clause) is hyperbolically inten-
sified in the second clause; if thy nest had been placed
among stars. שׂים is not an infinitive, but a passive
participle, as in the primary passage Numbers xxiv. 21,
which Obadiah had before his mind, and in 1 Samuel ix.
24, 2 Samuel xiii. 32; but קִנֶּךָ is never the less to be
taken as an accusative of the object, after the analogy
of the construction of passives, c. accus. obj. (see Ges.
143, L, a.).[1]

Bewer presents an interesting point when he says:

Obadiah has an additional pentameter "that saith in his
heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?" It is
so expressive that it seems impossible that Jeremiah
should have omitted it, if he had quoted from Obadiah.
The same is true of the striking additions "and though
among the stars were set."[2]

This is a difficult point to refute because it argues from
silence. Bewer seems to feel that he knows the mind of the
author. Is it not possible that Jeremiah, in quoting from
Obadiah, felt that these two clauses were repetitious and
thus left them out?

Obadiah's text is problematic. The meter is cumber-
some and breaks the form of the context, yet the addition of
this clause is possibly to be preferred. This clause
does provide a more obvious antecedent for מִשָּׁם than the
assertion that it refers to the high cliffs on which Edom
dwells. This would make the antecedent a verse away (i.e.
verse 3). This clause also gives a fuller description of
the actions of Edom against God for which God would bring
them down. One must honestly admit that this clause leaves

[1]Keil, Minor Prophets, p. 354.

[2]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

some unsolved questions.

Obadiah 5

The arrangement of Obadiah 5

  The text of Obadiah 5 is arranged quite differently
from that of Jeremiah 49:9. Obadiah first talks about
thieves and robbers that come to steal, then he switches to
talk about gleaners in the fields. Jeremiah presents these
two illustrations in exactly the reverse order. Bewer adopts
Jeremiah's order and rearranges Obadiah's to match it, be-
cause he feels that the transition from the vintages to the
thieves is better than vice versa.[1] Watts also arranges the
text in favor of Jeremiah, but he does so because of the
phrases באו-לך, נמיתה איך, and אם־שודדי. He says that
"they anticipate verse 6 in tone and content and break the
relation between the parts of verse 5."[2]

  The superiority of Obadiah's text is upheld by Keil.
In commenting on Jeremiah 49:9, he says:

> Verse 9 is a reproduction of Obadiah's verse 5, but in
> such a way that what Obadiah brings forward as a compar-
> ison is directly applied by Jeremiah to the enemy: our
> prophet (Jeremiah) represents the enemy as grape-gather-
> ers who leave nothing to glean, and as nocturnal thieves
> who destroy what is sufficient for them, i.e. destroy
> till they have enough, drag away and destroy as much as

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Watts, Obadiah, p. 34.

they can.[1]

It is impossible to establish the superiority of Obadiah's text if based upon verse 5 alone. The meter of these two readings supports Jeremiah's text. Obadiah's reading is not smooth and free flowing as some would desire. He does have some disjunctive clauses that break up the flowing thought. Yet if each verse is looked at in its context, Obadiah's reading has a stronger progression to the ultimate climax of Edom's destruction. Jeremiah builds up to this climax with a question, then a statement which tends to be anticlimactic, while Obadiah builds to the same climax by using a series of questions which tend to produce the climax that Obadiah 6 requires.

Obadiah 5a

Verse five of Obadiah is parallel to Jeremiah 49:9, but Jeremiah's text is shorter and has the two statements in reverse order from Obadiah.

The first clause of Obadiah 5a

The first clause of the first line of Obadiah 5 is parallel to the first clause of the second line in Jeremiah 49:9.

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[1]C. F. Keil, Jeremiah, Lamentations, in Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes, ed. by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Vol. VIII (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), p. 243.

5aa אם גנבים באו לך   אם שודדי לילה

49:9ab אם גנבים בלילה

Obadiah adds four words that are not found in Jeremiah's text. The words באו לך fulfill the need for a verb in this first clause which would other wise be lacking. Smith says that these words are a dittograph from verse 5b where these two words appear again.[1] Robinson feels that these words are somewhat awkward and come about with the transposition of the clauses (a and b) from their original order in Jeremiah, because in Jeremiah the verb stands naturally in its proper place.[2] Also, "אם with the perfect supposes a case to have already occurred, when although it does not as yet exist in reality, it does so in imagination."[3] This perfect construction in Obadiah seems to fit consistently in this context, where Obadiah is presenting the past and future actions of Edom that stand as proofs of Edom's guilt.

The next two words, אם שודדי, are said to be a gloss or variant to אם גנבים.[4] This may very well be true, because שודדי and גנבים are parallel terms.[5] גנב is used of

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[1] Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 136.

[2] Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

[3] Keil, Minor Prophets, p. 355.

[4] Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 136.

[5] Brown, Driver, and Briggs, Lexicon, pp. 170 & 994.

a common thief[1] while שדד looks more at the violence of the
action of such a one.[2] Although they are parallel, they are
not exact synonyms, for גנב is a general class of individuals
while שדד refers to an action that characterizes this class
of individuals, yet it may also characterize others outside
the class.[3] Bewer says that these two words are not neces-
sary to the thought and they spoil the meter scheme.[4]
These words do destroy the meter scheme, but it is question-
able whether there was meant to be such a strict meter scheme
as some commentators try to pose upon prophetic writers.
These words are not necessary to get across the thought, but
they expand the idea of a thief into vivid color, character-
izing his very actions of thievery. They add a lot to the
text that would be rather plain if they were deleted.

The second clause of Obadiah 5a

The second clause of the first line of Obadiah 5 is
parallel to the second clause of the second line in Jeremiah
49:9.

5ab איך נדמיתה   הלוא יגנבו דים

49:9bb   השחיתו דים

The words   איך נדמיתה have been excluded from the

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[1]Keil, Minor Prophets, p. 355.

[2]Brown, Driver, and Briggs, Lexicon, p. 994.

[3]Cf. Isa. 16:4; 21:2; 33:1; and Jer. 6:28.

[4]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

text by many writers for one reason or another. Robinson omits them because he says it is clearly a marginal exclamation which has crept into the text.[1] Wellhausen, Condamin, Sievers, Cheyne, and Marti omit these words because they say that these words are a gloss.[2] It is interesting to note that these same five commentators retain באו לך of the previous clause, yet they omit the entire line אם שודדי לילה which does have a parallel member in Jeremiah's text.[3] This method of excluding certain words seems to be a very subjective decision on the part of such commentators. They are not very consistent in what they retain and omit.

Keil in commenting on verse five, says:

> The following words אֵיךְ נִדְמֵיתָה cannot form the apodosis to the two previous clauses, because 'nidmethah' is too strong a term for the injury inflicted by thieves or robbers, but chiefly because the following expression הֲלוֹא יִגְנְבוּ וגו is irreconcilable with such an explanation, the thought that thieves steal דַּיָּם being quite opposed to 'nidmath,' or being destroyed. The clause 'how art thou destroyed' must rather be taken as pointing far beyond the contents of verses 5c and 6. It is more fully explained in verse 9, and is thereby proved to be a thought thrown in parenthetically, with which the prophet anticipates the principle fact in his lively description, in the form of an exclamation of amazement.[4]

The apodosis to the first two clauses is found in the following clause הלוא יגנבו דים.

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[1] Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 404.

[2] Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 136.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Keil, Minor Prophets, p. 355.

In commenting on the word הלוא, Robinson says that
it "runs counter to the prevailing rhythm, and in the first
case is unsupported by the text of Jeremiah. The interro-
gative may have been prefixed in the second case in order
to soften down the completeness of the doom pronounced."[1]

Rudolph says:

> For the sake of parallelism, הַ must simply be read in
> verse 5b instead of הֲלִיא (M arose under the influence
> of verse 5a); so V is correct with numquid saltem and
> Jeremiah 49:9 (they are merely transformed from a ques-
> tion into a statement).[2]

It seems that a hard hitting question would be more in
keeping with Obadiah's style, than a simple statement.
Obadiah uses the interrogative in verse three and at least
twice in verse five. Considering the context of doom against
Edom, it seems unlikely that Obadiah would soften his blows
against Edom by using a statement rather than increasing his
blow by an interrogative.

The verb of Obadiah, יגנבו, is more original and
more fitting than Jeremiah's verb, השחיתו.[3] The idea of
destroying in Jeremiah seems awkward in a context of a
thief taking what he wants, yet it could be a gloss from
Obadiah's שודדי which refers to a violent action such as
destruction. This is hard to support unless Jeremiah is

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[1]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 405.

[2]Rudolph, "Obadja," 224.

[3]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 35.

using Obadiah's text and omitted the clause אם שודדי, but preserved the idea of it in his verb השחיתו.

Obadiah's reading encompasses the actions of a thief and also that of a robber, when he says "they would steal." This is more fitting than Jeremiah's reading. It is interesting to note that the LXX rendering suggests an imperfect for Jeremiah which is in agreement with Obadiah's verbal root.

Obadiah 5b

The second line of Obadiah 5 is almost exactly paralleled by the first line of Jeremiah 49:9 with one minor exception.

5b אם בצרים באו לך   הלוא ישאירו עללות

49:9a אם בצרים באו לך   לא ישאירו עוללות

The only brake in the parallelism of these two lines is found in the word לא. Obadiah makes this word an interrogative by adding the הֲ prefix. However, Jeremiah has the simple adverbial form of the same word. The adverbial reading of Jeremiah is in proper balance to the first clause of this line which begins with the adverb אם. Obadiah makes a step up in his emphasis from that of an adverb to that of an interrogative. This seems more consistent with Obadiah's prophetical emphasis.

Obadiah 6

There is a striking similarity between Obadiah 6 and
Jeremiah 49:10, although these two are not parallel. This
similarity plus the parallel context presents a reason to
believe that these two are related.

The major point of similarity is the parallel idea
found in the words אֵיךְ נֶחְפְּשׂוּ עֵשָׂו of Obadiah and אֶת־עֵשָׂו
כִּי אֲנִי חָשַׂפְתִּי of Jeremiah. Bewer says:

> The strong exclamation of Obadiah is again more lively
> and forcible than the simple statement in Jeremiah. But
> the construction in Jeremiah with its explanation of the
> author of the calamity, setting the I of Yahweh over
> against the imaginary thieves and vintagers,--not they
> but I!--is clearer and more logical than the abrupt
> exclamation in Obadiah whose form reminds one of the
> exclamation in verse 5.[1]

Considering that verse six follows verse five and brings the
thought of verse five to a climax, it seems fitting that
Obadiah would present a strong exclamation while Jeremiah's
oracle is less climatic, thus his climax is stated in a
simple statement which fits his context.

Robinson feels that Jeremiah is the borrower, yet
Obadiah has probably suffered some textual corruption, espe-
cially in verse seven,[2] which will be demonstrated later.
Bewer, on the other hand, supports Jeremiah's text as the
superior text. He says:

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[1] Bewer, _Obadiah and Joel_, pp. 35-36.

[2] Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 406.

Whether the terms in Jeremiah aside from the construct are more original than the synonyms in Obadiah cannot be determined, unless the original be pre-exile and the Aramatic influence seen in בֿעֿה (Obadiah) be allowed to decide the question in favor of Jeremiah as the earlier reading.[1]

Some commentators, such as Wellhausen, Nowack, and Marti omit verse six from the text altogether.[2] These three commentators do so because they feel that verse six interprets the connection between verse five and verse seven, due to the use of the third person instead of the second person, and because it represents the catastrophe as a plundering of Edom and not as an expulsion from their land.[3] Wellhausen goes on to add that verse six was a later addition, because, as he says, verses 1-14 and 15b refer to the occasion when the Arabians drove the Edomites out of their land at the first half of the fifth century B.C.[4] Rudolph, in considering this omission of verse six, reminds us of the close connection between verse six and verse five that will not allow us to drop verse six from the text.[5] "Verse six is really so closely woven into the structure of the passage that it cannot be omitted

[1]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 36.

[2]George A. Peckham, "An Introduction to the Study of Obadiah" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1910), p. 15.

[3]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 36.

[4]Ibid., p. 3.

[5]Rudolph, "Obadja," 224.

as secondary."[1]

Obadiah 7

It would seem reasonable to assume that since verse
six of Obadiah can be compared to the first phrase of the
tenth verse of Jeremiah 49, then we could expect to find
some comparison between Obadiah 7 and the last phrase of
Jeremiah 49:10, but that is not the case. Obadiah 7 had
no correspondence in Jeremiah's oracle against Edom, al-
though it is possible to show some correlation between Oba-
diah 7 and Jeremiah 38:22. Between these two verses there
is one parallel phrase that can be found.

7 השיאוך יכלי לך אנשי שלמך

38:22 הסיתוך ויכלו לך אנשי שלמך

The context of these two readings is quite different.
In Obadiah, this phrase refers to Edom's allies that shall
turn on her and destroy her. In Jeremiah, this phrase is
used of the great men and false prophets of the king of
Judah. This oracle is to be sung by the women of the
king's house as a satire against him before the Chaldeans.[2]
Keil feels that Jeremiah quoted this phrase from Obadiah.[3]
This is quite likely when one considers the unity of this
phrase in Obadiah over against its standing as a song in

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[1]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 36.

[2]Keil, Jeremiah, Lamentations, pp. 114-115.

[3]Ibid., p. 115.

Jeremiah. Robinson says that "the phrase אנשי שלומך is too common a one in Hebrew to establish a definite connection between the two passages."[1]

"Obadiah six and seven constitute a brief, taunting lament over the fall of Esau (Edom)."[2] There are some textual problems with this verse, when comparing the LXX text with the Masoretic text, but these will not be developed here.

There is a major translation problem with the meaning of the word מזור. This word occurs only three times in the Hebrew text.[3] In two cases it clearly means "to wound" (Jeremiah 30:13, Hosea 5:13), but in Obadiah this translation does not fit the context. Bewer compares the post-Biblical Hebrew verb מזר, "to twist, weave, spin," and the Aramaic word "to bind" from which comes the meaning "cord, rope, snare."[4] This is possible, but still it does not fit the context well. Brown, Driver, and Briggs propose that it means "something extended, perhaps a net," and yet they are honest enough to admit that it is very

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[1]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 406.

[2]P. Kyle McCarter, "Obadiah 7 and the Fall of Edom," Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research (Feb., 1976), 87.

[3]Jeremiah 30:13; Obadiah 7; Hosea 5:13.

[4]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 40.

doubtful.[1] Rudolph proposed the translation "trap or snare,"
which fits the context and is a possible translation in
accordance with the Akkadian equivalent.[2] McCarter derives
the word from the Hebrew word זור "be a stranger." He
says, "as numerous examples illustrate, nouns of the type
maqtal derived from 'middle weak' roots in Biblical Hebrew
(hence nouns of the type maqom) are usually abstracts of
(most frequently) nouns of place."[3] He cites several Bib-
lical examples and points out that at least one ancient
authority, Symmachus translated מזר with ἀλλοτρίωσιν
estrangement.[4] He translates this clause of Obadiah as
follows: "They have established a place of foreigners in
your stead."[5]

Robinson has set the text of Obadiah six and seven
up as follows:

נבעו מצפניו	איך נחפשו עשו 6
אל אנשי בריתך	עד הגבול שלחוך 7
אנשי שלומך לחמך	השיאוך יכלו לך
אין תבונה בו[6]	ישים מזור תחתיך

[1]Brown, Driber, and Briggs, Lexicon, p. 561.

[2]Rudolph, "Obadja," 224.

[3]McCarter, "Obadiah 7 and the Fall of Edom," 87.

[4]Ibid., 88.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 406.

By doing this, one can more readily see the structural

relationship between these two verses. Robinson in commen-

ting on this structure says:

> The whole is clearly a dirge in proper form. Such
> dirges were often short--cf. Jer. ix 20, xxxvii 22--
> and a favorite word for the beginning was איך or איכה.
> The first, second, and fourth lines need no alteration,
> except that the last should be read as by the LXX. The
> third line, however, is meaningless as it stands. The
> crux of the line is to be found in the word לחמך,
> which has no construction and does not look likely to
> have been a gloss. It may, of course, be omitted as a
> doublet of שלומך, but it is tempting to suppose that
> some word like אכלי (cf. Ps. xli 10) once stood before
> it. We have thus the line
> השיאוך אנשי שלומך   אכלי לחמל
> If this were the original reading, אכלי may easily have
> been misplaced and then altered into יכלו as a reminis-
> cence of Jer. xxxviii 22.[1]

The partial use of this dirge by Jeremiah in his oracle

against Edom (49:10a) may indicate that Jeremiah drew upon

the already existing text of Obadiah in order to construct

his oracle against Edom.

Obadiah 8

Some commentators remove verses eight and nine from

the text. Peckham does this and gives the following justi-

fication for it:

> Verses 8 and 9, including מקטל which the LXX joins
> with verse 10, are regarded as an interpolation by
> Wellhausen, Nowack, G. A. Smith, Marti, and others, so
> verse 7 is immediately followed by verse 10. For the
> sake of the meter, drop with J. M. P. Smith יעקב
> which is an inserted comment on אחיך. Remove from the
> text מקטל as a gloss on מחמס (Nowack, Marti, J. M. P.

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[1]Ibid.

Smith).[1]

Robinson, in commenting on verses eight and nine, says:

> Verse 8 opens in the manner of an apocalyptic passage
> 8b, 9a (down to איש) look like a fragment from some
> longer oracle in trimeter rhythm directed against Edom.
> The words מהר עשׂו in 9b are not likely to have stood
> there originally, so soon after the same phrase in 8b.
> They were probably inserted from the previous verse to
> complete the sense left incomplete by the mutilation
> of the verse.[2]

One gets the impression of utter defeat with such subjective
cutting apart of the text by such commentators as cited
above.

The similarity of thought is so close between Obadiah
8 and Jeremiah 49:7 that we must recognize some kind of
relationship between them, even though the phraseology is
not so strikingly similar.[3] This can be clearly seen by
the references to the destruction of wisdom among Edom.
Obadiah refers to the wisdom in a general way, while Jere-
miah specifically mentions the Temanites as an example group
that will lose their wisdom. The Temanites were well known
for their wisdom.[4] One of the most well known Temanites
was Eliphaz, the chief disputant of Job (Job 2:1ff).

Obadiah speaks of this destruction in a predictive
manner. This is one of the reasons why Wellhausen insists

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[1]Peckham, "Introduction to the Study of Obadiah," 16.

[2]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 406.

[3]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 36.

[4]Keil, Minor Prophets, p. 359.

that verses 8 and 9 are inserted at a later time. He feels
that the preceding verses have already described this des-
truction as past and now verses 8 and 9 speak of it to come.[1]
If these two verses clash with the rest of the oracle, then
they should be rejected. One needs not go far in Obadiah
to find Obadiah using this predictive future in a parallel
sense, because verse three presents the same construction as
is found in verse eight, thus these two verses are consistent
with Obadiah's style.

Obadiah switches from the second person to the third
person in verse eight which has given some commentators a
reason to strike this verse from the text. As previously
seen (cf. verse 3b, c), Obadiah switches from the usual
second person to the third person for the purpose of "a
stronger prophetic scorn."[2]

Obadiah 9

The ninth verse of Obadiah has been suggested to
have parallel thought with Jeremiah 49:22b.[3] The parallel
thought is found in the word גבורי (mighty men). Obadiah
attaches a masculine suffix to the word in order to identify
them as the inhabitants of a specific district which he names
as Teman. Jeremiah simply names them as "the mighty men of

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[1] Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 36.

[2] Kleinert, The Book of Obadiah, p. 8.

[3] Rudolph, "Obadja," 224.

Edom."

Most commentators like to detach מקטל from verse
nine, and put it on the beginning of verse ten. They say
that it is superfluous when attached to verse nine.[1] Some
say that it looks like a gloss on מחמס at the beginning of
verse ten.[2] The LXX, Syriac, and the Vulgate join מקטל
to verse ten, although Bewer says, in opposition to these,
the meter as well as Joel 4:20 favor the Masoretic reading.[3]
Keil says:

> The thought of connecting "miqqatel" with what follows
> cannot for a moment be entertained. It is opposed not
> only by the authority of the Masoretic punctuation, but
> still more decisively by the fact, that the stronger and
> more special word (qetal) cannot precede the weaker and
> more general one (chamas), and that the murder of cer-
> tain fugitives is placed first in the last of crimes
> committed by Edom upon the Israelites (verses 10-14).[4]

A Comparison of the Rhythmic Structure

There is a lot of disagreement among scholars as to
the place of importance that the meter played in Hebrew
poetry. The fundamental idea of Hebrew poetry is that of
parallelism.[5] Watts, in describing Hebrew poetry, says:

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Robinson, "Structure of Obadiah," 406.

[3]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 41.

[4]Keil, Minor Prophets, pp. 359-360.

[5]Watts, Obadiah, p. 29.

> Lines or stichoi are parallel in thought and/or form
> to other lines or stichoi. A line of poetry is composed
> of two or three stichoi. Each stichoi has two, three,
> or four accents - usually one to a word. The system
> pays no heed to the number of syllables and makes no
> systematic use of rhyme. Strophes can be found, but
> there is no agreement on principles of strophic form.[1]

Terry adds:

> Its metre is not that of syllables, but of sentences
> and sentiments. Properly speaking, Hebrew poetry knows
> nothing of metrical feet and versification analogous to
> poetical forms of the Indo-European tongues.[2]

The distinguishing feature of Hebrew poetry is the parallel-

ism of its numbers which is characterized by thought rhythm,

not sound rhythm.[3]

The parallel passages in Obadiah and Jeremiah are

examples of Hebrew poetry. They do demonstrate a meter

system, but it is not consistent in either text. It can be

observed by looking at the Hebrew text of both prophets side

by side,[4] that the most common meter is 3:3 or 2:3. This

meter is generally true in Hebrew poetry.[5] In order to

show this meter structure, some words, adverbs, or conjunc-

tions, and even some phrases must be set outside the metrical

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[1]Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[2]Melton S. Terry, Biblical Hermeneutics (Grand Rapids,
Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 90.

[3]John J. Davis, The Psalms: Studies in the Hebrew
Text (Winona Lake, Indiana: Grace Theological Seminary,
1975), p. 10. This is not to negate the existence of rhythm
in Hebrew poetry.

[4]See Appendix I.

[5]Watts, Obadiah, p. 30.

structure and called anacrusis.[1]

The metrical structure of Obadiah is not so regular, indeed several times it seems to be disregarded altogether.[2] Smith reminds us that "variations of meter within the same poem are, of course, found in both ancient and modern poetry, and Hebrew poetry furnishes several examples."[3] It is worthy to note that although Obadiah has some variation in his meter, overall his entire oracle is rather consistent in meter with variations upon the 3:3 and 2:3 meter.[4] It is worth noting also, that Jeremiah is very irregular with the exception of the parallel to Obadiah where Jeremiah's meter is quite regular.[5] This forces us to question Jeremiah as the originator of the oracle against Edom. It seems more consistent to assume that Jeremiah quoted the oracle, keeping the metrical structure intact, although it was not consistent with his previous structure.

The meter of this parallel oracle is more consistent in Jeremiah, although Obadiah does retain a metrical structure, it is inconsistent and quite varied at points. This

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 34.

[3]Smith, "Structure of Obadiah," 133.

[4]See Watts, Obadiah: A Critical Exegetical Commentary, pages 34-36 and 38-41, for a complete diagram of the meter in Obadiah's text.

[5]Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, pp. 33-34

variation between the meter of Obadiah and Jeremiah may be explained in two ways. The first possible explanation is that both Obadiah and Jeremiah quoted this oracle from an older oracle, the original of which is better preserved in Jeremiah.[1] This explanation is a very appealing one, but it is an argument from silence, because we do not have textual evidence of any older oracle against Edom. The second possible explanation is that Jeremiah used Obadiah's oracle as a pattern, and he improved the metrical structure to be more consistent. This sounds good, but Jeremiah is inconsistent in his meter throughout his book. Why would he quote another oracle and clean up its meter when his own writing is metrically lacking? The question of meter still remains a question.

A Comparison of the Unity of the Oracle

The unity of the oracle is a very key factor in the comparison of the parallel passage in Obadiah and Jeremiah. In Obadiah the oracle is seen as one continuous flowing oracle. Each phrase follows the preceding phrase, without any break in thought or any interrupting clauses between the phrases of the oracle. Jeremiah is quite different, because his oracle is much larger, encompassing more phrases than Obadiah. The order and arrangement is much different. Where Obadiah has them one after the other, Jeremiah weaves

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[1]Ibid., p. 37.

them in among other additional phrases, which are lacking in Obadiah.

Jeremiah has the bulk of Obadiah's oracle (vv. 1-4) represented as one unit in his verses 14-16, but then he scrambles the rest of the phrases around and represents them in verses 7, 9, 10, and possibly 22. If it is possible to show a correlation between Obadiah 7 and Jeremiah 38:22, then Jeremiah has not only divided up Obadiah's oracle and woven it in against Edom, but he has also taken a part of it out of context and applied it to another situation. Even if this is not possible we can still conclude that Jeremiah's text is not a unified oracle in the sense that Obadiah's text is. As Keil says:

> That which is common to the two prophets not only forms an outwardly connected passage in Obadiah, whereas in Jeremiah it occurs in several unconnected passages of his prophecy, but as the exposition will show, that in Obadiah it is more closely connected and apparently more original than in Jeremiah.[1]

Keil points out a very interesting observation when he says:

> The prophecy of Jeremiah against Edom contains a number of expressions peculiar to himself and characteristic of his style, not a single one of which is to be found in Obadiah, whilst nothing is met with elsewhere in Jeremiah of that which is common to Obadiah and himself (for the proofs of this, see Caspari, pp. 7, 8).[2]

What Keil is saying is that those parts of Jeremiah 49 that

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[1]Keil, _Minor Prophets_, pp. 340-341.

[2]_Ibid._, p. 340.

have no counterpart in Obadiah, contain expressions that are
used by Jeremiah elsewhere, while the material in common does
not appear elsewhere in Jeremiah's book.[1] This observation
demonstrates that Jeremiah's oracle is not united with the
rest of his book, but it is actually an abruption in the text
which has been adopted by Jeremiah from some outside source,
such as Obadiah.

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[1]Leslie C. Allen, The Book of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah,
and Micah, in The New International Commentary on the Old
Testament, ed. by R. K. Harrison (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), p. 132.

CHAPTER II

THE VARIOUS VIEWS PROPOSED TO SOLVE THE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OBADIAH AND JEREMIAH 49

There have been three views proposed by scholars in
attempting to solve the apparent relationship between Obadiah
and Jeremiah 49. Each of these views will be developed and
evaluated, based upon the textual comparison work that has
been done in Chapter I.

Jeremiah's Text is the Original

The first view to be taken under consideration is the
view that supports Jeremiah's text as the original text.
Obadiah then copied his oracle from the original in Jeremiah.
This view lacks the scholarly supporters[1] that the other two
views have in abundance.[2]

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[1]The only strong supporters of the originality of
Jeremiah's text are Hitzig in Die Zwolf Kleine Propheten
and Vatke in Einleitang, cited by George Adam Smith, The
Book of the Twelve Prophets, Part II, Vol. IV of An Expo-
sition of the Bible (Hartford, Conn.: The S. S. Scranton
Company, 1908), p. 599.

[2]For an extensive list of supporters of the various
views see Appendix II.

Supportive Arguments for the Priority

of Jeremiah's Text

The originality of Jeremiah

Points of originality for Jeremiah have been claimed
in such passages as Jeremiah 49:15, as compared with Obadiah
2, and for Jeremiah 49:9 as compared with Obadiah 5. As was
previously demonstrated in the consideration of these passages,
there is some evidence to support the originality of Jeremiah,
but it is not conclusive by any means. As Lanchester remarks,
"These are in themselves very slight indications, and cannot
be pressed against the general consideration that the passage
reads much more naturally as a connected whole in Obadiah,
than as scattered about in fragments as in Jeremiah."[1]

The fall of Jerusalem

Jeremiah 49:12 speaks of the future destruction of
Jerusalem, while Obadiah 11 speaks of the city as already
having been captured and plundered.[2] This is a good point,
the only problem is that the argument assumes that Jeremiah
and Obadiah are talking about the same destruction of Jeru-
salem. If this be so, then Jeremiah must have preceded Oba-
diah. Jerusalem was besieged four different times. Jeremiah

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[1]H. C. O. Lanchester, Obadiah and Jonah, in The
Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, ed. by A. F. Kirk-
patrick (Cambridge: The University Press, 1918), p. 17.

[2]R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament
(Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing
Company, 1969), p. 901.

is unquestionably talking about the siege by the Chaldeans in 586, but the question remains to be answered as to whether Obadiah is talking about the same siege or a different one.

The date of Jeremiah

The date of Jeremiah is pretty well established to be in the period prior to the captivity of Jerusalem, by the Chaldeans in 604 B.C.[1] In order for Obadiah to have copied the original text of Jeremiah, he must have been a contemporary in post-exile time. This date for Obadiah has been proposed and supported by many scholars, even those that do not hold to the originality of Jeremiah's text. A late date for Obadiah is crucial to this view, but it does not exclusively prove it to be true.

Arguments Against the Priority of Jeremiah's Text

Jeremiah's habit

In Jeremiah's prophecies against various peoples, he often incorporates verses and phrases from other prophets that speak against the same people. E. B. Pusey points out five different occasions where Jeremiah does this.[2] In

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[1] S. R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), p. 319.

[2] E. B. Pusey, The Minor Prophets: A Commentary, Vol. I, in Barne's Notes on the Old & New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1950), p. 345.

Jeremiah's prophecy against Moab, he incorporates eight verses from Isaiah,[1] and four verses from the same prophet against Babylon.[2] In addition, he also has several allusions to Isaiah's prophecies containing a word or idiom or mode of expression.[3] Jeremiah also borrowed two verses from Amos. In Jeremiah's prophecy against Damascus, he closes with a verse from Amos that also speaks against Damascus.[4] Jeremiah also inserts a verse from Amos against Ammon in his prophecy against the Ammonites.[5]

Pusey points out the significance of this when he says:

> Probably in renewing the prophecies against those nations, Jeremiah wished to point out that those former prophecies were still in force; that they had not yet been exhausted, that the threatenings of God were not the less certain, because they were delayed; that His word could not the less come true, because He was longsuffering. The insertion of these former prophecies, longer or shorter, are a characteristic of Jeremiah's prophecies against the nations, occurring, as they do, in those against Babylon,

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[1]Jer. 48:29, 30, from Isa. 16:6; Jer. 48:31, from Isa. 15:5, 16:7, 11; Jer. 48:32, from Isa. 16:8, 9, 10; Jer. 48:34, from Isa. 15:4-6; Jer. 48:36, from Isa. 16:11, 15:7; Jer. 48:37, from Isa. 15:2, 3; also Jer. 48:43, 44, from Isa. 24:17, 18.

[2]Jer. 50:16, from Isa. 13:14; Jer. 50:39, from Isa. 13:21, 20; and Jer. 50:40, from Isa. 13:9.

[3]Jer. 50:2, refers to Isa. 46:1; Jer. 50:8, to Isa. 48:20; Jer. 50:23, to Isa. 14:6, 4; Jer. 50:25, to Isa. 13:5; Jer. 50:34, to Isa. 47:4; Jer. 50:38, to Isa. 44:27; Jer. 51:11, to Isa. 13:17.

[4]Jer. 49:27, from Amos 1:4.

[5]Amos 1:15, in Jer. 49:3, besides the allusion in verse 2.

Damascus, Moab, Ammon, and therefore probably in that also against Edom.[1]

In keeping with Jeremiah's habit it is safe to assume that Jeremiah is not the originator, but a copiest of an older oracle against Edom.

Jeremiah's style

Keil makes an interesting observation about Jeremiah's text when he says:

> There is not found in Obadiah a single one of all Jeremiah's peculiar and characteristic expressions, such as occur in his prophecy against Edom (for instance, comp. Jer. 49:13 with 22:5, 24:9, 25:9, etc.); while on the contrary nothing appears elsewhere in Jeremiah of all that he has in common with Obadiah, but rather it bears the stamp of something foreign, which proceeds from a different source.[2]

If Obadiah copied from Jeremiah, then one would expect to see some characteristic expressions common to Jeremiah, but there are none. Neither are there any characteristic expressions found elsewhere in Jeremiah of those phrases that are common between Jeremiah and Obadiah. One would not expect this to be so if this oracle against Edom was the original work of Jeremiah. This causes the author to conclude that the common portions of Jeremiah and Obadiah, that are found in Jeremiah, are not original with him, but have only been adopted by him very freely from a previous written document

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[1]Pusey, The Minor Prophets, p. 345.

[2]Karl F. Keil, Manual of Historico-Critical Introduction to the Canonical Scripture of the Old Testament, Vol. I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1881), p. 391.

against Edom. Thus the conclusion must be that Jeremiah's text is not the original oracle, but only contains parts of the original oracle which he copied and adopted to his oracle against Edom.

Obadiah's Text is the Original

The second view to be considered is the view that supports Obadiah's text as the original. Jeremiah then copied his oracle from the original in Obadiah. This view is well supported by an overwhelming majority of conservative scholars.

Supportive Arguments for the Priority
of Obadiah's Text

The order of Obadiah

The prophetical oracle against Edom is presented in one connected whole in Obadiah, while in Jeremiah it is interspersed with additional phrases from the mind of Jeremiah.[1] Keil says:

> The prophecy of Obadiah, forms a well-arranged whole, with internal and necessary progress, and with a homogeneous formation, on the contrary, in Jeremiah there is no advance in the plan of development, but a series of heterogeneous elements in the announcement of judgement, like the links in a chain.[2]

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[1] Charles Wordsworth, _The Holy Bible_, Vol. VI (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1891), p. 57.

[2] Keil, _Introduction to the Old Testament_, pp. 391-392.

In the material common to both prophets, it is interesting to notice that Obadiah sets the material forth in a short consecutive passage of eight verses, while in Jeremiah the same material is scattered out across sixteen verses with additional material woven in between. Pusey, in talking about Obadiah's order, points out:

> No one verse could be displaced, without injuring that order. Thoughts flow on, the one out of the other. But nothing is more improbable than to suppose that this connected train of thought was produced by putting together thoughts, which originally stood unconnected.[1]

In Obadiah the oracle is an orderly and regular production, with a beginning, middle, and conclusion, passing on naturally to the climax; while in Jeremiah the oracle has no internal unity and it does not work up into a perfect whole.[2]

In Jeremiah's introduction of verses from Isaiah against Moab, he scatters them amidst other verses of his own, much like he does with Obadiah. This leads one to conclude with Pusey when he writes:

> It is plainly more natural to suppose that Jeremiah enlarged an existing prophecy, adding to it words which God gave him, than that Obadiah put together scattered sayings of Jeremiah, and yet that these sayings, thus severed from their context, should still have formed as they do, one compact, connected whole.[3]

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[1]Pusey, The Minor Prophets, p. 346.

[2]W. J. Deane and J. R. Thomson, "Obadiah," in The Pulpit Commentary, ed. by H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, n.d.), p. X.

[3]Pusey, The Minor Prophets, p. 345.

The placement of Obadiah

In Obadiah the oracle is placed at the beginning of the book and is introduced by the common introduction of "Thus saith the Lord concerning Edom." In Jeremiah this is not so, because here the bulk of the oracle (vv. 1-4) appears obscurely in a phrase in the middle of Jeremiah's oracle.[1] It also lacks the formal introduction that Obadiah gives it.

Jeremiah places the oracle in a secondary place within a larger oracle against Edom, while Obadiah places it in the place of primary importance and introduces it thusly. This leads to the conclusion that Obadiah's presentation of the oracle is the primary one, while Jeremiah is secondary.

The roughness of Obadiah

Obadiah's oracle is much rougher than its counterpart in Jeremiah. Archer points this out when he says:

> In Obadiah the sentiments are expressed more briefly and rapidly than in Jeremiah, in part also more heavily and abruptly. Jeremiah seems to have smoothed down the rugged places in Obadiah's style of expression and made the whole oracle more lucid and perspicuous.[2]

Kleinert sums up the argument when he writes:

> It is contrary to all hermeneutical procedures to suppose that a later writer, in regard to a situation meanwhile explained, should have still darkened the clear language of the earlier one, while, on the contrary, it is a common

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[1] W. W. Cannon, "Israel & Edom: The Oracle of Obadiah-I," _Theology_, XV (October, 1927), 191.

[2] Gleason L. Archer, Jr., "Bible Book of the Month: Obadiah," _Christianity Today_, IV (June 20, 1960), 18.

and explainable occurrence, that the obscure prophecy of antiquity should, in the hands of the subsequent seer, who is at the same time highly skilled in discourse, become more flowing and more clear.[1]

By smoothing the rugged places of Obadiah's style, Jeremiah has shown himself to be the adapter, rather than the originator.[2]

The structure of Obadiah

Out of the nine verses of Obadiah's oracle, Jeremiah parallels five of them (vv. 1-5) and has some striking resemblances to three others (vv. 6-8), while one of them (v. 9) is in almost total obscurity to Jeremiah's text. The structure of the oracle is rearranged in Jeremiah. For example Jeremiah fuses Obadiah three and four into one verse (49:16) and by doing so he makes the phrase "from these," in his text, dangling without a specific meaning.[3] Obadiah's verse five is arranged in reverse order in Jeremiah, from the way it appears in Obadiah. As was stated previously,[4] Obadiah's text is not smooth and free flowing as Jeremiah's text is, yet Obadiah seems to build to a more dramatic climax than Jeremiah. Jeremiah is much smoother, yet somewhat

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[1]Kleinert, The Book of Obadiah, p. 4.

[2]Gleason L. Archer, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), p. 301.

[3]Cannon, "Israel and Edom," 191.

[4]See discussion on pp. 28-30.

anticlimatic in his structure.

Cannon gives an interesting observation on the structural differences when he says, "In many of the slighter parallels, Jeremiah gives the impressions of a writer quoting by memory from some known original."[1] This may help us explain some of the structural differences between these two oracles and help us understand why Jeremiah's oracle is so much smoother than Obadiah's.

The style of Obadiah

Obadiah's text presents us with a quite different style than the style that is displayed in Jeremiah's text. There are four distinguishing characteristics of Obadiah's style.

The flowing style

The first distinguishing characteristic of Obadiah, is his continuous flow of speech. Obadiah's thought pattern flows from one phrase to the next in a homogeneous character, while Jeremiah seems to start again and again in somewhat of a disjointed fashion. The original text would be better represented as one that was "struck off at one blow"[2] rather than a repetitve text which Jeremiah presents.

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[1]Cannon, "Israel and Edom," 191.

[2]H. C. Von Orelli, The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consumation of God's Kingdom (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885), p. 201.

The forceful style

A second distinguishing characteristic of Obadiah is his forceful style of writing. Caspari considered that Obadiah's oracle exhibited a bold, starker air in it, which Jeremiah has smoothed and simplified.[1] The most striking example of this is noted in a comparison of Obadiah 5ab with Jeremiah 49:9bb.[2] Obadiah uses a question which is hard hitting, but Jeremiah tones the thought down with a simple sentence. This forceful use of the interrogative is a common stylistic factor in Obadiah's writing (cf. vv. 3 & 5).

A personal style

A third distinguishing characteristic of Obadiah is his personal style of incorporating himself and his readers. Obadiah prefaces his oracle by the words, "The vision of Obadiah." In these words Obadiah identifies himself as the recipient of the vision which he is about to reveal. He does this in such a way that he leaves no room for any possibility that he got the vision second hand. If this vision was second hand, then Obadiah could not have prefaced it in such a singular way, but he only says, "concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts." He leaves room for the possibility of a second hand acception of the oracle.

Obadiah also adds the words, "we have heard tidings

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[1] Allen, Joel and Obadiah, p. 132, citing Caspari.

[2] See discussion on pp. 26-29.

from the Lord," to his preface. These words, even more force-
fully than the above ones, point to a direct reception of
this oracle from God to Obadiah with no possibility of any
second hand person to stand between. Jeremiah makes similar
claims for his oracle, yet he tears it down by changing the
verb form. He leaves open the possibility for a second hand
reception. "It is impossible that Obadiah should have pre-
faced his work with the words . . . if he was taking such
large extracts from previous writings."[1]

A lack of Jeremianic expressions

The last distinguishing characteristic of Obadiah is
his lack of Jeremianic expressions which we would expect if
he were the copiest instead of the originator. Pusey sums
up this point well when he says:

> Out of 16 verses of which the prophecy of Jeremiah
> against Edom consists, four are identical with those of
> Obadiah; a fifth embodies a verse of Obadiah's; of the
> eleven which remain, ten have some turns of expression
> or idioms, more or fewer, which recur in Jeremiah,
> either in these prophecies against foreign nations, or
> in his prophecies generally. Now it would be wholly
> improbable that a prophet, selecting verses out of the
> prophecy of Jeremiah, should have selected precisely
> those which contain none of Jeremiah's characteristic
> expressions; whereas it perfectly fits in with the
> supposition that Jeremiah interwove verses of Obadiah
> with his own prophecy, that in verses so interwoven
> there is not one expression which occurs elsewhere in
> Jeremiah.[2]

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[1] Deane and Thomson, "Obadiah," p. X.

[2] Pusey, The Minor Prophets, p. 347.

The originality of Obadiah

Evidences of originality for Obadiah's text are very numerous. Such passages as 1a, b, c, 3a, and c are outstanding examples of this originality.[1] Keil states it well when he says, "The comparison of the individual differences between the two texts in general, brings to light the originality of Obadiah and the imitation on the side of Jeremiah."[2]

Arguments Against the Priority of Obadiah's Text

The originality of Jeremiah

As has been stated before, there are two points at which Jeremiah's text seems to be more original (49:9, 15). Both of these points of supposed originality have been dealt with in Chapter I. In that chapter it was shown that Jeremiah 49:15 better completes the parallelism of the phrase, while Obadiah 2 better completes the meter. It was stated that it seems hard to rationalize a scribe changing parallelism in Hebrew poetry in order to achieve meter. It is much easier to see how one could change an inconsistent meter in order to achieve parallelism.[3] Thus the text of Obadiah is to be preferred as original instead of Jeremiah.

The originality of Jeremiah 49:9 begins to weaken

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[1] For a full development of these phrases and others, see Chapter I.

[2] Keil, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 392.

[3] See pp. 10-12.

under a closer investigation. Jeremiah, although his text is smoother and free flowing, is anticlimatic in his structure in a place which calls for the climax. On the other hand, Obadiah 5 cannot be absolutely proven to be superior over Jeremiah although Obadiah does present the climax where it is most expected.

Allen lists some other possible signs for the superiority of Jeremiah's text over Obadiah, when he says:

> The feminine suffix in v. 1 ("against her") is most unusual. Aalders has noted that in Jer. 49:19 it has Bozrah as its antecedent, which is lacking in the selective Obadiah material. Moreover Jer. 49:14 can easily be scanned as two lines of verse, but its counterpart in Obad. 1 is reduced to prose by the variant form of the second line. Jer. 49:15 begins with Heb. 'ki,' "for," giving a more closely structured relationship with v. 14, which is quite in keeping with the form of the passage; Obad. 2, however, lacks the conjunction and its contents have a different purpose. This formal degeneration has a secondary ring. Obad. 3 suspiciously lacks the difficult 'hapax legomenon' that occurs at the beginning of its parallel, Jer. 49:16.[1]

Each of these variants have been dealt with in Chapter I.

The fall of Jerusalem

This objection assumes that Jeremiah 49:12 and Obadiah 11 are referring to the same fall of Jerusalem. Jeremiah speaks of it in the future tense, while Obadiah refers to it as already past. The conclusion is that "Jeremiah must have delivered his prophecy before the destruction of the city, which excludes the possibility of his borrowing from an oracle

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[1]Allen, Joel and Obadiah, p. 132.

delivered after the fall of Jerusalem."[1]

The assumption that is made by this objection is a very difficult one to prove. Israel was sacked four different times. Even if it could be proven that Jeremiah and Obadiah have the same destruction of Jerusalem in mind, it is still possible that the prophet, Obadiah, is writing about a future prophetic act in the past tense in order to illustrate the certainty of God's word. Although God's word speaks of something future and not yet accomplished, it is to be believed as a past event, and because God said it, it will come about as He has said.

A Common Text That Both Obadiah
and Jeremiah Shared

The third view that has been proposed grows out of the seemingly unanswered questions that the first two views do not set at rest to the full satisfaction of many commentators. Thus a common text is presented. This text is purported to be much older than Obadiah or Jeremiah and both of these prophets relied upon it in their oracle against Edom. Peckham defines this common text view as follows:

> From a careful comparison of the two texts it appears that in Obadiah the arrangement of the verses is the logical one and that the prophecy as a whole is here in its more original form; but occasionally Jeremiah offers the better

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[1]Frederick C. Eiselen, The Minor Prophets, in Commentary on the Old Testament, IV, ed. by D. D. Whedon (New York: Eaton and Maine, 1907), p. 291.

reading.[1]

Jeremiah, in his manner, freely uses this older common text, while Obadiah sticks much closer to the original form.[2] Thus there are now two different forms of one original text. In Obadiah the text is more literally preserved, while in Jeremiah the actual reading is better preserved.

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Supportive Arguments for the Priority

of the Common Text

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Illustrations of the common text

Many writers, in support of the common text theory, have tried to point out occasions in the writings of Obadiah and Jeremiah that illustrate the use of the common text. Eiselen does this when he says:

> Both prophets derived the elements common to them from an earlier prophecy, which Obadiah incorporated with few alterations, while Jeremiah treated it with greater freedom, and that Obadiah was familiar not only with the original oracle but also with the utterance of Jeremiah dependent upon the same. On the whole, the earlier prophecy would be the same as Obad. 1-9, which contains no allusions to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586. This older utterance the prophet appropriated after the fall of the city and expanded it in 10-21, imitating to some extent the language of the earlier portion.[3]

Kirkpatrick responds to this argument when he says:

> In support of this view it is urged that as the common matter extends to the first nine verses in Obadiah only,

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[1] Peckham, "Introduction to the Study of Obadiah," p. 1.

[2] Lanchester, Obadiah and Jonah, p. 17.

[3] Eiselen, The Minor Prophets, pp. 291-292.

it is clear that that was all that Jeremiah had before
him; and that the inconsistencies, want of connexion, and
difference of style, between these verses and the later
verses, point in a difference in authorship . . . But it
is by no means certain that Jeremiah had only vv. 1-9
before him. The resemblance between Jeremiah 49:12 and
Obadiah 16 can hardly be accidental and suggest the prob-
ability that Jeremiah had the conclusion of the prophecy
before him, though he made little use of it. It would be
quite natural for him to adopt the verses which describe
the doom of Edom, and to neglect those which describe
Edom's offense, if that offense lay in the remote past;
while the latter part of the prophecy, which predicts the
restoration of Judah lay entirely outside his plan.[1]

If this be true, then there is no reason to assume a common
text. Obadiah is the original and Jeremiah has Obadiah's
completed text before him, although he does not use all of
it, but only those portions that suit his need.

Robert H. Pfeiffer argues for the common text and in
his argument he presents the following proof for such a text:

That both recensions are derived from a lost original is
also shown by a comparison of Obadiah 8 with Jeremiah
49:7; the admission in both texts that Edom was celebrated
for its sages is derived from a statement in the common
source apparently quoted from memory both in Obadiah and
Jeremiah.[2]

Allen uses verse one of Obadiah as proof. He feels
that "the plural 'we have heard' of Obadiah 1 (cf. "I heard,"
Jer. 49:14) is a reference to the community's inheritance of
a venerated oracle."[3] There are other places within the text

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[1] A. F. Kirkpatrick, The Doctrine of the Prophets
(Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958),
pp. 36-37.

[2] Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament
(New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941), p. 585.

[3] Allen, Joel and Obadiah, p. 133.

of the two prophets that could be called forward as illustra-
tions of the common text, yet, as discussed in Chapter I, all
of these are very weak proofs and are not necessarily conclu-
sive proofs for a common text.

The originality of the common text

There are points at which Jeremiah seems to be the
original (49:9, 16), but on the other hand there are also
points at which Obadiah seems to be the original (vv. 1, 2, &
4). This has caused many commentators to reject both prophets
as the original and to adopt a common text which is represent-
ed by the two prophets. Each prophet represents this common
text in different areas of originality. The only reason that
this author can see for adopting such a view is lack of will-
ingness, on the part of the commentator to do a comparative
exegetical study of the two prophets in their own spheres.

The structure of the common text

A desire to reproduce the structure of the common
text has been attempted by many commentators. In doing this
they take the rhythmic structure of Obadiah and Jeremiah,
which are not consistent, and work backwards to build a con-
sistently structured text. Bewer does this when he writes:

> In Obadiah the metre is not so regular, indeed several
> times it seems to be disregarded. But also here the
> rhythm indicates that the original oracle must have been
> metrical. This being so, the presumption is that its
> metrical form is on the whole more correctly preserved
> in Jeremiah. If the metrical form of Jeremiah 49 were
> due to an editor, it would be singular, that he did not

cast the whole oracle in this form.[1]

A question still remains to haunt such writers, for how does anyone know that the original text was as consistent-ly structured as most commentators propose it to be? Obadiah and Jeremiah both have a rhythmic structure. At points they agree, and at points they differ. Who is to be the authority to pick and choose between them, in order to reconstruct a lost text?

A common pool of prophetic literature

Many writers have proposed a common pool of prophetic literature from which the writing prophets drew. This is a real possibility, and can be demonstrated by the free use of the Biblical prophets in borrowing from each other. For instance Jeremiah uses both Isaiah and Amos. Obadiah has common parts with Jeremiah and Joel. As Eaton says:

> It was not a matter of quoting from an older writer, but of co-operation within a prophetic body to present the living Word of God in its current application . . . stand-ing firmly then within such a prophetic tradition, Obadiah has built together elements received in part directly from the tradition and in part from his own inspiration to form a well-integrated composition with marked unity of theme.[2]

This argument lacks the extra Biblical and archaeo-logical evidence that it needs, because there is no proof of any such oracle against Edom. It is very questionable whether

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[1] Bewer, Obadiah and Joel, p. 34.

[2] J. H. Eaton, Obadiah, Naham, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, in the Torch Bible Commentary, ed. by John Marshall and Cannon Allen Richardson (London: S. C. M. Press, 1961), p. 36.

such a prophetical body ever existed. The Biblical writers
did quote each other in order to show the progressive prophe-
tical value of God's Word, but it is very unlikely that they
would have quoted a non-Biblical text and given it the same
value as the writing of a past prophet of God, especially
since we have no physical evidence of any such text.

Dating the assumed common text

Affixing a date to the common text is a very subjec-
tive task, although some writers have attempted it. Driver
attempts to establish the dates of Jeremiah and Obadiah, and
thus to place the common text at a time before the other two
prophets, when he says:

> The date of Jeremiah 49:7ff seems fixed, not only by
> 46:1f. (B.C. 604), but by internal evidence as well
> (49:12a R. V. the punishment of Jerusalem is still fu-
> ture) to a period prior to the captive of Jerusalem by
> the Chaldeans, the prophecy of Obadiah, if it alludes to
> the conduct of the Edomites after that event, cannot
> evidently have formed the model for Jeremiah; one of the
> resemblances between the two prophecies can only be
> explained by the supposition that the common elements
> have been derived by both from a prophecy older than
> either, which Obadiah has incorporated with least alter-
> ation, while Jeremiah has treated it with greater free-
> dom.[1]

Ewald dates this conjectured common text to have come
from a prophet contemporary with Isaiah.[2] W. Gladstone Watson
says, "this earlier prophecy may be assigned to the reign of
Ahaz, when Edom smote Judah and carried away captives

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[1]Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old
Testament, p. 319.

[2]Smith, "The Structure of Obadiah," 131, citing Ewald.

(2 Chr. 28:17 cf. 2 Ki. 16:6); but this date is by no means certain."[1]

Even if one could establish the date of Obadiah and prove that there was a common text, then the most he could say about the text's date is that it was in existence before the other two prophet's oracles were written. The problem is that these two big if's have not been firmly established.

<div align="center">Arguments Against the Priority

of the Common Text</div>

The presuppositions of the common text

There are two presuppositions to which this common text theory adheres. The first presupposition is that they assign a late date to the book of Obadiah. The second presupposition is that there has to be a common text between Jeremiah and Obadiah.

The late date of Obadiah

The common text theory builds upon the late date for the book of Obadiah. If the book of Obadiah can be dated as a contemporary of Jeremiah's 49th chapter, but only following Jeremiah by a few years, then there is substantial evidence to support a common text. For if Jeremiah precedes Obadiah in writing, then Obadiah could not be the pattern

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[1]W. Gladstone Watson, Obadiah, in The Abingdon Bible Commentary, ed. by Frederick Carl Eiselen (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1929), p. 784.

for Jeremiah, and Jeremiah is unquestionably not the pattern for Obadiah. That leads us to an older common text that they both adapted in a personal way to their own oracles.

If it is possible to demonstrate that the date of Obadiah precedes that of Jeremiah, then the most likely conclusion is that Obadiah was the pattern for Jeremiah, and there is no need for a common text. By putting Obadiah before Jeremiah, with some time span in between, allows sufficient time to see the development and changes that have taken place between Obadiah's original oracle and Jeremiah's copied oracle. The time span between these two need not be a long period of time. Thus the introduction of a common text is unnecessary and more problematic.

Jerusalem was besieged four times during its Old Testament history.[1] Only two of these times are commonly supported by scholars as possible correlations to the destruction that Obadiah makes reference. These two are, the sacking of the city by the Philistians and Arabians in the reign of Jehoram (844 B.C.), and the final capture of the city by the Chaldeans (586 B.C.). Both of these dates can be supported by some very persuasive arguments. The arguments in favor of the early date of 844 B.C. have been

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[1]The four besieges are: (1) the capture by Shishak, King of Egypt (1 Ki. 14:25, 26 and 2 Chr. 12:1-2). (2) the sacking of the city by the Philistians and Arabians in the reign of Jehoram (2 Chr. 21:16, 17). (3) Amaziah's defeat of Jehoash (2 Ki. 14:8-14 and 2 Chr. 25:17-24). (4) the capture by the Chaldeans (2 Ki. 25).

summarized as follows:

(a) The description does not mention a destruction of the Temple which was the grand tragedy of the 586 B.C. catastrophe. Laetsch and Archer say that the description of Obadiah has none of the features that distinguished the fall of Jerusalem in 586.
(b) The absence of Aramaic expressions are more appropriate to the 9th cent. than the 6th cent.
(c) Implication of a recapture of the city.
(d) Nations mentioned are not exilic neighbors, but earlier foes (e.g. Philistines).
(e) It castigates the same sins as the 8th cent. prophet Amos.
(f) In the reoccupation the hill country of Judah is not mentioned, assuming it already was occupied.[1]

The arguments in favor of the late date of 586 B.C. have been summarized as follows:

(a) The events of vv. 11-14 fit most naturally into the destruction of Jerusalem.
(b) The bitter hostility to Edom was prevalent at this time (Lam. 4:21; Ezek. 25:12-14; 35:1-15; Ps. 137:7).
(c) The Philistine invasion of Jehoram's day was prob. of minor importance.
(d) The reference (v. 19) to possessing Ephraim and Samarian suits a late date better than an early date when Israel was in existence.
(e) The possibility is open that both Obadiah and Jeremiah used an older source.[2]

As one can see both dates present some very interesting arguments.[3] At this point one must at least recognize

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[1]A. K. Heembold, "Obadiah, Book of," in Vol. IV of The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, ed. by Merrill C. Tenny (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), p. 480.

[2]Ibid.

[3]As stated previously, it is the purpose of this paper to investigate the relationship between Obadiah and Jeremiah, not to determine the date of Obadiah.

the possibility of the 844 B.C. date of Obadiah and not unquestionably adopt the 586 B.C. date, as the critics would desire. This does not destroy the common documentary theory, but it questions the validity of one of its fundamental presuppositions, that of the late date of Obadiah.

The supposed necessity of the common text

The critics argue that a common text is absolutely necessary in order to explain the relationship that exists between Obadiah and Jeremiah 49. This is a presupposition that they make, and then they set out to prove and illustrate its existence. It is a presupposition, because there is no tangible evidence to support it. Archaeology has not uncovered such a document, nor has any other book or writing made any reference to such a lost document, a document so great in importance that two Biblical writers quote from it, yet it remains unknown to the rest of the world.

It is possible to explain the relationship between Obadiah and Jeremiah 49 without demanding a common text. This has been amply demonstrated under the previous section.[1] It was there demonstrated that Obadiah's text is the original, because of the order placement, and structure of the oracle. The roughness of Obadiah's text also demonstrates his originality over and against the smoother, more polished copy found in Jeremiah. These demonstrate that it is

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[1]See pages 49ff.

possible to explain this relationship without the introduction of a third text.

One must be honest and face the reality that there still remains some problems with the idea of the originality of Obadiah's text although this idea is less problematic than the common text theory.

The cumbersomeness of the supposed common text

By introducing a common text into the problem of the relationship between Obadiah and Jeremiah 49, the critics create an additional problem instead of solving the original problem. Now, instead of arguing for one of the two known texts, the critics spend their time trying to demonstrate the logical possibility of a common text of which there is no tangible proof.

The problem of Obadiah and Jeremiah's relationship is not aided by the introduction of a common text, but instead it has made it more cumbersome. Why introduce a factor into the discussion which does not solve anything, but only intensifies the problem?

The lack of evidence for the supposed common text

The critical argument for a common text of which Obadiah and Jeremiah shared, is mostly an argument from silence and inference. The critics point to a couple of phrases in Jeremiah of which, they feel, Jeremiah shows his superiority over Obadiah. From this they make the inference

that there must be a common text, because Jeremiah could not be the pattern for Obadiah, because he follows Jeremiah in writing.

Logically this all sounds good, but there is one minor problem and that is that there is no proof for the existence of any such common text. Thus the argument is silent because it has no proof. Common texts are also called upon to solve other textual relationships that are found in Scripture, but they too lack the evidence needed to substantiate their validity.

This author questions the introduction of a foreign unsubstantiated common text into the discussion, when a more obvious answer already exists within the realm of the proposed solutions. The proposed solution of Obadiah's superiority is not problem free, but it is less problematic than the Common Text assertion.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between Obadiah and Jeremiah 49 is a very real thing and not just an accidental occurrence. It has been demonstrated that one of these authors was the originator of the oracle and the other borrowed it under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Upon completion of the textual investigation, it is very obvious that Jeremiah takes temporally a secondary position to that of Obadiah. Obadiah's text demonstrates some signs of secondariness, yet as a whole it shows more signs of originality than Jeremiah's text does. As for the assertion of a common text, it seems best to deny any possibility of such an occurrence, based upon the lack of evidence and problems that it creates.

This author feels that it is possible to make a strong positive conclusion that Obadiah's text is the original, and that Jeremiah quoted and adopted it to his own style and time, as he saw fit, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

APPENDIX I

TEXTUAL COMPARISON OF OBADIAH 1-5
WITH JEREMIAH 49

1a	כה־אמר אדני יהוה לאדום
49:7a	לאדום כה אמר יהוה צבאות
1b	שמועה שמענו מאת־יהוה וציר בגוים שלח
49:14a	שמועה שמעתי מאת־יהוה וציר בגוים שלוח
1c	קומו ונקומה עליה למלחמה
49:14b	התקבצו ובאו עליה וקומו למלחמה
2	הנה קטן נתתיך בגוים בזוי אתה מאד
49:15	כי הנה קטן נתתיך בגוים בזוי באדם
3	זדון לבך השיאך
49:16a	תפלצתך השיא אתך זדון לבך
3b	שכני בחגוי סלע מרום שבתו
49:16b	שכני בחגוי הסלע תפשי מרום גבעה
3c	אמר בלבו מי יורדני ארץ
4a	אם תגביה כנשר ואם־בין כוכבים שים קנך משם אורידך
49:16c	כי תגביה כנשר קנך משם אורידך

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4b   נאם יהוה

49:16b   נאם יהוה

5a   אם גנבים באו לך   אם שודדי לילה

49:9ba   אם גנבים בלילה

5b   איך נדמיתה   הלוא יגנבו דים

49bb   השחיתו דים

5c   אם בצרים באו לך   הלוא ישאירו עללות

49:9a   אם בצרים באו לך   לא   ישארו עוללות

APPENDIX II

SUPPORTERS OF THE THREE VIEWS

Jeremiah	Obadiah	Common Text
Hitzig	Adams	Aglen
Vatke	Archer	Allen
	Caspari	Bewer
	Davis, John D.	Cannon
	Davis, John J.	Driver
	Deane	Eaton
	Deissley	Eiselen
	Delitzsch	Kraeling
	Eichkorn	Lanchester
	Eissfeld	Langford
	Exell	Livingston
	Fausset	Murphy
	Feinberg	Myres
	Freeman	Pfeiffer
	Gaebelein	Robinson
	Graf	Sanders
	Gray	Sellin
	Jager	Smith, John
	Jahn	Thompson, J.A.
	Keil	Wade
	Keller	Watson
	Kleinert	Watts
	Maurer	
	Orelli	
	Perowne	
	Pusey	
	Raven	
	Rudolph	
	Schnuner	
	Schultz	
	Smith, George A.	
	Tatford	
	Thomson, J. R.	
	Williams	
	Whitcomb	
	Wordsworth	

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