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INTERTEXTUALITY AND THE PORTRAYAL OF JEREMIAH THE PROPHET

Gary E. Yates

TIMOTHY POLK HAS NOTED, "Nothing distinguishes the book of Jeremiah from earlier works of prophecy quite so much as the attention it devotes to the person of the prophet and the prominence it accords the prophetic 'I', and few things receive more scholarly comment."[1] More than simply providing a biographical or psychological portrait of the prophet, the book presents Jeremiah as a theological symbol who embodies in his person the word of Yahweh and the office of prophet.[2] In fact the figure of Jeremiah is so central that a theology of the book of Jeremiah "cannot be formulated without taking into account the *person* of the prophet, as the book presents him."[3]

The purpose of this article is to explore how intertextual connections to other portions of the Bible inform a deeper understanding of the portrayal of Jeremiah the prophet and his theological significance in the book of Jeremiah. The past thirty years in biblical studies have witnessed a rapidly growing interest in the study of inner-biblical exegesis and intertextuality, focusing on the connections and relationships that exist between biblical texts.[4]

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1 Timothy Polk, *The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of the Self*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement (Sheffield: JSOT, 1984), 7.

2 See Joep Dubbink, "Getting Closer to Jeremiah: The Word of YHWH and the Literary-Theological Person of a Prophet," in *Reading Jeremiah: A Search for Coherence*, ed. Martin Kessler (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 25–39.

3 Ibid, 26.

4 For a survey of the current status of intertextual studies in the Old Testament

Schultz comments that "any careful Bible reader must note how instinctively—and pervasively—biblical authors quote, allude to, and echo the growing corpus of Hebrew and Greek texts that ultimately make up the canonical collection or refer more obliquely to the historical and theological themes contained therein."[5] The highly allusive nature of Scripture means that the informed reader must read beyond the boundaries of any one book or scroll to determine the relationships that exist between the various scrolls

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see Geoffery D. Miller, "Intertextuality in Old Testament Research," *Currents in Biblical Research* 9 (2011): 283–309. Miller distinguishes two basic approaches to intertextuality in biblical studies. The "purely synchronic" approach is "indebted to postmodern thought" and "focuses solely on the reader and the connections she draws between two or more texts" (ibid., 284). Whether the texts were intentionally alluded to or even available to the original authors is irrelevant to this approach. The "diachronic approach," on the other hand, focuses on "identifying the specific connections that the author wants the reader to perceive, as well as determining which texts predate the others, and consequently, have influenced the others." This study adopts the latter approach, though the direction of influence between related texts is generally not relevant to this study and often cannot be determined with certainty. With the connections between Jeremiah and the deuteronomistic history and other prophetic books, these texts developed in close proximity to each other in the exilic and postexilic periods and may have even originated within the same literary circles. For representative examples of studies focusing on inner-biblical exegesis in both Old and New Testament studies, see Steve Moyise, *Paul and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010); Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, *Deuteronomy in the Old Testament* (New York: Clark, 2007); idem, *Isaiah in the Old Testament: The New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel* (New York: Clark, 2005); idem, *Psalms in the New Testament* (New York: Clark, 2004); G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); Richard B. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scriptures* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); Mark J. Boda and Michael H. Floyd, eds., *Bringing out the Treasures: Inner Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–16*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement (London: Sheffield Academic, 2003); J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert to the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*, Biblical Studies Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002); Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, rev. ed., Biblical Studies Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001); Richard L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999); Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993); and Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

5 Richard L. Schultz, "Intertextuality, Canon, and 'Undecidability': Understanding Isaiah's 'New Heavens and New Earth' (Isaiah 65:17–25)," *Bulletin for Biblical R*esearch 20 (2010): 30. As Schultz notes, the concept of biblical canonicity means that "it is appropriate when interpreting biblical passages to weigh intertextual (or intratextual) connections to other biblical texts more heavily than other perceived intertexts."

that make up the biblical canon.[6]

The biblical intertexts that inform the portrayal of Jeremiah the prophet particularly highlight various forms of prophetic failure that characterize Jeremiah's ministry. The traumatic events surrounding Jeremiah's ministry and the Babylonian exile suggest the collapse of the office of prophet and the termination of Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel as His people. The message of Jeremiah reflects how the exile turned Israel's salvation history upside down. However, rather than these failures pointing to deficiencies in Jeremiah's ministry as a prophet, they demonstrate instead how the unbelief and disobedience of Jeremiah's generation led to the judgment of exile. At the same time, other intertextual connections reflect how the book of Jeremiah holds forth the hope of the restoration and renewal of God's relationship with Israel, but this hope is one that extends beyond the lifetime of Jeremiah and belongs to a distant and uncertain future.

The primary focus of this study is how the portrayal of Jeremiah in the book of Jeremiah connects to other portions of the Hebrew Bible. However, the canonical presentation of Jeremiah has also left an imprint on the New Testament presentation of the message and mission of Jesus, and this study will also explore how these intertextual relationships show that Jesus continued the ministry of Jeremiah while also fulfilling Jeremiah's promises of a new covenant and the restoration of God's people.

JEREMIAH THE PROPHET LIKE MOSES

Longman has observed that the prophet Jeremiah stands "in the line of prophets that Deuteronomy 18:14–20 announced would follow Moses' pattern."[7] This Moses typology is introduced in Jeremi-

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6 Gary Edward Schnittjer, "The Narrative Multiverse within the Universe of the Bible: The Question of 'Borderlines' and 'Intertextuality,'" *Westminster Theological Journal* 64 (2002): 231–32.

7 Tremper Longman III, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, New International Bible Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 21. See also Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 53–62; Louis Stulman, *Order amid Chaos: Jeremiah as Symbolic Tapestry,* Biblical Seminar (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 158–66; Christopher R. Seitz, "The Prophet Moses and the Canonical Shape of Jeremiah," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 101 (1991): 3–27; and William L. Holladay, "The Background of Jeremiah's Self-Understanding," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83 (1964): 153–64.

This motif of the "prophet like Moses" is applied to other canonical prophets as well. See Henry McKeating, "Ezekiel the 'Prophet Like Moses,'" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 61 (1994): 97–109; and Martin O'Kane, "Isaiah: A

ah's call narrative at the beginning of the book (1:4–19). Jeremiah's complaint concerning his limited speaking ability (v. 6) recalls Moses' protests about his lack of eloquence (Exod. 4:10).[8] The instruction "all that I command you, you shall speak" in Jeremiah 1:7 and the promise that Yahweh would "put" words in Jeremiah's mouth (v. 9) closely parallel the statements concerning the "prophet like Moses" in Deuteronomy 18:18 (cf. Exod. 7:2).[9]

The reasons for the parallels between Moses and Jeremiah in the book of Jeremiah are largely negative. As Allison states, "The construction of a Moses-like Jeremiah was a rhetorically effective means of condemning Jeremiah's contemporaries. One of the outstanding features of the Pentateuch is the interminable opposition to Moses by those he unselfishly serves. Moses' generation was obduracy and ingratitude incarnate. At every turn the stiff-necked people rebelled against God and His servant."[10] Jeremiah's generation was just as rebellious as the people of Moses' day (Jer. 7:25–26; cf. Exod. 32:9; Deut. 9:7; 10:16). Both generations had offended Yahweh with their idolatries (Jer. 8:19; Deut. 32:31). The scroll of Jeremiah's prophecies destroyed by Jehoiakim and then rewritten by the prophet was as much a testimony to Judah's covenant unfaithfulness as the tablets Moses broke when he came down from the mountain (Jer. 36:27–28; Exod. 34:1).[11] Moses had led the people out of Egypt in Yahweh's ultimate act of deliverance, but the book of Jeremiah recounts the inversion of Israel's salvation history as Jeremiah returns to Egypt with a group of Judean refugees (Jer. 43:1–7). Stulman comments that Jeremiah "presents the end of Israel's story where it originated, back in Egypt."[12] Even though Moses and Jeremiah were faithful servants of Yahweh, they both ended their lives outside the land of promise (Jer. 43:6; Deut. 1:37; 3:26; 4:21). Jeremiah's prophecy of a seventy-year exile meant that his generation would be excluded from the covenant blessings in the same manner as the generation in Moses' day that left Egypt

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Prophet in the Footsteps of Moses," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 69 (1996): 29–51.

8 Allison, *The New Moses*, 57.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., 61–62.

11 Ibid., 59. See also Else K. Holt, "Word of Jeremiah—Word of God," in *Uprooting and Planting: Essays on Jeremiah for Leslie Allen*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies (New York: Clark, 2007), 185.

12 Stulman, *Order amid Chaos*, 93.

but died in the wilderness because of their unbelief (cf. Jer. 25:11–12; 29:10; Num. 14:21–24).

In his role as covenant mediator and spokesman for Yahweh, Jeremiah's prophetic teaching and instruction became a second "book of the law" for his contemporaries, fusing with the law of Yahweh as divine instruction.[13] The prophet called the king and the people back to the standards of justice that were set forth in the book of Deuteronomy (Jer. 7:6–9; 22:1–5; 34:12–17; cf. Deut. 5:7–21; 6:11, 14; 15:12–18; 24:19–21).[14] Jeremiah's scroll in chapter 36 provided a warning to Jehoiakim similar to the curses found in the scroll that was discovered and taken to Josiah in 2 Kings 22 (cf. Deut. 28). With the recording and proclamation of the scroll's message, Jeremiah took on himself the responsibility of the king to write a copy of the law for himself (Deut. 17:18–20) and of the Levites to repeatedly read God's word to the people (Deut. 31:9–13).[15] In warning of the covenant curses in Jeremiah 11:1–17, the prophet's preaching reenacted the ceremony of Deuteronomy 27:9–26, in which the Levitical priests reminded the people of the blessings and curses of the covenant.[16] Jeremiah's preaching had a one-sided focus on the covenant curses because of the rampant infidelity that characterized the nation of Judah in his day.

The flagrant nature of the covenant infidelity of Jeremiah's generation is particularly highlighted in the contrast between Jer-

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[13] One observes this phenomenon in other parts of the Hebrew Bible as well. The five-book structure of the Psalms likely indicates that the "torah" to be meditated on in Psalm 1:2 at the beginning of this collection is the Psalms themselves. For development of this idea see Michael LeFebvre, "Torah Meditation and the Psalms: The Invitation of Psalm 1," in *Interpreting the Psalms: Issues and Approaches*, ed. D. Firth and P. S. Johnston (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2005), 213–25.

[14] Leo G. Perdue, "Baruch among the Sages," in *Uprooting and Planting*, 280.

[15] Mark Leuchter, *The Polemics of Exile in Jeremiah 26–45* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 105.

[16] Mark Leuchter notes that the threat of a curse (אָרוּר הָאִישׁ) in Jeremiah 11:3 and Jeremiah's response of אָמֵן יְהוָה in verse 5 recalls the ceremony in Deuteronomy 27 where this exact wording occurs (*Josiah's Reform and Jeremiah's Scroll: Historical Calamity and Prophetic Response,* Hebrew Bible Monographs [Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006], 160). Leuchter also notes other connections to Deuteronomy and deuteronomistic history in Jeremiah 11. The prophet commands the people to "hear the words of this covenant" (שִׁמְעוּ אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת) in 11:2, which closely resembles the הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת of Deuteronomy 5:3 and the דִּבְרֵי סֵפֶר הברית of 2 Kings 23:2. Jeremiah's message in 11:6–8 "condenses the basic historical and covenantal themes of Deuteronomy." The people are to "hear" (Deut. 5:1; 6:4; 9:1) and "do" (5:1; 8:1; 11:22) the commands that were ignored by their fathers (9:5). These connections serve to fuse together the Mosaic commands and Jeremiah's preaching as the "law" that the people must obey in order to remain in the promised land.

emiah and Moses in their roles as intercessors for the people. Throughout his life Moses was a mediator between God and Israel, and he successfully appealed for Yahweh not to destroy the people after their worship of the golden calf and their unfaithful response to the report of the spies (Exod. 32:9–14; Num. 14:13–20). In contrast Jeremiah was commanded not to intercede on Judah's behalf because it was too late for the nation to be spared from judgment (Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:11).[17] In Jeremiah's day Yahweh's relationship with Israel had deteriorated to the point that a prophet could not even engage in his normal ministry of intercession (cf. 1 Sam. 12:18–25; Amos 7:1–6).[18] Yahweh declared that He would not spare Judah even if Moses and Samuel were to pray for them (Jer. 15:1). Moses interceded at the beginning of Israel's salvation history, and the prohibition of Jeremiah praying for the people reflected how this history was coming to an end.[19]

Even after the fall of Jerusalem and the exile, Jeremiah continued to serve in the Mosaic role of covenant mediator, seeking to reconcile the people of Israel to Yahweh. However, in two specific episodes, covenantal renewal like that envisioned in the book of Deuteronomy is foiled by the continued disobedience of the people. The first episode occurs in Jeremiah 40–41 as Gedaliah the governor encouraged the people remaining in the land to submit to the king of Babylon so that it might go well for them (40:7–10). The political context and the absence of Jeremiah from this scene may at first make this episode read "like a human, non-theological account."[20] However, rather than merely dispensing political advice, Gedaliah was in fact applying Jeremiah's prophetic word that

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[17] R. E. Clements, "Jeremiah 1–25 and the Deuteronomistic History," in *Old Testament Prophecy: From Oracles to Canon* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 113–15.

[18] For further development of the collapse of Jeremiah's intercessory ministry, see Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 2009), 240–45. Instead of praying for the people, Jeremiah turns to praying for their judgment and destruction because of his rejection and persecution as Yahweh's messenger (cf. Jer. 12:1–4; 17:18; 18:21–23; 20:12).

[19] John D. Barry points to an even more shocking intertextual reference regarding intercession and Jeremiah's generation in 5:1–7 (*The Resurrection of the Servant* [Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2010], 133). When Jeremiah was unable to find even one righteous person in Jerusalem who might save the city from destruction, this means that Jerusalem had become even more corrupt than Sodom and Gomorrah, which was destroyed in spite of Abraham's intercession because there were not ten righteous individuals in the city (Gen. 18:22–33).

[20] Leslie C. Allen, *Jeremiah: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 432.

Yahweh had granted Babylon temporary sovereignty over Judah and that submission to Babylon was the only way Judah would be spared from further judgment (cf. 27:1–15; 38:2–4).[21] Leuchter even notes how the reference to the appointing of "men, women, and children" to Gedaliah in 40:7 recalls the assembling of the "men, women, and children" in Deuteronomy 31:12 for the purpose of reminding them of the covenant commands so that they might continuously possess the promised land (vv. 31:9–13).[22] Thus, Gedaliah was fulfilling the Deuteronomic directive to remind the people of the word of Yahweh as he stood in the place of the prophet and echoed Jeremiah's (Moses-like) message concerning what was necessary for them to remain in the land. When this instruction was followed, more refugees returned to the land and enjoyed an abundant harvest (Jer. 40:11–12), but this initial good fortune turned to disaster when the counsel of submission to Babylon was rejected and Gedaliah was assassinated (41:1–3).

The second episode of failed covenant renewal is recorded in Jeremiah 42–43. This episode begins with a reversal of the divine prohibition against Jeremiah's intercession on Judah's behalf (42:2–4); the nation was no longer under an immutable decree of judgment. There was the possibility of a new epoch in Israel's relationship with Yahweh. The "if/then" sermon of Jeremiah that follows his intercession for the people reflects the paranetic style of the "life/death" sermons in Deuteronomy 28–30 when Moses prepared Israel for entrance into the land and set forth the blessings and curses of the covenant (cf. Deut. 28:1, 15, 58).[23]

As with the Mosaic commands, following Jeremiah's counsel as the word of Yahweh was essential for the people's continued enjoyment of the land (Jer. 42:10). Those who came to Jeremiah for advice also expressed their willingness to obey the word of Yahweh

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[21] See Leuchter, *The Polemics of Exile*, 120–24.

[22] Ibid., 122–23, and 242, n. 33. Jeremiah 40:7 reads, "because he appointed to him men, women, and children," while Deuteronomy 31:12 reads, "assemble the people, the men, the women, and the children." Both passages have to do with the assembling of the people before the Levites/Gedaliah so that they might receive instruction on how to remain in the land. The terms "men, women, and children" directly follow each other in only these two passages in the Hebrew Bible (though see Jer. 41:16 in this immediate context). The reference to "children" and the phrase, "from the poor of the land" is missing from Jeremiah 40:7 in the Septuagint, but this omission is probably due to haplography caused by the מ that appears at the end of וְנָשִׁים and the beginning of מֵאֲשֶׁר.

[23] Walter Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 392–94.

in the same way as Moses' audience at Sinai (Jer. 42:5–6; Exod. 19:8; 24:3). As Moses was away for forty days to receive the law of God on Mount Sinai, so Jeremiah received direction from Yahweh to give to the people after ten days (Jer. 42:5–7). When the contingent led by Johanan rejected Jeremiah's advice and went down to Egypt (43:4–7), they brought on themselves the same types of punishments spelled out in the covenant curses of Deuteronomy 28 (sword, plague, and famine; cf. Jer. 42:22) and particularly the ultimate curse of return to Egypt (Deut. 28:68).

Jeremiah's sermon in chapter 44 reflects the depth of the covenant fracture between Yahweh and the Judean refugees who had fled to Egypt. The Jews in Egypt expressed their disregard for their covenant responsibilities toward Yahweh in a rather shocking manner. They blatantly refused to listen to Jeremiah's calls to repentance and defiantly vowed that they would continue to worship their pagan gods (44:16–17). The expressed reason for their rebellion was their belief that the Babylonian crisis was the result of the (Josianic) reforms that had put an end to pagan rituals and offerings (44:18–20). In response to this defiance, Jeremiah warned that Yahweh would bring death and destruction on this community so that only a few survivors would remain (44:26–30). Both before and after the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah's work as a covenant mediator resulted in epic failure and covenant dissolution.

JEREMIAH AND ISAIAH'S SERVANT OF YAHWEH

A reading of Jeremiah with the book of Isaiah also reveals a close parallel between the mission and ministry of the prophet and the Isaianic Servant of Yahweh. Though the New Testament identifies Jesus as the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah's servant prophecies, an exclusively messianic understanding of the Servant does not fit the historical context of the book of Isaiah. The Servant of Yahweh in Isaiah is a figure whose identity is shadowy and unclear.[24] The Servant is both corporate Israel (cf. Isa. 41:8; 42:1; 44:1; 49:3) and an individual who has a ministry to Israel (49:6). The individual features of the Servant are especially prominent in the four Servant Songs in Isaiah (Isa. 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12). The

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[24] For fuller discussion of the identity of the Servant of Yahweh in the Old and New Testament contexts, see Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, eds., *Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004); and William H. Bellinger and William R. Farmer, eds., *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1998).

Servant in Isaiah reflects royal, priestly, and prophetic features that qualify him as a second Moses.[25] Rather than identifying one single individual as the Servant of Yahweh, the book of Isaiah seems to present the role of the Servant as an open job description that could potentially be filled by various individuals in a trajectory that culminated with Jesus.[26] This type of pattern-prophecy characterizes other aspects of Isaiah's eschatological message as well. The mission of the individual Servant in Isaiah involves suffering and interceding on behalf of others so that Israel might be restored to its proper role as Yahweh's national Servant. As the Servant suffers for the sins of others (53:6), his death becomes a "sin offering" (אָשָׁם, 53:10), and he effectively "intercedes" or "intervenes" (פגע) for others (v. 12). His death and intercession are effective in bringing others to God.

The prophet Isaiah himself appears to fulfill in some way the role of the Servant in his proclamation of Israel's release from Babylonian exile (Isa. 61:1–3). Because of the intense abuse that Jeremiah experienced in fulfilling his prophetic vocation, his identification with the Servant was a natural one.[27] The Isaianic Servant and the prophet Jeremiah are beaten, shamed, and then vindicated (Isa. 50:4–9; Jer. 20:7–12).[28] Both the Servant and Jeremiah are like sheep "led to slaughter" (Isa. 53:7–8; Jer. 11:19) so that they are cut off "from the land of the living."[29] The ministry of the Serv-

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[25] For this understanding of the Isaianic Servant see G. P. Hugenberger, "The Servant of the Lord in the 'Servant Songs' of Isaiah: A Second Moses Figure," in *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*, ed. P. E. Satterthwaite, R. S. Hess, and G. J. Wenham (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 105–39. Both Jeremiah and the Servant are thus portrayed as the "prophet like Moses" anticipated in Deuteronomy 18:15–18.

[26] C. B. Caird refers to the Servant prophecies in Isaiah as an example of a "Situation Vacant advertisement" in which the prophet "describes in some detail a person whose identity is not yet known" (*The Language and Imagery of the Bible* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985], 58–60).

[27] Because of the generally recognized exilic setting of Isaiah 40–55, a tendency among scholars is to see the Servant Songs in Isaiah as alluding to and referencing preceding prophecies of Jeremiah (see Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture,* 64–66). The question of the direction of influence and whether the Isaianic Servant provides a pattern for Jeremiah or Jeremiah a pattern for the Servant is not as important to the present discussion as recognizing the commonality between the two.

[28] Sommer provides a fuller summary of the correspondences between these two passages (ibid., 64–65).

[29] Ibid., 65. Sommer further notes sixteen other examples of shared vocabulary between Isaiah 53 and Jeremiah 11:18–20. A close connection between these two passages seems beyond dispute.

ant brings "healing" to others (Isa. 53:5), and Jeremiah promises Yahweh's future "healing" of Israel (Jer. 30:17; 33:6).[30]

There are also important distinctions between Isaiah's Servant and the prophet Jeremiah. The Servant willingly accepts his fate (Isa. 50:5–6), while Jeremiah deeply resented the abuse and ridicule he experienced as Yahweh's messenger (Jer. 20:7–9).[31] The Servant does not open his mouth (Isa. 53:7), while Jeremiah gave full expression to his laments and complaints. As with the parallels between Jeremiah and Moses, Jeremiah's failure as an intercessor offers a striking contrast to the Servant. The Servant will effectively "intercede" for many (Isa. 53:12), but Jeremiah was forbidden to "intercede" for the people as they faced judgment from Babylon (Jer. 7:16; 15:11; cf. 11:14; 14:11). Barry comments, "In juxtaposition to Jeremiah's attempt to be an intercessor, the *very role* of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is to intercede *for* transgressors. The Servant is not trying to convince Yahweh to help the people, but instead is placed in a position *by* Yahweh where he is required to be their intercessor (53:12)."[32] There is a sense of incompleteness and inadequacy on the part of Jeremiah to be and do all that belongs to the role of the Servant. Though Jeremiah suffered greatly in fulfilling his mission, he did not suffer to the point of death like the Servant. While Jeremiah in his day was ultimately unable to find even the one righteous man whose presence would spare Jerusalem from judgment (Jer. 5:1), the role of the Servant is to become that one righteous man who delivers Israel. Barry explains, "Rather than waiting for one righteous man, Yahweh puts forth his own man who has 'done no wrong' in a legal sense (53:9), so that he might make many righteous (53:11)."[33] Despite these inadequacies, there is still a very real sense in which the ministry of Jeremiah anticipated the restoration to be accomplished by the ultimate Servant of Yahweh who would suffer on Israel's behalf.

THE CONTINUATION AND COMPLETION OF JEREMIAH'S MINISTRY IN CHRIST

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30 R. N. Whybray, *Thanksgiving for a Liberated Prophet: An Interpretation of Isaiah Chapter 53*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement (Sheffield: JSOT, 1978), 62.

31 Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 64–65.

32 Barry, *The Resurrected Servant in Isaiah*, 134.

33 Ibid., 133.

Exploration of the intertextual connections between Jeremiah's story and the Hebrew Bible at large finds that Jeremiah's ministry in many ways was one of failure and disappointment. The book of Jeremiah depicts the apparent end of the office of prophet, of salvation history, and of Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel. This aspect of the portrayal of Jeremiah makes all the more remarkable the promises that emerge from this book. As a second Moses, Jeremiah the prophet surpasses the first, promising a new covenant between Yahweh and Israel that will overcome the inadequacies of the first covenant when God writes His law on the hearts of His people (Jer. 31:31–34; 32:38–40). After condemning the final rulers in the historical Davidic dynasty for their unbelief and disobedience, Jeremiah promises the restoration of the Davidic throne and an ideal Davidic king to sit on that throne (Jer. 23:5–6; 30:9, 21; 33:14–26). As already noted in the discussion of the Servant of Yahweh, the prophetic ministry of Jeremiah is continued and ultimately completed in the person of Jesus Christ.

The message and ministry of Jeremiah has clearly influenced the portrayal of Jesus in the Gospels. The Matthean account in which Jesus inquires of His disciples what people were saying about Him indicates that some of the people had specifically identified Jesus with Jeremiah (Matt. 16:14; cf. Mark 8:28; Luke 9:19), and quotations from Jeremiah at the beginning and end of Matthew's Gospel (2:18–19; 27:9–10) reflect the importance of the prophet to the book. Knowles explains the significance of Jeremiah-typology for the presentation of Jesus in Matthew: "The relevance of Jeremiah for Matthew, therefore, was twofold. Most obviously, Matthew understood Jesus to be a prophet like Jeremiah: a figure of doom and suffering rejected by his own people for uttering words of judgment against Jerusalem and its Temple that ultimately proved to be true. Yet Jeremiah was also the prophet of the 'new covenant,' so that reference to him and his words demonstrated for Matthew the complementarity of rejection and renewal, judgment and restoration, within the covenant purposes of God. Matthew found in Jeremiah the key to explaining both the demise of Israel and the establishment of the Christian community."[34] Winkle has

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[34] Michael P. Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel: The Rejected Prophet Motif in Matthean Redaction*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 307. Knowles explains that this Jeremiah typology in Matthew is not surprising in light of the importance of the figure of Jeremiah in Second Temple Judaism (ibid., 247–64). Josephus seems to have viewed himself in some typological sense as a new Jeremiah, comparing his going over to the Roman side to Jeremiah's calls for Zedekiah to surrender to the Babylonians (*The Antiquities of the*

called attention to three shared motifs between the temple sermon of Jeremiah 7 and Jesus' temple discourse in Matthew 23:29–24:2): (1) the sending of the prophets, (2) the murder of the prophets, and (3) the prophetic judgment against the temple.[35] Perkins has also noted the Jeremiah-Jesus parallel in Mark: "Like Jeremiah, Jesus in Mark's narrative through word and deed pronounced oracles of judgment against the Temple and Jerusalem and their religious leadership. Moreover, the rejection and condemnation that Jesus experienced is similar to that which Jeremiah received from his contemporaries."[36]

As did Jeremiah, Jesus announced that judgment was necessary because of the people's unbelief, and the description of Israel's unbelief in Mark 8:17–18 seems to parallel Jeremiah 5:21, 23, and perhaps also Isaiah 6:9–10.[37] Both Jeremiah and Jesus confronted generations who were obstinate in their refusal to accept the word of the Lord. The cleansing of the temple at the close of Jesus' ministry was both symbolic act and prophetic announcement of the coming judgment (Matt. 21:12–17; Mark 11:15–19; Luke 19:45–48). Before Jesus entered the temple, the people recognized Him as "the prophet" (Matt. 21:11), and the authorities were afraid to take action against Him because of His prophetic status among the people (v. 46). Jesus' condemnation of the temple after He drove out the moneychangers recalls Jeremiah's temple sermon (Jer. 7, 26) in

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Jews 10.117, 125, 128; *The Jewish War* 5.362, 376–420). Josephus also viewed Jeremiah's prophecies as pointing to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and its restoration as well as to the events surrounding the Babylonian exile (*The Antiquities of the Jews* 10.79, 89, 93, 112–113, 117–118; 11:1).

2 Maccabees 15:11–19 describes how Judas Maccabaeus had a vision of Jeremiah and the deposed high priest, Onias III. Jeremiah gave Judas a golden sword and instructed him to use the sword against Israel's enemies. In 2 Esdras 2:18 the Lord promised to send Isaiah and Jeremiah in connection with Israel's future restoration. Sirach 49:7 attributes the fall of Jerusalem to the people's mistreatment of Jeremiah. Pseudepigraphal texts like *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* use the Jeremiah traditions and figures associated with Jeremiah to draw analogies between the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians and the fall of Jerusalem in the first-century A.D. to the Romans. Knowles also explains that typological references to the Jeremiah tradition in Matthew occur in connection with various typological connections to Jesus from the Old Testament, including references to Elijah, Abraham, David, Moses, Jonah, and Noah (*Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel,* 223–46).

35 Ross E. Winkle, "The Jeremiah Model for Jesus in the Temple," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 24 (1986): 155–72.

36 Larry Perkins, "The Markan Narrative's Use of the Old Greek Text of Jeremiah to Explain Israel's Obduracy," *Tyndale Bulletin* 60 (2009): 200.

37 Ibid, 222–23. The specific correspondences between Mark 8:17–18 and Jeremiah 5:21, 23 in the Septuagint include the ὀφθαλμός/βλέπω and οὖς/ἀκούω parallelism, as well as the reference to an unbelieving "heart" (καρδία).

which Jeremiah reproved the people for their empty belief that the Lord's house was an absolute guarantee of their security, and warned that the temple would become like the sanctuary at Shiloh if the people did not reform their ways. The Lord announced after "watching" His people's behavior that the temple was nothing more than a "den of robbers" (Jer. 7:11), and Jesus quoted this verdict from Jeremiah after going into the temple and "looking around" (Mark 11:11, 17; cf. Matt. 21:13; Luke 19:46). In Mark's Gospel the temple cleansing is "sandwiched" between another symbolic act—the cursing and withering of the fig tree (Mark 11:12–14, 20–25). The fig tree imagery provides further linkage to the context of Jeremiah's sermon. In Jeremiah 8:13–14, Yahweh warned that His judgment on Judah would result in the removal of "grapes and figs" and the withering of their leaves. Wright explains that Jesus' cursing of the fig tree is thus "part of his sorrowful Jeremianic demonstration that Israel and the Temple, are under judgment."[38]

The unbelieving response of Jesus' generation meant that Jerusalem and the temple would endure more judgment before enjoying final restoration (Matt. 23:37–24:2; Mark 13:1–2; Luke 13:34–35; 19:40–42; 21:20–24). As Bauckham explains, the echo of Jeremiah and other Old Testament prophets in Jesus' words of judgment indicates that the impending destruction of Jerusalem "constitutes a second exile or a second stage of the exile comparable to the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians."[39] The coming absence of Jesus would mean that the city of Jerusalem was "left desolate" (Matt. 23:38–39), and a number of Jewish sources from the Second Temple period suggested that Jerusalem could not be destroyed until Jeremiah and his followers had left the city (*2 Bar.* 2:1; *Par. Jer.* 1.1–3, 8; *Pes. K.* 13; *Pes. R.* 26:16; *Targ. Esth.* II to Est. 1.3).[40]

Both Jeremiah and Jesus experienced intense opposition and rejection in response to their announcements of judgment against Jerusalem and the temple. Jeremiah noted how Yahweh had repeatedly "sent" His prophets (Jer. 7:25; 26:4–6), and Jesus also spoke of "sending" prophets and wise men (i.e., His disciples) to the people (Matt. 23:34) before announcing doom on Jerusalem.[41] The

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[38] N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 422.

[39] Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 369.

[40] Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 250–51.

[41] Winkle, "The Jeremiah Model for Jesus in the Temple," 163–64. Parallels be-

people's unbelief had necessitated sending prophets repeatedly, and Jesus knew that the messengers He sent would be rejected because of Israel's propensity to murder its prophets and incur the guilt of "righteous blood" (Matt. 23:35–37). In Jeremiah's temple sermon, the Lord had also instructed the people not to shed "innocent blood" (Jer. 7:6), and Jeremiah had warned that the people would be bringing "innocent blood" on themselves if they carried through on their plans to put him to death (26:15). Jeremiah had faced death threats at various times in his ministry (cf. 11:21–23; 26:8–24). Being a messenger for God was a dangerous occupation.

The reference to "righteous blood" in Matthew 23:35 points to the death of Jesus. Following this passage, the word "blood" (αἷμα) appears six more times in Matthew (26:28; 27:4, 6, 8, 24–25), all referring to Jesus' death. The references to "blood" near the end of Matthew focus on the issue of guilt for the wrongful death of Jesus. Ham states, "Thematically, 'blood' in Matthew emphasizes the innocent Jesus who dies for sinners."[42] Judas confessed that he had betrayed "innocent blood" (αἷμα ἀθῷον, 27:4), the same expression that appears in Jeremiah 7:6 (LXX) and 26:15 (LXX, 33:15). The money paid to Judah for betraying Jesus was used to purchase a piece of property that came to be known as the "Field of Blood" (Matt. 27:7–8). Pilate washed his hands and pronounced his innocence over the "blood" of Jesus when the people called for His crucifixion, and the people called instead for them and their children to be held accountable for Jesus' "blood" (vv. 24–25). What transpired in the death of Jesus was the opposite of what had occurred when Jeremiah preached his sermon in Jeremiah 26. In Jeremiah's day, the people were spared from blood guilt because they heeded the prophet's warnings and did not put him to death. In contrast, Jesus was killed, and the people bore the guilt of His innocent blood. As Knowles comments, "Jeremiah's prediction of 'innocent blood' falling upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem should they slay him, although unfulfilled in his own day, came to pass in the crucifixion of Jesus because the blood of one like Jeremiah was shed."[43]

While it was guilt for the blood of Jesus that brought punishment on the people of God, it is also the blood of Jesus that inaugu-

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tween Matthew 23:34 and Matthew 10 indicate that Jesus was referring here to His disciples. The disciples were "sent" (vv. 5, 16), they were persecuted as they went from city to city (v. 23), and they were scourged (v. 17) and killed (v. 28).

[42] Clay Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10 (2000): 63.

[43] Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 307.

rated the new covenant between God and His people, a point that is highlighted by the repeated references to the shedding of blood (the noun αἷμά + the present passive participle of ἐκχέω) in Matthew 23:35 and 26:28. At the Last Supper, Jesus informed His disciples that the cup represented "the blood of the covenant" (Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24) and "the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). While the adjective "new" (καινός) does not appear in Mark or the earliest manuscripts of Matthew, it seems that a reference or allusion to Jeremiah 31:34 stands behind all four accounts. The word "covenant" (διαθήκη) appears four times in the Septuagint of Jeremiah 31:31–34 (LXX, 38:31–34), and the phrase "for forgiveness of sins" in Matthew's account parallels the Hebrew of Jeremiah 31:34. Evans writes, "The covenant of which Jesus speaks concerns the promise of the coming kingdom of God, the new covenant promised by Jeremiah. Jesus will give his own blood to effect the new covenant, the restoration of Israel, and the kingdom of God 'having come in power' (cf. Mark 9:1)."[44] Hebrews 8:7–13 and 10:16–18 also quote from Jeremiah 31:31–34 as part of the larger argument of Hebrews 7–10 that Jesus instituted the new covenant by providing a sacrifice on the cross that was superior to the animal sacrifices offered under the old covenant.[45]

The citation of Jeremiah in Matthew 27:9 provides another association between the prophet and the death of Jesus. The base text for the Old Testament quotation in Matthew 27:9–10 is actually Zechariah 11:12–13, as Matthew drew a typological connection between the blood money paid for the betrayal of Jesus and the paltry and insulting compensation of thirty shekels paid to Zechariah and reflecting the people's rejection of him as Israel's shep-

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[44] Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Nelson, 2001), 394.

[45] Jesus' reference to the "blood of the covenant" also recalls the use of this expression in Exodus 24:8 and Zechariah 9:11. In Exodus 24:8 Moses ratified the covenant between Yahweh and Israel by sprinkling the blood of a sacrifice on the altar. In Zechariah 9:11 the "blood of the covenant" would cause the Lord to rescue Israel's prisoners from a waterless pit. Jesus' words concerning the cup and His blood also indicate that He understood His death in light of Isaiah 53:11–12. The specific connections between Isaiah 53:11–12 and Matthew 26:28 are that Jesus' life is "poured out" (the verb ἐκχέω translates the MT עָרָה, rather than the LXX παραδίδωμι) for "sins" (ἁμαρτίας/ἁμαρτιῶν) on behalf of "many" (πολλοῖς/πολλῶν). Evans explains that by bringing together these Old Testament references Jesus took over the expression "blood of the covenant" and the others and "applied them to his own death with the eschatological perspective of Jer. 31:31 and the vicarious aspect of Isa. 53:12" (ibid.). For further discussion of these specific Old Testament allusions in Jesus' words concerning the cup, see Ham, "The Last Supper in Matthew," 59–66.

herd-leader.[46] As Brueggemann notes, attributing this passage to Jeremiah "attests to the powerful way in which Jeremiah was on the horizon of the Gospel of Matthew."[47] However, the attribution of the passage to Jeremiah is neither a mistaken or careless citation, as the quotation is in fact "a creative mosaic" of Scripture passages that also reflects the words of Jeremiah.[48] It was the custom in such composite quotations to attribute the prophecy to the more prominent prophet or to highlight the more obscure reference in order to make sure the readers would not miss it.[49]

References to the "Potter's Field" and the "Field of Blood" provide specific connections to the person and words of Jeremiah. The field purchased with Judas's blood money was called "Potter's Field," because the valley was the source of clay used for making pottery. Mention of the "potter" recalls Jeremiah 18–19 and the prophet's two visits to the potter.[50] In his second visit Jeremiah

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[46] R. T. France notes that this passage is related to three other citations from Zechariah 9–14 in Matthew that refer to the coming of a messianic/shepherd-figure and his subsequent rejection and death: (1) Zechariah 9:9–10 in 21:4–5; (2) Zechariah 12:10–14 in 24:30; and (3) Zechariah 13:7 in 26:31 (*The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 1045). France explains that Matthew "found in this mysterious rejected and suffering Messiah a powerful scriptural model which could stand alongside the suffering servant of Isaiah and the suffering righteous figures of some of the psalms as a model for understanding why Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, must suffer and die in Jerusalem." For further discussion of the messianic implications of Zechariah 9–14, see Iain Duguid, "Messianic Themes in Zechariah 9–14," in *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*, 265–80.

[47] Walter Brueggemann, *The Theology of the Book of Jeremiah*, Old Testament Theology (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 190.

[48] France explains further that Matthew's use of the Old Testament here "is not simple proof-texting, but the product of long and creative engagement with Scripture which delights to draw connections between passages and to trace in the details as well as in the basic meaning of the text the pattern of God's fulfillment of his prophetically described agenda" (*The Gospel of Matthew,* 1043–44). The common rabbinic technique of linking passages based on the use of catchwords is reflected in the connection of the Zechariah-Jeremiah texts, and the larger context and setting of these texts is reason for their inclusion. The Old Testament quotation in Mark 1:2–3 is a similar composite reference from Exodus 23:20; Isaiah 40:3; and Malachi 3:1. For a fuller discussion of this composite citation in Mark 1:2–3, see Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, 53–90.

[49] Ibid., 1047. Matthew quotes by name Isaiah (Matt. 3:3; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14; 15:7) and Jeremiah and also Daniel (Matt. 24:15).

[50] The Hebrew for "potter" (יוֹצֵר) appears in Jeremiah 18:2, 3, 4 (twice), 6 (twice); 19:1, 11, thus creating a catchword link to the reference to the "potter" (יוֹצֵר) in the MT of Zechariah 11:13. The LXX reads κεραμεύς for "potter" in the Jeremiah passages and εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον in Zechariah 11:13 when referring to the "potter" who appears to be a temple official or functionary. The name of the field purchased with

smashed a clay pot, symbolizing Judah's impending destruction, and he announced that this judgment would come as punishment for the people having shed "the blood of the innocents" (αἱμάτων ἀθῴων, LXX) in the Valley of Hinnom (Jer. 19:4, 6, 11–14), the traditional site of the burial field purchased in Matthew 27. There is no mention of a "potter's field" in the Zechariah passage, but the inclusion of the "field" in the quotation is likely due to the influence of Jeremiah 32, which records Jeremiah's having purchased a family field in Anathoth before the Babylonian exile as a sign act confirming the promise of Israel's future return to the land.[51]

The composite reference to Zechariah and Jeremiah in Matthew 27:9–10 symbolizes both judgment and hope. As in the Zechariah passage, Israel stands under judgment for rejecting its God-appointed leader. The field of bloodshed associated with child sacrifice in Jeremiah becomes associated with the guilt of bloodshed in the death of Jesus. However, if an echo of Jeremiah's purchase of the field is also present in the passage, then there is also a glimmer of hope on the other side of judgment. Nolland argues, "For Matthew, the potter's field is likely to provide a compound image, pointing first to judgment and destruction and then to renewed hope."[52] The purchase of the field was Jeremiah's only positive act signifying hope for future restoration, and so the blood of Jesus provides hope even in the midst of Israel's national judgment for putting to death its Messiah. This hope is grounded in the new covenant that God established through Jesus' death and resurrection.

Conclusion

Attention to intertextuality as a form of inner-biblical exegesis is a useful tool for explaining how the individual books of the canon are related to each other. Intertextuality particularly demonstrates the pivotal role of Jeremiah in the narrative of salvation history that joins the Old and New Testaments. As God interacts with His people, this narrative often takes surprising turns. Serving as a prophet at the time of the Babylonian exile required Jeremiah to

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the blood money in Matthew 27:10 is τὸν ἀγρὸν τοῦ κεραμέως.

51 France also suggests the possibility that the reference in Jeremiah 32:14 to the ceramic jar that contained Jeremiah's title deed to the land may have prompted a connection to the breaking of the clay jar in 19:1, 10–11 (*The Gospel of Matthew*, 1042).

52 John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Text Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 1115.

announce the overturning of many of Yahweh's great salvific acts and covenant promises on Israel's behalf. Yahweh expelled Judah from the land and removed the Davidic king from the throne. Jeremiah himself was taken to Egypt in a reversal of the exodus. And yet Jeremiah's mission was also to offer assurance that what appeared to be the end of Israel's history as God's people was not the end at all. Yahweh would restore Israel, reestablish the Davidic throne, and institute a new covenant that would reverse the failures of the past and guarantee Israel's perpetual blessing.

Jeremiah typology and intertextuality in the New Testament portrayal of Jesus highlight the emergence of hope out of catastrophic national judgment and help make the assertion that Israel's salvation history reaches its denouement in the person and work of Jesus Christ. However, the final acts of salvation history would involve even more surprising turns and developments. Israel's continuing unbelief meant that Jesus must become a Jeremiah-like prophet in announcing further judgment against Jerusalem and the temple and ironically fulfilling Jeremiah's promises of a new covenant by experiencing rejection and persecution like Jeremiah, even to the point of death. Ultimately even Israel's national rejection of Jesus would not prevent God from restoring His people on the basis of Jeremiah's promises of a new covenant.

Continuity is seen from Moses to Jeremiah to Jesus, but the fulfillment of Jeremiah's new covenant promises in Jesus occurs in surprising ways. Because of Israel's unbelief, the new covenant promises are inaugurated through Jesus but did not bring about Israel's end-time restoration as envisioned by Jeremiah. It is the church, not national Israel, that presently enjoys the new covenant blessings, and the complete fulfillment of Jeremiah's new covenant promises for Israel awaits the time of the eschatological restoration (Rom. 11:25–30).