TO END IN SILENCE OR SONG:

THE ORIGINAL INCLUSION OF CHAPTER 3

IN THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

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by

Joshua Bryan Henson

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APPROVAL SHEET

TO END IN SILENCE OR SONG:

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Joshua Bryan Henson

Read and Approved by:

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Duane A. Garrett (Chair)

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Peter J. Gentry

_____
Brian J. Vickers

Date_____

For my wife, Christina Marie Henson. Your patience in the process and confidence in the patient has borne me along through many days of doubt, denial, and despondency.

קוּמִי לָךְ רַעְיָתִי יָפָתִי וּלְכִי־לָךְ:

כִּי־הִנֵּה הַסְּתָו עָבָר הַגֶּשֶׁם חָלַף הָלַךְ לוֹ:

הַנִּצָּנִים נִרְאוּ בָאָרֶץ עֵת הַזָּמִיר הִגִּיעַ

וְקוֹל הַתּוֹר נִשְׁמַע בְּאַרְצֵנוּ:

הַתְּאֵנָה חָנְטָה פַגֶּיהָ וְהַגְּפָנִים סְמָדַר נָתְנוּ רֵיחַ

קוּמִי לְכִי רַעְיָתִי יָפָתִי וּלְכִי־לָךְ:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB   The Anchor Bible

ABD   *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D.N. Freedman. 5 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

ABH   Archaic Biblical Hebrew

ANE   Ancient Near East

ANEM   Ancient Near East Monographs

ANES   *Ancient Near Eastern Studies*

ANET   *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

AuOr   *Aula Orientalis*

BA   Biblical Aramaic

BAR   *Biblical Archaeology Review*

BabA   Babylonian Aramaic

Barb   Barberini Greek Text of Habakkuk 3 (GR. 549=RA 86)

BDB   *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Edited by Brown, F., S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs. Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1907.

BH   Biblical Hebrew

BHS   *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.* Edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. 4th ed. Stuttgart; Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990.

BSac   *Bibliotheca Sacra*

BZAW   *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentlich Wissenschaft*

CBH   Classical Biblical Hebrew [=Standard Biblical Hebrew]

CBQ   *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

CTAT3   *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*. Edited by Dominique Barthélemy and A.R. Hulst. 4 vols. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982.

DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
EA	El Amarna Letters
G^L	The Lucianic Recension of the Old Greek
GKC	*Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar.* Edited by Emil Kautzsch. Translated by Arther E. Cowley. 2nd ed. Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1910.
GTJ	*Grace Theological Journal*
HALOT	*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Ludwig Köhler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E.J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999.
HAR	*Hebrew Annual Review*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	*Harvard Theological Studies*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
HBCE	The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition
HS	*Hebrew Studies*
IA	Imperial Aramaic
IBHS	Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Syntax.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.
JANES	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBQ	*Jewish Bible Quarterly*
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JHebS	*Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JNSL	*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*
Joüon	Joüon, Paul. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew.* Translated and revised by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991.
JSem	*Journal of Semitics*

JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series*
KTU/CAT	Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín eds. *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Orten = The cuneiform alphabetic texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and other places.* 3rd ed. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verl, 2013.
LBH	Late Biblical Hebrew
LDBT¹	*Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts: An Introduction to Approaches and Problems.* Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensvärd. Vol. 1. London, England: Equinox, 2008.
LDBT²	*Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts: A Survey of Scholarship, A New Synthesis, and a Comprehensive Bibliography.* Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensvärd. Vol. 2. New York: Routledge, 2016.
LXX	Septuagint
Maarav	*Maarav*
MA	Middle Aramaic
MH	Mishnaic Hebrew
MT	The Masoretic Text
MurXII	Minor Prophets Scroll from Qumran (A.K.A Mur88)
NWS	North West Semitic
OA	Old Aramaic
PA	Palestinian Aramaic
PBH	Postbiblical Hebrew
R	8ḤevXIIgr or The Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever
S	Syriac
SBH	Standard Biblical Hebrew [=Classical Biblical Hebrew]
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
Sir	Ben Sira
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*

VABP	Notarius, Tania. *The Verb in Archaic Biblical Poetry.* Leiden: Brill, 2013
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
ZAH	*Zeitschrift für Althebräistik*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

SIGLA

//	Indicates parallel verbs in a line
⟦ ⟧	A *vacat,* an area of unwritten skin left by the scribe

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PREFACE

When I started this project in 2016, I had no idea it would morph into the pages that follow. The meandering route this dissertation has taken has been directed by a number of individuals who have kept me on the path. I am exceedingly grateful for the patient, thoughtful, and competent direction given me by my Doktorvater Duane A. Garrett. His astute observations, generous suggestions, and encouragement have left significant marks throughout this work. I also thank Peter J. Gentry, whose lifelong work on the text and linguistics has profoundly shaped my approach to Habakkuk. He opened up the world of the Septuagint for me, which has paid dividends along the way.

Jonathan Pennington has done a remarkable job in reshaping and breathing new life into the Research Doctoral Studies department. It was in the symposiums that I learned the benefit of scholarly cross-fertilization and challenging, yet constructive, criticism. The 1892 club has been a consistent source of fertile student discussion around fine cheeses and amazing coffee. I am also grateful for the rigorous discussions with fellow PhD students like Aubrey Sequeira, Collin Smothers, Matt Roberts, and Nate Collins.

Thanks are due to Bryan Estelle, Professor of Old Testament at Westminster Seminary in California for instilling within me a deep love for the Hebrew Bible. I thank the elders and congregation at Grace Covenant Church, where I joyfully serve as minister, for the generous sabbaticals granted from 2018–2020. Thanks go to Dr. Jim Newheiser, my pastoral mentor, who graciously filled the pulpit for me five times during that sabbatical. Thanks to Tara Schultz, my administrative secretary, who graciously

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

**The Uneasy Relationship Between Chapters 1–2
and 3 in the Book of Habakkuk**

The seventh-century prophet Habakkuk had a message for the southern

Kingdom of Judah.[1] The Neo-Babylonian empire was gaining worldwide dominance and

had already begun to deport Jews to Babylon (597 BC). Possibly a few decades earlier,

YHWH had communicated an ambiguous oracle to the people of Judah; he was going to

raise up the Babylonians to come against them for violence (1:5–11). The final death

knell to Assyrian hegemony and her allies at the battle of Carchemish (605 BC) seemed

to confirm this oracle. The writing was on the wall. And yet the ambiguity of the oracle

was its ostensible incompatibility with the Deuteronomic promises of blessing for

obedience (Deut 28:1–14). Under King Josiah, Judah had returned to the Lord, restored

the Law, and cultivated faithfulness to YHWH (see 2 Kgs 22:3–23:20). Accordingly,

Judah expected prosperity and blessing to increase and continue after Josiah's untimely

death.

Rather than prosperity and blessing, however, Judah was suffering under

Jehoiakim's heavy taxes and his shifting political alliances which ultimately brought

about Babylon's wrath and Judah's captivity.[2] Perplexed by the seeming paralysis (תָּפוּג)

of Torah (1:4), Habakkuk hurls his complaint up to his covenant Lord.[3] In it, he seeks

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[1] All dates in this work will be BC (before Christ) unless otherwise noted.

[2] Jehoiakim was initially a vassal to Egypt (2 Kgs 23:34–35). Under the pressure of Babylon, he became a vassal for three years, only to revolt in 598 BC (see 2 Kgs 24:1). See further John Gray, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 2nd ed., The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 752–53.

[3] A common interpretation of Hab 1:4 is that there was a breakdown of moral order in Judean society because a particular political faction, which wielded great power, was not obeying Torah. See

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clarification concerning the previously communicated oracle, asking how YHWH's actions square with his holy and eternal nature (see especially 1:12–17).[4] Habakkuk then stands on his watchtower and looks out in anticipation for YHWH's response (2:1). YHWH's answer comes in chapter 2 through the vision of woes against arrogant Babylon. The woes culminate with YHWH in his holy temple calling the whole earth to silence before him (2:20). According to some, this silence was the end of Habakkuk's message.[5]

In its final form, Habakkuk 3 is a prayer in which the prophet petitions YHWH to renew his mighty works of old in the coming days against Judah's current enemy, Babylon (3:1–2). Habakkuk then poetically describes YHWH's mighty works of old in two inset hymns (3:3–7 and 8–15). He concludes in 3:16–19 by vowing patient trust in YHWH while he waits for the fulfillment of the woe oracles against Babylon. For those who take the final chapter of Habakkuk to be an original part of the prophet's message,

Waylon Bailey, "Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah," in *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, New American Commentary, vol. 20 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 297. However, the verb תָּפוּג is not transitive but intransitive and its usage in the Hebrew Bible suggests the idea of something growing "numb," "weak," or "helpless." Thus, the expression תָּפוּג תּוֹרָה speaks not of how the Torah is handled by others, but of an ostensible weakness or failure inherent in the Torah itself. A helpful translation would be "paralyzed" (ESV), or "ineffective" (HCSB). I follow Marshall D. Johnson who takes Habakkuk to be a disillusioned Deuteronomist who expected Deuteronomic blessings from Josiah's reforms, but instead got wicked Jehoiakim and the pending Babylonian invasion. As Johnson says, "the thrust of [Hab] 1:2–4 is precisely the same as that of 1:13—historical reality seemed to fly in the fact [*sic*] of theological truth." See Marshall D. Johnson, "The Paralysis of Torah in Habakkuk 1:4," *VT* 35, no. 3 (July 1, 1985): 260. For a fuller defense of this interpretation of Hab 1, see chapter 3 below.

[4] The most popular interpretation of Hab 1:2–17 is the dialogue theory. The dialogue theory takes 1:2–4 to be Habakkuk's initial complaint, 1:5–11 to be YHWH's first response, 1:12–17 to be Habakkuk's second complaint, and 2:2–4 to be YHWH's second response. Contrary to the dialogue theory, I take the whole of Hab 1:2–17 to be Habakkuk's complete complaint. This complaint includes the previously communicated oracle (1:5–11). This view will be further explained and defended in chapter 3 of this work below. For a robust defense of Hab 1:2–17 as one complaint, with a previously communicated oracle embedded in the complaint, see David Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach to Hab 1,2-2,20," *SJOT* 17, no. 2 (2003): 206–25; Michael H. Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints about the Fulfillment of Oracles in Habakkuk 1:2-17 and Jeremiah 15:10-18," *JBL* 110, no. 3 (September 1991): 397–418; Julie Clinefelter Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk: Identifying Its Content in the Light of the Framework Set Forth in Hab 1," (PhD diss., University of Gloucestershire, 2004), especially 66–72 where Moller offers some helpful reflections on the rhetoric of an oracle embedded in a complaint.

[5] See, for example, Theodore Hiebert, *God of My Victory: The Ancient Hymn in Habakkuk 3*, Harvard Semitic Monographs, no. 38 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 2; George Gordon Vigor Stonehouse, *The Book of Habakkuk: Introduction, Translation, and Notes on the Hebrew Text* (London, England: Rivingtons, 1911), 108–109; James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah--Malachi*, The Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary 18b (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 686.

the movement from disorientation (Hab 1), to reorientation (Hab 2), to praise (Hab 3) is a fitting answer, and posture of faith for the believer, to the problem of theodicy.

Nonetheless, Habakkuk 3 is strikingly different from the previous two chapters. Whereas chapters 1–2 are a complaint and woes, chapter 3 is either a theophany or a report of a theophany. It has its own superscription (3:1), colophon (3:19), and bears the standard liturgical notations of a psalm.[6] Its syntax, specifically in 3:3–15, is distinct from the syntax in the rest of the book. Whereas the 'wicked one' in chapters 1–2 seems to be Babylon, the enemy in chapter 3 seems to be elements of creation and mythic in nature. The psalm of Habakkuk appears, apart from its context, in the Book of Odes appended to the Psalter for liturgical use in the Septuagint, but without the liturgical markers of its superscription and colophon in Habakkuk 3.[7] This may suggest a separate transmission history for this chapter. For these reasons and more, some posit that the book ends in the silence of Hab 2:20 rather than the song of Hab 3.

Thesis

This study argues that chapter 3 was an integral and original part of the book of Habakkuk. While recognizing the possible accretions of scribal activity and some textual corruption, on the whole chapter 3 may properly be attributed to the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk as a worshipful response to YHWH's correction (תוכחת, 2:1) of Habakkuk's complaint (1:2–17). A synchronic reading of all three chapters, with special attention to the underdeveloped prophetic genre of מַשָּׂא and the sign-posting of Habakkuk (2:1), presents plausible reasons to anticipate the third chapter. A diachronic, historical-linguistic analysis of the grammatical features and syntax of the two inset-hymns (3:3–15) strongly suggests that they antedate the seventh-century and that the prophet has

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[6] The enigmatic סֶלָה appears in 3:3, 9, and 13 and the instructions for the choir director in 3:19 (לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹתָי).

[7] James W. Watts, "Psalmody in Prophecy: Habakkuk 3 in Context," in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts*, ed. J. W. Watts and Paul R. House, JSOT 235 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 218.

incorporated them into the chapter for the purpose of petitioning YHWH to "renew" the same kind of redemptive feats on behalf of Judah in the years to come (3:2).

Concerning structure and genre, there are two distinct parts to the book. Chapters 1–2 are properly labelled a מַשָּׂא in the superscription (1:1). A מַשָּׂא is "a prophetic reinterpretation of a previous revelation."[8] Perplexed by the incongruity between the promised Deuteronomic blessings for obedience (which they believed Josiah's reformation should have brought) and YHWH's raising up the Chaldeans, the people of Judah seek a מַשָּׂא from the prophet. So, Habakkuk complains to YHWH. What does this Babylonian judgment say about YHWH's eternal and holy character (1:3, 12a and 13)? What does it say about YHWH's intentions for His people (1:14)? And will it be temporary or indefinite (1:2, 17)?

Habakkuk ascends his watchtower to see how YHWH will respond (2:1) and how Habakkuk himself will answer concerning his rebuke (תּוֹכַחַת, 2:1). YHWH responds with instructions about the vision (2:2–3), describes the nature of the righteous and the wicked (2:4–5), and finally, announces the reversal of fortune of the wicked one (Babylon) by putting mock-funeral dirges or taunt songs in the mouths of the oppressed nations (2:6–20). The conclusion is that YHWH does not legitimate every tyrant nation who abuses their God-given power. Though he uses Babylon to punish Judah, he will nonetheless reverse Babylon's fortunes, punish them for their haughty spirit (1:7, 11), and all the earth will keep silence before YHWH (2:20). The מַשָּׂא is now complete. But Habakkuk has not yet responded as he promised he would in 2:1. Since there is nothing in chapters 1–2 which signals Habakkuk's response, chapter 3 must be the response of Habakkuk.

Habakkuk's response is the psalmic prayer (תְּפִלָּה) of complaint in chapter 3 and constitutes the second part of the book as the superscription indicates (3:1). This תְּפִלָּה

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[8] So Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type," 409–10. Weis calls it a "prophetic exposition of YHWH's revealed will or activity." See Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 275.

is a fitting response given the content of the letter. Habakkuk petitions YHWH to put into motion Babylon's reversal of fortunes "in the years to come" (3:2). And as a celebration of what Habakkuk believes YHWH will do, he cites two ancient victory hymns in 3:3–15. The enemies in these ancient hymns are Israel's enemies from of old. They are not intended to be Babylon, as many secondary-inclusion scholars insist. And yet, in the framework section of 3:16–19a, Habakkuk intimates that he will wait for the fulfillment of YHWH's promised vision to come against "those who will invade us (3:16)," a clear allusion to Babylon. Habakkuk's resolution to wait for the manifestation of YHWH's works in the years to come is a personification of the "righteous one" whom YHWH had said would "live by his faithfulness" (2:4).

The aim of this chapter is three-fold. First, I describe two basic approaches to the inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk. Second, I lay out some basic trends of diachronic and synchronic approaches to Habakkuk 3 and point out some general deficiencies with both. Finally, I lay out my methodology for a particular synchronic and diachronic reading of Habakkuk which offers a plausible solution for the original-inclusion of Habakkuk 3.

Two Approaches to the Inclusion of Habakkuk 3

Opinions regarding Habakkuk 3 are many and complex. This chapter will synthesize and summarize the principal arguments against the original-inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk and describe how scholars have typically answered these challenges. For the purposes of this study, I will focus on two overarching approaches to the inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk: the original-inclusion view and the secondary-inclusion view.

The Original-Inclusion View

On the one hand, what I am calling the original-inclusion view maintains that

chapter 3 was composed by the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk himself.[9] In it, Habakkuk did one of two things. He either incorporated two ancient hymns[10] (3:3-7 and 3:8-15) from premonarchic times which highlighted the unique saving activity of YHWH in Israel's past, (e.g., the Exodus, the conquest, and episodes from the days of the Judges), or he composed the two hymns himself in an archaizing style.[11] Either scenario would explain why the vocabulary, syntax, and genre of Hab 3:3–15 is so markedly distinct from the rest of the book.

The original-inclusion view gives the bulk of its attention to the form, vocabulary, style, and content of chapter 3. Concerning form, both Ernst Sellin and Paul Humbert viewed the psalm as a prophetic liturgy composed for a day of prayer by the Israelite community suffering under the hostility of the Babylonians.[12] Many scholars follow Sellin's and Humbert's approach differing only in details.[13] The principal consensus among these scholars is that chapter 3 was a lament encompassing a vision.[14]

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[9] Not all are united on whether or not Habakkuk was responsible for the superscription, subscript (colophon), and liturgical notations. Furthermore, some original-inclusion scholars concede that minor redactional activity has accrued in chapter 3. But on the whole, original-inclusion scholars maintain that the bulk of the chapter was composed and included by Habakkuk himself. In other words, Habakkukian authorship of the superscription, subscript, and liturgical notations is by no means the *sine qua non* of the original-inclusion position.

[10] Some scholars believe these to be hymns while others believe them to be poetic pieces. I will use "hymn" and "poetic piece" interchangeably throughout this work.

[11] For example, David Noel Freedman suggests that the use of אֱלוֹהַ ("God") in Hab 3:3 is an indication of an archaizing tendency in the late seventh-century BC. It was briefly used in the early monarchy (tenth-ninth centuries), fell out of use, and then was revived in something of a nostalgic way. See "Divine Names and Titles in Early Hebrew Poetry," in *Magnalia Dei, the Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Werner E. Lemke, and Patrick D. Miller (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 75.

[12] Ernst Sellin, *Das Zwolfprophetenbuch* (Leipzig, Germany: Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1929), 381–82. Cf. Paul Humbert, *Problèmes Du Livre d'Habacuc*, Mémoires de l'Université de Neuchâtel 18 (Neuchâtel, Switzerland: Secrétariat de l'Université, 1944), 247–48.

[13] See Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction, Including the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and Also the Works of Similar Type from Qumran: The History of the Formation of the Old Testament*, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 420–21.

[14] See Sigmund Olaf Plytt Mowinckel, "Zum Psalm Des Habakuk," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 9, no. 1 (January 1, 1953): 7; John H. Eaton, "Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3," *ZAW* 76, no. 2 (January 1, 1964): 159, 167. Cf. Marvin A. Sweeney, "Structure, Genre and Intent in the Book of Habakkuk," *VT* 41 (1991): 63–83.

The two hymns (3:3-7 and 8-15) originated in the premonarchic era, were preserved by the Royal Cult, and were incorporated by the seventh-century prophet with minimal redactional activity.[15] The inclusion of Habakkuk 3:1-2 and 3:16-19 was the prophet's own contribution.

The original-inclusion view recognizes a disparity between the form, style and vocabulary of chapters 1-2 and 3 and yet they do not consider it to be a justification to separate the content of chapter 3 from the same author who composed chapters 1–2. The consensus view among original-inclusion scholars is that chapter one is loosely patterned after a complaint psalm where the prophet dialogues with YHWH.[16] In chapter 2, YHWH delivers a vision to Habakkuk wherein the Babylonians are punished, and this vision is fleshed out by the five woes placed into the mouth of the oppressed nations. Yet chapter 3 is a psalmic prayer responding to the vision and thoroughly distinct from the preceding chapters.

A minority of original-inclusion scholars downplays the disparity between chapters 1–2 and 3 by drawing numerous connections between the style, form, and vocabulary of all three chapters. For example, assuming that Habakkuk was a cult-prophet, Humbert argued for the original unity of all three chapters by claiming that they contain a similar mixture of vocabulary representative of the cultic poetry of the Psalter

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[15] See Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 253–55; Eaton, "Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3," 166–68; Robert Murray, "Prophecy and the Cult," in *Israel's Prophetic Tradition: Essays in Honour of Peter R. Ackroyd*, ed. R. J. Coggins, Anthony Phillips, and Michael A. Knibb (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 201; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, rev. and enl. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 151; Klaus Koch, *The Prophets* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 82–83; Mária Eszenyei Széles, *Wrath and Mercy: A Commentary on the Books of Habakkuk and Zephaniah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 5; Richard D. Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, ed. Kenneth Barker, Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 2003), 127–29 and excursus on 267-72; Watts, "Psalmody in Prophecy," 217–21. Watts maintains that Hab 3 was composed by a single author who included older material; Michael E. W. Thompson, "Prayer, Oracle and Theophany: The Book of Habakkuk," *TynBul* 44, no. 1 (May 1, 1993): 34–53; Oskar Dangl, "Habakkuk in Recent Research," trans. Aileen Derieg, *Currents in Research* 9 (January 1, 2001): 136; Bailey, "Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah," 265–69.

[16] See, for example Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 32 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 91–117; Bailey, "Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah," 265-69.; O. Palmer Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 136–64.

and of the prophets of the last quarter of the seventh-century BC.[17] However, secondary-inclusion advocate Theodore Hiebert finds Humbert's analysis methodologically problematic.[18] According to Hiebert, though Humbert successfully connects the vocabulary of chapter 3 with the vocabulary of the Psalter, he is unsuccessful in establishing a connection between the vocabulary of Habakkuk 3 and the prophetic usage of the late seventh-century which is characteristic of chapters 1 and 2. Humbert concluded that only the verb סער (Hab 3:14) may be dated, without a doubt, to a specifically prophetic provenance.[19]

Hiebert faults this methodology for two reasons. First, he questions the practice of limiting the inquiry to the specific form of a root found in Habakkuk 3 since סער, as a noun, is common outside of the prophets in both Job and the Psalter (e.g., Pss 55:9, 83:16, and 107:25). Second, Hiebert faults Humbert for the meagerness of evidence. One word is so marginal that it would be more appropriate to argue that Habakkuk 3 is unrelated to prophetic speech and consequently unrelated to chapters 1 and 2.[20] Furthermore, a cursory reading of the Hebrew in all three chapters evinces a stark contrast between the vocabulary of chapters 1–2 and chapter 3. Chapters 1–2, 3:1–2 and 16–19, with few exceptions, contain vocabulary from the classic prophetic period of the seventh-century, whereas the vocabulary found in the inset hymns of 3:3-15 is filled with archaic language. Virtually no original-inclusion advocate uses Humbert's focus on vocabulary to argue for the original-inclusion of Hab 3. Humbert's analyses are dated and

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[17] See Humbert, *Problèmes*. Humbert's analysis of the vocabulary of Habakkuk is found on pp. 80–289. Pages 204–45 contain his analysis of chap. 3 in particular. His conclusions for chap. 3 are pulled together on pp. 240–45. Cf. Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 132.

[18] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 132–34.

[19] Humbert argues that five other terms, though more frequent in the prophets, can also be found in the Psalms. Furthermore, Humbert lists a collection of twenty terms from Habakkuk 3 which he believes occur in no period earlier than the seventh-century, or which seem to come into vogue at the end of the seventh-century. See Humbert, *Problèmes*, 240–45; Cf. Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 132–33.

[20] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 133. Even Humbert admits that many vocabulary items in Habakkuk 3 are nowhere found in the prophets. See Humbert, *Problèmes,* 240–45.

in dire need of revision. Many original-inclusion advocates maintain that Habakkuk cites ancient hymns in chapter 3 which are distinct from chapters 1–2 in form, style, syntax, and vocabulary.[21]

Finally, the original-inclusion view primarily focuses on the inner logic and flow of the book's theme as evidence for the psalm's original-inclusion.[22] The book is about theodicy; how YHWH would allow wickedness to flourish and what this says about His nature. Some original-inclusion advocates view chapter 3 as YHWH's answer to Habakkuk's complaint (i.e., a vision or theophany) while others view the chapter as Habakkuk's response to YHWH's rebuke (i.e., the woe oracles in 2:6–20). Either way, chapter 3 is the fitting and integral conclusion to the complaints and woes of chapters 1–2, without which, the book would seem stilted and incomplete.[23]

The Secondary-inclusion View

On the other hand, approaching Habakkuk through historic-, form-, source-, traditio-, redactio- and literary-critical methodologies, the secondary-inclusion view maintains that chapter 3 was added to the book of Habakkuk long after the seventh-century BC. Though many secondary-inclusion advocates recognize a theological unity to all three chapters of the book, they nonetheless maintain that the theological unity was imposed upon the book by later redactors in the exilic or postexilic period. They detect redactional activity in the disparities in style, form, characters (the wicked one and the righteous one) and content between chapters 1–2 and 3.

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[21] Yitsḥak Avishur, "Habakkuk 3," in *Studies in Hebrew and Ugaritic Psalms*, Publications of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1994), 124.

[22] See Carl E. Armerding, "Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk," in vol. 7 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank Ely Gaebelein and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 494; J. J. M. Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 81–82. Cf. Sweeney, "Structure," 64–65; Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 129 and 272.

[23] Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 39.

Bernhard Stade noted that chapter 3 exhibits many points of agreement with postexilic psalms.[24] With the exclusion of 3:2 and 16, which may presuppose themes from Hab 2:1ff, chapter 3 seems to lack any contextual, literary, or formal connections with Hab 1-2.[25] Klaus Seybold argued that chapter 3 consisted of two hymns that originated in the pre-exilic period, but were later attributed to the prophet during the exile.[26] Karl Budde, Wilhelm Nowack, and Julius Wellhausen likewise consider Hab 3 to be an independent psalm taken from a collection of liturgical texts and incorporated into the book of Habakkuk during the postexilic period.[27] Karl Marti dates Hab 3 in the late second century BC.[28] James Nogalski posits that the whole book was compiled during the Persian period as "a theological *reflection on* the end of the seventh-century rather

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[24] Bernhard Stade, "Miscellen: 3: Habakuk," *ZAW*, no. 4 (January 1884): 154–59. Cf. R. E. Wolfe, "The Editing of the Book of the Twelve," *ZAW* 53 (1935): 99–114. He sees two independent poems: 3:2-15 and 3:17-19, with 3:16 serving as a redactional note connecting the two parts. See, e.g., S. R. Driver and Robert F. Horton, eds., *The Minor Prophets, II. Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, Century Bible (Edinburgh, Scottland: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1906); George Gordon Vigor Stonehouse, *The Book of Habakkuk: Introduction, Translation, and Notes on the Hebrew Text* (London, England: Rivingtons, 1911). James Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*, Beihefte Zur Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 218 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1993), 129–81 and 274–80.

[25] Stade, "Miscellen: 3: Habakuk," 157–58. Cf. Henrik Pfeiffer, *Jahwes Kommen von Süden: Jdc 5, Hab 3, Dtn 33, Und Ps 68 in Ihrem Literatur- Und Theologiegeschichtlichen Umfeld*, Forschungen Zur Religion Und Literatur Des Alten Und Neuen Testaments (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 164–66; Cf. Alexa F Wilke, *Die Gebete der Propheten: Anrufungen Gottes im "corpus propheticum" der Hebräischen Bibel* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 352, 362. See also Jakob Wöhrle, *Der Abschluss Des Zwölfprophetenbuches: Buchübergreifende Redaktionsprozesse in Den Späten Sammlungen* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2008), 317, who assumes that Hab 3:3-15 represents a formerly independent tradition which was integrated into the emerging book of Habakkuk by the author of the "Grundschrift." See also Franziska Ede, "Hab 3 and Its Relation to Hab 1f" (Unpublished, n.d.), 1. Franziska Ede kindly sent me a personal copy of this unpublished paper.

[26] Klaus Seybold, *Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja*, Zürcher Bibelkommentare 24/2 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1991), 44–45. Seybold identifies the two hymns with 3:3-7 and 3:8-13a, 15 while 3:13b, 14, and 17-19a belong to a psalm that he identifies as concomitant with the text of Hab 3. These later verses originated in the postexilic period and were added to Habakkuk. For a summary of Seybold's view, see Rex Mason, *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel*, Old Testament Guides (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1994), 78–79. See also Dangl, "Habakkuk in Recent Research," 137–38.

[27] Wilhelm Nowack, *Die Kleinen Propheten*, Handkommentar Zum Alten Testament (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1903), 270; Julius Wellhausen, ed., *Die Kleinen Propheten: Übersetzt Und Erklärt*, 4th ed. (Berlin: Gruyter, 1963), 170–71. Karl Budde, "Die Bücher Habakuk und Zephanja," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 66 (1893): 392. See also Eckart Otto, "Die Stellung Der Wehe-Worte in Der Verkündigung Des Propheten Habakuk," *ZAW* 89, no. 1 (January 1, 1977): 73–107, who regards the whole psalm as a postexilic addition that took place in two stages: Hab 3:2, 3-15 were added first and 3:1, 3, 9, 13, and 17-19 were added later.

[28] Karl Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton*, Kurzer Hand-Commentar Zum Alten Testament, Abt. 13 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1904), 326–31.

than the words of a seventh-century prophet."[29] Theodor Lescow goes further by claiming that Hab 3 is a literary unit added to Hab 1-2 after the Persian period.[30]

Diachronic and Synchronic Trends

Both the original and secondary-inclusion views ask diachronic and synchronic questions of the text in their evaluation of chapter 3's provenance in the book of Habakkuk. The following section will describe how these questions are utilized in each position's approach and then evaluate some deficiencies in each.

Diachronic Approaches

The strong consensus of the precritical interpretation of the book of Habakkuk was that all three chapters were composed by the seventh-century prophet.[31] But with the rise of historical-critical scholarship, many began to doubt the original unity of the book and propose that chapter 3 was a later addition.[32] This diachronic trajectory tended to carve the text up into its smallest possible units, identify the original setting, derive the original form, and focus on redactional activity. This conjecture became the prevailing opinion among many scholars from the latter half of the nineteenth century through the middle of the twentieth century. This diachronic trajectory, in general, has not focused on either the canonical shape, the literary cohesiveness, or the theological message of the book. Consequently, higher-critical scholarship tends to lose sight of the ways in which

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[29] James Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Micah--Malachi*, The Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary, vol. 18b (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 649. Cf. Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*, 129–81 and 274–80.

[30] Theodor Lescow, "Die Komposition Der Bücher Nahum Und Habakuk," *Biblische Notizen*, no. 77 (January 1, 1995): 84–85.

[31] For specific examples, see R. J. Coggins and Jin Hee Han, *Six Minor Prophets through the Centuries: Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, Blackwell Bible Commentaries 29 (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011); Alberto Ferreiro, *The Twelve Prophets*, ed. Thomas C. Oden, vol. 14, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Old Testament (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 284–92.

[32] See Wellhausen, *Die Kleinen Propheten*; Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton*; Driver and Horton, *The Minor Prophets*; Stonehouse, *The Book of Habakkuk*; Stade, "Miscellen: 3: Habakuk."

the smaller units unite the overall message of the book.[33] The tendency is to focus on the question of common authorship among the pericopes rather than discern a unified progression of message from beginning to end.[34] But some scholars, unconvinced by the historical-critical method, resisted this trend.[35]

Theodore Hiebert's 1984 dissertation is a typical example of a diachronic reading of Hab 3.[36] Hiebert offered a fresh text-critical analysis and reconstruction of Habakkuk 3 in order to clarify the nature of the poems and their relationship to the prophecy of Habakkuk.[37] He concluded that Habakkuk 3 is an ancient hymn of triumph, comprised of a theophany in two stanzas (vv. 3–7, 8–15), and enclosed within a literary framework (vv. 2, 16–19).[38] He contends that this hymn was composed in the premonarchic era as a recitation of the victory of the divine warrior over cosmic and earthly enemies. But it could not have been part of the original composition of the book due to the disparities of form, content, characters, and literary cohesiveness between chapters 1–2 and 3.[39] Instead, it was preserved in a collection of psalms by the royal cult and added by postexilic editors of the prophets who were caught up in the apocalyptic fervor of their era. These "apocalyptic visionary scribes" reinterpreted it as a prophecy of

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[33] Mark Allen Hahlen, "The Literary Design of Habakkuk" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1992), 3.

[34] Hahlen, "The Literary Design of Habakkuk," 3.

[35] See, for example Humbert, *Problèmes*; William Foxwell Albright, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," in *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy. Presented to Theodore H. Robinson on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday, August 9th, 1946*, ed. H. H. Rowley, Society for Old Testament Study (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1950), 1–18; Mowinckel, "Zum Psalm Des Habakuk"; Eaton, "Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3"; Baruch Margulis, "Psalm of Habakkuk: A Reconstruction and Interpretation," *ZAW* 82, no. 3 (1970): 409–42.; Georg Fohrer and Ernst Sellin, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968).

[36] See Hiebert, *God of My Victory*. Integral to Hiebert's argument is his view concerning the shift in prophetic literature in the postexilic world, based on the work of Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975).

[37] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 1.

[38] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 1.

[39] See his problems with the unity of the book of Habakkuk in 129–36.

God's eventual eschatological victory over their enemies.[40] While many scholars have

found Hiebert's literary analysis of the book useful, few have been convinced that the

hymns were preserved since the premonarchic era, and then appended to the book in the

postexilic era.

The Synchronic Shift

A notable methodological shift toward more synchronic-oriented readings of

Habakkuk emerged with the 1979 publication of Brevard S. Childs' *Introduction to the*

Old Testament as Scripture. In his treatment of Habakkuk, Childs called for a new

approach since, according to him, contemporary critical scholarship had not

comprehended the book's canonical shape and consequently failed to understand its

theological message.[41] In recent years, the prominence of synchronic readings has

brought about a greater appreciation for the literary and theological message of

Habakkuk. Some scholars believe that all three chapters were written by Habakkuk.

Many conservative Evangelicals, for example, have generally been optimistic of this

synchronic shift as it has turned the attention to the final form of the text. For others, this

appreciation has led to the conclusion that a literary or theological unity has been

imposed upon the work by later redactors, specifically chapter 3. In the last 60 years, a

handful of dissertations have examined Habakkuk 3 through either diachronic or

synchronic methods and yet none of them have specifically addressed the question of the

original-inclusion of the third chapter.[42]

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[40] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 1–2.

[41] Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 448–50.

[42] See, e.g., Roy Lee Honeycutt, "The Text of Habakkuk Examined in the Light of Modern Research and Discovery" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1957); Hahlen, "The Literary Design of Habakkuk"; Donna Stokes Dykes, "Diversity and Unity in Habakkuk" (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1976); Edwin Marshall Good, "The Text and Versions of Habakkuk 3: A Study in Textual History" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1958); Dennis Ray Bratcher, "The Theological Message of Habakkuk: A Literary-Rhetorical Analysis" (PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1984); Christopher R. Lortie, *Mighty to Save: A Literary and Historical Study of Habakkuk 3 and Its Traditions*, Arbeiten Zu Text Und Sprache Im Alten Testament 99 (Sankt Ottilien: EOS-Editions, 2017). Theodore

Prominence of eclecticism. Dangl points out that studies in Habakkuk during the 1990s witnessed an integration of historical and canonical methods while emphasizing the unique character of the book in comparison to the rest of the prophetic corpus.[43] Newer methods and theories such as intertextuality, ideological criticism and postcolonial theory have made contributions to the field that shed new light on the text with an eye toward addressing concerns of contemporary reading communities.[44]

The shift in priority from diachronic to synchronic readings does not mean that diachronic questions are ignored. Rather, the state of the question is redirected. Methodological challenges to form-criticism in the last 40 years have spawned a shift in form-critical approaches which is less prone to overconfident conclusions about things like *Sitz im Leben*.[45] For example, instead of a fixation on the prophet behind the text, the so-called New Form-Criticism is more concerned with the redaction process itself and asks questions concerning the numerous reinterpretations given by exilic, postexilic, and even intertestamental communities.[46] Habakkukian studies have seen a resistance to the "idea of reading individual books within the broader context of the Twelve and [have instead shifted] to the hypothesis of editorial activity extending beyond the boundaries of

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Hiebert's *God of My Victory* is an obvious exception.

[43] Dangl, "Habakkuk in Recent Research," 151–53.

[44] Barry A. Jones, "The Seventh-Century Prophets in Twenty-First Century Research," *Currents in Biblical Research* 14, no. 2 (February 2016): 138; See the summaries in Marvin A Sweeney, "Zephaniah: A Paradigm for the Study of the Prophetic Books," *Currents in Research* 7 (1999): 134–38; and Dangl, "Habakkuk in Recent Research," 135–36 and 151–54.

[45] For a sample of methodological refinements in form-criticism see James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88, no. 1 (March 1, 1969): 1–18; Rolf Knierim, "Criticism of Literary Features, Form, Tradition, and Redaction," in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Gene M. Tucker and D. A. Knight (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 123–65; Rolf Knierim, "Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered," *Interpretation* 27, no. 4 (October 1973): 435–68; William G. Doty, "Fundamental Questions about Literary-Critical Methodology," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 40, no. 4 (December 1972): 521–27; William G. Doty, "The Concept of Genre in Literary Analysis," in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1972*, vol. 2, SBLSP 9 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1972), 413–48; Burke O Long, "Recent Field Studies in Oral Literature and the Question of Sitz Im Leben," *Semeia* 5 (1976): 35–49.

[46] Mark J. Boda, Michael H. Floyd, and Colin M. Toffelmire, eds., *The Book of the Twelve and the New Form Criticism*, Ancient Near East Monographs 10 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 1.

individual books."[47]

Deficiencies in Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches

Both the original-inclusion and secondary-inclusion approaches ask diachronic and synchronic questions of the text in an effort to discern the provenance of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk. However, I contend that the original-inclusion position could be greatly strengthened by asking more diachronic questions, particularly in chapter 3. On the other hand, the secondary-inclusion position tends to simplistically overlook and underappreciate the literary cohesiveness of the two sections of Habakkuk (chapters 1–2 and 3) in their final form. Instead, they move quickly to the diachronic question of redactional activity. However, such theories tend to be highly speculative. In this section, I explain the deficiencies of each approach and lay out how this study will address them.

Original-Inclusion Deficiencies

Original-inclusion advocates tend to assume crucial pieces of their argument without giving adequate or plausible evidence. For example, they typically assume the archaic nature of the vocabulary, syntax, and motifs of the inset poetry in Hab 3:3–15.[48] These assumptions seem to have stemmed primarily from the work of scholars like William F. Albright and Frank Moore Cross, who offered what may be called a "gut-feeling" about the archaic nature of Habakkuk 3.[49] Since Albright, original-inclusion

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[47] Jones, "The Seventh-Century Prophets," 130.

[48] See, for example Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 122–23, who offers the examples of "rare words and difficult grammatical constructions not representative of standard classical Hebrew" marshalled by Albright. See Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk;" Cf. Francis I. Andersen, *Habakkuk: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 25 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 260–61; Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 149. Roberts approaches Habakkuk through a predominantly form-critical approach and yet he suggests that chapter 3 is full of archaic language. He assumes that the prophet has adapted an ancient hymn that spoke of God's past acts for his purposes into a thanksgiving vision report that describes God's new, present coming to save. Cf. also Bailey, "Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah," 354.

[49] See Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 8. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 70–71, 99–105. Cross assumes the archaic nature of the psalm of Habakkuk as he a likens it to other "archaic" passages in the Hebrew Bible such as Judges 5, Deut 32 and 33, Ps 68:18, and Exod 15. Cross does note that the first poem in Hab 3:3–6 "is inscribed in pre-exilic orthography; the pronominal suffix

advocates have basically repeated Albright's and Cross's conclusions without actually giving a sustained historical-linguistic defense of the archaic vocabulary and syntax of the inset poems. Even some secondary-inclusion scholars seem to assume the archaic nature of the inset poems without offering a robust historical-linguistic explanation of what distinguishes the vocabulary, syntax, and motifs of archaic poetry from that of seventh-century and later poetry.[50] Yitsḥak Avishur and others have shown parallels between the motifs in the inset poems of Hab 3 and similar pieces of older poetry in the Hebrew Bible (HB) and in Ugaritic literature but stopped short of giving any compelling or substantial evidence for the date of the inset poems.[51]

David A. Robertson's 1972 dissertation is one of the few exceptions. He attempts to reconstruct the nature of early poetic Hebrew by correlating the rare grammatical features of biblical poetry with Ugaritic poetry and the Amarna glosses.[52] Through historical-linguistic analyses, he concludes that the syntax and some grammatical features of the inset poems in Hab 3:3–15 are at least older than the purported seventh-century composition of the book. In what he regards to be a conservative estimate, he dates the poetry of Hab 3 to the eleventh/tenth century BC.[53] However, many have cited errors in his methodology.[54]

3.m.s was written -*h* (*uh>ō*)." See p. 102 fn. 40.

[50] A good example is Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 77–79. Hiebert leans heavily on David A. Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry*, SBLDS 3 (Missoula, MT: SBL Press, 1972), to argue for the premonarchic composition of the two inset poems, which Hiebert asserts to be victory hymns. However, Hiebert seems to misinterpret, and in some places misunderstand, Robertson's methodology and conclusions.

[51] See Avishur, "Habakkuk 3." Cf. Umberto Cassuto, "Chapter III of Habakkuk and the Ras Shamra Texts," in *Biblical and Oriental Studies: Bible and Ancient Oriental Texts*, trans. Israel Abrahams, vol. 2, (Jerusalem: Magnus, 1975), 3–15; Mark S. Smith, "The Passing of Warrior Poetry in the Era of Prosaic Heroes," in *Worship, Women, and War: Essays in Honor of Susan Niditch* (Providence, RI: Brown University, 2015), 3–15.

[52] Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, ix.

[53] Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, 153–56. Robertson's study concluded that Hab 3:3–15 does not exhibit any significant number of verbal forms characteristic of standard poetic Hebrew and yet it does exhibit other standard forms.

[54] See, for example Lortie, *Mighty to Save*, 57–63; Robyn Vern, *Dating Archaic Biblical Hebrew Poetry: A Critique of the Linguistic Arguments*, Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and Its

Many of the diachronic questions regarding the original-inclusion of Hab 3 would be greatly clarified if the inset poems could be reasonably dated, via historical-linguistic analyses, to a time before the seventh century.[55] If a pre-seventh-century date could be determined, one could plausibly suggest that the poems were common currency in Habakkuk's time and that he incorporated them into his book. The curiosity about Hiebert's theory of Hab 3's secondary-inclusion in the Persian period is that he grants that the inset hymns betray a premonarchic provenance and were common currency for Habakkuk in the seventh-century. Yet he asserts that they were preserved by the royal cult and added to the book of Habakkuk by apocalyptic visionary scribes in the postexilic period.[56] Hiebert's reluctance to attribute Habakkukian authorship to the hymns stems from the ostensible disparities between chapters 1–2 and 3.

Furthermore, a robust literary comparison of the motifs in the inset poems of Hab 3 and the earliest poems in the HB must be undertaken in order to discern if the inset poems of Habakkuk have drawn from a common stock of ancient Israelite motifs, mythopoeic motifs, or some other set of ancient Near Eastern motifs.[57]

Contexts 10 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011); Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensvärd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts: An Introduction to Approaches and Problems*, vol. 1 (London, England: Equinox, 2008), 329–35.

[55] Chapter 5 of this work will further discuss the kind of certainty one expects when seeking to linguistically date a particular text. Proponents of linguistic dating will often point out two important qualifications. First, the proposed dating is relative. Among other complicating factors, the transmission of texts complicates the application of dating methods. Scholars are looking for overall patterns from which they draw modest and probable conclusions, not objective certainty. Marc Bloch says, "the majority of the problems of historical criticism are really problems of probability." See Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, trans. Peter Putnam, A Borzoi Book (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), 129. Second, the dating of biblical texts cannot be arrived at exclusively by linguistic studies. Other considerations must be factored into the equation. For a balanced summary of these issues, see Ronald S. Hendel and Jan Joosten, *How Old Is the Hebrew Bible?: A Linguistic, Textual, and Historical Study*, The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 1–10, 31–46 and 98–126.

[56] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 136–39.

[57] One of the extremely helpful contributions of Avishur is that he shows, with great attention to detail, the affinities between the motifs in Hab 3 and the older poetry in the HB such as Judges 5, Deut 32–33, Psalm 77, Exod 15, and 2 Sam 22=Psalm 18. See Avishur, "Habakkuk 3."

Secondary-Inclusion Deficiencies

Brian Peckham notes that "[t]he pervasive unity of the book [of Habakkuk] is evident from *close literary analysis*, and an appeal to alternate theories of editing or redaction simply *eliminates its complexity without explaining its composition*."[58] This tends to be the penchant of secondary-inclusion approaches to the book of Habakkuk. When they confront the ostensible disparities of form, characters, content, and literary cohesiveness between chapters 1–2 and 3, they immediately begin to entertain complex diachronic redactional theories for chapter 3. I suggest that there are two principal reasons for this.

First, form-critical evaluations of the book of Habakkuk do not give proper weight to the two genres in the book which the superscriptions clearly describe: the מַשָּׂא (1:1) and the תְּפִלָּה (3:1). This is because many form-critical evaluations of the book simply assume that the superscriptions were later additions, and therefore cannot shed much light on the genre of the work. However, one need not argue for the original-inclusion of the superscriptions to recognize that they represent a long-standing tradition of interpretation. Most form-critical interpretations of the מַשָּׂא have been etymological and contributed little to its pervasive function in chapters 1–2.

But according to Richard D. Weis's and Michael H. Floyd's research on the rhetorical and semantic definition of מַשָּׂא in the HB concludes that it is a "prophetic reinterpretation of a previous revelation."[59] Weis maintains that this basic definition makes up a prophetic genre throughout the HB and has considerable flexibility in the forms and genres it utilizes. In other words, the מַשָּׂא genre is not so much identified by the constituent elements of particular forms as much is it is identified by its intention, i.e.,

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[58] Brian Peckham, "The Vision of Habakkuk," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 617–18 (emphasis mine). See also W. H. Brownlee, "The Composition of Habakkuk," in *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (Paris: Librarie Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1971), 255–75.

[59] See Michael H Floyd, "The מַשָּׂא (Maśśāʾ) as a Type of Prophetic Book," *JBL* 121, no. 3 (2002): 409–10; Cf. also Richard D. Weis, "A Definition of the Genre Maśśāʾ in the Hebrew Bible" (PhD diss., Claremont Graduate University, 1987).

the prophet's clarification of a previous revelation of YHWH.

The work on מַשָּׂא by Weis and Floyd has been virtually ignored in the secondary literature with a few exceptions.[60] As a result, scholars minimize the control that the מַשָּׂא should have on understanding the contents of Hab 1–2 and assume that pericopes that do not fit with their reconstructed genre of Hab 1–2 (typically a complaint) must be redactional layers. For example, Nogalski posits that 1:5–11, together with 1:12, 15–17, 2:5b, 6a, 8, 10b, 13–14, 16b–17, and 18–19 were part of a "Babylonian commentary" which was added to the original layer of Habakkuk.[61] He comes to this conclusion because 1:5–11 is primarily addressed to a plural audience whereas 1:2–4 addresses YHWH in the singular. However, if according to the מַשָּׂא genre, Habakkuk is citing a previous YHWH-oracle given to the people, which has caused confusion (1:5–11), and about which Habakkuk is seeking clarification, it makes sense to see it as part of the original message of Habakkuk. Furthermore, when proper weight is not given to the distinct genres within the book, מַשָּׂא (1:1) and תְּפִלָּה (3:1), form-critical and redactio-critical scholars expect all three chapters to be of one generic cloth. Thus, the first deficiency in the secondary-inclusion approach is that it does not give a careful literary analysis of the book in light of recent work on the genre of מַשָּׂא.

A second deficiency of the secondary-inclusion approach is also literary. The secondary literature is virtually silent about Habakkuk's sign-posting of what he will do in the book. After his complaint (1:2–17), Habakkuk ascends his watchtower and promises to do two things: look out to see what YHWH will say to him, and to give an answer concerning his rebuke (2:1). YHWH then gives him instructions about the vision (2:2–3), the essence of the vision (2:4–5), and then puts the vision into the mouths of the

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[60] A few examples of those who have used Weis's findings are David Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach to Hab 1,2-2,20," *SJOT* 17, no. 2 (2003): 206–25; Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type"; Marvin A. Sweeney, "Structure, Genre and Intent in the Book of Habakkuk," *VT* 41 (1991): 63–83; Marshall D. Johnson, "The Paralysis of Torah in Habakkuk 1:4," *VT* 35, no. 3 (July 1, 1985): 257–66.

[61] Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*, 129–81 and 274–80.

"oppressed nations" (2:6b–20). If Hab 2:20 is the end of the book, as many secondary-inclusion scholars assert, then Habakkuk has not "answered concerning his rebuke." With the exception of Theodore Hiebert, I have not read any secondary-inclusion scholars who argue that Habakkuk "responded" in Hab 2.[62] Curiously, some redactio-critical proponents even assert that Hab 2:1–4 is not only the original part of the book but also the central message in the history of the redactional process.[63] In other words, Habakkuk's intention (or "sign-posting") in 2:1 and the preliminary instructions about the vision in 2:3–4 are critical to understanding the connection between chapters 1–2 and 3. A literary sensitivity to Habakkuk's intention must point out where Habakkuk's response is in the final form of the book. The deficiencies of the secondary-inclusion view require a reevaluation of how the book of Habakkuk fits together.

Methodology and Scope

As the analysis above has highlighted, there are synchronic and diachronic challenges to the inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk. Accordingly, chapters 2–4 will address the synchronic challenges and chapters 5–8 will address the diachronic challenges. In chapter 2, I offer a synchronic reading of Habakkuk that resolves the typical challenges of disparities of form between chapters 1–2 and 3. The resolution of these disparities precludes the necessity of complex redactional theories which would disconnect chapter 3 from chapters 1–2. In particular, I will utilize the insights of Richard D. Weis's and Michael H. Floyd's work on the prophetic genre of מַשָּׂא and show how the content of chapters 1–2 fleshes out the constituent elements of the מַשָּׂא.[64] This renders it

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[62] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 135. Hiebert argues that the final refrain of Hab 2:20 is essentially Habakkuk's response: "But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him" (ESV). However, he does not show where YHWH's speech ends, and Habakkuk's comments begin in Hab 2:4–20. This matter will be further unpacked in chapter 4 of this work.

[63] See Theodor Lescow, "Die Komposition der Bücher Nahum und Habakuk," *Biblische Notizen* 77 (1995): 59–85.

[64] See Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ"; Richard D. Weis, "Oracle," in *ABD*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992); Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type"; Michael H. Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints about the Fulfillment of Oracles in Habakkuk 1:2-17 and Jeremiah 15:10-18," *JBL* 110, no. 3

unnecessary to expect chapter 3 to continue in the same genre of מַשָּׂא. An overview of the specific way in which the prophet utilizes מַשָּׂא and תְּפִלָּה will likewise help to explain why the book has such an eclectic mix of forms and genres.

A synchronic analysis will continue in chapter 3 of this work by showing the literary cohesiveness between chapters 1–2 and 3. Habakkuk's anticipated response to YHWH's correction (2:1) is nowhere seen in chapters 1–2 and therefore it is plausible to anticipate this response in chapter 3. Furthermore, chapter 3 will make a case for identifying YHWH's promised vision (2:2–3) with Hab 2:4–20. This further substantiates the claim that Habakkuk's anticipated response is nowhere seen in chapters 1–2. The application of Weis's and Floyd's treatment of מַשָּׂא, a rigorous treatment of Habakkuk's anticipated response and the promised vision are all fresh and unique contributions to the field of Habakkuk 3 studies.[65] Chapter 4 of this work will address the challenge of disparate characters between Hab 1–2 and 3.

Turning to the diachronic challenges, chapters 5–8 offer a historical-linguistic analysis of the grammatical features and syntax of Hab 3 that will demonstrate a pre-exilic provenance of the whole chapter and possibly an archaic provenance of the inset hymns. Chapter 5 will present a methodology for this historical-linguistic analysis. In chapter 6, a modified version of Avi Hurvitz's four criteria for deciphering a relative date will be used to identify five grammatical features of the inset hymns which suggest a pre-exilic provenance.[66] In chapter 7, I will utilize Tania Notarius's suggestions for

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(September 1991): 397–418.

[65] Besides the contributions in this study, a helpful dissertation devoted to identifying the vision of Habakkuk is Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk." However, Moller concludes that the promised vision in Hab 2:1–3 is the previously communicated revelation of 1:5–11. Chapter 3 of this work will differ from her conclusions.

[66] For example, see Avi Hurvitz, "Linguistic Criteria for Dating Problematic Biblical Texts," *Hebrew Abstracts* 14 (1973): 74–79; Avi Hurvitz, "The Recent Debate on Late Biblical Hebrew : Solid Data, Experts' Opinions, and Inconclusive Arguments," *HS* 47 (2006): 191–210; Avi Hurvitz, "The 'Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts': Comments on Methodological Guidelines and Philological Procedures," in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 265–79; For some refinements on Hurvitz's method, see Dong-Hyuk Kim, *Early Biblical Hebrew, Late Biblical Hebrew, and Linguistic Variability: A Sociolinguistic Evaluation of the Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts*, VTSup 156 (Leiden:

identifying the unique function of the verb in archaic biblical Hebrew poetry and suggest three syntactical features of the inset hymns which suggest a pre-exilic date.[67] In chapter 8, I will suggest a handful of syntactical features which suggest that the inset hymns exhibit an archaic, rather than archaizing, shape. These diachronic analyses will substantiate the claim that these hymns were likely ancient reflections on YHWH's past works of redemption which Habakkuk incorporated into his final chapter. The implication of these results is that one should not expect the grammatical features and syntax in the inset poems (3:3–15) to be similar to chapters 1 and 2. In chapter 9, I will summarize the cumulative evidence and conclude that chapter 3 must have been an original part of the book of Habakkuk.

Assumptions of this Study

This study proceeds from several assumptions.

Date and Authorship of Habakkuk 1–2

Though there are good reasons to posit either a late pre-exilic or early exilic date to the book, the evidence slightly favors a late pre-exilic date, specifically, sometime between 597 and 588 BC. Habakkuk's consternation about the paralysis of Torah and the impotence of justice (1:4) stemmed from his expectation that YHWH would fulfill the conditions of blessing or curse found in Deut 27–28. Josiah's reforms were a clear and radical example of Israel's obedience. Though it is impossible to know when the previously communicated revelation (1:5–11) was given to Judah, sometime during or

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Brill, 2013).

[67] See Tania Notarius, *The Verb in Archaic Biblical Poetry: A Discursive, Typological, and Historical Investigation of the Tense System*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 68 (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Tania Notarius, "The Archaic System of Verbal Tenses in 'Archaic' Biblical Poetry," in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 193–207; Tania Notarius, "Prospective WEQATAL in Biblical Hebrew: Dubious Cases or Unidentified Category?," *JNSL* 34, no. 1 (2008): 39–55; Tania Notarius, "Temporality and Atemporality in the Language of Biblical Poetry," *JSS* 56, no. 2 (2011): 275–305.

shortly after Josiah's reign would fit nicely. Precisely because Judah would have

expected blessing in the time of Josiah and afterward, this revelation would have caused

great consternation. However, it may also have been vague enough that it was

misinterpreted as somehow being in Judah's favor.

But when Josiah was unexpectedly killed in 609 BC (2 Kgs 23:29–30), every

king after Josiah contributed to a progressive decline in Israel's faithfulness to YHWH.

After the Battle of Carchemish (605 BC), Habakkuk would have heard of the

international threat that Babylon posed, and that Judah had become a hostile nation

toward Babylon with no interest in an alliance. In fact, much of the language in Hab 1–2

which describes Babylon, seems to be very aware of her ruthless manner of warfare.[68] It

is plausible to conclude that the book was written after the first Babylonian deportation in

597 BC. If so, Habakkuk and Judah would have had a first-hand experience of Babylon's

ways and would naturally cry out to the Lord for a מַשָּׂא to clarify the previous revelation

and ease the tension between the expected blessing for obedience and the present reality

of Babylonian invasion.

One indication that the book was written before 587/6 BC is that Habakkuk

speaks as if the temple were still standing in Hab 2:20: "But the LORD is in his holy

temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." It would be very odd for the prophet to

speak of the temple in which YHWH dwelt, if, in fact, it had been destroyed.[69] It is

unlikely that "temple" is used figuratively. The fact that the temple was still standing in

the midst of Babylonian invasion more than likely served as a great source of consolation

for the prophet and the people. All of this demonstrates the plausibility that the book was

written shortly after the first deportation to Babylon (circa 597 BC).

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[68] For example, Hab 1:5–11, 17, 2:5, 8, 9, 15, and 17.

[69] Habakkuk also mentions ascending his tower (מצור) in 2:1 in order to look out to see what God would say to him. Although some have taken this tower to be figurative or metaphorical, such usage is not common. When one combines these two insights, references to the Temple serve as an inclusio in chapter 2 (מצור in 2:1 and היכל in 2:20).

I leave open the possibility that Habakkuk may have composed the book over different periods of time since it is very plausible that Habakkuk's thought developed as events happened.[70] The wisdom elements throughout Habakkuk suggest that the book is part of the skeptical wisdom genre of Israel and William McKane has suggested that skeptical wisdom principally grew out of the exile experience. The disorientation of the exile could very well suggest that sections of Habakkuk may have been written in the early exilic period.[71] I take הַכַּשְׂדִּים in Hab 1:6 to be Chaldea, rather than Assyria or any other nation. I do not find convincing, however, the arguments for a late exilic or postexilic date of authorship. Furthermore, as will be seen in chapter 3 of this work, Habakkuk 1–2 belong to the prophetic genre labelled מַשָּׂא. Richard D. Weis has convincingly demonstrated that the מַשָּׂא genre functions differently in the eighth and seventh centuries than it did in the sixth and fifth centuries. Habakkuk 1–2 conforms to the seventh-century usage of the מַשָּׂא. I see no reason to deny that the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk wrote chapters 1–2, and the rest of the study will defend authorship of Habakkuk in the third chapter as well.

Synchrony and Diachrony

Diachronic questions must be subordinated to synchronic analysis. In other words, if sense may be made out of the text as it stands, then there is no need to emend or suggest a complex history of redactional activity.[72] Of course, the question might always

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[70] For example, see W. W. Cannon, "The Integrity of Habakkuk Chaps. 1–2," *ZAW* 43 (1925): 66, 83. Assuming the dialogue theory of 1:2–2:4, Cannon dates 1:2–4 to the earlier part of the reign of Jehoiakim, and the oracle from YHWH in 1:5–11 to the battle of Carchemish in 605 BC. Habakkuk 1:12–17 was Habakkuk's response to YHWH's oracle in 1:5–11 after which YHWH responds once more in 2:2–4. Once Habakkuk publishes YHWH's vision, which Cannon takes to be 2:4, 2:5–20 dates to the time of the first deportation to Babylon in 597 BC.

[71] See William McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 19; Cf. G. T. M. Prinsloo, "Life for the Righteous, Doom for the Wicked: Reading Habakkuk from a Wisdom Perspective," *Skrif En Kerk* 21, no. 3 (January 1, 2000): 621–40; Donald E. Gowan, "Habakkuk and Wisdom," *Perspective* 9, no. 2 (June 1, 1968): 157–66.

[72] See R. W. L. Moberly, *At the Mountain of God: Story and Theology in Exodus 32-34*, JSOTSup 22 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1983), 23–24; Summarized by Paul R. Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Biblical Interpretation," *Literature and Theology* 7, no. 2 (June 1993): 135. Moberly suggests that the diachronic/synchronic methodological problems should be solved through

be asked, "Could not the unity in the final form have been imposed by redactors rather than originating from the seventh-century prophet?" While this is certainly possible, in many cases it is not plausible. Regarding method, many of the arguments in favor of chapter 3's later addition may, in fact, be garnered to argue for its original-inclusion.[73] After I have shown the unity and cohesion between all three chapters through synchronic analyses, I will then proceed to consider the diachronic questions touching on dating.

Luis Alonso Schökel has helpfully categorized the various ways one might identify the relationship between synchronic and diachronic approaches: [74] (1) mutually unrelated;[75] (2) mutually complementary or supportive;[76] and (3) mutually antagonistic or destructive.[77] Regardless of the approach by which one comes to the text, the fact of the matter is that it is the same text. Thus, the first option, "mutually unrelated" is not a viable option. This work will utilize some combination of options 2 and 3, though a few qualifications are necessary. First, while both approaches can be complementary or

making a careful synchronic exegesis of the final form *before* diachronic reconstructions are attempted because, only when we have made every effort to understand the text on its own terms can we see which aspects really are infelicitous. Insofar as the synchronic reading of a text 'works,' this undermines our ability to reconstruct its prehistory. A text which reads satisfactorily as a coherent, well-integrated whole is one which, *ipso facto,* is largely free from the infelicities which provide the evidence for a diachronic reconstruction. Paul R. Noble develops this methodological line of reasoning further by explaining that "a successful synchronic study undermines the diachronic study of that text in two distinct ways: (1) it removes the *evidence* by which a diachronic study would proceed, by explaining the requisite textual features synchronically instead; and (2) it removes the *motivation* for attempting to reconstruct the text's prehistory." See Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Biblical Interpretation," 136.

[73] Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 260. Andersen notes, "the argument against its authenticity [i.e., Hab 3] that emphasizes how different it is from the rest of the book, is, in fact, an argument for its existence and currency before Habakkuk's time."

[74] See his "Of Methods and Models," in *Congress Volume: Salamanca, 1983*, ed. J.A. Emerton, VTSup 36 (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 3–13; Cf. Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Biblical Interpretation," 131.

[75] That is to say, diachronic and synchronic approaches are asking different sets of questions and are therefore unrelated.

[76] That is to say, the exegete should accept that a combination of synchronic and diachronic considerations may be needed to account for all the features of the text. See Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Biblical Interpretation," 133.

[77] R. W. L. Moberly suggests that "the synchronic and diachronic approaches will (sometimes) be pitched against each other exegetically, as *rival* explanations of the same features in the text" See Moberly, *At the Mountain of God*, 23.

supportive, it is not the case that they always are. For example, sometimes scholars

emend the text based on a very particular expectation of how Hebrew parallelism works.

This is not, in and of itself, an acceptable reason to emend the MT. Second, while both

approaches can be mutually antagonistic or destructive, they need not be. Though the

subtleties of literary design can help the exegete to understand why an ostensible

infelicity of the text may actually be intentional and integral to the text, the fact remains

that corruptions do creep into the text's transmission and, therefore, diachronic analyses

have a place.[78]

The Book of the Twelve Theory

Though studies on the Book of the Twelve theory are both in vogue and

voluminous, this study will not frame the question of chapter 3's original-inclusion in the

book, nor its integral purpose and function within the discussion of redactional theories.

The main reason is that there is only a vague consensus among scholars regarding various

redactional layers. Even if there were redactional activity, a very real possibility, as Grace

Ko comments, "it is nearly impossible to single out individual verses and attribute those

to a particular epoch. Thus, any proposal must remain provisional."[79] Roy F. Melugin

cautions that "persuasive evidence for historical reconstruction is very often unavailable,"

and thus questions the ability of historical criticism to reconstruct its historical situation.[80]

John Barton summarizes a common argument made against the very

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[78] This is especially the case when the texts and versions of any given word or phrase are markedly different. For example, the phrase בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים ("in the midst of the years") in Hab 3:2 is translated as ἐν μέσῳ δύο ζῴων ("in the midst of the two living creatures") in the LXX.

[79] Cf. Rex Mason, *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel*, Old Testament Guides (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1994), 79: "There is a risk of circular argument if redactional layers are isolated only or primarily on the basis of a prior conviction as to what can and cannot be original to the prophet. There clearly are tensions within the text which require explanation; but we may find after redaction-critical analysis that it is difficult to interpret the text at all, if it appears as the result of such a complex process that no consistent voice can be discerned. We should examine other avenues of analysis before accepting such a negative conclusion."

[80] Roy F. Melugin, "Prophetical Books and the Problem of Historical Reconstruction," in *Prophets and Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker*, ed. Stephen Breck Reid, JSOTSup 229 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 70.

foundation of redaction-criticism called "the disappearing redactor." He says:

> The more impressive the critic makes the redactor's work appear, the more he succeeds in showing that the redactor has, by subtle and delicate artistry, produced a simple and coherent text out of the diverse materials before him; the more also he reduces the evidence on which the existence of those sources was established in the first place...the redaction critic himself causes his protégé to disappear.[81]

Though this should not be used as an air-tight denial of any redactional activity, it certainly renders implausible the highly speculative and intricate proposals of redactional layers without any evidence.[82] Furthermore, while there is ample evidence in history that ancient commentators have recognized the twelve Minor Prophets as a complete book, I remain convinced that before Habakkuk was subsumed into the Book of the Twelve, it had its own unique provenance. The main focus of this study is to demonstrate that the third chapter was originally a part of the individual book of Habakkuk. [83]

Conclusion

The unique contributions of this study will be a heuristic use of the superscriptions for deciphering the two genres and the subsequent structure of the book, a robust treatment of Habakkuk's "sign-posting" (2:1), an identification of the elusive "vision," and a historical-linguistic analysis of the grammatical features and syntax of Hab 3 in order to determine a relative date and a plausible provenance of the inset hymns. Careful consideration of these analyses will demonstrate that the seventh-century prophet

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[81] John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*, Rev. and enl. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 57. Though Barton attempts to rebut this argument, he is not very convincing. For a rebuttal of Barton's rebuttal, see Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Biblical Interpretation," especially 145–46; Moberly, *At the Mountain of God*, 23–24.

[82] To be clear, I am not suggesting that the book of Habakkuk did not undergo any editing or updating for it seems clear that it has. However, I would submit that scribes were generally conservative and sought to preserve the text as much as possible, even while updating. In other words, they always saw their roles as editors and preservers rather than authors of new compositions.

[83] See Thomas Renz, "Habakkuk and Its Co-Texts," in *The Book of the Twelve: An Anthology of Prophetic Books or the Result of Complex Redactional Processes?*, ed. Heiko Wenzel, Osnabrücker Studien Zur Jüdischen Und Christlichen Bibel 4 (Göttingen, Germany: Universitätsverlag Osnabrück, 2018), 13. He says that the book "gives no reason to think that there was significant editorial intervention in order to advance a specific train of thought within the Book of the Twelve…Habakkuk seems to be at the more independent end of the spectrum with little if any editorial shaping for its context."

Habakkuk cited two ancient hymns in order to recall the mighty works of YHWH and petition him to renew those mighty works in the years to come.

CHAPTER 2

DISPARATE FORMS OR DIFFERING NORMS?: THE
QUESTION OF FORMS IN THE BOOK OF
HABAKKUK

There is no doubt that the book of Habakkuk is, on the surface, an eclectic mix
of genres and forms. R. P. Carroll once quipped: "As a ragbag [*sic*] of traditional
elements held together by vision and prayer, Habakkuk illustrates the way prophetic
books have been put together in an apparently slapdash fashion."[1] Operating from a
similar premise, secondary-inclusion advocates argue that the form of Hab 1 is probably a
complaint or a dialogue, 2:1 is a brief narrative, 2:2–20 is a catalogue of oracles or a
vision report,[2] and Hab 3 is either a hymn of victory, a psalmic prayer of complaint with
inset hymns, or simply a theophany. What typically motivates secondary-inclusion
advocates to excise Hab 3 (and other sections) from the book of Habakkuk is the
ostensible absence of an overarching typicality or macrostructure that unites all the sub-
genres, forms, and structures. In no other prophetic book does one find a full psalm
included in the book together with superscriptions, liturgical notations, and a colophon as
in Habakkuk.[3]

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[1] R. P. Carroll, "Habakkuk," in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 269. Voltaire once referred to Habakkuk as a "rogue who was capable of anything."

[2] The identification of the genre(s) and form(s) of Hab 2 is variously understood. Some believe that a vision is described in either 2:2–4, 2:4a, 2:2–20, 2:4–20, or 2:6a–20. The identification of the vision in the book of Habakkuk will be addressed in chapter 3 of this work. Others see a vision in 2:2–6a followed by a set of five oracles in 2:6b–20.

[3] Yet there are examples that closely approximate a psalm or hymn within narrative (1 Sam 2:1–10; 2 Sam 22 without liturgical notations = Psalm 18) or prophetic material (Jonah 2). A good argument may be made that "Hezekiah's Psalm" in Isaiah 38:9–20 is quite similar to the phenomenon in Hab 3. In Isa 38:9, the psalm has its own superscript which includes the genre (מִכְתָּב), name of author, and historical circumstance ("after his illness and recovery"). As Hans Wildberger notes, this superscription is not added smoothly to v. 8. See Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja, das Buch, der Prophet und seine Botschaft*, vol.

The specific form-critical challenge to chapter 3's original inclusion, in large part, depends on how one classifies the forms within the book and how they relate to one another.[4] The form-critical classification of the book of Habakkuk typically proffered by secondary-inclusion advocates has either misidentified (or failed to identify) and therefore, misapplied the overarching form classification of Hab 1–2. Consequently, they illegitimately expect Hab 3 to look the same as Hab 1–2. This chapter exposes this form-critical deficiency and suggests an alternative by doing a few things. First, I will show that the governing genre (or macrostructure) of Hab 1–2 is the מַשָּׂא, which is constituted not by the typical elements of its form, but by the typical elements of its *intention*, the *problem it addresses,* and the way in which it *solves the problem*.[5] Second, I will show how disparate genres and forms are intentionally used throughout Hab 1–2 in order to manifest the constituent elements of the מַשָּׂא. Third, I will show how the unique form of the מַשָּׂא naturally anticipates the secondary macrostructure of the תְּפִלָּה in Hab 3 and then offer a form-critical assessment of Hab 3. I conclude by drawing together the implications of these observations and showing how they answer the form-critical objection to the original inclusion of Hab 3 in the book of Habakkuk.

3, Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament 10 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982), 1454. The hymn follows in vv. 10–20a and then what seems to be liturgical instructions for the temple congregation follow in 38:20b: וּנְגִנוֹתַי נְנַגֵּן כָּל־יְמֵי חַיֵּינוּ עַל־בֵּית יְהוָה ("and so we will string our music all the days of our lives in the house of the LORD"). Notice the switch from singular (38:20a) to plural (38:20b). Bruce K. Waltke rightly suggests that Hezekiah's psalm, like the psalm of Habakkuk, once had a life of its own in the temple cultus. See Bruce K. Waltke, "Superscripts, Postscripts, or Both," *JBL* 110 (1991): 588.

[4] While I recognize that form-critical scholars distinguish "form" (German, *Form*), which refers to the unique formulation of a text, from "genre" (German, *Gattung*) which refers to the typical conventions of expression or language that appear in a text, form-critical scholarship often confuses the two or uses them interchangeably. For example, Marvin A. Sweeney notes, "[g]enre functions within form as a means to facilitate expression and communication." See *Reading Prophetic Books: Form, Intertextuality, and Reception in Prophetic and Post-Biblical Literature*, Forschungen Zum Alten Testament 89 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 3. And yet, Tremper Longman III reserves "form" to refer to the smaller units and "genre" for larger units, but says that "principles apply to both." See "Form Criticism, Recent Developments in Genre Theory, and the Evangelical," *WTJ* 47, no. 1 (1985): 50. I will use the term "form" to refer to the unique formulation of the text and the word "genre" to refer to the generic conventions or expressions of language which make up a particular form.

[5] Weis, "A Definition of Maśśā̕," 360, (emphasis mine).

The Search for Macrostructure in Habakkuk

Secondary-inclusion advocates engage in two methodological errors which prevent them from seeing the overall connection between Hab 1–2 and 3. First and foremost, little to no attention is given to the definition, intention, and subsequent function of the מַשָּׂא in the superscription (1:1).[6] According to Richard D. Weis, this lack of attention to the מַשָּׂא is probably due to an earlier etymological, rather than semantic, analysis which has prevailed in critical scholarship.[7] This led to:

> an inappropriate definition of the term and put the form critics who followed in the position of trying to reconcile the evidence of the [מַשָּׂא] texts with this definition. To put it another way, etymology bears on the question of why term and genre were associated. Since this may have happened at some stage prior to the final form of the text, to engage in etymological explanation before a full semantic investigation (of the final form of the text) is to effectively presume a tradition history.[8]

An exclusively etymological analysis typically leads to the vague translation of "oracle."[9] Within the context of prophecy, it is understood to mean a "burden" in the sense that its message is hard to bear; in other words, a prophecy of doom.[10] Others, taking a slightly different etymological approach, propose that the prophetic use of the word is related to the idiomatic phrase נָשָׂא קוֹל "to lift [one's] voice."[11] Thus, a מַשָּׂא is what results from a lifting of one's voice, namely a "pronouncement" or "proclamation."[12] The problem with both of these etymological analyses is that the content of some of the prophecies to which

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[6] The basic etymological starting point for understanding מַשָּׂא is that it is derived from the root נשא which basically means "carry" or "lift up." See *HALOT,* s.v. "מַשָּׂא II."

[7] For a summary of etymological definitions of maśśāʾ, see Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type," 401–404.

[8] Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 359. See a similar criticism in Rolf Knierim, "Criticism of Literary Features, Form, Tradition, and Redaction," in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Gene M. Tucker and D. A. Knight (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 155–56.

[9] See the RSV, NRSV, NEB, NAB, and NIV.

[10] See, e.g., Henry S. Gehman, "The 'Burden' of the Prophets," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 31, no. 2 (1940): 107–21; P. A. H. de Boer, "An Inquiry into the Meaning of the Term משא," *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 5 (1948): 197–214; J. A. Naudé, "Maśśāʾ in the OT with Special Reference to the Prophets," *Ou Testamentiese Werk-Gemeenskap in Suid-Afrika* 12 (1969): 91–100. See especially Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type," 402 for a summary of this etymological approach.

[11] Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type," 402.

[12] E.g., K. H. Graf, *Der Prophet Jeremia* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1862), 315; Karl Marti, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1900), 117.

the term is applied does not readily fit the typicality of this description. And when content

does not fit with an overarching typicality, it is presumed to be secondary. Furthermore,

etymological analyses fail to explain why מַשָּׂא seems limited mainly to prophecies.[13]

Second, form- and redaction-critical approaches to Habakkuk expect genres to

be defined in terms of ideal formal (i.e., macrostructural) patterns that would be

replicated pretty much completely in each exemplar of the genre.[14] When scholars

identify something unique amidst the typical, the tendency is to relegate the uniqueness to

subsequent exegesis or classify it as a secondary accretion. But there are numerous

examples in the HB where the unique or individual within a typical form or genre has

been intentionally incorporated by the author for some specific reason.[15] Failure to

reckon with how the unique may be an original variation on the typical reverts the form-

critical methodology back to Gunkel's rigid taxonomy of forms and genres and does not

allow for what Knierim called "total interpretation."[16]

Knierim offers a much-needed corrective to the error of giving rigid priority to

the typical over the unique:

The structure governing a text-entity can be discovered only on the basis of close

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[13] Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type," 402.

[14] Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 360. Responding to this rigid methodological approach, Knierim says, "If both fixed and variable text-types in fact exist in our literature, *methodological openness is demanded.* We should not have to choose between two alternative methodological premises, namely between concepts of genre as a fixed or flexible structure. Insistence on one or the other becomes methodologically meaningless. *Instead we should ask whether a certain text rests on the one or the other sort of generic pattern, whether this or that exegesis does more justice to it*," See Knierim, "Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered," 447–48, (emphasis mine).

[15] For example, Isa 6 exemplifies the typical genre of the prophetic report on vocation. However, Isaiah's vocation report contains the unique element of the vision of judgment (cf. 1 Kgs 22:17–23). The blending of these two genres is unique to Isaiah. See Rolf Knierim, "Vocation of Isaiah," *VT* 18, no. 1 (January 1968): 57ff. Knierim explains that Isaiah put his own stamp on the traditional prophetic vocation genre because he wanted to justify his vocation as the proclaimer of a judgment already decided upon by the heavenly council (59); Cf. Roy F. Melugin, "The Typical Versus the Unique Among Hebrew Prophets," in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1972*, vol. 2, SBLSP 9 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1972), 335.

[16] Knierim, "Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered," 458. "It has been correctly emphasized that the interpretation of a text must pay attention to both their typicality and their individuality, and that both tasks stand in their own right, each contributing in its own way to total interpretation. This means that through the exegesis of text-units, the identification of the text-*types* must be established in contradistinction to the individuality of the texts."

textual analysis which demonstrates the inherent framework from evidence in the text itself. This does not exclude the search for patterns, types, schemes, or genres. But it makes sure that the identifiable patterns are those indicated by the structure of text-entities, and not those imposed on them by partial association. Form criticism has been interested in typical structures and has generally tended to relegate the interpretation of the uniqueness of texts to subsequent exegesis. However, it seems necessary to reverse this approach: *Not only must the structural analysis of the individuality of texts be included into the form-critical method, it must, in fact, precede the analysis of the typical structure if the claim that such a typicality inherently determines an individual text is to be substantiated.*[17]

This corrective is especially relevant to Habakkuk if one is to make sense of the panoply of different genres. The uniqueness of the texts labelled מַשָּׂא is that they are not so much constituted by a particular structure, genre, or even form. Rather, they are typically constituted by their intention and the problem they address.

Superscriptions and Macrostructure

These missteps are overcome by giving greater attention to the macrostructures that govern the various forms and genres within each section of the book. It is here that superscriptions may provide a heuristic clue. The two superscriptions reveal that the book is to be read as a מַשָּׂא (1:1) and a תְּפִלָּה (3:1). One need not conclude that the superscriptions were original since the paucity of evidence precludes dogmatic assertions.[18] However, three critical observations about the place of superscriptions in the form-critical assessment of the book are in order, especially since many secondary-inclusion advocates tend to disregard their significance in establishing the structure and intent of the book.

First, the difficulty that some LXX translators seemed to have had in translating some of the superscriptions and liturgical notations suggests a significant gap of time between their inclusion and subsequent translation (circa 250 BC).[19] Though סֶלָה

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[17] Knierim, "Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered," 461, emphasis original. This sequence in methodology is in basic agreement with that proposed by Wolfgang Richter, *Exegese Als Literaturwissenschaft: Entwurf Einer Alttestamentlichen Literaturtheorie Und Methodologie* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), see especially his section on form and forms, 120–30.

[18] Although it is significant to note that מַשָּׂא and תְּפִלָּה are lacking in none of the extant manuscripts of Hab 1:1 and 3:1.

[19] John H. Eaton says "Now it is sometimes assumed that such annotations [i.e.,

is translated with διάψαλμα (Hab 3:3, 9, 13), as is customary in the Psalter, according to Hiebert, "such an interpretation of סֶלָה as an "interlude" does not appear to be based on a clear knowledge of the term, at least if one expects interludes to be associated with the stanzaic structure of psalms…[but] סֶלָה has little relationship with stanzaic structure."[20] The translators were even less sure about the directions in the colophon (3:19c), לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹתָי, which they seemed to have understood to be part of Habakkuk's confession of trust: ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ ἐπιβιβᾷ με τοῦ νικῆσαι ἐν τῇ ᾠδῇ αὐτοῦ ("he mounts me upon high places that I might conquer by his song"). The same confusion may be seen in the superscriptions.[21] The meaning of the technical terminology in the superscriptions seems to have already been lost by the Hebrew-speaking community by at least 250 BC or even before.[22] While this does not, in itself, necessitate ascribing authorship of the superscriptions and liturgical notations to Habakkuk, it is plausible to conclude that they were either prescriptive or descriptive of how the book was to be read at a very early

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superscriptions] derive only from late Jewish editors, but this is not necessarily so. For while the VSS in Habakkuk on the whole attest the firm textual tradition of these annotations, they seem to understand them even less than we do, so pointing us away from the usage of later Judaism to an earlier period. At the very least, such rubrics show that cultic tradition (so often conservative) thought liturgical usage appropriate to this composition." See "Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3," *ZAW* 76, no. 2 (January 1, 1964): 159.

[20] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 141.

[21] The following is a list of various translations of the metaphorical and prophetic use of מַשָּׂא: In Hab 1:1, 2 Kgs 9:25, Mal 1:1, Zech 9:1, 12:1, Nah 1:1, Jer 23:34, 36 (x2), Jer 23:38, and Lam 2:14, מַשָּׂא is rendered λῆμμα ("gain" or "something received"). The concept of "something received" may be the intention behind the rendering of מַשָּׂא as δεξάμενος in Prov 30:1. Although, some suggest that the MT is terribly corrupted here and the translator may be merely guessing. See McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach*, 644–45. It is left untranslated in Ezek 12:10, and Isa 21:13. It is confused with "five" (חָמֵשׁ) in 2 Chron 24:27 and rendered πέντε. In Prov 31:1 it is rendered χρηματισμός, which is a "divine statement," or "answer" and gets quite close to the actual meaning of מַשָּׂא. In Isa 13:1, 19:1, and 30:6, it is rendered ὅρασις ("vision" or "appearance"). In Isa 21:1, 11, 23:1 it is rendered ὅραμα ("vision," "sight"). Isaiah 14:28, 15:1, 17:1, and 22:1 render it with the generic ῥῆμα ("word," "statement," "expression"). While the different renderings may have something to do with translation style, the eclectic diversity suggests confusion over the Hebrew *Vorlage*. Furthermore, the Hebrew word שִׁגָּיוֹן is only used two times in the MT (Ps 7:1 and Hab 3:1). In Ps 7:1, the LXX has ψαλμὸς and in Hab 3:1, ᾠδῆς (cf. Barb, OG, and G^L).

[22] H. M. I. Gevaryahu points out that the meaning of the musical terms in the psalms seems to have been forgotten during the Babylonian exile. See H. M. I. Gevaryahu, "Biblical Colophons: A Source for the 'Biography' of Authors, Texts, and Books," in *Congress Volume: Edinburgh, 1974*, VTSup 28, 1975, 52 fn. 36. Waltke says that "with the exception of Psalm 67, למנצח + prepositional phrases occurs only with psalms whose superscriptions present authors, namely דוד, בני קרח, and אסף . It never occurs in book 4, in any postexilic psalms, and only with לדוד in book 5. The combined evidence shows that it is appended only to pre-exilic psalms." See Waltke, "Superscripts, Postscripts, or Both," 594.

stage.

Second, whether the superscriptions were part of the original composition or additions by later scribes and redactors is really a moot point. It begs the question: Why were such superscriptions added in the first place? Tucker and Childs have shown that superscriptions are an ancient commentary for how the book was to be read.[23] As will be shown below, Richard D. Weis has demonstrated that all the constitutive elements of a seventh-century מַשָּׂא are found in Hab 1–2. So, if the forms and genres of Habakkuk confirm what the superscriptions label them to be, the burden of proof is on those who deny that the content of Hab 1–2 comports with its description in the superscription.[24]

Third, the colophon in Hab 3:19b suggests an earlier date than many secondary-inclusion advocates ascribe to it. In the early twentieth-century, James William Thirtle theorized that in superscripts of the Psalter, למנצח + prepositional phrases were originally not superscripts of the following psalms but postscripts of the preceding ones, precisely as is the case in the psalm of Hab 3.[25] H. M. I. Gevaryahu held a similar view and suggested that scribes transposed the colophons to the beginning of the text at a later period.[26] The psalm of Hab 3 seems to have been preserved as a model psalm whose

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[23] See Gene M. Tucker, "Prophetic Superscriptions and the Growth of Canon," in *Canon and Authority: Essays in Old Testament Religion and Theology*, ed. George W. Coats and Burke O. Long (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 56–70; Brevard Childs says: "psalm titles do not appear to reflect independent historical tradition, but are the result of an exegetical activity which derived its material from within the text itself." See "Psalm Titles and Midrashic Exegesis," *JSS* 16, no. 2 (September 1, 1971): 143.

[24] Grace Ko notes "[e]ven if the superscriptions…are secondary, it does not follow that the content of the section is secondary. It is best to read the superscriptions as the editorial notes to clarify or inform later generations of the content of the section, rather than as grounds to deny the integrity of Habakkuk 3 to the prophecy. And at the very least it shows that tradition remembered Habakkuk as the author of this psalm very early on." See "Theodicy in Habakkuk" (PhD diss., University of St. Michael's, 2011), 25–26.

[25] James William Thirtle, *The Titles of the Psalms: Their Nature and Meaning Explained* (London, England: Henry Frowde, 1904), 11–12.

[26] Gevaryahu, "Biblical Colophons," 51–52. His internal evidence from the HB were (1) the transference of "Hallelujah" in Psalms 104, 105, and 115 from a postscript, as attested in the MT, to a superscript of the subsequent psalm in the LXX; (2) the preservation of the Hebrew word למנצח at the end of Habakkuk 3; and (3) the preservation of biographical data of the king found in the colophon at the end of the LXX version of Job, as well as in the original end of Ben Sira 1:27–29. Cf. Bruce K. Waltke, "Superscripts, Postscripts, or Both," *JBL* 110 (1991): 584–85.

superscription is at the beginning and colophon at the end. If Hab 3 is later than the seventh-century, why is it not marked by the typically late custom of transposing the colophon to the beginning?

A Rhetorical Definition of מַשָּׂא

Richard D. Weis's 1987 dissertation demonstrated that texts labelled מַשָּׂא, either sections of books or whole prophetic books, constitute a particular prophetic genre which could be translated "a prophetic exposition of YHWH's revealed will or activity."[27] Contrary to previous etymological attempts to connect the implications of מַשָּׂא to the text at hand, Weis's findings are the result of a semantic or rhetorical analysis of how the texts labelled מַשָּׂא typically function in prophetic texts.[28] Weis's contributions have been virtually ignored by Habakkukian scholarship.[29] As a genre, it is particularly unique in that it is constituted by "the typical aspects of its *intention* and the *problem it addresses*, rather than the typical aspects of its form. Instead, the latter simply express the former with a variety of superstructures."[30] The intention of the genre is further laid out by Weis:

> …the מַשָּׂאוֹת texts…respond to a question about a lack of clarity in the relation between divine intention and human reality. Either the divine intention being

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[27] Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 275. Or "prophetic reinterpretation of a previous revelation." See Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type," 409–10. In a later article, Floyd has also suggested "re-revelation," See Michael H. Floyd, "The Meaning of Maśśāʾ as a Prophetic Term in Isaiah," *JHebS* 18 (2018): 15.

[28] Of the 65 references to מַשָּׂא in the final form of the HB, 33 refer to something that, literally or metaphorically is "taken up." In none of these instances does the term refer to an utterance or writing of any kind. Weis limited his study to 27 uses of מַשָּׂא, each of which appears in a title, superscription, or introductory sentence and designates speech or writing that somehow pertains to prophets: 2 Kgs 9:25; Isa 13:1; 15:1a; 17:1a; 19:1a; 21:1a, 11a, 13a; 22:1a; 23:1a; 30:6a; Jer 23:3 (x2), 34, 35 (x2), 38 (x3); Ezek 12:10a; Nah 1:1; Hab 1:1; Zech 9:1a; 12:1a; Mal 1:1; Lam 2:14; 2 Chron 24:27.

[29] There are a few exceptions to this trend. See Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type"; Michael H. Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints about the Fulfillment of Oracles in Habakkuk 1:2-17 and Jeremiah 15:10-18," *JBL* 110, no. 3 (September 1991): 397–418; David Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach to Hab 1,2-2,20," *SJOT* 17, no. 2 (2003): 206–25; Marvin A. Sweeney, "'Habakkuk, Book Of,'" in *ABD* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3:3; Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, ed. David W. Cotter, Jerome T. Walsh, and Chris Franke, vol. 2, Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 2:459; Marvin A. Sweeney, "Structure, Genre and Intent in the Book of Habakkuk," *VT* 41 (1991): 65–66.

[30] Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 360, (emphasis mine).

expressed in some aspect of human experience is unclear, or the divine intention is clear enough, but the human events through which it will gain expression are unclear.[31]

The "divine intention" is predominantly expressed in some previously communicated revelation from YHWH. Due to the ambiguity in its intention, or the manner in which it is to be fulfilled, a further revelation is given to clarify the previous revelation.[32]

While the intention may manifest itself in many different structures, forms and sub-genres, it typically includes three constituent elements which work toward the same rhetorical end of reinterpretation. Floyd summarizes these three elements:

> First, an assertion is made, directly or indirectly, about Yahweh's involvement in a particular historical situation or course of events. Second, this assertion serves to clarify the implications of a previous revelation from Yahweh that is alluded to, referred to, or quoted from. This previous revelation is the source of consternation or distress which prompts the prophetic inquiry. Third, this assertion also provides the basis for directives concerning appropriate reactions or responses to Yahweh's initiative, or for insights into how Yahweh's initiative affects the future.[33]

Concerning the previous revelation that is clarified by the assertion, there is a difference between pre-exilic (eighth- and seventh-century BC) and exilic/postexilic (sixth- and fifth-century BC) מַשָּׂאוֹת. Pre-exilic מַשָּׂאוֹת texts frequently contain within themselves the previously communicated revelation which the prophet questions, due to a lack of clarity, and to which YHWH responds in a further revelation to disambiguate.[34] Exilic and postexilic texts may respond to a previously communicated revelation from YHWH but that revelation is outside the text itself.[35]

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[31] Weis, "Oracle," 5:28. Cf. Weis, "A Definition," 257, 271. Weis refers to this "lack of clarity" as "indeterminacy."

[32] In Floyd, "Maśśāʾ in Isaiah," Floyd shows the various ways in which the two revelations (former and latter) relate to one another in narrative texts such as 2 Kgs 9:25, Ezek 12:10, and 2 Chr 24:27 (see pp. 9–14) and in the texts labelled מַשָּׂא in Isaiah (see pp. 15–31).

[33] As summarized by Floyd, "מַשָּׂא as a Type," 409. Floyd sees the same phenomenon in Malachi and Zechariah. The previous revelation in Malachi is some form of the Torah; in Zech 9–11 it is Zech 1–8; in Zech 12–14 it is Zech 1–11.

[34] See Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 347–48. Weis says "[t]he eighth and seventh century BCE texts we examined all contained within themselves a quotation or report of the revelation whose manifestation in human affairs they expounded. None of the sixth and fifth-century BCE texts we examined did, but all of these texts expounded previously communicated YHWH revelation that existed, and exists, outside the *maśśāʾ* texts." Weis deals with the distinct sources of indeterminacy in the eighth and seventh-centuries BCE vs. the sixth and fifth-centuries BCE on the same pages.

[35] For example, Weis translates דְּבַר־יְהוָה מַשָּׂא in Zech 9:1 as "prophetic interpretation of the

מַשָּׂא as the Macrostructure of Habakkuk 1–2

These three elements are readily seen in Hab 1–2. In other words, everything a מַשָּׂא typically does in the prophetic corpus, is done in Hab 1–2 through a variety of different genres and forms. Thus, when the מַשָּׂא ends in 2:20, one should not expect anything that follows (i.e., Hab 3) to continue in the same form or genre.

Excursus: The Dialogue Theory (1:2–2:4)

Before identifying the three rhetorical elements of the מַשָּׂא, it is first necessary to clarify the structure and interpretation of Hab 1:2–17. Habakkuk 1:2–2:4 has traditionally been structured and interpreted as a dialogue between the prophet and YHWH.[36] Though there is nuance in how it is structured, the general consensus is that the prophet complains about the "wicked one" who perpetrates violence and oppresses the "righteous one" in 1:2–4.[37] In 1:5–11, YHWH responds by declaring that he will raise up the Chaldeans to judge the wicked ones. Habakkuk is unsettled by YHWH's answer, so he complains again in 1:12–17. Then Habakkuk ascends his watchtower and looks out to see how YHWH will respond to his last complaint (2:1) and YHWH gives His final answer in 2:2–4.[38]

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word of YHWH (i.e., the word previously revealed to Haggai and Zechariah)." See Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 276. Another difference is that the exilic/postexilic prophets distinguish carefully between מַשָּׂא and דְּבַר־יְהוָה (e.g., Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi) while the pre-exilic prophets (e.g., Isaiah) make no distinction.

[36] A few representative examples of the dialogue theory are: Elizabeth Rice Achtemeier, *Nahum-Malachi*, Interpretation (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1986), 34–48; Lawrence Boadt, *Jeremiah 26-52, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Nahum*, Old Testament Message, vol. 10 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982), 26–52, 171–72; Brownlee, "Composition," 260–64; J. H. Eaton, *Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah: Introduction and Commentary*, Torch Bible Commentaries (London, England: SCM Press, 1961), 85–98; Donald E. Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1976), 21–28; Theodore H. Robinson and Friedrich Horst, *Die Zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, Handbuch Zum Alten Testament 114 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1954), 172–80; J. Gerald Janzen, "Eschatological Symbol and Existence in Habakkuk," *CBQ* 44, no. 3 (July 1, 1982): 396–405; Wilhelm Rudolph, *Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja*, vol. 13, pt. 3. Kommentar Zum Alten Testament (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1975), 200–217; Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 94–95; Humbert, *Problèmes*, 9–18; Karl Elliger, *Das Buch der zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, vol. 2 (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951), 25–41.

[37] There is difference of opinion regarding what, exactly, Habakkuk is complaining about in 1:2–4. Some say he is complaining about an internal faction of wicked Judahites who are corrupting *Torah* and *justice*, while others claim that Habakkuk is complaining about an external oppressor, either Babylon or Assyria. I will address this matter more fully in chapter 4 of this work.

[38] Some see this final answer in 2:2–20. This dialogue structure is so prevalent that many Bible translations employ sub-headings before each respective dialogue section. See the ESV, JB, NIV [Study

A number of insurmountable problems render the dialogue theory untenable.[39]

First, the abrupt shift from a first-person speaker addressing YHWH in the second-person (1:2–4) to YHWH speaking in the first-person to an audience in the second-person plural (1:5–11) indicates that YHWH was addressing more than just Habakkuk. The tenses then return to a first-person speaker addressing YHWH in the second-person in 1:12–17. Both 1:2–4 and 12–17 are a complaint while 1:5–11 bear the marks of an oracle addressed to a group rather than to one individual.[40] Second, Prinsloo has convincingly shown that without exception, the ancient macrostructural unit delimiter *setumah* appears only after 1:17.[41] The *setumah* between 1:17 and 2:1 suggests that the whole of chapter 1 should be read as a single unit.[42] Third, while there is no narrative element between Habakkuk's complaint (1:2–4) and YHWH's speech (1:5–11), Habakkuk narrates YHWH's answer to 2:2 with the narrative element וַיַּעֲנֵנִי יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר.[43] The lack of any explicit or implicit indication of sequencing at 1:5 suggests that the relationship between 1:5–11, and its complaints on either side, is more of an interruption than a progression.[44]

Fourth, the dialogue theory depicts YHWH responding to a cry for help from a

Bible], NASB [Ryrie Study Bible], NEB, NKJV [MacArthur Study Bible].

[39] For a fuller critique of the dialogue theory, see Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach"; Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 46–72; Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints"; G. T. M. Prinsloo, "Habakkuk 1-A Dialogue? Ancient Unit Delimiters in Dialogue with Modern Critical Interpretation," *OTE* 17, no. 4 (2004): 621–45.

[40] Note the characteristic כִּי־הִנְנִי in 1:6.

[41] For more on the rediscovery and development of unit delimitation, See Marjo C. A. Korpel and Josef M. Oesch, eds., *Unit Delimitation in Biblical Hebrew and Northwest Semitic Literature*, Pericope: Scripture as Written and Read in Antiquity 4 (Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2003).

[42] For a fuller description, see Prinsloo, "Habakkuk 1-A Dialogue?," 625–27. A *setumah* is the term given to a "closed" *parašah,* the ending of one section and the beginning of the next being indicated by a space within the line of text of about nine characters, or else the new section receives an indent of several characters when the previous section runs to the end of a line. Cf. Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2012), 50; Terence Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language in Isaiah, Micah, and Habakkuk" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2010), 69–70.

[43] See Dennis Ray Bratcher, "The Theological Message of Habakkuk: A Literary-Rhetorical Analysis" (PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1984), 72; Michael H. Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 22 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 95.

[44] Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 95.

righteous individual (Hab 1:2–4) with a prophecy of disaster against the nation (Hab 1:5–11).[45] Habakkuk's chief complaint in 1:2–4 is about violence (חמס, Hab 1:2). It is difficult to understand how YHWH's raising up of the Chaldeans (1:5, 6), who come for violence (חמס, Hab 1:9), is the answer to Habakkuk's complaint. Habakkuk's complaint in 1:4 was that the law was paralyzed, and justice went forth ineffectively. Habakkuk 1:7b indicates that the Chaldeans establish their own justice. How, then, is 1:5–11 the answer to Habakkuk's complaint? If anything, 1:5–11 exacerbates Habakkuk's complaint rather than answering it in any positive way. Finally, in Hab 1:2 and 1:17, the prophet offers temporally-oriented questions concerning the deliverance of the people: "O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save?" (Hab 1:2), and "Is he [Chaldea] then to keep on emptying his net and mercilessly killing nations forever?" (Hab 1:17). Cleaver-Bartholomew points out that "[i]f Hab 1:5–11 were delivered between Hab 1:2 and 1:17, then one would expect to find some indication in Hab 1:12–17 that Habakkuk believed YHWH had in fact heard his earlier complaint. Yet there is none."[46]

It is best to view Hab 1:2–17 as one long complaint with the previously communicated revelation of 1:5–11 inserted in the middle.[47] Habakkuk 1:2–4 begins by attracting the reader's attention and brings them into the middle of the action by detailing the oppressive activity of the wicked one. His actions are rendering תּוֹרָה ineffectual and stifling the forward movement of מִשְׁפָּט. This first section of the complaint is more centered on Habakkuk's own personal consternation. Applying a literary-critical reading to this initial section, Cleaver-Bartholomew calls this technique *in medias res,* a literary

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[45] Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach," 207.

[46] Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach," 210.

[47] The elements of complaint are: (1) invocation (1:2–4), (2) description of trouble (1:3, 4, 6, 9), (3) plea for deliverance (implied in the questions that describe YHWH's failure to correct the situation; 1:2, 17), (4) reproach (1:2–3 and 13b–17), and (5) expression of Hope (1:12, 13).

convention common in the epic poetry of Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.[48] After

grabbing the reader's attention, Habakkuk then uses the well-known literary technique of

flashback, in 1:5–11, to fill the reader in as to what has precipitated this complaint,

namely, the previous revelation whose ambiguity has caused consternation.[49] Then, in

Hab 1:12–17, Habakkuk employs an *inclusio* by continuing the complaint he began in

1:2–4.[50] Whereas 1:2–4 focused more on the prophet's own personal consternation, 1:12–

17 describes how YHWH's complicity affects everyone in general.[51] Weis's rhetorical

definition of מַשָּׂא helps make sense of the structure of the prayer of complaint interrupted

by a previous revelation (1:2–17).

The Presenting Crisis and Its Ambiguity

Having established the correct structure for 1:2–17, I now identify the three

rhetorical elements of the מַשָּׂא in Hab 1–2. The presenting crisis which causes the prophet

to launch into complaint against YHWH is found in 1:5–11. This previous revelation was

likely delivered as early as 605 BC or just prior to 597 BC (the first deportation of Judah

to Babylon). The complaints in 1:2–4 and 12–17 are both regarding the problematic

nature of this revelation. The problem is not that the prophecy about the Chaldeans had

not come to pass. Rather, the problem is that it was coming to pass with a vengeance. But

there is inherent ambiguity in the revelation that has prompted the prophet to complain to

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[48] Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach," 214. Cf. Kathleen Morner and Ralph Rausch, *NTC's Dictionary of Literary Terms*, National Textbook Language Dictionaries (Lincolnwood, Ill: National Textbook Co., 1991), 110. Homer's works are believed to have been composed sometime in the ninth or eighth century BC. It is possible that the literary terms employed there (*in media res, flashback,* and *inclusio*) were part of Habakkuk's intellectual milieu. See Morton Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics That Shaped the Old Testament*, 2nd. ed. (London, England: SCM, 1987), 43–47.

[49] Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach," 215. Cleaver-Bartholomew mentions a similar use of *flashback* in Amos 7, Isa 6, Pss 22, 30, 89, 109, and 132.

[50] Numerous *stichwörter* tie 1:2–4 and 12–17 together: מֹשׁפט (1:4 and 1:12), עמל (1:3 and 1:13), רשׁע (1:4 and 1:13), צדיק (1:4 and 1:13), נבט (1:3 and 1:13 [x2]), ראה (1:3 and 1:13). The questions posed in 1:3 and 1:13 both use למה. Furthermore, the questions posed in both 1:2–4 and 12–17 all have to do with essentially the same problems: YHWH's complicity with the Chaldean's oppression and the question of the duration of this complicity.

[51] See Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints," 406.

YHWH.

The first ambiguity has to do with how the Chaldeans are meant to be a tool in YHWH's hand. While Habakkuk recognizes that God has raised up the Chaldeans for judgment and reproof (Hab 1:12), he cannot understand how YHWH's active involvement in such violence comports with his holy character (1:12–13). Specifically, how will YHWH's raising up the Chaldeans solve the paralysis of תּוֹרָה and the ineffectiveness of מִשְׁפָּט (Hab 1:4)? While it was YHWH who raised them up (1:5–6), the Chaldeans' own justice (מִשְׁפָּט) and sovereignty (שְׂאֵת) proceed from themselves (1:7b). Will Babylon be held guiltless for their evil oppression and for overstepping the sovereign limits of power placed on them by YHWH? Or will they be checked for overstepping these bounds, as Assyria was (cf. Isa 10:5–19)? Either YHWH is fundamentally unjust in the way he orders world affairs, or perhaps he has temporarily allowed an unjust situation to develop in order to teach his people a needed lesson.[52]

The second ambiguity has to do with the timing of YHWH's intention. The end of the previously communicated revelation (Hab 1:11) says: "Then the spirit [i.e., Chaldea] swept on and passed by; and he was guilty—he whose strength is his god."[53] This final word of the revelation seems to indicate that there will be a point when Chaldea will cease her oppressive activity, move on, and somehow be judged as "guilty" for her idolatrous pomp. But as Habakkuk looks out on the international scene, he sees no evidence of this. By 597 BC, the Chaldeans changed their policy toward Judah from a vassal state to a conquered nation and began deporting her people and treasures. It is likely that around 594/3 BC, this revelation of YHWH (1:5–11) had become so problematic that the people asked for a מַשָּׂא from YHWH as to how long this punishment

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[52] See Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints," 414.

[53] Andersen's translation. See *Habakkuk*, 135. This verse has a number of translation difficulties. I follow Andersen's translation and his rationale. Though רוּחַ is a feminine noun, there are enough similes used to describe Babylon in 1:8–9 (leopards, wolves, eagles, "gather like sand") to warrant the attribution of רוּחַ to the Chaldeans despite its feminine gender. See Andersen's justification in *Habakkuk,* 158–65. Cf. similar conclusions in Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 42–46.

would continue, how long they would be subjected to Chaldean domination, and when the Chaldeans would receive their just deserts.[54] And so, in his complaint, he asks a pointed question about timing: "Is he [Chaldea] then to keep on emptying his net and mercilessly killing nations forever?" (Hab 1:17, ESV).

This presenting crisis in Hab 1:2–17 contributes to the intention and problem of the מַשָּׂא genre through the specific form of complaint. The complaint form is common in wisdom literature, especially when it touches theodicy. The book of Habakkuk likewise stands in the tradition of theodicy, specifically the skeptical wisdom literature (e.g., Job, Asaph in Psalm 73).[55] In 2:1, Habakkuk ascends his watchtower and looks out to see what YHWH will say to him in response to his complaints about this ambiguous revelation. [56] It is important to note that Habakkuk expects to be disabused of his skewed interpretation of Babylon's ascendency and YHWH's actions as noted in the last phrase of 2:1: וּמָה אָשִׁיב עַל־תּוֹכַחְתִּי ("and what [or "how"] I will answer concerning my rebuke").[57] YHWH responds in 2:2–20.

The Assertion in Hab 2:2–20

In chapter 3 of this work, I will argue that the vision promised by YHWH (2:2–3) is to be identified with the "woe" oracles in 2:6b–20. For now, I assume those conclusions. YHWH's assertion concerning his involvement in Judah's particular historical situation is seen in the five woe oracles in which the proud and arrogant one experiences a reversal of fortunes. For example, whereas the proud and arrogant one made many debtors, he will be spoil for them (2:7). Whereas the proud and arrogant one

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[54] Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Alternative Approach," 222.

[55] Gowan, "Habakkuk and Wisdom," 158.

[56] Floyd has identified this as the genre of the sentinel report (*Wächterruf*). See Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 648. He defines it as "the kind of speech by which a sentinel keeping watch over a group advises them or their leaders of developments concerning the common welfare."

[57] A detailed analysis of the translation of אָשִׁיב and its significance in 2:1 will be dealt with in chapter 3 of this work. Here, I assume the conclusions of that analysis.

plundered many nations, he will be plundered by the same (2:8). The earth will be filled

with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea (2:14) and the

LORD's cup of wrath will come full circle to him (2:16).

The oracles register additional forms and genres. Chaldea is never specifically

mentioned, as in 1:5–11, so it is overly simplistic to designate this section as a prophecy

of disaster against a nation. The genre of the woe oracles is reproof speech in the vein of

wisdom literature[58] and the particular form in which they are structured is likely that of

the mock funeral dirge in which the oppressor's reversal of fortunes is celebrated by the

oppressed.[59] Though the vision is from YHWH, its taunts (מְשָׁלִים, 2:6) are put into the

mouths of the oppressed nations. They rebuke the wickedness, injustice, and oppression

of the arrogant one while ultimately vindicating the righteous one who lives by his

faithfulness. This is why the righteous one waits for the manifestation of the vision, even

though it tarries (2:3). He does not judge by what he sees, the success of the Chaldeans,

but by the wisdom that YHWH reveals. While the Chaldeans are the specific type or

iteration of Habakkuk's problem, the underlying problem is the incongruity between the

oppressor's injustice and wickedness and YHWH's character. This is why the woe

oracles take on a more general character. The function of the Chaldeans within the book

is to serve as a cautionary tale, or the basis of a lesson on wise living.[60]

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[58] Donald E. Gowan points out that key words used in Habakkuk are more than twice as likely to occur in wisdom literature (i.e., Job, Qoheleth, Proverbs, Psalms 1, 34, 37, 49, 73, 112, 119, 127). He specifically has in mind the following words: אָוֶן (Hab 1:3, 3:7), חָמָס (1:2, 3, 9, 2:8, 2:17[x2]), עָמָל (1:3, 13), שֹׁד (1:3, 2:17), רִיב (1:3), מָדוֹן (1:3), רָשָׁע (1:4, 13, 3:13), רָע (1:13, 2:9[x2], 15), בגד (1:13, 2:5). See Gowan, "Habakkuk and Wisdom," 160. For a more recent treatment of the connections between Habakkuk and wisdom literature, see Prinsloo, "Life for the Righteous, Doom for the Wicked."

[59] See Richard J. Clifford, "Use of Hôy in the Prophets," *CBQ* 28, no. 4 (October 1966): 458–64. Clifford has shown that the earliest use (circa 918 BC) of הוֹי (1 Kgs 13:20) in the Hebrew Bible was a cry of funeral lamentation. He traces its use, particularly its syntactic use, in the pre-exilic through the exilic prophets. He concludes that הוֹי develops from a funeral lament to a curse formula with a few exceptions. See also, Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 59–60.

[60] Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language," 203.

The Clarification of the Assertion

The assertion in the woe oracles clarifies the two ambiguities of the previous revelation. First, though YHWH had indeed sovereignly raised up the Chaldeans to accomplish his purposes of judgment on Judah, he is now destroying their power because they abused the imperial role he formerly assigned to them.[61] As Floyd says, it has been "ordered in the nature of things that some nations will dominate others, but it does not necessarily follow that YHWH legitimizes every bullying oppressor."[62] Thus, YHWH's purpose in rousing the Chaldeans has been correctional, his integrity, holiness, and justice may be maintained, and the people have cause to trust in him. Second, the assertion of the woes also clarifies the ambiguity of YHWH's timing. Though Habakkuk did not see any signs of Chaldea's power depleting, YHWH prompts the prophet, in 2:2–3, to publish the vision and make it known for, "still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end–it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay" (ESV). This assures Habakkuk that YHWH's rousing of the Chaldeans is temporary and uncharacteristic. YHWH is not "silent" (1:13). תּוֹרָה will not always be paralyzed and מִשְׁפָּט will eventually go forth effectively (cf. 1:4) but the people of God must wait for it.[63]

The Directive for Prophet and People

The prophet is directed to write down the vision (2:4–20), which has clarified the ambiguous implications of the previous revelation, and this vision is the basis for the people's response. The clarion call for the people of God is that though Chaldea is "puffed up and not upright within him, the righteous shall live by his faith" (2:4). YHWH had already set in motion the historical process by which the righteous ones would be freed from the unjust oppression of Chaldea, and it is incumbent on Judah to trust in and

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[61] Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints," 414–15.

[62] Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints," 406.

[63] The effectiveness of תּוֹרָה and מִשְׁפָּט is implied throughout the woes. For example, the *lex talionis* principle (Exod 21:24) is seen in Hab 2:8. The Babylonians had plundered, now they will be plundered by those they oppressed.

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wait upon that announcement.

The Anticipation of Chapter 3 in the מַשָּׂא

Thus far, I have shown that although Hab 1–2 contains disparate forms and genres (prayer of complaint [1:2–17], sentinel report [2:1], vision report and woes [2:2–20]), they are nonetheless subsumed under the macrostructure of the מַשָּׂא. Once again, the genre of מַשָּׂא is constituted by its intention and the problem(s) it addresses, not by the sub-forms or sub-genres it includes. The intention here is to disambiguate an ambiguous revelation and come away with directives for the people. The generic character of the מַשָּׂא anticipates Hab 3 in two ways.

First, the assertion of YHWH's involvement in history is made in the woe section of Hab 2. This assertion clarifies the problematic ambiguities of the previous revelation and serves as a basis for directives for the people. The first directive is found in 2:4, "the righteous shall live by his faith." This directive is personified by Habakkuk in 3:16–19b. Though Babylon will "sweep by like the wind, move on, and be held guilty" (1:11), no timeline is given. The prophet's act of faith in petitioning YHWH to renew his mighty works of old in the coming days (3:2), in waiting for the day of judgment to come upon his enemies (3:16c), and in rejoicing in the God of his strength despite the devastating agricultural effects of captivity (3:17, 18), is precisely the kind of faith that is to be exemplified by Judah. Like Habakkuk, the people must view this מַשָּׂא as a true מַשָּׂא and join it with faith.

Second, the conclusion of the woes of Hab 2 is that "the LORD is in his holy temple (בְּהֵיכַל קָדְשׁוֹ); let all the earth keep silence (הַס) before him" (ESV). This directive for holy reverence serves as an appropriate interlude before a psalm is sung in worship to YHWH. Though the prophet's connection to the cult will be discussed below, suffice it to say that a prophet may certainly function in a cultic capacity without necessarily being a cult prophet. The liturgical notations in chapter 3 certainly give the impression that the

chapter was sung in worship. Furthermore, in three of its six occurrences (Hab 2:20, Zeph 1:7 and Zech 2:17) the formula הס מפני יהוה, "keep silence before YHWH," appears immediately prior to a theophany.[64] The theophanic scenes described in the inset hymns (3:3–15) establish this connection and pattern. I now give a brief form-critical analysis of the form and genre of Hab 3 in order to show how it is distinct from the מַשָּׂא of Hab 1–2 and yet responds to it.

The Form of Habakkuk 3

Though the superscription of 3:1 designates the chapter as a תְּפִלָּה ("prayer"), the eclectic mixture of forms, genres, and liturgical notations[65] within the chapter challenge this simple designation. The chapter may be structured as follows: superscription (3:1), petition (3:2), first inset hymn (3:3–7), second inset hymn (3:8–15),[66] an affirmation of trust (3:16–19b), and a colophon (3:19c). The two inset hymns are distinguished by verbal forms and content. Habakkuk 3:3–7 begins with the march of God (אֱלוֹהַּ and קָדוֹשׁ) in 3:3, from the South, and continues in v. 5 with pestilence (דֶּבֶר) and plague (רֶשֶׁף) which accompany him. The effects upon nature also accompany his march (3:6). Third person verbal forms and pronominal suffixes dominate up to 3:6e. Though 3:7 shifts to a first-person verbal form (רָאִיתִי), the geographical terms in 3ab and 7bc indicate the interrelatedness of the section.[67] The whole section is a description of YHWH, in the third person, marching from the Southeast.

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[64] Humbert, *Problèmes*, 28; Cf. Watts, "Psalmody in Prophecy," 211. The theophany following Zeph 1:7 concerns the Day of the LORD where judgment is distributed against Judah while the theophany following Zech 2:17 depicts the judgment (vindication) of Joshua the High Priest.

[65] The liturgical notations are the superscription of 3:1: תְּפִלָּה לַחֲבַקּוּק הַנָּבִיא עַל שִׁגְיֹנוֹת ("A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth"), the three uses of סלה (3:3, 9, 13), and the colophon in 3:19b: לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹתָי ("for the choirmaster: upon my stringed instruments").

[66] Throughout this work, I will use "inset hymn" and "inset poem" interchangeably.

[67] G. T. M. Prinsloo, "Reading Habakkuk 3 in Its Literary Context: A Worthwhile Exercise or Futile Attempt?," *JSem* 11 (2002): 99. The reference to a first-person ocular phenomenon clearly clashes with the auditory trajectory announced by Habakkuk in 3:2. Thus, 3:7 must refer to the poet in the source hymn, of which Habakkuk is quoting. See Steven S. Tuell, "The Psalm in Habakkuk 3," in *Partners with God: Theological and Critical Readings of the Bible in Honor of Marvin A. Sweeney*, ed. Shelley L.

In Hab 3:8–15, the designation for deity shifts from אֱלֹוהַ and קָדֹושׁ (3:3) to יהוה (3:8) and the section is marked by verbal forms and pronominal suffixes in the second person. Habakkuk 3:8–15 is further distinguished from 3:3–7 because it designates the reason for YHWH's march, namely, to come for the salvation of his people (3:13). The third- and second-person singular verbal forms of the inset hymns (referring to YHWH) are contrasted by the first-person singular verbal forms in 3:2 and 16–19 (referring to the prophet). Habakkuk 3:2 and 16–19 function as a literary framework for the inset hymns. On both sides of the framework, the prophet hears (שׁמע, 3:2 and 16) of the work of YHWH and responds in various forms of fear (ירא in 3:2 and רגז [x2], and צלל in 3:16) mixed with resting and waiting (see 3:16c, 18–19).[68]

A Cultic Connection?

Some classify Hab 3 as a complaint/lament on cultic grounds. They claim that Habakkuk was a cultic prophet who had an official position in the religious community such as priest or temple singer. As a cultic prophet, he would intercede on behalf of the people with God in a time of calamity. Robertson goes so far as to say that in chapter 3, Habakkuk functioned as a "covenantal mediator" who had the "responsibility of offering intercession on behalf of the people."[69] If it could be demonstrated that Habakkuk was a cultic prophet, the original-inclusion of a psalm in chapter 3, despite its generic disparity with chapters 1–2, would fit nicely since one would expect a cultic prophet to incorporate liturgical notes into a psalm. While Gunkel probed the initial connection between prophets and the cult,[70] Mowinckel picked up on this cue and developed it in a more

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Birdsong and Serg Frolov (Claremont: Claremont Press, 2017), 268.

[68] See Theodore Hiebert, "The Use of Inclusion in Habakkuk 3," in *Directions in Biblical Hebrew Poetry* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1987), 119–40.

[69] Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 215. As evidence of prophets as covenant mediators he cites Gen 20:7, Exod 32:11–14, Isa 63:15, Jer 14:7–9.

[70] Hermann Gunkel, "Nahum 1," *ZAW* 13 (1893): 223–24.

robust manner in the book of Jeremiah.[71] Since these studies, views have ranged from

cautious judgment to a full-fledged cultic interpretation of the prophets.[72] Jörg Jeremias's

investigation of cultic prophecy in the late monarchy concluded that Habakkuk is the

foremost canonical example of the cultic prophet.[73] Some take Hab 3 to be a communal

psalm of lament prepared by Habakkuk which, together with the rest of the book, is to be

viewed as a temple liturgy.[74] In addition to these, scholars like Jeremias have asserted

that certain psalms (e.g., 12, 14, 75, 82, 50, 81, 95) showcase cultic prophets proclaiming

the word of God to the people and interceding with God on their behalf.[75] According to

Jeremias, these forms are mirrored in the whole structure of Habakkuk 1–3. Sweeney

qualifies his view of Habakkuk's cultic role by stating that "prophets do not need to be

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[71] Sigmund Mowinckel, *Zur komposition des Buches Jeremia*, Videnskapsselskapets Sckrifter 5 (Kristiania: J. Dybwad, 1914); Cf. Aubrey R. Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel*, 2nd ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1962). Cf. Arvid S Kapelrud, "Cult and Prophetic Words," *ST* 4, no. 1 (1950): 5–12.

[72] For a summary of different views, see Gene M. Tucker, "Prophecy and Prophetic Literature," in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Gene M. Tucker and D.A. Knight (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 349. For a recent exploration of the idea of cult prophets, see Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, ed., *Prophecy and Its Cultic Dimensions* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019).

[73] Jörg Jeremias, *Kultprophetie Und Gerichtsverkündigung in Der Späten Königszeit Israels*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien Zum Alten Und Neuen Testament Bd. 35 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchener Verl, 1970). At the same time, he recognizes that additions to the book have made it even more suitable for liturgical use in the late exilic period. Cf. Tucker, "Prophecy and Prophetic Literature," 349. Cf. R. E. Clements, *One Hundred Years of Old Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 65–69; Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 188 and 191.

[74] For those who see Habakkuk as a cult prophet, see Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 2:53-73; Gary V. Smith, *The Prophets as Preachers: An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 181; Cyril J. Barber, *Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, Everyman's Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 15; Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 118–19 and 130 Patterson tends to see Habakkuk as a Levite working in the temple but cannot find the necessary evidence to prove it; Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 93, 95; J. N. Boo Heflin, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Haggai*, Bible Study Commentary (Grand Rapids: Lamplighter Books, 1985), 71–72; Humbert, *Problèmes*, 280–301. Humbert used this cultic connection as a basis to argue for the unity of the book. Theodore Ferdinand Karl Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: The Minor Prophets.* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1956), 313; Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 254, who concludes that Habakkuk was "certainly a cultic prophet at the temple in Jerusalem." Carl Friedrich Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: The Twelve Minor Prophets*, ed. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, trans. James Martin, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 49–50; Tucker, "Prophecy and Prophetic Literature," 348–50. Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 14 and 69–70.

[75] They identified sin, announced judgment, and operated mainly in rituals of lamentation during times of trouble. See Jeremias, *Kultprophetie Und Gerichtsverkündigung in Der Späten Königszeit Israels*, 150; See also Tucker, "Prophecy and Prophetic Literature," 350.

priests, but they frequently are, and their authorization to perform as such so often comes from their presence or association with a Temple."[76]

This view has the benefit of making sense of the eclectic use of genres and forms in the book and is therefore very appealing to the original-inclusion view. But such confidence is thought to be premature by many original and secondary-inclusion scholars alike since the paucity of evidence for cultic prophets is a major stumbling block.[77] Peter Jöcken even denies that later postexilic redactors had even attempted to present Habakkuk as a cultic prophet. Though cult-like forms appear in the book, there are also traditional prophetic forms such as 1:5–11, which is a threat of judgment against Israel rather than a salvation oracle. Announcing judgment against his own people could hardly describe the function of a cultic prophet.[78] Many scholars are willing to recognize the cultic and liturgical elements in the book of Habakkuk without committing to the idea that the prophet served in an official capacity in the cult.

Habakkuk 3:2 as a Form-Critical *crux interpretum*

The superscription in 3:1 designates the chapter as a prayer (תְּפִלָּה). Prayers typically contain some kind of petition. Besides the superscription therefore, the rendering of the verbs in 3:2 (תּוֹדִיעַ, חַיֵּיהוּ, and תִּזְכּוֹר) becomes the *crux interpretum* for

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[76] Sweeney, *Reading Prophetic Books*, 8.

[77] For those who deny that Habakkuk was a cult-prophet, or at least deny there is any convincing evidence, see Childs, *Introduction*, 452. Childs believes that the autobiographical shaping of the book precludes Habakkuk being a cult-prophet. Rather, "the cultic influence is to be assigned a role in an earlier stage of development in providing traditional forms, but not in constructing the final literary composition." Cf. Peter Jöcken, "War Habakuk Ein Kultprophet," in *Bausteine Biblischer Theologie: Festgabe Für G Johannes Botterweck Zum 60. Geburtstag Dargebracht von Seinen Schülern* (Cologne: Hanstein Verlag, 1977), 319–32. Though Jöcken denies that Habakkuk was a cult-prophet, he nonetheless argues that the book has a cultic background. See 421–25, 440–46, 479–81, 505–508; Willem VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word: An Introduction to the Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 41–46; Wilhelm Rudolph, *Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja: Mit Einer Zeittafel von Alfred Jepsen*, vol. 13 pt. 3. Kommentar Zum Alten Testament (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1975), 193–94; Achtemeier, *Nahum-Malachi*, 19–21; Robert D. Haak, *Habakkuk*, VTSup 44 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 110–11. Haak believes that Habakkuk's individual complaint has implications for a wider community, but this does not constitute an official cultic role.

[78] See Peter Jöcken, *Das Buch Habakuk: Darst. d. Geschichte Seiner Krit. Erforschung Mit e. Eigenen Beurteilung*, Bonner Biblische Beiträge, Bd. 48 (Bonn: Hanstein, 1977), 224.

establishing the psalm as a prayer and its functions within the book (see table 1 below). As it stands in the MT, חַיֵּיהוּ is a Piel imperative masculine singular with a 3ms suffix. This imperative determines a jussive (modal) interpretation for the following two verbs in the tricolon (תּוֹדִיעַ, תִּזְכּוֹר) and renders three petitions: "[i]n the midst of the years, revive it, in the midst of the years, make it known, in wrath remember mercy." These petitionary elements corroborate the superscription's designation of the chapter as a prayer.

However, secondary-inclusion advocate Theodore Hiebert maintains that חַיֵּיהוּ was a corruption of the text. Only Jerome's Vulgate, which carefully follows the MT, confirms the MT's consonantal reading of חַיֵּיהוּ. He claims that the pronominal suffix הו- is suspicious because it lacks an antecedent. The antecedent cannot refer to ("your work") פָּעָלְךָ in the previous line because the verb חיה in the Piel form elsewhere takes living things as direct objects whereas פָּעָלְךָ is an inanimate object.

Looking to the LXX for answers, he notes that the Greek translators nominalized חיה with ζῴων "living beings" rather than the verbalized form in the MT, and treated the previous word, שנים, as the numeral "two" (δύο) rather than as the plural noun "years." Though he thinks that the Greek translation cannot be original since it destroys the poetic parallelism of the tricolon, he believes that it is closer to the original than the MT. Hiebert argues that the *Vorlage* was חיית but the translator mistook it for חיות due to the common graphic confusion of ו/י, and translated it as δύο ζῴων.[79] Thus, Hiebert emends חייהו to חיית, the Piel *qatal* 2ms form of חיה and renders it: "through the years you sustained life…"[80]

Hiebert's emendations are misleading at best. The verb חיה can and does take inanimate objects, as in 1 Chron 11:8 and Neh 3:34 [ET 4:2] where they refer to stone structures. Emanuel Tov notes that a different LXX reading does not necessitate a

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[79] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 13. He cites Ezek 1:5, 13, 15 and 3:13 as examples.

[80] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 4.

different *Vorlage* since translators sometimes disregarded suffixes, prefixes, or letters of the root and often dealt freely with components of the Hebrew.[81] David Cleaver-Bartholomew suggests that the LXX translator divided the MT's חייהו into יהו ("they will be") and חי ("a living thing"). The translator rendered יהו rather freely with γνωσθήσῃ ("you will be known") for stylistic and contextual reasons.[82]

Joshua L. Harper suggests another possibility. The LXX has read שָׁנַיִם חַיִּים where the MT has שָׁנִים חַיֵּיהוּ. The translator may have graphically confused הו with ם such that חיים was read as a masculine plural or dual.[83] Either one of these suggestions is more plausible than Hiebert's and allows the consonantal text (חייהו) to stand as the original. If this is the case, the author prefaces the citation of the inset hymns with a petition that the Lord would "revive" or even "recreate" his works "in the midst of the years." These petitionary elements corroborate that Hab 3 was a prayer of lament and fit well within the context of the book.

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[81] See *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, Jerusalem Biblical Studies 3 (Jerusalem: Simor, 1981), 247.

[82] David Cleaver-Bartholomew, "One Text, Two Interpretations: Habakkuk OG and MT Compared," *BIOSCS* 42 (2009): 8. Cf. Dominique Barthélemy and A. R. Hulst, eds., *CTAT3*, cxlv–clvii who posits a common *Vorlage* for MT and OG Habakkuk. Cf. George E. Howard, "To the Reader of the Twelve Prophets," in Albert Pietersma, ed., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint, and Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title: The Psalms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 779.

[83] So, Joshua L. Harper, *Responding to a Puzzled Scribe: The Barberini Version of Habakkuk 3 Analysed in the Light of the Other Greek Versions*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 608 (London, England: T. & T. Clark, 2015), 142–43; Johann Lachmann, *Das buch Habbakuk: eine textkritische Studie* (Aussig, Germany: Selbstverlag des verfasser, 1980), 65–66; Tov gives several examples of this confusion in Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 232.

Table 1. Comparison of Habakkuk 3:2 in the MT, LXX, and Barberini

MT	*LXX*	*Barb*[84]
יְהוָה שָׁמַעְתִּי שִׁמְעֲךָ יָרֵאתִי יְהוָה פָּעָלְךָ בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים חַיֵּיהוּ בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים תּוֹדִיעַ בְּרֹגֶז רַחֵם תִּזְכּוֹר	κύριε, εἰσακήκοα τὴν ἀκοήν σου καὶ ἐφοβήθην, κατενόησα τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ ἐξέστην. ἐν μέσῳ δύο ζῴων γνωσθήσῃ ἐν τῷ ἐγγίζειν τὰ ἔτη ἐπιγνωσθήσῃ ἐν τῷ παρεῖναι τὸν καιρὸν ἀναδειχθήσῃ ἐν τῷ ταραχθῆναι τὴν ψυχήν μου ἐν ὀργῇ ἐλέους μνησθήσῃ	Κύριε, εἰσακήκοα τὴν ἀκοήν σου καὶ εὐλαβήθην, κύριε, κατενόησα τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ ἐξέστην. ἐν μέσῳ δύο ζῴων γνωσθήσῃ ἐν τῷ ἐγγίζειν τὰ ἔτη ἐπιγνωσθήσῃ ἐν τῷ παρεῖναι τὸν καιρὸν ἀναδειχθήσῃ ἐν τῷ ταραχθῆναι τὴν ψυχήν μου ἐν ὀργῇ ἐλέους μνησθήσῃ
O LORD, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O LORD, do I fear. In the midst of the years, revive it; in the midst of the years, make it known. In wrath, remember mercy…	Lord, I have heard the report of what you did, and I feared; I saw your works, and I was amazed. In the midst of the two living creatures, you will be known; when the years draw near you will be acknowledged; when the appointed time is come, you will be revealed; when my soul is troubled, in wrath you will remember mercy…	Lord, I have heard the report of what you did, and I was reverent; Lord, I saw your works, and I was amazed. In the midst of the two living creatures, you will be known; when the years draw near you will be acknowledged; when the appointed time is come, you will be revealed; when my soul is troubled, in wrath you will remember mercy…

Deciphering the Form of a Maverick Psalm

Oskar Dangl rightly notes that "the genre definition of [chapter 3] as a whole

seems to depend on whether dominant significance is attributed to the framework section

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[84] The Medieval Barberini Text (Barb) is a non-LXX Greek translation of Habakkuk 3 alone. "Barberini" is so named because of its occurrence in the Barberini Codex, MS Barberinus Gr. 549 in the Vatican Library (Holmes and Parsons no. 86). See Edwin Marshall Good, "Barberini Greek Version of Habakkuk 3," *VT* 9, no. 1 (January 1959): 11. "The version is contained in five MSS, four of which also present the LXX text. The exception is V (Codex Venetus, H-P 23), which gives only Barb., though in a form which shows considerable adaptation to LXX. The other four are minuscules, H-P 62, 86, 147, and 407. All of the MSS are of medieval date, V being eighth-century, 407 ninth-century, 86 ninth- or tenth-century, 62 eleventh-century, and 147 twelfth-century. The four minuscules give the Barb. text first and follow it with the LXX text," (See Good, "Barberini," 11).

(3:2, 16–19) or to the inset hymn section (3:3–7, 8–15).[85] Working with Gunkel's

categorization of psalms, Humbert recognized that Habakkuk 3 contains elements of both

complaint/lament and hymn.[86] The subsequent discussion in the secondary literature has

tended to emphasize one of these two aspects of the text over the other.[87] So for example,

emphasizing the lament elements, some take Hab 3 to be a *Klagepsalm* (psalm of

lament),[88] sung either as an official cultic liturgy[89] or an unofficial imitation of a cultic

liturgy.[90] Those who classify the chapter as a lament face the problem of incorporating

the unusually large amount of hymnic material into a complaint, which is highly

uncommon in the HB.

On the other hand, emphasizing the mythic themes of divine combat against

the forces of cosmic chaos in the inset hymns (3:3-15), others see it as a song of triumph

or a victory hymn.[91] Theodore Hiebert, in particular, argued that the two hymns were

premonarchic, subsequently preserved in the royal cult, and later taken up by apocalyptic

visionary scribes in the postexilic period and appended to the book of Habakkuk. The

hymns were reinterpreted as a celebration of God's eschatological victory over his

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[85] Dangl, "Habakkuk in Recent Research," 147.

[86] See Hermann Gunkel, *The Psalms: A Form-Critical Introduction*, Facet Books 19 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967); Humbert, *Problèmes*, 24–28.

[87] Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 152.

[88] For example, see Margulis, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 437–38; Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 155; Mowinckel, "Zum Psalm Des Habakuk," 7; Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 130. There is confusion in the secondary literature between "lament" and "complaint." The two terms are often conflated. I will use "complaint" and "lament" interchangeably in this work.

[89] For representative views, see Peter Jöcken, *Das Buch Habakuk*, 358–74, 416–20, 451–79, 501–05.

[90] See Jöcken, *Das Buch Habakuk,* 421–25, 440–46, 479–81, 505–08.

[91] See William A. Irwin, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," *JNES* 1 (1942): 10–40; Umberto Cassuto, "Chapter III of Habakkuk and the Ras Shamra Texts," in *Biblical and Oriental Studies: Bible and Ancient Oriental Texts*, trans. Israel Abrahams, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Magnus, 1975), 3–15; Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 1–2. Hiebert calls it a hymn of victory, *God of My Victory*, 1. Claus Westermann notes that a "song of victory" was Israel's early form of celebrating a victorious battle over their enemies (e.g., Judg 5; 16:23ff, Pss 118:15ff; [149?]; Deut 31, Exod 15, etc.) whereas a "victory hymn" replaced the song of victory in later times (e.g., 1 Macc 13:48–51; 2 Macc 3:30 and 2 Chron 20:26). See Claus Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, trans. Keith R. Crim and Richard N. Soulen (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 90–91.

enemies. It is understandable why Hiebert identifies Hab 3 as a victory hymn. The inset

hymns dominate the chapter and are therefore disproportionate to the chapter's complaint

elements (if not ignored or emended away). Of the 19 verses in the chapter, thirteen are

taken up with hymnic material.[92]

However, the classification of Hab 3 as a victory hymn seems overly narrow.

As Michael Floyd has pointed out, a divine warrior victory hymn genre has not been

sufficiently established.[93] But even if one granted the existence of such a genre, Hab 3

does not meet the principal criterion proposed for it.[94] Instead of defining the genre in

terms of a conventional literary form with a typical structure, Hiebert, for example, points

out a cluster of mythic motifs as determinative in identifying the hymn of triumph

genre.[95] However, similar motif clusters are seen in a wide variety of quite heterogeneous

texts (e.g., Ps 114, the royal complaint in Ps 89, the annalistic account of the victory of

Rameses II at Kadesh,[96] and the Ugaritic mythic accounts of Baal's exploits).[97] Floyd

adroitly comments, "[c]ommon content does not necessarily entail a common form."[98]

The elements of complaint are virtually all in the framework section: (1) address to

YHWH (3:2a), (2) complaint (or description of trouble, 3:2b and 16b-17), (3) request for

help (3:2a), (4) affirmation of trust in God (3:16b, 18-19), and (5) a vow to praise God

(3:18-19). Though the inset hymns disproportionately outnumber the elements of

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[92] Avishur contrasts the disproportionate combination of hymnic and lament elements in Hab 3 with more proportionate examples in the Psalms. "In Ps 74, which contains 23 verses, the hymn cited is six verses long (12-17). Ps 77, which contains 21 verses, has a hymn of eight verses (14-21), while in Ps 89, which contains 53 verses, the hymn is only fourteen verses long (4-19)," See Avishur, "Habakkuk 3," 113–14.

[93] In the critiques which follow I am indebted to Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 152–57.

[94] Floyd, *Minor Prophets*,153.

[95] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 118–20.

[96] See Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 5.

[97] See Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 147–57. Cf. Mark S. Smith, ed., *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, VTSup 114 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 29–40.

[98] Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 154.

complaint, it is nonetheless the elements of complaint which are structurally dominant in the sense that they frame the way in which the inset hymns are to be understood.[99] Habakkuk 3 is not the only place where hymnic material outside the Psalter has been incorporated into prophetic texts (e.g., Amos 4:13; 5:8; 9:5-6; Jonah 2).[100] Watts is correct in noting that "Hebrew authors felt free to mingle different literary genres and thus create rich and new compositions."[101]

The superscription in 3:1 likewise points toward a psalm of lament. The title תְּפִלָּה ("prayer"), though a generic term, is sometimes used as a title for psalms of lament which petition God for deliverance.[102] The only other use of the term שִׁגָּיוֹן occurs in Ps 7:1 which bears the standard marks of a lament psalm. While the editors of *HALOT* note that the "etymology and exact meaning [of שִׁגְיֹנוֹת] are unknown," they nonetheless recognize that it is a technical term for a specific type of cultic song.[103] Further, the cognate Akkadian term *šigû* has been shown to refer to "lament" or even "song of lament."[104] Thus, Hab 3 is best viewed as a prayer of lament which petitions YHWH to renew his works of old (3:2), and then cites those works in two inset hymns (3:3–15).

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[99] Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 155.

[100] Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 259.

[101] Watts, "Psalmody in Prophecy," 222. Cf. Thompson, "Prayer, Oracle and Theophany," 33–53, who says that "the combination and arrangement of [oracles, laments and psalmic genres] into one work makes Habakkuk…unique [and]…something of [a] 'maverick' prophecy in the Old Testament" (50). Cf. Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 127–29.

[102] E.g., Pss 17:1, 86:1; 90:1, 102:1, 142:1. See Sweeney, "Structure," 78.

[103] See *HALOT,* s.v. "שגינות."

[104] For those who see *šigû* as the Akkadian cognate of שִׁגָּיוֹן, and accordingly classify Hab 3 as a *Klagepsalm,* see Sigmund Mowinckel, *Psalmenstudien*, Videnskapsselskapets Skrifter 4 (Kristiania: J. Dybwad, 1921), 7; Humbert, *Problèmes*, 25; Adam Falkenstein and Wolfram von Soden, eds., *Sumerische Und Akkadische Hymnen Und Gebete* (Zürich: Artemis-Verlag, 1953), 44–46. Cf. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalmen*, Biblischer Kommentar, 15 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1966), xlii; Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 130; For a dissenting opinion, see M. J. Seux, "Šiggayon-Šigu?," in *Mélanges Bibliques et Orientaux En l'honneur de M. Mathias Delcor*, ed. M. Delcor et. al., Alter Orient Und Altes Testament 215 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Butzon & Bercker, 1985), 419–38. Cf. Avishur, "Habakkuk 3," 112.

Implications for the Disparate Forms Argument

Three conclusions follow from this form-critical assessment of Habakkuk. First, as the superscriptions indicate, Hab 1–2 is a מַשָּׂא and functions as a separate generic unit from the תְּפִלָּה of Hab 3. Accordingly, one should not expect the same typicalities (genre, form, structure, intention, etc.) of a מַשָּׂא to be present in the תְּפִלָּה of Hab 3. While both Hab 1–2 and 3 involve complaints, the intention of the respective complaints is different in each case. The complaint in Hab 1 is controlled by the מַשָּׂא macrostructure. The intention is to seek clarification about a previous revelation. The prayer of complaint in Hab 3 is the response of faith to that clarification. This answers the secondary-inclusion argument of disparate genres between Hab 1–2 and 3. Instead of seeking uniformity in form between Hab 1–2 and 3, they should give greater attention to intention and diversity.[105] The secondary-inclusion advocate's common dismissal of the superscription's generic classification does not answer the more pressing question of why the ancient community felt compelled to affix the label to the book.

Second, I have stated throughout this chapter that Habakkuk was something of a maverick in how he blended different genres and forms.[106] However, given the above analysis of the genre of מַשָּׂא, the "maverick" label needs to be modified a bit. Since the מַשָּׂא is a type of prophetic discourse principally exercised by its intention rather than its genres and forms, a plethora of sub-genres and sub-forms are actually expected in the genre in order to achieve its rhetorical purpose of reinterpretation.[107] Since this is precisely what the book of Habakkuk displays, it goes to show that the prophet was not as maverick as many have thought. In fact, his use of the מַשָּׂא genre was quite standard.

Third, this still points up a challenge for the original-inclusion position.

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[105] Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 227.

[106] For a similar assessment, see Watts, "Psalmody in Prophecy," 222. Cf. Thompson, "Prayer, Oracle and Theophany." 50; Cf. Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 127–29.

[107] Floyd, "Maśśāʾ in Isaiah," 15, who says, "[a]lthough these three elements [assertion, clarification, directive] can take various forms and be configured in different ways, they work together to the same rhetorical end, that is, reinterpretation."

Recognizing a generic distinction between the two sections (Hab 1–2 and 3) still begs the separate question regarding the connection between these two sections. The answer is the very intention that Habakkuk gives in 2:1. As a result of the prophet's complaint about the ambiguity of a previous revelation (1:2–17), he looks out to see what YHWH will say to him (2:1). YHWH's answer is given in the woe oracles of chapter 2. But then Habakkuk says that he will respond to YHWH's "reproof" (תוכחת) in 2:1. Embedded in the very genre and structure of the מַשָּׂא is an anticipation of the prophet's response to YHWH (2:1). In chapter 3 of this work, I will show that nothing in Hab 1–2 resembles the prophet's response. Thus, the only possible identification of the prophet's response must be found in Hab 3.

CHAPTER 3

VISION AND RESPONSE IN HABAKKUK:
THE INTENTION OF HABAKKUK AS AN
ANTICIPATION OF CHAPTER 3

Chapter 2 of this work concluded that the two-fold macrostructure within which the book of Habakkuk is to be read and understood is the מַשָּׂא (1:1) and תְּפִלָּה (3:1). In chapter 1, Habakkuk offers a complaint which seeks clarification of a previously revealed oracle. In chapter 2, YHWH responds to Habakkuk's complaint with a revelation, which clarifies the previous revelation. The מַשָּׂא is now complete, and Habakkuk's theodicean complaint has been addressed. At this point, secondary-inclusion advocates argue that Hab 3 is, therefore, superfluous. For example, Theodore Hiebert claims that the resolution to Habakkuk's complaint has two elements, both of which are found in chapter 2: "a command to be faithful regardless of the circumstances (2:4), and an expectation of the demise of the Babylonians…(2:16–17)."[1] The literary disparity between chapters 1–2 and 3 constitutes a second challenge to the original inclusion of chapter 3. However, the claim of literary disparity fails to reckon with the identification of the promised vision (2:2–3) and its distinction from Habakkuk's response to YHWH's correction (2:1). In other words, Habakkuk anticipated that the מַשָּׂא would disabuse him of his misinformed notions about YHWH's purposes. Assuming that he would move from disorientation to reorientation, he intended to personally respond to YHWH's correction. Therefore, when YHWH's vision and Habakkuk's response are identified and distinguished, it will become apparent that Habakkuk's response is nowhere seen in chapter 2. Accordingly, one should expect his response in chapter 3.

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[1] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 135, 142–49.

I will demonstrate this thesis first by clarifying Habakkuk's anticipation of YHWH's vision and his intention to respond from 2:1. Second, I propose a threefold heuristic for identifying the vision, and show why three proposed pericopes fail to meet these criteria (Hab 1:5–11, 2:4–5, and 3:3–15). Finally, I show how 2:4–20 best fit the vision's heuristic and highlight some literary features from Hab 3 which show that it is a response *to this vision*.

Habakkuk's Anticipation and Intention

In Hab 2:1, which serves as a transition between Habakkuk's complaint and YHWH's response, the prophet offers a sign-posting of what he intends to do in the rest of the book:

I will take up my stand at my watch, and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my rebuke.	עַל־מִשְׁמַרְתִּי אֶעֱמֹדָה וְאֶתְיַצְּבָה עַל־מָצוֹר וַאֲצַפֶּה לִרְאוֹת מַה־יְדַבֶּר־בִּי וּמָה אָשִׁיב עַל־תּוֹכַחְתִּי

The identification of what YHWH will say to him (i.e., the vision) and Habakkuk's intention to respond are two of the most overlooked features of the book when discussing the question of Hab 3's original inclusion.[2] This sign-posting tells readers what they should expect in the rest of the book. The oversight of this text's significance in the secondary literature may stem from a text-critical problem.

Some take אָשִׁיב to be a textual corruption merely because it is not synonymously parallel to the preceding expression (וּמָה אָשִׁיב עַל־תּוֹכַחְתִּי/מַה־יְדַבֶּר־בִּי). Karl Budde sought to solve the difficulty by emending the verb to a passive יוּשַׁב.[3] Julius Wellhausen suggested that the repetition of מָה ("what") required an emendation of אָשִׁיב,

[2] While a few commentaries and articles risk a guess at its identification, few seem to view the identification of the vision as an important datum for answering the question of chapter 3's original inclusion. The only exception to this lacuna is Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk." But even Moller does not discuss the vision's relevance for the original inclusion of chapter 3.

[3] Karl Budde, "Zum Text von Habakuk, Kap 1 Und 2," *Orientalische Literaturzeitung* 34 (1931): 410.

"I will return," to יָשִׁיב, "he will return," referring to YHWH.[4] But Wellhausen's suggestion makes the thought unnecessarily redundant. Habakkuk 2:1 is not poetry, in which parallelism would be necessary or even expected (i.e., יָשִׁיב//וְדָבָּר). Furthermore, one needs to resist the temptation of letting a desire for synonymous parallelism drive speculative emendations. The majority of manuscripts support the MT reading.[5] The Syriac alone supports Wellhausen's emendation, but it is a very late textual version and can hardly be a legitimate justification, in and of itself, to emend the MT. Thus, אָשִׁיב is Habakkuk's intention to respond to what YHWH shows him on his tower.

As mentioned in chapter 2 of this work, the book of Habakkuk contains many elements typically found in Israel's skeptical wisdom literature and the particular use of שׁוב as a "return of a spoken answer" is no exception.[6] While rare in the prophetic literature (e.g., Isa 41:28), and altogether absent in the Psalms, Habakkuk's use is similar to Job contending with YHWH and receiving an answer (Job 31:14; 40:4).[7] Most significantly, Jason T. LeCureux points out that Job 31:14, like Hab 2:1, "uses שׁוב to look past what YHWH will initially reply to the inquisitor, and…focuses on how the inquisitor will respond to YHWH's rebuke."[8] But to what is Habakkuk responding?

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[4] Julius Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten übersetzt mit Noten*, Skizzen und Vorarbeiten 5 (Berlin: Reimer, 1893), 163. This emendation is supported by the Syriac and widely accepted. See also Good, "Text and Versions," 354 fn. 1. Although the phrase ומה אשיב על־תוכחתי is not listed among the *Tiqqunei Sopherim* or "Corrections of the Scribes," some have speculated that this reading is actually a correction of the original ומה ישיב על־תוכחתי which is supported by the Syriac. As Sweeney explains, "YHWH is hardly required to answer the prophet's complaint and therefore the statement was modified so that the prophet would have to answer to YHWH concerning the complaint that he leveled against the Deity." See Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 2:470.

[5] The LXX reads "τί ἀποκριθῶ," an aorist medio/passive subjunctive, first person singular which could be rendered "what I shall answer."

[6] This particular use is in the Hiphil stem and is used 41 times in the HB. See Humbert, *Problèmes*, 144.

[7] Elihu also uses שׁוב in the Hiphil stem three times for the purpose of inviting a response (33:5, 32, 35:4).

[8] See Jason T. LeCureux, *The Thematic Unity of the Book of the Twelve* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012), 161.

Habakkuk 2:1 says that the prophet will respond עַל־תּוֹכַחְתִּי. The noun תּוֹכַחַת

may be taken in a few different ways. It is used to describe an "argument"[9] (Ps 38:14 [HB

38:15]), a "rebuke" (Ps 39:11 [HB 39:12]; Ezek 5:15), or "reproof that provides

correction for living" (Prov 1:23-25; 15:31-32).[10] If it is "argument," Habakkuk is

referring to the argument he put before YHWH in 1:12-17. If it is "rebuke," "reproof," or

"correction," then Habakkuk refers to the reproof that he anticipates YHWH will give

him for his own good. Floyd has pointed out that תּוֹכַחַת is not typically used for the kinds

of complaints represented in Hab 1:12–17, nor to complaining in general (for which, see

Job 7:13; 9:27). Rather, a term like שִׂיחַ is typically used for those kinds of complaints.

Furthermore, when the "prophet as watchman" motif is used in the prophetic literature,

there is a close connection between what the watchman sees and his subsequent

announcement or response (e.g., Isa 21:6–12, Isa 52:8, Ezek 3:17, 33:6).[11] Therefore, in

2:1, תּוֹכַחַת should be taken as "rebuke" or "correction."[12] This has significant

ramifications for what the reader should expect in the rest of the book. Since Habakkuk

expects to be rebuked, YHWH must divulge some new information which will warrant

the prophet's move from the disorientation of his present reality (chapter 1) to the

reorientation of faith and future hope in chapter 3.[13] Furthermore, this new information

from YHWH cannot be conflated with the prophet's response.

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[9] The NIV, NJB, ESV, NET and RSV have either "argument" or "complaint."

[10] Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 161. The KJV, NIV marg., NKJV, and NASB gloss it as "rebuke."

[11] "Watchman" comes from the verb צפה, which generally means "to keep watch," "reconnoiter," or "keep a look-out." See *HALOT,* s.v., "צפה." Conversely, the corrupt watchmen are those who are blind and silent in Isa 56:10. In other words, the corrupt watchman does not speak or respond to what he sees.

[12] See a similar use in Job 13:6, 23:4; Ps 38:15, 39:12, 73:14; Prov 1:23, 25, 30, 3:11, 5:12, 6:23, 10:17, 12:1, 13:18, 15:5, 10, 31, 32, 27:5, 29:1, 15; Ezek 5:15, 25:17. Its pronominal suffix is best understood as a so-called objective genitive. See Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 111.

[13] For others who see this connection, see G. T. M. Prinsloo, "From Watchtower to Holy Temple: Reading the Book of Habakkuk as a Spatial Journey," in *Constructions of Space IV: Further Developments in Examining Ancient Israel's Social Space*, ed. Mark K. George, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 569 (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 132; Janzen, "Eschatological Symbol."

Some commentators do not connect this "response" with anything else in the book. Instead, they maintain that Habakkuk intends to respond but doesn't,[14] or that he intends to respond to God's answer by comforting himself and others privately.[15] However, it would be very odd for Habakkuk to publish his intentions without fulfilling them. Andersen conjectures that YHWH's "answer" is the oracles (2:4–20) and that Habakkuk intends to take those oracles and repeat them back as the answer to the complaint he has lodged against the wicked.[16] But Habakkuk's anticipated response is more personal and reflective than a mere repetition of YHWH's answer.

Three-Fold Heuristic for Identifying the Vision

Based on Habakkuk's signposting in 2:1, which distinguishes the vision from the prophet's response, I propose the following three-fold heuristic for identifying the vision. First, the vision must include the constituent elements of a prophetic visionary report. Following Burke O. Long's classification of the prophetic visionary report, I propose the following basic constituents of a vision: (1) announcement of the vision, (2) transition, and (3) report of vision.[17] The reception of visions by prophets in the HB is diverse. Visions are sometimes seen, other times felt, and other times heard (Isa 21:2[18]). In Habakkuk's case, the vision was spoken to Habakkuk, and this is what he expected.[19]

Second, the vision must give some kind of new information and warrant for the prophet's movement from disorientation to reorientation. In other words, it must

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[14] O. Palmer Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 166–67.

[15] Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah,* 162–63.

[16] Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 194.

[17] Burke O. Long, "Reports of Visions among the Prophets," *JBL* 95, no. 3 (September 1976): 355.

[18] חָזוּת קָשָׁה הֻגַּד־לִי ("a harsh vision is declared to me").

[19] Notice that in Hab 2:1, Habakkuk says that he will "station himself on the watchtower and look out to see (לִרְאוֹת) what he will speak to me (מַה־יְדַבֶּר־בִּי)."

somehow address and solve, even if minimally, the problem of theodicy.[20] Third, the new information that warrants this movement must be evident in and drawn from the genre, structure, and flow of the book, and distinguished from Habakkuk's response. In other words, Habakkuk's sign-posting in 2:1 makes it clear that YHWH will respond to his complaints, and then from that response, Habakkuk will give his own response. Habakkuk's response is a reaction to, and expression of, what the vision has done to him. I maintain that his response is given in chapter 3.

To sum up all these points, there must be a theodicy in the progression from Habakkuk's complaint of disorientation, to YHWH's answer, to Habakkuk's reorientation of faithful trust.[21] In saying that the vision must give new information and warrant for moving from disorientation to reorientation, this does not mean that the vision must give all the reasons why YHWH sent Babylon, or why Torah was paralyzed, or why YHWH allows wicked things to happen. A theodicy does not always answer every question that the pious ask. The examples of Job and Asaph demonstrate as much. In Job's case, reorientation did not come by YHWH answering all his questions. Rather, Job moved from disorientation to reorientation through YHWH's speeches (Job 38:1–40:2; 40:6–41:34). The message of these speeches was that God has the sovereign right to do as he wills, and that Job's friends were wrong in assuming that Job's ostensible wickedness was the cause of Job's suffering.

Asaph's reorientation did not come by understanding why YHWH allows the righteous to suffer and the wicked to prosper. In fact, the pursuit of such an

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[20] In Hab 2:1, the prophet expects to be "disabused of his former attitude *by* what YHWH will say to him." See Floyd, *Minor Prophets,* 111. Habakkuk is giving YHWH the benefit of the doubt and expecting to be corrected. He assumes that this "correction" will come *via* new information which will warrant his move from disorientation to reorientation.

[21] Faith expressed in the psalter focuses on two decisive movements. The first is a move out of a settled orientation and into a season of disorientation. The second is movement from a context of disorientation to a new orientation of faith. See Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary*, Augsburg Old Testament Studies (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1984), 20.

understanding was a "wearisome task" (73:16). Rather, his reorientation came in 73:17 when he entered the sanctuary of God and discerned the "end" of the wicked in eschatological judgment (Ps 73:18–20 and 27) and the nearness of God to the righteous ones (Ps 73:23–26, 28). Likewise, I propose that the vision will move Habakkuk from disorientation to reorientation by addressing three problems: (1) YHWH's idleness and silence, (2) his timeline of tolerance, and (3) the incongruity between his holiness and justice as juxtaposed with the paralysis of Torah and instrumental use of the Babylonians.

Assessing Proposals for the Vision

Scholars generally identify the anticipated vision with one of three pericopes in the book of Habakkuk: 1:5–11, 2:4 or 4–5a, and 3:3–15.[22] This section will briefly examine these proposals in light of the proposed heuristic.

Habakkuk 1:5–11

Karl Budde was probably the first scholar to suggest that the vision promised in 2:2–3 is the coming fulfillment of the vision given in 1:5–11.[23] Budde believed that Habakkuk's complaint in chapter 1 was against the oppression of Assyria, which had frustrated the progress of King Josiah's reforms. Thus, God gives Habakkuk a vision around 715 BC assuring him that he would raise up the Chaldeans, not to punish Judah

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[22] In addition to these three options, there are two less common positions. Richard Weis argues that the vision was previously revealed but not contained in the book. According to him, 2:4–20 is an argument in support of the promise (2:3) that it will come. See Weis, "A Definition of 'Maśśā','" 165. See also p. 224 where he says, "Hab 1:2–2:20 explicitly cites, but does not quote, a previously received YHWH vision (2:2–3)." However, this is a distinction without a difference; especially since 2:2 begins with וַיַּעֲנֵנִי יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר. Furthermore, it is very difficult to conceive that Habakkuk's report of the reasons for awaiting the vision in 2:4–20 would make any sense to his readers in the absence of this "previously received YHWH vision." How are the readers to know what 2:4–20 is referring to if the previously received YHWH vision was not also communicated to them in the body of Habakkuk's work? A handful of scholars simply suggest that the whole book is the vision. For example, see Markus Witte, "Orakel und Gebete im Buch Habakuk," in *Orakel und Gebete: interdisziplinäre Studien zur Sprache der Religion in Ägypten, Vorderasien und Griechenland in hellenistischer Zeit*, ed. Markus Witte and Johannes Friedrich Diehl (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 76. Of course, this view fails to distinguish between the מַשָּׂא, which no doubt contains the vision, and the תְּפִלָּה, which responds to the vision.

[23] Karl Budde, "Habakuk," *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 84 (1930): 139–47; Budde, "Zum Text von Habakuk, Kap 1 Und 2," 409–11; Cf. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, 418–19; Simon J. De Vries, "The Book of Habakkuk," in *The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Charles M. Laymon (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), 496.

but to deliver her from Assyria.

Julie Moller has recently given a robust defense of Hab 1:5–11 as the vision which Habakkuk is instructed to write down in 2:2–3.[24] Unlike Budde, she argues that the vision refers to the Chaldeans rather than to Assyria. She offers three premises for identifying the vision with 1:5–11. First, there is no indication in the book that the vision must contain words of hope and assurance.[25] Second, 1:5–11 is the only vision in the book clearly given by YHWH. Third, based on her translation and interpretation of 2:3,[26] the fulfillment of the vision "began at some point in the past and persists in the current day." The Chaldeans have been raised up and have already started their campaign of violence and destruction (1:6). Some nations have already experienced it, and Judah is in their sights. Moller distinguishes between the content, delivery, and fulfillment of the vision.[27] The *content* of the vision was 1:5–11, and it had already been delivered. Habakkuk 2:3 speaks to the *fulfillment* of the vision and, therefore, one should not expect new content.

Problems with 1:5–11. One of the problems with Moller's view is that it presents YHWH as responding to Habakkuk's complaint with a command to write down the very source of consternation which precipitated Habakkuk's complaint in the first place. While Moller is correct that the text nowhere explicitly indicates that the vision must contain words of hope and encouragement, Floyd rightly points out that "the hope

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[24] Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 186. Other commentators who take this position are John Currid, *The Expectant Prophet: Habakkuk Simply Explained*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Welwyn City Garden, England: EP Books, 2009), 78–79; Walter Dietrich, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, trans. Peter Altmann, International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament (Stuttgart, Germany: Kohlhammer, 2016), 127–28.

[25] Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 184.

[26] The underlined words indicate her emendations and/or unique translations: "For still (the) vision is at the appointed time, and it breathes to the end, and it does not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it, for it will surely come, it will not delay." See Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 184–86.

[27] The *content* of the vision is the actual text or record of the vision. The *delivery* and *reception* of the vision is the moment in time when YHWH delivered the vision and Habakkuk heard or saw it. The *fulfillment* of the vision is the period of time when the circumstances foretold in the vision actually come to pass. Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 185.

of deliverance is implicit in the questions that describe Yahweh's failure to right the

situation as something temporary (vv. 2, 17) and hence essentially uncharacteristic (v.

13).[28]

Moller's theory also presents no new information, which runs contrary to

Habakkuk's expectation to receive a תּוֹכַחַת from YHWH (2:1). In her interpretation,

Habakkuk's "rebuke" was simply YHWH repeating himself. Moller's contention that 2:3

refers to the fulfillment of the vision rather than the content and delivery does not make

1:5–11 the only viable candidate for the content of the vision. One could agree with

Moller that 2:3 is speaking of the fulfillment of the vision and yet see it as a preface

before the content of the vision is actually given in vv. 4–20.[29] Furthermore, if 1:5–11 is

the vision, then Habakkuk has no confidence to expect the day of distress to come upon

"those who invade us" (i.e., Chaldea) and yet he expresses this very confidence in 3:16.

Moller recognizes this difficulty and seeks to alleviate it by emending 3:16 to say that

Habakkuk expected the "day of distress" to come upon Judah, not Babylon.[30] But this is

an unwarranted emendation.[31]

Finally, Moller's view results in a confused description of what the woe

oracles actually are within the context of the book. Since, in her view, the woes cannot be

the content of the vision, Moller claims that they *illustrate* the main point of the vision,

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[28] Michael H. Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints about the Fulfillment of Oracles in Habakkuk 1:2-17 and Jeremiah 15:10-18," *JBL* 110, no. 3 (September 1991): 406.

[29] Moller's translation of לַמּוֹעֵד as "at the appointed time" is highly questionable. The LXX has εἰς καιρὸν which indicates that the translators understood the vision to be "unto" or "toward" a time. Moller cites BDB's examples in Gen 17:21 and Exod 23:15 but these examples seem to argue against her point.

[30] Moller translates the end of 3:16 as follows: "I have rest during a day of distress, concerning the withdrawal of a people who invade us." See Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 167, 172–73.

[31] The MT of Hab 3:16 reads: אנוח ליום צרה לעלות לעם יגודנו. I take the ל on ליום to be a ל of specification, that is, "with respect to" or of time, "during/at." See Ronald J. Williams, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*, ed. John C. Beckman, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), par. 273. I take לעלות as a parallel thought: "during the going up" (to war). The ל with לעם is likewise a ל of specification meaning "direction toward." Here it refers to יגודנו, "the people who invade us" which occurs in subordination to לעם. See Williams, *Hebrew Syntax,* par. 271 and GKC, par. 119r. Cf. Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 259. See a fuller treatment of the identification of the לְעַם יְגוּדֶנּוּ in chapter 4 of this work.

namely, that the distinction between good and evil will be maintained (2:4–5).[32] Yet

Moller never gives a sustained discourse analysis of 2:4–20[33] to substantiate her claim

that the instructions for the vision (2:2–3) are distinct from what follows in vv. 4–20. Nor

does she untangle where YHWH's speech ends and another's (Habakkuk? the nations?)

begins in 2:2–20. Instead, she merely conjectures in a footnote that "Habakkuk (or

Yahweh) could be illustrating a vision (2:4) by recording the woe oracles (2:6–20), or he

could be illustrating the message (2:4) by recording a vision (2:6–20)."[34] According to

Moller's view, Habakkuk remains disoriented since there is no new information that

would move him to reorientation. Or, to put it another way, Habakkuk moves from

disorientation to reorientation without any legitimate warrant in the text. Accordingly, it

is unlikely that 1:5–11 is the vision promised in 2:2.

Habakkuk 2:4 or 4–5a

Some scholars take 2:4[35] or 2:4–5a[36] as the vision Habakkuk was to write

down on tablets.[37] Either option could conceivably fit into the vision report genre and

there is certainly new information here.[38] The idea that the "righteous shall live by faith"

speaks to the problem of the paralysis of Torah. In other words, the Deuteronomic

blessing will not come through Judah's obedience. Rather, God is doing something new

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[32] Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 139.

[33] She merely says, "the structure of the passage—especially how vv. 4, 5 and 6 relate to each other—is a complicated matter." See Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 138.

[34] Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 139 fn. 297.

[35] Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton*, 336; Bailey, "Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah," 323; John Marshall Holt, "So He May Run Who Reads It," *JBL* 83, no. 3 (September 1964): 298–302. See also, W. W. Cannon, "The Integrity of Habakkuk Chaps. 1–2," *ZAW* 43 (1925): 74.

[36] See Rudolph, *Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja*, 215. Cf. William Hugh Brownlee, "Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," *JBL* 82, no. 3 (September 1, 1963): 319–25.

[37] Other scholars tend to view 2:2b–2:5a as the vision proper and the woe oracles in 2:6b–20 as the content of the vision. See David J. Fuller, *A Discourse Analysis of Habakkuk* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 217. But this is a distinction without a difference.

[38] The use of הִנֵּה in 2:4 is especially significant. Not only is it a typical introduction to vision reports, but it also appears in the vision concerning the Chaldeans (see 1:6).

apart from the law. While either option could also give some warrant for moving Habakkuk from disorientation to reorientation, a significant question is left unanswered: Is Babylon's oppression temporary or indefinite? Will YHWH be holy and just by judging them or will they go unpunished? There is little theodicy in 2:4–5 alone. However, limiting the vision to Hab 2:4 or 4–5a should be rejected for a simpler reason, a poor translation and overly-wooden interpretation of the phrase כְּתוֹב חָזוֹן וּבָאֵר עַל־הַלֻּחוֹת לְמַעַן יָרוּץ קוֹרֵא בוֹ in Hab 2:2.

For example, W. W. Cannon attempts to interpret כְּתוֹב חָזוֹן וּבָאֵר עַל־הַלֻּחוֹת in light of similar instructions given to Isaiah. In Isa 8:1, YHWH instructs Isaiah to "take a large tablet and write on it in common characters 'Belonging to Maher-shalal-hashbaz.'" In Isa 30:7–8, Isaiah is to write, "Rahab who sits still." Cannon concludes that when Hab 2:2 is interpreted in the light of the Isaiah references, it seems to show that "prophets were in the habit of setting up in public places, tablets or plates containing short pregnant oracles, a sort of publication."[39] Habakkuk was doing something similar, writing the message on tablets and posting it in a public location for all to see and read.

There are, however, significant problems with this interpretation. First, the "large tablet" mentioned in Isa 8:1 is גִּלָּיוֹן גָּדוֹל, not הַלֻּחוֹת ("tablets") as seen in Hab 2:2. The problem is that we really don't know what a גִּלָּיוֹן was. It is used only in Isa 8:1 and 3:23. The LXX translates גִּלָּיוֹן גָּדוֹל in Isa 8:1 with τόμον καινοῦ μεγάλου, which probably means something like "a volume of a great *book*."[40] The LXX translates הַגִּלְיֹנִים in Isa

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[39] See Cannon, "The Integrity of Habakkuk Chaps. 1–2," 74. Building on Cannon's theory, William Brownlee maintains that vv. 4–5a should be taken together as the vision because the particles וְאַף כִּי at the beginning of v. 5 are conjunctive. He notes that v. 5b, beginning with אֲשֶׁר הִרְחִיב כִּשְׁאוֹל, is required as part of the introduction to the taunt song which follows, for "all these" (2:6a) refers to the "nations" and the "peoples" (2:5b). Consequently, he divides v. 5 and includes only 5a with 2:4. See Brownlee, "Placarded Revelation," 321–22. However, Brownlee recognizes that setting 2:5b off as the introduction of the taunt song with the relative pronoun אשר, is a very odd way to begin an oracle. Thus, he revocalizes אֲשֶׁר to אַשּׁוּר (Assyria) and translates 2:5b as "Assyria has enlarged his appetite as Sheol, and he, as death cannot be sated, he has gathered to himself all nations, and has amassed for himself all peoples." There is, of course, no textual reason to justify Brownlee's revocalization apart from his programmatic theory that Assyria is the "wicked one" of Habakkuk 1–2 against which YHWH sent Babylon to judge.

[40] τόμος is used in 1 Esd 6:22, Isa 8:1 and Heb 4:12. Liddell-Scott gloss it as "part of a book, a tome, volume." See Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. and augm.

3:23 with τὰ βύσσινα, which probably means "fine linen garments" or possibly "fine transparent garments."[41] In Isa 30:8, YHWH instructs Isaiah to write the inscription ("Rahab who sits still") on a tablet (לוּחַ), but also tells him to inscribe it in a book (סֵפֶר). But Habakkuk was instructed to write (כתב) the vision upon more than one tablet (עַל־הַלֻּחוֹת).[42] Thus, it is illegitimate to interpret the meaning of Hab 2:2 in the light of Isa 8:1 and 30:7–8 since they refer to different things. It is not a one-to-one correspondence.

More to the point, however, if YHWH's instructions to write down the vision are to be taken literally and the intended vision is to be identified with either 2:4 or 2:4–5a, then one tablet would certainly suffice. And yet YHWH instructs Habakkuk to write the message on "tablets." Meredith Kline has pointed out that the two tablets placed in the ark of the covenant were actually two separate copies of the Ten Commandments, rather than five commandments on one tablet and the other five on another.[43] More than likely, the Ten Commandments may have taken up both sides of each tablet. The total number of words in the Ten Commandments, as recorded in Exod 20:2–17 (if the prologue of 20:2 is included) includes a total of 165 Hebrew words. There are 183 words in the introductory words and the woe oracles (Hab 2:4–20) combined. Since YHWH mentioned "tablets," it is reasonable to expect all 183 words of Hab 2:4–20 to fit on two or more tablets. Thus, it is unnecessary, and unlikely, that the intended vision should be limited to 2:4 or 2:4–5a.

Another problem with identifying the vision with 2:4 or 2:4–5a is a misunderstanding of the phrase לְמַעַן יָרוּץ קוֹרֵא בוֹ in 2:2. In general, many commentators

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(Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1996), s.v., "τόμος."

[41] See BDAG, s.v., "βύσσινος." Various English translators of the MT show that the meaning of the word is notoriously difficult to translate: "the mirrors," (ESV and NIV), "the glasses," (KJV), "hand mirrors," (NASB and ASV), "garments," (HCSB and NET).

[42] We do not know what material these tablets were made of, but as Andersen suggests, the "most eligible candidates are clay, stone, and wood with probability increasing in that order." See Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 204.

[43] Meredith G. Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1997), 113–30. Or four commandments on one and six commandments on the other.

have taken Hab 2:2 in a literal sense to either mean "that one may read it at a glance" or "that one may read it on the run."[44] The problem with these translations is that they assume that the main verb is the participle קוֹרֵא rather than the *yiqtol* יָרוּץ. This is highly unlikely. The main verb of this brief sentence is "run" (יָרוּץ) rather than "read" (קוֹרֵא).[45] In other words, the "reading" is circumstantial and prior to the "running," which is the main purpose of the clause.[46] Given the syntax of the line, it would be very unusual to have the main verb יָרוּץ functioning as an adverb to highlight a particular feature of קוֹרֵא.[47] Typically, when two verbs are joined together such that one communicates the manner in which the other verb carries out its action, the two verbs are either both finite or a finite verb is joined with an infinitive construct.[48] The line should be translated "Write the vision and engrave it clearly on tablets so that the one who reads it may run."[49]

But is יָרוּץ to be interpreted literally or figuratively? The literal approach creates an awkward scenario where either the prophet or the people passing by are in a

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[44] For example, Brownlee explains that Hab 2:2 "seems to imply a rather brief text which is written large so that it can be easily and quickly read," Brownlee, "Placarded Revelation," 320. For a recent summary of translations and interpretations, see Thomas Renz, "Reading and Running: Notes on the History of Translating the Final Clause of Hab 2:2," *VT* 69, no. 3 (2019): 435–46.

[45] The participle קוֹרֵא functions as a title; "the one who reads." See Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 204.

[46] Unless קוֹרֵא is used as a noun, which is unlikely, יָרוּץ does not happen prior to the reading.

[47] For example, the CHSB has "so one may *easily* read it." The NET has: "so the one who announces it may read it *easily*." Renz sees a possible parallel in Amos 8:14: "They who swear (הַנִּשְׁבָּעִים) by the guilt of Samaria, who say (וְאָמְרוּ), 'By the life of your God/gods, Dan!' and 'By the life of the way of Beersheba!' They will fall and not get up again." "But," he says, "this would require that the two citations form the content of the swearing indicated by the participle which is not how the text is usually understood." See Renz, "Reading and Running," 445; Renz notes that, among others, Douglas K. Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, Word Biblical Themes 31 (Dallas: Word Pub, 1989), 386–87; Shalom M. Paul, *Amos: A Commentary on the Book of Amos*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 268–72, "all believe that Amos refers to three oaths. In other words, Amos does not make a general reference to swearing an oath followed by two specific examples."

[48] I could not find an example where a participle is used in a verbal hendiadys. See Williams, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*, 90. Williams says, "[v]erbal coordination is a combination of two verbs such that the first verb indicates the manner in which the second verb happens. Renz, "Reading and Running," 445–46; F. H. Polak, "Hebrew *hāyāh*: Etymology, Bleaching, and Discourse Structure," in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation: Studies Presented to Professor Eep Talstra on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Wido Th. van Peursen and Janet Dyk, Studia Semitica Neerlandica 57 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 379–98. See especially 396–97.

[49] For a similar translation and rationale, see Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language," 190.

hurry and need to read something large and legible. A more suitable interpretation is a figurative understanding of יָרוּץ.[50] For example, the two ideas of "running" and "prophesying" (or "reciting") are attributed to prophets in Jer 23:21: "I did not send the prophets, yet they ran (רָצוּ); I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied." The synonymous parallelism connects "running" with "prophesying." Thus, קוֹרֵא would be rendered as something of a town crier, "someone who publicly reads or announces the text inscribed on the tablets."[51] The problem with this approach, however, is that it only addresses the prophet Habakkuk or anyone who would deliver the message. But those addressed seem to be whomever receives and believes the message of the vision (see Hab 2:4). The switch in verbal patterns in 2:2 from two imperatives directed toward Habakkuk (כְּתוֹב and וּבָאֵר) to a 3ms *yiqtol* (יָרוּץ) and a masc. sing. participle (קוֹרֵא) signal this shift.

Working with a poetical-literary reading of the main verb יָרוּץ, John Marshall Holt has suggested that יָרוּץ has a widened semantic domain that has less to do with perambulation or even heraldry, and more to do with how one is to live their life. In Hab 2:2 then, יָרוּץ is speaking of the one who wisely heeds the admonition of the vision. For example, in Prov 4:12, the son who follows the wise father's instruction is promised a way free of the stumbling blocks of wickedness as he lives his life under God's guidance and wisdom: "When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; and if you run (וְאִם־תָּרוּץ), you will not stumble."[52] Boyle adopts Holt's approach and translates the line: "so that one may live well on reading it."[53] Given the wisdom dimension of Habakkuk in general, and Hab 2 in particular, the sapiential use of יָרוּץ makes more sense. Therefore, Hab 2:2

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[50] BDB also takes it figuratively but the figure is of "reading smoothly." See BDB, s.v. "רוץ." Cf. *HALOT*, "to read fluently," s.v. "רוץ." So also, Holladay, s.v. "רוץ."

[51] J. Schaper, "On Writing and Reciting in Jeremiah 36," in *Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah*, ed. Hans M. Barstad and Reinhard Gregor Kratz, BZAW 388 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 142.

[52] See John Marshall Holt, "So He May Run Who Reads It," *JBL* 83, no. 3 (September 1964): 298–302. Holt marshals a number of texts which use רוץ in this figurative manner. For example, see Ps 119:32, Isa 40:31, Ps 147:15 and Jer 8:6.

[53] Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language," 190.

does not require that one limit the message to 2:4 or 2:4–5a. Doing so would actually curtail the message that would enable one to "run" in the way of its content.

Habakkuk 3

Finally, some have identified the vision with chapter 3, specifically, the two inset hymns in 3:3–15.[54] Georg Fohrer took chapters 1 and 2 as a unit which functioned as a prophetic imitation of a cultic liturgy, containing two cycles of lament and oracle. Chapter 3 was part of this unit because it contained the vision promised to the prophet in 2:1-3.[55] Specifically, Fohrer suggests that chapter 3 serves the role of replacing the missing vision of chapter 2. Childs believes such a view misunderstands chapter 3's present role and unnecessarily introduces confusion.[56]

The principal problem with identifying the vision with Hab 3 is that the inset hymns are not presented as a direct vision or theophany to the prophet Habakkuk.[57] Though there is one reference to *seeing* (רָאִיתִי) "the tents of Cushan" in 3:7, that verse is actually part of the source hymn itself rather than Habakkuk's own personal statement.[58]

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[54] Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 81–82, sees a connection between chapter 3 and the central section of Hab 2:1-4. He takes chapter 3 to be the vision announced in Hab 2:1-4; Sweeney, "Structure," 80, who called chapter 3 a "convincing conclusion to the book as a whole;" Artur Weiser, *The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development* (New York: Association Press, 1961), 260–63; Johnson, "Paralysis," 259; Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 213. Robertson is ambiguous regarding the content of the vision. He says that the vision itself is 2:4-5 and is "expanded" in the woes against the Chaldeans in 2:5-20 but is not limited to these two things. He seems to imply that chapter 3 also involves a facet of the vision. Julius A. Bewer maintains that "vision" must be interpreted literally and the only vision in the book is the theophany of chapter 3. He takes 2:1–3 to be the introduction to the vision that was previously given. Since that previously given vision was the vision of chapter 3, he inserts chapter 3 between chapters 1 and 2. In his view, the present location of the "vision" was occasioned by its independent circulation and later incorporation in a book of psalms from which it was eventually extracted and restored to the book of Habakkuk. See *The Literature of the Old Testament*, 3rd ed., Records of Civilization, Sources, and Studies 5 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 140–42; See also Brownlee, "Placarded Revelation," 320.

[55] Fohrer and Sellin, *Introduction,* 454.

[56] Childs, *Introduction*, 452.

[57] Westermann distinguishes between epiphany and theophany and classifies Hab 3 as an epiphany. See Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 98–99. He includes the following elements of an epiphany: "(1) God's coming from, or his going forth from…(2) cosmic disturbances which accompany this coming of God. (3) God's (wrathful) intervention for or against…."

[58] So also, Tuell, "The Psalm in Habakkuk 3," 268.

Furthermore, Habakkuk does not see YHWH in 3:7, he only sees the impact of the terrors of YHWH's coming on the tents of Cushan and Midian.[59] What the inset hymns were originally, and how Habakkuk is using them are two different things. I take the inset hymns to be two archaic victory hymns which highlight the past acts of YHWH's salvation of his people. The inset hymns are what Habakkuk has "heard" (שָׁמַעְתִּי, 3:2). He asks that YHWH "renew" those mighty works in the coming years, and then he cites those mighty works in vv. 3–15. Judging by the grammatical features, syntax, and similarity of these verses to other archaic texts (e.g., Judges 5; Deut 32; Exod 15; 1 Sam 2:1–10), it is likely that their provenance may be dated back to the time of Moses. So, the hymns are not a vision which Habakkuk sees, but an ancient and poetic account which he cites for the purpose of seeing them revived.

Secondly, the framework section (3:2, 16–19c) shows that Hab 3 is the prophet's response to how the vision has affected him. The purpose of citing the ancient hymns is to remind himself, and his hearers, of how God has saved Israel in the past and petition YHWH to do the same kind of salvation in the future regarding Babylon. Then in vv. 16–18, Habakkuk responds to these marvelous acts in faith and signals his trust in YHWH to sustain Israel, in the meantime, as they quietly wait (3:16). So, Habakkuk is responding by showing how the new information granted by YHWH's revelation of the vision (2:4–20) has corrected his perception of YHWH's actions, and has given him warrant for a reorientation of trust. YHWH had commanded two things in the instructions to the vision: the righteous shall live by faith, and they are to wait for the fulfillment of the vision even though it tarries (2:3–4). Habakkuk's response is exactly that. He trusts in YHWH and waits for the day of distress to come upon proud Babylon (3:16–19c).

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[59] Floyd comments, "The narrative description here is perhaps visionary in a very general sense, i.e., imaginative, and it is based on prophetic intuitions regarding the significance of what the prophet has observed. The prophet's observations themselves, however, are not based on any experience that is visionary in the strict sense of the word, as is explicitly the case in some other prophetic texts (e.g., Isa 6; Amos 7:1–3; Zech 2:8–17)," See Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 153.

In conclusion, identifying the vision with 1:5–11 does not give new information or warrant for Habakkuk to move from disorientation to reorientation since the vision would be the very problem that caused the prophet's consternation. Identifying the vision with Hab 2:4 or 2:4–5a assumes an overly literal reading of the instructions to write down the vision and does not give warrant for Habakkuk's assurance of Babylon's demise in 3:16. Identifying the vision with Hab 3 fails to recognize that the new information and warrant has already been obtained by Habakkuk, and he is responding to it through a confession of faith. Thus, the only section in Habakkuk which adequately meets all the requirements which Habakkuk himself anticipates in 2:1 is 2:2–20.

Habakkuk 2:2–20 as the Vision

Careful attention to the unique rhetorical features of Hab 2:2–20 reveals that these verses are the vision Habakkuk anticipated.

Heuristic #1—Elements of the Vision

The constituent elements of a vision are seen in YHWH's instructions to the prophet and what follows in 2:4. First, the vision is anticipated by Habakkuk in 2:1 and announced by YHWH in vv. 2–3. The introductory words in 2:2 clearly set this section off as the words of YHWH: וַיַּעֲנֵנִי יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר. YHWH has begun to speak to the prophet, and he mentions the vision two times in 2:2–3. It makes good sense to conclude that what follows is the vision. Second, the transition to the vision itself comes with הִנֵּה (2:4a) just as it did with the previously revealed vision in 1:6. So while vv. 2–3 are the words of YHWH, they are the instructions for Habakkuk, and not necessarily the vision itself. The vision itself is given from 2:4–20. So, at a basic level, we can say that the basic components of a vision are present in chapter 2.

Heuristic #2—Vision and
Response Distinct

The unique rhetorical features of Hab 2 reveal that vv. 2–20 are all the words

of YHWH and therefore distinct from Habakkuk's response. Robinson and Horst argue that either 2:4 or 2:5 marks the end of YHWH's speech.[60] But 2:4 can only be identified as the end of YHWH's speech if something other than the MT of 2:5 is read. וְאַף כִּי ("moreover") in 2:5[61] clearly joins it to 2:4. All the versions agree with the MT with the exception of the Syriac.[62] So, I take it that YHWH is continuing his speech through 2:5. The only other possible break in narration comes at 2:6a and 2:6b.

The deictic shift. In 2:6a, YHWH asks a rhetorical question, "Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say…" (ESV). "All these" (אֵלֶּה כֻלָּם) refers to the oppressed "nations" and "peoples" of 2:5. In this rhetorical flourish, a deictic shift is signaled where YHWH places mock funeral dirges into the mouths of the oppressed nations.[63] Brown and Levinson have referred to this rhetorical device as "point-of-view distancing."[64] It is not simply YHWH who condemns the actions of the arrogant one. The charge of violence and injustice has been broadened to a wider audience in order to increase the condemnation. In keeping with the wisdom dimension of this "mock funeral dirge" which celebrates the reversal of fortunes of the oppressor, Boyle notes that focus on the victims and their interaction with the oppressor makes the argument less "theological" and more "sapiential." "Earthly

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[60] Robinson and Horst, *Die Zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, 179–80; Elliger, *Das Buch Der Zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, 2:38–39 and 44, fn. 1; Rudolph, *Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja*, 216.

[61] "Yea also," (KJV); "Furthermore," (NASB); "Indeed," (NET, NIV); "Yea, moreover," (ASV, JPS).

[62] Weis "A Definition of 'Maśśā'," 162, fn. 80. Weis suggests that the Syriac translators were confused by the MT and sought to simplify it.

[63] As noted in chapter 2 of this work, the woes are "mock funeral songs" which celebrate and ridicule, rather than mourn, the falling of a great one See Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 61. Citing the example of Isa 14:4–21, he says that the mock funeral song uses the "theme of reversal of fortune as a cause for glee rather than mourning, emphasizing the former power and prestige of the man as a way of gloating over his present weakness."

[64] Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 204. A similar phenomenon is seen in Isa 14:4–6.

retribution speaks both to pagans and the godly."[65] It also aides in broadening the charges from the narrow iteration of Babylon, to all instances of wickedness, violence, and oppression. In other words, the oracles address the heart of the theodicean challenge.

There is yet another subtle shift in 2:6b from the 3mp verbal form יִשְׂאוּ ("take up") following אֵלֶּה כֻלָּם, to the 3ms וְיֹאמַר ("and say"). The shift from plural to singular is probably distributive for "all these" (אֵלֶּה כֻלָּם).[66] In other words, there is no justification to posit a break in narration between 2:6a and b. The speaker has been YHWH since 2:2. He continues to speak as he declares how the nations will mock the arrogant one. In a broad sense, the whole vision of YHWH (announcement and content) is given from 2:2 through 2:20. The absence of any discourse marker that would signal a change of speaker or even a break between vv. 5 and 6 confirms this.[67] Verses 2–3 serve as instructions for the prophet regarding the recording and dissemination of the vision and the vision itself runs from vv. 4–20. Thus, Hab 2:2–20 are the words of YHWH and Habakkuk's response is nowhere recorded. This, of necessity, means that chapter 3 is Habakkuk's response.

Heuristic #3—New Information and Warrant for Theodicy

Finally, Hab 2:2–20 contains new information which warrants the prophet's move from disorientation to reorientation. Habakkuk's main complaint in chapter 1 was that he could not square God's timeline, justice, holiness, silence, and purposes with raising up the Chaldeans and the paralysis of Torah. The oracles of 2:4–20 give resolution to this problem in a few different ways. First, whereas Habakkuk questioned

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[65] Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language," 204.

[66] Since the LXX has ἐροῦσιν (Future Active Indicative, 3pl), and 1QpHab has ויומרו (Qal *yiqtol* 3mp), BHS suggest an emendation of ויאמרו.

[67] Weis, "A Definition of 'Maśśā','" 162–63. Christopher Lortie suggests that Hab 2:20 is a "sign of [Habakkuk's] contrition and acknowledgement that YHWH is in control;" in other words, he suggests that 2:20 is Habakkuk's words and not YHWH's. See Lortie, *Mighty to Save*, 153. But there is no stylistic or rhetorical break in the text to indicate a change in speaker. The only break in style or variation comes at 3:1. Without a clear contextual or stylistic break, it is best to see it as part of the oracles delivered by YHWH.

the timeline of YHWH's use of the Chaldeans (1:2, 17), the oracles assure Habakkuk that Chaldea's ascendency is temporary, and they will be judged for abusing the power YHWH had sovereignly given them. Though the actual fulfillment of the woes may tarry, it will eventually come (2:3).

Second, regarding the juxtaposition of YHWH's justice and raising up the Chaldeans, the woes assure Habakkuk that the plunderer will be plundered (2:8). Though the arrogant one marched through the breadth of the earth exalting himself (1:6–7) and spreading violence (2:8, 17), the knowledge of the glory of the Lord would fill the earth as the waters cover the sea (2:14). Habakkuk's hunch that YHWH's purpose in raising up Chaldea was merely corrective (1:12), has proven to be true. As Floyd comments, "[i]t may be ordered in the nature of things that some nations will dominate others, but it does not necessarily follow that Yahweh legitimizes every bullying oppressor."[68] The judgment upon Babylon (and wickedness in general) will come and the faithful are to wait for it. It may not come in the time that the righteous expect or desire, that is, it may tarry, but its fulfillment will surely come (2:3).

Third, regarding YHWH's purposes, the woes assure the prophet that YHWH is willing and able to save his people despite his use of the Chaldeans. In chapter 1, Habakkuk complained that YHWH seemed unwilling to save (1:13). He questioned whether or not God's people would die (1:12). Through the oracle, however, the prophet is assured that though the wicked one oppresses and scoffs at kings, the righteous will live by faith (2:4). That is, the righteous will be saved despite what they presently see. Fourth, regarding the prophet's complaint about YHWH's silence in the face of violence (1:2, 3, 13), the woes assure the prophet that YHWH speaks in a vision (2:2) and the nations join their voices to condemn the violence and oppression of the arrogant one (2:6). Furthermore, the oracles remind Habakkuk that it is the false gods of the Chaldeans

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[68] See Floyd, "Prophetic Complaints," 406.

who are "speechless idols" (2:18), "a silent stone" in which there is no breath at all (2:19). The whole earth will be silent in reverence to YHWH because he is in his holy temple (2:20). The whole revelation of YHWH from 2:2–20 answers Habakkuk's complaints by giving new information and a warrant for moving from disorientation to reorientation.

Finally, the paralysis of the law will not be overcome by the obedience of the righteous ones (i.e., Judah), but by their faith (2:4) in a righteous one to come. In other words, God is doing something new. YHWH instructs Habakkuk to write the vision on "tablets" (2:2). This word is most commonly used in reference to the Decalogue upon which the covenant was written. Duane Garrett notes that "the implied connection between YHWH's command to Moses to prepare 'tablets' for the decalogue and his command to Habakkuk to write the vision on the tablets…suggests that YHWH is giving Habakkuk a new Torah."[69] What was inscribed is that "the righteous shall live by his faith." It was this text (Hab 2:4) which Paul and the author to the Hebrews used to refer to the one who places their faith in Christ for salvation, the answer to God's righteous demands. Here we see New Covenant foreshadowing of another, and greater, righteous one who would fulfill the Deuteronomic demands of the covenant and procure the covenant blessings for his people who believe in him. But the redemptive-historical coming of that righteous one awaits a future time (Gal 4:4).

Habakkuk 3 as Response

Having identified the vision with Hab 2:4–20 and shown how it warrants the prophet's move from disorientation to reorientation, this section will now demonstrate how Hab 3 is the prophet's response of reorientation as promised in his sign-posting on

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[69] Duane A. Garrett, "The Twelve: Habakkuk to Malachi," (Unpublished, 2014), 10. My Doktorvater Dr. Duane Garrett kindly granted me a section of his unpublished forthcoming book.

his watchtower in 2:1.[70] There are, at least, four ways in which chapter 3 is a response to the plight that the vision has resolved.

Responding with a Petition

        The declaration that YHWH is in his holy temple and that all the earth should be silent (2:20) effectually ends the מַשָּׂא and prepares the way for a worshipful prayer of response. The reversal of fortunes that the arrogant one will experience are to find their fulfillment at the "appointed time" (לַמּוֹעֵד) and unto the "end" (לַקֵּץ, 2:3). The context of the vision indicates a great reckoning when the scales of justice will be balanced at the end of the age, and this is how קֵץ is often used.[71] The vision of woe oracles has announced the retribution that will come upon the arrogant one. This coming retribution conjures up in Habakkuk's mind the many ways that YHWH has redeemed his people in the past from violent oppressors.

        Accordingly, in 3:2, Habakkuk says that he has heard a report of YHWH and פָּעָלְךָ ("his work") and consequently he fears. Though פֹּעַל is used in 1:5 to refer to YHWH's work of raising up the Chaldeans, this cannot be what Habakkuk refers to in 3:2. Habakkuk is asking that YHWH "revive" the work and surely the prophet is not asking YHWH to send the Chaldeans again for judgment against his people. More to the point, Habakkuk cites the inset hymns in vv. 3–15 as the very thing he petitions YHWH to revive, and the hymns do not depict a wicked entity attacking God's people. Instead, they depict YHWH attacking the enemies of his people and going out for the salvation of his anointed (3:13). Others say that פָּעָלְךָ refers to the work of judgment just announced in

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[70] For a similar interpretation, see Floyd, *Minor Prophets,* 83.

[71] In connection with a noun, קֵץ refers to the "furthest," or "last." See *HALOT*, s.v., "קֵץ, I." Following Pardee, I take וְיָפֵחַ, in 2:3, as a verbal adjective functioning as a noun rather than from the verb פ(ו)ח, "to blow" (see previous footnote). Connected to a noun, קֵץ likely refers to the end of the age. It is used this way in Dan 12:13 in the collocation קֵץ הַיָּמִים ("end of days"); in Dan 8:17, 11:35, 40, and 12:4, 9 in the collocation עֵת קֵץ ("time of the end"); in Dan 8:19 in the collocation מוֹעֵד קֵץ (cf. similar usage in Dan 11:27), and in Ezek 21:30, 34, and 35:5 in the collocation עֵת עֲוֺן קֵץ.

the woe oracles of 2:4–20.[72] But if this is the case, it is hard to understand the connection of the inset hymns to the rest of the chapter. It is more likely that פָּעָלְךָ refers to past concrete historical feats of redemption undertaken by YHWH for his people rather than a depiction of such works in "riddle" form (חִידָה, see Hab 2:6). A similar function of פֹּעַל is found in Ps 44:2 (44:1 HB): "O God, with our own ears, we have heard, our fathers have recounted to us the work you performed in their days, in the days of old."[73] The inset hymns are a celebration of YHWH's past redemptive feats which Habakkuk has heard and is now asking YHWH to "revive" (חַיֵּיהוּ).[74] Habakkuk's additional request that YHWH make known (תּוֹדִיעַ) his work in the midst of the years means that the prophet is petitioning YHWH to revive and make known those mighty acts of days past in the prophet's own days.

Why does the prophet fear? In 3:2, Habakkuk states that he "fears" YHWH's work, and further petitions YHWH to remember to have compassion in his wrath (בְּרֹגֶז רַחֵם תִּזְכּוֹר). This fear continues in the confession of trust in vv. 16–19c. But if Habakkuk is remembering YHWH's past deeds of salvation and asking him to revive them in the coming days against his enemy, why would the prophet be fearful and expect wrath from YHWH? There are a few reasons for his fear. First, if I am correct that the book of Habakkuk was written sometime after the first deportation in 597 BC and before the final deportation and destruction of the temple in 586/87 BC, then Habakkuk has already begun to see the fulfillment of YHWH's wrath upon Judah. No doubt he knew that after the first deportation, the Chaldeans would be returning to finish what they started. So, on the one hand, Habakkuk knows that wrath is still coming, thus his assumption of additional wrath from YHWH in 3:2. It is in this coming wrath that Habakkuk requests

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[72] So, J. Gerald Janzen, "Eschatological Symbol," 409.

[73] See also Psalm 77:6–21 and 143:5.

[74] "It" here would refer to YHWH's work (פָּעָלְךָ). So also, Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 276.

that YHWH be compassionate and not cause Judah to bear the full strength of YHWH's wrath.

Secondly, as Roberts says, there is a "disturbing ambiguity in the concept of God's work."[75] It was originally YHWH's פֹּעַל which brought Chaldea's oppression to Judah (Hab 1:5–11). Roberts further explains:

> [t]he older prophetic tradition also knew of God's strange work (מַעֲשֶׂה) of judgment on his own people (Isa 28:21), and only an impious fool would want to hurry that along (Isa 5:19; cf. Jer 17:15–16)….[Habakkuk] wants a renewal of God's work, but his early work of deliverance as in the exodus and conquest, not that of his more recent work against Jerusalem (Hab 1:5; cf. Isa 10:12).[76]

In other words, there is almost always collateral damage when YHWH comes to redeem his people.

Response to the Timeline

A second way in which Hab 3 functions as the prophet's response is seen in how he intentionally petitions YHWH to revive his work in the near future. The phrase בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים is used twice in 3:2 and has long been a challenging phrase to translate and understand.[77] Exegetes feel compelled to emend the phrase since it is used only in Hab 3:2, seems unintelligible, and is significantly different than the LXX version which reads: ἐν μέσῳ δύο ζῴων γνωσθήσῃ. However, as noted in chapter 2 of this work, the difference in the LXX is probably due to an incorrect division of the word חייהו in 3:2. David Cleaver-Bartholomew suggests that the LXX translator divided the MT's חייהו into יהו ("they will be") and חי ("a living thing"). The translator rendered יהו rather freely with γνωσθήσῃ ("you will be known") for stylistic and contextual reasons.[78] Joshua L. Harper

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[75] Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 150–51.

[76] Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 150–51. A comparable response is given by Isaiah in 21:3–4.

[77] For a summary of the various text-critical and interpretational challenges surrounding this phrase, see Paul E. Copeland, "The Midst of the Years," in *Text as Pretext: Essays in Honour of Robert Davidson*, ed. Robert P. Carroll and Robert Davidson, JSOTSup 138 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992), 91–105; Aron Pinker, "'Captors' for 'Years' in Habakkuk 3:2," *RB* 112 (2005): 20–26.

[78] Cleaver-Bartholomew, "One Text with Two Interpretations," 8. Cf. Dominique Barthélemy

suggests another possibility. The LXX has read שָׁנִים חַיִּים where the MT has שָׁנִים חַיֵּיהוּ.
The translator may have graphically confused הו with ם such that חיים was read as a
masculine plural or dual.[79]

Five translations are typically proffered: (1) "in the midst of (the) years,"[80] (2)
"in (our) midst, once more,"[81] (3) "in the battle of yore,"[82] (4) "when the years draw
near,"[83] and (5) "when a twin-life looms."[84] Options 2, 3, and 5 are not very compelling,
and there is certainly no compelling reason to emend the consonantal text. Options 1 and
4 have the most promise. Andersen notes that the problem with "in the midst of the
years" is that the noun קֶרֶב is never used as a preposition for time.[85] However, the verb
קרב is often used in the HB to depict the approach of a distinct event in time (e.g., Gen
27:41, 47:29, Deut 31:14, 1 Kgs 2:1, Lam 4:18).[86]

Roberts suggests that בְּקֶרֶב be revocalized to the infinitive construct בִּקְרֹב and
that the phrase be translated "as the years draw near."[87] The LXX and Barb have a triple
reading for the MT's בקרב. As already mentioned, the first mistaken reading was ἐν μέσῳ
δύο ζῴων γνωσθήσῃ. But the second and third readings are: ἐν τῷ ἐγγίζειν τὰ ἔτη
ἐπιγνωσθήσῃ ἐν τῷ παρεῖναι τὸν καιρὸν ("when the years draw near, when the set time

minimaland A. R. Hulst, eds., *CTAT3*, cxlv–clvii, who posits a common *Vorlage* for MT and OG Habakkuk. Cf.
George E. Howard, *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, 779.

[79] So Harper, *Responding to a Puzzled Scribe*, 142–43; Lachmann, *Das buch Habbakuk*, 65–
66; Tov gives several examples of this confusion in Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 232.

[80] Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 215.

[81] Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 273.

[82] Michael L. Barré, "Habakkuk 3:2: Translation in Context," *CBQ* 50, no. 2 (April 1, 1988):
184–97.

[83] Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 128.

[84] Margulis, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 412–14. See interaction with these five prominent views,
see Moller, "The Vision in Habakkuk," 135–52.

[85] See Andersen, *Habakkuk,* 278.

[86] It is most often used with "days" (from יום).

[87] Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 128. See also, Humbert, *Problèmes*, 59;
Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 13.

arrives"). In other words, Habakkuk is petitioning YHWH to revive his works of old in Habakkuk's day. Habakkuk 1:2, 17, and 2:3 all question the timeline of Chaldea's ascendency; whether it was to be temporary or indefinite. The woe oracles declared that Chaldea would be punished, but not when. YHWH merely said that the fulfillment of the vision would come, even if it tarried: "For yet the vision is unto an appointed time, a witness[88] unto the end, it will not lie, if it delays, wait for it, for it will surely come and it will not hesitate" (2:3). Habakkuk's petition to revive and make known YHWH's works "as the years draw near" picks up on and responds to YHWH's timing in 2:3. In other words, Habakkuk expresses his trust that the vision will come by petitioning YHWH to revive it in his own days.

Responding by Example

A third way in which Hab 3 is the prophet's response to the vision is the exemplified trust he shows, particularly in 3:16–19. Despite the impending fear that will set in when the Chaldeans lay siege to Jerusalem (3:16), and the devastating effects on agrarian life (3:17), Habakkuk declares that he will "quietly wait"[89] for the day of distress

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[88] ויפח is usually thought to be from √פוח meaning "to breathe" (See *HALOT*, s.v., "פוח"). 1QpHab reads יפיח, which is probably a reflection of the more usual pronunciation found, for example, in Prov 12:17, and 19:5, 9. The LXX has καὶ ἀνατελεῖ which may derive from either ויפרח, or ופרח. Here I follow Pardee in taking ויפח as ‏יפ(י)ח, a verbal adjective which functions as a noun. Pardee's research concludes that the root is יפח, and is related morphologically and semantically to Ugaritic *yāpiḥu, but the evidential links between the two languages are missing." See Dennis Pardee, "YPḤ 'Witness' in Hebrew and Ugaritic," *VT* 63 (2013): 105 and 108. Pardee also shows numerous parallels between עֵד ("witness") and יפח ("witness," e.g., Ps 27:12, Prov 12:17, 19:5, 9, 14:5, 25, and 7:19). If עוֹד were emended to עֵד in Hab 2:3, this would strengthen the case for taking ויפח as ‏יפ(י)ח. Cf. also Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 106; Haak, *Habakkuk*, 56. Philologists and lexicographers from the eleventh century to the present have derived ‏יפ(י)ח from ‏פ(ו)ח, "to blow." They just have not been able to figure out the place of the y-preformative. See Adolf Neubauer, ed., *The Book of Hebrew Roots* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1968), 565; Johann Heinrich Biesenthal and F. Lebrecht, eds., ספר השורשים לרבי דוד בן יוסף קמחי הספרד: עם הגימוקים מרבי אליהו הלוי האשכנזי, (Berlin: Impensis G. Bethge, 1847), 288.

[89] I find unsatisfactory the attempt by some scholars to read the root אנח in place of נוח. For example, Hiebert emends the text to the Niphal *yiqtol* 1 cs, אאנח (from the root אנח) and renders it with preterit force "I sighed, groaned." He explains, "the initial א could have been lost by haplography, there being two א's in sequence, and the *waw* may be understood as a vestige of late orthography once the א was lost and the verb was related to נוח." See Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 53. However, his main impetus for emending the text is that he doesn't think that such a calm state of "rest" is fitting given the context. But this is, of course, dependent upon interpretation more than textual-critical evaluation. The LXX concurs with the MT by glossing it ἀναπαύσομαι, "I will rest." The Old Latin and Vulgate both have *requiescam*.

to come upon the people who come up against us" (3:16). The assurance that a day of distress will come upon Chaldea came from the new information given in the vision, and functions as a warrant for Habakkuk's move from disorientation to reorientation. YHWH's directive that the "righteous shall live by his faith" (2:4) and Habakkuk's confession of trust are meant to show all, who would likewise believe YHWH's vision, that Habakkuk is its foremost exemplar. Furthermore, there is an intentional contrast between the "unbelief" that the people would experience when they heard of the work of God in 1:5–11 and the belief of Habakkuk, the faithful, in the promised work of God in the vision.

The matter of faith is a significant part of Habakkuk's reorientation. Part of this disorientation in Hab 1:4 was the paralysis of the law. As noted above, Habakkuk was a disillusioned Deuteronomist.[90] He expected Judah's obedience to the conditions of the law to render the blessing of tenure in the land and peace from all her enemies. But Habakkuk has received the message from 2:4. The salvation of God's people will not be by their obedience but by faith in one who is to come. It is interesting to note that though Hab 3 mentions significant events in the life of Israel (Exodus and conquest), the giving of the law from Sinai is nowhere mentioned. Instead, Habakkuk makes much of YHWH's going out for the salvation of his anointed (מְשִׁיחֶךָ, 3:13).

Conclusion

Through careful attention to the literary features in the book of Habakkuk, I have shown that Hab 2 clarifies a previously revealed, and yet ambiguous, revelation from YHWH in Hab 1 and effectively answers the prophet's complaint about YHWH's ostensible injustice, silence, purposes, and timeline. And yet, contrary to secondary-inclusion scholars, this does not render Hab 3 superfluous. There is consistent literary continuity between Hab 1–2 and 3. The signposting of Hab 2:1 clearly demonstrates that

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[90] See page 3, fn. 3 above and pages 94–96 below.

Habakkuk ascended his watchtower to look out to see what YHWH would say to him, and how he would respond to his rebuke. YHWH's revelation to the prophet is to be identified with Hab 2:2–20. Since Habakkuk's response is nowhere recorded in those verses, Hab 3 must be his response. Finally, I showed how a handful of features from Hab 3 classify it as Habakkuk's response. If Hab 3 is not an integral and original part of the book of Habakkuk, then there is significant literary disparity in Hab 1–2. In the next chapter, I will show the literary continuity between the righteous one and the wicked one in Hab 1–2 and 3.

CHAPTER 4

DISPARATE CHARACTERS IN THE
BOOK OF HABAKKUK

In addition to the disparity in literary cohesiveness, secondary-inclusion

scholars also point to a disparity between the identity of characters in chapters 1–2 and 3.

They argue that while the first two chapters identify Chaldea, or an internal faction of

Judahites (1:2–4) and Chaldea (1:12–17) as the "wicked one," there is no specific

mention of the Chaldeans or the internal faction of Judahites in chapter 3. Instead, some

identify the enemy in chapter 3 as the dragon of chaos or other mythopoeic characters

from ancient Near Eastern culture.[1] The identity of the "wicked one" (רשׁע, 1:4, 13; 3:13)

and the "righteous one" (צדיק, 1:4, 13; 2:4) in Habakkuk has posed numerous challenges

for an overall interpretation of the book.[2] Some would even argue that one's

identification of these characters determines the approach to and interpretation of the rest

of the book.[3] Much of the confusion over the identification of these characters, as well as

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[1] For examples of those who see general mythopoeic elements borrowed from ANE culture, see Hiebert, *God of my Victory,* 134; William Irwin, "The Mythological Background of Habakkuk 3," *JNES* 15, no. 1 (January 1956): 47–50; Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 150; Michael L Barré, "Yahweh Gears up for Battle: Habakkuk 3,9a," *Biblica* 87, no. 1 (2006): 75–84; Avishur, "Habakkuk 3"; For examples of those who believe Hab 3 reflects the Hebrew counterpart to the Canaanite *Chaoskampf* motif, particularly in the Baal-Yam myth, see Cassuto, "Chapter III of Habakkuk and the Ras Shamra Texts," 11; Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 11, 15, note y; Eaton, *Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah;*, 113; For an opposing viewpoint, see David Toshio Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction: A Reappraisal of the Chaoskampf Theory in the Old Testament* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 164–81.

[2] For a summary of conjectures made by various scholars, see Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, 417–18; Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 115–119; Sweeney, "Structure," 73–77; Mason, *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel*, 81–84. For a dated and yet thorough summary of different interpretations of the righteous and the wicked, see Eduard Nielsen, "The Righteous and the Wicked in Habaqquq," *ST* 6, no. 1 (1952): 54–78.

[3] For example, see Waylon Bailey, "Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah," in *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, New American Commentary, vol. 20 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 257–58.

the perceived incongruity between chapters 1–2 and 3, results from three interpretive missteps.

First, as already described in chapter 3 of this work, an underappreciation for, or misunderstanding of, how a מַשָּׂא functions in Habakkuk, typically affects how one structures the chapters and identifies the characters. Second, the genre of theodicy, and its unique expression in Habakkuk, requires one to interpret wickedness and righteousness both generally and specifically. In other words, the identity of the wicked and the righteous can be both peculiar to Habakkuk's own situation and yet general enough to apply to every succeeding generation. Finally, chapter 3 is Habakkuk's promised response to YHWH's vision (cf. 2:1) and it functions in a unique way. While many view chapter 3 as a theophany seen by Habakkuk, which envisions the retribution coming toward Chaldea, this is only partially true. As discussed in previous chapters, chapter 3 is Habakkuk's petition that YHWH revive, in his own time, the ancient feats of redemption that YHWH accomplished on behalf of ancient Israel. This petition is a response to the vision of woes in which YHWH said that he would punish wickedness. Habakkuk's reflection on past deeds leads him to cite two ancient hymns which recount those redemptive feats. In the original setting of the hymns, the "enemies" are Israel's enemies from days past (e.g., Egypt in Exod 15, the Canaanites in the time of the Conquest, Jabin and Sisera in the days of the Judges [see Judg 4 and 5]), not Chaldea. In 3:16, however, Habakkuk seems to reference the Chaldeans as a palpable and specific iteration of wickedness in his own day (see below).

Building upon the specific function of both the מַשָּׂא (Hab 1–2) and the תְּפִלָּה (Hab 3), this chapter will argue that the "wicked" and the "righteous" characters have both a general and specific function within the book. The shifts in structure and genre within the book will, in large part, highlight when and how the prophet conceives of the characters in either general or specific terms. I will demonstrate how the characters are used in both broad and narrow ways in each chapter.

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The Wicked One in Chapter 1

Many scholars have traditionally identified the "wicked one," against whom Habakkuk complains (1:2-4), with an internal threat, namely, a faction of wicked Judean leaders whose treachery and injustice paralyzed Torah (1:4). Habakkuk 1:5-11 is then taken to be the divine answer to the complaint. YHWH is raising up the Chaldeans to "come for violence," presumably against the wicked Judean leaders. But the tension comes in 1:13 when Habakkuk complains that such instruments of judgment are evil and laments that the Chaldeans are now the wicked ones who swallow up the man more righteous than he (1:13). The more righteous ones, according to this interpretation, would be Judah, whom Habakkuk had previously identified as the wicked ones who surround the righteous in 1:4. But if God is sending the Chaldeans as judgment against the wickedness of his own people, the question is how can Habakkuk describe his own people as "more righteous" than the Babylonians (1:13)? And why does the prophet, who begged for judgment against the wicked Judeans in 1:1-4, then complain about the severity of the judgment when God announces Babylon as that judgment?[4]

Wicked as External Threat

Among scholars who find the identity of the wicked one to be incompatible with an internal threat, some suggest that Habakkuk's complaint in 1:2–4 is against an external threat. Among the many possible candidates, some scholars have identified that threat with Assyria.[5] YHWH responds in 1:5–11 that he will raise up the Chaldeans to

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[4] See Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 166. Furthermore, the oppressive situations in chapters 1–2 are different than those in chapter 3. See Stonehouse, *The Book of Habakkuk*, 122–24. Cf. Driver and Horton, *The Minor Prophets*, 59–60. In chapters 1–2, the prophet focuses on political discord and confusion, the paralysis of Torah, and the oppression of Babylon. Yet in chapter 3, none of these matters reoccur. Instead, the enemies are the nations (3:12), elements of nature (e.g., 3:8-11), and the great deep (3:10).

[5] Budde, "Zum Text von Habakuk, Kap 1 Und 2"; Budde, "Habakuk," 139–47; Fohrer and Sellin, *Introduction,* 455; Mowinckel, "Zum Psalm Des Habakuk," 17–18; Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, 419; Walter Dietrich, "Three Minor Prophets and the Major Empires: Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives on Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah," in *Perspectives on the Formation of the Book of the Twelve: Methodological Foundations, Redactional Processes, Historical Insights*, ed. Rainer Albertz, James Nogalski, and Jakob Wöhrle, BZAW 433 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 150. Dietrich identifies Assyria as the source of the complaints in both 1:2-4, and 12-17 and Babylon as Yahweh's answer to

punish this threat and, since the Chaldeans conquered Assyria, this would seem to fit. Budde, for example, moved 1:5-11 to follow 2:4. He then reads 1:1-4 and 12-17 as a consistent description of Assyrian oppression.[6]

However, there are two major problems with identifying Assyria as the wicked one. First, and most obvious, Assyria is nowhere mentioned in the text and thus cannot, without strained emendations and speculations, be identified with the wicked one. This same objection applies to scholars who identify the wicked one as Egypt,[7] the Greeks and Macedonians under Alexander the Great,[8] even Nicanor.[9] Second, in Hab 1:4, the prophet describes the dilemma in terms of the "law (תורה) being paralyzed and justice (משפט) never going forth." Both terms (תורה and משפט) are intricately bound up with Israel's legal infrastructure and her expectations of blessing and cursing (Deut 27 and 28). It would be strange for a Hebrew prophet to chastise Assyria, or any of the nations, for not abiding by a law-covenant with YHWH since they were never parties to such a covenant.[10]

Righteous and Wicked as Kings

Robert Haak is a typical example of those who seek to identify the "wicked one" and the "righteous one" with historical figures, specifically kings. Haak assigns Habakkuk's prophetic activity to the years 605–603 BCE. Against that historical

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Habakkuk's complaints about the wickedness of the Assyrians in 1:5-11.

[6] See Budde, "Zum Text von Habakuk, Kap 1 Und 2," 410.

[7] See Miloš Bič, *Trois prophètes dans un temps de ténèbres, Sophonie, Nahum, Habaquq*, Lectio divina 48 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968), 71.

[8] Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Habakuk: Text, Übersetzung Und Erklärung* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1906), 75. Duhm emends "Chaldeans" in 1:6 to "Kittim" and concludes that it refers to the Greeks under Alexander the Great. See also, Wolfram Herrmann, "Das Unerledigte Problem Des Buches Habakkuk," *VT* 51, no. 4 (2001): 496.

[9] Paul Haupt, "Eine Alttestamentliche Festliturgie Für Den Nikanortag," *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 61, no. 2 (1907): 275–97.

[10] Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 35. The Psalmist declared in Ps 147:19–20 that YHWH "proclaime[d] his words to Jacob, his statutes and judgments (וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו) to Israel. He has not done so with any other nation; they do not know his judgments (וּמִשְׁפָּטִים)."

backdrop, he insists that the righteous one must be a royal figure and identifies him with Jehoahaz.[11] Josiah was the righteous king who recovered the religious and social demands of Torah, was pro-Babylon and consequently opposed Assyria and their ally Egypt, a stance which ultimately led to his demise.

In the aftermath of Josiah's death, there were two opposing political ideologies in Judah. One party, which Haak labels the "co-existers," supported the Josianic socio-political and religious reforms and were thus pro-Babylonian. The other party, which Haak refers to as the "autonomists," opposed Babylon and were thus pro-Egyptian.[12] Josiah's son Shallum-Jehoahaz continued the pro-Babylonian policy of his father and as a result was imprisoned by Pharaoh Neco (2 Kgs 23:33). In his place, Neco placed the pro-Egyptian sympathizer Eliakim on the throne and changed his name to Jehoiakim (2 Kgs 23:34). According to Haak, Habakkuk was a pro-Babylonian sympathizer who complains and is under pressure because of the breakdown of law and order in the nation (1:4).[13] Haak identifies this breakdown with the illegitimate king Jehoiakim and consequently, the "wicked one."[14] Haak's theory is fascinating but very difficult, if not impossible to prove. Few have been persuaded by it.

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[11] See Haak, *Habakkuk*, 11–22 and 107–155.

[12] Haak, *Habakkuk,* 140–41.

[13] Haak claims that Jeremiah is also a pro-Babylonian sympathizer. See Jer 22:13ff which contains a violent oracle against Jehoiakim; Cf. Jer 26 and 36.

[14] For a similar view see J. W. Rothstein, "Ueber Habakkuk Kap. 1 U. 2," *TSK* 67 [1894]: 51–85; Simon J. De Vries, "The Book of Habakkuk," in *The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Charles M. Laymon (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), 494–97; Eduard Nielsen, "The Righteous and the Wicked," 74–78. According to Haak, Habakkuk's pro-Babylonian rhetoric is clearly seen in the oracle of 1:5–11. As God's chosen instrument of judgment, Babylon unleashes God's wrath upon the illegitimate and wicked Jehoiakim whose dwellings are not his own in the ensuing oracles of chapter 2. Chapter 3 announces Habakkuk's confidence that the rightful King, Jehoahaz, will be reinstated. See especially Hab 3:13: "you went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed one (מְשִׁיחֶךָ)." Following the final Babylonian deportation of 586/7 BCE, an anti-Babylonian reinterpretation was given to the book as a whole. See Haak, *Habakkuk*, 151–55.

Righteous and Wicked as Eschatological

Moving to the opposite end of the spectrum, Willy Staerk avoids the tensions involved in identifying the righteous and the wicked ones as either internal or external by abandoning a historical interpretation altogether. He maintains that the righteous and the wicked ones are merely eschatological descriptions of good and evil in every age.[15]

Dual Referents for Righteous and Wicked

Dangl has aptly noted, "literary-critical difficulties only arise when one attempts to relate 'the wicked one' in 1:4 and in 1:13 to the same group."[16] While recognizing the unique literary-critical challenges that the identification of the wicked and righteous ones poses, many evangelical scholars are unwilling to forfeit the concrete historical details in the book of Habakkuk to emendation, mythology, or bare eschatological symbolism.[17] Instead, they alleviate the perceived tension by assigning different referents to the righteous and the wicked in different pericopes within the book. So, for example, Baker insists that the wicked in 1:4 refers to a group within Judaea whereas 1:13 refers to the Chaldeans. Conversely, the righteous ones of 1:4 must refer to those Judeans who experienced injustice and discrimination on the part of the wicked in Judaea, while the righteous one in 1:13 is identified with Judaea as a whole which is threatened by the Chaldeans.[18] So why does Habakkuk complain about YHWH's choice of the Babylonians to punish Judah in 1:12–17? Because his original complaint in 1:1–4 was against a specific group within Judah and Habakkuk was expecting that YHWH

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[15] Willy Staerk, "Zu Habakuk 1 5—11: Geschichte Oder Mythos?" *ZAW* 51 (1933): 1–28. Cf. Wolfram Herrmann, "Das Unerledigte Problem Des Buches Habakkuk," *VT* 51, no. 4 (2001): 485–87, 495. Summarized in Jones, "The Seventh-Century Prophets," 136; Fredrik Lindström, "`I Am Rousing the Chaldeans' Regrettably? Habakkuk 1.5-11 and the End of the Prophetic Theology of History," in *The Centre and the Periphery: A European Tribute to Walter Brueggemann*, ed. J. A. Middlemas, D. J. A. Clines, and E. K. Holt (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010), 42–43; 57–58. Floyd finds this unconvincing. See *Minor Prophets,* 82.

[16] Dangl, "Habakkuk in Recent Research," 143.

[17] Pace Staerk, "Zu Habakuk 1 5—11"; Herrmann, "Das Unerledigte Problem Des Buches Habakkuk"; Lindström, "'I Am Rousing.'"

[18] See Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 127–29.

would specifically judge them. The righteous in 1:12–17 are the exception to the internal wicked faction within Judah and refer to Judah as a whole.

Identifying Characters According to the מַשָּׂא, Structure and Catch Phrases

While the dual referents interpretation seems to work on the surface, it suffers from a few problems. First, it is highly speculative. Whether or not there was an internal Judean faction which was causing lawlessness in society is very hard to demonstrate from the text itself. The book of Habakkuk is notoriously difficult to date precisely because it does not give many concrete historical details, with the exception of the Chaldeans (הכשׂדים, 1:6). Second, the dual referents interpretation fails to make sense with respect to how a מַשָּׂא functions. Specifically, it requires structuring chapter 1 as a dialogue between the prophet and YHWH. I have already shown above that the dialogue view is untenable. Accordingly, since the text itself mentions only the Chaldeans (הכשׂדים, 1:6), it is plausible to suggest that the wicked one is Chaldea throughout chapter 1.[19]

Instead of a dialogue, chapter 1 consists of the prophet's single complaint over a previously communicated revelation, which he cites in the middle of his complaint (1:5–11). But the previously communicated revelation was ambiguous enough that the people, represented by the prophet Habakkuk, sought a מַשָּׂא, a prophetic interpretation of a previous revelation. Many things needed to be clarified for the prophet and the people and that is why chapter 1 consists of so many questions.[20] Most of these questions

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[19] So also Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 54; Friedrich Giesebrecht, *Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik: nebst einer Studie über prophetische Schriftstellerei*, (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1890), 196–98; Humbert, *Problèmes*, 248–279; Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, ed. David W. Cotter, Jerome T. Walsh, and Chris Franke, vol. 2, Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 2:455. Sweeney identifies the wicked in each complaint as Babylon, see Sweeney, "Structure," 74.

[20] Hab 1:2–3 (ESV): "O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? Hab 1:12–13 (ESV): "Are you not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, you have ordained them as a judgment, and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof. You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?"

queried how YHWH's holy and just character was consistent with raising up such a wicked tyrant of a nation. But the other question was about the efficacy of the Deuteronomic promises.

Marshall D. Johnson has helpfully suggested that Habakkuk is here considering the Deuteronomic curses and blessings proffered in Deut 27 and 28. As a result of the reforms of Josiah, Habakkuk had expected that the promised rewards attached to the Deuteronomic blessings should have broken in upon Judah. Instead, YHWH gave Judah his previously communicated revelation that he was raising up the violent and destructive Chaldeans (1:5–11). The descriptive vocabulary of the dismal state of affairs in 1:2–4 speaks to the paralysis of Torah: violent and unjust oppression (חמס, 1:2 and 3), meaningless misfortune, disaster (און, 1:3), trouble (עמל, 1:3), and havoc, oppression (שׁד, 1:3). In 1:3c, the terms ריב and מדון "suggest the contention and strife which the historical realities created when juxtaposed with the promises of Torah."[21] The pairing of תורה and משׁפט in 1:4 certainly evokes juridical language.[22] Andersen suggests that the words ריב and מדון in 1:3c anticipate this juridical language.[23] In other words, ריב and מדון seem to connote a legal dispute about the meaning and fulfillment of the promises of Torah.[24] The על־כן, which introduces 1:4, indicates that the list of evils in 1:2–3 is the basis of the charge of the non-fulfillment of Torah.

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[21] Johnson, "Paralysis," 260.

[22] So Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 116.

[23] The question is whether ריב and מדון in 1:3c are to be connected with 1:3a ("Why do you make me see iniquity, and look at wretchedness and the devastation and violence that are before me? [my translation]) or with 1:4. Andersen makes a convincing case for the latter. See Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 116–18. The new beginning of discourse with וַיְהִי (1:3c) seems to support this view.

[24] The word מדון is used in Psalm 80:6 [HB, 80:7] to depict Israel as objects of contention before their laughing enemies: "You have made us an object of derision to our neighbors, and our enemies mock us" (NIV).

Some have objected that תורה is never glossed in the HB to refer to the Josianic reform movement.[25] Instead, some suggest that תורה refers to wisdom instruction,[26] divine instruction that is intended to create or maintain order in the world of creation,[27] or, when paired with משפט, to priestly rulings upon specific questions.[28] But Johnson is not claiming that the Josianic Reforms are specifically referenced here. He is simply claiming that the pairing of תורה with משפט in 1:4 draws a parallel to the Deuteronomic nexus of blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience in the Deuteronomic corpus.[29]

Johnson notes that "paralyzed" (פוג, 1:4) is an intransitive verb that refers to "being frozen or numbed, a condition of inability to function."[30] In other words, the paralysis of law does not describe how the Law was transgressed by others, but refers to a weakness or inherent failure in the law itself to reward obedience with blessing.[31] Marshall identifies four in particular: "(1) the retention of the promised land, (2) security from foreign oppressors, (3) security of the king, and (4) the continuance of the covenant and of divine חסד."[32] Therefore, Habakkuk is a disillusioned Deuteronomist and he wants

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[25] See Heath Thomas, *Habakkuk*, Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 28.

[26] Thomas, *Habakkuk*, 28.

[27] Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 2:463.

[28] Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*, 139. Nogalski references a similar use in Hag 2:11.

[29] On 265–66, Johnson shows that careful attention and obedience to תורה and משפט are prominent throughout the book of Deuteronomy as conditions by which the Deuteronomic blessings would come to Israel (e.g., Deut 5:28, 31). Performance of the משפטים is linked with the promise of land (Deut 6:1, 12:1), the promise of security (Deut 6:24), the promise that YHWH will keep the covenant and the חסד which he swore to their fathers (Deut 7:12), and all of this is linked with Israel's chosen status (Deut 26:16–19). Johnson notes, "God's demand for the performance of the משפטים (37 occurrences of the term are found in Deuteronomy) and fidelity to the תורה (22 occurrences in Deuteronomy) are, for the Deuteronomist, a reflection of the character and attributes of God Himself [see Deut 32:4];" Johnson, "Paralysis," 265. Lundbom has also shown the close connection between Deut 32 and the Josianic reform. See Jack R. Lundbom, "Lawbook of the Josianic Reform," *CBQ* 38, no. 3 (July 1976): 293–302.

[30] Johnson, "Paralysis," 259.

[31] Janzen, "Eschatological Symbol," 397. This was Janzen's prior position until he changed it in this journal article.

[32] Johnson, "Paralysis," 262.

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YHWH to explain the inherent ambiguity in the previously communicated revelation which makes the Law out to be the opposite of what YHWH claimed it would be.

Finally, subtle catchwords and phrases in Hab 1:2–17 show the connection between the wicked one and Babylon. In 1:3, the prophet complains that YHWH makes him see (Hiph of ראה) "iniquity" (אָוֶן) while YHWH himself looks (Hiph of נבט) at trouble (עָמָל). The same combination of ראה and נבט is used in the previously proclaimed oracle of 1:5a where YHWH exhorts the people to look (רְאוּ) among the nations and see (וְהַבִּיטוּ). The כי clauses in 1:5b and 1:6a explain that the reason the people are to look and see is because YHWH is doing a work that they would not believe, namely, that he is raising up the Chaldeans (1:6a). In other words, that which YHWH caused Habakkuk to see in 1:3 is what he declared he raised up in 1:5–11.

Both sections make reference to the רָשָׁע (1:4, 13) and the צַדִּיק (1:4, 13). In both sections, the prophet is asking YHWH "why" (לָמָּה, 1:3, 13). Habakkuk complains about the violence (חָמָס, 1:3) which surrounds him and petitions YHWH to do something about it. When the rise of the Chaldeans is described in the citation of the previous oracle, חָמָס describes the general impact of their ascendency (1:9).[33] Habakkuk complains in 1:4 that YHWH's ostensible indifference to the promises in the law caused an inversion of מִשְׁפָּט. He says negatively that וְלֹא־יֵצֵא לָנֶצַח מִשְׁפָּט ("justice does not go forth with enduring effect")[34] and positively that when it does go forth, יֵצֵא מִשְׁפָּט מְעֻקָּל ("justice goes forth perversely"). The same combination of the nominal subject מִשְׁפָּט with the verbal predicate יֵצֵא, ironically, appears in the description of the Chaldeans at 1:7b: מִמֶּנּוּ מִשְׁפָּטוֹ וּשְׂאֵתוֹ יֵצֵא ("his justice and sovereignty go forth from himself"). And in 1:12, the prophet recognizes that YHWH has established the Chaldeans as judgment (מִשְׁפָּט) and yet,

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[33] So also Sweeney, "Structure," 67; Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 95.

[34] Janzen rightly notes that לָנֶצַח does not mean "never" as many translations have it. Rather, it means "not with an enduring effect (cf. Prov 21:28). See Janzen, "Eschatological Symbol," 399–400. See also Garrett, "The Twelve," 9.

YHWH sends the Chaldeans for the purpose of מִשְׁפָּט (1:12). These catch phrases confirm that the injustice Habakkuk complains about in 1:4 is identified with the injustice brought by the Chaldeans in 1:5–11 and will somehow, by Habakkuk's own confession, make for justice in the future (1:12).[35] So chapter one narrowly conceives of the "wicked one" as Chaldea and cannot be an internal faction within the Judean aristocracy. The righteous ones are the Judeans.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Broad and Narrow Identification of Characters</h2>

That the wicked and righteous ones in the book are not meant to be static characters is seen from a few different considerations.

The Nature of Theodicean Literature

Though Chaldea is the most palpable iteration of the problem from the perspective of the prophet, Habakkuk would still voice his complaint against YHWH if it were Assyria, Greece, or Persia. In other words, the very nature of the complaints in chapter 1 points up that the problem is how a righteous and holy God would allow, and even raise up, wicked tyrants and oppressors to afflict the righteous and even snuff out their lives. What about YHWH's covenant? What about YHWH's character? Though theodicean literature always has specific circumstances and perpetrators, the warp and woof of the theodicy genre is the uneasy and bewildering relationship between YHWH's holy and righteous character and the presence of sin, suffering, and injustice. Even in Hab 1, there is at least one moment when the general nature of wickedness comes to the foreground, while the specific iteration of Babylon recedes into the background.

The noun רָשָׁע is used only three times in Habakkuk (1:4, 13, 3:13). In each case, it occurs as an indefinite noun. However, in 1:4, רָשָׁע is contrasted with אֶת־הַצַּדִּיק. The contrast of the direct object marker and the definite article led Jeannette Matthews to

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[35] Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 96.

translate the phrase: "for wickedness surrounds the righteous one."[36] This is an acceptable translation which highlights the core of Habakkuk's theodicean complaint. Yes, Chaldea and the ineffectiveness of the Torah is the specific iteration of the problem. But the real problem is that despite the sovereignty of YHWH, wickedness and a paralyzed Torah are there in the first place. Throughout the book of Habakkuk, the broad and the narrow conceptions of wickedness switch from the foreground to the background as Habakkuk moves through the various stages of his מַשָּׂא (Hab 1–2) and into his תְּפִלָּה (Hab 3). In Hab 2 we see the move away from the specific iteration of Chaldea to the broader description of arrogance and defiance.

The Broad and the Narrow in Chapter 2

As argued in chapter 3 of this work, the vision promised to Habakkuk will find its fulfillment at the appointed time; it is a witness unto the end (לַקֵּץ, 2:3). This language speaks of the *eschaton*, from the perspective of Habakkuk, and should not be confined to the "end" of Chaldea's reign of tyranny, even if he believed the two events to be the same. Accordingly, when the woes are considered, though Chaldea (הַכַּשְׂדִּים) is never mentioned after 1:6, their ruthless and violent spirit is still present. But they recede into the background in chapter 2. At the same time, an amorphous wicked entity comes to the foreground which could conceivably fit any evil tyrant in any age.

Chapter 2 refers to the enemy of YHWH and his people as one whose soul is puffed up and not upright within him (2:4), a "traitor," and "arrogant man" (2:5), one who plunders (2:8), cuts off many people (2:10), builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity (2:12), forces people to drink (2:15), does violence to Lebanon (2:17), and worships idols (2:18, 19). For some, the crimes committed in these woes seem to be local in nature. Accordingly, some have tried to find specific historical events and tie

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[36] Jeanette Matthews, *Performing Habakkuk: Faithful Re-Enactment in the Midst of Crisis* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 207.

them back to an internal Judean group[37] before later editors reapplied them against Chaldea. For others, the crimes seem to presuppose an international situation and many, therefore, believe that the Neo-Babylonian empire's international campaign of tyranny and oppression fits the description.

Narrow Iteration of Wickedness

There are a few ways in which narrow iterations of Chaldea's oppression may be seen in chapter 2. First, Habakkuk connects the oppressor's crimes with idolatry (2:18–20), which corresponds to the description of the Chaldeans in 1:11, 16 (cf. 2:13a). Second, Jer 51:58 may be a donor text to Habakkuk 2:12–13.[38]

Table 2. Babylon in Jeremiah 51:58 and Habakkuk 2:12–13

Jeremiah 51:58		*Habakkuk 2:12–13*	
"Thus says the LORD of hosts: The broad wall of Babylon shall be leveled to the ground, and her high gates shall be burned with fire. The peoples labor for nothing, and the nations weary themselves only for fire."	כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת חֹמוֹת בָּבֶל הָרְחָבָה עַרְעֵר תִּתְעַרְעָר וּשְׁעָרֶיהָ הַגְּבֹהִים בָּאֵשׁ יִצַּתּוּ וְיִגְעוּ עַמִּים בְּדֵי־רִיק וּלְאֻמִּים בְּדֵי־אֵשׁ וְיָעֵפוּ	"Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity! Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire, and nations weary themselves for nothing?	הוֹי בֹּנֶה עִיר בְּדָמִים וְכוֹנֵן קִרְיָה בְּעַוְלָה: הֲלוֹא הִנֵּה מֵאֵת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְיִיגְעוּ עַמִּים בְּדֵי־אֵשׁ וּלְאֻמִּים בְּדֵי־רִיק יִעָפוּ

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[37] For example, see Jeremias, *Kultprophetie Und Gerichtsverkündigung in Der Späten Königszeit Israels*, 57–89, 101–3; Otto, "Die Stellung Der Wehe-Worte in Der Verkündigung Des Propheten Habakuk." Those who make this claim draw support from Jer 22:13–23.

[38] Karl Budde made this connection in "Habakuk," *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 84 (1930): 139–47.

Jeremiah was a contemporary of Habakkuk and the book of Jeremiah can, therefore, serve as a valuable resource for information about Habakkuk's historical context. Jeremiah says that the city is Babylon and Habakkuk repeats it. While the focus is on the slave labor which built the city, the point in both Jeremiah and Habakkuk is that they built the city of Babylon in vain, for it will be judged by Yahweh. Though "fire" and "nothing" are juxtaposed in the texts, the general idea is essentially the same. While it is unclear whether Habakkuk is drawing from Jeremiah,[39] or if each prophet is simply quoting a by-word,[40] what is unmistakable is that Babylon is the target audience. While the peoples were the ones who built the town, Habakkuk makes it clear that the woe is upon the builder who builds with blood and founds the city on iniquity (2:12).

Broad Conception of Wickedness

However, the general nature of these offenses, whether they are local or international,[41] could describe a whole host of nations drunk on their own pride and power. It is unnecessary to conclude that the woes of chapter 2 *only* target the Chaldeans. Nor is it necessary to conclude that the woes merely target wickedness in general. It is plausible to conclude that there is a general character to the oppressor, described in the woes, which could conceivably fit any evil tyrant, Chaldea included.

In chapter 3 of this work, I argued that that Hab 2:2 should be translated: "Then the Lord answered me, 'Write down the vision, inscribe it plainly upon tablets so that one may live well on reading it."[42] The word יָרוּץ (lit. "one who runs") speaks of the one who wisely heeds the admonition of the vision. For example, in Prov 4:12, the son

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[39] So, Franziska Ede, "Hab 3 and Its Relation to Hab 1f," (Unpublished, n.d.), 8. Franziska Ede kindly provided me a copy of this unpublished paper.

[40] Andersen, *Habakkuk,* 245.

[41] Prophets sometimes refer to international events in terms of localized crimes. See, for example, Amos 1:3, 11, 12; Isa 10:14; and Nah 3:5–7. Cf. Sweeney, "Structure," 77.

[42] Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language," 190.

who follows the wise father's instruction is promised a way free of the stumbling blocks of wickedness as he lives his life under God's guidance and wisdom: "When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; and if you run (וְאִם־תָּרוּץ), you will not stumble."[43] The purpose of the vision is that one may "live well." In other words, the woes are a manifestation of wisdom literature and, as Boyle argues, this "subtly dissociates it from any specific reference to the Chaldeans, whose oppressive career was recounted in Habakkuk's first chapter, and provoked his challenge to God."[44] If anything, Chaldea serves as a type or a kernel of sapiential truth. Boyle says, "they are the cautionary tale, and the basis of a lesson on wise living."[45]

Habakkuk 2:12–13 is a good example of the broad application of the woes. While it has links to Jer 51:58 (see table 2 above) where Babylon is rebuked, it likewise shares strong links to, and perhaps even reliance upon, Jeremiah's scathing rebuke of Jehoiakim (Jer 22:13–17). Note the two texts together in table 3 below.

Table 3. Jehoiakim in Habakkuk 2:12–13 and Jeremiah 22:13

Habakkuk 2:12–13	*Jeremiah 22:13*
הוֹי בֹּנֶה עִיר בְּדָמִים וְכוֹנֵן קִרְיָה בְּעַוְלָה: הֲלוֹא הִנֵּה מֵאֵת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְיִיגְעוּ עַמִּים בְּדֵי־אֵשׁ וּלְאֻמִּים בְּדֵי־רִיק יִעָפוּ:	הוֹי בֹּנֶה בֵיתוֹ בְּלֹא־צֶדֶק וַעֲלִיּוֹתָיו בְּלֹא מִשְׁפָּט בְּרֵעֵהוּ יַעֲבֹד חִנָּם וּפֹעֲלוֹ לֹא יִתֶּן־לוֹ:
Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity! Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire, and nations weary themselves for nothing? (ESV)	Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice, who makes his neighbor serve him for nothing and does not give him his wages, (ESV)

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[43] See Holt, "So He May Run Who Reads It," 298–302. Holt marshals a number of texts which use רוץ in this figurative manner. For example, see Ps 119:32, Isa 40:31, Ps 147:15 and Jer 8:6.

[44] For a further defense of the poetic and wisdom-oriented use of רוץ in Hab 2:2, see Terence Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language in Isaiah, Micah, and Habakkuk," 198. For elements of wisdom in the book of Habakkuk, see Gowan, "Habakkuk and Wisdom," 157–66; Carl Albert Keller, "Die Eigenart Der Prophetie Habakuks," *ZAW* 85, no. 2 (1973): 162; Prinsloo, "Life for the Righteous, Doom for the Wicked," 621–40.

[45] Boyle, "The Rhetoric of Taunt Language," 203.

Jehoiakim was a puppet king for both Egypt and Babylon and his actions here could very easily be interpreted as wicked works done in the service of either. This shows the elastic application of these woes to "the arrogant one" or "puffed up one." Through the taunts of the nations, YHWH casts his net much more broadly than just Babylon.

The Characters in Chapter 3

Habakkuk's complaint in chapter 1 was about the specific problems that Chaldea's ascendency caused for Judah's view of YHWH's character and the efficacy of the Law. But even in chapter one, Habakkuk's complaint went beyond Chaldea. It included any tyrannical oppressor who, like Chaldea, abuses the power that YHWH sovereignly assigns to them. That broad application is confirmed in the woes of chapter 2. YHWH answers Habakkuk's complaint by giving him a vision of cosmic retribution in the end (see Hab 2:3) and Chaldea is nowhere mentioned. Chapter 3 also includes rhetoric about the wicked (e.g., 3:13) and the people whom YHWH saves from the wicked (e.g., 3:13). But in chapter 3, the prophet's mention of these two groups is unique and functions differently than it did in chapters 1 and 2.

The Function of Chapter 3

As mentioned above, some secondary-inclusion scholars claim that the disparity between the characters in chapters 1–2 and chapter 3 is so great that chapter 3 should not be viewed as an integral and original part of the book of Habakkuk. Among other things, they point to the elements of nature mentioned in the hymns (the great deep [3:10], mountains and hills [3:6], rivers and sea [3:8, 9, 15], and the sun and the moon [3:11]) and identify them as YHWH's enemies, either in episodes of *Chaoskampf*[46] in primordial times, or as Hebrew versions of YHWH's conflict with the mythical Canaanite gods like the dragon and the sea.[47]

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[46] See references in footnotes 1 and 2 of this chapter.

[47] See, for example John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a*

However, this approach fails to account for what Habakkuk is doing in chapter 3. After Habakkuk has heard the vision of woes, he thinks back to past events when YHWH had routed the enemies of Israel (e.g., the Exodus, Conquest, and select episodes in the book of Judges), and then sings of those events in the inset hymns of vv. 3–15. For example, the pestilence and plague which accompany YHWH's presence (3:5), YHWH's going forth for the salvation of his people, and the crushing of the head of the house of the wicked (3:13) refer to the plagues brought upon Egypt (Exod 7–12) and the judgment upon the house of Pharaoh.[48] The depiction of YHWH riding in indignation upon the sea on his chariots of salvation (3:8, 15) refers to the splitting of the Red Sea and the Exodus of his people (Exod 12).[49] The mention of the "sun and moon standing still in their place" (3:11) refers to the sun and moon standing still so that the children of Israel could overcome the five kings of the Amorites (Josh 10) in the Valley of Aijalon.[50] These episodes of redemption depict the very thing Habakkuk is petitioning the Lord to revive in the near future (3:2). Given the function of chapter 3, therefore, it is illegitimate to expect the inset hymns to mention Chaldea with any specificity.

A Hint of Babylon

The second inset hymn, however, concludes at 3:15, and Habakkuk's personal response to the collective experience of complaint, vision, and song begins. In the first

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Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament, University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 35 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[48] The crushing of the head of the house of the wicked could also have a reference to Jael's crushing of Sisera's head in Judg 5:26.

[49] The mention of the various elements of nature is simply meant to convey the effects of YHWH's coming upon the earth. The prophet clarifies this in 3:8 when he asks the question: "Was your wrath against the rivers, O LORD? Was your anger against the rivers, or your indignation against the sea, when you rode on your horses, on your chariot of salvation?" (ESV). The answer is clearly given in 3:12: "You marched through the earth in fury; you threshed the nations in anger" (ESV). It is the nations who are the target of his wrath.

[50] Habakkuk 3:11a reads: שֶׁמֶשׁ יָרֵחַ עָמַד זְבֻלָה. Avishur suggests that זְבֻלָה means "its dominion," and that the line means that the dominion of the sun and moon ceased when they stopped shining. See Avishur, "Habakkuk 3," 141.

half of 3:16 he recounts the various bodily responses he experienced. In the second half of the line, he gives a succinct statement about his posture of trust as he waits for YHWH to bring about this retribution against Chaldea, which he has requested in 3:2. Habakkuk 3:16c reads אֲשֶׁר אָנוּחַ לְיוֹם צָרָה לַעֲלוֹת לְעַם יְגוּדֶנּוּ: It is likely that Habakkuk is here referring to Chaldea as he waits for the final Babylonian deportation, the destruction of the temple, and the promised retribution that YHWH has shown him in the vision.

Habakkuk 3:16, however, is exceedingly difficult to translate. S. R. Driver declared that "this and the next line are most obscure and uncertain, the Hebrew being in parts ambiguous, and the text open to suspicion…[t]he case is one in which it is impossible to speak with confidence."[51] Two textual problems must be solved in order to clarify the text and decipher the subject upon whom the "day of distress" is coming. First, how should אָנוּחַ be read and translated? Most versions agree with the MT. The OG has ἀναπαύσομαι ("I will rest"), and the OL and Vg have *requiescam*. But whereas BDB derives the Qal *yiqtol* 1cs form from נוּחַ ("to rest"), *HALOT*, derives it from the otherwise unattested verb II נוח ("to sigh for" or "to groan") in conjunction with the preposition לְ.[52] The BHQ apparatus suggests אֲחַכֶּה ("I await").

Hiebert argues that "resting" or "waiting" does not fit the context of verse 16. Accordingly, instead of taking the form from the √נוח, he reads the Niphal *yiqtol* 1cs אאנח with preterite force: "I sighed" or "groaned," (from √אנח). He claims that the "initial א could have been lost by haplography, there being two *alephs* in sequence, and the *waw* may be understood as a vestige of late orthography once the א was lost and the verb was related to נוח."[53] But Hiebert's conjectural emendation conveniently assumes the very

[51] S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, The International Theological Library (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1910), 96–97.

[52] *HALOT*, s.v., II נוח. Cf. Holladay, s.v. II נוח.

[53] See Hiebert, *God of my Victory,* 52; So also, Eaton, "Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3," 157; M. L. Margolis, "The Character of the Anonymous Greek Version of Habakkuk 3," in *Old Testament and Semitic Studies in Memory of William Rainey Harper*, eds. William Rainey Harper et. al., vol. 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1908), 82. G. R. Driver, "Studies in the Vocabulary of the Old

thing he is trying to argue. The context of the verse is the best aid in deciphering which verb should be used in this line. This leads to the next question.

Against whom is the coming calamity directed in 3:16? Some translations indicate that the "day of distress" is coming against the Judahites (KJV, NKJV, NASB). Other translations direct the "day of distress" against the Chaldeans (NIV, NJB, RSV, ESV, NET, HCSB). If the day of distress is coming against Judah, then "I groaned/sighed" (from either אנח√ or II נוח) would fit the context. On the other hand, if the day of distress is coming against Babylon, then "I will rest" (from נוח√) would best fit the context. Table 4 illustrates the challenges in identifying the subject upon whom the day of distress comes:

Table 4. Habakkuk 3:16c in the MT, LXX and Barberini texts

MT	LXX	Barberini Text
אֲשֶׁר אָנוּחַ לְיוֹם צָרָה לַעֲלוֹת לְעַם יְגוּדֶנּוּ׃	ἀναπαύσομαι ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεως τοῦ ἀναβῆναι εἰς λαὸν παροικίας μου	Κατ᾽ἐμαυτὸν ἐταράχθην. Ταῦτα φυλάξεις ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεως ἐπαγαγεῖν ἐπὶ ἔθνος πολεμοῦν τὸν λαόν σου
Where I wait for the day of distress to come up against the people who invade us	I will rest on a day of distress to go up among/with a people of my sojourning[54]	I was troubled for myself. These things you will guard in the day of distress to bring [them] upon the nation fighting your people.[55]

A surface reading of the MT would suggest that the day of distress is coming against "the people who invade us." However, the LXX seems to suggest that a people will go up from exile on the day of distress, namely, the day of YHWH's coming. The LXX

Testament VI," *JTS* 34, no. 136 (October 1933): 377.

[54] Translation taken from Cleaver-Bartholomew, "One Text with Two Interpretations," 66.

[55] Translation from Harper, *Responding to a Puzzled Scribe,* 206.

translator seems to have read a י for the second ו and a ר for the ד in יגודנו (from גוד) and

therefore saw יגורני (from גור, "to sojourn").[56] It is very likely that the original was from

the √גוד , which means to "attack" or "assault."

Patterson translates the verse in such a way that reference is made *both* to the

attack of the Chaldeans upon Judah and the judgment against Chaldea by those whom the

Lord sends: "I will rest during the day of distress (and) during the attack against the

people invading us."[57] He says:

> Habakkuk is thus considering the total picture of distress that is to come upon his
> nation and the Chaldeans. If one takes the first of the two parallel lines as applying
> primarily to the Judahites and the second as in asyndetic parataxis with the first so
> as to dramatize the situation with the Chaldeans, a balance is thereby achieved.
> Habakkuk will take his rest both during the day of distress for his people and during
> the judgment of the Chaldeans, Judah's invaders.[58]

Though Patterson's translation certainly fits with how Hab 3 functions, it is doubtful if

the syntax supports such an elaborate conjecture. However, Patterson rightly translates

עַם יְגוּדֶנּוּ as the "people invading us." From the mouth of Habakkuk, this people can be

none other than the Chaldeans. Though the phrase לַעֲלוֹת לְעַם is uncommon, it is

essentially supported by the versions. The *lamed* preposition prefixed to עַם may be a

dative of disadvantage. The line should read "I will wait for the day of wrath to come

upon the people who will invade us." Habakkuk interprets the enemies upon whom God

will renew (3:2) his ancient works as those "who invade us." The Chaldeans are the

current iteration of that foreign invader and Habakkuk petitions that YHWH would bring

wrath upon them just as he had done to Israel's enemies in days past.

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[56] So also, Cleaver-Bartholomew, "One Text with Two Interpretations," 9; Dominique Barthélemy and A. R. Hulst, eds., *CTAT3,* 878. The LXX translator therefore gave something of a dynamic equivalence translation with λαὸν παροικίας μου. Harper says, "[t]he 1cp suffix נוּ- may have been read as 1cs נִי- (with י/ו interchange). נוּ-, however, is usually attached to verbs, while nouns take ִי-, but the nouns most closely related to גור are גֵּר and מָגוֹר. Perhaps the translator simply imagined a suitable form based on גור, a form of contextual manipulation." Harper, *Responding to a Puzzled Scribe,* 195.

[57] Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 255.

[58] Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah,* 259; For a similar use of asyndetic parataxis in Akkadian, see Richard Duane Patterson, "Old Babylonian Parataxis as Exhibited in the Royal Letters of the Middle Old Babylonian Period and in the Code of Hammurapi" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1970), 128–81.

Conclusion

Habakkuk's treatment of the righteous and the wicked is both narrow and broad throughout all three chapters. In chapter one, the narrow iteration of wickedness is most palpably seen to be Chaldea as Habakkuk hurls up his complaint to YHWH. In chapter 2, Chaldea recedes to the background and a general depiction of wickedness is offered as the subject of the woes. In chapter 3, Habakkuk thinks back to the wicked ones of Israel's past and how YHWH routed them for the salvation of his anointed one and people, and now asks that YHWH would do it again in the near future. The secondary-inclusion insistence that the characters of chapters 1–2 are inconsistent with chapter 3 misses what Habakkuk is attempting to do in chapter 3. Furthermore, when Habakkuk responds in 3:16, he indicates that he is waiting for the day of wrath to come upon the people who invade them. This reference points to Chaldea, the current iteration of foreign invaders, and highlights chapter 3's continuity with the previous two chapters.

CHAPTER 5

A METHODOLOGY FOR AND RELEVANCE OF
LINGUISTICALLY DATING HABAKKUK 3

The preceding chapters have presented a case for the original, seventh-century

inclusion of Hab 3 in the book of Habakkuk based on the thematic, theological,

theodicean, and form-critical connections between chapters 1–2 and 3. Chapters 5–8 will

offer a plausible, cumulative-case argument for the original inclusion of Hab 3 based on

diachronic, historical-linguistic considerations. Secondary-inclusion scholars typically

take one of two approaches when ascribing a late date to the addition of Hab 3 in the

book of Habakkuk. One approach is to say that both the framework (3:1–2 and 16–19)

and the inset hymns (vv. 3–15) were compositions created as early as the postexilic age

or as late as the third/second century BC. Such theories are often assumed but rarely

defended with any kind of historical-linguistic arguments. But there have been a few

exceptions.

Attempts to Linguistically Date Habakkuk 3

For example, Markus Witte argues for the inclusion of Hab 3 in the early

Hellenistic period (circa 200 BC) by focusing on the apocalyptic nature of the book.[1] He

claims that the "eschatological terms מוֹעֵד and קֵץ in 2:3" recall Dan 8:19; 11:27, and since

Daniel is a late book, Habakkuk must also be late. Apparently these two words are

common vocabulary stock for apocalyptic literature and must, therefore, belong to the

same period.[2] This is an odd linguistic argument. Though he recognizes the use of these

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[1] Witte, "Orakel und Gebete im Buch Habakuk," 88; See also, Herrmann, "Das Unerledigte Problem Des Buches Habakkuk," 490–91 and 496; Cf. Dietrich, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 97.

[2] Witte, "Orakel und Gebete," 85–86. See also John E. Anderson, "Awaiting an Answered Prayer: The Development and Reinterpretation of Habakkuk 3 in Its Contexts," *ZAW* 123, no. 1 (2011): 63–

'apocalyptic' words in Daniel, Witte makes no reference to the other 64 uses of קֵץ or the other 221 uses of מוֹעֵד in the HB, their distribution throughout the different books, or the significance of that distribution for attempting to linguistically date the book to the early Hellenistic period.[3] The linguistic evidence supporting this thesis is admittedly small and unconvincing. But, granting the possibility of the thesis, at the very least, one would expect to find features of LBH in both the framework and the inset hymns of Hab 3. However, Witte offers no such evidence.

Theodore Hiebert exemplifies a second approach to the late inclusion of Hab 3. According to Hiebert, the inset hymns (vv. 3–15) bear the marks of archaic Biblical Hebrew (ABH) and were probably pre-monarchic in origin.[4] They were preserved in the royal cult down to the Persian period (late sixth and early fifth centuries) and then inserted into the book of Habakkuk between the framework section (3:1–2 and 16–19) which was composed by apocalyptic visionary scribes caught up in the eschatological fervor of their day.[5] There are two problems with this theory. As will be demonstrated in chapters 6–8 of this work, there is a curious absence of any LBH grammatical features, or syntactical peculiarities in the inset hymns or the framework section of Hab 3. To assume that the redactor/composer would not even slightly level the text, intentionally or accidentally, in order to communicate the message of these ancient hymns to his

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66 who argues for a postexilic date based on the purported lateness of the liturgical elements (לַמְנַצֵּחַ, סֶלָה, שִׁגְיֹנוֹת); Eckart Otto, "Die Theologie Des Buches Habakuk," *VT* 35, no. 3 (July 1985): 283; Eckart Otto, "Die Stellung Der Wehe-Worte in Der Verkündigung Des Propheten Habakuk," *ZAW* 89, no. 1 (January 1, 1977): 106.

[3] It is particularly significant to note that of the 224 uses of מוֹעֵד in the HB, it appears 63x in Numbers, 45x in Leviticus, and 37x in Exodus in contrast to 5x in the book of Daniel and once in the book of Habakkuk. One can hardly say that מוֹעֵד is a characteristically apocalyptic term found primarily in apocalyptic literature.

[4] Regarding evidence for such a claim, Hiebert relies heavily on David A. Robertson's work and maintains that the alternating tenses of the verb, in the absence of the *waw* connector, demonstrate its antiquity. See Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, 33-34 for his analysis of the syntax in the inset hymns, and 154-55 for his conclusions. Cf. Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 77–79, 138–39.

[5] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 137. Hiebert builds his case upon the theories found in Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); Cf. Paul D. Hanson, "Jewish Apocalyptic against Its Near Eastern Environment," *RB* 78, no. 1 (January 1971): 31–58.

contemporary community strains credulity.

More importantly, Hiebert's argument is a double-edged sword. If the hymns were preserved from premonarchic times, then they would have been common currency in Habakkuk's day. The burden of proof is on Hiebert to demonstrate why Habakkuk could not himself have utilized the hymns and inserted them into his own framework. For that matter, secondary-inclusion proponents must produce reasonable examples of LBH in Hab 3 or give a convincing justification for their absence. If there is any evidence of textual levelling or updating in Hab 3, it is toward CBH and not LBH, which would be expected if the hymns were inserted in the Persian period.

The Manuscript Evidence

Though all extant versions and copies of the book of Habakkuk include chapter 3, the 1947 discovery of the Qumran *Pesher* on the book of Habakkuk (1QpHab[6]) found in cave 1 includes only chapters 1-2. Most scholars date 1QpHab, on paleographic grounds, to the second half of the first century BC, though it is possible that the date of composition may have been earlier.[7] The absence of chapter 3 initially seemed to coincide with the long-held secondary-inclusion view. Yet original-inclusion scholars have noted that chapter 3 may not have been germane to the purposes of the Qumran community and was therefore left out.[8] It is also significant that among the *pesharim*

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[6] Sometimes the secondary literature refers to 1QpHab as DSH=the Dead Sea Habakkuk Commentary.

[7] Haak, *Habakkuk*, 1. On the dating of the scroll, see William H. Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk*, ed. F. Garcia Martinez, vol. 12, SBL Monograph 24 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979), 22–23; Maurya P. Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books*, The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 8 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979), 3, 11; John C. Trever et al., *Scrolls from Qumrân Cave I: The Great Isaiah Scroll, the Order of the Community, the Pesher to Habakkuk*, (Jerusalem: Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, 1981), 4; N. Avigad, "The Paleography of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Documents," in *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Chaim Rabin and Yigael Yadin, 2nd ed., Scripta Hierosolymitana 4 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1965), 58–59, 75–76.

[8] Avishur, "Habakkuk 3," 124, Avishur notes that the Qumran sect was primarily concerned with prophecy and since chapter 3 is not really a prophetic work, there was no need for a pesher on it. Cf. Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk*, 12:218.

from Qumran, no commentaries on complete books have been found.[9] Furthermore, a Hebrew manuscript of the twelve minor prophets "was discovered as early as 1955 at Wadi Murabba'at, about 17 km south of Qumran, which contains chapter 3."[10] A scroll of the Minor Prophets in Greek (8ḤevXIIGR or R) was found at Nahal Ḥever in 1952 which contains broken portions of Hab 3:8c-15a.[11] Thus, original-inclusion scholars would argue that the absence of chapter 3 from 1QpHab does not validate the secondary-inclusion view of Habakkuk.[12]

Linguistic Dating Favors Original Inclusion

It is a common opinion among both secondary and original-inclusion scholars that the inset hymns of Hab 3 may be archaic hymns from premonarchic times and preserved through the royal cult. However, no one has adequately demonstrated this bold diachronic claim, and there are at least three good reasons for this. First, from a historical-linguistic perspective, the corpus of Hebrew writings, which are objectively datable to the pre-classical period of language, is small indeed.[13] Second, while it is always possible for a later author to co-opt and employ an early feature, it is much more

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[9] Haak, *Habakkuk*, 8. Haak adds that "in at least some cases, portions of books are omitted. This appears clearly in the movement of the Psalms commentary from Ps 37 to Ps 45"; See also, Horgan, *Pesharim*, 193, 199.

[10] Mason, *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel*, 92. This manuscript was originally called II Mur 88 and the relevant Habakkuk texts were found in cols. XVIII–XIX. The standard *siglum* is now MurXII. It has been dated to the second-century BC and is virtually the same as the MT.

[11] Barthélemy believes that 8ḤevXIIGR (or "R") is not an independent translation of Habakkuk but rather a revision of the OG toward a Hebrew text in the same tradition as the later MT. See Dominique Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila; première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodécaprophéton trouvés dans le désert de Juda,* VTSup 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1963), 179–98.

[12] Note Brownlee's conclusion in *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 11 (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1959), 95: "Any final evaluation of the textual omission of Hab 3 must await the determination, if possible, from fragmentary remains of other commentaries, whether it was customary for the Qumran community to treat whole prophetic books within such compositions."

[13] Aaron D. Hornkohl, "Biblical Hebrew: Periodization," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, ed. Geoffrey Khan (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 320. See also Tania Notarius, "Lexical Isoglosses of Archaic Hebrew: פְּלִילִים (Deut 32:31) and כֵּן (Judg 5:15) as Case Studies," *HS* 58 (2017): 84–85; Cf. Tania Notarius, "Historical Linguistics Is Not Text-Dating: A Review of Early Biblical Hebrew, Late Biblical Hebrew, and Linguistic Variability: A Sociolinguistic Evaluation of the Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts by Dong-Hyuk Kim," *HS* 55 (2014): 389–97.

difficult for an earlier author to use a late innovation.[14] In other words, the appearance of an archaic lexical item, grammatical feature, or syntactical phenomenon may be the author's attempt to give the text the appearance of antiquity by *archaizing*.[15] Finally, finding a random archaic feature in Hab 3 would not, in and of itself, demonstrate the archaic nature of the whole chapter. Instead, there must be an accumulation of many archaic features which no one has demonstrated so far.

It is easier to identify CBH and LBH elements in the text than it is ABH elements. If the secondary-inclusion thesis is correct, one should expect to find some LBH features. However, the following three chapters will demonstrate that there are no historical-linguistic vestiges of LBH anywhere in Hab 3. To the contrary, there are at least five cases of either CBH grammatical features, in both the framework and inset hymns sections, where an LBH grammatical feature would have been expected if it were inserted or composed in that period. Late Biblical Hebrew innovations are more pronounced and distinct from CBH. While it is true that the absence of evidence does not necessarily constitute evidence, it must be stated that the absence of *any* LBH feature in a text purported to have a LBH provenance is strong evidence against such claims.

Secondary-inclusion scholars may respond by saying that the authors/redactors intentionally composed the framework and inset hymns in a style reminiscent of ABH and CBH so as to give the appearance of antiquity (i.e., archaizing). However, this is special pleading. It is very hard for a late author to archaize consistently without detection.[16] Nehemiah was a fearless leader, but he cannot be credited with a polished

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[14] Na'ama Pat-El and Aren Wilson-Wright, "Features of Archaic Biblical Hebrew and the Linguistic Dating Debate," *HS* 54 (2013): 409.

[15] For example, Albright and Pfeiffer believe the author of Hab 3 was archaizing. See Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 9. Cf. Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper, 1948), 632. Margulis and Stonehouse, on the other hand, believe that the author has cited from an archaic text. See Stonehouse, *The Book of Habakkuk*, 126; Margulis, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 437–39.

[16] See Hendel and Joosten, *How Old Is the Hebrew Bible?*, 125. Such a view "lacks consilience with the historical and linguistic data."

literary style or sophisticated linguistic skills savvy enough to master an ABH or CBH style of writing.[17]

All that is necessary to establish a seventh-century provenance of Hab 3 from a historical-linguistic approach is either an absence of or a relatively low frequency of LBH elements and a robust presence of CBH grammatical, lexical, and syntactical features. The general dictum, according to which diachronic studies proceeds, holds true: *early grammatical elements can be retained in late stages, whereas innovations are not expected to appear in earlier stages*.[18] The remainder of chapter 5 will lay out a general method and working assumptions by which I will highlight ABH and CBH features where LBH features would be expected. Chapter 6 will present five CBH grammatical features of Hab 3 which strongly suggest a pre-exilic provenance and contrast them with the LBH grammatical features that would have been expected in the Persian period (or later). Chapter 7 will present three CBH syntactical features of Hab 3 which, likewise, suggest a pre-exilic provenance and contrast them with the LBH features that would have been expected in the Persian period (or later).

Chapter 8 will focus in on the rare syntactical feature of alternating tenses (*qatal/yiqtol,* or *yiqtol/qatal,* [*QY/YQ*]) without the *waw*-conjunctive and, consequently, without opposition of tenses, and suggest a connection to the ABH corpus. Just to be clear, I do not need to prove that the *QY/YQ* pattern of alternating tenses in the hymns of Hab 3 is archaic to *disprove* the secondary-inclusion view. With the rise and function of the *wayyiqtol,* the *QY/YQ* phenomenon became increasingly rare, even in CBH texts and it is virtually unattested in the LBH corpus. At the least, the *QY/YQ* phenomenon is a feature of CBH texts. But it is very likely it extends further to ABH texts.

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[17] See Abba Bendavid, *Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew* (Tel-Aviv: Dvir, 1967), 65.

[18] See Hornkohl, "Biblical Hebrew: Periodization," 2013, 317, 320 (emphasis mine). To give a modern example, the English verb "google it" is the product of the search engine "Google" which began in 1998. Prior to 1998, this verb would have been unintelligible unattested.

Avi Hurvitz's Four Criteria (Traditionalist Model)

Avi Hurvitz has been called the chief architect of the diachronic study of Biblical Hebrew.[19] Hurvitz is a modern proponent of a reputable school of thought that has long recognized linguistic development in the Hebrew Bible.[20] Hurvitz's greatest contribution to the diachronic study of the Hebrew Bible is his four criteria for identifying LBH features in a text and consequently, assigning a relative date. A 'relative' date is different than an 'absolute' date. The attempt to linguistically date a text must, admittedly, be modest and cautious. The historical-linguistic approach concentrates on identifying a phenomenon of linguistic change as it is attested in a corpus of writings.[21] When an example of linguistic change is identified, one may cautiously attempt to place it into a particular period of the Hebrew language that has the highest concentration of that linguistic peculiarity. While Hurvitz's criteria for deciphering and relatively dating Biblical Hebrew is principally applied to LBH, it may also be applied cautiously to the evaluation of other diachronic stages of the Hebrew language.[22]

In order to discern a LBH feature in a text, Hurvitz developed the following criteria.[23] The first is *linguistic distribution,* in which any given grammatical, lexical, or

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[19] Mark F. Rooker, "Recent Trends in the Linguistic Analysis of Biblical Hebrew," in *The Unfolding of Your Words Gives Light: Studies on Biblical Hebrew in Honor of George L. Klein*, ed. Ethan C. Jones (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2018), 38. See also, Ziony Zevit, "Not-So-Random Thoughts on Linguistic Dating and Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew," in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 456. While Hurvitz's work in the late twentieth century focused on lexical features, Robert Polzin focused more on syntactical features. See, for example Robert Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose*, Harvard Semitic Monograph Series 12 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the Harvard Semitic Museum, 1976).

[20] For example, see Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, ed. E. Kautzsch, trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd English ed. (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1910), §2 l and m; Cf. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*, trans. James Martin, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 190 who said, "If the book of Kohelth were of old Solomonic origin, then there is no history of the Hebrew language."

[21] Notarius, "Historical Linguistics Is Not Text-Dating," 394.

[22] Pat-El and Wilson-Wright, "Features of Archaic Biblical Hebrew and the Linguistic Dating Debate," 388 fn. 2.

[23] See Avi Hurvitz, "Evidence of Language in Dating the Priestly Code: A Linguistic Study in Technical Idioms and Terminology," *RB* 81, no. 1 (January 1974): 24–56; Avi Hurvitz, "Date of the Prose-Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered," *Harvard Theological Review* 67, no. 1 (January 1974): 17–34; Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem*, Cahiers de La Revue Biblique 20 (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1982); Avi

syntactical feature is exclusively, or predominantly confined to late biblical writings. The relative confinement to the LBH corpus is a philological prerequisite for locating the feature on the spectrum of diachronic development. But in order to distinguish that linguistic feature from its correlative feature in another linguistic period, one must establish, secondly, a *linguistic contrast.* A linguistic contrast is the existence of a CBH alternative, for example, which would have been available to early writers prior to the penetration of a suspected late feature. Thirdly, in order to serve as some form of control data, a suspected late feature must be broadly represented in *extrabiblical sources.* Finally, in order to demonstrate that we are not dealing with a text which includes one or two isolated cases of late features, there must be an *accumulation* of the feature in the LBH corpus.[24] Linguistic dating is substantiated on the basis of *bundles of linguistic features*.

Classical סֵפֶר vs. Late אִגֶּרֶת

As an example, the *linguistic distribution* of the word אִגֶּרֶת (letter, missive, epistle; royal letter, edict) is predominantly found (11x) in the LBH corpus (2 Chron 30:1, 6; Neh 2:7, 8, 9; 6:5, 17, 19; Esth 9:26, 29, Ezra 4:8 [BA]). The *linguistic contrast* is seen in its CBH alternative סֵפֶר (royal or official letter) which is predominantly found in the CBH corpus.[25] As for its *accumulation,* the clustering of אִגֶּרֶת in the LBH corpus is

Hurvitz, "The Chronological Significance of 'Aramaisms' in Biblical Hebrew," *Israel Exploration Journal* 18, no. 4 (1968): 234–40; Avi Hurvitz, "The Historical Quest for 'Ancient Israel' and the Linguistic Evidence of the Hebrew Bible: Some Methodological Observations," *VT* 47, no. 3 (July 1997): 301–15; Avi Hurvitz, "Can Biblical Texts Be Dated Linguistically?: Chronological Perspectives in the Historical Study of Biblical Hebrew," in *Congress Volume: Oslo 1998*, VTSup 80 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 143–60; Hurvitz, "The 'Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts': Comments on Methodological Guidelines and Philological Procedures," 278. See, for example Hurvitz, "The Recent Debate on Late Biblical Hebrew," 194. As an example, Hurvitz points to חַיְתוֹ שָׂדָי in Ps 104:11. The *o* ending in חַיְתוֹ is most probably a survival of an old, obsolete, case ending, and the final *ay* in שָׂדָי represents an archaic uncontracted diphthong.

[24] From Hurvitz, "Can Biblical Texts Be Dated Linguistically?," 153; Cf. Avi Hurvitz, "Continuity and Innovation in Biblical Hebrew--the Case of 'Semantic Change' in Post-Exilic Writings," in *Studies in Ancient Hebrew Semantics*, ed. T. Muraoka, Abr-Nahrain, Supplement Series 4 (Louvain: Peeters Press, 1995), 6.

[25] סֵפֶר occurs 174 times in the HB as either 'document,' 'book,' or 'census.'

significant. אִגֶּרֶת is unattested in CBH, pre-exilic Hebrew epigraphy (Lachish letters), and

Ugaritic, all three of which make consistent use of the general old NWS word סֵפֶר.[26] אִגֶּרֶת

is also well attested in *extrabiblical sources* (e.g., 3x in Targum Neofiti and 23x in

Targum Jonathan). It is clear from the book of Esther that אִגֶּרֶת and סֵפֶר co-existed for a

time without a clear-cut distinction in meaning.[27]

Objections to the Traditionalist Model

The secondary literature refers to Hurvitz's position as the 'traditional' model.

Those who oppose such diachronic development are called the 'challengers.'[28] The

challengers suggest that, rather than diachronic linguistic development, the HB exhibits

different *styles* which were available to the author at any given stage of composition. The

challenger position could be summed up in two simple statements. First, they believe

language is changed in ways unknown to the scholar via textual transmission. This makes

any link between the language of the current texts and the language of the original author

quite dubious.

Second, even if, hypothetically, one were able to get past the problems of

textual transmission, the data of the text do not corroborate the traditionalist's theories

about periodization and dating. Instead of the traditionalist model, which recognizes

diachronic change in the HB, the challenger model asserts that multiple co-existing

contemporary styles of literary Hebrew were available to the authors, editors, and

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[26] Avi Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Innovations in the Writings of the Second Temple Period*, VTSup 160 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 26.

[27] For further analysis, see Ronald L. Bergey, "The Book of Esther: Its Place in the Linguistic Milieu of Post-Exilic Biblical Hebrew Prose: A Study in Late Biblical Hebrew" (PhD diss., The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1983), 149; Ángel Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 117; Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew*, 126; Avi Hurvitz, *The Transition Period in Biblical Hebrew: A Study in Post-Exilic Hebrew and Its Implications for the Dating of Psalms* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1972), 21–22; Hurvitz, "Can Biblical Texts Be Dated Linguistically?," 150–51.

[28] See Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, *LDBT¹*, 208; Robert Rezetko and Ian Young, *Historical Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew: Steps Toward an Integrated Approach*, Ancient Near East Monographs 9 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press: Universidad Católica Argentina Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente, 2014); Vern, *Dating Archaic Biblical Hebrew Poetry*.

redactors at every period of its transmission.[29] What traditionalists identify as early Biblical Hebrew (EBH), challengers describe as one conservative style available to authors, editors, and redactors.[30] What traditionalists identify as late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), challengers describe as a LBH author's, editor's, and redactors' proclivity to use a variety of linguistic forms.[31]

Sometimes scribes would switch styles in order to update, level, or smooth the text in so as to make it more homogenous. At other times, they would archaize words in order to give the impression of antiquity. Thus, archaic forms are not in the bible because they were the only available forms, they are in the bible because scribes were intentionally seeking to convey a particular style.[32] But as Ziony Zevit points out, the challengers never really define what constitutes the 'style' in EBH or LBH or what they mean by this unconventional term in this context.[33]

More importantly, Hurvitz's emphasis on accumulation is woefully underappreciated and misunderstood by those who challenge his method. For example,

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[29] Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensvärd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts: A Survey of Scholarship, A New Synthesis, and A Comprehensive Bibliography*, vol. 2 (New York: Routledge, 2016), 96.

[30] Young, et. al. use the word 'conservative' here in the sense of "moderate, cautious, avoiding extremes" rather than conservatism in the sense of favoring an older style. Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, *LDBT*, 2008, 1:141 fn. 91; Cf. B. Elan Dresher, "Methodological Issues in the Dating of Linguistic Forms: Considerations from the Perspective of Contemporary LInguistic Theory," in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 34.

[31] Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, *LDBT¹*, 141.

[32] See, for example Ian Young, "The Style of the Gezer Calendar and Some 'archaic Biblical Hebrew' Passages," *VT* 42, no. 3 (July 1992): 368–74; Ian Young, *Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1993), 122–25; Ian Young, "The 'Archaic' Poetry of the Pentateuch in the MT, Samaritan Pentateuch and [4]QEXOD[c]," *Abr Nahrain* 35 (1998): 74–75; Cf. Ian Young, "Biblical Texts Cannot Be Dated Linguistically," *HS* 46 (2005): 342.

[33] Zevit, "Not-So-Random Thoughts," 474; For examples, see Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, *LDBT¹*, 361; Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, *LDBT²*, 72. In other places, the authors define 'style' somewhat more conventionally. For example, in *LDBT¹*, 59, they say "style is a systematic variation related to a type of discourse or its context rather than differences of dialect or sociolect." This definition acknowledges that style is not purely random choices made by authors, editors, or redactors. It is conditioned or determined by certain describable factors such as topic and genre. Yet, the authors make no attempt to identify what factors conditioned the use of one 'style' as opposed to the other. See Zevit "Not-so-Random-Thoughts," 474.

the challengers maintain that the traditionalist methodology is invalid because most, if

not all, examples of 'early' linguistic features may be found in 'late' texts and vice versa.

Yet, Hornkohl rightly notes that the burden of proof is on the challengers to

disprove the accumulation principle:

> …the sporadic appearance of a characteristically late feature in a Classical Biblical
> Hebrew work is not sufficient to prove late provenance, since an early writer could
> conceivably have employed a feature atypical of his time, which would only later
> gain currency…[34]

This is why Hurvitz's fourth criterium of *accumulation* is so important. [35] Dresher notes,

"it is a well-attested fact in many languages that competing forms may coexist over a

period of time, and thus a late form may occur sporadically in early texts, and an early

form may survive in late texts."[36] In other words, the coexistence of competing forms

does not negate their value for dating texts.[37] The challenger model errs by judging the

appearance of words and grammatical features according to "presence or absence" rather

than "accumulation." By doing so, the challenger model misses the diachronic

development of a grammatical feature in the different periods of the text.

A helpful example is seen in the words used for "kingdom" in the HB. In table

7, for example, why is there a higher concentration of מַלְכוּת in books conventionally

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[34] See Hornkohl, "Biblical Hebrew: Periodization," 319, 321.

[35] "The relative dating of the archaic corpus does not hinge on a single feature, but on cumulative evidence." See Pat-El and Wilson-Wright, "Features of Archaic Biblical Hebrew," 409.

[36] Dresher, "Methodological Issues," 26. Zevit adds, "to the best of my knowledge, [the challenger's method] is not used in historical linguistics because studies of well-attested languages based on collections of abundant data indicate that often what is common and typical of a language during a late period developed from sporadic, occasional usage in an earlier period." See Zevit, "Not-So-Random Thoughts," 473.

[37] It is beyond the scope of this work to give a sustained defense of the traditionalist model. For the most up-to-date treatment of the subject, see Kim, *Early Biblical Hebrew, Late Biblical Hebrew, and Linguistic Variability*; Notarius, "Historical Linguistics Is Not Text-Dating: A Review of Early Biblical Hebrew, Late Biblical Hebrew, and Linguistic Variability: A Sociolinguistic Evaluation of the Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts by Dong-Hyuk Kim"; Tania Notarius, "Just a Little Bend on the S-Curve: The Rise and Fall of Linguistic Change in Post-Classical Biblical Hebrew," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 32, no. 2 (2018): 201–16; Notarius, "The Archaic System of Verbal Tenses in 'Archaic' Biblical Poetry"; Rooker, "Recent Trends in the Linguistic Analysis of Biblical Hebrew"; Vern, *Dating Archaic Biblical Hebrew Poetry*; Pat-El and Wilson-Wright, "Features of Archaic Biblical Hebrew and the Linguistic Dating Debate"; Hendel and Joosten, *How Old Is the Hebrew Bible?*

believed to be exilic/postexilic and a lower concentration in the books that are conventionally believed to be pre-exilic?[38] See table 5 below. While the challenger model has certainly pointed out some inconsistencies and deficiencies in the diachronic method, it has not disproven the plausibility of the traditional diachronic model, nor has it offered a suitable alternative. The challenger model does not, and cannot, account for the variation of words, forms, syntax, and grammatical features in books throughout the standard periodization of ABH, CBH, and LBH. Their theory, which purports that variation of grammatical features in books of different periods is nothing more than stylistic differences, is novel, methodologically unsustainable, and empirically unproven.

Table 5. Distribution of מַמְלָכָה and מַלְכוּת in the MT

Book	מַמְלָכָה	מַלְכוּת	מַלְכוּת %
Numbers	2	1	33
Samuel	12	1	8
Kings	17	1	6
Jeremiah	17	3	15
Ezra	1	6	86
Nehemiah	1	2	67
Chronicles	22	28	56

Though it is extreme to say that the majority of linguistic differences in the HB are a matter of style, it is, nonetheless correct to recognize that style is certainly a factor and must not be ruled out. Diachronic observations *alone* cannot sufficiently date a text. Again, Hurvitz's criteria can only suggest a text's relative date, not its absolute date.

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[38] While Chronicles and Ezra are both late, the author(s) of Chronicles were more concerned to imitate elements of the earlier grammar. And yet, the 28 occurrences of מַלְכוּת betray the author's linguistic typology. Dresher, "Methodological Issues," 29, 33.

Furthermore, when attempting to ascertain the relative date of a text, one must recognize that at least some of the language variation may be explained by other non-diachronic rationale such as diglossia,[39] regional dialects[40] or language contact.[41] These non-diachronic explanations tend to share more in common with the view that observed language variations are synchronic rather than diachronic in character. But, as John A. Cook notes, "there is no *a priori* reason why diachronic and synchronic sorts of explanations should be mutually exclusive."[42] The attempt to identify diachronic development in Hebrew is much more than numbering words, they must also be weighed.[43]

A Rubric for Linguistic Periodization

Hurvitz's criteria do not operate in a vacuum. Rather, they work in conjunction with a proposed periodization of the Hebrew Bible. Many scholars have proffered their own theories of periodization as a starting point for doing the work of linguistically dating texts. There are, no doubt, some obvious challenges to the methodological approach which begins with dividing up the HB into different periods and then examining a particular text in order to discern which period it most closely approximates.

[39] See Gary A. Rendsburg, *Diglossia in Ancient Hebrew*, American Oriental Series 72 (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1990).

[40] See Gary A. Rendsburg, "Notes on Israelian Hebrew (I)," in *Michael: Historical, Epigraphical and Biblical Studies in Honor of Prof. Michael Heltzer*, ed. Yitshak Avishur and Robert Deutsch (Tel Aviv: Archaeological Center Publications, 1999), 255–58; Gary A. Rendsburg, "Notes on Israelian Hebrew (II)," *JNSL* 26, no. 1 (2000): 33–45.

[41] Young, *Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew*, 60–63.

[42] John A. Cook, "Detecting Development in Biblical Hebrew Using Diachronic Typology," in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 83.

[43] "When individual cases are examined, some cause which cannot be tabulated may appear for the presence or absence of a given word in a particular writing." See S. R. Driver, "On Some Alleged Linguistic Affinities of the Elohist," *Journal of Philology* 11 (1882): 201–36.

The Challenge of Circularity

The challengers have rightly pointed out that there is something very circular about dividing up the HB into 'linguistic' periods and then dating a particular text according to the features of those periods. However, some circularity is inevitable. Hurvitz's model is both inductive and deductive. One begins with a particular designation of periodization, then examines texts to see into which period they might fit. As new insights come to light from the examination of particular vocabulary, grammatical features, and syntax, the corpus of books in their respective periods is modified. Tania Notarius, an advocate of the traditionalist model, likens the process of dating biblical texts to a hermeneutical circle.[44] It is not a vicious circle since it is augmented and fueled by a continuous stream of new information.[45] Some texts are difficult, if not impossible, to date and, accordingly, a period should not be forced upon them. This is particularly the case with many Psalms which defy any attempts at dating.

Periodization as a Foil

The enterprise of relative linguistic text dating is still young and accordingly, while some attempts have been made to linguistically date various texts in the HB, a good number of texts have not been examined with the rigor necessary to draw anything close to dogmatic conclusions. Therefore, what follows below is an attempt to lay out distinctive corpora of texts that roughly represent different periods within the historical-linguistic development of the Hebrew language.[46] The corpus of literature in each period represents a rough consensus within the circles of those who see relative text dating as a possible by-product of historical-linguistic analysis. I offer the following periods as a foil

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[44] On the idea of the "hermeneutical circle," see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, ed. John Cumming, trans. Garrett Barden (New York: Seabury Press, 1975).

[45] See Elizabeth Anne Kinsella, "Hermeneutics and Critical Hermeneutics: Exploring the Possibilities within the Art of Interpretation," *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research [Online]* 7, no. 3 (May 2006). Cf. Notarius, "Historical Linguistics Is Not Text-Dating," 394.

[46] Cook, "Detecting Development," 89.

against which I will seek to date various elements within Hab 3.

Archaic Biblical Hebrew (ABH)

The Archaic Biblical Hebrew (ABH) corpus is generally believed to include the following texts: Gen 49, Exod 15:1–18, Num 23:7–10, 23:18–24, 24:3–9, 24:16–19, Deut 32:1–43 and 33:1–29, Judg 5:1–30, 1 Sam 2:1–10, 2 Sam 22:2–51=Ps 18 and Ps 68.[47] These texts tend to be poetic and bear many structural and metrical affinities with Ugaritic poetry.[48] The motifs in these poems contain an abundance of mythopoeic elements and a high concentration of *hapax legomena*.[49] Though scholars will haggle over a *terminus ad quo* and *terminus ad quem,* a window of ca. 1300–1000 BC will be used in this work.

Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH)

Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH)[50] is the language of biblical and extra-biblical material from the First Temple Period (tenth century–sixth century BC) and

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[47] Agustinus Gianto, "Archaic Biblical Hebrew," in *A Handbook of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 20. Most scholars are less inclined to assign an absolute date to these texts and more inclined to simply conclude that they are earlier than Classic Biblical Hebrew (CBH). See Pat-El and Wilson-Wright, "Features of Archaic Biblical Hebrew and the Linguistic Dating Debate," 400; Cf. Alice Mandell, "Archaic Biblical Hebrew," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, ed. Geoffrey Khan (Leiden: Brill, 2013); David Noel Freedman, "Archaic Forms in Early Hebrew Poetry," *ZAW* 72, no. 2 (1960): 101–7.

[48] See Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk"; William Foxwell Albright, "The Oracles of Balaam," *JBL* 63, no. 3 (September 1944): 207–33; William Foxwell Albright, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32," *VT* 9, no. 4 (October 1, 1959): 339–46; William L Moran, "Hebrew Language in Its Northwest Semitic Background," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, ed. G.E. Wright (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1979), 54–72; Cassuto, "Chapter III of Habakkuk and the Ras Shamra Texts"; Yitsḥak Avishur, *Studies in Hebrew and Ugaritic Psalms*, Publications of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1994); Avishur, "Habakkuk 3"; Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*, SBLDS 21 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975).

[49] Some scholars argue that high concentrations of *hapax legomena*, are themselves, a valid indication of the archaic shape of a text. See, for example Shelomo Morag, "'Layers of Antiquity' — Some Linguistic Observations on the Oracles of Balaam / רובדי קדמות: עיונים לשוניים במשלי בלעם," *Tarbiz / תרביץ נ* 24–1 (1980); Cf. Chaim Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena in the Light of Akkadian and Ugaritic*, SBL Dissertation Series 37 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978).

[50] Also referred to as Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH).

includes the Pentateuch,[51] the Deuteronomistic History (i.e., Joshua–Kings), Isaiah 1–39,[52] Hosea, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, various Psalms and the relevant epigraphic material.[53] The inscriptional and epigraphic material from this period is especially helpful in strengthening the certainty of a relative date. Whereas the manuscript evidence presents the challenge of textual updating and levelling, which can obscure the date of the text, the inscriptional and epigraphic material is something of a fossilization of the period in which it was composed. This provides an added control to the dating of various lexical or grammatical features.

Transitional Biblical Hebrew (TBH)

Transitional Biblical Hebrew (TBH) characterizes texts that date to a period extending from the close of the First Temple period, through exile, until the period of the restoration. Books or sections of books conventionally attributed to this period are 2 Kgs

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[51] Some scholars will include the entire Pentateuch in the CBH period while others will include only the Priestly (P) portions of the Pentateuch. For questions on the dating of P and the historical-linguistic challenges for dating, see Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study*; Avi Hurvitz, "Dating the Priestly Source in Light of the Historical Study of Biblical Hebrew: A Century after Wellhausen," *ZAW* 100, no. 3 (1988): 88–100; Gary A. Rendsburg, "Late Biblical Hebrew and the Date of 'P,'" *The Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 12 (1980): 65–80; Joseph Blenkinsopp, "An Assessment of the Alleged Pre-Exilic Date of the Priestly Material in the Pentateuch," *ZAW* 108, no. 4 (1996): 495–518.

[52] The challenges that accompany the dating of the poetry in Isa 1–39 cause some to doubt placing it in the CBH period. See Aaron D. Hornkohl, "Biblical Hebrew: Periodization," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, ed. Geoffrey Khan (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 321.

[53] Hornkohl, "Biblical Hebrew: Periodization," 321; See especially, Avi Hurvitz, "The Relevance of Biblical Hebrew Linguistics for the Historical Study of Ancient Israel," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies--Division A: The Bible and Its World*, ed. Ron Margolin (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1999), 21–33; Ian Young, "Late Biblical Hebrew and Hebrew Inscriptions," in *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology*, ed. Ian Young, JSOTSup 369 (London, England: T. & T. Clark, 2003), 276–311.

24–25,[54] Jeremiah,[55] Isaiah 40–66,[56], Ezekiel,[57] Joel,[58] Haggai,[59] Zechariah,[60] Malachi,[61] and Lamentations.[62]

Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH)

Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH) includes texts with content dating unequivocally to the Persian Period or beyond. Many scholars include the following books in this period: Esther,[63] Daniel,[64] Ezra–Nehemiah,[65] Chronicles,[66] various psalms such as 103,

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[54] See Aaron D. Hornkohl, "Transitional Biblical Hebrew," in *A Handbook of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 33. There is some indication that the second half of 2 Kings has a later linguistic profile than the first half. See Aaron D. Hornkohl, "Transitional Biblical Hebrew," 33–40. However, since no systematic diachronic analysis of the language of 2 Kgs has been undertaken, we will limit 2 Kgs 24–25 to the TBH period and leave the rest of 1 and 2 Kgs to the CBH period.

[55] See Colin Smith, "'With an Iron Pen and a Diamond Tip': Linguistic Peculiarities of the Book of Jeremiah" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2003).

[56] See T. K. Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah* (London, England: A. and C. Black, 1895), 255–70; Driver, *Introduction*, 240; However, for a defense of a pre-exilic date of Isa 40–66, see Mark F. Rooker, "Dating Isaiah 40-66: What Does the Linguistic Evidence Say?," *WTJ* 58, no. 2 (1996): 303–12.

[57] See Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study*; Mark F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition: The Language of the Book of Ezekiel*, JSOTSup 90 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1990).

[58] Elie Assis, "The Date and Meaning of the Book of Joel," *VT* 61, no. 2 (2011): 163–83.

[59] See Seoung-Yun Shin, "A Lexical Study on the Language of Haggai-Zechariah-Malachi and Its Place in the History of Biblical Hebrew" (PhD diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007); Seoung-Yun Shin, "A Diachronic Study of the Language of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi," *JBL* 135, no. 2 (2016): 265–81.

[60] See Andrew E. Hill, "Dating Second Zechariah: A Linguistic Reexamination," *Hebrew Annual Review* 6 (1982): 105–34; Shin, "A Lexical Study on the Language of Haggai-Zechariah-Malachi and Its Place in the History of Biblical Hebrew."

[61] See Andrew E. Hill, "The Book of Malachi: Its Place in Post-Exilic Chronology Linguistically Reconsidered" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1981); Shin, "A Lexical Study."

[62] See F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp, "Linguistic Evidence for the Date of Lamentations," *The Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 26 (1998): 1–36.

[63] See Driver, *Introduction*, 535–40; Cf. Bergey, "The Book of Esther."

[64] Driver, *Introduction*, 504–8.

[65] Driver, *Introduction*, 553.

[66] Driver, *Introduction,* 535–40; Arno Kropat, *Die syntax des autors der Chronik verglichen mit der seiner quellen; ein beitrag zur historischen syntax des hebräischen*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 16 (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1909); Robert Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose*, Harvard Semitic Monograph Series 12 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the Harvard Semitic Museum, 1976); Robert Rezetko, "Dating Biblical Hebrew: Evidence from Samuel-Kings and Chronicles," in *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and*

117, 119, 124, 125, 133, 144, and 145,[67] the narrative framework of Job (1–2, 42:7–17),[68]

and Qoheleth.[69] Finally, some texts are quite difficult to date: Jonah,[70] many of the

Psalms, Proverbs,[71] the poetic sections of Job,[72] Song of Songs,[73] and Ruth.[74]

Typology, ed. Ian Young, JSOTSup 369 (London, England: T & T Clark, 2003), 215–250.

[67] See Hurvitz, *The Transition Period in Biblical Hebrew*.

[68] See Hurvitz, "Date of the Prose-Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered."

[69] Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes*, Clark's Foreign Theological Library 54 (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1891), 190–99; Driver, *Introduction*, 474–75; Avi Hurvitz, "Book Review: Daniel C. Fredericks, Qoheleth's Language: Re-Evaluating Its Nature and Date," *HS* 31 (1990): 144–54; Avi Hurvitz, "The Language of Qoheleth and Its Historical Settings within Biblical Hebrew," in *The Language of Qohelet* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2007), 23–34; A. Schoors, *The Preacher Sought to Find Pleasing Words: A Study of the Language of Qoheleth*, vol. 1, 2 vols., Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 41 (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 1992); A. Schoors, *The Preacher Sought to Find Pleasing Words: A Study of the Language of Qoheleth*, vol. 2, 2 vols., Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 143 (Leuven, Belgium: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 2004); C. L. Seow, "Linguistic Evidence and the Dating of Qohelet," *JBL* 115 (1996): 643–66; For a defense of an early date for Qoheleth, see Daniel C. Fredericks, *Qoheleth's Language: Re-Evaluating Its Nature and Date*, Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies, 3 (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1988); Gleason Leonard Archer, "The Linguistic Evidence for the Date of 'Ecclesiastes,'" *JETS* 12, no. 3 (June 1, 1969): 167–81.

[70] See Driver, *Introduction*, 322; Athalya Brenner, "The Language of the Book of Jonah as a Means of Establishing the Date of its Composition (in Hebrew)," *Beit Mikra* 79 (1979): 396–405; Elisha Qimron, "The Language of the book of Jonah as an Indicator for Fixing the Time of its Composition (in Hebrew)," *Beit Mikra* 81 (1980): 180–83; George M. Landes, "Linguistic Criteria and the Date of the Book of Jonah," *Eretz-Israel* 16 (1982): 147–70; George M. Landes, "A Case for the Sixth-Century BCE Dating for the Book of Jonah," in *Realia Dei: Essays in Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Edward F. Campbell, Jr. at His Retirement*, ed. Preston H. Williams Jr. and Theodore Hiebert (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 100–116.

[71] See Christine Roy Yoder, *Wisdom as a Woman of Substance: A Socioeconomic Reading of Proverbs 1-9 and 31:10-31*, Beihefte Zur Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 304 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2001).

[72] Avi Hurvitz, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the Biblical Period: The Problem of 'Aramaisms' in Linguistic Research on the Hebrew Bible," in *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology*, ed. Ian Young, JSOTSup 369 (London, England: T. & T. Clark, 2003), 33.

[73] Driver, *Introduction*, 448–50; Dobbs-Allsopp dates Song of Songs to the Late period but some of his conclusions are questionable. See F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp, "Late Linguistic Features in the Song of Songs," in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs*, ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn, Beihefte Zur Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 346 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2005), 27–77.

[74] Driver, *Introduction*, 454–56; Avi Hurvitz, "On the term שָׁלַף נַעַל (šālap naʾ al) in Ruth 4:7 (in Hebrew)," *Shnaton--An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 1 (1975): 45–49; Robert D. Holmstedt, "Dating the Language of Ruth: A Study in Method" (Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, Ottawa, 2009), 1–22, https://tinyurl.com/y6c38mhk. Accessed 31 July 2020.

Table 6. Linguistic periodization in the Hebrew bible

ABH (ca. 1300–1000 BC)	CBH (ca. 1000–587 BC)	TBH (ca. 587–520 BC)	LBH (ca. 520–200 BC)	Difficult to Date
Gen 49, Exod 15:1–18, Numbers 23:7–10, 18–24, 24:3–9, 16–19, Deut 32:1–43 and 33:1–29, Judges 5:1–30, 1 Sam 2:1–10 2 Sam 22:2–51=Psalms 18, and Psalm 78.	Pentateuch, the Deuteronomistic History (i.e., Joshua–Kings), Isaiah 1–39, Hosea, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and various Psalms	2 Kgs 24–25, Jeremiah, Isaiah 40–66, Ezekiel, Joel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Lamentations	Esther, Daniel, Ezra–Nehemiah, Chronicles, Psalms103, 117, 119, 124, 125, 133, 144, and 145, the narrative framework of Job (1–2, 42:7–17), and Qoheleth	Jonah, many Psalms, Proverb, the poetic sections of Job, Song of Songs, and Ruth

Conclusion

Joining Hurvitz's four criteria for detecting late elements with the above periodization, chapter 6 will identify five grammatical features which should be expected from a LBH text and show that those features do not occur in Habakkuk 3. Instead, two ABH features and three CBH features occur. When these diachronic observations are paired with the thematic, theodicean, theological, and form-critical connections between Hab 1–2 and 3, the cumulative evidence supports the original-inclusion view of Hab 3.

FIVE GRAMMATICAL FEATURES WHICH SUGGEST
A PRE-EXILIC PROVENANCE OF HABAKKUK 3

Chapters 1–4 of this work have shown the theological, thematic, theodicean, and form-critical connections between Hab 1–2 and 3. Chapter 5 laid out the methodology and relevance for linguistically dating elements within Hab 3. Utilizing Avi Hurvitz's four criteria for identifying late elements in a text, together with the periodization of BH laid out in chapter 5, this chapter presents five grammatical features from Hab 3 that strongly suggest the original inclusion of Hab 3 in the seventh century: (1) the old 3ms pronominal suffix (3:4, 11), (2) the enclitic *mem* in Hab 3:8(2x), (3) the appearance of the CBH *yiqtol* + לֹא pattern in 3:17 vs. its LBH counterpart *liqtol*[1] + אֵין or *liqtol* + לֹא, (4) the appearance of the CBH usage of a clause of negation with וְאֵין (3:17) vs. the LBH counterpart of a clause of negation with לְאֵין, and (5) the CBH usage of the preposition עַד vs. the LBH counterpart of עַד + לְ. While these linguistic observations are not meant to stand on their own, when they are combined with the synchronic arguments laid out in chapters 1–4, and the additional historical-linguistic arguments laid out in chapters 6–8, a total picture emerges indicating the plausibility of chapter 3's original, seventh-century inclusion in the book of Habakkuk.

3ms Pronominal suffix ה

The old 3ms pronominal suffix הֵ- is used in 3:4 and 11. At 3:4, we read עֻזֹּה ("his strength"). The LXX agrees with this reading (ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ).[2] At 3:11, the MT has

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[1] Inf. cs. + לְ.

[2] BHS suggest that the whole phrase וְשָׁם חֶבְיוֹן עֻזֹּה was probably added.

זְבֻלָה. This is the only place in the HB where זְבֻל ("lofty residence") is found in this form.[3] The Masoretic pointing suggests a masculine singular absolute form of זְבֻל + a directional ה or possibly a 3fs suffix.[4] The LXX has ἐν τῇ τάξει αὐτῆς ("in their order"). Though different in gender, the LXX sees a possessive suffix rather than a directional suffix.[5] MurXII[6] has זבולה, whose pointing is virtually impossible to discern. A directional ה does not make good sense of the line and seems out of place in the MT. BHS suggests a preposition and a 3ms suffix: (בְּ)זְבֻלֹה. Reading ה־ as the 3ms pronominal suffix, the line reads: שֶׁמֶשׁ יָרֵחַ עָמַד זְבֻלֹה ("the sun and the moon stood still in its place"). A 3ms suffix makes the most sense in the line.[7] The verb עָמַד (Qal qatal, 3ms) agrees in gender and number with יָרֵחַ (masc. sing.). עמד here means to "stand still"[8] and takes as its subject both שֶׁמֶשׁ and יָרֵחַ. The two luminaries, syntactically represented by יָרֵחַ, stand still in its (i.e., "their") place. Though זְבֻל typically refers to the lofty habitation of YHWH, here it refers to the habitation, or dominion, of the two luminaries.

Linguistic Distribution and Contrast

Throughout the HB, the standard 3ms suffix is used some 13,974 times.[9] The 3ms suffix ה is rare, occurring only 53 times (0.37% of the time). Of these, 5 are found in

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[3] See *HALOT*, s.v., "זְבֻל." זְבֻל appears in the masculine singular absolute state in 1 Kgs 8:13 and 2 Chron 6:2, and in the masculine singular construct state in Isa 63:15 and Ps 49:15.

[4] This is certainly how the LXX translates it. The Tg has במדוריהון ("their dwelling" or "compartments").

[5] The feminine singular in the line concords with the feminine singular of ἡ σελήνη ("the moon").

[6] The Minor Prophets Scroll from Qumran (Hebrew). MurXII was discovered in 1955 in the Wadi Murabbaʿât, 17 km south of Qumran. It is conventionally dated to the second century AD.

[7] So also, Theodore Hiebert, *God of My Victory: The Ancient Hymn in Habakkuk 3*, Harvard Semitic Monographs, no. 38 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 31; William Foxwell Albright, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," in *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy. Presented to Theodore H. Robinson on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday, August 9th, 1946*, ed. H. H. Rowley, Society for Old Testament Study (Edinburgh, Scottland: T & T Clark, 1950), 12.

[8] For similar uses, see Gen 19:17, 1 Sam 20:38, 2 Sam 20:12, Jer 4:6, Josh 10:13, and Jon 1:15.

[9] Some of the most common forms are ו־, הו־, and יו־.

the ABH corpus (Gen 49:11 [x2], Num 23:8, Hab 3:4, 11), 26 in the CBH corpus (Gen 9:21, 12:8, 13:3, 35:21; Exod 22:4, 26, 32:17, 25; Lev 23:13; Num 4:9, 10:36; Deut 34:7; Josh 11:16, Judg 9:49; 2 Sam 2:9; 2 Kgs 6:10, 19:23, 20:13, 22:5; 1 Isa 15:3, 16:7, 39:2; Hos 13:2; Nah 1:15; Hab 1:9, 15), 21 in the TBH corpus (Jer 2:3, 21, 8:6, 10 [x2], 15:10, 17:24, 20:7, 22:18, 48:31, 38 Ezek 11:15, 12:14, 20:40, 31:18, 32:31, 36:10, 39:11, 48:15, 18, 21) and only once in the LBH corpus (Dan 11:10, *kethib*).[10] The high occurrence of ה in the TBH corpus may be due to archaizing tendencies, a matter of style, or the occurrence of the grammatical feature in a poetic section.[11] However, that only one occurrence is found in what is conventionally considered to be a LBH book (Dan 11:10) signals that this feature was highly uncommon in the Persian period. It is reasonable to conclude that had Hab 3 been composed and/or added to the book in the Persian period, or later, one would not expect to find this grammatical feature present. This lends weight to the claim that Hab 3 had a seventh century provenance.

Extrabiblical Sources

In order to trace the predominantly early use of the 3ms suffix ה, I will compare its use in the NWS inscriptions, Hebrew inscriptions, DSS corpus (religious and sectarian), Siraḥ, and the Targums (where applicable). What emerges is that the 3ms suffix ה is more common in the older texts and less common in the texts conventionally dated to the Persian and Greco-Roman periods. By way of methodology, it is important to note two controls by which the statistics are tallied. First, all the Northwest Semitic languages of Syria-Palestine have the "*h*" form of the third person pronouns though with time it morphed.[12]

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[10] Three occurrences were found in Psalms nearly impossible to date (Pss 10, 27, 42).

[11] The enterprise of "updating" of the text was less stringent and consistent when it came to sections of poetry since, in many cases, updating would have disrupted the meter of the line.

[12] See Zellig S. Harris, *Development of the Canaanite Dialects: An Investigation in Linguistic History*, American Oriental Series 16 (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1939), 6.

The independent 3ms pronoun in languages like Phoenician, Moabite, and Hebrew is *hū*.[13] Joshua Blau explains how the 3ms pronominal suffix morphed and why the archaic 3ms suffix ה is sometimes still found in the HB:

> Since the 3ms of the suffix-tense originally terminated in *a…,* which in pause became lengthened, הו– was preserved in pause after long *ā* (e.g., שְׁמָרְהוּ). But after short *a* the *h* was elided and the emerging diphthong *aw* was monophthongized to וֹ–: **šamarahū > *šamaraw > שְׁמָרוֹ.* It is this וֹ– that serves as the usual pronominal suffix of the 3ms after singular nouns; from the three original forms *-uhū* (in the nominative), *-ihū* (in the genitive), and *-ahū* (> *-aw* > *ō;* in the accusative), it was *-ahū > -ō* that had the upper hand through the analogical influence of verbal forms of the third-person singular of the suffix-tense such as שְׁמָרוֹ and prepositions that originally terminated in the adverbial accusative ending *-a* (לוֹ 'to him,' עִמּוֹ 'with him,' etc., which influenced the emergence of שִׁירוֹ 'his song'). The archaic spelling ה- (as עִירֹה 'his foal' Gen 49:11), which attests the original consonantal *h* (*-ahū > ō*), still occurs in the biblical text.[14]

However, languages like Old, Imperial, biblical, and later Jewish Aramaic, do not undergo the same morphological evolution. The standard Aramaic 3ms pronominal suffix was ה (הֵ◌ for 3ms and הַ◌ for 3fs). Thus, when statistics are tallied, I do not count the occurrences of the 3ms suffix in Aramaic since it skews the overall results.[15] However, when the 3ms pronominal suffix ה occurs in Akkadian, Byblian, Moabite, and Phoenician, I do count the occurrence. Second, in both the extant texts and inscriptions, there are indecipherable words and characters which must be conjecturally reconstructed. Generally speaking, these examples will not be tallied in the overall statistics since they do not constitute clear examples of any given grammatical feature.

NWS Inscriptions. Inscriptions are helpful as a comparative tool since they are not emended like textual sources. Accordingly, an inscription provides a clearer

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[13] John Kaltner and Steven L. McKenzie, eds., *Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages*, Resources for Biblical Study 42 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 209; Cf. Joshua Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 2 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 171.

[14] Blau, *Phonology and Morphology*, 172.

[15] For example, in the Aramaic section in the book of Daniel (a book conventionally dated to the Persian period), there are 141 occurrences of the 3ms suffix ה in the Aramaic section, and only 1 occurrence in the Hebrew section. Conversely, in the Hebrew section, besides the one occurrence of the 3ms suffix ה, there are 141 occurrences of the alternative form(s): הו (5x), ו (136x, 2 of which are found with the energic nun).

picture of the common grammatical features available at any given point in history. Among the non-Aramaic NWS inscriptions, the 3ms pronominal suffix is used 76 times: ה (35x), ו (7x), הו (7x), י (24x), and ן (3x).[16] The 3ms suffix ה occurs 5 times in an eleventh-century Byblian Phoenician inscription (KAI1), 25 times in a ninth-century Moabite inscription (KAI181, the Mesha Stele), and 5 times in a seventh-century Phoenician dedicatory inscription (KAI286, the Ekron Inscription).[17] The use of the 3ms pronominal suffix in the NWS inscriptions reveals a high occurrence of ה prior to and in the seventh-century. That no occurrence is found after the seventh century BC suggests that the grammatical feature was not very common after the seventh-century in the extant NWS inscriptions. This, again, lends weight to the original inclusion of Hab 3 in the seventh century BC.

Hebrew Inscriptions. The Hebrew inscriptions, including all the minor and fragmentary inscriptions, date from 1200–586 BC. The 3ms pronominal suffix occurs 39 times: ה (18x), ו (19x),[18] and הו (2x).[19] Of the 18 occurrences of the suffix ה, 7

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[16] The 3ms suffix ה occurs 219 times in Aramaic inscriptions: KAI25 (1x), KAI201(3x), KAI202 (16x), KAI214 (28x), KAI215 (33x), KAI216 (2x), KAI222 (88x), KAI225 (4x), KAI226 (4x), KAI233 (2x), KAI236 (1x), KAI266 (1x), KAI309 (28x), KAI310 (1x), KAI312 (7x).

[17] All abbreviations of NWS and Hebrew inscriptions come from Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Sass, eds., *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals*, כתבי האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית למדעים החטיבה למדעי־הרוח (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1997). Cf. Johannes Renz and Wolfgang Röllig, eds., *Handbuch der althebräischen Epigraphik*, 3 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995); Graham I. Davies et al., eds., *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions: Corpus and Concordance*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1991). *KAI* stands for the text-collection *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften,* and the abbreviation *CIS* stands for *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*.

[18] Once as יו, and twice with the energic *nun* (נו).

[19] Once with the energic *nun* (נהו).

inscriptions were from ca. 800–700 BC, (KAjr[20] 20:2 [2x]; Qom[21] 3:1, 3 [2x], Silwan[22] 2:2 [2x]) and 11 inscriptions were from ca. 630–589 BC (Arad[23] 17:6, 28:1, 7, 40:4; Lachish 2:5, 3:12, 21, 4:6, 6:11, 12:4; MHsh[24] 1:2). While 39 occurrences of the 3ms pronominal suffix is not a high number, it is interesting to note that of these 39 instances, 46% of the occurrences were ה and 48% were ו. Furthermore, 11 of the 18 instances of the suffix ה were from ca. 630–589 BC, which happens to be the window of time wherein Habakkuk wrote his oracle. Assuming the inscriptions to be a better representation of the most common choices available in that time, it is much more likely that the author of Hab 3 would have chosen the 3ms pronominal suffix ה in the seventh or sixth century BC than during the Persian or Greco-Roman era.

Sectarian Writings from Qumran. In the sectarian writings from Qumran, there are 7,136 occurrences of the 3ms pronominal suffix. Of those, there are only 12 non-Aramaic occurrences of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה:[25] חֹירה in 4QpNah (ca. 50–25 BC), עמֹיה in 4Q225 [4QpsJub[a]] (ca. 30 BC to 20 AD), רעה in 4Q258 (ca. 30–1 BC),[26] ודרשׁה in 4Q265, (there is no date suggested for this document). In 4Q266, ["Damascus Document," (ca. 100–50 BC)], there are 7 occurrences: אפה in f2 2:21, לחללה in f5 2:6, בה

[20] From Kuntillet Ajrud, inscriptions are mostly in Hebrew with some in Phoenician script. See Z. Meshel, "The Israelite Religious Centre of Kuntillet' Ajrud, Sinai," in *Archaeology and Fertility Cult in the Ancient Mediterranean: Papers Presented at the First International Conference on Archaeology of the Ancient Mediterranean, the University of Malta, 2-5 September 1985*, ed. Anthony Bonanno (Amsterdam: B.R. Grüner, 1986), 238; Cf. B. A. Mastin, "Yahweh's Asherah, Inclusive Monotheism and Dating," in *In Search of Pre-Exilic Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. John Day, JSOTSup 406 (London, England: T & T Clark International, 2004), 326–51.

[21] From Khirbet el-Qom (ca. 800–700 BC). See Judith M. Hadley, "The Khirbet El-Qom Inscription," *VT* 37, no. 1 (1987): 50–62.

[22] From Silwan Necropolis inscriptions, in Hebrew. See Hershel Shanks, "The Tombs of Silwan," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 20, no. 3 (May 1994): 38–51.

[23] From Tel Arad. Unless otherwise mentioned, all inscriptions are in Hebrew.

[24] From Mesad Hashavyahu, believed to have been an ancient fortress on the border of ancient Judea facing the Philistine city of Ashdod.

[25] Two occurrences (4Q274, 4Q405) were not counted since they were highly speculative reconstructions of scribal erasure activity.

[26] Carbon dating results suggest either ca. 11 BC–78 AD or 95 BC–122 AD. See Abegg, Jr., *DSS Index*, s.v., "4Q258."

and בדרשה in f8 1:2, רעה and דעתה in f8 1:6, and רעה in f1 3:4. In 11Q19 (11QTemple^a),

(ca. 125–100 BC),[27] there is one occurrence, אביה (66:13).[28] All of these occurrences are found in texts dated between ca. 125 BC to 20 AD. The appearance of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה constitutes 0.16% of the entire sectarian Qumran writings. If anything, its appearance signals a conscious decision on the part of the scribe to express something archaically but, by no means, establishes a consistent pattern during the second century BC through the second century AD.

Sectarian Writings from Judean Desert. A search for the Hebrew 3ms pronominal suffix in the second-century AD sectarian writings from the Judean Desert yielded 157 occurrences. Of these, the standard ו occurred 119x, the ה suffix occurred 34x, and the הו suffix occurred 3 times. With one exception,[29] every occurrence of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה in the Judean Desert writings appears in some form of legal document or formal list of names.[30] For example, Mur 42[31] was a letter from the stewards of Beit Mashiko to Yeshua, son of Galgula, attesting to the ownership of a cow.[32] The phrase נפשה (lit. "his/its soul") occurs 16 times in these contracts (nearly half of the occurrences of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה) and appears to be part of some kind of fossilized archaic phrase, as is typical in contract writing. The phrase נפשה is no doubt influenced by the Aramaic expression על נפשה and carries the idea: "he is obliged to keep the contract" (see Mur 42:10).[33] A search for נֶפֶשׁ + the 3ms pronominal suffix ו yielded 5

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[27] Carbon dating assigns a date of 53–21 BC. See Abegg, Jr., *DSS Index*, s.v., "11Q19."

[28] The 3ms pronominal suffix is used 915 times in Ben Siraḥ. Of those, the ה– suffix occurs only 5 times (0.5%): וּמְקוֹרֹה (Sir 10:13), לחֹה (Sir 31:13), תסתורה (Sir 32:1), וגדלֹה (Sir 44:2). Ben Siraḥ was written ca. second century BC.

[29] Mas1h (Masada Ben Sira) 7:7 or Sira 44:2.

[30] For example, deeds of sale, promissory notes, receipts, deeds of gift, and contracts (farming, marriage, etc.).

[31] A letter discovered in the Wadi Murrabba'at.

[32] Abegg, Jr., *DSS Index*, s.v., "Mur42."

[33] Holger Gzella, "The Use of the Participle in the Hebrew Bar Kosiba Letters in the Light of Aramaic," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 14, no. 1 (2007): 91. The Aramaic expression does not, in and of itself,

occurrences among the same legal documents. So, while both suffixes were available to scribes, there seemed to be a predilection for the 3ms pronominal suffix ה. Another common use of the 3ms pronominal suffix is with כתבה (e.g., Mur 42:8–9). It seems to be a fixed formula which means "he has dictated it. The predilection to use these fixed phrases more than likely stemmed from a desire to portray legal documents in archaic language which imbued more gravitas into the contractual obligation. This curiosity aside, the standard 3ms pronominal suffixes ו and הו were chosen 77% of the time in the Judean Desert writings in the Roman period, while the 3ms pronominal suffix ה was chosen only 21% of the time.

Summary. The preceding analysis of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה reveals a number of important insights. First, though the 3ms suffix ה is rarely used in the Hebrew Bible (0.37% of the time), it is nonetheless present in the ABH corpus and has a strong presence in the CBH and TBH corpora. However, it is almost entirely absent in the LBH corpus with only one occurrence. While it is possible that the low occurrence of the 3ms suffix ה is due to an updating of the text, the vestigial presence of the grammatical feature in mostly poetic sections of the ABH, CBH, and TBH corpora suggests that there was enough of a social awareness of the feature that it was left in the text, even if it was recognized to be archaic. However, its near absence in the LBH corpora suggests that it had mostly fallen out of use during that time.

Second, the NWS and Hebrew inscriptions reveal that both 3ms suffixes ה and ו were common options for scribes prior and up to the seventh century BC. This means that the two occurrences of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה in Hab 3 fit well in the seventh century BC. Third, between 125 BC and 20 AD, the appearance of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה constitutes only 0.16% of the entire sectarian Qumran writings. Fourth, the standard 3ms suffix in the sectarian writings from the Judean Desert (ca. second century

prove an Aramaic influence but rather indicates the impact of the existing legal and administrative tradition in Aramaic from which set phrases of this kind were taken.

AD) was ו, occurring 75% while ה occurred only 21%. However, the vast majority of the occurrences of ה were intentional archaisms intended to lend gravitas to legal documents. Its usage in Siraḥ constitutes 0.5% of all uses of the 3ms suffix. These findings suggest that it is more plausible that Hab 3 was written in the seventh century BC than in the Persian or Greco-Roman era.

Enclitic *mem* in Habakkuk 3:8

Hurvitz's four criteria work well with the pointed MT. However, the enclitic *mem* is an example of a vestige of an ancient grammatical feature that had fallen out of use by the time the text was pointed, and as result, was inaccurately pointed. So, with this example, I will not so much be utilizing Hurvitz's four criteria as much as examining whether or not it is plausible to conclude that Hab 3 includes the vestige of an ancient grammatical feature known as the enclitic *mem.*

The two occurrences of בנהרים in Hab 3:8 may be cases of a petrified enclitic *mem* which many scholars believe to be an archaic Hebrew grammatical feature.[34] Based on its widespread use in Akkadian[35] and other Northwest Semitic languages such as Ugaritic (*-m* suffix),[36] the Amarna letters (*-ma/-mi*),[37] Amorite personal names (with the

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[34] See Avi Hurvitz, "Originals and Imitations in Biblical Poetry: A Comparative Examination of 1 Sam 2:1-10 and Ps 113:5-9," in *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1985), 116; *GKC*, §90, para. K; Joüon, §93; Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, 80–110.

[35] See Wolfram von Soden, *Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik*, 3rd ed., Analecta Orientalia 33 (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1995), 221.

[36] See Daniel Sivan, *A Grammar of the Ugaritic Language*, Handbuch Der Orientalistik 28 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 192–94; Gregorio del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín, *Diccionario de la Lengua Ugarítica*, Aula Orientalis Supplementa 7 (Barcelona: Editorial AUSA, 1996), 2.251-52; See also W. G. E. Watson, "Final -m in Ugaritic," *AuOr* 10 (1992): 223 fn. 4 for an extensive list of all previous studies on the enclitic mem in Ugaritic; W. G. E. Watson, "Final -m in Ugaritic Again," *AuOr* 12 (1994): 95–103; Wilfred G. E. Watson, "Final -m in Ugaritic Yet Again," *AuOr* 14 (1996): 259–68; Harold Louis Ginsberg, *Kitvé Ugarit* (Jerusalem: Bialik Foundation, 1936), 20, 29, 63, 74.

[37] Anson F. Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets: A Linguistic Analysis of the Mixed Dialect Used by Scribes from Canaan*, vol. 3, Handbook of Oriental Studies: The Near and Middle East 25 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 227-48; Daniel Sivan, *Grammatical Analysis and Glossary of the Northwest Semitic Vocables in Akkadian Texts of the 15th-13th C. B.C. from Canaan and Syria*, Alter Orient Und Altes Testament 214 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 124–26.

suffixes *-ma/-mi*),[38] and texts from Ebla which show the regular Akkadian suffix *-ma,*[39] it is reasonable to suppose that the phenomenon of the enclitic *mem* was also a feature of an earlier iteration of BH, only vestiges of which still remain in the MT. According to Chaim Cohen, the enclitic *mem* is a suffix that is "pushed aside," when it occurs attached to a noun in the construct state.[40] As a suffix, it is not meant to be considered in the regular morphological analysis of the form.[41] W. G. E. Watson has cogently argued that we should consider the enclitic *mem* as a "focus marker."[42]

Because it had fallen out of use at some point, later scribes simply read the enclitic *mem* as a plural marker and the orthography was revised to match. Waltke and O'Connor note that ם- became ים-, and the oral tradition was reshaped.[43] Most common in poetry, the enclitic *mem* is most clearly seen in the light of external evidence.

2 Sam 22:16		ויראו אפקי ים
Ps 18:16		יראו אפיקי מים

Whereas 2 Sam 22:16 has lost the *mem,* Ps 18:16 has attached the *mem* to the ים to make

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[38] See H. B. Huffmon, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts: A Structural and Lexical Study* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), 228.

[39] See Giovanni Pettinato, *The Archives of Ebla: An Empire Inscribed in Clay* (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 63, 307–8.

[40] See Chaim Cohen, "The Enclitic-Mem in Biblical Hebrew: Its Existence and Initial Discovery," in *Sefer Moshe--The Moshe Weinfeld Jubilee Volume: Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East, Qumran, and Post-Biblical Judaism*, ed. Chaim Cohen, Avi Hurvitz, and Shalom M. Paul (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 235 for the initial examples profered by R. Yonah ibn Janach more than 1,000 years ago.

[41] Cohen, "The enclitic-mem," 235. For a detailed discussion of the enclitic *mem* in the text and in the history of scholarship in general see, H.D. Hummel, "Enclitic Mem in Early Northwest Semitic, Especially Hebrew," *JBL* 76, no. 2 (1957): 85–106; Marvin H Pope, "Ugaritic Enclitic -m," *JCS* 5, no. 4 (1951): 123–28; Mitchell Joseph Dahood, "G. R. Driver and the Enclitic Mem in Phoenician," *Biblica* 49, no. 1 (1968): 89–90; John A. Emerton, "Are There Examples of Enclitic Mem in the Hebrew Bible?," in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran*, ed. Michael V. Fox et al. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 321–38; James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 31–33.

[42] Watson, "Final -m in Ugaritic Yet Again," 250–52; Watson stands on the foundation of Hatte Anne Rubenstein Blejer, "Discourse Markers in Early Semitic, and Their Reanalyses in Subsequent Dialects" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1986); Cf. John Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, Harvard Semitic Studies 34 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 204, who calls it a "focusing morpheme."

[43] *IBHS,* §1.6.2e.

it מִם, a plausible emendation. Waltke and O'Connor suggest that the reading should be: וַיֵּרָאוּ אֲפִיקֵי־ם יָם ("…the depths of the sea were seen").[44]

The enclitic *mem* is identified in a few different ways. First, when the presence of the *mem* creates some kind of textual, syntactical, semantic, or lexical problem, James Barr suggests that a philological treatment, which exposes the *mem* for what it is, would remove the difficulty."[45] Second, any proposed solution suggesting an enclitic *mem* should not create more problems in the rest of the text. Third, it does not necessarily follow that an enclitic *mem* should be ruled out if the manuscript witnesses agree with the MT and the various versions presuppose the same reading. Robertson notes that "if the Masoretes didn't recognize its existence, neither did the copyists or translators."[46] Fourth, Chaim Cohen worked through 15 classic cases of the enclitic *mem* in the HB and noted three of its major uses: "(1) to separate a construct from its dependent genitive…(2) for the purpose of variation when biblical passages are repeated… [and]…(3) allowing for an additional secondary meaning."[47]

The second of Cohen's major uses appears when Hab 3:8 and 9 are contrasted. Habakkk 3:8 uses the mp form of נָהָר two times (הַבִּנְהָרִים and בַּנְּהָרִים). However, in Hab 3:9, an mp alternative of the noun is used that is feminine in form (נְהָרוֹת). While the author could simply be alternating the different mp forms for stylistic reasons, there is another kind of variation that is more plausible. The most common form of the plural is נהרות, occurring 34x (24x in the absolute state[48] and 10x in the construct state[49]).

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[44] *IBHS* §9.8a.

[45] Barr, *Comparative Philology*, 32. Robertson adds that even if the MT is the more difficult reading, "before reading an unrecognized morpheme the possibility of accounting for the difficulty by internal corruption of the MT must be explored." See *Linguistic Dating,* 78–79.

[46] Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence,* 79. Robertson highlights twenty different kinds of difficulties encountered when attempting to identify an enclitic *mem* in the MT. See pp. 80–110.

[47] Cohen, "The Enclitic-Mem," 260.

[48] Exod 8:1; Job 28:11; Ps 24:2, 78:16, 89:26, 93:3 [x3], 98:8, 107:33; Cant 8:7; Isa 19:6, 41:18, 42:15, 43:2, 19, 20, 47:2, 50:2; Jer 46:7, 8; Nah 1:4, 2:7; Hab 3:9.

[49] Exod 7:19; 2 Kgs 5:12; Ps 74:15, 137:1; Isa 44:27; Ezek 31:4, 31:15, 32:2 [x2], and 32:14

Alternatively, נהרים occurs only 8x (5x in the absolute state[50] and 3x in the construct

state).[51] With the exception of Hab 3:8, 9, these two forms never appear in close

proximity to one another.[52] That makes Hab 3:8, 9 a rarity. It is more likely that the

variation is between the two uses of נהר־ם in Hab 3:8 and נהרות in Hab 3:9. This is how

M. O'Connor conceives of the lines in 3:8a-c and 3:9c:[53]

הבנהר־ם חרה יהוה		8a

Is it kindled against River, Yahweh?

אם בנהר־ם אפך		8b

Is your anger kindled against River?

אם־בים עברתך		8c

Is your wrath kindled against Sea?

נהרות תבקע־ארץ		9c

You split the earth with rivers.

When the enclitic *mem* is read instead of the mp נהרים, the parallelism between the

singular נהר־ם (River) and ים (Sea) are maintained.[54] O'Connor rightly notes that the *mem*

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where it takes the feminine plural construct state form.

[50] Isa 18:2, 7; 33:21; Hab 3:8 (x2)

[51] Job 20:17; Isa 18:1; Zeph 3:10. These results are slightly different from *HALOT,* which recorded the נהרים form 7x while the נהרות form occurs 33x.

[52] Whereas the Pentateuch, 2 Kgs, the Psalms, Canticles, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Nahum uniformly use the נהרות form, a mixture of both the נהרות and נהרים forms are used in Job, Isaiah, and Habakkuk. Only Zephaniah used the נהרים form exclusively.

[53] Michael Patrick O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 236. Albright takes a very similar approach in his translation of Hab 3. See Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 115. Robertson dismisses Albright's and, by extension, O'Connor's suggestions too easily. He simply states that "the commonly understood 3mp *nhrm* as well as the singular *nhr* occur in Ugaritic meaning the primordial deep. See Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, 100; Cf. Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Manual: Newly Revised Grammar, Texts in Transliteration, Cuneiform Selections, Paradigms, Glossary, Indices*, Analecta Orientalia; Commentationes Scientificae de Rebus Orientis Antiqui 35 (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1955), 295, §1219. Robertson's answer misses the point of parallelism.

[54] See also Hummel, "Enclitic Mem in Early Northwest Semitic, Especially Hebrew," 95; Cf. Albright, "Psalm of Habakkuk," 15 fn. y; Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 318.

in both 8a and 8b are emphatic. In other words, mythopoeic and polemical factors are at play in these lines of poetry.

This touches on Cohen's third major use of the enclitic *mem: "allowing for an additional secondary meaning."[55] While one should rightly avoid admitting too many elements of *Chaoskampf* into the poems, but instead, see the staple redemptive acts of Israel memorialized, it is hard to find a concrete moment in Israelite history that would correspond to "rivers."[56] The "sea" may be connected with the Red Sea (Exod 15) but when was YHWH's wrath kindled against "rivers?" If "rivers" is intended to refer to the crossing of the Jordan River under Joshua, why is the plural used instead of the singular?[57]

It is more probable that Hab 3:8 is a polemic against foreign kings who stood against YHWH and his people. These kings take the form of the "River" and "Sea" which are associated with their kingdom.[58] Andersen notes that the parallelism of River and Sea is familiar in the Ugaritic *Epic of Baal and Anat*, in which there is conflict between Baal and various enemies, including Prince Sea//Judge River. [59] The Targum of Hab 3:8 confirms this hunch as it interprets the "River" as kings and their kingdoms:

[55] See Cohen, "The Enclitic-Mem," 260.

[56] See Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*.

[57] See Aron Pinker, "Problems and Solutions of Habakkuk 3:8," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (January 2003): 4.

[58] This is a common theme among the prophets. Daniel likewise received a vision by the Ulai near Susa (Dan 8:2, 16ff) and on the bank of the Tigris (Dan 10:4ff; 12:5ff). Ezekiel received visions by the Chebar river (Ezek 1:1ff). These bodies of water represent the kingdoms through which they flowed. The kings of these kingdoms oppressed the covenant people of God and threatened their well-being. Hab 3:8, then, is a polemic against these kings and their kingdoms. See Meredith G. Kline, *Glory in Our Midst: A Biblical-Theological Reading of Zechariah's Night Visions* (Overland Park, KS: Two Age Press, 2001), 13–14.

[59] Andersen, *Habakkuk,* 317. In the Ugaritic corpus, the parallel is most often *yām//nāhār*. There are a few instances of *yām//nĕhārîm* in KTU 1.3 ['nt]: VI:5–6 [broken text]; KTU 1.4 [UT 51]: II:6–7 [on Asherah]) and yet none of these instances appear in conflict scenes. See Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 165.

Was the anger before you O LORD, against kings and their encampments which were as numerous as the waters of the river? Yes, your anger was against the kings, and you made known to them your mighty vengeance in the sea when you revealed yourself upon your mighty chariot. Your presence is might and salvation for your people.

הָא עַל מַלְכִין וּמַשְׁרְיָתְהוֹן דְּסַגִּיאִין כְּמֵי נַהְרָא הֲוָה

רְגֵז מִן קֳדָמָךְ יוי וְעַל מַלְכַיָּא הֲוָה רוּגְזָךְ וּבְיַמָּא

הוֹדַעְתָּא לְהוֹן פּוּרְעָנוּת גְּבוּרְתָּךְ אֲרֵי אִתְגְּלִיתָא עַל

מַרְכְּבַת יְקָרָךְ שְׁכִינְתָּךְ לְעַמָּךְ תְּקוֹף וּפָרְקָן:

That YHWH's anger is against the "nations" and not the literal bodies of water upon the earth is brought out in Hab 3:12: "you marched through the earth with indignation, in anger your trampled down the nations." It is plausible, therefore, to take the two uncommon mp forms of נָהָר in Hab 3:8 as enclitic *mems*. The presence of enclitic *mems* in Hab 3:8 makes better sense of the juxtaposition of the two mp forms of נָהָר in 3:8, and 9 and should be regarded as a vestige of the ABH corpus.

Absence of Three LBH Features in Habakkuk 3

In this section, I highlight the absence of three LBH features that would likely be used if Hab 3 were written in the Persian to Greco-Roman period and show how the author of Hab 3 uses the CBH equivalent of those LBH features (i.e., *linguistic contrast*). The examples below are drawn from Hab 3:13b (עַד + ל/עד), and two grammatical features in Hab 3:17: Classical *yiqtol* + לֹא vs. Late *liqtol* + אֵין and Classical אֵין vs. Late לְאֵין.

Classical *yiqtol* + לֹא vs. Late *liqtol* + אֵין

In Hab 3:17, לֹא־תִפְרָח (*yiqtol* + לֹא) is used to describe how the fig tree (תְּאֵנָה) "will not be able to bud" or it "will not be possible to bud."[60] Linguistically speaking, לֹא־תִפְרָח is an example of the 'dynamic modality of ability,' (e.g., 'one cannot,' or 'it is impossible'). This is close to the idea of existence or possession. One might argue that this example is distinct from the 'deontic modality of permission,' (e.g., 'the fig tree may

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[60] See Uri Mor, "One More Look at the Negation of the Infinitive Construct in Second Temple Hebrew," *VT* 65, no. 3 (July 2015): 451; Cf. J. Nuyts, "Modality: Overview and Linguistic Issues," in *The Expression of Modality*, ed. William Frawley, Expression of Cognitive Categories 1 (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2006), 16.

not bud' or 'the fig tree is forbidden from budding'). However, the distinction between what is not possible and what is not allowed is not only feeble but non-essential. This is particularly true of the ancient Near Eastern culture which conceived of human abilities within the framework of the will of the divine being(s). In other words, that the fig tree *cannot* bud implies that it is *forbidden* from budding according to the divine will. The syntactical construction of *yiqtol* + לֹא is common in CBH (e.g., Deut 4:2, 7:24, 13:1, 24:10, Ps 5:6).[61]

However, in the LBH corpus, the same concept is typically expressed by a different syntactic construction: *liqtol*[62] + אֵין or *liqtol* + לֹא (see, e.g., Qoh 3:14; Esth 4:2, 8:8; Ezra 9:15; 1 Chron 5:1, 15:2, 23:26; 2 Chron 5:11, 20:6, 22:29, 35:15).[63] This late Hebrew construction communicates the idea "it is not permitted to, it is not possible to, there is no need."[64] Outside of the HB, the *liqtol* + אֵין construction appears 10x in Ben Sira,[65] and 42x in the Qumran non-biblical manuscripts.[66] The *liqtol* + אֵין or *liqtol* + לֹא are syntactical constructions characteristic of late Hebrew[67] and if Hab 3 were composed

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[61] A Hebrew construct search of the constituent phrase "*yiqtol* + לֹא" yielded 2,508 occurrences.

[62] Inf. cs. + לְ.

[63] See BDB, 34b; Joüon, §160j; See also Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 36–39. W. Th. van Peursen, "Negation in the Hebrew of Ben Sira," in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 223–43; Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition*, 45–47; Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Harvard Semitic Studies 29 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 78-79 §400.12; Hurvitz, "Review of Fredericks," 145–47; Pace Fredericks, *Qoheleth's Language*, 132–33; Seow, "Linguistic Evidence and the Dating of Qohelet," 663–64.

[64] Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 36.

[65] Sir 10:23 (4x), 12:11, 39:21 (2x), 39:34, 40:26 (2x).

[66] Of those 42 occurrences, 30 were of the syntactical construction *liqtol* + אֵין: 1QS 3:16; 1QHa 16:34 (3x), 20:33; 1Q34bis f3 2:2; 4Q184 f 1:12; 4Q223_224 f2 4:6; 4Q255 f 2:7; 4Q266 f2 1:2; 4Q268 f 1:4; 4Q270 f2 2:10; 4Q378 f1 1:8; 4Q381 f14 5:3; 4Q392 f 1:7; 4Q394 f3_7 1:7 (2x), f8 3:13 (3x), 4:8; 4Q396 f1_2 1:2, 2:9, 3:11; 4Q397 f1 2:1, 5:4, f6 13:2, 10; 4Q427 f 9:2; 4Q513 f10 2:3. The remaining 12 were of the syntactical construction *liqtol* + [some constituent] + אֵין: CD 4:11; 1Qha 14:26, 15:20, 19:25; 4Q185 f1_2 1:7; 4Q200 f1 2:3; 4Q221 f 4:4; 4Q266 f3 1:5; 4Q299 f 4:5; 4Q427 f 1:5, f7 2:18; 4Q429 f4 2:3.

[67] Peursen, "Negation in the Hebrew of Ben Sira," 238; See also Edward Yechezkel Kutscher, "Hebrew Language: The Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, ed. C. Roth (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 1588a; Seow, "Linguistic Evidence and the Dating of Qohelet," 663–65.

or edited in this era, we would expect אין לפרח instead of לֹא־תִפְרַח in 3:17. This syntactical

development is most clearly seen when texts representative of each corpus are placed

side-by-side (see Table 7 below).[68]

Table 7. Classical *yiqtol* + לֹא vs. late *liqtol* + אֵין

LBH		CBH
	לֹא תֹסִפוּ עַל־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם וְלֹא תִגְרְעוּ מִמֶּנּוּ	Deut 4:2
	לֹא־תֹסֵף עָלָיו וְלֹא תִגְרַע מִמֶּנּוּ	Deut 13:1
Qoh 3:14	עָלָיו אֵין לְהוֹסִיף וּמִמֶּנּוּ אֵין לִגְרֹעַ	
	לֹא־יִתְיַצֵּב אִישׁ בְּפָנֶיךָ עַד הִשְׁמִדְךָ אֹתָם	Deut 7:24
	לֹא־יִתְיַצְּבוּ הוֹלְלִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינֶיךָ	Ps 5:6
2 Chron 20:6	וּבְיָדְךָ כֹּחַ וּגְבוּרָה וְאֵין עִמְּךָ לְהִתְיַצֵּב	
	לֹא־תָבֹא אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ לַעֲבֹט עֲבֹטוֹ	Deut 24:10
Esth 4:2	אֵין לָבוֹא אֶל־שַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ בִּלְבוּשׁ שָׂק	

Classical אֵין vs. Late לְאֵין

In Hab 3:17, two clauses of negation with the particle adverb אֵין appear. Both

communicate the idea of 'without' or 'so that not': אֵין בָּקָר בָּרְפָתִים and וְאֵין יְבוּל בַּגְּפָנִים. The

syntactical construction is a noun + אֵין. However, Qimron points out that the LBH and

QH equivalent of this is an abstract noun or infinitive + לְאֵין in the sense of 'without,' or

'so that not' (e.g., 1 Chron 22:4; 2 Chron 14:12, 20:25, 21:18; Ezra 9:14 1QS 2:7).[69] The

same phenomenon is seen in Sira 51:4b: מכבות אש לאין פחה '(You saved me) from burning

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[68] See Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew,* 36.

[69] Qimron states, "[t]his construction occurs some 40 times in the DSS…It is characteristic of the Second Temple period; no similar construction is found in First Temple texts." For his examples from the DSS, see Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 77; Cf. Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 150–51.

fire, without a trace of it remaining.[70] Once again, if Hab 3 were either composed or redacted in the Persian or Greco-Roman period, one would expect לְאֵין instead of אֵין. The distinction between these two constructions may be seen in Table 8 where CBH and LBH texts are compared:[71]

Table 8. Classical אֵין vs. late לְאֵין

LBH			CBH
	הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד עַד כִּי־חָדַל לִסְפֹּר כִּי־אֵין מִסְפָּר		Gen 41:49
	כִּי אָפְפוּ־עָלַי רָעוֹת	עַד־אֵין מִסְפָּר	Ps 40:13
1 Chron 22:4	וַעֲצֵי אֲרָזִים	לְאֵין מִסְפָּר	

Classical עַד vs. Late עַד + לְ

Hab 3:13b uses the preposition עד to express the idea of "as far as." The exclusive use of the preposition, without any additional constituents, is the standard in CBH. The last half of the line reads:[72]

You struck the head of the house of the wicked, causing [*him*] to lay open from foot[73] unto neck.	מָחַצְתָּ רֹּאשׁ מִבֵּית רָשָׁע עָרוֹת יְסוֹד עַד־צַוָּאר סֶלָה

However, instead of the exclusive use of the preposition עַד, LBH texts use the distinct

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[70] Peursen, "Negation in the Hebrew of Ben Sira," 237.

[71] Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 150. The late affinity for the syntactical construction noun phrase + לְאֵין is also seen when the addition to Deut 29:18 in 1QS 2:14–15 is compared Deut 29:18 in the HB. See M. F. J. Baasten, "Existential Clauses in Qumran Hebrew," in *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira*, ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 36 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 8–9; For exceptions to this rule (Isa 40:29; Neh 8:10, and 2 Chron 14:10), see Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 151.

[72] Habakkuk 3:13 is notoriously fraught with textual difficulties, especially the second half of the line. While many doubt the integrity of the MT at this point, the preposition עַד is not often questioned. *HALOT,* BDB*,* and *BHQ* do not offer emendations for עַד and the LXX glosses it with ἕως ('until,' or 'as far as').

[73] יְסוֹד literally means 'foundation,' or 'base.' Assuming the reference is to the wicked 'man' rather than to his 'house,' the term is taken metaphorically to refer to his 'feet.'

collocation לְ + עַד.[74] BDB defines עד + לְ as a "strengthened form for עַד, found chiefly in Ezra."[75] The construction is found (a) before a substantive…(b) before an infinitive…and it is used "of space, of time, and of degree."[76] A few examples drawn from the LBH and CBH texts highlight the differences:[77]

<p align="center">Table 9. Classical עד vs. late עד + לְ</p>

LBH			*CBH*
	עַד־חוֹבָה	וַיִּרְדְּפֵם	Gen 14:15
2 Chron 14:12	וַיִּרְדְּפֵם אָסָא וְהָעָם אֲשֶׁר־עִמּוֹ עַד־לִגְרָר		
	עַד־מְאֹד	וַיֶּחֱרַד יִצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְּדֹלָה	Gen 27:33
2 Chron 16:14	וַיִּשְׂרְפוּ־לוֹ שְׂרֵפָה גְּדוֹלָה עַד־לִמְאֹד		
	עַד־עוֹלָם	וְכֹנַנְתִּי אֶת־כִּסֵּא מַמְלַכְתּוֹ	2 Sam. 7:13
1 Chron 28:7	וַהֲכִינוֹתִי אֶת־מַלְכוּתוֹ עַד־לְעוֹלָם		

The same phenomenon occurs in the Targumim. For example, Targum Neofiti has the phrase עד לעלם a total of 13x where the MT equivalent is עַד־עוֹלָם (e.g., see Gen. 13:15). The Qumran texts also exhibit an affinity for the construction עד + לְ (e.g., cf. 1Qha 12:28 with Job 5:9 [MT]). Hurvitz also notes how the CBH formula *temporal phrase* + עד

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[74] Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 196–98; Robert M. Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose*, Harvard Semitic Monograph Series ; 12 (Missoula, MT: Published by Scholars Press for the Harvard Semitic Museum, 1976), 69, 141; Qimron, "The Language of the book of Jonah as an Indicator for Fixing the Time of its Composition (in Hebrew)," 249; Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 93; Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 119, 122; Willem Theodor van Peursen, *The Verbal System in the Hebrew Text of Ben Sira*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 41 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 235–36.

[75] There are some exceptions to this (e.g., Josh 13:5; Judges 3:3; 1 Chron 13:5; Amos 6:14; 1 Kgs 8:65; 2 Kgs 14:25; 2 Chron 7:8; Ezek 47:20). However, these examples should be excluded from the discussion because the לְ is functioning as an integral part of the names of locations, etc., rather than as a preposition. See B. Mazar, " לְבֹא חֲמָת, לְבוֹא חֲמָת," in *Encyclopedia Biblica* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1962), 417; Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 197; Pace Driver, *Introduction*, 538.

[76] BDB, s.v., "עַד לְ."

[77] Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 196–97.

(without לְ) appears in the contemporaneous Arad and Lachish ostraca.[78] If Habakkuk 3 were composed or redacted in the Persian or Greco-Roman period, it would be reasonable to expect the עַד + לְ. Its absence lends weight to the plausible suggestion that the inset hymns were either composed in the seventh century BC or preserved from premonarchic times and redacted by Habakkuk to reflect CBH linguistic conventions (i.e., archaizing).

Conclusion

The five grammatical features in Hab 3 are significant because they are found in *both* the framework section (Hab 3:17) and the inset hymn section (Hab 3:4, 8, 11, 13). These examples of both ABH and CBH are significant in a text purported to be from the Persian or Greco-Roman period. Where a LBH grammatical feature is expected, an ABH or CBH occurs. Why didn't scribes/redactors in the Persian or Greco-Roman period update these features to align with LBH norms? Why, for example, does the 3ms pronominal suffix ה appear in vv. 4 and 11 but the 3ms pronominal suffix ו appears in vv. 3 (2x), 4, 5 (2x), 10, and 14 (2x)? If the text was updated, as it most certainly was, why were the two instances of the 3ms pronominal suffix ה־ not also updated? Or, if the Persian or Greco-Roman period scribe/redactor was archaizing, why didn't he also archaize the 3ms pronominal suffix ו? Archaic biblical Hebrew and CBH features in both sections of chapter 3 strongly suggest that the chapter was composed in the seventh century. The two ABH elements in the hymnic section (3ms pronominal suffix ה [3:4, 11] and enclitic *mem* [3:8]) suggest that Habakkuk was either citing an archaic hymn or archaizing in order to strike an ancient rhetorical flourish.

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[78] See Hurvitz et al., *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, 197–98.

CHAPTER 7

THREE SYNTACTICAL FEATURES WHICH
SUGGEST A PRE-EXILIC PROVENANCE
OF THE INSET HYMNS OF
HABAKKUK 3

The exilic, and especially the postexilic era of Judah's history serves as the

proverbial Rubicon which divides CBH from LBH. Nehemiah 13:23–24 highlights the

external linguistic influence that other languages had upon Judahite Hebrew:

> At that time too, I saw Jews who had married wives from Ashdod, Ammon and
> Moab; as regards their children, half of them spoke *the language of Ashdod* or the
> language of one of the other peoples but could no longer speak the language of
> Judah (NJB, emphasis mine).

Though scholars puzzle over the precise nature of the "language of Ashdod," it is clear

that the linguistic environment in which the postexilic Jews lived differed from pre-exilic

days. Dating books of the HB is an incredibly challenging endeavor and many seek to

undertake this task through form-critical analysis, theological progression, or literary

motifs. Though relative linguistic dating is not a precise science, it is safe to say that it

yields better and more certain results than these other methods.[1] As Robert Polzin notes,

"lexical features are far less useful than syntactical ones when it comes to determining the

relative age of a text.[2]

This chapter presents three syntactical features in the inset hymns of Hab 3:3–

15 that strongly suggest a provenance in the pre-exilic period and therefore should be

classified, at a minimum, as a CBH text when compared with diachronic developments in

the biblical Hebrew verbal system (BHVS) of LBH and PBH texts. The first feature is the

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[1] See Jan Joosten, "The Distinction Between Classical and Late Biblical Hebrew as Reflected
in Syntax," *HS* 46 (2005): 328.

[2] See Robert Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew,* 15.

verbally-encoded stative which appears two times in Hab 3. While a robust number of verbally-encoded statives mark pre-exilic texts, it declines in the LBH and PBH periods. The second feature is the virtual absence of the *liqtol* (לְ + Qal inf. cs.) in the inset hymns. Its absence is contrasted with an increase of predicate *liqtols* in the LBH and PBH periods. The third feature is a contrast between the virtual absence of the active predicative participle (APP) and its increasing presence in LBH and PBH texts. In the inset hymns, the *yiqtol* functions in the same way that the APP later functions in the LBH and PBH texts. At the least, the absence of the APP suggests a pre-exilic provenance, and possibly, an archaic function of the verbal system.

Methodology

As in chapter 6, this chapter applies Avi Hurvitz's four criteria for detecting diachronic development to the syntax of Hab 3: (1) linguistic distribution, (2) linguistic contrast, (3) extrabiblical sources, and (4) accumulation. The criterium of linguistic contrast will be on center stage as I show linguistic development from one particular function of verbal syntax in CBH texts to a different function of similar constructions in LBH and PBH texts. I will continue to utilize the NWS inscriptions, Hebrew inscriptions, and the ABH corpus to show one end of the linguistic spectrum. At the other end of the spectrum, I will draw examples from the LBH corpus, the PBH corpus, i.e., texts from the Judean Desert, Qumran Hebrew (QH), and Ben Sira.

I reiterate that relative dating, not absolute dating, is the goal in this chapter. In other words, I am simply trying to isolate examples of linguistic development (i.e., grammaticalization pathways) and compare that development to the syntactical picture of the inset hymns in Hab 3. No isolated example in this chapter is meant to sufficiently make the case for the original inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk. However, when all three syntactical arguments from the inset hymns are considered together, a plausible argument for original inclusion is confidently proffered.

The Robust Presence of Verbally-Encoded Statives as
Evidence for Pre-Exilic Works

One commonly noted example of linguistic variation in BH is what John A.

Cook has called the split-encoding of stative adjectives (e.g., זקן, כבד, מלא).[3] When the

stative is used in predicate constructions, its classification as a verb or noun is

ambiguous, since either classification shares similar morphological and morphosyntactic

features.[4] Cook examined 12 statives in the HB that are encoded as either verbal or

nominal. While cases of split-encoding appear in ABH, CBH, and LBH, there is a decline

in frequency in LBH texts and no new split-encoded stative-pattern adjectives appear in

PBH.[5] According to Cook, this phenomenon highlights the general diachronic decline of

the stative adjective. He offers three interrelated generalizations which serve as the

foundation of this claim.

First, Cook points out that TAM (Tense, Aspect, Modality) systems typically

progress from aspectual categories and appositions toward tense systems rather than the

reverse.[6] Second, there is a necessary distinction between perfective and past

conjugations, specifically in how they interact with stative predicates. This distinction

exhibits itself by a marked opposition between perfective and past conjugations.[7] The

perfective with stative predicates represents the unmarked member of the opposition and

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[3] See John A. Cook, "Detecting Development in Biblical Hebrew Using Diachronic Typology," in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 86; John Cook, "The Hebrew Participle and Stative in Typological Perspective," *JNSL* 34, no. 1 (2008): 1–19.

[4] Cook, "The Hebrew Participle and Stative," 3.

[5] Cook, "Detecting Development," 87.

[6] Cook, "Detecting Development," 87; Cf. Bernd Heine, "Grammaticalization," in *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics*, ed. Brian D. Joseph and Richard D. Janda, Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 594. Heine notes, "[v]erbal aspect categories give rise to tense categories…while processes in the opposite direction are unlikely to happen." Bybee, *et. al.* give a specific example: "imperfective and present verb conjugations develop from progressive constructions." See Joan L. Bybee, Revere D. Perkins, and William Pagliuca, *The Evolution of Grammar: Tense, Aspect, and Modality in the Languages of the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 91.

[7] See Bybee, *et. al.*, *The Evolution of Grammar*, 95.

expresses itself in either present or past states. For example, Ps 131:1 gives a typical

example of the unmarked present state with a *Qal perfect* + <u>stative</u>:[8]

O Lord, my heart is not *exalted* / my eyes are not <u>raised high</u>	יְהוָה לֹא־גָבַהּ לִבִּי וְלֹא־רָמוּ עֵינַי

The marked member of this opposition expresses only past time with the *Qal past*

narrative (i.e., *wayyiqtol*) + <u>stative</u> as in 1 Sam 10:23:

And *when he stood* in the midst of the people, <u>he was taller</u> than all the people	וַיִּתְיַצֵּב בְּתוֹךְ הָעָם וַיִּגְבַּהּ מִכָּל־הָעָם

This opposition characterizes the perfect (*qatal*) and past narrative (*wayyiqtol*)

conjugations in BH.[9]

Cook's third generalization utilizes Leon Stassen's concept of the "tensedness

[*sic*] universal of adjective encoding"[10] Stassen argues that the encoding strategy for

expressing adjectival predicates differs according to a language's TAM system. If the

TAM system is predominantly aspectual, it encodes adjectival predicates according to its

verbal strategy. If a language's TAM system is predominantly tense based, however, the

adjectival predicate operates according to one or more of its nominal strategies.[11]

Regarding the interpenetrating nature of these three generalizations, Cook concludes:

> …as a language's TAM system shifts from aspect toward tense, which may happen
> according to the first generalization, its aspectual categories decline in productivity
> or may shift in meaning. For example, a perfective conjugation may become past
> tense; such a shift could be discerned by its pattern of interaction with statives as
> outlined in the second generalization. As the shift occurs, the strategies for
> expressing present states also shift, based on the tensedness parameter, given as the
> third generalization.[12]

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[8] Cook, "Detecting Development," 87. For the Qal perfect + stative = past state example, Cook cites 2 Chron 32:25.

[9] Cook, "Detecting Development," 87.

[10] Leon Stassen, *Intransitive Predication* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1997), 347.

[11] See Stassen, *Intransitive Predication,* 347–57.

[12] Cook, "Detecting Development," 87–88.

The foregoing diachronic-typological argument points to a significant decline of the stative in LBH and beyond.

One way to highlight this decline is to focus on the variation of the verbal and nominal encoding of stative predicates.[13] Cook considered the 60 most frequent stative verbs, excluded the ambiguous masculine-singular form,[14] and ended up with 12 verbs which provide 183 instances in the HB of unambiguous verbal encoding and 57 occurrences of unambiguous nominally-encoded predicates. The 12 statives are זקן, דלל חדל, חפץ, טמא, יבשׁ, ירא, כבד, מלֹא, קלל, קרב, שׂמח. His results are represented in table 10 below.[15]

Seven books offer no data (Amos, Obadiah, Haggai, Song of Songs, Esther, Daniel, and Ezra). Eight books show just one example, either nominal or verbal. Cook suggests that this may reflect "the general decline in the use of the stative adjective patterns that 11 of these 14 books are philologically datable to the exilic or postexilic periods: Jonah, Chronicles, Ruth, Nehemiah, Qoheleth, Song of Songs, Obadiah, Ezra, Haggai, Esther, and Daniel."[16] By contrast, however, the majority of the books with the highest number of verbal encoding contain material philologically datable to the pre-exilic period (14 of the 21 books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Isaiah 1–39, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah, Habakkuk, Psalms, and Proverbs).[17]

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[13] See *IBHS,* §30.5.3.

[14] That is, the masculine-singular nominal encoding and Qal third-person masculine-singular verbal encoding since they are morphologically identical (e.g., כָּבֵד) and syntactically identical in the absence of an overt copula. See Cook, "Detecting Development," 88.

[15] Taken from Cook, "Detecting Development," 89.

[16] Cook, "Detecting Development," 88.

[17] Cook, "Detecting Development," 89.

Table 10. Verbal vs. nominal encodings of twelve stative adjectives

Book	Verbal	Nominal		Book	Verbal	Nominal
Psalms	24	2		Zech	3	0
Isa 1–39	18	0		Mic	3	1
Deut	18	2		Kgs	3	8
Jer	17	4		Hos	2	0
Ezek	14	5		Prov	2	0
Job	12	1		Mal	2	0
Lev	11	7		Lam	2	2
Gen	9	1		Zeph	1	0
Sam	8	3		Jon	1	0
Isa 40–66	7	1		Chron	1	0
Judg	6	0		Ruth	1	0
Joel	4	0		Neh	1	0
Josh	4	1		Nah	1	0
Exod	4	3		Num	1	0
Hab	3	0		Qoh	0	1

To further highlight the diachronic decline of the verbally-encoded stative, Cook analyzed its frequency in the Qal perfect[18] in both the CBH and LBH texts. The books conventionally designated as LBH show a decline in verbally-encoded statives in the Qal Perfect.[19] Cook notes that:

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[18] The term "perfect" and "*qatal*" will be used interchangeably through this work.

[19] See Cook, "Detecting Development," 89–90. Arian J. C. Verheij has demonstrated this decline in the frequency of verbal predications between Samuel—Kings and Chronicles. See *Verbs and Numbers: A Study of the Frequencies of the Hebrew Verbal Tense Forms in the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles*, Studia Semitica Neerlandica 28 (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1990), 32.

[t]he frequency of 60 statives in Qal Perfect as a percentage of all Qal Perfects in these books shows an almost equal amount between the two groups of books [i.e., pre-exilic vs. exilic/postexilic]—about 22% of all perfects are stative verbs. However, the data are skewed by the increase of היה, which jumps from 8% to 12.5% frequency in the data. Given the shift of the Hebrew TAM from aspectual categories toward tense, this increase is fully expected given that the copula is a main strategy for overtly signaling tense.[20]

This increase is further confirmed by the frequency of היה in the PBH literature: 83 times in Sira, 945 times in Qumran, and 1,738 times in the Mishnah.[21] Finally, Cook notes that "if we set aside this single stative verb, the data show a decline in frequency from 14% in the [C]BH corpus to 9% in LBH."[22]

Verbal Statives in Habakkuk 3

The two verbally-encoded statives in Habakkuk are מלא in 3:3 (מָלְאָה, Qal *qatal* 3fs) and ירא in 3:2 (Qal *qatal* 1cs).[23] In the following section, I extend Cook's analysis by examining the Qal perfect statives in the NWS inscriptions and the sectarian texts from Qumran. There were no instances of the Qal perfect stative in Sira.

מלא in the Northwest Semitic Inscriptions

A verbal encoding of the stative מלא is found three times in the bilingual Phoenician/Luwian text KAI26 (AI:6, BI:3, and CI:10).[24] Some date KAI26 to the late eighth century, corresponding to the activity mentioned in the annals of Tiglath-Pileser III (744–727 BC),[25] others to the early seventh century BC corresponding to activities in

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[20] Cook, "Detecting Development," 90.

[21] Cook, "Detecting Development," 90 fn. 5.

[22] Cook, "Detecting Development," 90. That represents an actual decrease of 457 examples (564 vs. 107 occurrences). See Cook, "Detecting Development," 90 fn. 6.

[23] קלל (Qal qatal 3cp) was omitted because it is found in 1:8 and is not germane to this study. וימדד (3:6) was omitted because it is the 3ms form. תעור (3:9) was omitted because it in the Niphal stem.

[24] Also known as Azatiwada, Azitawada, Karatepe, Azatiwadd. The text is a mix of Phoenician and Luwian which was typically used in Hittite monumental inscriptions. See K. Lawson Jr. Younger, "The Phoenician Inscription of Azatiwada: An Integrated Reading," *JSS* 43, no. 1 (1998): 11–47; Michael L. Barré, "An Analysis of the Royal Blessing in the Karatepe Inscription," *Maarav* 3, no. 2 (October 1982): 177–94; John David Hawkins and Halet Çambel, *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions*, vol. 2, Studies in Indo-European Language and Culture 8 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2000), 122.

[25] See Helmuth Th. Bossert, "Die Phönizisch-Hethitischen Bilinguen Vom Karatepe," *Oriens*

the reigns of Sennacherib (704–681 BC) or Esarhaddon (680–669 BC).[26] Others favor a

ninth-century date generally corresponding to the activities of Shalmaneser III (858–824

BC).[27] A verbal encoding of the stative מלא is also found in the Aramaic inscription

KAI215 (1:4) conventionally dated to the mid to late eighth century BC,[28] two times in

the Imperial Aramaic text KAI233 (I:19)[29] conventionally dated to 650 BC,[30] and one

time in the Aramaic text KAI309 (I:22) conventionally dated to the ninth century BC.[31]

There is only one example of a nominally-encoded predicate of מלא in Arad 2:5: יין וה

מלא החמר ("and a full homer of wine…[?]"). מלא seems to function as a masculine

singular construct מְלֹא ("fullness").

מלא in the Qumran Sectarian Texts

The lexeme מלֹא appears a total of 133 times in the Qumran non-biblical

manuscripts: 103 times in the finite verbal form (15 of which are Aramaic),[32] 19 times as

an adjective (5 of which are Aramaic), and 11 times as a noun. There are 13 occurrences

of מלא as a Qal *qatal.* Of these, 2 are omitted because they are 3ms forms (4Q299 f9:3[33],

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1, no. 2 (1948): 163–92. Cf. Younger, "The Phoenician Inscription of Azatiwada," 13.

[26] See M. J. Mellink, "Karatepe, More Light on the Dark Ages," *Biblica et Orientalia* 7, no. 5 (1950): 141–50.

[27] See R. D. Barnett, J. Leveen, and C. Moss, "A Phœnician Inscription from Eastern Cilicia," *Iraq* 10, no. 1 (1948): 56–71; Cyrus H. Gordon, "Azitawadd's Phoenician Inscription," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 8, no. 2 (1949): 108–15.

[28] See Baruch Margalit, "Studies in NWSemitic Inscriptions," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 26 (1994): 271–315.

[29] Also known as the Ashur Ostracon. The text was discovered on six pieces of potsherd and its orthography is the earliest known representative of Aramaic cursive writing. See Ron Tavalin, *An Index of Northwest Semitic Inscriptions,* Version 1.9, Accordance 13 Bible Software (OakTree Software, 2006).

[30] See A. Dupont-Sommer, "L'Ostracon Araméen d'Assur," *Syria* 24 (1944): 24–61; James M. Lindenberger, *Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew Letters*, ed. Kent Harold Richards, 2nd ed., Writings from the Ancient World 14 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003). See Ron Tavalin, *An Index of Northwest Semitic Inscriptions*.

[31] Also known as Tel Fekhariyah, a statue of a first millennium BC ruler of Gozan (Guzana, modern Tell Halaf in northern Syria on the border of Turkey.

[32] 52 in the Qal, 7 in the Niphal, 27 in the Piel and 1 in the Hithpael.

[33] Or 4Q Mysteries[a].

4Q379 f I2:6[34]), 2 are references to the HB (4Q176[35] f I_2i:5=Isa 40:2, 4Q365 f2:9[36]=Exod 8:17, 10:6), 4 are nominally-encoded stative predicates (CD [Damascus Document] 10:1, 4Q215a fIii:5[37], 4Q269 f8ii:6[38], 4Q271 f2:13[39]), 3 are verbally-encoded stative predicates (4Q181 fI:5 [?], 4Q270 f6iv:14[40], 4Q491 fI 3:20[41]), and in 2 occurrences, the text was not decipherable (5Q16 f6:1, 4Q525 fI 7:3[42]).

ירא in the Qumran Sectarian Texts, Masada, and Sira

The second verbally-encoded stative ירא in Hab 3 was not found in the NWS or Hebrew inscriptions. In the Qumran sectarian texts, it is used 93 times. Of those uses, only 7 occurrences are in the Qal perfect (4Q364 f2:1, 4Q366 f2:8, 4Q367 f2a b:13, 4Q381 f50:4, 4Q382 f1:3, 11Q19 46:11, 11Q20 12:23). One additional occurrence of the Qal perfect appears in Mas1l [Masada] a:6. Of the total 8 occurrences, 2 were not counted because they were 3ms forms (4Q364 f2:1, 4Q382 f1:3), 2 were Qal *qatal* 2ms (4Q366 f2:8, 4Q367 f2a b:13), 1 was Qal *qatal* 3fs (4Q381 f50:4), and 3 were Qal *qatal* 3cp (11Q19 46:11, 11Q20 12:23, Mas1l a:6). Of the remaining 6 occurrences, 4 were verbally encoded (4Q366 f2:8, 4Q367 f2a b:13, 11Q19 46:11, Mas1l a:6) and 2 were nominally encoded (4Q381 f50:4, 11Q20 12:23). However, of the 93 occurrences of the lexeme ירא, 46 were participles.

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[34] Or 4Q Apocryphon of Joshua[b] [*olim* Psalms of Joshua[b]].

[35] Or 4QTanh (Tanhumim).

[36] Or 4Q Reworked Pentateuch[c].

[37] Or 4Q Time of Righteousness (*olim* part of TNaph).

[38] Or 4Q Damascus Document[d].

[39] Or 4Q Damascus Document[f].

[40] Or 4Q Damascus Document[e].

[41] Or 4Q War Scroll[a].

[42] Or 4Q Beatitudes.

ירא in Sira. The lexeme ירא appears 10 times in Sira: once as a Hithpael inf. cs. (12:11), once as a Hithpael *yiqtol* 2ms (4:30), and 8 times as a Niphal ptc ms (9:17, 43:2 [2x], 8, 9, 29 [2x], and 48:4) but never as a Qal *qatal.* The absence ירא in the Qal *qatal* in Sira and the predominant use of ירא in the participial form in both Sira and the Qumran sectarian texts is significant and functions as an example of linguistic contrast. It confirms E. J. Revell's general observation that in post-exilic Hebrew a "restructuring of the verbal system was required by the use of the participle as the main verbal form expressing the present."[43] When all of these findings are combined, Cook's conclusions about the gradual decline of the verbally-encoded stative are consistently enforced. The pre-exilic period clearly has a higher frequency of the verbally-encoded stative than later books in both the LBH corpus and PBH corpus. Of the two unambiguous statives in Hab 3, both are verbally encoded. These findings tip the scales toward a pre-exilic, rather than postexilic, date for Hab 3.

The Absence of the *liqtol* in the Inset Hymns

A second syntactical feature of the inset hymns which suggests a pre-exilic provenance is the absence of the *liqtol* (לְ + Qal inf. cs.). According to Ohad Cohen, one of the internal developments marking the transition from the Classical era to the Second Temple period is the expanding use of the infinitive construct *liqtol* (לְ + Qal inf. cs.).[44] Generally speaking, the infinitive construct is a verbal noun that names a state or an action.[45] It is not restricted to a particular time, nor does it inflect for person, gender, or

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[43] E. J. Revell, "Stress and the Waw 'consecutive' in Biblical Hebrew," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104, no. 3 (July 1984): 444; Cf. E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (I Q Isa)*, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 41–42, 351.

[44] See Ohad Cohen, "Linguistics and the Dating of Biblical Literature," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*, ed. Susan Niditch, The Wiley Blackwell Companions to Religion (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 123ff; Ohad Cohen, *The Verbal Tense System in Late Biblical Hebrew Prose*, Harvard Semitic Studies 63 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013), chapter 8.

[45] See Joüon, §124a.

number. If tense is to be assigned to it at all, it must be derived from the surrounding

context. In CBH texts, the *liqtol* tended to function as an adverbial complement to the

main verb. An example is found in Gen 15:5 where the *liqtol* לִסְפֹּר functions adverbially.

The main verb functions as clause-initial and is followed by the inf. cs. לִסְפֹּר:

And then he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and count the stars, if you be able *to count (infinitive/adverb)* them	וַיּוֹצֵא אֹתוֹ הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַבֶּט־נָא הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וּסְפֹר הַכּוֹכָבִים אִם־תּוּכַל לִסְפֹּר אֹתָם

The *liqtol* gradually morphed into an independent modal infinitive which functioned like

a regular verb in LBH and PBH. For purposes of consistency, I will appropriate Lloyd

Charles John's nomenclature of "the predicative *liqtol*" and define it as a "*liqtol* serving

as the predicate of a sentence or clause where a finite form (*qatal, yiqtol,* or their *waw*-

consecutive counterparts) would normally be expected."[46]

The Shift from Adverbial to Modal

There are two foundational functions of this predicate *liqtol,* the modal and the

plain indicative. A parade example of the modal predicate *liqtol* is found in Jeremiah

51:49, a TBH text: גַּם־בָּבֶל לִנְפֹּל ("Indeed, Babylon shall fall!" [lit. "is for falling"]). בָּבֶל is

the subject and לִנְפֹּל functions as a surrogate for the finite form תִּפֹּל. The strength of the

preposition לְ is keenly intimated and it communicates that the subject בָּבֶל is bound, with

a great degree of certainty, to fall. The action is inescapable and inevitable.[47] This is the

verbal concept typically filled by the modal, and normally conveyed by the *yiqtol*.[48] A

parade example for the plain *liqtol* predicative is found in Prov 16:30: [49] עֹצֶה עֵינָיו לַחְשֹׁב

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[46] See Lloyd Charles John, "A Study of Predicate Liqtol in the Hebrew Bible, with Examples from the Qumran Writings," (PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 1995), 4; Cf. Charles R. Krahmalkov, "The Periphrastic Future Tense in Hebrew and Phoenician," *Rivista Degli Studi Orientali* 61, no. 1–4 (1987): 73–80.

[47] John, "Predicate Liqtol," 1.

[48] See Joüon, §113l, m; *GKB*, 2. §7i, k.

[49] BHS suggests emending לַחְשֹׁב to יַחְשֹׁב in order to align with the LXX's λογίζεται (present medio/passive indicative 3s). This was probably just a reflex to correct what seemed like a very uncommon form.

תַּהְפֻּכוֹת ("he who winks his eyes plans perverse things"). This is simply a gnomic present. By way of linguistic contrast, the inset hymns of Hab 3 typically use the imperfective *yiqtol* for the gnomic or historic present as in Hab 3:12:[50]

| In indignation *you march* through the earth | בְּזַעַם *תִּצְעַד* ־אָרֶץ |
| In anger you *trample down* the nations | בְּאַף *תָּדוּשׁ* גּוֹיִם |

It is not as though the *liqtol* never functions as a modal or plain indicative predicate in the CBH texts, for it certainly does.[51] Lloyd Charles John found and examined 118 examples of the predicate *liqtol* in the HB. Of these, 30 instances were found in CBH,[52] and 34 in LBH.[53] While the occurrences of the predicate *liqtol* in CBH and LBH are about equal, it must be remembered that the LBH corpus within the HB is much smaller. Accordingly, it is safe to say that the predicate *liqtol* is much more common in LBH than CBH.

The remaining 54 instances of predicate *liqtol* were found in BH poetry, but John did not attempt to assign them to any specific period of BH. However, he did note that many, if not most, of the examples in poetry were clearly earlier than the examples from the LBH corpus. He notes that "predicate *liqtol* was known in the [C]BH period as a colloquialism that was rarely used in narrative prose but does appear in quotations that reflect spoken language."[54] This is significant for purposes of understanding the two appearances of *liqtols* in Hab 3. If the predicate *liqtol* had the highest concentration of occurrences in CBH poetic texts and it was a colloquialism that reflected the spoken language of that time, we would expect to see it in the poetry reflected in the inset hymns,

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[50] For another example of this phenomenon in an ABH text, see 2 Sam 22:42–44.

[51] See GKB 2, §11o; Joüon, §§154d, 124p; GKC, §114i; S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew: And Some Other Syntactical Questions*, 3rd ed., Clarendon Press Series (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1892), §§204, 206.

[52] Of those, 20 occur in direct speech (quotations), and 10 in prose. See John, "Predicate Liqtol," 151.

[53] Of those, 22 appear in narrative and 12 in direct speech. Seventy-three examples of predicate *liqtol* appear in main clauses in the HB. Of those, 19 are from CBH, 25 from LBH, and 29 from poetry. See John, "Predicate Liqtol," 151, 153.

[54] John, "Predicate Liqtol," 151–52; Cf. Krahmalkov, "The Periphrastic Future Tense in Hebrew and Phoenician," 77.

if they were composed in the CBH period. But of three occurrences of the *liqtol* in Hab 3 (see below), not one is a predicate *liqtol*.

As mentioned above, there is a higher ratio of occurrences of the predicate *liqtol* in LBH than in CBH. According to Cohen, "out of the infinitive construct's 486 occurrences in the Second Temple prose, 104 (21.39 percent) fill various predicative roles of this sort."[55] In particular, its presence in the Second Temple period texts (e.g., the DSS) and later in Mishnaic Hebrew, represents a stark increase from its CBH usage as the embedded adverbial usage increasingly gave way to an independent modal form.[56] An example of the modal function of the predicate *liqtol* is found in 1QS 9:12–13 (Rule of the Community):

These are the statutes for the instructor. *[He] is to conduct himself (infinitive/command)* by them with every living person, guided by the precepts appropriate to each era and the value of each person. *[He] shall carry out (infinitive/command)* the will of God according to what has been revealed for each period of history, *and shall study (infinitive/command)* all the wise legal findings of earlier times, as well as every…	אלה החוקים למשכיל *להתהלך* בם עם כול חי ⟧ ⟦ לתכון עת ועת ולמשקל איש ואיש *לעשות* את רצון אל ככול הנגלה לעת בעת *ולמוד* את כול השכל הנמצא לפי העתים ואת

The first inf. cs. להתהלך seems to function as a command and could also be rendered "he shall conduct." The second inf. cs. לעשות also functions like a command and could be rendered "he shall carry out." Ohad Cohen points out that the string of commandments in this passage does not open with a main verb but simply informs the reader of the list of laws for the "instructor."

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[55] Cohen, "Linguistics and the Dating of Biblical Literature," 124; See also Cohen, *The Verbal Tense System*, 211–36.

[56] For example, see John C. Kesterson, "Tense Usage and Verbal Syntax in Selected Qumran Documents" (PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 1992), 233–49; Cf. M. H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Eugene, OR.: Wipf and Stock, 2001), §348; Krahmalkov, "The Periphrastic Future Tense in Hebrew and Phoenician," 75. See Cohen, *Tense System in LBH*, 212.

Contrasts in CBH and LBH Legal Texts

One of the clearest ways to show the development from the predominantly embedded adverbial use (CBH) to the independent modal form (LBH) of the predicate *liqtol* is to show the contrast in legal texts which make up the majority of its occurrences in LBH texts. The LBH tendency to substitute an infinitive form for a *yiqtol* appears when CBH texts are compared with Qumran texts. Whereas Deut 17:11 has the CBH standard לֹא + *yiqtol* pattern for the prohibitive, 1QS 1:15 has לֹא + *liqtol:*

Deut 17:11		*1QS 1:15*	
You shall not turn aside from the verdict that they declare to you, either to the right hand or to the left (ESV)	לֹא תָסוּר מִן־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־יַגִּידוּ לְךָ יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל	[they] *shall not turn aside* from his unerring laws, neither to the right nor to left	ולוא לסור מחוקי אמתו ללכת ימין ושמאול

A similar contrast is seen between Numbers 15:39 and 1QS 1:6:[57]

Numbers 15:39		*1QS 1:6*	
and *you shall not follow* your heart and eyes after which you go a whoring	וְלֹא־תָתֻרוּ אַחֲרֵי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם׃	And [you] *shall no longer walk* (*liqtol*) in a stubborn and guilty heart, or with lustful eyes	ולוא ללכת עוד בשרירות לב אשמה ועיני זנות

Typical CBH legal speech using either *yiqtol* or *wᵉqatal* morphs into *liqtols* in LBH (cf. Lev 6:1–3 with 1QS5:1ff; see also Esth 1:22, 3:13–14, 9:21–22, 31, 8:10–13 and 2 Chron 30:1).[58]

The Function of the *liqtol* in Habakkuk

When the linguistic shape of the book of Habakkuk is considered, it is important to note that there is at least one occurrence of a predicate *liqtol* in Hab 1:17:

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[57] Cohen, "Linguistics and the Dating of Biblical Literature," 125–26.

[58] See Ohad Cohen's treatment of Esth 8 in *Tense System in LBH*, 210–14.

Shall he then continue *to make empty* his net,	הַעַל כֵּן יָרִיק[59] חֶרְמֹו וְתָמֵיד לַהֲרֹג
and [will he] always *slay* nations without sparing *them?*	גֹּויִם לֹא יַחְמֹול:

Note that the *yiqtol* in line A has the same temporal value as the *liqtol* in line B. The *liqtol* in line B has the same discursive position as the *yiqtol* in line A: [x] *yiqtol//*[x] *liqtol*. The presence of this predicate *liqtol* comes as no surprise in Hab 1 since it is a clear example of CBH. But it is also edging ever closer to the exile when language registers would begin to slightly change in TBH texts, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and eventually into LBH texts like Nehemiah and Chronicles.

Having noted the LBH tendency to substitute *liqtol* for *yiqtol,* I now turn to the inset hymns in Hab 3. If these hymns were either composed or edited in the Persian period (or later), one would expect the LBH phenomenon of the predicate *liqtol*. There are three occurrences of the *liqtol* in the inset hymns, 2 in 3:14 (לֶאֱכֹל, לַהֲפִיצֵנִי) and 1 in 3:16 (לַעֲלֹות). The two occurrences in 3:14 are of primary interest since they are part of the second inset hymn which runs from vv. 8–15. How are these infinitives functioning? I present my translation of Hab 3:14 below:

With his own arrows, you bore through the head of his warriors who stormed in *to scatter me*, in arrogance as if *to devour* the afflicted in secret	נָקַבְתָּ בְמַטָּיו[60] רֹאשׁ פְּרָזֹו[61] יִסְעֲרוּ לַהֲפִיצֵנִי עֲלִיצֻתָם כְּמֹו־לֶאֱכֹל עָנִי בַּמִּסְתָּר:

The *athnach* appears under לַהֲפִיצֵנִי marking the end of the first line. The first infinitive (לַהֲפִיצֵנִי) is functioning adverbially to either express the purpose of the finite verb יִסְעֲרוּ ("storming in") or its result.[62] The second *liqtol* לֶאֱכֹל is part of the second line in which verb gapping continues the idea of יִסְעֲרוּ. There is no other verb in the second line, but the subject continues to be "his warriors" (פְּרָזֹו) who had "stormed in." פְּרָזֹו is the *kethib* form

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[59] Hiph *yiqtol* 3ms, fr. ריק, "to make empty."

[60] I take בְמַטָּיו as "his arrows" even though the most common gloss for this word is "stick, staff, or spear." The concept of arrows is appropriate since it is used in 3:9 in conjunction with קַשְׁתֶּךָ ("your bow").

[61] See *HALOT,* s.v., "*פרז."

[62] See Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 71; Cf. Williams, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*, §197 and 198; Gesenius, *GKC*, §114f-h; Waltke and O'Connor, *IBHS*, §36.2.2b, 36.2.3d; Joüon, *Joüon*, §1241, 168c.

and the *qere* form is פְּרָזָיו, the masculine plural construct form of *פְּרָז. The *qere* form

certainly makes more sense as it agrees in person and number with the verb יִסְעֲרוּ (3mp)

in the next line.

The noun *פְּרָז is a *hapax legomenon* whose meaning is not entirely clear.

HALOT suggests that the word may derive from the Arabic *faraza,* "to muster, select," in

which case it would mean something like "leader" or "warrior." The LXX translates פְּרָזָיו

with δυναστῶν ("prince, ruler, sovereign"), so "warrior" would be a good fit. On the

other hand, if the word is derived from פְּרָזוֹן or פְּרָזִי, it may mean something like "country

people, slaves, or adherents." Line B gives more information behind the purpose for

which the warriors stormed in, but it expresses the purpose with a metaphor (כְּמוֹ־לֶאֱכֹל).

The complete idea of line B is "in arrogance [the enemy stormed in] as if to devour the

afflicted in secret." Even the LXX translates לֶאֱכֹל as a participle (ἔσθων) and not a finite

verb, which strengthens the idea that verb gapping is at play in line B and the *liqtol* is

functioning adverbially. Neither of the two *liqtols* in 3:14*,* therefore, are functioning as

independent modals, or even as plain indicative forms as they do in LBH texts. Instead,

these two *liqtols* are completing the idea of the main verb in the first cola.

The final *liqtol* in 3:16 is part of the framework section, which I believe was

probably composed by Habakkuk in the seventh century. And yet, even there, the *liqtol* is

not functioning as a predicate *liqtol* but as the purpose or specification of the prophet's

waiting (אָנוּחַ).[63] So in the inset hymns of Hab 3, there is no distinct LBH usage of the

predicate *liqtol.* The function of the *liqtols* in both the framework sections (3:2 and 16–

19) and the hymnic section (3:3–15) exhibit uses of the *liqtol* which are more akin to

CBH usage. As was referenced above (see 3:12), and will be further expanded below, in

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[63] This verb is often taken by translators to be from the √ II נוח meaning "sigh." See *HALOT* and Holladay*, s.v.,* "II נוח." However, this is highly problematic. It is best to read the √ I נוח meaning "rest" or "wait." See *HALOT,* "I נוח." For an extended treatment of this word and the problem it poses in Hab 3:16, see chapter 4 of this work.

the inset hymns, the *yiqtol* tends to carry out the tense and aspect functions that the *liqtol*

accomplishes in LBH and PBH texts.

The Absence of the Active Predicative Participle (APP)
in Habakkuk 3

A third feature of the inset hymns which plausibly suggests a pre-exilic

provenance is the absence of the active predicative participle (APP). While a fitting

description of the participle in the BHVS is controversial, S. R. Driver most succinctly

describes it as "an expression of the continuous/durative aspect."[64] However, the

participle takes on different functions when viewed diachronically. Many have noted that

the development of the participle's function into a real present tense, as well as many

other aspectual functions, began sometime in the CBH period. This development exhibits

itself when the APP is paralleled to the imperfective aspect of the *yiqtol* form.[65] This

usage expanded well into the LBH and PBH period (QH and MH).[66] Mark Smith notes

that "the use of the participle as a main verb in narrative probably contributed to the

reconfiguration of the postexilic system of narrative tenses."[67] As Tania Notarius

observes, "the 'old' synthetic form of the imperfective is typologically substituted by a

'new' analytic form resulting from reanalysis of the embedded non-finite verb."[68] Here, I

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[64] Driver, *Treatise*, §135. He says, "the participle…where stress is to be laid on the continuance of the action described." Cf. Jan Joosten, "The Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew," *ZAH* 2 (1989): 129 fn. 6. Mark S. Smith notes "…the PP replaces the *yiqtol* conjugation for the simple present tense in pre-exilic and post-exilic discourse and for the past durative in post-exilic narrative." See Mark S. Smith, "Grammatically Speaking: The Participle as a Main Verb of Clauses (Predicate Participle) in Direct Discourse and Narrative in Pre-Mishnaic Hebrew," in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, Held at Leiden University, 15-17 December 1997*, ed. T. Muraoka and J.F. Elwolde, Studies on the Text of the Desert of Judah 33 (Boston: Brill, 1999), 331–32.

[65] Smith, *The Waw-Consecutive,* 32; See also Verheij, *Verbs and Numbers*, 77 fn. 1.

[66] See Revell, "Stress and the Waw 'consecutive' in Biblical Hebrew," 444.

[67] Smith, *The Waw-Consecutive*, 31.

[68] See Notarius, *VABP*, 273; That progressives evolve into presents and other imperfectives, including habituals, see Bybee, *et. al.*, *The Evolution of Grammar*, 127–33 and 140–48; For reanalysis as a path for the grammaticalization of the predicative participle, see J. W. Dyk, *Participles in Context: A Computer-Assisted Study of Old Testament Hebrew*, Applicatio 12 (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1994). Bybee, *et. al.*, *The Evolution of Grammar*, 127–33 and 140–48.

register a few general observations regarding the participle's grammaticalization pathway from ABH through PBH and contrast it with the use of the participle in the book of Habakkuk.

The APP in ABH Texts

With a few disputed exceptions, the APP is virtually absent in the ABH texts and is almost never used in one of the classically verbal uses of present tense, progressive, or immediate future.[69] Even when the APP appears in the disputed exceptions, it often parallels the *yiqtol* (e.g., יָרִים, 2:8)*,* the *wayyiqtol* (e.g., וַיָּעַל, 2:6) and the inf. cs. (e.g., לְהוֹשִׁיב, 2:8) in its habitual aspect as seen in 1 Sam 2:6–8 below:

The LORD *kills* and *brings to life*; he *brings down* to Sheol and <u>raises up</u>. The LORD *makes poor* and *makes rich*; he *brings low*, he also *exalts*. He *raises up* the poor from the dust; he <u>lifts</u> the needy from the ash heap, to <u>make them sit</u> with princes and <u>inherit</u> a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world	⁶ יְהוָה *מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה מוֹרִיד* שְׁאוֹל <u>וַיָּעַל</u>׃ ⁷ יְהוָה *מוֹרִישׁ וּמַעֲשִׁיר מַשְׁפִּיל* אַף־מְרוֹמֵם׃ ⁸ *מֵקִים מֵעָפָר דָּל מֵאַשְׁפֹּת* <u>יָרִים</u> אֶבְיוֹן <u>לְהוֹשִׁיב</u> עִם־נְדִיבִים וְכִסֵּא כָבוֹד <u>יַנְחִלֵם</u> כִּי לַיהוָה מְצֻקֵי אֶרֶץ וַיָּשֶׁת עֲלֵיהֶם תֵּבֵל׃

The actions of YHWH are depicted from an imperfective viewpoint. They are modal and depict a habitual action that is extended over a period of time.[70] To illustrate this, I have italicized the participles and underlined the *wayyiqtols, yiqtols,* and the inf. cs.[71]

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[69] Deut 32, Judges 5, Exod 15, 2 Sam 22:5–20 and 33–46 unambiguously attest to the absence of the APP. There are 'dubious cases' in Exod 15:6 and Gen 49:11. The possible exceptions to the null presence of the APP in the ABH corpus are Num 24 (the Oracles of Balaam), and 1 Sam 2 (the Song of Hannah). For an analysis of these dubious cases and exceptions, see Tania Notarius, "The Active Predicative Participle in Archaic and Classical Biblical Poetry: A Typological and Historical Investigation," *Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 47 (2010): 241–69.

[70] For the *wayyiqtol* in habitual statements, see *GKC,* §111u and *Joüon*, §118r. Commenting on the *yiqtol* in this passage, Joüon says, "the participle and the *yiqtol* may be used indiscriminately" (See §121h n. 1). On the *liqtol* taking on the function of the imperfect *yiqtol,* see Krahmalkov, "The Periphrastic Future Tense in Hebrew and Phoenician." Ohad Cohen believes this is a distinct feature of LBH. See See Cohen, *Tense System in LBH*, 125–50.

[71] See Notarius, "Active Predicative Participle," 260. The translation here is Notarius's.

However, this use of the APP is very rare in the ABH corpus. As will be shown below, the APP's later use of habitual aspect was typically communicated by the *yiqtol* and the *wayyiqtol* in the ABH corpus. As a historical-linguistic comparison, it is important to note that the language of El-Amarna, likewise, did not use the APP.[72] The rare use of the APP in ABH texts may also be seen in an equally rare and isolated example of the APP with the aspectual meaning of progressive action in the Oracles of Balaam (Num 24:18).[73]

The APP in CBH Texts

The semantic function of the participle morphs in the CBH texts by progressively taking on additional functions. In the book of Amos, for example, the 14 examples of the APP function as simple present progressive, immediate future,[74] and past progressive. In almost every case they appear in non-initial position (except 6:8) with the syntagm type הנה (ו) + a participle.[75] In the book of Hosea, the APP appears 13 times, typically in non-initial position and functions similarly to Amos. However, it has two additional uses, the iterative and habitual present and the periphrastic construction with היה. As will be shown below, the form consistently used for these unbounded actions is the *yiqtol* and the *wayyiqtol* in both Amos and Hosea. The APP is an outlier. Some parade examples of the various uses of the APP are presented below:

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[72] See William L. Moran, "A Syntactical Study of the Dialect of Byblos as Reflected in the Amarna Tablets" (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1961); Cf. William L. Moran, *Amarna Studies: Collected Writings*, ed. John Huehnergard and Shlomo Izre'el (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2003); Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets*.

[73] Notarius, *VABP*, 216. Albright believes this verse was a later addition of the Edom malediction into the oracle against Moab. See Albright, "The Oracles of Balaam."

[74] Once the participle takes on more of the aspectual values of the imperfect (i.e., unboundedness), it may also take on a nuance of immediate future in some CBH prophetic texts, particularly the poetic sections (e.g., Amos 2:13). See Notarius, "Active Predicative Participle," 251.

[75] Notarius, "Active Predicative Participle," 253.

Table 11. The active predicative participle
in Classical prophetic poetry[76]

Simple present progressive	Behold, *I am setting* a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel (Amos 7:8b)	הִנְנִי שָׂם אֲנָךְ בְּקֶרֶב עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל
Immediate future	Therefore, behold, *I will now allure her*, and bring her into the wilderness, (Hos 2:16)	לָכֵן הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מְפַתֶּיהָ וְהֹלַכְתִּיהָ הַמִּדְבָּר
Progressive past	Behold, the Lord God *was calling* for a judgment by fire (Amos 7:4)	וְהִנֵּה קֹרֵא לָרִב בָּאֵשׁ אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה
Iterative and habitual present	To them *they are speaking*, each one sacrificing, they kiss calves (Hos 13:2)	לָהֶם הֵם אֹמְרִים זֹבְחֵי אָדָם עֲגָלִים יִשָּׁקוּן
Periphrastic construction with היה [77]	Because they will not listen to him, let my God reject them; and *let them wander* among the nations (Hos 9:17)	יִמְאָסֵם אֱלֹהַי כִּי לֹא שָׁמְעוּ לוֹ וְיִהְיוּ נֹדְדִים בַּגּוֹיִם

The APP in LBH Texts

Similar functions of the APP may also be seen in the LBH corpus. In addition to the semantic functions seen in CBH above, the APP also functions as a performative. Generally speaking, it is the *qatal* (perfective) in CBH texts that typically carries out the semantic function of the performative.

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[76] The translations are taken from Notarius with a few modifications. See "Active Predicative Participle."

[77] This syntagm was certainly not absent in CBH, but it is safe to say that there is a higher concentration of this phenomena in LBH. Morag gives a very nuanced observation on this phenomenon when he says that it was "a development that started in the First Temple and greatly expanded in LBH." See Shelomo Morag, "Qumran Hebrew: Some Typological Observations," *VT* 38, no. 2 (April 1988): 60; S. R. Driver says concerning this syntagm, "…the more frequent use of the combination is characteristic of the later writers." See Driver, *Treatise*, 170. For more on this phenomenon, see T. Muraoka, "The Participle in Qumran Hebrew with Special Reference to Its Periphrastic Use," in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, Held at Leiden University, 15-17 December 1997*, ed. J. F. Elwolde and T. Muraoka, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 33 (Boston: Brill, 1999), 194–201; Cf. Notarius, "Active Predicative Participle," 261.

Table 12. The active predicative participle in late biblical Hebrew texts

Simple present progressive	Let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to receive the prayer of your servant, that *I am praying* to you now (Neh 1:6; cf. 5:9; 13:17)	תְּהִי נָא אָזְנְךָ־קַשֶּׁבֶת וְעֵינֶיךָ פְתוּחוֹת לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל־תְּפִלַּת עַבְדְּךָ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי *מִתְפַּלֵּל* לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם
Immediate future[78]	And he said, "Behold, *I am going to inform* you of what will happen when wrath is at an end, for it refers to the time appointed for the end (Dan 8:19)[79]	וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי *מוֹדִיעֲךָ* אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה בְּאַחֲרִית הַזָּעַם כִּי לְמוֹעֵד קֵץ
Iterative Action in the Past[80]	Thus, the Lord *delivered (wayyiqtol)* Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from King Sennacherib of Assyria, and from everyone; *he gave them rest (wayyiqtol)* on all sides. Many *would bring (ptc.)* tribute to the LORD to Jerusalem, and gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah; thereafter *he was exalted (wayyiqtol)* in the eyes of all the nations (2 Chron 32:22–23)[81]	22 **וַיּוֹשַׁע** יְהוָה אֶת־יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ וְאֵת יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם מִיַּד סַנְחֵרִיב מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר וּמִיַּד־כֹּל **וַיְנַהֲלֵם** מִסָּבִיב: 23 וְרַבִּים **מְבִיאִים** מִנְחָה לַיהוָה לִירוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וּמִגְדָּנוֹת לִיחִזְקִיָּהוּ מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה **וַיִּנַּשֵּׂא** לְעֵינֵי כָל־הַגּוֹיִם מֵאַחֲרֵי־כֵן

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[78] Like many other Semitic languages, Aramaic would use the imperfect for non-past events (i.e., the present and the future). Gzella notes that the participle acquired the status of "more or less a present tense form" by the beginning of the fifth century BC. See Gzella, "Use of the Ptc.," 95. In principle, the present tense could be applied to future events. However, throughout the Persian period, this usage is rarely seen. An exception is found in Dan 2:13a: (Hithpaal ptc. mp.) וְדָתָא נֶפְקַת וְחַכִּימַיָּא *מִתְקַטְּלִין* ("So a decree went forth and the wise men *were about to be slain*"). This usage of the ptc., which points to the imminent future, is an outlier (but see Mur 43:5 below). General references to the future would typically take the imperfect. See Holger Gzella, *Tempus, Aspekt und Modalität im Reichsaramäischen*, Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission 48 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 225–32.

[79] See Cohen, *Tense System in LBH*, 142–43.

[80] Here I put in bold both the *wayyiqtol* and the ptc. in order to show another LBH phenomenon. In CBH texts, the transition from a narrative succession to a habitual action is often marked by a shift from *wayyiqtol* to either a *yiqtol* or a *wᵉqatal* form (e.g., see Exod 33:6–8). However, in 2 Chron 32:22–23, it is marked by a transition from *wayyiqtol* to participle

[81] Cohen, *Tense System in LBH*, 139–40.

Table 12 continued

Iterative and habitual present	Yet all this is worth nothing to me every time *I see* that Jew Mordecai sitting in the palace of the gate (Esth 5:13)	וְכָל־זֶה אֵינֶנּוּ שֹׁוֶה לִי בְּכָל־עֵת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֶת־מָרְדֳּכַי הַיְּהוּדִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ
Periphrastic construction with היה	And I *continued fasting and praying* before the God of heaven (Neh 1:4)	וָאֱהִי צָם וּמִתְפַּלֵּל לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם
Performative	We, therefore, *make known* to the king (Ezra 4:16; cf. Dan 3:4a)	מְהוֹדְעִין[82] אֲנַחְנָה לְמַלְכָּא דִּי

The APP in PBH Texts

By the time of the writing of the Bar Kosiba letters (ca. 132–135 AD), the participle had been fully integrated as a normal present-tense form.[83] Gzella notes that this grammaticalization pathway began to manifest itself in the fifth-century letters from Hermopolis in Egypt[84] and then gradually extended its functional range until it became the core of the entire verb in Eastern Neo-Aramaic.[85] Its functions included the performative and the immediate future, which shows that the imperfect is increasingly being restricted to modality. This Aramaic influence left its mark on the Hebrew of this period as well. Below are a few examples of the multi-faceted tense operations of the participle in the Judean Desert writings.[86]

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[82] Haphel ptc. mp.

[83] Gzella, "Use of the Ptc.," 92.

[84] The Aramaic letters from Hermopolis more than likely date to the fifth century BC. Hammershaimb notes that the "basis of comparison is first and foremost the Aramaic papyri and ostraca from Elephantine and next, the Aramaic documents edited by G. R. Driver, *Aramaic Documents of the fifth Century B. C.,* Oxford 1954, abridged and revised edition 1957." See E. Hammershaimb, "Some Remarks on the Aramaic Letters from Hermopolis," *VT* 18, no. 2 (1968): 265.

[85] Gzella, "Use of the Ptc.," 92; Cf. Gzella, *Tempus, Aspekt und Modalität*, 194–203.

[86] See Gzella, "Use of the Ptc.," 92–93.

Table 13. The active predicative participle in the Judean Desert Writings

Simple present progressive	You *sit eating* and *drinking* up the possessions of the House of Israel (5/6 Ḥev 49:3–4a)	אתן יושב[י]ן אכלין ושתין מן נכסי בית ישראל
	[...] and *he is treating mercifully* the poor and burying the dead (Mur 46:5)	וח[ונן] תעניאין וקובר במיתין
Immediate Future[87]	...that *I will immediately put* fetters on your feet [if anybody deserts] (Mur 43:5; Sira 13:6)	שאני נתן ת כבלים ברגלכם
Iterative Action in the Past	...and they themselves also *would pollute* the sanctuary...and they *would lay* with... (CD 5:6–7)	וגם מטמאים הם את ושוכבים עם...המקדש
Iterative and habitual present	The judge of a people *establishes* his people[88] (Sir 10:1)	שופט עם יוסר עמו
Periphrastic construction with היה	It shall *be known* to you (Mur 42:2b–3a; cf. XḤev/Se 30:4)	ידע[89] יהי לך
	...lest *you keep thinking* that I have not come to you out of contempt (Mur 42:6–7)	שלא תהי אמור[90] מן בשרון לא עלתי אצלך
Performative	I hereby *call* heaven to *witness* against me (Mur[91] 43:3)	מעיד אני עלי ת שמים

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[87] Some take the *immediate future* in Mur 43:5 as an example of a participle in a protasis/apodosis framework of a conditional clause. See Beate Ridzewski, *Neuhebräische Grammatik auf Grund der ältesten Handschriften und Inschriften*, Heidelberger orientalistische Studien 21 (Frankfurt, Germany: P. Lang, 1992), §26.4.4. But even if a logical 'if/then' concept is latently present in the idea of the sentence, the sentence pattern itself does not qualify as a proper conditional clause since it lacks the particle "if." This use of the participle as an immediate future occurs in Mishnaic Hebrew, most often in idiomatic speech. See Miguel Pérez Fernández, *An Introductory Grammar of Rabbinic Hebrew*, trans. John Elwolde (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 137–38.

[88] See Mark S. Smith, "Grammatically Speaking: The Participle as a Main Verb of Clauses (Predicate Participle) in Direct Discourse and Narrative in Pre-Mishnaic Hebrew," in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, Held at Leiden University, 15-17 December 1997*, ed. T. Muraoka and J.F. Elwolde, Studies on the Text of the Desert of Judah 33 (Boston: Brill, 1999), 312.

[89] I take this as a Qal passive ptc. ms.

[90] I take this as a Qal passive ptc. ms. but I admit that the word itself is not entirely clear. Holger Gzella thinks it aligns with the *qatol* pattern and takes it as a substantive to the Qal active participle, which, under Aramaic influence, has replaced the usual form. See Gzella, "Use of the Ptc.," 93; Cf. Gzella, *Tempus, Aspekt und Modalität*, 179–81 Gzella thinks the "passive ptc." option is unlikely since that usage is limited to a fairly restricted group of verbs. But whether it is passive or active makes little difference since it is a ptc. either way.

[91] Letter from Shimʿon b. Kosba to Yeshua b. Galgula (ca. 132–135 AD).

The Participle in Habakkuk

The purpose of tracing this grammaticalization pathway of the APP is to place the syntax of the inset hymns of Hab 3 on the typological spectrum in BH. When we consider the participles in Habakkuk, the first thing to note is that there is a stark contrast between the use of participles in the first two chapters of Habakkuk and their use in the third chapter. The participle appears 11 times in chapter 1, 17 times in chapter 2, and only once in chapter 3. Of the 28 participles in chapters 1–2, only 6 function as an APP: 4 in chapter 1 (1:4, 5, 6, 14) and 2 in chapter 2 (2:5, 10). This shows that the semantic function of the APP was certainly available to Habakkuk, and yet it does not appear at all in chapter 3. In other words, the language register in chapters 1–2 is not carried over into chapter 3. At a minimum, this indicates that the inset hymns fit well in the CBH period. But when the absence of the APP is paired with the other archaic syntactical features in the inset hymns (see chapter 8), it is better to conclude that that the hymns are archaic.

The one occurrence of the participle in chapter 3 is unique and hardly representative of its use in the first two chapters. Some have suggested that חֹמֶר in Hab 3:15 is a participle, but this is doubtful: דָּרַכְתָּ בַיָּם סוּסֶיךָ חֹמֶר מַיִם רַבִּים. It is a *hapax legomenon* in the HB which makes its usage difficult to discern. Together with מַיִם רַבִּים, it stands in a construct relationship (חֹמֶר מַיִם רַבִּים), and the whole phrase constitutes the complete line B. The phrase functions appositionally to further describe the state of the sea (יָם) in line A, as YHWH treads upon it: דָּרַכְתָּ בַיָּם סוּסֶיךָ ("you tread upon the sea *with* your horses"). Accordingly, line B should read "You tread upon the sea *with* your horses, the heap of many waters."[92] The lexeme חמר may be communicating the idea of "heaps" (*HALOT,* s.v., "I חֹמֶר") as in Exod 8:10 (HB). When the overwhelming number of frogs from the plague died, the Egyptians piled them up in heaps:

and they gathered in *great heaps* and the land emitted a foul odor.[93]	וַיִּצְבְּרוּ אֹתָם חֳמָרִם חֳמָרִם וַתִּבְאַשׁ הָאָרֶץ׃

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[92] *HALOT* has "foaming," BDB has "heap," and Holladay has "storming" or "raging."

[93] See *GKC,* 396, §123e. See another example in Judges 15:16. This lexeme may be the

The repetition of "heaps" (חֲמָרָם חֲמֹרָתָֽיִם) functions to intensify the idea. One might even render this "countless heaps." Therefore, חֹמֶר should be taken as a construct noun and not a participle.

The only unambiguous participle in chapter 3 is לַמְנַצֵּחַ in 3:19. But it is not an APP. Rather, it is a frozen, nominalized form that simply means "for the director," referring to the leader of song. The LXX translator was clearly confused by this nominal clause. He rendered לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹתָי as νικῆσαι ἐν τῇ ᾠδῇ αὐτοῦ ("that I may conquer by his song"). The translator believed לַמְנַצֵּחַ was derived from √נצח, which in later Hebrew and Aramaic came to mean "to be victorious," or "to triumph." It appears 22x in the Qumran sectarian documents and 10x in 1QM (War Scroll). It occurs most often (10x) as a Piel inf. cs. and typically refers to "leading" or "directing" in battle: e.g., 1QM 8:1:

The trumpets shall blow continually *to direct* the sling men until they have completed hurling seven [times]	החצוצרות תהיינה מריעות *לנצח* אנשי הקלע עד כלותם להשליך שבע

The translator may have taken the מ in למנצח to be an infinitive marker as in Aramaic.[94] But as Joshua Harper points out, it is more likely that the translator interpreted the form as a participle and that his infinitive, νικῆσαι, is slightly periphrastic.[95] The translator then rendered בִּנְגִינוֹתָי with the singular since נְגִינָה can mean "music played on strings," or a "(taunt) song."[96] He was probably influenced by μετὰ ᾠδῆς= עַל שִׁגְיֹנוֹת in Hab 3:1. Translation styles aside, לַמְנַצֵּחַ is used 55 other times in the psalms as a frozen liturgical term indicating that the piece to which it referred was "for" the music director. It is not an active predicative participle. Table 14 below shows the most common temporal and

nominalized form of II חמר (*HALOT*), which means "to foam" (see Ps 46:4 and 75:9).

[94] See Harper, *Responding to a Puzzled Scribe,* 202; Cf. Good, "The Text and Versions of Habakkuk 3," 115; Eaton, "Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3," 158.

[95] Harper, *Responding to a Puzzled Scribe*, 202.

[96] See *HALOT*, s.v., "נְגִינַת/נְגִינָה." Cf. its usage in Lam 3:14; Job 30:9; Ps 69:13 [HB 68:13].

aspectual functions of the APP in CBH, LBH, and PBH texts and contrasts them with the

temporal and aspectual functions of the *yiqtol* and the *qatal* in the inset hymns of Hab 3.[97]

Table 14. The active predicative participle in CBH, LBH, PBH
texts and its contrast in Habakkuk 3

Function of the Verb	Hab 3/ABH	CBH	LBH	PBH
Simple present progress-ive	קַשְׁתֶּךָ עֶרְיָה תֵעוֹר[98] שְׁבֻעוֹת[99] מַטּוֹת אֹמֶר סֶלָה נְהָרוֹת תְּבַקַּע[100]־אָרֶץ	הִנְנִי *שָׂם* אֲנָךְ בְּקֶרֶב עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־אוֹסִיף עוֹד עֲבוֹר לוֹ	תְּהִי נָא אָזְנְךָ־קַשֶּׁבֶת וְעֵינֶיךָ פְתֻחוֹת לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל־תְּפִלַּת עַבְדְּךָ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי *מִתְפַּלֵּל* לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם	אתן יושב[/]ן אכלין ושתין מן נכסי בית ישראל
	Unto nakedness, your bow *is laid bare*, *Your* arrows are sworn in with a word, selah You *split* the earth with rivers (Hab 3:9)	Behold, *I am setting* a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass by them (Amos 7:8b)	Let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to receive the prayer of your servant, that *I am praying* to you now (Neh 1:6; cf. 5:9 and 13:17)	You *sit eating* and *drinking* up the possessions of the House of Israel (5/6 Ḥev 49:3–4a)
Immed-iate future	כִּי לֹא־נַחַשׁ בְּיַעֲקֹב וְלֹא־קֶסֶם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כָּעֵת יֵאָמֵר לְיַעֲקֹב וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל מַה־פָּעַל אֵל	לָכֵן הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי *מְפַתֶּיהָ* וְהֹלַכְתִּיהָ הַמִּדְבָּר וְדִבַּרְתִּי עַל לִבָּהּ	וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי *מוֹדִיעֲךָ* אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה בְּאַחֲרִית הַזָּעַם כִּי לְמוֹעֵד קֵץ	שאני נתן ת כבלים ברגלכם

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[97] The translations are taken from Notarius with a few modifications. See "Active Predicative Participle." Where any given function of a verb does not appear in the inset hymns of Habakkuk 3, an example from another ABH text is supplied.

[98] Imperfective *yiqtol,* simple present progressive (e.g., Judges 5:26, 29). From √עור; Niphal *yiqtol,* 3fs.

[99] I take this as a Qal pass. ptc. fem. pl. from שבע. It functions very similarly to פְּקֻחוֹת (from פקח), another III-ע/ה weak verb.

[100] Imperfective *yiqtol,* simple present progressive (e.g., 2 Sam 22:37–38).

Table 14 continued

Function of the Verb	Hab 3/ABH	CBH	LBH	PBH
Immed-iate future cont.	Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel; now *it shall be said* of Jacob and Israel, "*See* what God has done!" (Num 23:23)	Therefore, behold, *I will now allure her*, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her (Hos 2:16)	And he said, "Behold, *I am going to inform you* of what will happen when wrath is at an end, for *it refers* to the time appointed for the end (Dan 8:19)[101]	…that *I will immediately put* fetters on your feet [if anybody deserts] (Mur 43:5; Sira 13:6)
Progress-ive past	הֶבִנְהָרִים חָרָה[102] יְהוָה אִם בַּנְּהָרִים אַפֶּךָ אִם־בַּיָּם עֶבְרָתֶךָ כִּי תִרְכַּב[103] עַל־סוּסֶיךָ מַרְכְּבֹתֶיךָ יְשׁוּעָה:	כֹּה הִרְאַנִי אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וְהִנֵּה קֹרֵא לָרִב בָּאֵשׁ אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וַתֹּאכַל אֶת־תְּהוֹם רַבָּה וְאָכְלָה אֶת־הַחֵלֶק	וַיּוֹשַׁע יְהוָה אֶת־יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ וְאֵת יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם מִיַּד סַנְחֵרִיב מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר וּמִיַּד־כֹּל וַיְנַהֲלֵם מִסָּבִיב: וְרַבִּים מְבִיאִים מִנְחָה לַיהוָה לִירוּשָׁלַיִם וּמִגְדָּנוֹת לִיחִזְקִיָּהוּ מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּנַּשֵּׂא לְעֵינֵי כָל־הַגּוֹיִם מֵאַחֲרֵי־כֵן	וגם *מטמאים* הם את המקדש…. *ושוכבים* עם
	Was your wrath against the rivers, O LORD? Was your wrath against the rivers, Or your anger against the sea? *When you were riding* upon your horses in your chariots of salvation? (Hab 3:8)	This is what the Lord God showed me: the Lord God *was calling* for a shower of fire, and it devoured the great deep and was eating up the land (Amos 7:4)	Thus, the Lord delivered (*wayyiqtol*) Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from King Sennacherib of Assyria, and from everyone; he gave them rest (*wayyiqtol*) on all sides. *Many would bring* (ptc.) tribute to the LORD to Jerusalem, and gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah; thereafter he was exalted (*wayyiqtol*) in the eyes of all the nations (2 Chron 32:22–23)	…and they themselves also *would pollute* the sanctuary… *and they would lay with*… (CD 5:6–7)

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[101] See Cohen, *Tense System in LBH*, 142–43.

[102] Past perfective *qatal.*

[103] Imperfective *yiqtol,* past progressive (e.g., 2 Sam 22:7a)

Table 14 continued

Function of the verb	Hab 3/ABH	CBH	LBH	PBH
Iterative and habitual present	וְנֹגַהּ כָּאוֹר תִּהְיֶה[104] קַרְנַיִם מִיָּדוֹ לוֹ וְשָׁם חֶבְיוֹן עֻזֹּה[105]	עַתָּה יוֹסִפוּ לַחֲטֹא וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם מַסֵּכָה מִכַּסְפָּם כִּתְבוּנָם עֲצַבִּים מַעֲשֵׂה חָרָשִׁים כֻּלֹּה לָהֶם הֵם אֹמְרִים זֹבְחֵי אָדָם עֲגָלִים יִשָּׁקוּן	וְכָל־זֶה אֵינֶנּוּ שֹׁוֶה לִי בְּכָל־עֵת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֶת־מָרְדֳּכַי הַיְּהוּדִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ	שׁופט עם *יוסר* עמו
	His radiance is like the sheer light, he has horns *coming* from his hand, and there is the covering of his strength (Hab 3:4)	And now they keep on sinning and make a cast image for themselves, idols of silver made according to their understanding, all of them the work of artisans. To them *they are speaking*, sacrificing man, they kiss calves (Hos 13:2)	Yet all this is worth nothing to me every time *I see* that Jew Mordecai sitting in the palace of the gate (Esth 5:13)	The judge of a people *establishes* his people[106] (Sir 10:1)

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[104] Imperfective *yiqtol*, historical present or iterative and habitual present aspect (see, e.g., Judg 5:29; cf. Deut 32:38–39). This is the long form. The short form would be תְּהִי as seen in Gen 13:8.

[105] This line is notoriously difficult to translate. I have simply translated it this way even though its meaning is indecipherable.

[106] See Mark S. Smith, "Grammatically Speaking: The Participle as a Main Verb of Clauses (Predicate Participle) in Direct Discourse and Narrative in Pre-Mishnaic Hebrew," in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, Held at Leiden University, 15-17 December 1997*, ed. T. Muraoka and J.F. Elwolde, Studies on the Text of the Desert of Judah 33 (Boston: Brill, 1999), 312.

Table 14 continued

Function of the Verb	Hab 3/ABH	CBH	LBH	PBH
Periphrastic construction with היה[107]	N/A[108]	יִמְאָסֵם אֱלֹהַי כִּי לֹא שָׁמְעוּ לוֹ וְיִהְיוּ נֹדְדִים בַּגּוֹיִם	וָאֱהִי צָם וּמִתְפַּלֵּל לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם	שלֹא תהי אמור[109] מן בשרון לֹא עלתי אצלך
		Because they will not listen to him, let my God reject them; and *let them wander* among the nations (Hos 9:17)	*And I continued fasting and praying* before the God of heaven (Neh 1:4)	…lest *you keep thinking* that I have not come to you out of contempt (Mur 42:6–7)

Conclusion

This chapter has presented three syntactical features of the inset hymns of Hab 3 that confirm a seventh-century provenance. First, the two verbally-encoded statives in Hab 3 confirm my conclusion that, at a minimum, the chapter was written in the seventh-century. Second, when contrasted with its increasing and pervasive presence in the LBH and PBH text, the absence of the predicate *liqtol* in Hab 3, likewise confirms a seventh-century provenance. Third, there are no examples of the APP in any part of Hab 3. Though it is beyond the scope of this work to delve into further linguistic developments

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[107] This syntagm was certainly not absent in CBH, but it is safe to say that there is a higher concentration of this phenomena in LBH. Morag gives a very nuanced observation on this phenomenon when he says that it was "a development that started in the First Temple and greatly expanded in LBH." See Shelomo Morag, "Qumran Hebrew: Some Typological Observations," *VT* 38, no. 2 (April 1988): 60; S. R. Driver says concerning this syntagm, "…the more frequent use of the combination is characteristic of the later writers." See Driver, *Treatise*, 170. For more on this phenomenon, see Muraoka, "The Participle in Qumran Hebrew with Special Reference to Its Periphrastic Use," 194–201; Cf. Notarius, "Active Predicative Participle," 261.

[108] "Not attested"

[109] I take this as a Qal passive ptc. ms. but I admit that the word itself is not entirely clear. Holger Gzella thinks it aligns with the *qatol* pattern and takes it as a substantive to the Qal active participle, which, under Aramaic influence, has replaced the usual form. See Gzella, "Use of the Ptc.," 93; Cf. Gzella, *Tempus, Aspekt und Modalität*, 179–81 Gzella thinks the "passive ptc." option is unlikely since that usage is limited to a fairly restricted group of verbs. But whether it is passive or active makes little difference since it is a ptc. either way.

in Mishnaic Hebrew (MH), I will simply cite Notarius's observation: "the attribution of the iterative, habitual, and generic values to the APP semantics is a sign of its path to the category of an absolute present-future tense, which it becomes in Mishnaic Hebrew."[110] None of these attributes are attributed to the participle in Hab 3 and only a handful function this way in Hab 1–2.

From a historical-linguistic perspective, there is a reason for the absence of both the predicate *liqtol* and the APP in Hab 3. It is, by and large, the imperfective *yiqtols,* and in at least 3 cases the *wayyiqtols* (3:6) in the inset hymns which carry out the functions that the *liqtol* (its independent predicative and modal uses, etc.) and the APP (i.e., iterative and habitual present, progressive past, simple present progressive, immediate future, and future in general) would sporadically begin to do in CBH texts, and would later do on a more consistent basis in the LBH and PBH texts.[111] In chapter 8, I will focus on some archaic features of the BHVS in the inset hymns of Hab 3 which, when combined with the syntactical features described in chapter 7, make a strong case for inclusion in the ABH corpus.

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[110] Notarius, "Active Predicative Participle," 263.

[111] There are no performatives in Hab 3. But if there were, the *qatal* would have performed this function in the ABH texts. Gzella says "Like the older Semitic languages in general, earlier stages of Hebrew and (Imperial) Aramaic (there are no examples in Old Aramaic) required the 'perfect' for 'performatives or *Koinzidenzfälle* for instances in which an act of speaking and the action thereby mentioned are identical." See Gzella, "Use of the Ptc.," 94.

CHAPTER 8

ARCHAIC FEATURES IN THE VERBAL SYSTEM OF
THE INSET HYMNS OF HABAKKUK 3

Chapter 7 of this work showcased three syntactical features from the inset

hymns that strongly suggest a pre-exilic provenance. This chapter will point out a handful

of features within the BHVS of the inset hymns that suggest an archaic provenance. I

reiterate at this point that none of the grammatical features of chapter 6, nor the

syntactical features of chapter 7 are to be considered in isolation. The argument for the

original inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk is a cumulative-case argument

and this must be borne in mind throughout. Though I will cautiously conclude in this

chapter that a handful of syntactical features suggest an archaic (and not archaizing)

mark, an archaic provenance is not necessary to demonstrate the seventh-century

inclusion of chapter 3. When taken together, the synchronic arguments proffered in

chapters 1–4 of this work and the grammatical and syntactical arguments proffered in

chapters 5–7 sufficiently refute the secondary-inclusion theory. At the least, Hab 3 may

confidently be considered a CBH text based on synchronic and diachronic (i.e.,

historical-linguistic) considerations. At this point, however, two possible interpretations

exist concerning the inset hymns of chapter 3.

The first interpretation is that the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk composed

the hymns himself in archaic fashion. Notwithstanding the standard textual accretions of

scribal transmission here and there, which certainly exist, this theory would still stand.

The second interpretation, however, is that the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk has

cited two genuinely archaic hymns in chapter 3. This second interpretation is preferable

based on three basic premises: (1) the *absence* of the predicate *liqtol,* the APP, the

conditional and purposive *wᵊqatal,* the system of consecutive tenses, and (2) functioning

in their place, the *presence* of the *qatal*/*yiqtol* or *yiqtol*/*qatal* (*QY/YQ*) pattern of

alternating forms without the *waw*-consecutive and without clear temporal opposition

between the two forms (see below). Among the uses of the tenses is the preterite *yiqtol.*

The final premise is (3) the *presence* of the enclitic *mem* and the archaic 3ms pronominal

suffix ה. The combination of these three features is rare in CBH, LBH, and PBH texts but

common in ABH texts. I dealt with the enclitic *mem* and the archaic 3ms pronominal

suffix ה in chapter 6 and the absence of the predicate *liqtol,* and the APP in chapter 7. In

this chapter I lay out my case for the archaic provenance of the inset hymns by dealing

with the *presence* of the *QY/YQ* pattern of alternating forms without the *waw*-consecutive

and without clear temporal opposition between the two forms and the generally archaic

uses of the *qatal,* preterite *yiqtol,* and imperfective *yiqtol* in the ABH corpus in general,

and the inset hymns of Hab 3 in particular.

The Absence of Sequential Tenses and the QY/YQ
Pattern in the Inset Hymns of Habakkuk 3

While Hab 3's framework section (3:2, and 16–19) exhibits the standard usage

of the system of consecutive tenses (mainly *wayyiqtol* and *yiqtol*), it is virtually absent in

the inset hymns.[1] In its place is the *qatal*/*yiqtol* or *yiqtol*/*qatal* (*QY/YQ*) pattern of

alternating forms without the *waw*-consecutive and without clear temporal opposition

between the two forms.[2] Some refer to this as "tense-shifting,"[3] although "form-shifting"

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[1] The exception to this is three *wayyiqtols* in 3:6. Most commentators excise the *wayyiqtols* through emendation due to their awkward and unexpected presence in the poems. They certainly seem out of place. See treatment of 3:6 below.

[2] I prefer the term the *waw*-consecutive over *waw*-conversive.

[3] See Notarius, *VABP*, 30, 64–65; Moshe Held, "YQYL-QTL (QTL-YQTL) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and in Ugaritic," in *Studies and Essays in Honor of Abraham A Neuman*, 1962, 281–90; Alviero Niccacci, "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in Poetry," in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz, Publication of the Institute for Advanced Studies, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2006), 248; Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 35–40; Nicholas P. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics*, Paternoster Biblical

would be a better description in the case of the inset hymns since the temporal reference does not change between forms, though the aspectual references do in some cases (see below). In some cases, the *yiqtol* appears in the first line and then switches to the *qatal* in the second line (e.g., 3:3), or the *qatal* appears in the first line and then switches to the *yiqtol* in the second line (e.g., 3:7). In other cases, like 3:10, the *qatal* switches to *yiqol* followed by three more *qatals* (the *qatal*s are italicized and the *yiqtol* is underlined):

רָאוּךָ יָחִ֫ילוּ֒ הָרִ֗ים זֶ֥רֶם מַ֙יִם עָבָ֔ר נָתַ֥ן תְּהוֹם֙ קוֹל֔וֹ ר֖וֹם יָדֵ֥יהוּ נָשָֽׂא

The absence of the system of consecutive tenses (i.e., *wayyiqtol/qatal* and *wᵊqatal/yiqtol*) is a common feature of the ABH corpus (e.g., Deut 32; Judg 5; Exod 15; 2 Sam 22:5–20; and 2 Sam 22:33–46).[4]

The two inset hymns (3:3–7 and 8–15) contain a mixture of 32 finite verb forms: 16 *qatals*, 12 *yiqtols,* 1 *wᵊyiqtol,* 2 infinitive construct forms, and 1 infinitive absolute form. The curious case of the alternating *QY/YQ* without the *waw*-conjunction (except for Hab 3:6) has confused exegetes and translators. The façade of English translations of the inset hymns reveals both the challenge that this hymnic section presents and the opportunity for deciphering a chronological layer within the chapter. For example, some versions translate all the finite verbal forms in the past tense (e.g., ESV, NASB, NIV, and NRSV). While the LXX translates the hymns with a mixture of both past, present, and future tenses, it begins with a future orientation in 3:3a:

| God *shall come* from Thaeman, and the Holy One from the dark shady mount Pharan. Pause. | ὁ θεὸς ἐκ Θαιμαν ἥξει καὶ ὁ ἅγιος ἐξ ὄρους κατασκίου δασέος διάψαλμα | אֱל֙וֹהַ֙ מִתֵּימָ֣ן יָב֔וֹא וְקָד֥וֹשׁ מֵֽהַר־פָּארָ֖ן סֶֽלָה |

Likewise, C. F. Keil based his whole interpretation of the two inset hymns (3:3–15) on the assumption that the first *yiqtol* was imperfective with future/modal aspect and consequently that the poems were a prophecy of the future. He says:

Monographs (Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster, 2006), 117–18.

[4] For a list of other features of the verb in archaic biblical poetry, see Notarius, *VABP*, 297.

It is evident that Habakkuk does not describe the mighty acts of the Lord in the olden time, in order to assign a motive for his prayer for the deliverance of Israel out of the affliction of exile which awaits it in the future, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, but that he is predicting a future appearance of the Lord to judge the nations, from the simple fact that he places the future יָבוֹא…at the head of the whole description, so as to determine all that follows; whilst it is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the impossibility of interpreting the theophany historically, *i.e.* as relating to an earlier manifestation of God.[5]

More recently, Lénart de Regt has also assigned a future orientation to the hymns through a sophisticated application of a discourse analysis and pragmatic framework.[6]

Other versions, such as the New English Translation (NET), take the verbs as present tense as if Habakkuk were describing what he was seeing in the moment.[7] Likewise, J. H. Eaton has asserted that the seemingly indiscriminate alternation of verbal tenses produces the sensation of an "incipient present," that is, "the cultically mediated experience of 'a present event,' but signifying both the renewal of ancient salvation and the promise of a future outworking of the victory.'"[8] Wilhelm Rudolph suggested that the alternating tenses make sense if the two hymns are considered a vision. The perfect tense indicates that the vision had already taken place and the imperfect tense that the actualization of the vision would take place in the future.[9] Edwin Marshall Good rejected all such explanations and concluded that no plausible explanation of the alternating tenses

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[5] Keil and Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 10:97.

[6] See Lénart de Regt, "Hebrew Verb Forms in Prose and in Some Poetic and Prophetic Passages: Aspect, Sequentiality, Mood and Cognitive Proximity," *JNSL* 34, no. 1 (2008): 75–103. De Regt presents a new discursive opposition between cognitive proximity vs. non-proximity. However, his examples of these oppositions complicate more than clarify matters and are unconvincing.

[7] The NET translation note for Hab 3:3 says, "The forms could be translated with the past tense, but this would be misleading, for this is not a mere recital of God's deeds in Israel's past history. Habakkuk here describes, in terms reminiscent of past theophanies, his prophetic vision of a future theophany…. From the prophet's visionary standpoint, the theophany is 'as good as done.' This translation uses the English present tense throughout these verses to avoid misunderstanding." See *The New English Translation Bible (NET)*, version 10, Bibleworks (Biblical Studies Press, 1996).

[8] Eaton, "Origin and Meaning of Habakkuk 3," 161–62 and 165; For a similar view, see Michael H. Floyd, "Oral Tradition as a Problematic Factor in the Historical Interpretation of Poems in the Law and the Prophets" (PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate School, 1980), 276–77.

[9] Rudolph, *Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja*, 241.

has been found.[10]

The Exception to the QYYQ Pattern (3:6)

The only exception to the absence of the system of consecutive tenses is found in the three occurrences of *wayyiqtol* in Hab 3:6. The sequence is clause-initial *qatal*→*wayyiqtol*→*qatal*→*wayyiqtol*→*wayyiqtol*→*qatal*. The exclusive appearance of these sequential tenses in 3:6 may be a result of redaction. On the other hand, John A. Cook has suggested that the *wayyiqtol* is employed in poetry for its discourse-pragmatic implicature of temporal succession.[11] In other words, while the *wayyiqtol* typically functions in narrative to denote the most salient events, one after the other (unless marked otherwise), poetry predominately communicates ideas via constitutive elements of parallelism. Parallel events are not iconically ordered (i.e., one after the other) but refer to the same event or phenomenon.[12] Therefore, Cook concludes, "past narrative in poetry is employed for its discourse-pragmatic implicature of temporal succession that it brings from its narrative use in order to *override* the non-narrative parallel structure of poetry and denote events as…iconically ordered."[13] Cook translates Hab 3:6 thus:[14]

He stood [perfective] and the earth quaked [past],	עָמַד וַיְמֹדֶד אֶרֶץ
he looked [perfective] and the nations shook [past],	רָאָה וַיַּתֵּר גּוֹיִם
and the ancient mountains shuddered [past],	וַיִּתְפֹּצְצוּ הַרְרֵי־עַד
the everlasting hills sank	שַׁחוּ גִּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם
on his everlasting path	הֲלִיכוֹת עוֹלָם לוֹ

In addition to this semantic *overriding* function, Cook also believes that the exclusive use

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[10] Good, "Text and Versions," 11–13.

[11] See John A. Cook, "The Semantics of Verbal Pragmatics: Clarifying the Roles of Wayyiqtol and Weqatal in Biblical Hebrew Prose," *JSS* 49, no. 2 (2004): 247–73.

[12] See John A. Cook, "Verbs in Habakkuk 3," *Ancient Hebrew Grammar* (blog), June 17, 2010, https://ancienthebrewgrammar.wordpress.com/2010/06/17/verbs-in-habakkuk-3-2/; Cf. John A. Cook, "Hebrew Language," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets*, ed. Mark J. Boda and J Gordon McConville (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012).

[13] See Cook, "Verbs in Hab 3," (emphasis mine).

[14] Cook, "Hebrew Language," 316.

of *wayyiqtols* in 3:6 is meant to break the otherwise static description of the vision by the introduction of two brief narrative sequences that describe the reaction of the earth and nations to God's actions.[15] The effect of YHWH's presence on the created order, however, is also seen in vv. 8–12, a similar sequential (or simultaneous) chain of actions is seen in 3:10, and yet the *wayyiqtol* forms are not used in any of these verses. It is more likely that the presence of the *wayyitols* in 3:6 is an indication of the exception to the syntactical rules governing the hymns rather than the norm. Tania Notarius has suggested that the rare instances of *wayyiqtol* and *wᵊyiqtol*[16] in the ABH corpus can be interpreted as an initial sign of the system of sequential tenses which had not yet fully blossomed.[17] The appearance of the *wayyiqtols* could be archaizing. But why do they show up three times in the first hymn (3:6), despite their absence in the second hymn (3:8–15)? If the scribe or redactor was trying to level both poems to adapt to contemporary use, why would he update the first poem but not the second?

An Archaic Reflex?

The confusion over the temporal and aspectual axis of the *QY/YQ* pattern without the *waw*-consecutive likely finds a solution in the function of the verb in the ABH corpus. Before suggesting an archaic provenance to the *QY/YQ* pattern in the inset hymns, it is important to stop and take stock of the distinctive features of the verbal system so far in this section. So far, I have pointed out the virtual absence of the APP in the inset hymns. Such an absence is a feature of the ABH corpus (e.g., Deut 32; Judg 5; Exod 15; 2 Sam 22:5–20; and 2 Sam 22:33–46).[18] But there are other features in Hab 3 that likewise bear a striking resemblance to ABH texts. For example, with few

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[15] See Cook, "Verbs in Hab 3."

[16] *Wᵊyiqtol* is the only other vestigial appearance of the sequential tense system in Hab 3:5 (וַיֵּצֵא). It also shows up in the Deut 32:6 as a past sequential. See Notarius, *VABP,* 282.

[17] See Notarius, *VABP*, 291.

[18] For a critical analysis of the few exceptions, see Notarius, "Active Predicative Participle."

exceptions, the conditional and purposive *wᵊqatal* is virtually absent (e.g., see Deut 32; Judg 5; Exod 15; 2 Sam 22:5–20; and 2 Sam 22:33–46).[19] Two additional features of the inset hymns that find a parallel in the ABH corpus are the robust appearance of preterite *yiqtol* (e.g., Deut 32 and 2 Sam 22:5–20) and the imperfective *yiqtol* (e.g., Deut 32; Judg 5; Exod 15; 2 Sam 22:5–20; and 2 Sam 22:33–46). I believe that the *QY/YQ* pattern, without the *waw*-consecutive or tensed opposition is a reflex of an earlier stage of the BHVS when the *yiqtol* had both a preterite (i.e., perfective) and imperfective function.

Prior Recognition of Two *yiqtols*

This is not a new insight as many scholars have made this connection. Even before modern scholarship recognized a proto-Hebrew counterpart to the twofold use of the *yiqol,* John Calvin assumed that the prophet's use of the alternating tenses was intentional rather than a result of textual corruption. Calvin says:

> The prophet changes often the tenses of the verbs, inconsistently with the common usage of the Hebrew language; but it must be observed, that he so refers to those histories, as though God were continually carrying on his operations; and as though his presence was to be looked for in adversities, the same as what he had granted formerly to the fathers. Hence, the change of tenses does not obscure the sense, but, on the contrary, shows to us the design of the prophet and helps us to understand the meaning.[20]

The Albright school. Seventy-five years ago, William Foxwell Albright and many of his students likewise recognized a preterite *yiqtol* (<*yaqtul*) and imperfective *yiqtol* (<*yaqtulu*) in Ugaritic and suggested that the Hebrew equivalents, short *yiqtol* (<*yaqtul*) and long *yiqtol* (<*yaqtulu*) respectively, were a mark of early Hebrew poetry.[21] In 1950, F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman noted that in Ugaritic and in early

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[19] For a list of these and other features of the verb in archaic biblical poetry, see Notarius, *VABP*, 297.

[20] John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Calvin's Commentaries*, trans. John Owen, vol. 15 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 161.

[21] See William Foxwell Albright, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," in *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy. Presented to Theodore H. Robinson on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday, August 9th, 1946*, ed. H. H. Rowley, Society for Old Testament Study (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1950), 1–18; Cf. William Foxwell Albright, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32," *VT* 9, no. 4 (October 1, 1959): 339–46; Albright, "The Oracles of Balaam"; Shelomo Morag, "'Layers of Antiquity' — Some

Hebrew poetry:

> The *yqtl* form is vari-temporal in usage, expressing past time as well as future time; it often appears (without the conjunction) in consecutive sentence with *qtl* forms, with a past meaning…There can be no doubt that in this corpus of poetry the time-aspect of the *yqtl* form was determined by the context and not the presence or absence of the so-called *waw*-conversive. In other words, old Hebrew poetry reflects a stage of the language which preceded the final development of the standard *waw*-conversive sequence.[22]

Moshe Held also noted the similar function of the *QYYQ* pattern in Ugaritic and Hebrew.[23]

David Robertson. In his 1972 ground-breaking linguistic analysis of early Hebrew poetry, David Robertson concluded that there were only two individual forms that occurred with sufficient density in any one poem to be significant for dating: the alternating *QY/YQ* pattern without tensed opposition and the 3mpl suffix *-mw*.[24] He noted that while in early poetic Hebrew, the *qatal* and *yiqtol* conjugations are predominantly used to narrate past events, the *qatal* and *wayyiqtol* are used in standard poetic Hebrew. In early poetic Hebrew, the *yiqtol* rarely occurs with the *waw*-consecutive, and when it does, it is merely a conditioned variant of the *yiqtol*. On the other hand, in standard poetic Hebrew, the *wayyiqtol* cannot be described vis-à-vis the *yiqtol* because it is a fully independent verbal form.[25] Based primarily on the basis of verbal syntax, Robertson believed the poetry of Hab 3:3–15 to be truly archaic and dated it to the eleventh/tenth

Linguistic Observations on the Oracles of Balaam / רובדי קדמות: עיונים לשוניים במשלי בלעם," *Tarbiz* / תרביץ (1980):1-24.

[22] Cross and Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*, 28.

[23] Held, "YQYL-QTL (QTL-YQTL) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and in Ugaritic." It is something of a moot point whether Ugaritic should be regarded as Canaanite or some other position on the spectrum of Semitic languages. For a recent analysis of the finite verb in Ugaritic, see Edward L. Greenstein, "Forms and Functions of the Finite Verb in Ugaritic Narrative Verse," in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi. Hurvitz, Publication of the Institute for Advanced Studies, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2006), 75–102.

[24] See Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, 148. Theodore Hiebert based his own view on Robertson's conclusions. See *God of My Victory*, 76–79.

[25] Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence,* 27–28.

century BC.[26] Many scholars have stood upon the linguistic analysis of Robertson and assumed an archaic provenance to the inset hymns in Hab 3.[27]

Silviu Tatu. In 2008, Silviu Tatu published a revised version of his doctoral dissertation on the *QYYQ* pattern in the Psalter. He notes that only 63 of the 150 psalms contain the *QYYQ* pattern. Of the 2,126 total couplets in the psalter, the *QYYQ* pattern appears in only 102. Tatu notes that the *QYYQ* poetic device is:

> …far from having the generalized status *parallelismus membrorum* enjoys in H[ebrew] P[oetr]y. Its role must have been more specialized than sponsoring similarity between adjacent lines. The QYYQ verbal sequence is unsatisfactorily linked with authorial style, being noted in use in poems of various poetic tradition, whether Davidic, Asaphic, Korahic or otherwise. *It can be argued that its use belongs rather to diachronic instantiations than to a particular authorial style.* With its eight samples…, Ancient [Hebrew poetry] suggests that this poetic device was long known before the Classical era when the arts flourished in Ancient Israel.[28]

Tatu translates both verbal forms of the *QYYQ* verbal sequence similarly since both verbs are interchangeable in couplets.[29] In the next section, I suggest a diachronic source for the twofold function of the *yiqtol* in the inset hymns and submit that the use of *yiqtol* in the inset hymns is an archaic reflex of the proto-Semitic use of the two separate *yiqtol* forms **yaqtul* (preterite) and **yaqtulu* (imperfective).

Preterite and Imperfective *yiqtol*

As most scholars recognize, an intelligible translation of the *QYYQ* pattern of

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[26] Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence,* 153–56 See his careful qualifications on page 154; For a critique of Robertson's theory, see Yigal Bloch, "The Prefixed Perfective and the Dating of Early Hebrew Poetry--a Re-Evaluation," *VT* 59, no. 1 (2009): 34–70; Robyn Vern, *Dating Archaic Biblical Hebrew Poetry: A Critique of the Linguistic Arguments*, Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and Its Contexts 10 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011); Ian Young, *et. al.*, *LDBT¹,* 329–40.

[27] For example, see Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*; Richard Duane Patterson, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," *GTJ* 8, no. 2 (September 1987): 163–94; Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*; Andersen, *Habakkuk*.

[28] Silviu Tatu, *The Qatal//Yiqtol (Yiqtol//Qatal) Verbal Sequence in Semitic Couplets: A Case Study in Systemic Functional Grammar with Applications on the Hebrew Psalter and Ugaritic Poetry*, Gorgias Ugaritic Studies 3 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008), 339–40. The eight samples of archaic Hebrew poetry couplets with the *QY/YQ* verbal sequence are Deut 33:3, 7, 9; Judg 5:17 (2x); Exod 15:12; Hab 3:7, and variant of Gen 49:9. See page 515.

[29] Tatu, *The QY/YQ Verbal Sequence,* 343.

verbal forms cannot assume a different temporal axis for each form. One of the most obvious reasons for this is that the context of Hab 3 will not allow it (more on this below). But without the narrative-controlling function of the *wayyiqtol, wᵊyiqtol,* or *wᵊqatal,* it is difficult to find a systemic control for the function of each form. It is at this point that a historical-linguistic insight can help.

Krzysztof J. Baranowski has noted that, "[i]f there is anything absolutely certain in the historical understanding of the Semitic verbal system, it is the reconstruction of a short, prefixed form with the perfective meaning, used typically as the past tense in the indicative and as the directive-volitive form."[30] Based on a comparative study of the El-Amarna letters, Ugaritic, Moabite, Old Byblian, and Southern Old Aramaic, Anson F. Rainey concluded that the prefix conjugations of these languages had two separate forms in two separate moods. He notes that:

> when the West Semiticized letters from outside of Byblos were examined, it was found that the zero-form, *yaqtul,* was often juxtaposed to *yaqtulu* to express the contrast between a single action in the past and present-future continuous….The demonstration of a true preterite function for *yaqtul* completed the picture and made possible the formulation of the system as proposed [below].[31]

His findings are tabulated below:[32]

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[30] Krzysztof J. Baranowski, "The Biblical Hebrew Wayyiqtol and the Evidence of the Amarna Letters from Canaan," *JHebS* 16 (2016): 1; Cf. Notarius, *VABP*, 306ff; Umberto Cassuto, *The Goddess Anath; Canaanite Epics of the Patriarchal Age.*, Publications of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1971), 46–48; Held, "YQYL-QTL (QTL-YQTL) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and in Ugaritic"; Stanley Gevirtz, "Evidence of Conjugational Variation in the Parallelization of Selfsame Verbs in the Amarna Letters," *JNES* 32, no. 1/2 (1973): 99–104; Stanley Gevirtz, *Patterns in the Early Poetry of Israel*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 32 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963); John Huehnergard, "Features of Central Semitic," in *Biblical and Oriental Essays in Memory of William L. Moran*, ed. Agustinus Gianto, Biblica et Orientalia 48 (Roma, 2005), 155–203; For a nuanced perspective, see Edward L. Greenstein, "On the Prefixed Preterite in Biblical Hebrew," *HS* 29 (1988): 7–17; Peter J. Gentry, "The System of the Finite Verb in Classical Biblical Hebrew," *HS* 39 (1998): 11–13.

[31] See Anson F. Rainey, "The Ancient Hebrew Prefix Conjugation in the Light of Amarnah Canaanite," *HS* 27, no. 1 (1986): 4. See also Joseph Lam and Dennis Pardee, "Standard/Classical Biblical Hebrew," in *A Handbook of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 14.

[32] Cf. Anson F. Rainey, "Further Remarks on the Hebrew Verbal System," *HS* 29 (1988): 35–42; Anson F. Rainey, "The Yaqtul Preterite in NorthWest Semitic," in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. T. Muraoka, M. F. J. Baasten, and W. Th. van. Peursen, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 118 (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2003), 395–407; William L Moran, "Hebrew Language in Its Northwest Semitic Background," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, ed. G.E. Wright (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1979), 54–72;

Table 15. West Semitic origins of the prefix Conjugation

Indicative		Injunctive	
Preterite	*yaqtul, -û*	Jussive	*yaqtul, -û*
Imperfect	*yaqtulu, -ûna*	Volitive	*yaqtulu, -û*
Energic	*yaqtulun(n)a*	Energic	*yaqtulan(n)a*

Rainey concluded that this two-fold function of the indicative, **yaqtul* for preterite and **yaqtulu* for imperfective,[33] carried over into BH. Certain weak verbs in Hebrew, as well as the strong verbs in the Hiphil stem, demonstrate the formal distinction between **yaqtulu* and **yaqtul* (e.g., Job 4:18).

At some point, in the evolution of the language, the final short vowels disappeared and the imperfect form **yaqtulu* became **yaqtul* and was thus identical to the preterite *yaqtul.* Eventually **yaqtul,* in either the preterite or the imperfect, evolved into *yiqtol.*[34] Therefore, in its imperfective form (<**yaqtulu*), the long *yiqtol* (i.e., with a vocalic ending) may be read as a present-future or past continuous. In its short form (<**yaqtul*), the *yiqtol* without a vocalic ending may be read as a preterite.[35]

This proto-Semitic two-fold use of *yiqtol* illumines various facets of the inset hymns in Hab 3. When temporal opposition in the *QY/YQ* pattern seems awkward or incommensurate with the context and the available discourse pragmatics, the distinction

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[33] See the helpful contributions to Rainey's theory by John Huehnergard, "The Early Hebrew Prefix-Conjugations," *HS* 29 (1988): 20–22. Heuhnergard believes that the two forms, *yaqtul* and *yaqtulu*, were unmarked for mood and that both could occur in both statements and injunctions. He likewise believed that what truly distinguished the two forms was primarily aspect and secondarily tense. The *yaqtul* was a perfective or punctual form and temporally referred to a specific past. *Yaqtulu* was an imperfective or durative form that temporally referred to the future. Statements and injunctions were marked discursively.

[34] See Vern, *Dating Archaic Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 47; Cf. *IBHS*, §31.1.1.

[35] Rainey, "The Ancient Hebrew Prefix Conjugation in the Light of Amarnah Canaanite," 4; Cf. Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets*, 1:221–64; Bo Isaksson, "The Biblical Hebrew Perfective Short Yiqtol and the 'consecutive Tenses.' Some Methodological Reflections'" (Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew: New Perspectives in Philology and Linguistics, Cambridge, England: N.P., 2019), https://tinyurl.com/y4kgabx7.

between the two functions of the *yiqtol* becomes helpful and illuminating. Specifically, when alternating preterite/future oppositions do not make good sense of the inset hymns, the preterite *yiqtol* makes good sense.

Alviero Niccacci's Objection

However, Alviero Niccacci rejects the use of preterite *yiqtol* based on historical-linguistic comparisons.[36] He says:

> In principle, I would observe that, first, a phenomenon of a given language cannot automatically be applied to another language without appropriate control within the framework of the verbal system of that language. Second, one should expect different verbal forms to play different functions and analyze the texts accordingly on a synchronic level, rather than make the analysis depend on comparative, diachronic considerations. Of course, diachrony is not excluded, but one should make appropriate used of it, and in any case, synchrony is crucial.[37]

Later he says, "[t]he absence of the narrative *yiqtol* in BH combined with the absence…of "inverted/converted" verbal forms in Ugaritic makes me suspicious of any quick comparison between the two verbal systems."[38] Robyn Vern agrees and boldly claims that "there is no linguistic evidence which attests to this direct link between the verbal system in biblical Hebrew and the second millennium sources in relation to the development, assimilation and maintenance of these nuances."[39] I actually agree with Niccacci and Vern on both accounts and still see a place for a preterite *yiqtol* in the hymns.

While it is true that a phenomenon of a given language cannot automatically be applied to another language without appropriate control, it is important to point out first that the phenomenon of the preterite *yiqtol* was common in many NWS and CWS languages. The task of historical linguistics is not so much a matter of identifying a direct

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[36] See Niccacci, "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in Poetry."

[37] Niccacci, "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in Poetry," 249–50.

[38] Niccacci, "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in Poetry," 252.

[39] Vern, *Dating Archaic Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, 51.

link between languages as much as it is about identifying reliable and relevant comparative evidence.[40] An abundance of comparative evidence from NWS and CWS languages shows that the short *yiqtol* was originally a preterite. Besides Rainey's evidence,[41] J. A. Hackett has convincingly demonstrated that the **yaqtul* form appears in Ugaritic poetry with a preterite function.[42] Furthermore, as Robert Hetzron points out, the **yaqtul* preterite survives in numerous Semitic languages in specifically marked environments.[43] Arabic uses **yaktub* as a preterite following the particles *lam* and *lamma* ("not yet") instead of the more standard negation of the perfect *mā kataba,* and in conditional sentences following *ʾin,* "if".[44] According to A. F. L. Beeston, Sabean uses the **yaqtul* preterite after the particle *lm* and also uses the prefix tense for "a simple narrative sequence of past-time acts."[45] Mark Smith conjectures that this "relatively rare usage [may] represents a vestige of the old **yaqtul* preterite and not simply the use of the long prefix form (either **yaqtulu* or **yaqattal*) in its past iterative function."[46] Thomas O. Lambdin notes that in Geʿez, the preterite **yeqtel* is used after *ʾem-qedma* and

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[40] For a critique of Vern, see Pat-El and Wilson-Wright, "Features of Archaic Biblical Hebrew and the Linguistic Dating Debate," 393.

[41] See his most recent and mature opinion on the *yiqtol* in Rainey, "The Yaqtul Preterite in NorthWest Semitic."

[42] See J. A. Hackett, "Yaqtul and an Ugaritic Incantation Text," in *Language and Nature: Papers Presented to John Huehnergard on the Occasion of This 60th Birthday*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach and Na'ama Pat-El, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 67 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), 111–17.

[43] See Robert Hetzron, "Evidence for Perfect *y'aqtul and Jussive *yaqt'ul in Proto-Semitic," *JSS* 14, no. 1 (1969): 18–20; Cf. Mark S. Smith, *The Origins and Development of the Waw-Consecutive: Northwest Semitic Evidence from Ugarit to Qumran*, Harvard Semitic Studies 39 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991), 12.

[44] William Wright, ed., *A Grammar of the Arabic Language, Translated from the German of Caspari, and Edited with Numerous Additions and Corrections*, vol. 2 (London, England: Williams and Norgate, 1859), 22–24; Frank R. Blake, *A Resurvey of Hebrew Tenses, with an Appendix: Hebrew Influence on Biblical Aramaic.*, Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici 103 (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1951), 4; Hetzron, "Evidence for Perfect *y'aqtul and Jussive *yaqt'ul in Proto-Semitic," 18–20; Smith, *The Waw-Consecutive*, 12.

[45] A. F. L. Beeston, *Sabaic Grammar,* Journal of Semitic Studies, Monograph 6 (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1984), 17.

[46] Smith, *The Waw-Consecutive*, 12.

(za)ʾenbala, and in both cases means 'before.'[47]

Secondly, it is true that synchronic observations on the verbal system are, as Niccacci says, "crucial." The synchronic control is that the *QY/YQ* alternation without opposition is an uncommon feature of CBH. In the absence of an explanation from the CBH system of sequential tenses as to why this phenomenon appears, a diachronic explanation is quite helpful. Furthermore, the context of the book of Habakkuk in general, and the specific function of 3:2, in particular, is also an important factor in deciphering the temporal and aspectual functions of the *QY/YQ* pattern. Habakkuk says in 3:2 that he has heard of YHWH's past redemptive feats for Israel in the past and petitions YHWH to make those past works alive in the coming years. The two hymns are a recital of those past works and must be taken as past tense.

Taking a more synchronic approach, Alviero Niccacci basically asserts that while prose communicates information in a sequence, poetry communicates segments of information in parallelism. Consequently, "poetry is able to switch from one temporal axis to another even more freely than direct speech. This results in a greater variety of, and more abrupt transition from, one verbal form to another.[48] This 'abrupt transition' in Niccacci's system is jarring and requires more nuance. Tania Notarius quips, "the analysis of biblical poetic discourse should not be limited to the structural principles of poetic text."[49] In other words, in addition to things like word order, pragmatic implicature, context, and the default functions of the finite verb, the identification of the temporal and aspectual axis of alternating verb forms in the inset hymns of Hab 3 should also take into consideration the widely held diachronic distinction between preterite and imperfective *yiqtol.* The basic assumption in this section will be that of Tania Notarius's:

[47] Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Classical Ethiopic (Geʿez)*, Harvard Semitic Studies 24 (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1978), 151.

[48] Niccacci, "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in Poetry," 248.

[49] Notarius, *VABP*, 30.

…if a certain non-routine phenomenon in poetic language cannot be explained as purely discourse-conditioned after all the appropriate tools of discursive analysis have been applied…there are grounds to locate this phenomenon on the historical-linguistic axis, in our case to examine its contribution to the archaic language type.[50]

The following analysis of the verbal system in Hab 3 suggests that the long *yiqtol* (<*yaqtulu*), the short *yiqtol* (<*yaqtul*), and in some respects, the *qatal* (<*qatala*) exhibit syntactical features similar to those in the ABH corpus.

Distinguishing long and short *yiqtol* is not always possible but they can be deciphered in certain classes of verbs and with certain pronominal suffixes. These distinctions are summarized in tables 16 and 17:[51]

Table 16. Long and short prefix forms of *yiqtol*

	Long Form	*Short Form*
Hiphil	Pointed with *ḥireq yod* Pointed with *ḥireq* יַפְקֵד / יַפְקִיד	Pointed with *ṣere* 3rd -*ayin* pointed with *pataḥ* יֹשַׁע / יַפְקֵד
Medial *yod* verbs (Qal)	Pointed with *ḥireq yod* Pointed with *ḥireq* יְשֵׁת / יָשִׁית	Pointed with *ṣere* Pointed with *segol* יָשֵׁת / יְשֶׁת
Medial *waw* verbs /u/ in inf. cs. (Qal)	Pointed with *šureq* Pointed with *qibbuṣ* יָקֻם / יָקוּם	Pointed with *qameṣ ḥatuf* Pointed with *ḥolem* יָקֹם / יָקָם
Medial *waw* verbs /o/ in inf. cs. (Qal)	No distinction between long and short forms יָבוֹא / יָבֹא	
Third *he* verbs	3rd *he* retained יִבְנֶה	3rd *he* elided יִבֶן
This holds for 3ms, 3fs, 2ms, 1cs, and 1 cp forms without pronominal suffixes		

The paragogic nun that occasionally occurs on 3mp, 2mp, and 2fs prefix forms is a remnant of the **yaqtulu* paradigm. Prefix forms with the archaic *nun* are long forms while prefix forms without the *nun* could either be long or short.[52] The pronominal

[50] Notarius, *VABP*, 271.

[51] Taken from Jill E. Zwyghuizen, "Time Reference of Verbs in Biblical Hebrew Poetry" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2012), 95–96.

[52] See Rainey, "The Ancient Hebrew Prefix Conjugation in the Light of Amarnah Canaanite,"

suffixes on the *yiqtol* forms may be distinguished using the following table:

Table 17. Pronominal suffixes on long and short *yiqtol* forms

	Long Forms	*Short Forms*
3ms	*-enhû, -ennû*	*-ēhû*
3fs	*-enhā*	*-ēhā, āh*
2ms (?)	*-ekkā*	*-ekā*
2fs (?)	*-nek*	*-ēk*
1cs (?)	*-nniy*	*-ēniy*

Word Order and TAM

Word order is often thought to play a significant role in the deciphering of the temporal and aspectual nature of verbs. Many scholars today have taken word-order conditioning of a verb's semantic value to such an extreme that they identify all verbal forms in clause-initial position as marked and modal, and forms in clause-internal position as unmarked and indicative.[53] Though space does not allow for a robust treatment of word order in Hab 3, a few remarks will suffice.

First, it is too extreme to say that the word order in Hebrew poetry is of a different species than that of prose. Sherry Lynn Fariss noted in her 2003 dissertation that while the greater the complexity of poetry in BH, the greater the variation of word order, it is nonetheless true that the more informational the genre, the more likely the traditional word order remains stable (i.e., VSO).[54] Niccacci adds:

7; Cf. Zwyghuizen, "Time Reference of Verbs in Biblical Hebrew Poetry," 95.

[53] For example, see Cook, "The Semantics of Verbal Pragmatics"; R. D. Holmstedt, "Word Order in the Book of Proverbs," in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients: Essays to Honor Michael V. Fox on the Occasion to His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. R.L. Troxel, K.G. Friebel, and D. R. Magary (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 135–54; Robert D. Holmstedt, "Word Order and Information Structure in Ruth and Jonah: A Generative Typological Analysis," *JSS* 54, no. 1 (2009): 111–39.

[54] Sherry Lynn Fariss, "Word Order in Biblical Hebrew Poetry" (PhD diss., University of Texas, 2003), iv. She says, "…poeticality has little effect on word order variation in Biblical Hebrew, but…transitivity appears to answer the questions of word order variation by text type."

…the functions of the verbal forms in poetry are basically the same as in prose, more precisely in direct speech. The main difference is that direct speech, as prose in general, consists of pieces of information conveyed in a temporal sequence, while poetry communicates segments of information in parallelism. The result is linear *vs.* segmental communication. As a consequence, poetry is able to switch from one temporal axis to another even more freely than direct speech.[55]

Second, the word-order patterns in the ABH corpus are still not completely understood. However, what is clear is that BH verse has a relaxed syntactic structure wherein certain syntactic constructions that would be unviable in prose are acceptable in verse. John Scott Redd, Jr. notes,

One such construction is the occurrence of syntactic constituent postponements that are viable in the environment of verse but not in prose. In the verbal clause, such postponement would include (1) irregular subject- and (2) object-placement in a clause after constituents that they would normally precede in prose, and (3) placement of the verb in the third constituent position of a clause, a position that excludes the verb according to the syntactic rules of prose.[56]

Third, while word order in biblical poetry (or "verse") should certainly be consulted, it is rarely the determining factor for distinguishing the short from the long *yiqol.* All factors of discourse analysis should be taken into consideration. Both the preterite and the imperfective *yiqtol*, for example, can take either a clause-initial or clause-internal position. Having made those qualifications, I present here the statistics for clause-initial and clause-internal appearances of the verb in the inset hymns. The clause-internal *qatal* (represented by "[x] *qatal*") appears a total of six times,[57] [x] *yiqtol* appears nine times,[58] clause-initial *qatal* appears 10 times,[59] clause-initial *yiqtol* appears two

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[55] Alviero. Niccacci, "An Integrated Verb System for Biblical Hebrew Prose and Poetry," in *Congress Volume Ljubljana 2007*, ed. André Lemaire, International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 114. Cf. also Alviero Niccacci, "Analysing Biblical Hebrew Poetry," *JSOT* 22, no. 74 (June 1997): 78. Niccacci demonstrates this distinction through an analytical comparison of the killing of Sisera at the hands of Jael narrated first in prose in Judges 4:19–21 and later celebrated in poetry in Judges 5:25–27. See pp. 78–80. Niccacci bases his analysis of the BHVS on the text-linguistic approach of Harald Weinrich, *Tempus: besprochene und erzählte Welt*, 4. Aufl. (Stuttgart, Germany: Kohlhammer, 1985).

[56] John Scott Redd, *Constituent Postponement in Biblical Hebrew Verse*, Abhandlungen Für Die Kunde Des Morgenlandes 90 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), i.

[57] In 3:3, 7, 8, 10 [x2], 11.

[58] In 3:3, 4, 5, 8, 9 [x2], 11, 12 [x2].

[59] In 3:3, 6 [x3], 10 [x2], 13 [x2],14, 15.

times,[60] clause-initial *wᵉyiqtol* appears one time (3:5), and clause-initial *wayyiqtol* appears three times in 3:6. While word order can be significant for deciphering the semantic function of the verb, it is never to be considered in isolation from other factors such as context and the relation to the verb in the parallel line. In tables 18[61] and 19, I combine observations on the word order of the *yiqtols* and the identification of long and short *yiqtols* in order to distinguish between preterite and imperfective *yiqtols*.

Table 18. Legend for peripheral clause types

Sign	Meaning
X	Adjective (e.g., "you are *beautiful*")
X^*	Introducer ("behold…")
X^T	Topicalizer
X^a	Adverbial phrases
X^c	Conjunction (the *waw* "and, or" is not included in this coding)
X^d	Deictic (e.g., "*there* they set forth…")
X^i	Interrogative particle
X^j	Interjection ("*alas* the abundance is not his…")
X^p	Prepositional phrase (includes comparatives)
X^r	Relative particle ("which," "who," "that")

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[60] In 3:7 and 10.

[61] This list of peripheral clause types is drawn from Fariss, "Word Order," 61.

Table 19. Short, long, and unknown *yiqtol* forms

Verse	yiqtol	[S]hort [L]ong [U]nknown	[C]lause-initial/ [X]-initial	nun energicum before pron. Suffix [y or n]	[I]mperf. yiqtol Or [P]reterite yiqtol	Word Order
3:3	יָבוֹא	S	X		P	SXᴾV
3:4	תִּהְיֶה	L	X		I	XᴾOS
3:5	יֵלֶךְ	S	X		P	XᴾV
3:7	יִרְגְּזוּן	U	C	n	P	VO
3:8	תִרְכַּב	U	X		I	XᶜVXᴾ
3:9	תֵעוֹר	U	X		I	SVXᴾ
	תְבַקַּע	U	X		I	XᴾVO
3:10	יָחִילוּ	L	C		I	VO
3:11	יְהַלֵּכוּ	U	X		P	SVXᴾᵃ
3:12	תִּצְעַד	U	X		I	XᴾVO
	תָּדוּשׁ	U	X		I	XᴾVO
3:14	יִסְעָרוּ	U	X		I	V

Translation of the Inset Hymns

Having considered the word order of the *yiqtols,* the archaic reflex of the two *yiqtol* forms*,* and how to distinguish them, I now present my own translation of the inset hymns below in table 20. I have designated the temporal and aspectual values of the *qatal, yiqtols,* and *wayyiqtols* in footnotes. Following the translation, I briefly show the similarity between the functions of the imperfective *yiqtol,* preterite *yiqtol,* and the *qatal* forms in the inset hymns and in ABH in general.

Table 20. A translation of the inset hymns of Habakkuk 3:3–15

English	Hebrew

³ Eloah came out from Teman,
    even Qadosh from Mount Paran, Selah!
His glory covered the heavens
    and the earth was full of his praise
	³ אֱלוֹהַ מִתֵּימָן יָבוֹא[62]
	וְקָדוֹשׁ מֵהַר־פָּארָן סֶלָה
	כִּסָּה[63] שָׁמַיִם הוֹדוֹ
	וּתְהִלָּתוֹ מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ

⁴ His radiance is like the *sheer* light,
    He has horns *coming* from his hand
    And there *is* the covering of his strength
	⁴ וְנֹגַהּ כָּאוֹר תִּהְיֶה[64]
	קַרְנַיִם מִיָּדוֹ לוֹ
	וְשָׁם חֶבְיוֹן עֻזֹּה[65]

⁵ Before him went pestilence, and plague was following at his feet	⁵ פָּנָיו יֵלֶךְ[66] דָּבֶר וְיֵצֵא[67] רֶשֶׁף לְרַגְלָיו

⁶ He stood and shook the earth,
    he looked and startled the nations,
Then the everlasting mountains were shattered,
    The ancient hills collapsed,
        His ways are everlasting
	⁶ עָמַד[68] וַיְמֹדֶד[69] אֶרֶץ
	רָאָה[70] וַיַּתֵּר[71] גּוֹיִם
	וַיִּתְפֹּצְצוּ[72] הַרְרֵי־עַד
	שַׁחוּ[73] גִּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם
	הֲלִיכוֹת עוֹלָם לוֹ

⁷ I saw the tents of Cushan under distress, the tents in the land of Midian trembled	⁷ תַּחַת אָוֶן רָאִיתִי[74] אָהֳלֵי כוּשָׁן יִרְגְּזוּן[75] יְרִיעוֹת אֶרֶץ מִדְיָן

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[62] Preterite *yiqtol,* perfective aspect.

[63] Given the preterite *yiqtol* in the first line, this *qatal* in the second line continues the idea of boundedness with the perfective.

[64] Imperfective yiqtol, historical present or iterative and habitual present aspect (see, e.g., Judg 5:29; cf. Deut 32:38–39). This is the long form. The short form would be תְהִי as seen in Gen 13:8.

[65] This line is notoriously difficult to translate. I have simply translated this way even though its meaning is indecipherable.

[66] Preterite *yiqtol,* perfective.

[67] *wᵊyiqtol,* past sequential aspect following a perfective. See Deut 32:6 where the *wᵊyiqtol* functions as a past sequential in correlation with perfective *qatal*. Notarius says that "the use of *wᵊyiqtol* as a past sequential in report can be interpreted as an initial sign of the system of sequential tenses." See *VABP,* 282.

[68] Past perfective *qatal.*

[69] From the √מוד , "to be moved mightily." Polel *wayyiqtol*, 3ms. Past simultaneous/circumstantial use.

[70] Past perfective *qatal.*

[71] Past simultaneous/circumstantial use.

[72] Sequential use.

[73] Past perfective *qatal.*

[74] Past perfective *qatal.*

[75] Preterite *yiqtol,* perfective.

Table 20 continued

English	Hebrew

[8] Was your wrath against the rivers, O LORD?
  Was your wrath against the rivers,
Or your anger against the sea?
  when you were riding upon your horses
  in your chariots of salvation?
	[8] הֲבִנְהָרִים֙ חָרָה֙[76] יְהֹוָ֔ה
	אִ֤ם בַּנְּהָרִים֙ אַפֶּ֔ךָ
	אִם־בַּיָּ֖ם עֶבְרָתֶ֑ךָ
	כִּ֤י תִרְכַּב֙[77] עַל־סוּסֶ֔יךָ
	מַרְכְּבֹתֶ֖יךָ יְשׁוּעָֽה

[9] *Unto* nakedness, your bow is laid bare, *Your* arrows are sworn in with a word, selah You split the earth with rivers	[9] עֶרְיָ֤ה תֵעוֹר֙[78] קַשְׁתֶּ֔ךָ שְׁבֻעוֹת֙[79] מַטּ֖וֹת אֹ֣מֶר סֶ֑לָה נְהָר֖וֹת תְּבַקַּע[80]־אָֽרֶץ

[10] The mountains saw you and trembled,
  the torrential downpour passed through
The great deep roared with its voice
  And lifted high its hand
	[10] רָא֤וּךָ[81] יָחִ֙ילוּ֙[82] הָרִ֔ים
	זֶ֥רֶם מַ֖יִם עָבָ֑ר[83]
	נָתַ֤ן[84] תְּהוֹם֙ קוֹל֔וֹ
	ר֥וֹם יָדֵ֖יהוּ נָשָֽׂא[85]

[11] The sun and moon stood still in *their* place
  your arrows went streaming to the light[86]
  your flashing javelin to the bright light[87]
	[11] שֶׁ֥מֶשׁ יָרֵ֖חַ עָמַ֣ד[88] זְבֻ֑לָה
	לְא֤וֹר חִצֶּ֙יךָ֙ יְהַלֵּ֔כוּ[89]
	לְנֹ֖גַהּ בְּרַ֥ק חֲנִיתֶֽךָ

[76] Preterite *yiqtol,* perfective.

fective *yiqtol,* past progressive (e.g., 2 Sam 22:7a)

[78] Imperfective *yiqtol,* simple present progressive (e.g., Judges 5:30). From √עור; Niphal *yiqtol,* 3fs.

[79] I take this as a Qal pass. ptc. fem. pl. from שבע. It functions very similarly to פְּקֻחוֹת (from פקח), another III-ח/ע weak verb.

[80] Imperfective *yiqtol,* simple present progressive (e.g., Deut 32:40).

[81] Past perfective *qatal.*

[82] Imperfective *yiqtol,* past simultaneous and circumstantial (e.g., Exod 15:12).

[83] Past perfective *qatal.*

[84] Past perfective *qatal.*

[85] Past perfective *qatal.*

[86] Francis I. Andersen's translation. See *Habakkuk,* 312.

[87] Verb gapping.

[88] Past perfective *qatal.*

[89] Preterite *yiqtol,* perfective.

Table 20 continued

[12] In indignation you march through the earth In anger you trample down the nations	בְּזַ֥עַם תִּצְעַד[90]־אָ֑רֶץ [12] בְּאַ֖ף תָּד֥וּשׁ[91] גּוֹיִֽם

[13] You went out for the salvation of your people
   for the salvation of your anointed one[92]
You struck the head from the house of the wicked
   causing [*him*] to lay open from foot[93] unto neck selah
	יָצָ֙אתָ֙[94] לְיֵ֣שַׁע עַמֶּ֔ךָ [13]
	לְיֵ֖שַׁע אֶת־מְשִׁיחֶ֑ךָ
	מָחַ֤צְתָּ רֹּאשׁ֙ מִבֵּ֣ית רָשָׁ֔ע
	עָר֛וֹת יְס֥וֹד עַד־צַוָּ֖אר סֶֽלָה

[14] With his own arrows, you bore through the head of his warriors,
    who stormed in to scatter me,
    in arrogance as if to devour the afflicted in secret
	נָקַ֤בְתָּ בְמַטָּיו֙[95] רֹ֣אשׁ פְּרָזֹו[96] [14]
	יִסְעֲר֖וּ[97] לַהֲפִיצֵ֑נִי
	עֲלִ֣יצֻתָ֔ם כְּמוֹ־לֶאֱכֹ֥ל עָנִ֖י בַּמִּסְתָּֽר

[15] You tread upon the sea *with* your horses, the heap of many waters	דָּרַ֥כְתָּ[98] בַיָּ֖ם סוּסֶ֑יךָ [15] חֹ֖מֶר מַ֥יִם רַבִּֽים

Imperfective *yiqtol* (<*yaqtulu*)

Most texts in the ABH corpus use the imperfective *yiqtol* (<*yaqtulu*) for the most typical functions of the imperfective aspect: present progressive (e.g., Judges 5:30; Deut 32:40; Num 23:9), historical present (e.g., Judges 5:26, 29; 2 Sam 22:37–38, 42–44; Exod 15:7), past progressive (e.g., 2 Sam 22:7a; cf. Deut 32:8, 10), past simultaneous and

[90] Imperfective *yiqtol,* historical present (e.g., 2 Sam 22:42–44).

[91] Imperfective *yiqtol,* historical present.

[92] Verb gapping.

[93] יְס֣וֹד literally means 'foundation,' or 'base.' Assuming the reference is to the wicked 'man' rather than to his 'house,' the term is taken metaphorically to refer to his 'feet.'

[94] Past perfective *qatal.*

[95] I take בְמַטָּיו as "his arrows" even though the most common gloss for this word is "stick, staff, or spear." The concept of arrows is appropriate since it is used in 3:9 in conjunction with קַשְׁתֶּ֔ךָ ("your bow").

[96] פְּרָזֹו is the *kethib* form and the *qere* form is פְּרָזָיו, the masculine plural construct form of *פָּרָז. The *qere* form certainly makes more sense as it agrees in person and number with the verb יִסְעֲרוּ (3mp) in the next line. The noun *פָּרָז is a *hapax legomenon* whose meaning is not entirely clear. *HALOT* suggests that the word may derive from the Arabic *faraza,* "to muster, select," in which case it would mean something like "leader" or "warrior." The LXX translates פְּרָזָיו with δυναστῶν ("prince, ruler, sovereign"), so "warrior" would be a good fit. On the other hand, if the word is derived from פְּרָזוֹן or פְּרָזִי, it may mean something like "country people, slaves, or adherents." See *HALOT,* s.v., "*פרז."

[97] Imperfective *yiqtol,* past simultaneous and circumstantial (e.g., Exod 15:14–15).

[98] Past perfective *qatal.*

circumstantial (e.g., Exod 15:4–5, 12, 14–15; 2 Sam 22:5, 8–9, 14, 34, 44; Deut 32:16), and immediate future (e.g., Num 23:23; 2 Sam 22:50).[99] The imperfective *yiqtol* is characterized by the full or long *yiqtol* form and the presence of energic endings.[100]

The position of the imperfective *yiqtol* in the clause is not fixed. It tends to be non-initial (see e.g., 2 Sam 22:36; cf. also 2 Sam 22:34, 36, 44; Deut 32:3, 40; Exod 15:6, 18; Judges 5:26, 29) but it can also function, less often, in the clause-initial position (2 Sam 22:37; cf. also 2 Sam 22:40; Deut 32:10, 29; Exod 15:7, 10, 16–17; Judges 5:8).[101] When the *yiqtol* is functioning in the narrative foreground, it does not convey temporal progress and should be interpreted as imperfective (<*yaqtulu*). An example of this is seen in Deut 32:10:

He *found him* in a desert land, in a howling wasteland: he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him as the apple of his eye.	יִמְצָאֵהוּ בְּאֶרֶץ מִדְבָּר וּבְתֹהוּ יְלֵל יְשִׁמֹן יְסֹבְבֶנְהוּ יְבוֹנְנֵהוּ יִצְּרֶנְהוּ כְּאִישׁוֹן עֵינוֹ

Notarius describes the function of the imperfective *yiqtol* in the following way:

> In the narrative register imperfective *yiqtol* is the main form in the background and functions to depict circumstantial simultaneous, progressive, iterative, and habitual events.[102]

The majority of the ABH texts do not present examples of imperfective *yiqtol* denoting volitive modality, although the imperfective *yiqtol* is attested for non-volitive modal uses such as the conditional mood or epistemic modal (e.g., Deut 32:29; cf. also 2 Sam 22:39).[103]

Many of these imperfective uses of the *yiqtol* occur in the inset hymns of Hab

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[99] Notarius, *VABP*, 282–83.

[100] On the Old Canaanite imperfective energic *yaqtulu-na* forms, see Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets*, 1:234–36. Tania Notarius interprets the Northwest Semitic ventive-energic endings -*a/na* as allomorphs. See Tania Notarius, "The Modal Forms of Prefix Conjugation in Archaic Biblical Poetry and in Old Canaanite," *Lěšonénu* 72 (2010): 393–420.

[101] See Notarius, *VABP*, 283.

[102] Notarius, *VABP*, 83 and 95.

[103] Notarius, *VABP*, 284.

3. The simultaneous and circumstantial aspect occur in 3:10 and 14, the past progressive aspect in 3:8, the iterative and habitual present in 3:4, the simple present progressive in 3:9 (2x) and the historical present 3:12 (2x).

Preterite *yiqtol* (<*yaqtul*)

Jan Joosten notes that the "*yiqtol* appears…as a preterite in poetry in a way that does not agree with prose usage…and may be regarded as an archaism."[104] Tania Noatarius further notes that the preterite *yiqtol* is attested as the main past perfective tense in the discourse mode of narrative and is used sporadically as a past sequential in the discourse mode of report.[105] The preterite *yiqtol* (<*yaqtul*) is marked by a number of morphosyntactic characteristics: (1) it appears in the short form ([106]יַצֵּב, תֶּשִׁי [Deut 32:18],[107] and וַיַּרְא [Deut 32:19]), (2) it lacks the *nun energicum* before the pronominal suffix,[108] (3) with some exceptions, it tends to be clause-initial,[109] and (4) it mainly occurs in main clauses.[110]

With respect to the preterite *yiqtol's* semantics, it denotes dynamic bounded past perfective events. However, it can be difficult to distinguish the preteritie *yiqtol* from

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[104] Jan Joosten, *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew: A New Synthesis Elaborated on the Basis of Classical Prose*, Jerusalem Biblical Studies 10 (Jerusalem: Simor Publishing, 2012), 425. Cf. T. David Andersen, "The Evolution of the Hebrew Verbal System," *ZAH* 13 (2000): 51–52; See many more examples of this in G. R. Driver, *Problems of the Hebrew Verbal System*, Old Testament Studies 2 (Edinburgh, Scottland: T. & T. Clark, 1936), 138–44; Notarius, *VABP,* 26; James A. Hughes, "Another Look at the Hebrew Tenses," *JNES* 29, no. 1 (1970): 12–15.

[105] Notarius, *VABP*, 303.

[106] The long spelling would be יציב. See Gotthelf Bergsträsser and Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräische Grammatik* (Hildesheim: G. Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1962), §34h; Waltke and O'Connor, *IBHS*, 498.

[107] This form is controversial but Waltke and O'Connor take it as a shortened form of the preterite. See *IBHS*, 558.

[108] For example, see (יִמְצָאֵהוּ, Deut 32:10; יִקָּחֵהוּ, יִשָּׂאֵהוּ, v. 11, יַרְכִּבֵהוּ, וַיֵּנִקֵהוּ, v. 13). This morphosyntactic analysis regarding the *nun energicum* closely follows Notarius, *VABP,* 78 and Rainey, "The Ancient Hebrew Prefix Conjugation in the Light of Amarnah Canaanite."

[109] A few examples of exceptions may be seen in Deut 32:18: צוּר יְלָדְךָ תֶּשִׁי.

[110] Notarius, *VABP*, 280–81.

the imperfective *yiqtol* when the imperfective *yiqtol* is used for the historical present

(e.g., תִּשְׁלַחְנָה in Judg 5:26, תַּעֲנֶינָה in v. 29).[111] One of the clearest examples of the preterite

yiqtol comes from the Song of Moses in Deut 32:8–11:

When the Most High apportioned to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of men, he *set* the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. However, *Yahweh's* own portion was his people, Jacob is his allotted inheritance. He *found him* in a desert land, in a howling wasteland: he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, and hovers over its young, he *spread out* his wings, took them up, and bore them aloft on his pinions.	בְּהַנְחֵל עֶלְיוֹן גּוֹיִם בְּהַפְרִידוֹ בְּנֵי אָדָם *יַצֵּב* גְּבֻלֹת עַמִּים לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל[112]: כִּי חֵלֶק יְהֹוָה עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ: *יִמְצָאֵהוּ* בְּאֶרֶץ מִדְבָּר וּבְתֹהוּ יְלֵל יְשִׁמֹן יְסֹבְבֶנְהוּ יְבוֹנְנֵהוּ יִצְּרֶנְהוּ כְּאִישׁוֹן עֵינוֹ: כְּנֶשֶׁר יָעִיר קִנּוֹ עַל־גּוֹזָלָיו יְרַחֵף *יִפְרֹשׂ* כְּנָפָיו יִקָּחֵהוּ יִשָּׂאֵהוּ עַל־אֶבְרָתוֹ:

Since Moses is referring to that moment in the past when YHWH found Israel, the verb

יִמְצָאֵהוּ must be a preterite. The Lord's habitual action of protecting Israel is expressed

with the imperfective *yiqtol* יְסֹבְבֶנְהוּ. The imperfective, or long, *yiqtol,* is discerned by its

nun form of the suffix.[113] The same can be said about יִצְּרֶנְהוּ. The preterite function of the

yiqtol in Hab 3:3 functions in a similar way:

Eloah *came* out from Teman,	אֱלוֹהַּ מִתֵּימָן *יָבוֹא*[114]
even Qadosh from Mount Paran, Selah!	וְקָדוֹשׁ מֵהַר־פָּארָן סֶלָה
His glory covered the heavens	כִּסָּה[115] שָׁמַיִם הוֹדוֹ
and the earth was full of his praise	וּתְהִלָּתוֹ מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ

The [x] *yiqtol* is functioning as a preterite here. יָבוֹא is a short *yiqtol.* Though it is

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[111] Notarius, *VABP*, 281.

[112] Among those manuscripts which read "sons of Israel" are the MT, the Samaritan Pentateuch, two later revisions of the LXX: Aquila (Codex X), Symmachus (also Codex X), Targum Onkelos (as well as most other Targumim), the Vulgate, the Peshitta and Theodotian. The majority of the Septuagint witnesses read ἀγγέλων θεοῦ ("angels of God") which many commentators maintain is interpretive. Two versions of the Septuagint read υἱῶν θεοῦ, and a Qumran fragment (4QDeut[j]) found in cave 4 reads בני אלוהים. The בני אלוהים reading should be preferred because it is earlier and because the change was probably motivated by theological presuppositions. See Michael S. Heiser, "Deuteronomy 32:8 and the Sons of God," *BSac* 158, no. 629 (January 1, 2001): 52–74.

[113] See Rainey, "The Ancient Hebrew Prefix," 16.

[114] Preterite *yiqtol,* perfective aspect.

[115] Given the preterite *yiqtol* in the first line, this *qatal* in the second line continues the idea of boundedness with the perfective.

preceded by the subject in a prepositional phrase, it is clearly the main clause, not

background, and constitutes a new topic. While the preterite *yiqtol* tends to be clause-

initial in the ABH corpus, there are also plenty of exceptions. For example, see Deut

32:18:

You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you, You forgot the God who gave you birth	צוּר יְלָדְךָ תֶּשִׁי וַתִּשְׁכַּח אֵל מְחֹלְלֶךָ

Besides 3:3, the preterite *yiqtol* appears four times in the inset hymns (e.g., 3:5 [2x], 7,

and 11).

qatal (<*qatala)

The *qatal* in ABH tends to be mainline while the imperfective *yiqtol* is

background (e.g., Exod 15:5). Notarius says,

> texts that reflect the archaic type of verb system consistently attest to the use of the
> perfect tense *qatal* in its typical functions: as a static and resultant perfect or as a
> performative perfect. The gnomic perfect or prophetic perfect are occasionally
> attested but discourse conditioned."[116]

An example of generic or gnomic statements with the *yiqtol/qatal* interchange is found in

Deut 33:12:[117]

The beloved of the LORD *rests* in safety upon him…he *rests* between his shoulders	יְדִיד יְהֹוָה יִשְׁכֹּן לָבֶטַח עָלָיו…וּבֵין כְּתֵיפָיו שָׁכֵן

Qatal is commonly used as a generic present, and for simple past report.[118] (Notarius,

§13.1.6). The *qatal* is used exclusively as a resultant perfect in the two inset hymns of

Hab 3.

Linguistic Similarity

The *QY/YQ* pattern of verbal forms without the *waw*-consecutive and without

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[116] Notarius, *VABP*, 304.

[117] See Notarius, *VABP,* 269.

[118] *IBHS*, 505; Cf. A. B. Davidson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar: Syntax*, ed. John C. L. Gibson, 4th ed (Edinburgh, Scottland: T. & T. Clark, 1994), 61; Joüon, §112k-l; *VABP,* 289.

temporal opposition certainly fits well in the ABH corpus. The preterite *yiqtol* (<*yaqtul)

was used 4 times (3:3, 5, 7, 11) in 13 verses. The Song of Moses (Deut 32) is an example

in the ABH corpus of how the preterite *yiqtol* occurs often in the foreground of the

narrative report (see also 2 Sam 22:5–20). The archaic reflex of past-tense *yaqtul* in the

main clauses of both prosaic and poetic texts finds its origin in the Old Canaanite

material from El-Amarna (e.g., EA 245:8–45).[119] Also, the historical-present use of the

imperfective *yiqtol* (Hab 3:4 and 12 [2x]) finds a parallel in 2 Sam 22:33–46. An archaic

counterpart to this may be seen in Ugaritic prose and poetry where, according to

Greenstein, the imperfective *yaqtulu* is extensively used in the mainline of narrative as a

historical present (see KTU 1.17).[120] But the perfective *qatal* (<*qatala) is the verb that

dominated the verbal forms in the inset hymns. Judges 5 and Exod 15 are similar

examples of a *qatal*-dominated text-types in the ABH corpus. The dominant use of the

qatal for past tense without the *waw*-consecutive is common in the language of Ugaritic

(i.e., the *qatala* form).[121]

Linguistic Contrast

By contrast, the preterite use of *yiqtol* is quite rare in LBH texts. Parallel texts

from CBH and LBH periods show signs of scribes changing a past narrative *yiqtol* to a

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[119] Most of the Old Canaanite preterite forms are found in the letters from Megiddo (EA 245). But additional potential examples may also be found in EA 247:9; 365:27; EA 197. See Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets*, 1:222–27; Josef Tropper and Juan-Pablo Vita, *Kanaano-akkadische der Amarnazeit*, Lehrbücher orientalischer Sprachen: Cuneiform Languages 1 (Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010), 108–9.

[120] See Greenstein, "Forms and Functions of the Finite Verb in Ugaritic Narrative Verse"; Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugarit Textbook: Grammar, Texts in Transliteration, Cuneiform Selections, Glossary, Indices* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), 69. Greenstein notes that within the epic of Aqhat, the status of the old perfective preterite *yaqtul* is obscure: either it has completely merged with imperfective *yaqtulu,* or else it is poorly attested, marginalized, and conventionalized for certain usages. See also *VABP,* 316.

[121] For example, KTU 2.38, 2.72, 2.82, 2.36, and 2.61. See A. Bruck, "The Syntax of Ugaritic Prose" (PhD diss., Bar-llan University, 2007), 90–95; Dennis Pardee and R. Whiting, "Aspects of Epistolary Verbal Usage in Ugaritic and Akkadian," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 50 (1978): 1–31; Notarius, *VABP*, 314; Anson F. Rainey, "The Prefix Conjugation Patterns of Early Northwest Semitic," in *Lingering Over Words: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Literature in Honor of William L. Moran*, ed. T. Abusch, John Huehnergard, and P. Steinkeller (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 410.

qatal. Two examples will suffice:[122]

Table 21. *Qatal* for *yiqtol* in CBH and LBH texts

LBH	*CBH*
(2 Chr. 22:6) הַמַּכִּים אֲשֶׁר הִכֻּהוּ בָרָמָה "the wounds which *they inflicted* at Ramah"	(2 Kgs 8:29) הַמַּכִּים אֲשֶׁר יַכֻּהוּ אֲרַמִּים בָּרָמָה "the wounds which the Arameans *inflicted* at Ramah"
(Isa 37:34) בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־בָּא בָּהּ יָשׁוּב "By the way in which *he came*, he will return"	(2 Kgs 19:33) בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־יָבֹא בָּהּ יָשׁוּב "By the way in which *he came*, he will return"

The *yiqtol* in Qumran Usage

According to J. Kesterson's 1984 dissertation, wherein he examined the use of verbs in 1QS, 1QSa, 1QSb, and CD, the *yiqtol* was notably not used for past time. He said it was "conspicuously absent from Serakim and CD in the sphere of past time because these texts contain relatively little narrative, the kind of material in which this particular usage is usually encountered."[123] In these documents, the *yiqtol* commonly functioned as the future (including future perfects) and durative or repetitive present, and was used most frequently for expressing modal functions, especially deontic modality.[124]

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[122] See Ken M. Penner, *The Verbal System of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Qumran Hebrew Texts*, Studia Semitica Neerlandica 64 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 64; Alexander Sperber, *A Historical Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: A Presentation of Problems with Suggestions to Their Solution* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 250.

[123] Kesterson, "Tense Usage," 8.

[124] Kesterson, "Tense Usage," 8.

Table 22. Kesterson's Qumran verb form semantics[125]

Form	Function
Any *qatal*	Past, pluperfect, and future perfect
Dynamic *qatal*	Present perfect
Stative *qatal*	Present
yiqtol	Not past; future, future perfect, durative or repetitive present, modality (especially deontic)
wᵊqatal	Future, future perfect, durative or repetitive present, modality (especially deontic); rarely past
wayyiqtol in past sequences	Like *qatal*
Participle	Durative or repetitive present; instantaneous or durative future; rarely past; deontic modality

Ken M. Penner, who has recently undertaken a near exhaustive study of the TAM system in the Dead Sea Scrolls concludes that only 2% of the uses of the *yiqtol* function in the absolute past.[126]

Conclusion

On the surface, the BHVS in the inset hymns seems *sui generis.* On the one hand, it is marked by the absence of the predicate *liqtol,* the APP, the conditional and purposive *wᵊqatal,* and the system of consecutive tenses with *waw*-consecutive and without tensed opposition (with the exception of 3:6). While these four syntactical features are attested in CBH texts, that attestation significantly increases in the LBH and PBH texts. The reason for the appearance of the *wayyiqtols* in 3:6 and the one attestation of the *wᵊyiqtol* in 3:5 is hard to determine. At this point, the best explanation is that the inset hymns bear the marks of an archaic period when the *wayyiqtol* and *wᵊyiqtol* forms

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[125] Summarized and tabulated by Penner, *The Verbal System of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 26.

[126] Penner, *The Verbal System of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 127.

had not yet crystallized and taken over the preterite *yiqtol* (<*yaqtul) form. In the place of the predicate *liqtol,* the APP, the conditional and purposive *wᵊqatal,* and the system of consecutive tenses, the inset hymns have a robust attestation of the *QY/YQ* verbal form alternation, the preterite *yiqtol,* imperfective *yiqtol,* and the *qatal* (used exclusively with past perfective aspect). The brief examples of linguistic contrast from CBH, LBH, and PBH make it clear that the *sui generis* status of the *QY/YQ* pattern does not sit well with any of these linguistic stages.[127] When compared with the temporal and aspectual uses of the imperfective and preterite *yiqtol,* and the *qatal* in the ABH texts, however, an archaic provenance makes the best sense.

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[127] A possible exception would be the CBH period.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION: DID HABAKKUK
END IN SILENCE OR SONG?

The relationship of Hab 3 to Hab 1–2 has long perplexed scholars. The disparity of forms, genres, motifs, and linguistic profiles between the two sections, paired with the absence of chapter 3 from the Qumran Habakkuk Pesher, have created enigmas that have been difficult to decipher. In the preceding chapters, however, I have laid out a cumulative case for the original inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk. It is necessarily cumulative because no one argument is meant to stand on its own. But when taken together, the cumulative weight cannot be ignored. I have argued that the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk intentionally incorporated two archaic hymns (3:3–7 and 8–15) into a framework section (3:2, 16–19) in order to showcase his unwavering faith in YHWH's ability and intention to save, despite what the prophet saw. This ensign of faith, enshrined in song, and declared as a prayer (תְּפִלָּה) was a response of trust to YHWH's מַשָּׂא and became to all subsequent generations, a picture of the triumph of faith.

Archaic Hymns Incorporated by Whom?

Theodore Hiebert also concluded that the inset hymns were archaic. And yet he notes that the "archaic hymns of triumph in Habakkuk 3 stand in tension in almost every respect with the classical prophecy with which it has been related in the canon."[1] Following Paul D. Hanson's work on the origins of the apocalyptic genre in Israel, Hiebert claims that with the Babylonian exile and captivity, classical prophetic eschatology died out.[2] By classical prophetic eschatology, he means the fulfillment of

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[1] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 136.

[2] See Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*; Cf. Hanson, "Jewish Apocalyptic against Its Near Eastern

prophecies of salvation and judgment in politically, historically, and socially concrete terms."[3] For example, the Zadokites believed that the fulfillment of the prophecies in Isaiah, Haggai and Zechariah (1–8) would find their fulfillment in the rebuilding of the temple under the leadership of Joshua and Zerubbabel.

In place of classical prophetic eschatology arose apocalyptic eschatology which identified divine activity, to a greater extent, with the cosmic realm. In the postexilic period, an alliance of apocalyptic visionaries and disenfranchised Levites were excluded from the cult by the hierocracy of the Zadokites. Disillusioned by this ostracism, they concluded that the restoration promised by the classical prophets should not be interpreted to find fulfillment in the politico-religious structures of their community, but instead, in a new vision of restoration in a cosmic context.[4] In order to propagate their message, they expressed their newly formulated cosmic expectations of restoration by creating new hymns cast in the rustic shape of archaic hymns, specifically, the divine warrior hymn.

The divine warrior hymn motif was chosen because it was characteristic of the era of the league (e.g., Exod 15, Judges 5), of the royal cult (e.g., Ps 29, 89b, 110),[5] and was full of mythological patterns, motifs, and images that were suitable for a cosmic interpretation. For a people engaged in a conflict with the Zadokites over the true Israel, the "use of that archaic form served well the purpose of demonstrating their solidarity with early Israel."[6] Hiebert identifies these apocalyptic visionary scribes with the disciples of Second Isaiah who eventually added these newly constructed hymns into the book of Isaiah and Zechariah to give them an apocalyptic conclusion (e.g., Isa 24:1–25:8,

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Environment,"; Hanson, "Zechariah 9 and the Recapitulation of an Ancient Ritual Pattern."

[3] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 136.

[4] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 136. See also Hanson, *Dawn of the Apocalyptic,* 309–11.

[5] Hiebert, *God of My Victory,* 136–37.

[6] Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 124; Cf. Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 137.

Isa 34–35, 59:15b–20, 63:1–6, 63:19–64:2, 66:14b–16; Zech 9:1–17, 10:1–12, 12:1–13:6, and 14:1–21).[7]

According to Hiebert, these apocalyptic visionary scribes carried out the same redactional activity on the book of Habakkuk, which, Hiebert claims, originally only had two chapters. But instead of creating new hymns that had the trappings of old hymns, these scribes apparently took two well preserved ancient divine warrior hymns (Hab 3:3–7 and 8–15) and added them, along with the framework section (3:2, 16–19), as a third chapter to the book of Habakkuk. Hiebert admits that in their premonarchic form, the divine warrior hymns were originally composed as a recitation of YHWH's past activity. However, the apocalyptic visionary scribes reinterpreted them eschatologically, that is, as an anticipation of YHWH's future activity.[8] Hiebert claims that the *QY/YQ* pattern of alternating tenses without the *waw*-consecutive or opposition of tenses facilitated this reinterpretation. He says:

> Finally, a peculiar grammatical feature of Habakkuk 3, its archaic verbal system, provided a linguistic vehicle for this future reorientation. According to archaic conventions, past narrative was expressed by the alternation of prefix (the old preterit) and suffix (the perfect) forms of the verb. With the shift to standard Hebrew in the era of the classical prophets, this old convention fell out of use and prefix forms of the verb not preceded by a conjunction signified only incomplete action. Hence the prefix forms in Habakkuk 3 came to be understood as imperfect verbs, referring not to the past but to the future. The suffix forms were then understood in light of the prefix forms, rather than the other way around. Reference to the past in the poem was simply tied to the future, the real orientation of the poem. God's coming acts would recreate the victories he had once accomplished.[9]

So which theory makes more sense given the data? Did the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk cite the two inset hymns and write the framework section himself? Or were the hymns and the framework section the work of postexilic redactors?

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[7] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 137. As is clear from these 'exilic' examples of the Divine Warrior hymn, both Hanson and Hiebert assume a non-Isaianic authorship of Second Isaiah in the exilic period. The postexilic apocalyptic visionary scribes took up these exilic examples of the reappropriated divine warrior hymn in the service of their contemporary theological battles with the Zadokites.

[8] For his defense of this reinterpretation, see Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 136–49.

[9] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 139.

A Summary of the Cumulative Evidence

Hiebert's theory is representative of many scholars who take Hab 3 as a secondary inclusion. But when all the evidence of the preceding chapters is cumulatively considered, there are five reasons why the original inclusion of chapter 3 in the book of Habakkuk must be preferred over a secondary inclusion.

Ancient Hymns as Common Currency

First, Hiebert rightly recognizes the archaic texture and feel of the two inset hymns and yet argues that it was preserved in the royal cult from premonarchic times until the postexilic era when redactional scribes inserted it into the book of Habakkuk. But a similar, and more plausible argument is proffered here. If these two hymns were common currency in the time of the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk, then it is just as likely that he himself could have incorporated them into the third chapter. Therefore, Hiebert's argument for the common currency of the two ancient hymns is really an argument for their seventh-century inclusion.

Visionary Scribes and Ancient Hymns

Another problem with Hiebert's unique thesis is the claim that the divine warrior hymns in Hab 3 were actually old hymns. Granting, for the sake of argument, that Hiebert is justified in thinking that disciples of Second Isaiah added to Trito-Isaiah, Zechariah, and Habakkuk, why didn't these scribes insert a new hymn into Habakkuk as they did in Trito-Isaiah? Is Habakkuk the only example where they added a supposedly ancient hymn instead of one of the 'new' hymns that they apparently composed? Granting, for a moment, that this is actually what they did, why wouldn't they change Teman, Mount Paran (3:3), Cushan, and Midian (3:7) to Zion? Hiebert recognizes the tension of this theory when he says

> The location of God's theophany at his ancient sanctuary in the southeast in Habakkuk 3 links this poem to Israel's most archaic poetry which originated in the era of the league. At the same time, it places Habakkuk 3 in tension with the poetic traditions of the temple cultus of the monarchy, with prophetic conventions, and

with the motifs of apocalyptic literature.[10]

Apparently then, the divine warrior hymns in Hab 3 are the only examples of redacted hymns by the apocalyptic visionary scribes that have not been updated to fit their theological agenda. Far from cohering with Hiebert's thesis, the disparity between the divine warrior hymns in Hab 3 and those in Trito-Isaiah and Zechariah, would rather suggest that chapter 3 was already an integral part of the book when Habakkuk was incorporated into the prophetic corpus.[11] Once again, Hiebert's argument is actually an argument for their original inclusion.

The Distinction that Unites מַשָּׂא and תְּפִלָּה

A third reason for the original inclusion of chapter 3 is the identity of and relationship between the מַשָּׂא (chapters 1–2) and the תְּפִלָּה (chapter 3). As the superscriptions indicate, Hab 1–2 is a מַשָּׂא and functions as a separate generic unit from the תְּפִלָּה of Hab 3. Accordingly, one should not expect the same typicalities (genre, form, structure, intention, etc.) of a מַשָּׂא to be present in the תְּפִלָּה of Hab 3. While both Hab 1–2 and 3 involve complaints, the intention of the respective complaints is different in each case. The complaint in Hab 1 is controlled by the מַשָּׂא macrostructure. The intention is to seek clarification about a previous revelation. The previous revelation was given in Hab 1 where YHWH declared that he was going to send the Chaldeans against Judah. Habakkuk was perplexed by this revelation given the Deuteronomic promises of blessing for obedience (Deut 28). By virtue of Josiah's political and religious reforms, Habakkuk expected blessing and not curse. So, Habakkuk complains (Hab 1) about the theological ambiguity of YHWH's revelation. Then he ascends his watchtower in hopes that YHWH will disambiguate the previous revelation with a subsequent revelation. That

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[10] Hiebert, *God of My Victory*, 92. On page 140, Hiebert admits and identifies the differences between the hymns in Hab 3 and other 'new' divine warrior psalms composed during the sixth and the fifth centuries in other prophetic books.

[11] Ko, "Theodicy in Habakkuk," 27–28.

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disambiguating revelation comes in the woes of Hab 2 where God assures Habakkuk that Chaldea, and every tyrant who acts the same, will eventually be judged. In other words, the raising up of Chaldea is meant to be a temporary corrective for Judah, but the righteous shall live by faith (Hab 2:4)

On the other hand, the prayer of complaint in Hab 3 is the response of faith to that clarification. This answers the secondary-inclusion argument of disparate genres between Hab 1–2 and 3. The two sections are not supposed to be the same. Instead of seeking uniformity in form between Hab 1–2 and 3, secondary-inclusion scholars should give greater attention to intention and diversity.[12] The secondary-inclusion advocate's common dismissal of the superscription's generic classification does not answer the more pressing question of why the ancient community felt compelled to affix the label to the book. Once again, the secondary-inclusion argument is *actually* an argument for their original inclusion.

Sign-Posting, Silence, and Song

The fourth reason for the original inclusion of chapter 3 is Habakkuk's sign-posting in Hab 2:1. After having complained to YHWH about the ambiguous nature of YHWH's previous revelation about the Chaldeans ascent (Hab 1), Habakkuk ascends his watchtower and does two things. First, he looks out to see what God will say to him. In other words, the prophet is waiting for the disambiguation of revelation which is inherent to the meaning of מַשָּׂא. Secondly, because he expects some kind of rebuke from YHWH, he intends to respond. This intention to respond is a clear sign-posting of what the reader should expect. However, the rest of chapter 2 takes up the woes against the Chaldeans and ends in a call to all the earth for silence as YHWH presides in his temple (Hab 2:20). Habakkuk never responds. The absence of this response means that chapter 3 must be the prophet's response.

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[12] Weis, "A Definition of Maśśāʾ," 227.

Chapter 3 has all the trappings of a psalm (superscription, liturgical notations) and has two hymns embedded within it. Habakkuk's purpose is set out in 3:2. He has heard the report of YHWH and his work. That is, he recalls the mighty works of YHWH's redemption of his covenant people in Israel's past. Those works fill him with reverence for YHWH. Habakkuk then petitions YHWH to revive those works of redemption in the years to come. That is, make those works come alive again against Judah's current foe, the Chaldeans. After this petition, Habakkuk cites two hymns which recall those ancient works of YHWH. The two hymns are not meant to be a prophesy of what YHWH will do (although functionally that is what they end up being). Rather, they are memories of what he has done. After citing the two hymns, Habakkuk professes unconditional trust in YHWH. So, the sign-posting of Habakkuk's anticipation in 2:1 did not end in the silence of Hab 2:20 but in the song of triumph in 3:2–19.

Linguistic Dating Leans Away from
Persian Period

The fifth reason for the original inclusion of chapter 3 is the linguistic profile of Hab 3. In chapter 5 of this work, I laid out a methodology for a relative linguistic dating of Hab 3 drawn from Avi Hurvitz: (1) linguistic distribution, (2) linguistic contrast, (3) extrabiblical sources, and (4) accumulation. With that methodology, I identified five grammatical features from Hab 3 that establish a *terminus ad quem* of the seventh century BC: (1) the old 3ms pronominal suffix (3:4, 11), (2) the enclitic *mem* in Hab 3:8(2x), (3) the appearance of the CBH *yiqtol* + לֹא pattern in 3:17 vs. its LBH counterpart *liqtol* + אֵין or *liqtol* + לֹא, (4) the appearance of the CBH usage of a clause of negation with וְאֵין (3:17) vs. the LBH counterpart of a clause of negation with לְאֵין, and (5) the CBH usage of the preposition עַד vs. the LBH counterpart of עַד + לְ. These five grammatical features of Hab 3 showed that where a LBH feature would have been expected if Hab 3 were written or even redacted in the Persian period (or later), a CBH feature was found.

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In chapters 6 and 7, I identified four syntactical features in Hab 3 that likewise lean away from the Persian period and closer to the pre-exilic period. First, the verbally-encoded stative is more common in CBH texts and declines in LBH texts. Two examples are found in Hab 3. Second, the virtual absence of the predicate *liqtol* in the inset hymns was contrasted with its more robust use in LBH and PBH texts. In place of the LBH/PBH functions of the predicate *liqtol,* the syntax of Hab 3 had a predominant use of *qatal* and *yiqtol* verbal forms. Third, the active predicative participle (APP) was virtually absent in the inset hymns but is increasingly used in LBH and PBH texts. In the place of the LBH/PBH functions of the APP, both the inset hymns and the framework section of Hab 3 used the *qatal, yiqtol,* and *wayyiqtol* verbal forms. Fourth, the system of consecutive tenses was absent in Hab 3. In its place, the (*QY/YQ*) pattern of alternating forms without the *waw*-consecutive and without clear temporal opposition between the two forms was used. Furthermore, the use of the *yiqtol* in the inset hymns of Hab 3 resembled the twofold use of imperfective and preterite *yiqtol,* which is a common feature of ABH texts.

While I recognize that it is possible for later redactors to archaize, the reality is that scribes rarely, if ever, are able to do so without being detected. In other words, with the archaizing elements, the linguistic profile of the Hebrew of their day will inevitably make its way into the text. Postexilic authors/redactors cannot be expected to accurately reproduce the outdated style of CBH without slips betraying their own linguistic background. For example, throughout the Song of Moses (Deut 32), a text considered by many to be among the ABH corpus, the short *yiqtol* is used as a preterite multiple times: 32:8b, 10, 11b (2x), 13, 18, and possibly in 11b, 16 (2x), 17.[13] As Joosten notes, this is "a striking usage, justifiable on language-historical grounds, but unparalleled in Hebrew

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[13] These *yiqtols* have the same temporal-aspectual value as the *wayyiqtol* forms in vv. 6, 13 (2x), 15 (4x), 18, and 19 (3x). See Joosten, *Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew*, 417–19.

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prose texts."[14] The use of the short *yiqtol* as preterite in the Song of Moses is "part of an organic system."[15] By contrast, Psalm 78 is a clear case of archaizing. Psalm 78:45, for example, uses the short *yiqtol* as a preterite, but it is merely an isolated usage. The distinction between the linguistic profiles of Deut 32 and Ps 78 is seen with the use of *qatal.* Whereas Deut 32 only uses it in its perfective aspect, and never in narrative sequences, Ps 78 uses it throughout its narrative sections as an equivalent of *wayyiqtol*.[16] Psalm 78 is a proper example of a CBH writer trying to imitate archaic poetry.[17] Such slips of the linguistic profile are not seen in Hab 3.

It is for this reason, throughout this work, that a linguistic contrast has been shown between what would be expected in a CBH text vs. an LBH or PBH text. On the whole, the linguistic profile of Hab 3 fits nicely among CBH texts. Where certain LBH features would be expected, had it been written or redacted in that period, they do not appear. The linguistic profile of the inset hymns in particular shares many affinities with texts from the ABH corpus. When the synchronic observations in chapters 1–4 of this work are combined with the diachronic observations in chapters 5–8 on the linguistic profile of Hab 3, only two plausible conclusions arise: either Habakkuk cited two archaic hymns or Habakkuk created two hymns with archaizing features. The evidence supports the former.

Therefore, the third chapter of Habakkuk should be seen, not only as an original part of the book of Habakkuk, but more importantly, as an integral and intentional conclusion to the book's theological and theodicean purposes. If Habakkuk

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[14] Joosten, *Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew,* 417.

[15] Joosten, *Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew,* 431.

[16] It functions in a similar fashion to many CBH texts (e.g., Ps 78:13, 21, 25, 31). Joosten also points out the use of the iterative *wᵊqatal* in 78:34. A similar function is found in the syntax of other CBH texts such as Gen 38:9; Num 21:9; and Judg 6:3. The iterative *wᵊqatal* is never found in ABH poetry. See Joosten, *Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew,* 431.

[17] Joosten, *Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew,* 431.

had remained silent after receiving the disambiguating revelation of YHWH in Hab 2, the stones would have cried out (Luke 19:40). Habakkuk's response of faith in chapter 3 was, and continues to be, the reflex of every subject of YHWH's unwavering faithfulness.

The Unique Contributions of this Work to Habakkukian Studies

This work has filled a lacuna in Habakkukian studies in a number of ways. First, I have highlighted the heuristic use of the superscriptions for deciphering the two genres and the subsequent structure of the book. Second, I have given a robust treatment of Habakkuk's *sign-posting* (2:1) which has, in turn, shed greater light on the purpose and function of chapter 3 in the book. Third, I have given a contextually based identification of the elusive vision in the book. Fourth, I have suggested a relative linguistic date to the inset hymns based on grammatical and syntactical considerations. Based on these four unique contributions, I conclude that the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk cited two ancient hymns in order to recall the mighty works of YHWH and petition him to renew those mighty works in the years to come.

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ABSTRACT

TO END IN SILENCE OR SONG:
THE ORIGINAL INCLUSION OF CHAPTER 3
IN THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

Joshua Bryan Henson, PhD
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2021
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Duane A. Garrett

This study argues that chapter 3 was an integral part of the book of Habakkuk. Based on synchronic considerations in chapters 1–4, the author argues that chapter 3 must have a seventh-century provenance. The nature of a *massá* requires that the prophet seek clarification for an ambiguous prior revelation. The prior revelation was that YHWH was raising up the Chaldeans in chapter 1. Habakkuk complains about this in chapter 1. In chapter 2, Habakkuk waits to see how YHWH will respond to this complaint and intends to answer YHWH's response. The rest of chapter 2 consist of oracles against the arrogant one (Chaldea) and Habakkuk never responds. Therefore, the author concludes that Hab 3 is the response.

In chapters 5–9, the author argues for a relative linguistic date of the seventh century for Hab 3. The author presents 5 grammatical features (chapters 5–6) and 3 syntactical features (chapter 7) common to classical biblical Hebrew (CBH). In chapter 8, the author additionally argues that some archaic elements can be detected in the inset hymns of Hab 3. The author concludes that the seventh-century prophet Habakkuk cited two archaic inset hymns in Hab 3 showcasing the redemptive feats of YHWH in days past, and asked YHWH to renew those mighty works in the years to come, namely against Chaldea.

VITA

Joshua Bryan Henson

EDUCATION
        BA., The Master's University, 2001
        MDiv., Westminster Seminary California, 2012
        ThM., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014

ORGANIZATIONS
        Society of Biblical Literature
        Institute for Biblical Research
        The Evangelical Theological Society

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT
        Adjunct Faculty, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville,
            Kentucky, 2017

MINISTERIAL EMPLOYMENT
        Minister of Youth, Hickman Community Church, Hickman, California, 1999-
            2000
        Missionary-Teacher, Logos Bible Institute, Ensenada, B.C., Mexico, 2003-
            2006
        Senior Pastor, Grace Covenant Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 2016–