THE PHRASE "THOU KNOWEST"

IN JEREMIAH 15

by

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IN JEREMIAH 15
Recent investigations of the ancient Near Eastern treaty texts have shed a new light especially on the familiar idea of a covenant between God and his people. A Hebrew verb ידע is shown as one of the basic words concerning the notion of God as sovereign Lord and of the people as his servants. A Hebrew formula ידע היה demonstrates the importance of the "mutuality" motif of the covenant. The mutual understanding of Divine Confrontation in Jeremiah's Confession will be shown as a central problem in his Rib-controversy with God.
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Without listing them all, grateful appreciation is hereby acknowledged to my many colleagues.
### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFO</td>
<td>Archiv für Orientforschung</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJSLL</td>
<td>The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</td>
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<td>AnBi</td>
<td>Analecta Biblica</td>
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<td>AnOr</td>
<td>Analecta Orientalia</td>
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<td>ATD</td>
<td>Das Alte Testament Deutsch</td>
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<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>The Biblical Archaeologist</td>
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<td>BANE</td>
<td>G. E. Wright, ed., The Bible and the Ancient Near East</td>
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<tr>
<td>BASOR</td>
<td>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>BZAW</td>
<td>Beithefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
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<tr>
<td>BJRL</td>
<td>Bulletin of John Rylands Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBQ</td>
<td>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>ET</td>
<td>Evangelische Theologie</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOST</td>
<td>Glasgow Oriental Society, Transactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>HAT</td>
<td>Handbuch zum Alten Testament (Tübingen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HK</td>
<td>Handkommentar zum Alten Testament (Göttingen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUCA</td>
<td>Hebrew Union College Annual</td>
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<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>The Interpreter’s Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Critical Commentary</td>
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<td>IDB</td>
<td>The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible</td>
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<td>Iraq</td>
<td>British School of Archaeology in Iraq</td>
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<td>JAOS</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society</td>
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<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
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<td>JCS</td>
<td>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</td>
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<td>JEA</td>
<td>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</td>
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<td>JNES</td>
<td>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</td>
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<td>JPPOS</td>
<td>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</td>
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<td>JQR</td>
<td>Jewish Quarterly Review</td>
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<td>JRAS</td>
<td>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</td>
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<td>JSS</td>
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<td>JTS</td>
<td>Journal of Theological Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>KAT</td>
<td>Kommentar zum Alten Testament (Leipzig)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LYTL</td>
<td>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros. (Kühler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951-53)</td>
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<td>LXX</td>
<td>Septuagint</td>
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<td>MVAG</td>
<td>Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatische-Aegyptischen Gesselschaft</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Massoratic Text</td>
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<td>RSV</td>
<td>The Holy Bible; Revised Standard Version</td>
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<td>TWzNT</td>
<td>Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. Kittel</td>
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<td>TZ</td>
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<td>VT</td>
<td>Vetus Testamentum</td>
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<td>VTS</td>
<td>Vetus Testamentum, Supplements</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZAW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the phrase "Thou knowest" in the context of the "confession" of Jer. 15:10-11, 15-29 is a covenant lawsuit motif and expresses Jeremiah's claim on the absolute merciful protection of God according to His promise and a petition to Yahweh for the renewal of His covenant acts.

The thesis is restricted to the word study of the Hebrew verb ידע, whose meaning has not been sufficiently studied by scholars and whose Sitz im Leben has not been completely established. It is, therefore, not within the scope of this study to discuss whether or not verses of 12-14, which are not clear and are generally taken as interpolation are original and must be included within the context of vv.10-20 from the point of view of form-criticism.

The formula ידע ידוע has not received sufficient attention in recent scholarship. Textual studies have resulted in different opinions concerning the first two words ידע ידוע in Jer. 15:15. Most commentators have deleted these two words from the present context or have transposed them to another. Recently, for example, E. Gerstenberger argues that these two words must be deleted from the context.
Walter Baumgartner considers these two words as possible "opening phrases" of the section of vv.15-18.

The view to be defended in this thesis is that this phrase takes a central position in the structure of Jeremiah's petition. The Hebrew word יָּד will be shown to be covenant terminology, and more exactly covenant lawsuit terminology. Using this phrase, Jeremiah affirms that Yahweh is Suzerain. Jeremiah stands as the vassal, the Mediator-Intercessor before Yahweh. This argument is proved by demonstrating that the phrase occurs in the Gattung of the rib-controversy and its Sitz im Leben is the covenant-renewal ceremony.

The use of the rib-pattern has been established in the prophetic writing and more precisely in the "confession". The uniqueness of the "confession" is that in the "I-Thou" of the controversy motif, the "I" is not God, but the prophet himself. This argument can be examined by comparison of Moses's petition (Ex.33:12-17). Furthermore, a comparison of these two texts will demonstrate that Jeremiah's confession reflects the traditional framework of the rib or "covenant Lawsuit".

Investigations of the ancient Near Eastern Treaties suggest an inquiry into the effects which the covenant idea and covenant form had upon the prophets. The covenant lawsuit is associated with the covenant Gattung, which has parallels in the Suzerain-treaties form. The covenant lawsuit ultimately
rests upon the Suzerain-treaties form. These investigations enlighten the present study specifically by establishing the Lebenskreis ("sphere of life") of International Relationships in which this word originally functioned. "To know" is used in two technical legal senses: "to recognize" as legitimate a Suzerain or vassal, and "to recognize" treaty stipulations as binding in the Lebenskreis of International Relationships, especially in the Sitz im Leben of the treaty making ceremony.

The Hebrew verb יָדַע no doubt reflects shades of meaning of this common technical usage in the ancient Near Eastern world. The present study gives a more strict differentiation between the Lebenskreis of the International relationships and that of the covenant lawsuit. These investigations which have shown the Hebrew word יָדַע as part of covenant lawsuit terminology have clarified that the word יָדַע functions as a key term for the indictment for the breach of the covenant in the covenant lawsuit and that the phrase "Thou knowest" functions as a technical term for the renewal of His covenantal act in the Gattung of the Rib- controversy with God. By using this phrase Jeremiah claims the "mutuality" of the Covenant (i.e., Yahweh's protection to His vassal and His vengeance on His vassal's enemies) and serves as Mediator-Intercessor between Yahweh and the people.

Chapter I establishes the terminology involved in the definition of the present topic, observes (1) the primary sense of the root יָדַע, and (2) the root יָדַע in the sphere
of International Relationships in the light of the Suzerain-treaty. By giving syntactical observation of the usage of נָעַל, the chapter shows that the Hebrew verb נָעַל is a technical term for the divine controversy with the people, i.e., the Covenant Lawsuit.

Chapter II, which defines the unique function of the Hebrew formula נָעַל נָעַל, observes (1) the primary sense of the formula, and (2) the unique role of the formula from the point of view of the syntax, and shows the formula to be the technical term for the renewal of the covenant within theGattung of the rib-controversy with Yahweh.

Chapter III establishes the confession context, observes (1) relation between the confession and the "mutual recognition" motif of the Suzerain-treaty, and (2) Jeremiah's prophetic "office" as Mediator-Intercessor. By delineating Moses's petition as the Ur-Gattung of the confession, this chapter shows that the context of confession is the rib-controversy with Yahweh.

Chapter IV analyses the context of Jer. 15:10-11, 15-20. An exegetical study demonstrates how this formula contains the unique motif of the Covenant Lawsuit in connection with Jeremiah's prophetic role as Mediator-Intercessor; as his claim to the fulfilment of the covenant obligation.

Chapter V summarizes the way in which the formula is used as a technical term by the prophets. A clearer understanding of this formula in Jeremiah's confession is therefore obtained.
CHAPTER I

THE ROOT יָדַע AND THE COVENANT LAWSUIT

1. The Primary Sense of יָדַע

Standard Hebrew dictionaries define the root יָדַע simply as "to know". However, in a number of places this translation does not provide a satisfactory sense. Recent philological investigations have proposed at least four other primary meanings: "to care for"; "to make submissive," "to humiliate"; "to have experienced" and "to sweat".

These alternative definitions, now widely accepted by Old Testament scholars, are of interest to the present study. (a) First, from the point of view of Semantics, some recent philological treatments do not differ greatly from the older views of the character and meaning of יָדַע. D. W. Thomas has proposed the first two meanings from his etymological studies of יָדַע. Of particular importance is the Arabic cognate ٍمٍثٍ، which has as its two basic meanings:


\[\text{2Especially see, James Barr, Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament (Oxford, 1965).} \]
"to put, place", and "to be quiet". The most prominent example of the first meaning appears in Exodus 2:25b

In this context \( \text{ל} \) is used absolutely without an object, and the text has, therefore, been subject to emendation. The RSV reads "and God knew their condition." If v. 25b could be understood as having the sense "and God cared", as is the case with the Arabic \( \text{א} \), there would be no difficulty. A second example is the familiar phrase in Isaiah 53:3a \( \text{א} \). The RSV renders this as "and acquainted with grief", but this translation does not explain the use of the passive participle \( \text{א} \). The probable literal meaning is "known by sickness", but such a personification is not characteristic of Hebrew. But the context is more comprehensible if the phrase could be interpreted "he was humbled or disciplined by sickness", which is a characteristic usage of the Arabic cognate \( \text{א} \). E. A. Speiser has suggested the third meaning, finding support for this view from the analogous use of the Akkadian verb \( \text{א} \).


"to experience". The clearest case is Genesis 4:1 which Speiser translates as "the man had experience of his wife Eve." He states that "Heb. yd' itself has a broader range than our verb 'to know' and shares with lmd the connotation 'to experience'." The euphemistic usage of yd' for the sexual act is also supported by Ugaritic evidence. C. H. Gordon, G. R. Driver and M. Dahood have suggested the fourth meaning, and support their position by distinguishing between the Ugaritic roots yd' (I) "to know" and yd' (II) "to sweat".

The Hebrew verb yd', therefore, is a peculiarly flexible word, with meanings ranging from "to know, take notice of, care for, be familiar with," to "to sleep with a woman, to experience sexual intercourse". But basic to all of these usages is the common characteristic of a personal relationship. On this point E. Baumann's pioneering work,

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Baumann asserts that the word " amat" has more the element of personal relationship than that of mere information, intellectual knowledge, or theoretical knowing. This view has long been accepted by Old Testament scholars. Baumann's interpretation has now received support from philological investigations. To know, therefore, is "the appropriation of totality" and "to have communion with".

(b) Philological investigations have not been able, however, to establish the differentiation of the Lebenskreis in which originally functioned. In most of the common instances where means "to know", the Lebenskreis has not yet been made clear. This is also the case with the Sitz im Leben of the unique


2 J. Hänel, Das Erkennen Gottes bei den Skriftpropheten. BMAT 2, Heft 4, 1923; W. Reise, ZAW 38, PN 17 (1940/41), pp. 70-98; S. Nowinckel, Die Erkenntnis Gottes bei den alttestamentlichen propheten (Oslo; 1941); R. Hultmann, Gott Erkennen: im sprachgebrauch des Alten Testaments (Bonn, 1951); G. von Rad, Genesis: A Commentary (Philadelphia, 1961), 100; Georg Fohrer, Studien zu alttestamentlichen Prophetic (1949-65) (Belrin, 1967); p. 228. FN.16.


prophetic usages of ἴν.

New light has been shed on this unanswered problem by the recovery of ancient Near Eastern Treaty Texts. B. Huffman has suggested the importance of treaty terminology for the understanding of the root ἴν. ¹ "To know" is used with the meaning "to recognize", "be loyal to", in the vocabulary of international relations over a wide range of the ancient Near Eastern world during the period between the 15th century B.C. and the 12th century B.C. The influence of this usage is evident in certain usages of ἴν by certain Old Testament prophets. For example, in the Hittite-Vassal Treaty the great King of the Hittites writes to his vassal: "As he is an enemy to you, even so is he an enemy to the Sun; (and) I, (the Sun) will know only you, Alakasandus."² There is an obvious similarity between this passage and Amos 3:2, "You only have I known of all the families on earth."

It appears then that the primary sense of the root of each occurrences of ἴν should be examined. Basic to ἴν is the element of personal relationship. It does not signify objective and theoretical

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² H. B. Huffman, BASOR 181 (1966), p. 32.
knowledge. To the Hebrew, knowledge involves a mutual exchange. It is the "appropriation of totality". In the Lebenskreis of international relations "to know" is used as a technical legal term, recognizing the suzerain or vassal as legitimate, and the treaty stipulation as binding. This unique usage is examined in the next section.

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2. **The Root יָדַע in the Lebenskreis of International Relationships**

The root יָדַע functions in at least four separate Lebenskreis in the OT: (a) most common is the sphere of the personal relationship,\(^1\) and more exactly in that of sexual intercourse;\(^2\) (b) some instances are found in lament material, presumably used in the sphere of the cult;\(^3\) (c) its occurrences are also common in the sphere of the court at the gate;\(^4\) (d) Moreover finally, the recovery of the ancient Near East Treaty Texts call our attention to the sphere of the international relationships in which the verb יָדַע functions as a "Treaty" term.

1. According to E. B. Huflmon the usage of "to know" in treaties as a technical term is illustrated by materials in Hittite, in Akkadian, and in Ugaritic.\(^5\) "To know" is used in two technical legal senses: "to recognize" the legitimate suzerain or vassal, and "to recognize" the treaty stipulation as binding. In the treaty between Suppiliuma and Huflkanus

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\(^1\) Jer 9:15, 10:25, Ps 79:6, Gen 4:9, Ex 1:8, Dt 9:2, Ru 2:11.

\(^2\) 216 times in the OT: for normal marital situation (Gen 4:1, 17, 25, 1 Sam 1:19); for caldestine conduct of the man (Gen 38:26, Judg 19:25, 1 King 1:4); of the woman (Num 31:17); for homosexuality (Gen 19:5, Judg 19:22); for chaste maiden (Gen 19:8, 24:16, Num 31:18, 35, Judg 11:39, 21:12).

\(^3\) Hos 8:2.

\(^4\) Amos 5:12, Jer 26:15, 5:1, 42:19, 22, 2:19, 23; Dt 4:39.

the vassal is requested not to acknowledge any other king but the sun (the Hittite king):

And you, Hukkanas, know only the sun regarding lordship; ...Moreover, any other do not know!  

In the treaty between Muwattallis and Alaksandus, the Suzerain assures His protection to the vassal:

As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you, even so is he an enemy to the sun; (and) I (the sun), will know only you, Alaksandus.  

Similar uses of "to know" have been found in the Amarna and Mari-letters and in a letter from Ugarit.  

These instances of the verb "to know" are used always in a sense of "to recognize," "be loyal to". More recently Albrecht Goetze distinguished between Hittite šek-/šak "to know" and šek-/šak with -za "to recognize" (legally).  

Hittite šek-/šak with reflexive particle -za means first of all "keep in one's mind"; then, "acknowledge, recognize". The verb is employed for the relationship of the suzerain to the vassal. M. Gilula  

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1 BASOR. 181 (1966), p. 31f.
2 BASOR. 181 (1966), p. 32.
also points out an Egyptian parallel to Jer 1:4-5 from the
text of a stele of King Pianchi (25th dynasty), and demonstrates
the usage of "to know" in the sense of the legal recognition
of the King.

To the above illustrations one more example can be
added. Ugaritic idu is used as treaty-terminology in the
treaty between Mursil II and Nigrepa.¹

If the King of (Ugarit) does not give him...
...) and if (...) Nigrepa will be a thief...
...) some servants, without knowledge of the
King (of Hatti...
...if) I say to you: "Is therenot (any servant
of mine)?" and if the King (of Ugarit)
replies: NO(?); You will transgress (your oath!)

In this text "without knowledge of the King" refers to the
vassal's transgression. This idea of "without knowledge of
God" is well known in the prophetic texts.²

Thus it appears that in the Lebenskreis of Inter-
national Relationships the verb "to know" is used as the
Suzerain-vassal treaty term for "to recognize," "be loyal
to," as legitimate suzerain or vassal; i.e. the verb "to
know" is the technical term for the "mutuality" of the treaty."³

¹Jean Nougayrol, Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, IV

²Hos 4:1, 5:4, Jer 2:8, 4:22, 8:7, 9:2, 10:25, Is
56f; Wilhelm Reiss, "'Gott nicht erkennen" im Alten
Testament," ZAW., LVIII (1940-41), pp. 70-98.

³Note that in the suzerain treaties the Hittite king
did not swear to perform any thing in a treaty with a vassal.
Therefore, this "mutuality" is not used in the sense of the
2. Instances of Hebrew verb יְתַתּ (yətta) in the sense of the "legal recognition" occur in the OT in the sphere of international relationships. One instance occurs in connection with the legal recognition of the King; eight instances occur in the sphere of international relationships, especially in the sphere of "religious relationship", i.e. Egypt's recognition of Israel's God, Yahweh.

In 1 Sam 24:20 Saul states his recognition of David as the King of Israel, "his successor"¹ and only with him will the Kingdom be established. "And now, behold, I recognize that you shall surely be King and that the Kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand." This is the only instance in the OT, in which the verb יְתַתּ is used in connection with Kingship-succession, in the sense of legal recognition.

Eight instances occur in the sphere of international relationships between Egypt and Israel in the Exodus story. These describe Moses' conflict with Pharaoh about Israel's parity treaties in which both parties are "mutually" bound to obey the same stipulations. Cf. D. R. Hillers, Covenant: the History of a Biblical Idea (Baltimore, 1969), p. 52.

In the Hittite treaties protection is promised by the great king, the sun, to his vassal against enemies. In the treaty between Nuwattallis and Alaksandus, the Suzerain assures his protection to the vassal: "As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you, even so is he an enemy to the sun;" ¹

release from Egypt.

In Ex 5:1ff Moses and Aaron were commanded by God to go to Pharaoh (cf. 4:18) and proclaim: "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness." Without any preparatory explanation Moses used the formula "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel." Pharaoh's reaction was characteristic of a powerful King, who considered himself a god in the Egyptian tradition. Pharaoh asked Moses: "Who is Yahweh that I should heed his voice and let Israel go?" Who is this deity whom you mention? Am I not alone a god in this Kingdom? Then, in unambiguous terms he replied: "I do not recognize Yahweh," and therefore, "I will not let Israel go" (vs. 2).

Opposed to this strong statement of Pharaoh, Yahweh uttered oracles to Moses: "As well as Pharaoh is himself considered a deity, I have also made you a god before him that you may appear before him as one of the divinities who speaks through his prophets, Aaron" (7:1ff). Even so, Pharaoh will not listen to you and then Yahweh will lay his hand on

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1In Ex 5:3-19, "a fragment of an older tradition," Moses is not mentioned, but "they", Israel, appeared as taking part in the discussion. M. Noth, Exodus: A Commentary, tr. by J. S. Bowden (Philadelphia, 1962), 6ff, believes that Moses' role as "Messenger" (J) or as "a charismatic leader" (E) are presumably later than this fragment.

Egypt and bring forth his people by "great judgement". 1 By
this punishment Pharaoh, who had said at first "I do not
recognize Yahweh" (vs. 2), and his people, who did not yet
"fear the Lord God" (9:30), will learn to recognize Yahweh:
"and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord (י"כ ה יבצ
Ex 7:5, 14:4, 18 "P"); "By this you shall know that I am the Lord (י"כ ה יבצ
Ex 7:17, 8:13 (Eng. 22), 8:6 (Eng. 10), 9:14..."J"). 2

3. The obvious occurrences of the verb יִשָּׁהוּ in the
sense of the "legal recognition" occur in the sphere of the
covenantal recognition between Yahweh and the people.
Yahweh's covenantal activity for the people and Israel's
covenantal loyalty for Yahweh as legitimate Suzerain.

(i) The covenantal recognition of the individual by
Yahweh,

First, five instances of the covenantal recognition of
individual as legitimate vassal by Yahweh occur in Gen 18:19,
22:12, Ex 33:12, 17 and Jer 1:5.

The covenant between the Suzerain and individuals may

1M. Weinfeld, "Traces of Assyrian Treaty Formulae in
Deuteronomy," Biblica vol 46 (1965), pp. 417-427, pointed out
the expression "great punishment", referred to the plague of
leprosy, as the maledictions term in ancient Near Eastern
treaties.

2It is noticed that there are different "recognition"
formulas in "P" and "J": The "P" holds a same formula with
"Egyptians" as subject, but "J" holds a different formula with
"you", in 2nd person, and with additional words "in the midst
of the earth" or "in all the earth". In 9:10 and 9:14 the
word "Yahweh" does not appear.
go back to the great covenant of Shechem. The Shechem event demonstrates that entrance into the covenant with Yahweh was a matter for each individual family to decide. This is different from the situation in most Hittite treaties, which involves heads of state. Evidence that the sacred pact concluded with individual families has been found, however, in

1 Cf. The covenantal recognition of the individual as vassal by Yahweh can be shown to be the original pattern of the Israel covenant. Josh 24 is a story about the great covenant which brought the tribal league into being in the sort of Palestine. At Shechem, when Joshua gathers "all the tribes of Israel" and brings them into a covenant with Yahweh, for the service of Yahweh to the exclusion of all other gods, he says: "As for me and my family, we will serve Yahweh". (v.15)

Shechem as well as Sinai filled an important function in the covenant tradition in the history of Israel. Shechem had a long history as a "sacred area" having associations with the patriarchs.

The Abimelech Narrative shows that there was a temple, the "House of El-berith" (Judges 9:4), in Shechem during the period of Israel's tribal league. Shechem is also known as a "sacred area" to the patriarch, Abraham (Gen 12:6-8) and Jacob (Gen 33:18-20), who both erected an altar there and worship "God of the Fathers" there. Jacob's story gives the divine name associated with the Shechem altar as "El-Elohe-Israel" (El, God of Israel), Josh 24:16, an early tradition, refers to the Shechem temple as παγε γεματος "sanctuary of Yahweh". Shechem was a place of worship and also was centrally related to covenant. Hence, Shechem became the place when Israel was created about 1200 B.C. Cf. G. E. Wright, Shechem: The Biography of a Biblical City (New York and Toronto, 1965), pp. 123-132, "The Sacred Area of Shechem in Early Biblical Tradition". G. von Rad, "The Form-Critical Problem of the Hexateuch," in The Problem of the Hexateuch, tr. by E. W. Trueman Dicken (New York, 1966), p. 36 traced the cultic basis of the Sinai-covenant story to a celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in Shechem.
treaties between the Hittite king and the Kashkeans. In these treaties individual Kashkeans are listed by name as partner.

The verb שָׂרָה is used in Gen 18:19 in the sense of Yahweh's recognition of Abraham as legitimate vassal. The aim of Yahweh's recognition of Abraham is clear in the theological expression "keep Yahweh's way," "doing righteous and justice" (v. 19). In v. 19 the word יְהַמְּרָה "I have made him acquainted with me" is, as von Rad suggests, understood in the sense of "God has called into a relationship of trust, so that God's act shall be revealed to him." In the covenant with Abraham, God obliges himself here to give Abraham "the land of the Amorites" and there is no obligation to Abraham (cf. Gen 15: 7-18 "J" and Chapter 17 "P"). However, even in a


3 G. von Rad, Genesis: A Commentary (Philadelphia, 1961), p. 204, considers v. 19 as a later addition, because of its theological formulation, which is foreign in the older narrators.

4 Ibid., p. 205.
covenant like that with Abraham it is assumed that Abraham will "trust God and walk righteously before him" because he has Yahweh as the Great Suzerain.\(^1\)

In Gen 22:12 "for now I recognize that you fear God," the verb כָּרַת occurs again together with the unique covenant terms: "now"( הָרַת) and "fear of God" ( הָרַת הָאָרוֹן). The "fear of God" means an "obedience to the divine commands;\(^2\) i.e., a loyalty for the covenant obligations as vassal.

In Ex 33:12, 17, "I know you by name" the verb כָּרַת is used in the sense of Yahweh's "specifically chosen"\(^3\) as legitimate vassal, and its renewal acts as a key term of Moses' dialogue ofRib against Yahweh. In this context the terms "and now"( הָרַת) and "if"( הָרַת) occur together with the verb כָּרַת. A dialogue between Moses and the Lord (vv.12-23) contains the covenantal Gattung, in which the verb כָּרַת occurs five times: three of them appear in the motif of the indictment in the court; two of them, in the same form, "I know you by name," occur in the indictment and last blessing.

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\(^1\) D. R. Hillers, Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea, p. 104f, criticizes the strict distinction between the Sinai covenant and the Abraham covenant, saying that "It would be going too far to say that this sort of covenant represents a religious idea contradictory to the Sinai covenant."

\(^2\) von Rad, Genesis, op. cit., p. 237; John Gray, I & II Kings, op. cit., p. 594, identified with Arabic 'ittaga 'Allaha (lit. to seek protection against Allah) "to show piety towards Allah" and the Hebrew idiom for "to worship."

\(^3\) U. Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, op. cit., p. 433.
In Jer 1:5 the verb יָדָעָה is used in Jeremiah's call to be a prophet. From the evidence of an Egyptian parallel to this text it is clear that the verb יָדָעָה is used in the sense of legal recognition of a legitimate vassal.¹

(ii) The covenantal recognition of Israel as vassal by Yahweh.

Second, two instances of the covenantal recognition of Israel as legitimate vassal by Yahweh from Amos 3:2 and Hos 13:5 are obvious in this sense: Yahweh had recognized only Israel as his legitimate vassal and only to them had the suzerain granted the covenant. "Therefore," if they had not fulfilled the covenant obligations, "I, (Suzerain), will punish you for all your iniquities" (v. 3b). The example of Amos 3:2 is very important, because the Suzerain's recognition of his legitimate vassal involves obligations, that is to say, the recognition of treaty stipulation as binding.²

¹M. Gilula, "Short Notes on Egyptian Parallel to Jeremiah 1:4-5," VT, XIII (1967), p. 114f. In the stele of King Pianchi (25th dynasty, c. 751-730 B.C.), Amun speaks to the king:

"It was in the belly of your mother that I said concerning you that you were to be ruler of Egypt; it was as seed and while you were in the egg, that I knew you, that I knew you were to be Lord."

²In the Treaty between Muwattallis and Alaksandus, the Hittite suzerain assures his vassal: "As he is an enemy to you, even so is he an enemy to the Sun; (and) I, the Sun, will recognize only you, Alaksandus." cf. Johns Friedrich, "Staatsverträge des Hatti-Reiches in hethiticher Sprache, II," MVAG, XXXIV, 1, 1930, pp. 106-111. Cited from E. B. Huffman, BASOR, 181 (1965), p. 33; and F. C. Fensham, "Clauses Protection in Hittite Vassal-Treaties and the QT," VT 13 (1963), p. 136; fn. 5.
uniqueness of this sort of covenant is much clearer in 
Hos 13:4-5. In the same way of Amos 3:2 Hosea speaks:

I am Yahweh, your God, from the land of Egypt, 
and you shall not recognize any God but me. 
There is no other savior. 
And I acknowledge you (as mine) in the wilderness;1 
in the land of drought. (Hos. 13:4-5)

The aim of this prophet's speech is to show Yahweh's 
indictment of his people's conduct: "they forget me" (v.6). 
Therefore, the usage of the verb _nwr_ as a covenantal re-

cognition term occurs also in connection with the other party, 
i.e., Israel's recognition of Yahweh as legitimate suzerain. 
Here, the verb _nwr_ is used in the sense of the "mutual 
recognition" of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel.

(iii) Israel's recognition of Yahweh as legitimate 
suzerain.

Instances of the other party, Israel's recognition of 
Yahweh as the legitimate suzerain occur in Ex 6:7, Hos 13:4, 
recognize any God but me" the use of the verb _nwr_ is clearly 
a reflection of the Hittite suzerain treaty. In the treaty 
between Suppiliuma and Hukkana the vassal is requested not to 
acknowledge any other king but the sun (the Hittite king):

And you, Hukkanas, know only the sun

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Here, the verb _nwr_ as a covenant term is used in 
connection with an election in the desert. The tradition of 
Israel's election in the desert is united for the theme of 
the deliverance of the exodus. Cf. R. E. Clements, Prophecy 
regarding lordship; ... Moreover, any other do not know.

This is even clearer in an instance in Ex 6:7:

And I will take you for my people, and I will be your God; and you shall recognize that I am the Lord your God.

The text is the so-called "another call of Moses"\(^2\) (vv. 2-8), which has its *Sitz im Leben* in the theophany cult.

U. Cassuto gives a unique suggestion for understanding this passage. This context contains the Divine action for the benefit of Israel, which is described in seven unique clauses, each of which begins with a **H8.1'! consecutiv'e verb** in the first person: "and I will bring out--and I will deliver -- and I will redeem -- and I will take -- and I will be -- and I will bring -- and I will give."\(^3\) The mutual recognition between Yahweh and Israel, which is expressed by the middle two, is based on the liberation, which is expressed by the first three. That is to say, Yahweh takes the initiative for mutual relationship. This is true in the Hittite suzerain-vassal treaties. This element of covenantal recognition appear clearly in Jeremiah's context.

Because of Israel's broken covenant obligation, the prophet must declare God's indictment of the King assenting

\(^1\) *BASOR. 181* (1966), p. 31f.


\(^3\) U. Cassuto, *Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, op. cit., p. 58.
that being King is to do justice and right, to judge the cause
of the poor... that he may live in an obedience to the
obligation: "...Is not that knowing me?" (Jer 22:15-16).
Without God's liberation it is impossible to renew the mutual
covenant relation between Yahweh and the people. Thus, Yahweh
proclaims His new liberation: "I will put my law within them
and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their
God, and they shall be my people. ...they shall all recognize
that I am Yahweh, and they shall be my people, and I will be
their God." (Jer 24:7).

(4) Thus it is apparent that the Hebrew יִדָּעַה is used
in the sense of the Egyptians' or Pharaoh's acknowledgement of
Yahweh as legitimate Suzerain in the International Relations-
ships between Egypt and Israel; in the political legal recog-
nition of Kingship in the successor in Israel; further in two
technical legal senses: to recognize as legitimate Suzerain or
vassal, and to recognize covenant obligations as binding in
the "religions" relationship between Yahweh and the people.

In the covenant between Yahweh and Israel the sacred
pact is concluded with Israel, the community and individuals,
Abraham, Moses and Jeremiah.

It has been shown that the covenant between Yahweh and
Israel followed the pattern of suzerain-vassal treaties in the
late second millennium. The investigations of "to know", that
is showing functions as a technical treaty in suzerain-vassal
national treaties, support Mendenhall's thesis that the legal
pattern must have been introduced into Israel early in her history.

Mendenhall attacks the well-accepted Wellhausen thesis,¹ that the idea of a covenant between God and Israel is the creation of the prophets' theology, and maintains:

The Covenant of Sinai was the formula means by which the semi-nomadic tribes, recently emerged from state slavery in Egypt, were found together in a religious and political community.²

It is to be noted also that the verb יִדְּרָה as a technical term always occurs in important theological material in the literary form of a "conventional nature". Further, the verb יִדְּרָה, when it is used in connection with Israel's recognition of Yahweh, occurs specifically in the unique prophetic speeches, where the prophets indict Israel for her broken covenant obligations. This suggests that the prophets not only knew a word "to know" as a covenant term, common in international suzerain treaties, but also something like the covenant form, the יִדְּרָה pattern, the covenant lawsuit, that also has parallels in international treaties. It is necessary, therefore, to investigate the use of the verb יִדְּרָה in the covenant lawsuit.

¹Wellhausen; Prolegomena to the History of Israel, tr. by J. S. Black and A. Menzies, (Edinburgh, 1885), p. 417.
3. The Root מְאֹד in the Prophetic Speeches or the Covenant Lawsuit

The foregoing investigations may be brought to bear on the prophetic speeches or the Covenant lawsuit as follows:

(a) It is observed that the primary sense of the verb מְאֹד is the personal relationship in this sense the meaning is flexible: know, care for, make submissive, come to know, have experienced. More precisely, in the sphere of political relationships it means the legal recognition: to recognize, acknowledge, be loyal. The word מְאֹד is shown to be covenant terminology. And also it is noticed that instances of the covenant term occur in the literary form of a "conversational nature": in the covenant context the subject of the verb מְאֹד is always Yahweh, the Great Suzerain.

However, there are also some instances in which the verb מְאֹד is syntactically bound to the other party, the people. These instances are found in the framework of the prophetic speeches or צב, in which the prophets use the verb מְאֹד in connection with God's indictment for the people's breaking obligations. These instances represent a unique usage of the word מְאֹד in the prophets.

This paper will give special attention to these instances. At least four clear instances are to be noted in the framework of the covenant lawsuit, or צב, all of which are excellent poetic examples of the divine lawsuit or the prophetic lawsuit speech: Is 1:2ff, Mic 6:2ff, Jer 2:4ff, and
Dt 32 (below, section (d)).

(b). Before studying the technical covenantal usage in the Covenant lawsuit, brief attention may be given to the verb מַעֲשֶׂה in the rib itself. There is a rib of the wisdom literature, which has no relation with the covenant obligation and should be strictly distinguished from the rib in the covenant tradition.¹ In this type of rib the verb מַעֲשֶׂה occurs originally in connection with the motif of God's knowledge of the "innocent-suffering". The best example is Job 31:6, where the verb מַעֲשֶׂה is used for claiming Job's innocence for God: "Let me be weighed in a just balance, and let God know my integrity (נָעָשֶׂה כְּמִי מְשֶׁה שַׁלָּשָׁה)."

Job still holds the current doctrine of suffering and he proves his innocence with "if" clauses (vv. 5, 7, 9, 21, 29, 31, 38, 39). After repudiation in detail of a large number of sinful deeds and his conviction of integrity, Job expressed his wish that God would answer him, and a conviction that in this case he has proved his innocence and integrity: "Oh, that I had one to hear me! ...Oh, that I had the indictment written by my adversary (נָעָשֶׂה בְּפִי אוֹרָבָא)...If a prince I would approach him." (vv. 35-37). The style of Job's dialogue is the same as that of Chapter 13, where the word rib occurs three times in connection with Job's conviction.

¹I am indebted to Prof. John Gray for this portion of the thesis.
of innocence: "Hear now my reasoning, and listen to the
pleadings ( נבון) of my lips" (v. 6); "will you plead the
case ( נבון) for God?" (v. 8); "Who is there that will
contend ( בָּרָא) with me?" (v. 19). Further Job says: I
desire to argue my case with God" (v. 3b).

Therefore Job's dialogue with God is undoubtedly a rib
or lawsuit, where Job stands before God as Judge (cf. 31:14).
According to H. Richter this rib contains Gattung des
Rechts- erfahren. In this kind of rib the verb נבון has no
relation to the covenant obligation, but stands firmly within
the wisdom theology concerning God's acknowledgement of the
innocent suffering. In this type of a lawsuit Yahweh func-
tions clearly as the role of Judge at the court. The verb
נבון is syntactically bound to Yahweh as subject, and is used
in connection with Job's conviction of God's knowing of the
innocent-suffering: "I know that I shall be vindicated
( נבון נבון וַיַּנְבֹּן)" (v. 18).

(c) There is one instance of the verb נבון that has no
relation with the covenant obligation, though the verb נבון
occurs clearly in the covenant lawsuit. This example is Ps 50,

1 H. Richter, "Erwägungen zum Hiobproblem" Evangelische
311. *Idem., Studien zur Hiob: Der Aufbau des Hiobbuches
(Berlin, 1939), p. 31, "Gattungen des Rechtslebens".

S. Terrien, Job, Poet of Existence (Indianapolis, 1957),
see especially, p. 21. C. Westermann, Der Aufbau des Buches
Hiob, (Tübingen, 1956), p. 4. Both understand the character
of Job as the existential problem and קלאליוד.
where the Psalmist uses clearly the covenant lawsuit and its cultic basis in the idea of epiphany (cf. vv. 1-4), of renewal of the covenant at Sinai, and where the verb ἵλτα is syntactically bound with Yahweh as subject. In vs. 4 God "calls upon the heaven and earth" to appear as His witness that they may testify to the righteous of His judge. God calls Israel: "Hear, O my people... O Israel... I am God, Your God" (vs. 7). Here, the covenantal motif is clearly reflected and denotes the relationship of the religious community with its God. Further God's indictments are stated for the people's breach of the covenant: "You cast my words behind you" (v. 7b) and "you who forget God" (v. 22a).

Therefore Ps 50 shows the course of time, when the Mosaic tradition of the covenant renewal cult is embodied by the elements of the lawsuit. Ps 50 employs the covenant lawsuit

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3 G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God", ibid., G. Von Rad, The problem of Hexateuch, tr. by E. W. T. Dicklen (New York, 1966), p. 23, also believes that this psalm is firmly tied to the schema of the cultic rite.
form in order to renew the covenant, as the cult of epiphany.

In v. 11 "I know all the birds of the air" the verb "יְָכְנַ" is used in the sense of Yahweh's sovereignty over the whole world.

Though God as subject for "know" is bound by the covenant of Zion (cf. v. 2), the usage of the verb "יְָכְנַ" has no relation with the covenant obligation in this context. By this "knowing" is expressed God's knowledge of being as His own, and He does not hunger for sacrifices.

(d) Let return the occurrences in the Covenant Lawsuit.

One of four instances in the Covenant lawsuit is Is 1:3, "The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people does not understand." Is 1:2-3 holds the clearest Covenant lawsuit form. The lawsuit implies a covenant which the Suzerain has granted a vassal, but which the vassal has broken. The "heaven" and "earth" appear as the witness to the covenant, as the Hittite treaties indicate.

The word "my people" (יִֽהְָחֵל) has a peculiar connotation for Israel. This denotes the relationship of the community with its God. "Israel" also has a peculiar significance as the

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1 According to Gunkel, Die Psalmen (Göttingen, 1926), p. 215, "heaven and earth" are the judges (Ps 50, Is 3:13-15), Jer 2:4ff, Mic 6:1-8). Yahweh, the plaintiff, summoned them in the controversy between Him and Israel. But now Huffman and Wright accept them as a witness, because the Hittite international treaties have as one of their sections a list of gods who are witness to the covenant. See Huffman, JBL, LXXVIII (1959), p. 291.

religious community, realized at the general assembly at
the sacramental renewal of the covenant.\(^1\) Here, Yahweh is
himself Plaintiff, and Jury. At the divine lawsuit Yahweh
(as Suzerain) enveighs against Israel's (as Vassal) disloyalty
to the covenant obligation. The verb וָרַע is syntactically
bound to the other party, Israel. The verb וָרַע is used in
the sense of denoting Israel's rejection of the legal recognition
of Yahweh, the Suzerain. Therefore the verb וָרַע occurs in
parallel with the treaty term "rebel" (מַעַד)\(^2\) against
Yahweh. The verb וָרַע appears in the Mosaic covenant tradition
in connection with His indictment of the people's breach of
that covenant. Thus the verb וָרַע functions here as a
technical term in the Covenant lawsuit.

The second instance occurs in Jer 2:4-13, the divine
lawsuit context.\(^3\) This divine lawsuit opens with the summons
to the accused, Israel, in the second person (vv. 4-5), the
plaintiff recites the mighty acts in spite of which Israel
transgressed (vv. 6-8), Yahweh contends against Israel and
also Israel's descendants (v. 9), based on the international

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\(^1\) John Cray, Joshua, Judges and Ruth: The Century Bible

\(^2\) Cf. Treaty-term: The vassal-Treaties of Esarhadon, ANET.
p. 53ff, lines 173 and 302f.

\(^3\) H. B. Huffman, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets,"
JBL, LXXVIII (1959), pp. 235-89; P. H. Williams, "The Fatar
and Foolish Exchange: Living water for "Nothings": A Study
situation (vv. 10-11), and the plaintiff appeals to the "heavens" as a witness to the indictment. There are no defenses in God's accusation.

The verb יָרָא occurs in v. 8 ("those who handle the law did not know me") as a technical term in the covenant lawsuit. The verb יָרָא expresses the indictment of Israel, because of unfulfilled covenant obligations. The verb occurs here also in parallel with the verb "rebel" (יָרָא) against Yahweh, and also with the statement of indictment: "Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my own people have exchanged, ¹ Me, their glory, for Useless!" (v. 11)

The verb יָרָא is syntactically bound to the other party, Israel as vassal. The verb יָרָא is used in the technical legal sense of Israel's neglect to recognize Yahweh as legitimate suzerain.

A third instance occurs in Mic 6:5, an indictment section of the covenant lawsuit form of vv. 1-8.² The "mountain" and "foundation of the earth" are invoked to hear as the witness. Yahweh, the plaintiff, puts His case before the mountain and hills and directs, in the first person "I", a

¹The word "change" is the term for the breach (cf. Treaty of Esarhaddon. ANET., p. 538); and also the treaty term (cf. 1 Kings 9:10-14; The Alalakh Tablets, D. J. Wiseman, "Abban and Alalah," JCS., XII, Issue 4 (1954), pp. 124-29.

question to the accused, Israel: "What have I done to you, O my people?" (v. 3). Then, the prophet states the reason for His claim: the events of Exodus, Moses, Balaam, and of the gift of the Land should have led "my people" to "acknowledge" (יִרְאֶה) the justice deed of Yahweh. Within the Exodus tradition and the Mosaic tradition (cf. v. 4), the verb יִרְאֶה functions to renew the covenant. The verb יִרְאֶה occurs in parallel with the covenant terminology "remember" (יִרְאוּ)¹ "Remember...that you may acknowledge..." The cultic basis of the recital of the benevolent acts of Yahweh is clear for the Sitz of the verb יִרְאֶה from the following passages (vv. 6-7). Finally the sentence is stated that the people should live up to the covenant obligations. Hebrew יִרְאֶה is a common term for the legal norms demanded by the treaty.² The word "to walk after" is used to describe the relation of a vassal to his Suzerain.³ Here, the verb יִרְאֶה, functions as the Covenant lawsuit term at the Sitz im Leben of the epiphany cult of the renewal of the Covenant.

The final instance occurs in Dt 32:17 "they sacrificed to demons which were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come in of late, whom your father had

¹Ex 2:24.

²Cf. The vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon, lines 97-98: "You will hold perfect justice; you will always treat him in a true and fitting manner;" J. Gray, I & II Kings, op. cit., p. 97 and p. 697.

never dreaded." Dt 32 contains the covenant lawsuit in its expanded form.\(^1\) Vs. 17 belongs in the section of indictment (vv. 15-18), Israel abandoned their true Rock and turned to idolatry. The "heavens" and "earth" are addressed as the witness. The mighty acts of Yahweh are summarized: "He found him in a desert land" (v. 10) and "the Lord alone did lead him and there was no foreign god with him" (v. 12). Alongside these affirmations of Yahweh's historical activity, there is Yahweh's indictment for Israel: "You forget the God who gave you birth" (v. 18) and "he abandoned the God who made him" (v. 15a). The theological theme of vs. 17: "they worshiped new gods whom they had never acknowledged" is clearly reflected by the first commandment of the decalogue. It is the sin par excellence and its root is in the sacrament of the covenant (cf. Josh 24:19-21).

A. Weiser believes that the theological theme of vs. 17 has its origins in the "Song of Deborah" in Judges 5, especially vs. 8: "they chose strange gods, Gods, whom formerly they had not known."\(^2\) John Gray, following Weiser, believes that "this is the element of confession of sin in relation to the disaster of Israel and the theology of the pre-Dtite collection."\(^3\)

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\(^1\)G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God," op. cit., p. 26ff.

\(^2\)Weiser, ZAW LXXI (1959), pp. 67ff, specially p. 75.

\(^3\)John, Gray, Joshua, Judge and Ruth: op. cit., p. 280f.
This evidence makes clear that the verb נא functions in early stage as the covenant lawsuit term in the connection with the Mosaic tradition.\(^1\) The element of indictment (vv. 15-18) is most common in prophecy, which forms the basis of the prophets' mission.

Thus it has appeared that all occurrences in the Covenant lawsuit are always syntactically bound to the other party, Israel. These instances are used in connection with Yahweh's indictment for the people's breaking of the Covenant obligations, which are clearly patterned in the international suzerain treaties in the sense of the vassal's neglect of the legal acknowledgement of the suzerain, based on the breaking of the treaty stipulations.

It is also noticed that there is a lawsuit, which has no relation with the covenant obligation and should be strictly distinguished from the נא in the covenant tradition. In this type lawsuit the verb נא is used for expressing God's knowledge of the "innocent-suffering". The best example is found in Job 31. Further there is also the covenant lawsuit, in the context of the covenant tradition and the cultic idea of epiphany, but in which the verb נא is not used as a technical covenant term simply to express God's providential knowledge. This instance is found in Ps 50. Both Job 31 and Ps 50 show that the verb נא is syntactically

\(^1\)Cr.Dt 33:2; Judg 5:5; Ps 68:9, 18.
bound to God. This distinction is important for understanding the unique usage of the word וָיַע as a technical term in the prophets.

Finally it may be suggested that all occurrences of the verb וָיַע as the technical covenant lawsuit term have been tied to the Mosaic-covenant tradition, in which the covenant obligation is characteristically bound to the people. The verb וָיַע in the Covenant lawsuit is used strictly in relation to the people's covenant obligation, i.e., God's indictment for Israel's breaking of the obligations.

Chapter I may be concluded as follows: The verb וָיַע is flexible, having a multiplicity of meanings in the OT: such as to know, care for, make submissive, come to know, and have sexual experience. It also functions as a technical term in the sphere of legal relationships with the sense of "to recognize, acknowledge, be loyal".

"To know" is used in the sphere of international relationships over a wide range of the ancient Near Eastern world during the 15th to the 12th centuries B.C. as a technical legal term, which recognizes the suzerain or vassal as legitimate and the treaty stipulation as binding. The best examples are shown in the Hittite-vassal treaties. In the treaty between Suppiliuma and Hukkanus the vassal is requested to acknowledge any other king but the sun (the Hittite king):

And you, Hukkanus, know only the sun
regarding lordship. Moreover, any other do not know.

In the treaty between Qawattalleis and Alaksandus, the Suzerain assures His protection to the vassal:

As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you; even so is he enemy to the sun; (and) I (the Sun) will know only you, Alaksandus.

The Hebrew verb יָדַע no doubt reflects shades of meaning of this common technical usage in the ancient Near Eastern world.

The Hebrew verb יָדַע is used to acknowledge the legitimacy of succession in the Kingdom of Israel; by the Egyptians to recognize Yahweh, the God of Israel, as the legitimate Suzerain in their international relationships; in the description of the covenant relation between Yahweh and the people. On the one hand, there is the election of the patriarchs, the prophets, and Israel as vassals in the Mosaic tradition. On the other hand Israel's recognition of Yahweh as her legitimate Suzerain, and the stipulation as binding, are precisely stated in Yahweh's legal case against his people for breach of the obligation.

Thus, it appears that the verb יָדַע is one of the basic words concerning the notion of God as sovereign Lord and of the people as his servants.¹ These investigations

¹E. F. Campbell, Jr., "Sovereign God," McCormick Quarterly XX, (1967), pp. 173-186, pointed out four terms: "bow down" (hishtan'keweh), "to avenge" (q'm), "to know", "to love". The word יָדַע may evidence by Gen 33:3, Ex 20:5, II Sam 14:33. Campbell found the evidence from the Amarna letters.
confirm the following theological implications.  

(1) The relationship between Yahweh and Israel was given concrete form early in Israel's life through the adaptation of the form of an international vassal treaty. This adaptation may go back to the time of the exodus from Egypt and her entry into Canaan.

(2) By this adaptation Israel's understanding of God is not as a King among Kings, i.e., the Canaanite term melek, but as "Suzerain," a technical term in the political sense for a monarch who acknowledges no other power to be the equal of his own.

(3) The Mosaic covenant, that was adapted from inter-

"At the feet of the King my lord seven times over I fall." The word מְלֶכֶת has shown that this term relates to vindication on the basis of the standard of the covenant relationship. The evidence may found in Dt 32:35, 41, Lev 26:25, Jer 5:9, 27, 9:8, 46:10, 50:15, 51:36. The subject is always Yahweh, cf. G. Mendenhall, "God of Vengeance, Shines Forth!", The Wittenberg Bulletin, XLV, 12 (Dec. 1948), pp. 37-42. The word מְלֶכֶת has been fully discussed by W. L. Moran's important article of "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," CBQ, XXV (1963), pp. 77-87.

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national suzerain treaties of the Late Bronze Age,¹ provided the historical symbols which mediated the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God is a knowledge of his sovereign claim upon his people and the world. The Mosaic covenant was fundamental to the thought of the Deuteronomic historian of Israel in the Promised Land, and also for the pre-Exilic prophets from Elijah to Jeremiah. The interpretation of history was drawn out from elements celebrated in the covenant renewal services based upon the Exodus and the Sinai experiences.

(4) Sin now became more than the violation of law. It was guilt. Israel's sin was treated within the context of the Suzerainrib, his legal case against his vassal for breach of the treaty-obligations. Therefore, Israel was indicted, declared guilty and sentenced. By using this Suzerainrib or the Covenant lawsuit the prophet identified himself as the official of the court who made known to Israel her guilt and passed sentences.²


²R. Wheeler Robinson, "The Council of Yahweh," JTS, XLV (1944) p. 151ff, first pointed out the connection of the "heavenly assembly" and the office of the prophet; Frank M. Cross, Jr., "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," JNES, XII (1953), pp. 274-277; G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of GAD," op. cit., p. 42 said: "The prophet understood himself to be one who not only could hear what went on during the heavenly rib, but also to have been appointed as an officer of the
As G. E. Wright has stated:

the breach of the covenant and the consequent heavenly Rib is the conceptual setting of Israel's classical prophecy.\(^1\)

Without the prophetic office no Rib would have been announced in Israel. Hence the Rib form must have originated in Israelite circles where the theology of the prophetic office was seriously regarded as a vital part of God's rule over Israel.\(^2\)

"The canonical prophets are thus," as R. E. Clements has also explained, "very much concerned with Israel as the covenant people of Yahweh, and consequently with the covenant by which Israel's life was governed."\(^3\)

(5) The celebration of the making of the covenant became of utmost importance to Israel as the vehicle of religious communication. By the use of the Rib motif the covenant-renewal celebration was turned into a penitential service. The covenant lawsuit theme was therefore a reformulation of the covenant-renewal theme. Evidence of this is the language of direct address with stress upon the first and second persons, the "I - Thou", in a way that the "I" always occurs in reference to Yahweh as Suzerain in both of the court (a mal'ak, "messenger" or "herald") to announce its verdict, and perhaps even to expound the verdict and to reveal some of the proceedings in the heavenly trial."

\(^1\) G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God," p. 59

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 62.

covenant-renewal celebration and the covenant lawsuit.

Therefore, in the covenantal usage the Hebrew verb מִנהַ תָּא is syntactically connected to Yahweh as subject in the sense: "I, Suzerain, recognize you as vassal"; in the covenant lawsuit usage it is syntactically connected to the people as subject in the sense of Yahweh's indictment: "You, vassal, did not recognize me, Suzerain." Yahweh as Suzerain takes the initiative of the "I - Thou" motif.

(6) However, there are some instances of prayer, in which the prophet addresses Yahweh directly by using the "I - Thou" motif in the same language and the same rhetorical forms as the covenant relation. In the context of these prayers the Hebrew word מִנהַ תָּא is syntactically connected to Yahweh as subject, but its speaker is the prophet in the sense of "Thou, Suzerain, recognize me, vassal." This shows the utter uniqueness of the prophetic "office". The uniqueness of these prayers is that in the "I-Thou" of the controversy motif, the "I" is the prophet himself.

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CHAPTER II

THE FORMULA "THOU KNOWEST" AND THE COVENANT LAWSUIT

In the conclusion to the former section some instances were noted in which the verb יד is syntactically connected to Yahweh as subject, but where the speaker is the prophet who is petitioning or engaging in controversy with Yahweh: "Thou, Suzerain, recognize me, vassal." Here, the prophet addresses Yahweh directly by using the "I-thou" motif in the same language and the same rhetorical form as that of the covenant relation. The uniqueness of these instances is that the "I" of the controversy motif refers to the prophet himself, not Yahweh. This unique use of the Hebrew word יד always occurs in the Hebrew formula יד יד with the second person masculine singular pronoun "thou".

Before going on to study the unique function of the formula "thou knowest" in the prophetic petition or controversy with Yahweh, the primary sense of the formula in its context of the historical books should be reviewed.

1. The primary sense of the formula "thou knowest"

In the context of the historical books the formula "thou knowest" occurs in the section of dialogue or controversy with the
"I-thou" motif. The formula "thou knowest" does not occur in an independent form, but always takes an objective phrase. The formula functions as a technical term for the opening phrase in the Gattung of the rib-controversy regarding two different motifs: (a) the rib-controversy in regard to Benediction; (b) the rib-controversy in regard to Malediction.

(a) Usage as the Introduction of the rib-controversy in regard to Benediction.

Josh. 14:6-15 is originally a part of the Deuteronomistic history. It stands before 11:23b and the Gattung of the rib-controversy concerning the blessing in the following structure:

v. 6 Introduction of Caleb's claim about his inheritance.

"You acknowledge what the Lord said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me."


2S. H. Blank, "The Confession of Jeremiah and the Meaning of Prayer," HUCA, Vol. XXI (1948), p. 332, points out that elements of the court patterns are in the prayer: the narrative, the plea, and the expression of confidence. The direct plea is an imperative: Do! The indirect plea is a rhetorical question or it is an accusation; G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit..." op. cit., pp. 49-54, fully discussed the elements of the form of the covenant renewal and the covenant lawsuit. The covenant-renewal form was as follows: recital of the Suzerain's benevolent acts; the stipulations of the covenant; vows, witness, and solemn declaration; blessing and curses.
vv. 7-11 Historical prologue: Statement of Caleb's loyalty to God.

"Yet I wholly followed the Lord my God." (v.8b)

v.12 The direct plea: petition.

"So now (ךָֽגַנְלַ) give me this his country of which the Lord spoke on that day."¹

v. 13 Answer: the blessing

"And Joshua blessed Caleb and gave Him Hebron for his patrimony."

The faithfulness of the vassal to the Lord is expressed by the term "wholly followed the Lord" (ךָֽגַנְלַךְ, נַחְשָׁלָה) in v. 8b.² The idea that the blessing of the Lord is based on faithfulness to Him reflects an important phrase of Dt 33:9.

The blessing of Moses on the Levites is based on their faithfulness to the Lord: "For they observe (ךָֽגַנְלַךְ) thy word and kept (ךָֽגַנְלַךְ) thy covenant." The faithfulness of the vassal is expressed by a uniformity of vocabulary in the Hittite treaties: "honour," "fulfil," and "keep".³


²Cf. Nu 14:24, 32:11, 12, Dt 1:36, Josh 14:8, 9, 14, 1 King 11:6.

³"Honour" in the treaty of Mursilis and Duppil-Tessub (ANET., p. 205); "fulfil" in the treaty of Suppiluliuma and Mattiwaza (ANET., p. 206); "keep" in the treaty of Mursilis II and Nqmepa of Ugarit (D. J. McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant, Appendix p. 182).

If Nqmepa keeps the words of the sworn [treaty] which this tablet [records,
The formula "Thou knowest" serves here as the Introduction to Caleb's petition or rib-controversy and means "to acknowledge, to recognize" the Lord's promise (Dt 1:36, Num 14:14) in the sense of witnessing his plea. The motif of the promise of the land dates back to the very earliest time in Israel history.¹

I King 5:17–26 (Engl. 3–12), the story of the treaty between Soloman and Hiram, contains the section of Soloman's recognition or petition (vv. 21–26).² The expounded rib-controversy is evident in the following structure:

v.17 Introduction of Soloman's recognition of Hiram:
"You acknowledge that David my father could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God.

vv.18–19 Narrative of Yahweh's saving history and His promise.

v.20 The direct plea:

then may the divine oaths keep him together with his wife, his sons, [his city, his country] and all his possessions.


In I Kings 9:10–14 Soloman paid twenty cities in Galilee in exchange for wood and gold to Hiram, King of Tyre. The legal background of the exchange of the city is paralleled by the Alalakh Tables II. 30f: "Can I give Irridî, a smashed place to my brother?" This expression appears in I Kings 5:11, 13. The verb for the deed is the same in both languages (Akk. naiān; Heb nātan) and also, the word for partner is the transaction (Akk. āṭiia; Heb. ʾāṭi).
"Now (נ虺) therefore, command that cedars of Lebanon be cut before me..."

v. 21-25 Hiram’s answer and the blessing:

"So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire."

v. 26 The treaty ritual:

"There was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and two of them made a treaty."

The formula "thou knowest" functions here as a motif of introduction to Solomon's plea in the sense of "acknowledging" the reason why Caleb put his plea before Hiram regarding God's promise (cf. 2 Sam 6:12, 1 Chr 22:8) as the witness to his petition.

Both Josh 14:6-15 and 1 Kings 5:17-26 are a part of the Deuteronomic history whose central theme is the rib which is formed by the elements of Introduction, Historical Prologue, the Direct Plea, and the Blessing. The formula "thou knowest" functions as a technical term for the Introductory element in

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1This treaty form occurs in the Alalakh Tablets II, 39-41: "Abban placed himself under oath to Jarimlim and had cut the neck of a sheep." (cf. D. J. Wiseman, ibid., p. 29). The fact that a sheep was slaughtered, shows a treaty was made between two parties. Cf. Albright, Archaeology and Religion of Israel, (Baltimore, 1968, 1942), p. 113; M. Noth, "OT Covenant-making in the Light of a Text from Mari," in The Laws in the Pentateuch (Philadelphia, 1966) p. 110ff.; J. Gray, J & II Kings, p. 143, assumes v. 26 as a later insertion. W. F. Albright, "The Hebrew Expression for 'Making a Covenant' in pre-Israelite Documents," BASOR No. 121 (1951), pp. 21-22; draw out the expression תֵּבֵּרִי, which means literally "to cut a beritū" paralleled to the Hebrew likhvat berit "to cut a covenant" from the fifteenth century B.C. (the El-Mishrifeh Tablets).
the Gattung of the rib-controversy and is used in the sense of "acknowledging" the Lord's promise or understanding the reason for the controversy in regard to God's promise as the witness of his plea. Therefore, it is assumed that the Gattung of the rib-controversy is based on the covenant relation between Yahweh and the people. The formula "thou knowest" is used for pointing indirectly to Yahweh's covenantal loyalty.

(b) Use as the motif of the introduction of the rib-controversy in regard to Malediction

I King 2:5-9, the second section of David's last charge to Solomon, and vv. 36-46, the story of the end of Shimei, utilize the old court source which contains the "curse" motif by the oath.¹

In vv. 5-9 Joab is marked for vengeance on account of his "bloodguiltiness -- avenged the blood of war in peace" -- of Abner (2 Sam 3:27) and Amasa (2 Sam 20:8-10).² The sons

¹Scholars agree with the Deuteronomic editorial epilogue. C. Anderson, A Critical Introduction, p. 82; J. Gray; I & II Kings, p. 95; O. Eissfeldt, The Old Testament an Introduction, p. 95; von Rad, OT Theology, II, p. 94, n. 23.

²However, F. Skinner, Kings: The Century Bible (Edinburgh, 1904), p. 69f and W. E. Barnes, The Two Books of the Kings: The Cambridge Bible (Cambridge, 1908), p. 131f, assume that vv. 5-9 belong to the "court source".

²Both Abner and Amasa were under David's safe conduct, when Joab murdered them. So Joab had made David responsible for the bloodshed. Forgiveness for the shedding of blood was alien to the thought of David's age. The idea that the Suzerain has a responsibility for his vassals enemies reflects the motif of the rib controversy; cf. J. Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture, I-II, p. 423f.
of Barzillai will be rewarded, because of their loyalty
to the King. Shimei was pronounced guilty, because
his course still rested on David's house (cf. Ex 11:23).1
Vv. 5-9 may be read as the following rib-controversy regarding
Malediction:

v. 5 Introduction of David's last charge to Solomon:

"You acknowledge also what Joab, the son of Zeruiah
did to me, how he dealt with the two commanders of
the armies of Israel, Abner the son of Ner, and
Amasa the son of Jether, whom he murdered, avenging
in time of peace blood which has been shed in war,
and putting innocent blood upon the girdle about
my loins, and upon the sandals on my feet."

v.6f The direct plea: charge and blessing.

"Act therefore..., do not let his head go down
to Sheol in peace."

"But deal loyalty ( תָּה הַלְּבָנָה) with the sons of Barzillai...
"you shall bring his head (i.e., 'of Shimei') down
with blood to the grave"

In vv. 5-9 the loyalty of the Suzerain to the faithful
vassal is expressed by the term "deal loyalty" (תָּה הַלְּבָנָה), and
the punishment of the Suzerain to the unfaithful vassal is
expressed by the words "bring his head down with blood to
Sheol".

In vv. 36-46 Shimei is sentenced to guilt, because he
did not keep the oath which Solomon had put upon him.

1 Cf. Ex 22:18. To curse a ruler or judge is especially
forbidden by the law. David promised to spare Shimei's life,
(cf. 2 Sam 19:17-24) but this oath did not cancel the offence.
The curse remains in effect.
v. 43 Solomon calls directly Shimei in the "I-thou" theme:

"Why then have you not kept (כָּל אָשֵׁר נֹשֶׁא) your oath to the Lord and commandment with which I charged you.

v. 44a Solomon introduces his claim:

"You acknowledge all evil, that your heart knew,¹ that you did to David my father."

vv. 44b-45 The direct plea by lawsuit: curse and blessing.

"So the Lord will bring back you evil upon your own head."

"But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the thron of David shall be established before the Lord for ever."

v. 46 The ritual act:

"Then the King commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he went out and struck him down, and he died."

The term "not kept" (כָּל אָשֵׁר נֹשֶׁא) is one of the technical terms for the breach of promise.³ This term occurs

¹Cf. 2 Sam 19:21 (English 20).

²The same idea of the maledictions occurs in the prophet (cf. Is 1:23, 22:14; Amos 7:17, 9:4, 10).

³P. C. Fensham, "Malediction and Benediction in Ancient Near Eastern Vassal-Treaties and the Old Testament," ZAW., VXXIV (1962) I, pp. 1-9, fully discusses the motif and terminology of the "blessing and curses". Other terms for the breach of promise: "break off" (Jer 11:10, 22:8-9, 34:8); in the treaty between Mursilis and Alaksandus (cf., ZAW., 74, p. 3); "not honor" (in treaty between Mursilis II and Duppil-Tessub, ANET., p. 203); "not fulfill" (in Treaty between Suppiliumas and Matuwaza, ANET., p. 206); "not loyal" (in Treaty Ashurnirari V of Assyria and Matti'ilu of Arpad, ANET., p. 533); "change", "neglects", "transgression", "erasing" (in Treaty of Esarhaddon, (397), ANET., p. 538).
in the vassal-treaty between the Hittite and Egypt:

As for these words which are on this tablet of silver of the land of Hatti and of the land of Egypt - as for him who shall not keep them, a thousand gods of the land of Hatti, together with a thousand gods of the land of Egypt, shall destroy his house, his land, and his servants.¹

The formula "thou knowest" functions here in both v. 5 and v. 44 as a technical term for the introduction of the rib-controversy in the sense of the acknowledgement of the reason why the "curse" is charged, and as the witness regarding the oath to the Lord. These two Gattungen of the rib-controversy regarding Malediction are firmly reflected by the treaty curse pattern.² Vv 45-56 establish the argument of the whole chapter that the central aim is a covenant renewal, i.e. the absolute merciful protection of the Lord according to His promise of the land, and His punishment of the unfaithful vassal.

In summary it may be concluded as follows:

¹ANET, p. 201; cf. D. R. Hillers, Treaty Curses and the Old Testament Prophets, (Pome, 1964), points out that the prophets pronounced the doom by means of ideas and terms borrowed from treaty-curses. In the treaties, a curse is pronounced on anyone who will prove disloyal. The prophets frequently indite the people for breaking the covenant with Yahweh, and then announce that punishment will be inflicted.

(1) The primary function of the formula "thou knowest" seems to be a technical term for the Introductory phrase of the Gattung of the rib-controversy regarding Benediction or Malediction and is used in the sense of the legal acknowledgement either of the Lord's promise, or of the reason for the rib.

(2) In the background of this formula may be assumed the tradition of the "curse and blessing" formula of the covenant between Yahweh and the people, that rests on the suzerain-treaty of the ancient Near East.

In the Gattung of the rib-controversy regarding Benediction the formula is used for the purpose of expressing the speaker's wish to obtain the blessing that is based on the promise of Yahweh and the vassal's faithfulness to the stipulation. In the Gattung of the rib-controversy regarding Malediction the formula is used for the purpose of expressing the speaker's wish to charge the curse for the enemies, which is closely linked up with the unfaithfulness or breach of promise concerning the stipulation of the treaty.

(3) The Sitz im Leben of this formula is the covenant renewal ceremony, which is stylistically reflected in the characteristic "I-Thou" form of the suzerain-treaties. These documents of a conversational character in the rib-controversy exhibit the classic legal form of the suzerain-treaties of the Mosaic age. The blessing and curse are enacted by lawsuit in connection with the faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the
2. The Unique Role of the Formula "Thou Knowest" in the Covenant Lawsuit or Controversy with Yahweh

(a) An examination of two points is important for the investigation of the formula in the covenant lawsuit.

(i) What relation is there between the primary sense of this formula and the word מִי as a technical covenant or covenant lawsuit term?

(ii) What relation is there between the formula and the suzerain-treaty?

As a technical Covenant term the word מִי is used in two legal senses for "mutual recognition": to recognize the legitimate Suzerain or vassal, and to recognize the covenant obligation between Yahweh and his people. The subject of the word מִי syntactically may be either Yahweh or Israel, but the subject of the pact is always Yahweh.

As a technical term of the Covenant Lawsuit the word מִי is used for Yahweh's indictment of the people for the breach of their covenant obligation. The verb מִי is here syntactically connected to the people, but the speaker is Yahweh.

In the Gattung of the lawsuit regarding Malediction this formula is used in the sense of legally recognizing the reason for the controversy, i.e., the breach of obligation by the minor party. In this case, the verb מִי is syntac-
tically bound to the minor party as subject, but the speaker is the superior party. In the context of the lawsuit regarding the Benediction, this formula is used in the sense of the legal acknowledgement of Yahweh's promise as the witness of his plea requesting blessing. The verb יְתָּן is here syntactically bound to the superior party as subject, but the speaker is the minor party.

The importance of this investigation is, therefore, in demonstrating that this formula contains a completely new usage of the verb יְתָּן: the verb יְתָּן is syntactically bound to the superior as subject, but the initiative of the 'I-thou' motif belongs to the minor party of the covenant. When the lawsuit-controversy concerns Benediction, the minor party speaks to the superior party in the 'I' of the 'I-thou': 'Thou knowest thy promise for me!' or 'Thou, Suzerain, recognize me, vassal!'

(ii) Second, it is to be noted that the formula is used in connection with the "curses and blessing" motif of the covenant which rests originally on the treaty-curse on the ancient Near East.

The idea of " curses" and "blessings" is to be derived from disobedience and obedience to the obligations of the minor party in the treaty. This idea reflects the central theme of the reib-controversy. The merciful protection of the Lord or His punishment will be a result of the minor party's faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the obligation of
the treaty. The "blessing" and "curses" are enacted by lawsuit in connection with obedience or disobedience to the obligations of the minor party in the Treaty.

Some technical terms may be noted for the faithfulness and unfaithfulness of the minor party: "keep" (Dt 33:9; the treaty between Suppiluliuma and MattiwaZa)\(^2\) - "not keep" (1 Kings 2:43; the treaty between Hittite and Egypt)\(^3\); "break off" (Jer 11:10, 22:6-9, 34:8; Muwatallis and Alaksandes);\(^4\) "not honor" (Nursilis II and Duppi-Tessub);\(^5\) "not fulfill" (Suppiluliuma and MattiwaZa)\(^6\) "not loyal" (Ashuruirari V and Matti'ilu);\(^7\) "change" (Jer 2:11; Esarhaddon);\(^8\) "neglect", "transgression," "erasing" (Esarhaddon);\(^9\) "love" (Dt 6:4, 11:1, 22, 30:20, 10:12, 19:9; a letter to Yasma'-Addu, the

\(^1\) H. B. Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," JBL, LXXVIII (1959), pp. 285-295, has discussed the judgement by the lawsuit and by the judge, Yahweh.

\(^2\) ANET., p. 206.

\(^3\) ANET., p. 201.


\(^5\) ANET., p. 205.

\(^6\) ANET., p. 206.

\(^7\) ANET., p. 533.

\(^8\) ANET., p. 538.

\(^9\) ANET., p. 538.
King of Mari; Esarhaddon; Ed-Dur tablets;¹ "fall or bow down" (Gen 33:3, Ex 20:5, 2 Sam. 14:33; the Amuru letters);² "to avenge" (nqm) (The Aramaic Suzerainty Treaty).³

There are also some cases of the technical term for the protection and the punishment of the superior party: "not break off" (Jer 14:21); "deal loyally" (1 King 2:6); "to avenge (nqm)"⁴ (Dt 32:35, 41, Lev 26:25, Jer 5:9, 27, 9:8, 46:10, 50:15, 51:36; "by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence" (Jer 14:12, 15:1, Am 7:17);⁵ "keep covenant" (Daniel 9:4; 1 King 8:22, 25).

Therefore, it is assumed that the "curses and blessing" motif of the Rib-controversy rests on the suzerain-curse treaty in the ancient Near East. In the suzerain-treaties the "mutual obligation" of both parties of the bond is

¹CBQ, XXV (1963), pp. 78-80; cf. ANET, p. 537, "Esarhaddon".


³CBQ, XX (1958), p. 450, lines 11-12.


demanded. Protection against foreign enemies is demanded of the vassal as occurs in the Treaty between Suppiluliuma and Azirras of Amurru.

He who is an enemy of the Sun, shall also be an enemy with you.¹

In the treaty between Suppiluliuma and Niqmadu the vassal makes his promise to the Suzerain in the first person.

To the enemy of my Lord I am hostile, (and) with the friend of my Lord (I am) friendly.²

However, the Suzerain also assures his vassal, in the case of rebellion against the vassal. For example in the treaty Muwattallis and Alaksandus:

As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you, even so is he an enemy to the Sun.³

The idea that Suzerain assures his vassal is reflected in the following sections:

I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse. (Gen. 12:3)

Then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and an adversary to your adversaries. (Ex 23:22)

May all your enemies perish thus, O Lord! but your friends be as the sun rising in its might! (Judges 5:11)

¹ANETS., p. 529.
you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. (EX 20:5-6)

The investigation of the primary sense of the formula confirms the importance of the formula "thou knowest" as a technical term to express the vassal's wish to obtain the blessing binding on the promise of the Suzerain and the vassal's faithfulness to the obligation. This type of formula occurs in the Gattung of the rib-controversy in regard to the Benediction.

It now appears that the formula "thou knowest," in its unique role, is a technical term for the "mutual recognition" in connection with the "I-thou" motif of the covenant. Within the context of "mutual recognition" the vassal may request the Suzerain's promise of protection. Thus, the formula always occurs in the Gattung of the rib-controversy.

In the former section it was noted that the verb שָׂרָה in the covenant lawsuit is used strictly only in connection with the people's obligation, i.e., God's indictment for Israel's breaking of the obligation.

However, it is now shown that the verb שָׂרָה is also tied to Yahweh's obligation to His promise as a special

1On this point Mendenhall seems to be mistaken in regarding the Abrahamic covenant as a completely different type from the Sinai covenant, because of God's oath (Gen 15), Yahweh promised territory to Abraham as an everlasting
technical term. This usage of the verb וּעֲשָׂה occurs only in the petition or prayer context that contains the Gattung of the rib-controversy and is used as a technical term for requesting the renewal of Covenant or the fulfillment of Covenant.

As the prophetic office of Mediator-Intercessor the prophet uses this type of the word וּעֲשָׂה and he utters his plea in the first person "I" before the Lord: "Thou acknowledge!"

(b) An examination of the covenant lawsuit with Yahweh in its context is now in order: five instances will be discussed in David's prayer, Solomon's prayer, two covenant songs, and Ezekiel's dialogue with God.

(1) 2 Sam 7:18ff (= 1 Chron 17:16ff), David's prayer context, presents the Deuteronomic understanding of history as


renewal and punishment. The literary type is the prayer, more precisely the thanksgiving prayer. These phrases seem to contain theGattung of the rib-controversy as follows: 2

vv. 18-21 Preamble:
   a) Invocation: Statement of the speaker as a vassal.
      "Who am I, O Lord God, ... O Lord God, ... O Lord God, and what more can David say to thee? For thou acknowledge thy servant, 3 O Lord God!
   b) Praise to God as Suzerain.
      "Therefore thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like thee, and there is no God besides thee,

vv. 22-24 Historical prologue: regarding the stipulation.

"What other nation on earth is like my people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his people, ...

"And thou didst establish for thyself thy people Israel to be thy people for ever; and thou, O Lord didst become their God.


2 J. Muilenburg, VT., IX (1959), p. 256, pointed out that these phrases employed the covenant Gattung.

vv. 25-29 The direct plea: Petition.

"And now (אָדֶּנֹ֫כֶ֔, O Lord God, confirm for ever the word which thou hast spoken...

"do as thou hast spoken...

"And now ( אָדֶּנֹ֫כֶ֔), therefore, may it please thee to bless the house of thy servant; that it may continue for ever before thee.

The central theme of this prayer is the controversy against Yahweh in which David requests Yahweh's recognition of him as a vassal and Yahweh's act of renewing the covenant. In the "I" of the "I-thou" motif David speaks to Yahweh: "Confirm the word!" "Do as thou hast spoken!"

Vv. 18-21 reflects the treaty between Suppiliuma and Hukkana in which the vassal is required not to acknowledge any other king but the Sun. Using the same imagery David calls Yahweh's attention to the "mutual recognition" of the suzerain-vassal relation: "Who am I?" "Thou acknowledge, thy servant, O Lord God!" David confesses his faithfulness to the obligation: "there is no God besides thee!"

Further, in vv. 22-24, Historical prologue, David describes the covenant between Yahweh and Israel and calls again Yahweh's attention on His initiation of the pact, i.e., responsibility for the pact.

Then, David puts his direct plea: "Confirm your words

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1F. C. Fensham, VT, XIII (1963), p. 130.

2Both the Exodus tradition (cf. "redeem") the Sinaitic tradition (cf. "establish") are mentioned.
(i.e., covenant)! This plea is designed for the renewal of the covenant in the setting of the covenant renewal cult or the penitential service. The formula "thou knowest" functions to express the indictment of Yahweh, because of an unfulfilled covenant promise. The formula is used, therefore, as a technical term of the covenant lawsuit in the sense of the legal acknowledgement of a vassal.

(ii) I Kings 8:22-53 (=2 Chron 6:12-42), Solomon's prayer context, reflects the traditional framework of the rib. The King stands "before the altar in the presence of all the assembly of Israel" (there invokes the covenant with David.) The King prays for the continuity of the Davidic line and praises God who always remains faithful to His covenant.

v.22a Preamble: Praise to Yahweh as Suzerain.

"O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above or on earth beneath

vv. 22b-24 Historical prologue: (thanksgiving for the fulfilment of his promise to David)


"Keeping covenant¹ and showing steadfast love to thy servant who walk before thee with all their heart,

"who hast kept with thy servant David my father what thou didst declare to him;...

vv. 25-26 The direct plea: "thy eyes may be open night and day toward this house,..."

"Now therefore (נָּא), O Lord, God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father what thou hast promised him;

"Now therefore (נָּא), O God of Israel, let thy word be confirmed, which thou hast spoken to thy servant David my father.

vv. 27-50 Seven petitions:

individual (31-32), Israel (33-34), drought (35-36), famine (37-40), foreigner (41-43), military mission (44-45), in captivity (46-50)

vv. 51-53 Liturgical conclusion: (Expression of confidence)

"Let thy eyes be open to the supplication of thy servant,

"and to the supplication of thy people Israel, giving ear to them whenever they call to thee.

"as thou didst declare through Moses, thy servant when thou didst bring our father out of Egypt, O Lord God.

The central theme of Solomon's prayer is the controversy against Yahweh in which Solomon requests Yahweh's protection of His vassal. By using some "traditional cultic

¹The word "keep covenant" occurs in Daniel's prayer (Daniel 9:4). The idea of God as "one who keeps covenant" is the basis for Israel's idea of patrimony. (Cf. E. W. Jones, "The Prayer in Daniel 72," VT, XVIII (1968), 482-493); this word occurs three times in this prayer in the sense of the Lord's protection.
patterns" of David's prayer (2 Sam 8:18ff) this prayer shows a more spiritualized understanding of the covenant.

In vv. 22-24 Solomon confesses his faithfulness to the obligation: "there is no God like thee, in heaven above or on earth beneath." In the historical prologue Solomon describes his thanksgiving for the fulfillment of his promise to David. The idea that Yahweh as Suzerain enacts his loyalty to his faithful vassal is expressed by the treaty term "keep": "keep covenant" or "keep...what thou didst declare."

Using the same term "keep" Solomon puts his plea of the renewal of covenant before Yahweh together with the emphatic covenant term "now therefore ( תִּכְנָה)" : "Now therefore, O Lord, God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father what thou hast promised him."

The confidence of the plea of v. 53 refers to the Exodus tradition, i.e., "the deliverance from Egypt". As J. Muilenburg has pointed out, the same language and rhetorical form of the covenant pact occurs throughout this dedication prayer. By using the sin-controversy motif the proclamation and sanctification of the covenant becomes the

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1S. O. Collins, Israel and the Assyrian Crisis, op. cit., p. 99.

2The treaty between Hamanuwa and Matsuware, (ANET, p. 206); the treaty between Wittiya and Egypt, (ANET, p. 201); Dt 33:9; 1 Kings 2:4.

3J. Muilenburg, VT 25 (1972) p 356.
penitential petition\textsuperscript{1} or the covenant lawsuit against Yahweh. The formula "thou knowest" occurs in one of seven petitions (v. 39=2 Chron 6:30): "Thou knowest the hearts of all the children of men." The idea that God vindicates according to the innermost thoughts became fundamental to the theology of the Deuteronomic historians.\textsuperscript{2}

A similar connotation has expressed in the treaty of the Esarhaddon in many clauses; the vassals are requested to defend whole-heartedly his interests (lines 53, 169, 310, and 386ff):

If you do not fight (and) die for him,
(if) you do not speak sincerely with him
(and) do not give him good advice with whole your heart. (line 50f).

(If) your heart is not entirely with him. (line 152)

As R. Frankena says, "The obedience of the vassals must be more than a matter of words, it must be a matter of the heart and affect their whole being."\textsuperscript{3}

In vs. 43 "all the people of the earth may know thy name and fear thee, as do thy people Israel", the Hebrew verb יָדַע is used as a technical term for the covenantal acknowledgement. The formula "thou knowest" is, therefore, used as a technical

\textsuperscript{1}G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God," in Israel's Prophectic Heritage, p. 59.


term for the covenantal acknowledgement. The formula "thou knowest" is, therefore, used as a technical term of the covenant lawsuit in the sense of Yahweh's acknowledgement of a vassal's loyalty to the covenant obligation. By using this formula Solomon expresses his indictment to Yahweh in regard to the mutual recognition. Only when Yahweh vindicates according to the hearts, i.e., true loyalty will "all the people of the earth" be able to enter into the covenant with Yahweh. (cf. vv. 43, 60)

(iii) Ps 69\(^1\) reflects the traditional framework of the lawsuit in which the Suzerain's protection against enemies is demanded from the vassal. The central concern of this lament is that he who trusts in God will not be disappointed. The psalmist justifies his plea to God for help, because of his innocence (vv. 1-4) and because his suffering is for God's sake: "For it is for thy sake that I have borne reproach that

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\(^1\) Some scholars suggest that this Psalm refers to the martyrdom of the prophet Jeremiah (cf. Briggs, Psalms II: ICC, p. 112); Weiser, The Psalms, p. 493; Davidson, The Psalms I, II, p. 337; Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, II, p. 10. Davidson says: "This psalm should be read throughout with Jeremiah in mind; whether he wrote it or not, his history gives the key to its meaning."

The relevant passages are: v. 2 "Save me, Yahweh" (Jer 17:14); vv. 7-9 "For thy sake, I become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien to my mother's son" (Jer 20:7, 12:6); vv. 20-21 "poison" are "fasts be a trap" (Jer 8:14, 9:15, 23:15); v. 19 Psalmist calls directly God like Jeremiah (Jer 12:3, 15:15, 17:18, 18:7); v. 21 "I made sackcloth my clothing" (Jer 4:6, 14:2); v. 24 "thy indignation" (Jer 15:17).
Then he put his plea before his Suzerain.

vv. 19-27 the direct plea: Protection and punishment.

"Draw near to me, redeem me
Set me free because of my enemies!

"Thou knowest my reproach
and my shame and my dishonor,
my foes are all known to thee

"Pour out thy indignation upon them...
"Add to them punishment upon punishment...
"Let them be blotted out of the book of the living;...

The idea that the psalmist suffers for the sake of the Lord and that his enemies are also the Lord’s enemies reflects the "blessing and curses" motif of the suzerain-treaty. This idea is common in ancient Near Eastern suzerain treaties, in which "mutual obligations" from both parties of the bond are demanded. As it has been noticed, the mutual obligation is expressed from both parties. When the vassal makes his promise he speaks in the first person:

To the enemy of my Lord I am hostile
(and) with the friend of my Lord (I am) friendly.¹

The Suzerain also makes the promise to protect his vassal:

As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you,
even so is he an enemy to the Sun.²

¹Itti nakri sa belia nakraku u itti salami sa belia

²Itti nakri sa belia nakraku u itti salami sa belia

M. C. O’Hara, Nouryrot, PBU, IV p. 49, lines 12-13; D. J.

McKee, Treaty and Covenant, Appendix 2, p. 162; J. H.


W. D. Mathew, BASOR, No. 181 (1966), p. 32; P. C.

Karcher, MT, XIII (1963), 140.
This "mutual recognition" is reflected in Judges 5:31:

May all your enemies perish thus, 0 Lord! but your friends be as the sun rising in its might!

In this psalm the formal "thou knowest" functions as a technical term for the idea of this "mutual recognition". By using this formula he understands Yahweh as his suzerain, i.e., as protector and requests His vindication for His "reproach for His sake".

(iv) Ps 40 has been understood as a compound psalm because of the two different themes of thanksgiving and lamentation.\(^1\) It may, however, be shown that this psalm is united in the Gattung of the Rib-controversy in which the psalmist expresses his plea or petition for the Suzerain's protection against his enemies and His vindication by punishing them.

Vv. 2-11 should be regarded as a historical prologue; (a) vv. 2-4 narrative of the Lord's saving act: "I waited... He inclined... He drew me up...and set my feet." (Cf. Dt 26:7;

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Some think there is a relation between Ps 40 and Jeremiah. Especially v. 10b and Jer 17:16b. However, the Deuteronomist historian's influence is more characteristic through Ps 40.
10); (b) vv. 5-6 Praise of the Lord: "thou hast multiplied, O Lord my God,...; none can compare with thee!"
(f. Dt 26:8-9); (c) Proclamation of the faithful to the Lord: "I delight to do thy will, O my God." Here, the formula "thou knowest" occurs:

I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation;
I have not restrained my lips,
thou knowest, O Lord.

Vv. 12-17 The direct plea: Protection and vindication.

"Therefore, O Lord, thou will not withhold thy mercy from me:
let thy grace and thy faithfulness ever preserve me!

"Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me!
O Lord, make haste to help me!

"Let them be confounded and blush with shame...
Let them be turned back and brought to dishonour...

"But may all who seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee;
may those who love thy salvation say continually,
'Great is the Lord!'

v. 18 The ritual act: the expression of confidence.

The first part, vv. 2-11, is a thanksgiving prayer directed to Yahweh for his protection. The psalmist confesses his loyalty to the Lord: (i) his "trust" (רְוִּים) in Yahweh (v. 4); (ii) his obedience: "I delight to do thy will" (v. 5); (iii) his recognition of Yahweh as Suzerain: "none can compare with thee!" (v. 5). Thanksgiving for the Lord's saving act may be compared with Dt 16:7-10, one of the oldest creeds.

This part is reflected by the covenant idea. The word "trust" (רְוִּים) has been defined as a covenant term by F. C.
The idea that if the vassal will be faithful to the Suzerain, the Suzerain will protect him and will extend his good will to him is found in the vassal-treaty.  

The second part, vv. 12-17, has important ties with the curses and blessing motif of the treaty. The psalmist requests of Yahweh his "covenant-love" ( Navbar) for "those who love thy salvation: (vv. 12, 16) but his indictment (cf. "brought to dishonor") to his enemies (v. 14).

As W. L. Moran has fully discussed, the word "those who love" is a technical term for a vassal. The word "love" is used as terminology for International Relations; for the vassal's faithfulness to the sovereign; the subject's attitude to their King. In the Treaty of Esarhaddon the vassal is requested to love Esarhaddon's successor Assurbanipal:

If you do not love the crown prince designate Assurbanipal, son of your lord Esarhaddon, King of Assyria, as you do your own lives, ... 4


2 Treaty between the Hittite and Egypt (ANET., p. 199): "while his is in brotherhood with me and he is at peace with me, and I am in brotherhood with him and I am at peace with him forever."; Hattusili and Tageses II, ANET, 202): "He is a brother (to me) and I am a brother to him and at peace with him forever."


4ANETS., p. 357; 2Ki 14:29; 26:6-26; cf. 1 Sam 20:17 "he loved him as he served him well,"
In 2 Sam 19:6-7 Joab charged David: "you love those who hate you and hate who love you" (v. 6), because David grieves at the death of his rebellious son while showing no concern for those who had remained loyal. The word "those who love you" occurs here in parallel with the word "your servants" (v. 6).

The word "dishonour" is also a technical term for the vassal-suzerain relation in the treaty between Mursilis and Duppi-Tessub of Amurru.¹ This psalm has, therefore, been influenced by the terminology and rhetorical form of the covenant. The central theme of the ḫib-controversy is this:

"Let them be turned back and brought to dishonour who desire my hurt! (v. 15b)

"May those who love thy salvation say continually, 'Great is the Lord!'" (v. 17)

This theme of the ḫib-controversy is exactly the same as Judges 5:31:

"So perish all thine enemies, O Lord!
But thy friends (Heb. יִֽשְׁמַ֣ע) be like the Sun as he rises in his might!"

In the Near Eastern treaties not only the claim of fidelity from the vassal when the suzerain is attached, but also the suzerain's protection to the vassal when he is attached has been emphasized:

¹ANET, p. 205, "should Duppi-Tessub not honor these words of treaty and the oath, may these gods of the oath destroy Duppi-Tessub together with his wife, his son, his grandson, his house, his land and together with that he owns. But if Duppi-Tessub honors these words of the treaty and the oath protect him together with his person, his wife, his son, his grandson,..."
The one who is your enemy is also the enemy of the sun. The one who is the enemy of the sun, should also be your enemy.

The mutual recognition is essential for the suzerain-treaties. The historical introduction part always emphasizes this mutual recognition. In the Gattung of the rib-controversy of this psalm the formula "thou knowest" functions as a technical term for requesting this "mutual recognition" as the witness of the controversy. The formula is used in the sense of the Lord's acknowledgement of the vassal's fidelity to the obligation. If the Lord acknowledges the vassal's fidelity, He should respond to him with covenantal-love (כרד) and with absolute merciful protection. Therefore, the psalmist requests the Lord's acknowledgement of his fidelity based on the motif of the "mutual recognition" of the covenant.

(v) Ezek. 17:3 which records a symbolic vision of Israel's restoration, is the only occurrence of the formula in the prophets, other than in Jeremiah's confession. Critics agree generally that with the editorial collection it is to dated from the time of the exile."

"Treaty between Asshur and Alalakh, (F. C. Fensham, ZAW, V111X (1960), p. 195); Treaty of Suppiluliumas and Aziruš of Amurru (MERT, p. 529). "And if you, Aziruš, protect the king of the Hatti land, your master, the king of the Hatti land, your master, will protect you in the same way."

Our concern at this time is to define its Gattung. The literary type is the message, and may be represented as follows:

vv. 1-2 Introduction: The Lord's saving hand in the valley.1
3-6 The dialogue:
3 And he said to me,


The vision of the valley of Dry Bones, 37:1-14, is one of the most famous passages in the book of Ezekiel. But its original authorship is uncertain. It is generally accepted that its origin goes back to the memory of, or written sources about a splendid oracle concerning the shepherds of Israel in which the author gives rein to his own personality and genius in thought and words of abiding worth. Vv. 12-14 reveal its origin outside Palestine (Irwin, pp. 246; 204; May, p. 206). Gallant, p. 206).

The Sitz im Leben suggests "a return of those exiled in Babylon" (May), not the resurrection of individuals after death, E. W. Hengstenberg, The Prophecies of the Prophet Ezekiel. (Edinburgh, 1949), p. 317.; sees it as the resurrection of a covenant people."

However, H. Riesenfeld sees it as the resurrection of the Israelites in the eschatological future. The idea of the purification of the death was not entirely foreign to the prophets and his contemporaries (cf. Is 16:19; Jer 31:34). He believes the continuation of life and of its reproduction in connection with the annual festival, especially the celebration of Tammuz. (Ibid., p. 37.)

1 The word "valley" (אַרְגָּמִית) used to be understood as the situation of exile (May, Cooke, Hengstenberg). But Riesenfeld sees it as the cultic drama (p. 10).
Thus says the Lord God to these bones:

Behold, I (וְגוֹן) will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.

And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and you shall know that I am the Lord.

These verses belong within the Gattung of the covenant. The last phrase "you shall know that I am the Lord" (v. 6) indicates the renewal of Yahweh's covenant to the people.\(^2\) The renewal of covenant is based on the liberation, or Yahweh's initiative that is expressed with a הָיָה consecutive verb in the first person: "and I will lay...and I will cause flesh to come...I will cover...and I will put breath in you." (v. 6)

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1 There are other verses about the continuance of life and its regeneration: Hos 6:2 "of the people"; Mic 7:8 "one single person" (King); Ps 17:15 "one single person"; Is 54; Is 26:19 "the dew".


3 Cf. the editor's typical formula: "then they will know that I am the Lord." (םֹּרְפֵי לֹאֵל). Cf. Blank, "Studies in DR," HUCA, XV (1940), pp. 34-41. Appendix II.

4 Blassfeld, The Old Testament, p. 315; Anderson, A Critical P. 132; Cock, ICC, p. 395; KJV, NEB, p. 266f. They all agree with that the belief in a general resurrection of the dead had not yet arisen in Israel.
The renewal of the covenant is expressed in the way of the mutual recognition in vv. 23, 26-28.

"they shall be my people, and I will be their God." (v. 23)

"I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, ... and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will recognize that I the Lord sanctify Israel, (vv. 26-28)

However, without liberation it is impossible to renew the mutual covenant relation between Yahweh and the people. When Yahweh asked him, Ezekiel charged him, therefore, with His responsibility for the covenant. The formula "thou knowest" is used in the sense of Yahweh's covenantal initiative as the technical term for the "mutual recognition".1

The formula occupies the central role for his controversy against Yahweh to initiate His covenantal act of salvation. Risenfeld sees this Sitz im Leben in the New Year Festival. Undoubtedly it is the covenant renewal ceremony.

Chapter Two may be concluded as follows:

(1) The formula is syntactically connected to Yahweh as subject, but its speaker is the man who is petitioning or engaging in controversy with Yahweh. Syntactically, this formula is reflected in the characteristic "I-Thou" motif of

1Against K. Ca., op. cit., p. 200. He understands this formula as the corollary of Yahweh's ignorance. This is not acceptable; Henneberg, op. cit., p. 217 and Risenfeld, op. cit., p. 5f.
the suzerain-treaties. The minor party speaks directly to the superior in the first person "I" of the "I-Thou" motif.

(2) The formula always occurs in the Gattung of the rib-controversy regarding the renewal of the covenant. This literary form has been classified as the "utterances" directed from man to God (prayer and petition) that must be sharply separated from the prophetic speeches.

However, this literary form is now classified due to a recognition of the rib-controversy motif against the Lord. This rib-controversy motif is identified with that of the prophetic speeches or the Covenant Lawsuit.

In the Covenant Lawsuit the prophets approach Yahweh and deliver the word of God to the people. In the first person Yahweh speaks of His indictment of his people's unfaithfulness to the covenant obligation. The prophet has to act as messenger-mediator. The Hebrew verb מָשָׁה is used as a technical term for His indictment of his people's disloyalty.

In the petitioning rib-controversy with Yahweh the prophet also stand before Yahweh and utter his claim of Yahweh's unfulfillment of the promise or His renewal of the covenant. The prophet must act as the covenant interceding Mediator between Yahweh and his people.

(3) The formula is used in connection with the "mutual recognition" motif of the covenant that rests on the Near
Eastern suzerain-treaties. In the Near Eastern suzerain-treaties not only the claims of fidelity from the vassal when the suzerain is attacked, but also the promise of the suzerain's protection to the vassal, when he is attacked, have been emphasized. The mutual recognition is essential for the suzerain-treaties. The best example is found in the vassal-treaty between Muwattalis and Alaksandus the following:

The one who is your enemy,  
is also the enemy of the sun.  
The one who is the enemy of the sun,  
should also be your enemy.  

This motif is comparable to the following sections in the Old Testament:

If you hearken attentively  
to his voice and do all that I say,  
then I will be an enemy to your enemies  
and an adversary to your adversaries. (Ex 23:22)

So perish all thine enemies  
O Lord!  
But thy friends (Heb. יִשְׂרָאֵל) be like the sun  
as he rises in his might. (Judges 5:31)

Let them be turned and brought to dishonour  
who desire my hurt!  
May those who love thy salvation ( יִשְׂרָאֵל)  
say continually, "Great is the Lord!" (Ps 40:15b, 17)

I will bless those who bless you,  
and him who curses you I will curse. (Gen 12:3)

Know therefore ( יִשְׂרָאֵל) that the Lord your God is God,  
the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love  
with who love him ( יִשְׂרָאֵל) and keep his commandment  
(Dt 7:9-10)

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Based on this motif of the "mutual recognition" of the treaty, the formula "thou knowest" is used in the sense of the Suzerain's acknowledgement of the vassal's fidelity. To request Yahweh's acknowledgement of the vassal's fidelity means to request His absolute merciful protection and the renewal of the covenant.

(4) The Sitz im Leben of this formula is the covenant renewal ceremony. Stylistically, using the Rib-motif in the "I-Thou" relation of the treaty the covenant renewal ceremony becomes the petitioning service.
CHAPTER III

THE "CONFESSION" AND THE COVENANT LAWSUIT

Jeremiah's confessions have been classified as "utterances."¹ By "utterances" Westermann means a literary genre that are directed from man to God. They have the character of the answer. Their two major forms are lament and praise. Under this system the confessions were placed in the "ancient literary category of the individual lament."²

¹Clause Westermann, Grundformen Prophetische Rede (München, 1964), p. 64; Basic Form of Prophetic Speech, tr. by H. C. White (Philadelphia, 1967), p. 90. There are considered three major kinds of speech in the prophetic books: (a) accounts, (b) prophetic speeches, (c) utterances (Worte).


It is generally accepted that most of these were never
In recent years however the confessions have been reclassified in recognition of the importance of Jeremiah's challenge of the Lord. The Rib-pattern has been discovered in the Book of Jeremiah, and more precisely in the "confessions." One of the "confessions", Jer 12:1-6, has been defined as the Covenant Lawsuit. The uniqueness of the "confessions" lies in this: in the "I-Thou" of the controversy the "I" is not God, but Jeremiah himself.

A survey of these investigations requires a brief consideration concerning the relation between the confession and the "mutual recognition" of the Suzerain-vassal treaty.

1. The "Confession" and the Mutuality Motif of the Treaty

Jeremiah's confessions belong to the reign of Jehoiakim (609-597 B.C.), and are regarded as authentic uttered publicly, and that a purely oral transmission even within the prophet's circle of friends was very brief. Cf. John Bright, Jeremiah: The Anchor Bible (New York, 1965), p. LXIX; Eduard Nielsen, Oral Tradition (London, 1954), p. 64f; but R. Kittel, Great Man and Movement in Israel (New York, 1929), p. 349, believes that Jeremiah committed directly to the paper, monologues in which Jeremiah wrote himself, whether it found readers or not.


reflections of actual experiences in his prophetic life. 1 The "Book of the law" was discovered in the eighteenth year of king Josiah. 2 "What was rediscovered," as Mendenhall says, "was not old legislation, but the basic nature of the old amphictyonic covenant." 3 To be sure, Jeremiah had some knowledge of Josiah's lawbook. 4 Jeremiah stood in a yet older tradition reaching back through Hosea to the Mosaic covenant itself. 5 The influence of the covenant idea on Jeremiah can


3 G. Mendenhall, op. cit., p. 47.


be recognized.¹

Jeremiah is familiar with the treaty-curses. Delbert R. Hillers has declared that the treaty-curses motif has most strongly influenced the Book of Jeremiah among the Old Testament.² He argues that "from the time of Jeremiah the prophets would have known curses connected with the covenant


¹R. E. Clements, Prophecy and Covenant, (London, 1966), p. 51. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel, p. 46, "The idea is often present where the word 'covenant' is absent"; F. C. Fensham, VT, XIII (1963), p. 317, "The presence of this covenant as a fundamental feature of Israel's faith would also have provided a thoroughly adequate motive for the delineation and conscious use of treaty-curses in prophetic preaching, being with Jeremiah." D. R. Hillers, Treaty-Curses and the OT, p. 82. "The idea of covenant between Yahweh and Israel is present in fully developed form by 621 B.C., the date of Josiah's reform. It was thus present to influence Jeremiah and from the time of Jeremiah with the covenant Israel and Yahweh."

Jeremiah gives the tradition of Israel's election in the exodus a position of great emphasis (Jer 2:5-7, 7:21f, 16:14f, 23:7f, 31:31-34), but he is also aware of the popular beliefs concerning Jerusalem and the Davidic house (Jer 23:5f). Cf. G. von Rad, O. T. Theology, vol. II, p. 192.

²Delbert R. Hillers has examined the significant parallels between the treaty-curses and the Book of Jeremiah. Some technical expression of "curses" are found: The dwelling-places of animals (Jer 10:22, 49:33, 51:37; Sf I A. 32-33), Devouring animals (Jer 5:6, 8:17, 12:9; Sf I A. 30-32, II A. 9), Remove of joyful sounds (Jer 7:34, 16:9, 21:10, 33:10; Sf I A. 29; Esarhadon 443-445); to eat the flesh of sun and daughter (Jer 19:9, Esarhadon 448-50), Ravishing of wives (Jer 8:10, Esarhadon 428-29), contaminated water (Jer 23:15, 9:14, 8:14, Esarhadon 521-22), The incurable wound (Jer 10:19, 14:17, 15:18, 30:12f, 46:11; Esarhadon 643-45; Baal of Tyre Treaty 1v:3-4), No burial (Jer 34:20, 7:33, 8:2, 9:21, 14:16, 16:4, 16:8, 22:19, 25:33, 36:30; Esarhadon 626-27). Cf. D. R. Hillers, Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets (Rome, 1964).
between Israel and Yahweh."

In Jer 34:18 he prophesies doom, as a result of Israel's breach of the covenant. In the case of a breach of the fundamental religious covenant, Jeremiah may have chosen appropriate, authentic covenant curses as the basis for his oracles.

Some technical terms may be noticed in the motif of "curses" in the treaty: (a) For the indictment of the breach of obligation: "break off" (Jer 11:10, 22:8-8, 31-32, 34:8; Nuwatallis and Alaksandus), "change" (Jer 2:11; Esarhaddon line 397); "go after" (Jer 2:5, 8, 7:9, 11:10; EA 136:11ff) "transgression (Jer 2:8; Esarhaddon)." For the punishment of the Lord: "to avenge" (nqm) (Jer 5:9, 29, 9:9: The Aramaic Suzerain Treaty, lines 11f.)

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1 Ibid., p. 82.
2 Cf. Gen 15:10. The covenant was shown by the ceremony of cutting up a calf, which would have been accomplished by a malediction identifying king and people with the calf and its fate. Cf. M. Noth, "Old Testament Covenant-making in the light of a Text from Mari," in The Laws in the Pentateuch, p. 108f.
4 ANETS, p. 538.
6 ANETS, p. 538.
7 J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic Suzerain Treaty from
The "literary genre" of Jer 2:4-13 has been also established firmly as the "Covenant Lawsuit" by H. B. Huffmon and further studies on this context have been added by J. Harvey and P. W. Williams. The central theme of this literary form is the rib-controversy in which Yahweh indicts His people's breach of Covenant:

they went far from me, and went after worthlessness (v. 5)

Those who handle the law did not recognize me; the ruler transgressed against me, the prophets... went after things that do not profit (v. 8).

Has a nation changed its gods? even thou they are no gods? But my people changed their glory for that which does not profit. (v. 11)

Sefire in the Museum of Beirut," CBQ, XX (1958), pp. 449f; G. Mendenhall, "God of Vengeance, Shine Forth!", The Wittenberg Bulletin XLV (1948), p. 38, says, "In two other passages of these Amarna letters the same verb means 'to punish'."

1H. B. Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," JBL., VXXVIII (1959), pp. 285-295. Huffmon found the appeal to "heaven and earth" or other nature elements as witness to the concluding of a treaty. Cf. J. Bright, Jeremiah, pp. 16-18, also understands that Jer 2 is not a single unit, but rather a series of poems with the common rib-theme; C. Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech, p. 79.

2J. Harvey, "Le 'Rib-Pattern' requisitord prophetique sur la rupture de l'Alliance," Biblica 43 (1962), pp. 172-196, provides examples of parallel material from the outside biblical literature:

Thus, Jeremiah indicted the people along lines suitable to the treaty tradition. As D. J. McCarthy says, "This is perhaps the strongest indication that the prophets were indeed concerned with the covenant, even though they avoid the use of the word." ¹

However, Jeremiah uses the treaty terminology in another way. Some technical terms may be noticed in the motif of "mutual recognition" in the treaty, that is, the protection on His vassal and the vindication on His vassal's enemies: "Not break off" (Jer 14:21; Nuwatallis and Alaksandus.)²; "to avenge" (Jer 11:20, 15:15, 46:10, 50:15, 51:36; The Aramaic Suzerain Treaty).³

In Jer 14:21 Jeremiah prayed the Lord not to break (יָשֶׁר יָשֵׁר) his covenant with his people. Israel broke the covenant already, but through the "covenantal love" (תִּשְׁמָר).

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3 J. A. Fitzmyer, CBQ, XX (1958), pp. 449ff; G. Mendenhall, "God of Vengeance, Shine Forth!", The Wittenberg Bulletin, XLV, 12 (1948), pp. 37-42, first pointed out the importance of God's action described as "vengeance". He says, "Through the action of God the enemy of God is punished, and those who trust in God are rescued, vindicated, and avenged." (p. 39); "God's action describes as 'vengeance' is simultaneously punishment and salvation." (p. 40). G. E. Right, "Reflections concerning OT Theology," in Studia Biblica et Semitica (1966), says, without mention to Mendenhall, "Nagam properly is the sole prerogative of God because it refers to the Suzerain's action over against his subjects in his role as Judge." (P. 387); E. F. Campbell, "Sovereign God," McCormick Quarterly XX (1967), pp. 173-86.
of the Lord the covenant was not abolished. The term "not to break" arose here as language appropriate for a Suzerain in relation to his vassal. This term shows the central motif of the "mutual recognition" of the covenant.

Furthermore the "mutual recognition" motif appears in the "confession" context. Jeremiah understands himself as the "man of contention" (יִרְבְּךָ וּרְעָה) par excellence.

Ah me, my mother that you bore me,
a man of strife (וָרָע) and contention (יִרְבְּךָ) to the whole land! (Jer 15:10)

Jeremiah stands before Yahweh as "God of Vengeance" and as Suzerain, and utters his יִרְבּ-controversy with Him.

Righteous art thou, 0 Lord, when I complain (וְנֵבֶל) to thee; yet I would plead my case before thee. (Jer 12:1)

Let me see thy vengeance (יִנְגָּד) upon them, for to thee I have committed my cause (יָרֵד) (Jer 11:20b, 20:12b)

Give heed to me, 0 Lord and hearken to my plea (יָרֵד). (Jer 13:19).

Take vengeance (יִנְגָּד) for me on my persecutors. (Jer 15:15b)

This יִרְבּ-controversy motif can well be understood from the point of the "mutual recognition" of the treaty. Jeremiah is firmly standing on the "mutuality" of the Covenant between Yahweh and himself as Mediator-Intercessor. In the imperative


2The head partner, in the treaty, claims absolute
form Jeremiah claims Yahweh's unfulfilled promise for this "mutual recognition": "Acknowledge (נָא) that for thy sake I bear reproach! (Jer 15:15c).

The mutual recognition is essential for the suzerain-treaties. The best example is noticed in the Treaty between Muwattalis and Alaksandus.

The one who is your enemy is also the enemy of the Sun. The one who is the enemy of the Sun, should also be your enemy.¹

This motif appears often in the ancient Near Eastern Treaties and the Old Testament.²

Jeremiah asks Yahweh whether or not Jeremiah's enemies are His enemies. If they are, Jeremiah is standing before his Protector as the head partner of the Covenant, e.g., as Israel's prophet in the office of a Mediator-Intercessor. He claims the absolute merciful protection of Yahweh according to His promise which is based on the vassal's fidelity in the vassal-treaty. By using the "mutual recognition" motif in connection with "I-Thou" of the covenant, Jeremiah stands before Yahweh as Suzerain.

Mendenhall explains this aspect of the "Mutual

faithfulness from the vassal. Cf. F. C. Fensham, VT., 13 (1963), op. cit., p. 137.


recognition" of the covenant between Yahweh and the people as follows:

The harmonization of the two covenant (i.e. the covenant of Moses and the covenant of Abraham) means that great emphasis had to be placed upon the divine forgiveness, and this becomes the foundation of the New Covenant predicted by Jeremiah. It is only this that could harmonize the fact of human breach of covenant with the divine promise to protect and preserve Israel.¹

Thus, the complete new application of notion of the "mutuality" of the covenant can be well understood only in connection with Jeremiah's prophetic office. As D. J. McCarthy says: "The prophetic 'office' has been connected with a supposed feast of the covenant in Israel."² It must, therefore, be noticed that "the covenant was also an affair of cult".³ "It was something religious and not secular, not even legalistic and moralistic. The covenant was made reaffirmed and renewal in the cult."⁴

Therefore, the question that must be dealt with is: What is the relationship of the "confessions" to the prophetic office?

¹ Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel, p. 49.
⁴ Ibid.
2. The "Confession" and Moses's Intercession

Jeremiah uses the word יְהֵ֑וֵע, in the way H. W. Robinson mentions, as referring to Yahweh's Heavenly Council and Jeremiah's understanding of the "office" of the prophets as the one who stands before the council. ¹

Jeremiah knew that he had been commissioned by Yahweh to be one of His messengers or spokesmen. ² However, this prophet is also the representative of the people, the plaintiff who challenges ( כָּא) Yahweh, or petitions Yahweh. Jeremiah has interceded indeed for the nation. ³ To intercede on behalf of worshipers was a notable aspect of the prophet's work. ⁴


⁴ A. R. Johnson, The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel (Cardiff, 1962), p. 58ff, 75. "He was not only the spokesman or messenger of Yahweh; he was also the representative of the people. Accordingly, just as the priest became the specialist in sacrifice, so the prophet was a specialist in prayer; he was peculiarly qualified to act in this way as an intercessor." R. E. Clements, Prophecy and Covenant (SBT. No. 43)(London, 1965), p. 30.
Moses was the great intercessor before Yahweh. It is quite probable that Jeremiah had in mind Moses' function as Prophet. In Jer 15:1 Jeremiah himself mentions the name of the prophets, Moses and Samuel. According to W. L. Holladay this verse shows "the heritage of which Jeremiah was conscious in the fulfillment of the demands of his own ministry."  

The story of the prophetic call of Samuel (1 Sam 3) shows evidently that "the prophet in Israel performed certain functions of the covenant mediator of the old amphictyony". In the early period the office of covenant mediator was the cult official of the annual festival at Shiloh (1 Sam 1:3, 21). When the amphictyony was breaking down under blows of the Philistines, Samuel appears and becomes the legitimate successor of the cult official. Dt 18:15-22 says that Yahweh will raise up among Israel a prophet like Moses. In Ex 20:18-20 Moses appears as the covenant mediator. Therefore, Samuel is presumably the successor of the covenant mediator like

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Moses. 1 As the covenant mediator Samuel would have performed the role of Moses in the re-enactment of the Sinai covenant. 2 Therefore we must call attention to Moses's rib-controversy with Yahweh in order to find the Ur-Bild of Jeremiah's prophetic office. In Num 11:2f (JE), an element of a personal rib is mentioned, referring to Moses' office of Intercessor. When Moses prayed to the Lord the fire of His anger abated. In v. 11ff Moses talks with the Lord about his "office". In Ex 33:12-17 (J) there is Moses' petition to Yahweh, which is understood as the renewal of the Covenant. 3 This section has the Gattung of the rib-controversy as follows:

v. 12 Introduction: Historical prologue

Moses said to the Lord:

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1 H.-J. Kraus, Worship in Israel, p.110f.

2 James Muilenburg, "The Form and Structure of the Covenant Formulations," VT, IX (1959), p. 361, says, "In a three-fold guise, as covenant representative, covenant mediator, and covenant intercessor Samuel appears to Israel and acts his prophetic office." W. L. Moran, "Review of K. Baltzer's Das Bundes formula," Biblica, 43 (1962), p. 106, explains this figure as follows: "In retaining his role as arbitrator Samuel remains in judge of the sacral law (cf. 12:23) and the mediator or the covenant."

3 It is generally recognized that vv. 12-17 to be a self-contained unity. Its original position immediately following the covenant liturgy of Ex 19-24, its dialogical character, and above all, the significance of the ל"פ for Israel's worship and faith would suggest as much. Cf. M. Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Tradition, p. 98f; G. von Rad, "The Form Critical Problem of the Hexateuch," in The Problem of the Hexateuch, p. 18.
See! (תָּאָה) thou (תָּאָה) sayest to me, 'Bring up this people'; but thou (תָּאָה) hast not let me know (תָּאָה תַּעֲמָן יִקְרָא) whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou (תָּאָה) hast said, 'I recognize you (תַּעֲמָן יִקְרָא) by name and you have indeed (תָּאָה) found favour in my eyes.

v. 13 The direct plea:

Now therefore (תָּאָה), I pray thee, if I have found favor in thy sight, show me now (תָּאָה תַּעֲמָן) thy ways that I may recognize thee (תָּאָה תַּעֲמָן) and find favor in thy sight. Consider! (תָּאָה) too that (תָּאָה) this nation is thy people.

v. 14 The answer:

And he said: "My presence will go with you I will give you rest."

vv. 15-16 The second plea:

And he said: if thy presence will not (תָּאָה תַּעֲמָן) go with me, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known (תַּעֲמָן) that I have found in thy sight, I and thy people?

Is it not in thy going with us so that we are distance, I and thy people, from all other people that are upon the face of the earth.

v. 17 The answer:

And the Lord said to Moses:

This very thing that you have spoken I will do; for you have found favor in my sight and I recognize you (תַּעֲמָן יִקְרָא) by name.

James Muilenburg also understands Ex 33:12-17 as Moses's "intercession" as follows:¹

¹James Muilenburg, "The Intercessor of the Covenant
Introduction: Depart from here! 33:1a
I. The mediator's plea and the divine response: 33:12-14
   a. The mediator's plea: 12-13
      (1) 'You have not let me know the one who will lead us' 12
      (2) 'Let me know your ways.' 13
   b. The divine response: My presence will go. 14
2. The mediator's plea and the divine response: 33:15-17
   a. The mediator's plea: 15-16
      (1) 'How will it ever be known?' 15
      (2) 'Is it not in your going with us?' 17

James Muilenburg and the present paper differ at the following points: (1) J. Muilenburg considers Ex 33:1a as
Introduction for the plea of vv. 12-17. (2) He understands v.12 as a part of the section of the plea. However, it is difficult
to accept his second point. V. 12 would be better understood as the Historical prologue motif of the treaty which this
paper upholds. He fails to see also the witness motif in this context (cf. v. 12 "See!"). If this interpretation is ac-
ceptable, especially regarding the witness motif and the Historical prologue motif inv. 12, his first point is then also
not acceptable.

Muilenburg considers v. 1a as the reference phrase for v. 12: "And Yahweh said to Moses: 'Go depart from here, you and
the people!'", but this phrase can not apply to v. 12b "But you have said: 'I know you by name.'" The reference of v. 12 must

Mediator (Exodus 33:1a, 12-17," in Words and Meanings: Essays presented to D. W. Thomas, ed. by P. R. Ackroyd and B. Lindars (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 159-181, especially p. 168, says, "it is the plea of intercession of the mediator of the covenant, the representative of Yahweh, Israel's Lord and Suzerain, on behalf of the people and Yahweh's answering assurance."
be, therefore, found in other evidence. The considerable evidence is Ex 5-7; the context of Moses' calling as Mediator in International Relationship, in which Yahweh speaks to Moses: "Let my people go" (Ex 5:1) and "I make you (יהוה) as God to Pharaoh" (Ex 7:1). The word יד and ייה are often exchangeable in connection with the idea of Yahweh's calling His vassal as Covenant-Mediator.¹

In this text the word יד (lit. "face") does indeed play a central role. This word shows the Sitz im Leben of this intercession to the cultic sphere of Israel's life. This is the plea or intercession of the mediator of the covenant, the representative of Yahweh as Suzerain. The central aim of this plea is expressed by the repetition of the liturgical motif of "find favour in...eyes" 9vv. 12c, 13a, 13c, 16b, 17c). The importance of the motif of the "favour" of the Suzerain to His vassal has been established by W. L. Moran.²

The word "see" (יהיה) is the motif of the witness. Moses calls Yahweh as witness in the imperative form of "I-Thou"

¹Cf. Gen 17:2-5 "I will make my covenant (יהיה) between you and me,...for I have appointed you (יהיה) to be the father of many nations," Gen 15:19 "I have recognized him (יהיה) that..."; Gen 22:12 "I now know (יהיה) that you fear God". In these contexts of the covenant between Yahweh and Abraham the words יזיה, יזיה, יזיה, occur in parallel. In the Hittite treaties the evidence for the exchange is shown: I, (the Sun), will know only you, Alamsandus (Treaty between Mawattaris and Alaksandus); "he named and appointed to the crown-prinship." (Esarhaddon, line 45).

relation.

"See! thou sayest to me: Bring up this people." (v. 12). The word "see" occurs in the covenant context of Sinai (Ex 19:3-6), where Israel is called as witness to the mighty act of Yahweh. It has been noticed that this witness motif has its ancient Near Eastern parallels.¹

Historical prologue refers to Yahweh's initiative of the sacred pact and the promise of blessing in the "I-Thou" form: (1) Yahweh's word (Ex 32:34, 33:1): "Thou παρακλησία sayest"; (2) Yahweh's unfulfillment of the promise: "But thou παρακλησία did not"; (3) Yahweh's special election and promise: "Thou παρακλησία have said...

The central theme of the plea is the νῆμον-controversy, in which Moses requests the "mutuality" of the Covenant and Suzerain's protection. The pleas have been uttered in the characteristic style: Both pleas open with the conditional formula "If" יָסַר יָתָא (v. 13) and יָסַר יָתָא (v. 15); (a) the first plea is expressed in the imperative form יָסַר יָתָא (b) the second plea employs the interrogative form יָסַר יָתָא

a. If...
   Let me know thy way!
   Consider! that this notion is thy people. v. 13

b. If...
   How shall it be known?
   Is it not in thy going with us? v. 16

The first answer refers to the Suzerain's protection. The phrase "My presence will go" is characteristic of the theophanic or covenant cult. The second answer gives Moses the assurance of "mutuality" in that Moses has been singled out as Yahweh's vassal: "I recognize you by name" (v. 17).

Moses presses his intercession on the initiative of the Divine recognition in order that He may grant the "mutuality" of the covenant. With reference to "mutual recognition" on the part of Suzerain and vassal the Hebrew verb יִהְיֶה occurs six times in Moses' plea.

Two of these occurrences refer to Yahweh's recognition of Moses as Mediator: "I recognize you by name" once refers to Sinai (v. 12) and once to its renewal (v. 17). Three occurrences refer to Moses' recognition of Yahweh as Suzerain (vv. 12, 13 "twice"). One reference points to the mutual relation (v. 16).

In Moses' rib-controversy with Yahweh the verb יִהְיֶה is, therefore, used as the technical term for indictment of the unfulfillment of the "mutuality". Moses is firmly standing on the "mutuality" of the covenant between Yahweh and himself as Mediator-Intercessor. This petition of Moses as Mediator seems to be the original form for other Covenant lawsuits with Yahweh as found: David's plea, Solomon's prayer, Ezekiel's dialogue and in the Psalmist's voice. In all these covenant

1 Cf. above Ch. II.
lawsuit the Hebrew verb יִשָׁנַה does indeed play a central role.

Therefore, it is probable that Jeremiah preferred traditional and inherited forms and expressions to those which were but private and individual, i.e., theGattung of Covenant lawsuit for his rib-controversy with Yahweh, in like manner to Moses.

To conclude: it appears that Jeremiah's confession could be defined as the Covenant lawsuit with Yahweh as follows:

(1) Jeremiah's confession is regarded as the authentic reflection of his prophetic office. The confession should be interpreted rather in its character as rib-controversy, than as individual lament.

(2) Jeremiah is standing in the tradition of Israelite covenant religion. He knew the treaty-curses. He uses the "mutuality" of the Covenant as the basis for his prophetic oracle. He utilizes not only the terminology of treaty-curses, but also the literary genre itself of the rib-controversy of treaties.

(3) Jeremiah understands himself as the "man of strife" ( נָרָא וְיִשָּׁנַה) and "man of contention" ( לַיִּשָּׁנַה וְיִשָּׁנַה) (v. 15:10). He also understands his prophetic office like that of Samuel and Moses as Mediator-Intercessor (v. 15:1). He would have performed the role of Moses in the re-enactment of the Sinai Covenant and stands before Yahweh as "God of Vengeance", as Suzerain.
Exodus 33:12-17, Moses' petition, is considered as the Ur-Gattung of Jeremiah's confession. Moses's intercession shows the rib-controversy with Yahweh, in which Moses presses his plea on the initiative of the Suzerain recognition in order that He may grant Suzerain's absolute merciful "favour" to His vassal. Ex 33:12-17 shows the Covenant lawsuit. The central theme of the plea is to stress the divine assurance of the "mutuality" of the Covenant.

The affinity is also noticed between Moses' petition and other Covenant lawsuits (i.e., David's prayer, Solomon's prayer, The Covenant Songs (Ps 40, 96) and Ezekiel's dialogue with Yahweh). It is also shown that the Hebrew verb ἀρίστα does indeed play a central role in these Covenant Lawsuits with Yahweh. The word ἀρίστα is used always in connection with the central theme of rib-controversy concerning "mutuality" of the Covenant.

The affinity between Jeremiah's confession and Moses' petition suggests that Jeremiah's confession should be interpreted in the traditional framework of rib-controversy or Covenant lawsuit with Yahweh. It must be required that the Hebrew word ἀρίστα serves as the key term for the Covenant lawsuit motif. By using this word Jeremiah affirms that Yahweh is Suzerain, God of Vengeance. Jeremiah claims the "mutuality" of the Covenant with Yahweh and himself as Mediator-Intercessor. This conviction will be examined in the following chapter.
CHAPTER IV

THE CONTEXT


v. 10 Introduction:

Ah me, my mother, that you bore me,
a man of strife and contention
to the whole land!

I have not lent, nor have I borrowed
yet all of them curse me.

v. 11 The Historical Prologue:

Thou hast said, O Yahweh:

"Truly, I will greatly strengthen you;
Truly, I will bring the enemy to your feet,
in the time of distress
and in the time of disaster."

vv. 15-18 The direct plea:

a. First plea in the imperative form (v. 15)

Thou knowest!

Remember me, Yahweh, Take note of me!
and avenge me of those that harass me!
Do not take me away through thy patience!
Acknowledging! For thy sake I bear reproach.

b. The more detailed conditions (vv. 16-17)

Thy words were found, and I ate them:
and thy word become to me a joy,
For I am called by thy name,
O Yahweh, God of Hosts.

I did not sit in the company of merrymakers,
and enjoy the delight to my heart.
I sat alone, because thy hand was upon me.
For thou hadst filled me with rage.
c. Second plea in the interrogative form (v. 18)

Why is my pain unceasing,
My wound incurable, refusing to be healed?
Ah truly thou art a disappointing stream to me,
like water that failed.

vv. 19-20 Answer:

Therefore, thus says Yahweh:

"If you return, I will restore you,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious,
and not what is worthless,
you shall be my mouth.
They shall turn to you,
but you shall not turn to them.

"And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze:
they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you.
For I am with you
to save you and deliver you,"
says Yahweh

2. Exegesis

v. 10a Ah me, my mother, that you bore me,
a man of strife and contention
to the whole land!

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The section of vv. 12-14 are not clear, and may be omitted. Vv. 13-14 are generally regarded as interpolated, because the verses are repeated in Ch. 17:3b-4. V. 12 is difficult to translate. Rudolph considers the verse a corruption of 17:1.

A. Weiser, Der Prophet Jeremia: ATD (Göttingen, 1952), p. 130f.
P. Volz, Der Prophet Jeremiah (Tübingen, 1930), p. 132.
"Ah me" frequently introduces the accusation, i.e., a participial sentence that addresses woe to the one doing the evil. However, in Jeremiah usually introduces a vocative, as in this case.

"A man of strife and contention" is Mt יִרְגָּשׁ יְבָרְךָ וַיְסָרָה יִרְגָּשׁ Jeremiah understands himself as one who stands in the rib-controversy. The root of יִרְגָּשׁ denotes a process at law: the verb יִרְגָּשׁ means "judge"; the noun means "cause, plea" or "strife, contention". The word יִרְגָּשׁ is the Covenant lawsuit term. "Man of strife" ( תָּרְגִּשׁ וַיְסָרָה ) occurs in Judges 12:1 "I was very much the legal adversary, I and my people against the sons of Ammon." Jephthah describes himself as תָּרְגִּשׁ Therefore, the term תָּרְגִּשׁ is used in reference to a complaint for breach of international law.

v. 10b I have not lent, nor have I borrowed yet all of them curse me.

"Yet" ( וַיֵּעֵשׁ ) is added, for יִרְגָּשׁ seems to be lost by haplography with יִרְגָּשׁ.

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V. 11 is badly preserved. There have been two kinds of interpretation about v. 11. First, most commentators read the first word as "So be it!(=#{)) with LXX, and this phrase as Jeremiah's petitioning words as Intercessor. RSV reads:

"So let it be O Lord!
if I have not entreated thee for their good,
if I have not pleaded with thee
on behalf of the enemy
in the time of trouble?
and in the time of distress!


2 Read with LXX. MT: ננכנ

3 כָּלַ֖א is an oath formula. This formula is the special Gattung concerning the commission of Messengers in Yahweh's service. By this formula Jeremiah protests to Yahweh that he has been faithful in the discharge of his office as vassal. (Cf. Blank, HUGA, op. cit., p. 348, Fn. 24; N. Habel, "The Form and Significance of the Call Narrative," ZAW, 77 (1965), pp. 297-323. This formula is an important motif of the Covenant context. (Cf. J. Muilenburg, MT, IX (1959), p. 255.

4 כִּלַָ֖א (Piel of the root לָאַ֖ה) "I serve thee": MT. The word לָאַ֖ה occurs in Ex 24:13, 33:11 (E), Num 11:28 (J), Josh 1:1 (D), concerning Joshua as chief assistant to Moses.


6 MT כִּלְכַּלָּה; Read as כִּלְכַּלָּה (Cf. Rudolph, Weiser, Bright).

7 MT כִּלְכַּלָּה; Rudolph and Weiser and Bright read as כִּלְכַּלָּה.
Thus, it is shown here that Jeremiah understands his suffering as the Mediator suffering servant, as the prophetic office. Jeremiah protests to Yahweh that he has been faithful in the discharge of his office as Mediator-Intercessor.

Second, some scholars\(^1\) understand v. 11 as Yahweh's answer. The crucial point is the first word of v. 11a: MT. is יְהֹוָה הַיָּדָם "Yahweh said". What follows is seen as the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah. "As it stands in Hebrew," as E. Gerstenberger says, "our text gives no evidence whatsoever that it might be speaking about a prophet or prophetic office".\(^2\)

The New English Bible holds this understanding as follows:

The Lord answered,
But I will greatly strengthen you;
in time of distress and in time of disaster
I will bring the enemy to your feet.\(^3\)

Scholars, who hold this interpretation about v. 11, consider vv. 10-11 as an independent unit of "the oldest elements in the composition of Jer 15:10-21".\(^4\)

However, from the point of the Gattung of the "confession",

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\(^2\)E. Gerstenberger, ibid., p. 402.


v. 11 can be better understood as the Historical prologue of the Covenant Lawsuit. V. 11 is Yahweh's word, but not an answer. V. 11 is Yahweh's word, but Jeremiah's quotation of it. MT. פָּלַלְךָל may read as נָתַן or רָמָךְ or רָעֵךְ in the sense of "Thou hast said, O Yahweh!" (Cf. Ex 33:12, Moses' petition).

The exact reference of v. 11 is not clear, but this phrase presumably refers to Jeremiah's calling to the prophetic office in the chapter 1:

I have appointed you ( יְהִי) a prophet to the nation. (v. 5)

I had made you ( יְהִי) today, a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land,

They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you. (vv. 18-19)

The word יְהִי occurs as a vassal-treaty term in Esarhaddon: "he named and appointed to the crown-princeship,"¹ and also in the context of Moses's calling as the Lord's vassal in the sphere of International Relationship: "Yahweh said to Moses: 'I make you ( יְהִי) a god for the pharaoh'," (Ex 7:1).²

What follows is the promise of Yahweh to Jeremiah. In v. 11, the Historical prologue, Jeremiah reviews the relations

¹Line 45; of ANETs, p. 535.

²See above Chapter 1, 2, "The root יְהִי in the Lebenskries of International Relationships."
of the Suzerain with His vassal and declares His benefaction and His vindications. V.11 may read as follows:

Thou hast said, O Yahweh! "Truly I will greatly strengthen you; Truly, I will bring the enemy to your feet, in the time of distress and in the time of disaster.

The word "enemy" occurs in the important phrase with regard to the "mutuality" of the Covenant between Yahweh as Suzerain and His people as vassal:

then I will be an enemy (מְמֵיהוּ) to your enemies

So perish all thine enemies (מְמֵיהוּ) O Lord!

Moses said, "Arise, O Lord, and let thy enemies (מְמֵיהוּ) be scattered;"

Jeremiah is here firmly standing on the "mutuality" of the Covenant between Yahweh and himself as Mediator.  

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1 מְמֵיהוּ is an emphatic affirmative formula (Cf. Driver-Briggs, H. & E. Lexicon, op. cit., p. 50); "Verily" (Driver, op. cit., p. 89); "Wahrlich" (Baumgartner, op. cit., p. 60), Cf. Num 14:35, 2 King 9:26, Josh 14:9, Is 5:19, 14:24, Jer 49:20.


3MT. מְמֵיהוּ means "I cause one to entreat to you". Cf. Driver-Briggs, op. cit., p. 803; Driver, op. cit., p. 89. "I will cause the enemy to make supplication unto thee"; Gerstenberg, op. cit., p. 402. "I will intervene on your behalf"; Baumgartner, op. cit., p. 60f "helfend zur Seite treten" i.e. "Ich stehe dir bei". He also reads MT. מְמֵיהוּ as מְמֵיהוּ כְּפַךְ "du bist mein Freund!"
Intercessor, as Moses did. (Cf. Ex 33:12).

The "mutual recognition" is essential for the Suzerain-treaties. The Historical prologue always emphasizes this "mutual recognition" motif.¹ The Suzerain assures his vassal, in the case of rebellion against the vassal in the treaty Muwattalis and Alaksandus:

As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you, even so is he an enemy to the Sun.²

V. 15 Remember me,³ Yahweh, Take note of me!⁴
and avenge me of those that harass me!
Do not take me away⁵ through thy patience!
You know! For thy sake I bear reproach.

¹In the Suzerain-treaties the "mutual obligation" of both parties of the bond is demanded. Protection against foreign enemies is demanded of the vassal: "He who is an enemy of the Sun, shall also be an enemy with you." (Treaty between Suppiliuma and Aziras of Amurru. ANET., p. 529; the vassal makes his promise to the Suzerain: "To the enemy of my Lord I am hostile, (and) with the friend of my Lord (I am) friendly." (Treaty between Sulliliuma and Nqmadu, JBL. LXXXIX (1970), op. cit., p. 182f).

²Cf. H. B. Huffman, BASOR, No. 131 (1966), op. cit., p. 32.

³The word  יְבִנֵי is a covenant term. Cf. Ex 2:24, "God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob"; Mic 6:5.

⁴Literary "visit graciously" Cf. Jer 27:22, 19:10, 32:5, Ps 106:4 (יה יְבִנֵי)

⁵Verb יָנֵב is a court term in the sense of the sentence of guilty. Cf. Is 53:8 "From imprisonment and from sentence he was taken away."

⁶But read as the noun יָנֵב in the sense of "no length of your anger" with Volz, Weiser, Rudolph, and Bright. Driver, op. cit., p. 90, understands this phrase as through thy mercy towards my enemies".

100
V. 15 is the direct plea or the rib-controversy with Yahweh, in which Jeremiah requests the "mutuality" of the Covenant and the Suzerain's protection. This phrase has three entwining elements in the imperative form: (a) Suzerain's protection: "Remember me..."; (b) Suzerain's vindication with punishment on enemy: "And avenge me..."; (c) Suzerain's acknowledgement of his faithfullness: "Know! For thy sake I...".

"Avenge" (אֹרֵב) is a technical term for the "mutuality" of Treaty-curses. This word is used in the sense of "vindication" on the basis of a standard of the Covenant relationship (a) Yahweh can vindicate by punishing Israel's enemies for being too puffed up; (b) Yahweh can bring the "vindication of the Covenant" upon Israel for her failure to keep the Covenant.

Jeremiah stands before Yahweh the "God of Vengeance".

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1Cf. The Aramaic suzerain treaty lines 11-12: "if they kill me you must come and avenge my blood from the hand of my enemies; and your son must come (and) must avenge the blood of my son from his enemies; and the son of your son must come (and) avenge the blood of the son of my son and your offspring must come (and) avenge the blood of my offspring." (CBQ XX, 1958, p. 450, ANET p. 202); cf. G. Mendenhall, "God of Vengeance, Shine Forth!" op. cit.; E. F. Campbell, "Sovereign God," op. cit., p. 173ff.


4G. Mendenhall, "God of Vengeance", op. cit., p. 37ff.
and as Suzerain. Jeremiah claims Yahweh's vindication with punishment on his enemies, because of the "mutuality" of the Covenant. Jeremiah uses this word in other confessions:

Let me see thy vengeance (יָכְבַּד) upon them, for to thee have I committed my curse.
(Jer 11:20b, 20:12)

In the doom oracle of Babylon he utters Yahweh's indictment in the same way like the Covenant lawsuit of Dt 32.1

Behold, I will plead your cause and take vengeance for you (יָכְבַּד בִּיּוֹתֶעַתָּא)
(Jer 51:36a)

I will take vengeance on my adversaries, and will require those who hate me,
(Dt 32:41)

Jeremiah claims also Yahweh's acknowledgement of his faithfulness for the obligation: "Acknowledge! For thy sake I bear reproach." (v. 15c) The same idea appears in the Covenant lawsuit with Yahweh and Hittite treaty:

For it is for thy sake that I have bore reproach... Thou knowest my reproach...
(Ps 69:8, 20)
"they shall slay [his enemy and] take revenge upon him for the sake of the Hatti land."

The word "know" (יָכְבַּד) is here also used to express his indictment of Yahweh, because of Suzerain's unfulfilled promise. By using this term as a technical term for the "mutual recognition" Jeremiah understands Yahweh as his Suzerain, i.e.,

1G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God", op. cit.
2Cf. Ch II, 2 (b), (iii).
as protector.

v. 16 Thy words were found, and I ate them, and thy word become to me a joy.
For I am called by thy name, O Yahweh, God of Hosts.

The phrase "I am called by thy name" denotes not only the invoking of Yahweh in particular cultic acts but also the normal idiom for engaging informal worship. This basic idea is in connection with the promised theophany to Moses in Ex 33:19f: "I will also call out the name 'Yahweh' in front of thee."

Therefore, this phrase may be used in connection with the covenant making. This phrase indicates the other aspect of the prophetic function rather than the spokesman or messenger of Yahweh. Jeremiah is called by the 'Name' of Yahweh for not only was he the spokesman or messenger of Yahweh; he was also the representative of the people, i.e., the Covenant Intercessor.

1 Cf. Jer 7:10, 11, 14, 30, 32:34; 34:15, 14:9, 25:21; Amos 9:12, Deut 28:10, 1 Kings 8:43, Is 63:19, Dan 9:18f.


3 Cf Ex 33:12 "I recognize you by name". In Moses's petition this phrase functions as a technical term for the covenant making and its renewal act.

4 Johnson, op. cit., pp. 58f, 75.

V. 17. I did not sit in the company of merrymakers and enjoy the delight to my heart. I sat alone, because thy hand was upon me, For thou hadst filled me with rage.

V. 17 seems to be a Treaty-curse motif. The removal of all joyful sounds from their midst comes to the unfaithful vassal:

Nor may the sound of the lyre be heard in Arpad and among its people. (Sefire I A. line 29).¹

May his peasant in the field sing no work-song.²

(Treaty of Ashamirari V. of Assyria)

Jeremiah expresses the same thought:

I will make to cease from the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the voice of the bride-groom, and the voice of the bride. (Jer 7:34, 16:9, 25:10, 33:11)

"I sat alone" seems to be understood in both cases:

one is "a description of the seclusion which results from being punished by God,"³ the other is the expression that he has only ר generado with Yahweh.⁴

"Rage" (נִי) is the anger for evil of his people.

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¹Cited from D. R. Hillers, Treaty-Curses and the OT Prophets, op. cit., p. 57.

²ANETS., p. 533.


⁴Pedersen, Israel, I-II, op. cit., p. 307. "The Israelites have a term for such a particularly intimate union of souls shared by close friends; they call it סדד." Jeremiah understands the prophetic office as the one who stands before the Heavenly Council. Cf. H. W. Robinson, JTS XLV (1944), p. 151f; F. M. Cross, JNES. XII (1953), pp. 274f; Jer. 23:18, 22.
(cf. Is 30:27; Jer 10:10, Ps 69:25). "Thy hand was upon me" expresses Yahweh's punishment, i.e., "it simply states that God is the author of the suffering."¹ (Cf. Jer 51:25, Is. 31:3).

V. 18 Why is my pain unceasing, My wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Ah, truly thou art a disappointing stream to me, like waters that failed.

It is the peak of Jeremiah's rib-controversy with Yahweh. Once Jeremiah had called Yahweh "the fountain of living water." (Jer 2:13). Here, he complains that Yahweh is a "disappointing stream." Jeremiah has been faithful in the discharge of his office as His vassal. Yahweh seems, however, to have forgotten His promise of protection.

John Gray observes concerning the formation of the first communities in Palestine-Syria:

The Canaanite settlements familiar in the historical period originated generally in the beginning of the Bronze Age (c. 3000) on sites which were easily defended on some rockspur or on some eminence in the plains, always by a reliable spring of water.²

"A disappointing stream" ( הָיוֹתָה יְיָב) means literally "a deceitful", "a stream that goes dry in summer and cannot be depended upon for water."³ "Ah, truly Thou art"

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¹ E. Gerstenberger, JBL 82 (1963), p. 400, fn. 29.
³ John Bright, Jeremiah: The Anchor Bible, op. cit., p. 110.
(אֲשֶׁר בִּעַלְבּוֹ) is MT: "will Thou be" (כִּי בִּעֲלָתוֹ). ¹ Like v. 10a it may be understood as the "Abschluss der Klage."²

For he here accuses Yahweh of failing him.

V. 18a reflects the Treaty-curses motif. The idea of the "incurable wound" appears often in the Book of Jeremiah³ (Jer 10:19, 14:17, 19, 15:18, 30:12f, 46:11). Jer 30:12f is particularly close in thought to the treaty-curses:

Your hurt is incurable, and your wound is grievous.
There is none to uphold your cause,
no medicine for your wound,
no healing for you.

May there be no wax, oil, zinzaru or cedar balsam available to put on your wounds.
(ESARHADON, lines 643f)⁴

May Gula, the great physician, [put illness and weariness in] your [hearts], an unhearing sore in your body, bathe [in your own blood as if in water].⁵
(Baal of Tyre Treaty, iv:3-4)

Jeremiah understands his suffering as Yahweh's curse upon him. He claims Yahweh's unfaithfulness to the Covenant obligation and asks Yahweh's absolute merciful protection as Suzerain, because of the mutual recognition of the Covenant.

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¹RSV reads like this.


³D. R. Hillers, Treaty-Curses and the OT Prophets, op. cit., p. 64f.

⁴ANETS, p. 540.

⁵ANETS, p. 534.
V. 19 Therefore, thus says Yahweh:
   'If you return, I will restore you
and you shall stand before me
If you utter what is precious
and not what is worthless
you shall be my mouth
They shall turn to you,
but You shall not turn to them.

'Therefore' occurs twenty-two times in Jeremiah.¹ This
word indicates that the following words are Yahweh's revealed
judgment upon the matter.² This introduction originally
legitimized a messenger. Thus, v. 19 is the answer of Yahweh
for Jeremiah's indictment.

In these announcements, the notice of punishment includes
the "I" speech (the "I" is Yahweh). This "I" speech originates
in the announcement of salvation:³ "I will restore you", i.e.,
the renewal of making the Covenant.

"If you return" indicates the announcement
of demand for the Covenantal fidelity. Verb יְבָנֵי is used
here as the covenant terminology.⁴ יְבָנֵי means a change of

¹Jer 5:14, 6:21, 7:20, 9:6, 14, 11:11, 14:15, 18:15,
22:18, 23:2, 15, 30, 38, 25:8, 26:16, 29:32, 34:17, 19, 36:30,
42:15, 44:11. Cf. E. Gerstenberger, JBL, 82 (1963), p. 397,
fn. 14, "often marks the juncture between prophetic reflection
and the divine word."; Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic
Speech, p. 149f, understands this formula as the introduction
form of an announcement for the parts of the judgments speech
to individuals; J. W. Ross, "The Prophet as Yahweh's Messenger",
op. cit., p. 98f; Blank, Jeremiah: Man and Prophet (Cincinnati,

²E. Gerstenberger, JBL 82 (1963), p. 397.

³Westermann, op. cit., p. 158.

⁴One of the 48 instances of covenantal יְבָנֵי in the Book
loyalty on the part of Israel turning toward Yahweh as Suzerain.\(^1\)

The announcement "I will restore you" (\(\pi\ Tau\(\underline{\text{w}}\)\)) means the renewal of making the Covenant. These words may be read as "I accept you back into the Covenant".\(^2\) Therefore, the words "you shall stand before Me" occur in parallel with these words. "To stand before any one", C. R. Driver says, "is to be his servant."\(^3\)

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1 Cf. William L. Holladay, *The Root SIBH in the Old Testament* (Leiden, E. J. Brill 1958), remarks about the covenantal usage: "Now of the 48 instances of covenantal subh in Je, there is agreement among Nowickel, Rudolph, Hyatt and the present writer as to the source (i.e., either Jrm [i.e., Nowickel's "A"] or Dts [i.e., "C"] of 29 of these instances, and no effort will be made here to display the evidence for assignment to source for these 'clear-cut' instances. They are: Jrm--ii 19, iii 1 (2), 19, 22 (1) (2) (3), iv 1 (1) (2), v e, 6, viii 4 (1) (2), 5 (1) (2) (3), 6, xvi 7, 19 (1) (2), xxxii 14; Dts--xi 10, xviii 8, 11, xxv 5, xxxii 40, xxxiv 15, 16 (1) xxxv 15, xliv 5 (p. 129)."

Holladay explains v. 19 in the following way: "Verse 19 (1) is Qal 10b without the prepositional phrase in the technical meaning 'repent.' Verses 19 (2) is the first example of the hiphil which we have encountered in the corpus of covenantal subh--Hiphil 11a (1) 'accept (Israel) back into the covenant' (not, nota bene, 'make (Israel) repent'). The last two examples of subh in the verse are, necessarily to say, no distinction in the definitions in the mind of Jeremiah. This verse is a remarkable example of the result of Jeremiah's brooding over the word subh (p. 131)."

2 Ibid., Cf. Treaty between Suppliluliumas & Mattiwa, *ANET*, p. 206; if you, Mattiwa, the prince, and (you) the Hurrians, fulfill this treaty and (this) oath, may the gods protect you...May the Mitanni country return to the place which it occupied before".

occurs in Jer 23:18: "For who among them has stood in the council of Yahweh" (אֶלִיְיַו אִישׁ בְּכִלָּא צוֹאָר יָהֵה), and 23:22: "But if they had stood in My council" (אֶלִיְיַו אִישׁ בְּכִלָּא צוֹאָר יָהֵה). Undoubtedly Jeremiah claims that his ultimate authority as Yahweh's messenger is to be found in the Divine council.

Therefore, these words mean the re-calling his prophetic office. Yahweh as Suzerain makes covenant with Jeremiah as his vassal.

may refer to Ex 20:3 in the Decalogue, in which the covenant God, Who speaks in the first person, demands: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me (אֶלִיְיַו אִישׁ בְּכִלָּא צוֹאָר יָהֵה)."

v. 20 And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze: they will fight against you but they shall not prevail over you for I am with you to save you and deliver you.

This verse is the announcement of renewal of making the Covenant. The words "I am with you" (אֶלִיְיַו אִישׁ בְּכִלָּא צוֹאָר יָהֵה) are the key words. This form is the poetical formulation of the ancient oath. Using this form Yahweh reassures Moses.

This form occurs in the context of Moses' צְבָא as the motif of the sentence of the renewal of making the Covenant.

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1 Cf. Judges 6:16 "I am indeed with you" (אֶלִיְיַו אִישׁ בְּכִלָּא צוֹאָר יָהֵה); John 1:5; This full phrase is unique to Jer 1:8, 19, 41:11, 30:11.

2 John Gray, Joshua, Judges and Ruth, op. cit., p. 298.

3 Ex 33:14 "My presence will go with you"; and also this form occurs in Ex 3:1-12, the theophany of Horeb. Especially, v. 12 "I will be with you". In Ex 4:11-16, the
The characteristic usage of this form in Jeremiah indicates quite possible a view that Jeremiah understands his prophetic office as that of Moses.  

This form appears concerning the calling to the prophetic office in both Moses and Jeremiah, and also concerning the renewal of the Covenant making: Yahweh as Suzerain and Prophet as His vassal.

"And I will make you " (כִּי גוֹ�נֵנֶךָ). The verb קֵנֶךָ is a covenant term and here occurs in the form of the waw consecutive in the first person. As U. Casto says, the waw consecutive verb is especially connected to "God's liberation", which the "mutual recognition" is based on. This phrase is connected precisely to Yahweh's renewal act of the covenant between Yahweh and Jeremiah, the prophet.

calling of Moses, this form occurs twice connected with the "mouth" i.e., the Covenant Mediator.

v. 12 "I will be with your mouth" נָדִיר וְנַשְׁמָתְךָ
v. 15 "I will be with your mouth נָדִיר וְנַשְׁמָתְךָ and with his mouth" נָדִיר וְנַשְׁמָתְךָ

Undoubtedly here this form is used concerning the Covenant-making between Yahweh and Moses.

1Cf. Jer 1:8, 19, 15:20b, 42:11, and 30:11. The words "a fortified wall of bronze" refers to the first calling of Jeremiah (Jer 1:18), and appears with the form "I will be with you" in both sections.

2It may be interesting that the reactions of the two prophets to the call of Yahweh indicate the same manner:
Jer 1:6 כִּי אֶל עֵדֵר כִּי צֶּרֶר קַנְכִּי
Ex 4:10 כִּי אֶל עֵדֵר כִּי צֶּרֶר קַנְכִּי

3(Esarhaddon, line 45, ANETS, p. 535); Alalah Tablets II. 30f. Treaty between Hiram-Solomon. (1 King 5:17-26) Engl. 3-12 Cf. above, p. 36; The covenant between Yahweh and Abrahm. (Gen 17:5)

4U. Casto, Commentary on the Book of Exodus, p. 80.
This phrase can compare with Jeremiah's first calling to the prophetic office (cf. Jer 1:5, 18). Further, it stands in parallel with the contexts of Moses's calling as Mediator-vassal in the sphere of International Relationship (cf. Ex 7:1), and the covenant between Yahweh and Abraham (cf. Gen 17:5) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Text Reference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jer 15:20</td>
<td>1:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>Ex 7:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 17:5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Problem: v. 15a The form "Thou knowest".

Text critical studies have indicated different opinions concerning the first two words בָּנֵךְ בַּעָלָה in v. 15a. Recently E. Gerstenberger asserts the opinion that the words, "thou knowest", possibly were inserted after the Greek version had been made; then these words must be stricken from the context. For LXX omits these two words.¹

Many commentators, however, keep these two words within the context by replacing them. There are three kinds of opinion concerning such a shift: (1) read it after v. 11:²

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¹E. Gerstenberger, JBL. 82, op. cit., p. 399.
²Cf. Duhm, KAT, op. cit., p. 135, reads v. 15a and the first line of v. 15a with v. 12, before v. 12; "Du selbst weisstes, Jahwe," and omits vv. 13-14; Cornill, op. cit., p. 196.
(2) read it after v. 12a; \(^1\) (3) read it after v. 10. \(^2\)

Common characteristics among them could be pointed out in the following way: commentators understand the first two words of v. 15a in connection with the section of vss. 10-11 (or -12). By these two words Jeremiah expresses his faith in God's knowledge. Yahweh knows his life which is described in vv. 10-11. Therefore, many commentators read these two words "thou knowest it".

However, Walter Baumgartner considers these words a possible opening phrase of the section v. 15-18, rather than a secondary connection of the two complaints, vv. 10-11 and vv. 15-18. \(^3\) This interpretation of Baumgartner is rejected by Gerstenberger. \(^4\) But it seems to be worthwhile to reconsider reads v. 15a and 15b altogether, after v. 11: "Du weisst es, Jahwe," and omits vv. 12-14. He denotes the section of vv. 12-15a may be parallel in Ch. 7:3-4; Rudolph, HAT, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 96, reads the "thou knowest" immediately after v. 11: "Du weisst es!" and omits vv. 12-14; Blank, HUCH, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 349 and Jeremiah, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 110f, reads it after v. 11: "You know of it", and considers the words "thou knowest" follows immediately after v. 11; Bright, The Anchor Bible, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 106f, reads "Ah, but thou knowest!"

\(^1\) Cf. Volz, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 134f, read it with v. 12 as the useful expression of the innocence of the prophet; Leslie, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 143, reads with v. 12: "I have broken iron and bronze, thou knowest"; Weiser, \textit{ATD op. cit.}, p. 130 reads v. 15 altogether after v. 12: "Du weisst es!" and omits vv. 13-14; Hyatt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 941, reads after v. 12.

\(^2\) Giesebrecht, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 77.

\(^3\) Walter Baumgartner, \textit{Die Klagegedichte des Jeremia}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 33.

\(^4\) Gerstenberger, \textit{JBL}, 82, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 77.
Baumgartner's opinion. 1

Through the exegetical study above the context defined clearly as the traditional form of the ḳib-controversy or the Covenant Lawsuit with Yahweh in which Jeremiah claims Yahweh's renewal of the Covenant: Yahweh as Suzerain and Jeremiah as His vassal.

The section vv. 19-20 is the answer for Jeremiah's indictment. This section is the judgment (i.e. sentence) upon Jeremiah in the Covenant lawsuit. But at the same time this sentence means the announcement of salvation, i.e., the renewal of making the Covenant. The emphasis is undoubtedly put on the latter in the following way: "I accept you back into the Covenant" (v. 19); "You shall stand before me" (v. 19) as Mediator; and "I am with you" (v. 20) as Suzerain, as Protector.

In the framework of the ḳib-controversy, v. 11 can be better understood as the Historical prologue. V. 11 is Yahweh's word according to MT. V. 11 is Yahweh's word, but Jeremiah's quotation of it. In v. 11 Jeremiah reviews the "mutual recognition" motif of the relation of the Suzerain with His vassal. The Historical prologue always emphasizes the "mutual recognition" in the Suzerain-treaties:

1C. R. Driver, The Book of Prophet Jeremiah, op. cit., p. 90, simply reads with Mt; Most recently, R. G. Reventlow, Liturgie und prophetisches Ich bei Jeremia (Tübingen, 1963), p. 219, agrees with Baumgartner's opinion.
As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you, even so is he enemy to the sun. 1

The idea that Suzerain assures his vassal is reflected in the following sections:

Then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and an adversary to your adversaries. (Ex 23:22)

I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse. (Gen 12:3)

In the same way Jeremiah quotes Yahweh's promise:

"Truly, I will greatly strengthen you; Truly, I will bring the enemy to your feet, (Jer 15:11)

Thus Jeremiah understands that Yahweh is Suzerain.

V. 11 is the fundamental basis for Jeremiah's rib-controversy with Yahweh.

The section vv. 15-18 is the indictment by Jeremiah.

The direct plea to Yahweh has been uttered in the same style as Moses' petition: First, in the imperative form: "Remember..., Take note..., Avenge me, Do not take..., Acknowledge!" (v. 15); Cf. "Let me know... Consider...!" (Ex 33:13); Second, in the interrogative form: "Why...? My wound...?" (v. 18); Cf. "How...? "Is it not...? (Ex 33:16)

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1 Treaty between Muwattallis and Âlaksandus, Cf. H. B. Huffmon, BASOR. No. 181 (1966), op. cit., p. 32; F. C. Fensham, VT., 13 (1963), op. cit., p. 140; Cf. the demand of the vassal: "He who is an enemy of the Sun, shall also be an enemy with you" (Treaty between Suppiliuma and Aziru of Amurru, ANET., p. 529); The vassal's promise: "To the enemy of my Lord I am hostile, (and) with the friend of my Lord (I am) friendly." (Treaty between Sulliliuma and Nigmadu, Nougayrol, PRU. IV, op. cit., p. 49, and J. H. Tigay, JBL., LXXIX (1970), op. cit., p. 182f.
The word ئـت does indeed play a central role in Jeremiah's plea: "Acknowledge! For thy sake I bear reproach." (v. 15) Here, the verb ئـت functions as a technical term for indictment of the unfulfillment of the "mutuality" of the Covenant, in the same way that it does in Moses' petition.

The first two words ئـت نـآ of v. 15a can be better read within the rib-controversy with Yahweh. Syntactically, the subject is Yahweh, but the speaker is Jeremiah himself. Jeremiah calls Yahweh directly "Thou!" in the characteristic "I-Thou" motif of the Suzerain-treaties.

Based on the motif of the "mutual recognition" of the Suzerain-treaties, the formula ئـت نـآ introduces Jeremiah's plea and claim of His unfulfillment of the "mutuality" of the Covenant, His absolute merciful protection as the Suzerain, His vengeance on his enemies, and finally His renewal of the Covenant.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

From the above examination of how מַעְבָּדָּא functions as the key term for the mutual understanding of Divine confrontation in Jeremiah's confession, there can be established the following two points: (a) מַעְבָּדָּא is a technical term for the renewal of the covenant, and (b) the context of Jer 15:10-11, 1520 is the Gattung of the rib-controversy with Yahweh.

(a) מַעְבָּדָּא

(1) Recent philological investigations concerning the primary sense of the Hebrew מַעְבָּדָּא have established that the verb מַעְבָּדָּא is shown as a flexible word, having a multiplicity of meaning in the OT, but basic to all these usages is the common characteristic of a personal relationship. However, philological investigations failed to discover the differentiation of the Lebenskreis1 in which this verb originally functioned.

New light has been shed on this unanswered problem by


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the recovery of ancient Near Eastern Treaty Texts. These have shown that "to know" is used in the Lebenskreis of International Relationships over a wide range of the ancient world of the period from 15th century B.C. to 12th century B.C.

According to H. B. Huffman¹ this usage of "to know" is illustrated by materials in Hittite, in Akkadian, and in Ugaritic. Albrecht Goetze² has shown by his further study the importance of differentiation between Hittite šek-/šak "to know" and šek-/šak/ with -za "(legally) to recognize". G. Gilula³ found Egyptian parallels to Jer 1:4-5 and demonstrated the Egyptian evidence of "to know" as the legal technical term for "recognition" of the king. To these above instances, this paper added one evidence from the Ugaritic material: Ugaritic idu is shown as the treaty term: "without acknowledgement of the king" refers to the vassal's transgression.⁴

Thus, the verb "to know" is shown to be the technical term for "mutual recognition" in two senses: "to recognize" the legitimate Suzerain or vassal, and "to recognize" the treaty stipulations as binding. The best examples are shown as follows: in the treaty between Suppliuma and Hukkanus the vassal is requested not to acknowledge any other king but the

²JCS XXII (1968), p. 7f.
⁴Jean Jougayrol, Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, IV, p. 97.
Sun (the Hittite king):

And you, Rukkanus, know only the Sun regarding lordship; . . . moreover, any other do not know! 1

In the treaty between Muwattallis and Alaksandus, the Suzerain assures His protection to the vassal:

As he (the rebel) is an enemy to you, even so is he enemy to the sun; (and) I (the sun) will know only you, Alaksandus. 2

(2) The Hebrew verb סֵכִּית no doubt reflects the various shades of meaning of the common technical usage in the ancient Near Eastern world. In the OT, first, some instances of the verb סֵכִּית as the "legal recognition" term have been discovered: in the sphere of international relationships the verb סֵכִּית is used for the Egyptian's recognition of Yahweh, the God of Israel, as the legitimate Suzerain (Ex. 5-7); in the kingdom of Israel for acknowledgement of the legitimacy of succession (1 Sam 21); the most characteristic usage of the technical term for the "legitimate mutual recognition" occurs in the sphere of the covenant relation between Yahweh and Israel.

In this usage the verb סֵכִּית is shown as Covenant terminology: (a) By Yahweh (individual) 3, Abraham (Gen 18:19,

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1BASOR (1966), p. 31f.

2BASOR. 181 (1966), p. 32.

3The covenant between Yahweh and individuals is different from the situation in most Hittite treaties, which involves heads of state. However, evidence that the sacred pact concluded with individual families has been found in
22:17), Moses (Ex 33:12-17), and Jeremiah (Jer 1:5); (b) by Jahweh (Israel) Amos 3:2, Hos 13:5. (c) By Israel, Ex 6:7, Hos 13:4, Jer 24:7, 31:34, 22:15, 16.

It should be noted that the verb כָּבֵד as Covenant terminology is syntactically bound to either Yahweh or Israel as subject, but the initiator is always Yahweh.

An important consideration here is this: the verb כָּבֵד is one of the basic words concerning the notion of God as sovereign Lord and of the people as his servants. The covenant between Yahweh and Israel followed the pattern of Suzerain-vassal treaties in the late second millennium. Therefore, these investigations of "to know" support Mendenhall's thesis that the legal pattern must have been introduced into Israel early in her history. 2

(3) Some instances of the verb כָּבֵד as Covenant terminology, occur specifically in the Gattung of the rib-controversy. This type of the verb כָּבֵד is used for Yahweh's indictment for Israel's breaking the covenant obligations.

treaties between the Hittite king and the Kashkeans. Cf. Einar von Schuler, Die Kaskäen, (Berlin, 1965). D. R. Hillers, Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea, pp. 52, 63; in the OT this type of the covenant may go back to the great covenant of Shechem. The covenantal recognition of the individual as vassal by Yahweh is presumably the original pattern of the Israelite covenant. But this supposition should be left open for further studies.

1 The example of Amos 3:2 is especially important, because the Suzerain's recognition of his legitimate vassal involves obligations

2 G. E. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East, p. 25f.
This literaryGattung is noted as the divine \( \text{rib} \), or Covenant lawsuit. This paper establishes, therefore, a strict differentiation between Covenant terminology and Covenant Lawsuit terminology.

When the category of the Covenant Lawsuit is used, another differentiation is carefully considered between this \( \text{rib} \)-pattern and the \( \text{rib} \) of the wisdom tradition (Job 31:6, Ps 50). In the latter type of \( \text{rib} \) the verb \( \text{MT} \) is used in the sense of God's awareness of the "innocent-suffering," and it has no relation to the covenant tradition.

The verb \( \text{MT} \) as the Covenant Lawsuit terminology is examined in four instances (Is 1:2-3, Jer 2:4-13, Mic 6:1-18, and Deut 32). The verb \( \text{MT} \) is syntactically connected to Israel as subject, but Yahweh still takes the initiative, in the sense of Yahweh's indictment for Israel's neglect to acknowledge Yahweh as the legitimate Suzerain.

(4) However, here there arises another syntactical question of the usage of the verb \( \text{MT} \). Some occurrences of the verb \( \text{MT} \) are syntactically connected to Yahweh as subject but the speaker is the minor party who is petitioning or engaging in controversy against Yahweh. These examples are unique in that the "I" of the "I-Thou" controversy motif refers to the man, not Yahweh, and that the verb \( \text{MT} \) always occurs in the formula

The primary sense of the formula \( \text{MT} \text{MT} \text{MT} \text{MT} \) is a technical term for the introduction of the \( \text{rib} \)-controversy
regarding "Benediction" or "Malediction", and it is used either in the sense of the legal "acknowledgement" of the Lord's promise, or to indicate the reason why the "curses" are spoken. These texts show that the "blessing" or "curses" are enacted by lawsuit, based on the minor party's faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the stipulations.

From the viewpoint of the usage of the verb יְתַתָּהוּ, the formula demonstrates syntactically the new aspect of the usage of the verb יְתַתָּהוּ. When the formula is used regarding "blessing," the verb יְתַתָּהוּ is then syntactically bound to the superior party as subject, but the speaker is the minor party. The importance of investigations is, therefore, demonstrating that the formula contains a unique usage of the verb יְתַתָּהוּ.

In connection with the Suzerain-treaty the formula is shown to be the technical term for the "mutuality" motif, which is specifically evidenced in the Historical prologue section of the treaty. The idea of the "mutuality recognition" is reflected in the OT. Within the context of "mutual recog-

1Josh 14:6-15 "Caleb's claim"; 1 King 5:17-26 (Eng. 3-12) "Treaty between Solomon and Hiram".

21 King 2:5-9 "David's last charge"; vv. 36-46 "Solomon's sentence to Shimei".


4The terminology for the "mutuality" is noted: "keep-not keep," "break off," "not honor," "not fulfill," "not loyal," "change," "love," "neglect," "transgression," "erasing,"
nition" the vassal may request the Suzerain's promise of protection in the first person: "Thou knowest!"

(5) It is now shown that the formula is tied to Yahweh's obligation to the covenant. The formula is defined as the key term in the rib-controversy with Yahweh. Evidence of these facts is given in the following five examples: David's prayer (2 Sam 7:18ff), Solomon's prayer (1 King 8:22ff), Two Covenant Songs (Ps 40, 69), and Ezekiel's dialogue with God (Ez 37). These literary forms are now reclassified as Covenant Lawsuit with Yahweh, which contains the following elements: Preamble, Historical prologue, Direct plea, and Answer. The central theme is the controversy against Yahweh, in which man requests Yahweh's recognition of him as a vassal and His act of renewing the Covenant. The formula is established as a technical term for the claim of Yahweh's covenantal initiative of the "mutuality" of the covenant.

(b) The context of Jer 15:10-11, 15-20

Jeremiah's "challenge" of the Lord in the confession context is based on the Covenant Lawsuit with Yahweh of the Mediator-Intercessor, the close relation between the confession and the "mutual recognition" motif of the Suzerain-treaty, and "fall or bow down," "to avenge," "not break off," "deal loyally," "to avenge," "keep covenant".

The idea of the "mutuality" is noted in Gen 12:3, Ex 23:22, Judges 5:31, Ex 20:5-6. The best example is shown in Ex 23:22: "Then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries."
the affinity between the confession and Moses's Intercession.

(1) Jeremiah is familiar with the treaty-curses (ex. Jer 34:18), and he indicted the people along lines similar to the treaty tradition. Some of the terminology of the treaty-curses should be noted: "break off," "go after," "change," "transgression," and "avenge." The literary genre of Jer 2:4ff has been established as the Covenant Lawsuit.

However, Jeremiah uses the treaty term in another way. Some terms in the motif of "mutuality" of the treaty are very important, that is, the Suzerain's protection on his vassal and the vindication on his vassal's enemies. Jeremiah prayed the Lord not to break the covenant with his people (Jer 14:21). This term "not to break" is a typical phrase which the Lord used in relation to his people.

Furthermore, the "mutual recognition" motif appears in the context of the confessions. Jeremiah as the "man of contention" (יהב עיר) (Jer 15:10) stands before Yahweh who is the "God of Vengeance,"¹ the Suzerain. Jeremiah speaks to Yahweh in the first person "I" of "I-Thou" of the covenant:

"Take vengeance (ננ"ד) for me on my persecutors" (15:15b);
"Acknowledge (ש י) that for thy sake I bear reproach!" (15:15c).

By using the "mutuality" motif of the covenant Jeremiah claims the absolute merciful protection of Yahweh as

Suzerain and demands the condemned of his enemies. Thus, the nature of Jeremiah's "challenge" to the Lord is defined as that of the rib-controversy with Yahweh, that originally rests on the "mutual recognition" motif of the Suzerain-treaty.

(2) Jeremiah is the messenger or spokesman of Yahweh, but also the representative of the people, the plaintiff who "challenges" Yahweh. Jeremiah had in mind Moses's function as Mediator-Intercessor (cf. 15:1) as Samuel did.2

The context of Moses's intercession (Ex 33:12-17) is the Gattung of the rib-controversy with Yahweh, because it contains these elements: Introduction-Historical prologue (v.12), the Direct plea (vv. 13, 15-56), and Answer (vv. 14,17).3 The central aim of Moses's rib-controversy is expressed by the repetition of the liturgical motif of "find favour in thy eyes"4 (vv. 12c, 13a, c, 16b, 17c). Moses speaks to Yahweh in the first person "I" of "I-Thou" of the treaty: "Let me know (ךְֳָּתַּי) thy way! Consider! (ךְֳָּתַּי) that this nation is thy people." (v. 13). The divine answer is Yahweh's assurance of His renewal of the covenant: "I recognize you (ךְֳָּתַּי)"

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4The importance of the motif of the "favour" of the Suzerain to His vassal has been established by W. L. Moran,
by name." (v. 17. Cf. v. 12)

It should be noted that the verb יָּדוּן occurs six times in this context and is used as the technical term for the "mutual recognition" in the same way in other covenant lawsuits. ¹ Using this word Moses is firmly standing on the rib-controversy with Yahweh the Suzerain, on the "mutual recognition" of the covenant between Yahweh and himself as Mediator-Intercessor.

(3) A comparison of two contexts, Moses's petition and Jeremiah's confession, demonstrated that the Jer 15:10-11, 15-20 is the Gattung of the rib-controversy with Yahweh, as patterned in the Suzerain-treaty as follows:

| Introduction | v. 10 |
| The Historical prologue | v. 11 |
| The direct plea | v. 15 |
| a. First plea in the imperative | vv. 16-17 |
| b. The more detailed condition | v. 18 |
| c. Second plea in the interrogative | vv. 19-20 |
| The answer |

The interpretation of v. 11 is the key for understanding the Gattung of the whole context. The first two words of v. 11a נָא יָּדוּן יָּדוּן are the crucial point. There have been two kinds of interpretation about v. 11: as Jeremiah's words or God's answer. However, if v. 11 is considered to be not only

CBQ, XXV (1963), pp. 77-87.

¹David's prayer (2 Sam 7:18ff), Solomon's prayer (1 King 8:22ff). Two Covenant Songs (Ps 40,69) and Ezekiel's dialogue with God (Ez 37).
Yahweh's word but also Jeremiah's interpretation of that word, then a third opinion is possible. There are three reasons for this interpretation: (i) From the point of view of the linguistic aspect. In Moses's petition (Ex 33:12) the similar forms בָּאָהַת and שָׁם יְהֹוָה occur referring to Yahweh's word in the section of Historical prologue; (ii) from the point of view the relation of v. 11 to the whole Gattung. V. 11 can be better understood as the Historical prologue element of the Covenant Lawsuit with Yahweh. V. 11 shows Jeremiah's review of the "mutuality" of the covenant between Yahweh and Jeremiah; (iii) From the point of view its content, v. 11 refers to the first calling of Jeremiah as prophet (Jer 1:5ff) as Ex 33:12f does.

The affinity of Gattung between Moses's petition and Jeremiah'sRib-controversy is shown as follows:

A. Moses's intercession

a. Historical prologue: refers to Yahweh's covenant with him.

Yet thou hast said (ָּֽמָּֽשָּׁת הַֽנְּבָּה); (וַּאֲשֶׁר יָֽשָּׁב)
"I recognize you (נְּפָלַת תּוּר) by name

In relation to these words: [ ]

I make you (נְּפָלַת) a god for the pharaoh. (Ex 7:1)

b. Direct plea:

i. In the imperative form. "Let me know (דֹּמְעַת תּוּר) thy way! Consider! (נְּפָלַת) that this nation is thy people (v.13)

ii. In the interrogative form.
"How shall it be known (נְּפָלַת)? Is not in thy going with us? (v. 16)
c. Answer: Yahweh's renewal of the covenant.

"I will recognize you (נְּגִיאֵל) by name. (v. 17)

B. Jeremiah's rib-controversy

a. Historical prologue: refers to Yahweh's covenant with him.

Thou hast said, O Yahweh (יָהָהֶו נָשַׁה) "Truly, I will greatly strengthen you (נְּגִיאֵל) Truly, I will bring the enemy to your feet. (Jer 15:11)

In relation to these words:

"I recognize you (נְּגִיאֵל) I make you (נְּגִיאֵל) a prophet to the nation I make you (נְּגִיאֵל) this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, ... They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you. (Jer 1:6, 18f)

b. Direct plea:

i. In the imperative form

"Acknowledge (נִצְּחַי) that for thy sake I bear reproach! Take vengeance (נְּגִיאֵל) for me on my persecutors. (v. 15)

ii. In the interrogative form.

"Why (נְּגִיאֵל) is my pain unceasing, My wound incurable, refusing to be healed? (v. 18)

c. Answer: Yahweh's renewal of the covenant.

And I will make you (נְּגִיאֵל) to this people a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you. (v. 20)

Here, the word נִצְּחַי and נְּגִיאֵל are used interchangeably in connection with the expression of Yahweh's covenant making with his vassal, the Mediator-Intercessor, and His renewal act of the covenant. The evidence for this usage of these words is shown in the Suzerain-treaties.
I, (the Sun), will know only you, Alaksandus.

(Treaty between Kuvattalis and Alaksandus)

he named and appointed to the crown-princeship.

(Esarhaddon, line 45)

(c) מַעְרָף נְם in Jer 15:15a.

On the basis of these conclusions the formula מַעְרָף נְם in v. 15a is established as the Covenant lawsuit motif and expresses Jeremiah's claim of the absolute merciful protection of Yahweh according to His obligation and a petition to Yahweh for the renewal of the covenant.

Two different viewpoints appear in these two words of v. 15a. First, the scholars who have held v. 11 as Jeremiah's words against Yahweh understand accordingly the formula in connection with vv. 10-11 (or -12). In this formula Jeremiah expresses his faith in God's knowledge of his innocent suffering, and these scholars read with emendation: "Thou knowest it!"

Second, the scholars who have held v. 11 as God's answer, either consider this formula as the "opening phrase" of vv. 15-18, without any relation to vv. 10-11, or else completely delete it from the context.

However, this paper has established a new viewpoint. Only when v. 11 is understood as God's word and Jeremiah's interpretation of it as the Historical prologue motif of treaty within the Gattung of the Covenant Lawsuit, can the formula מַעְרָף נְם be clearly understood in its original
function as consonant with MT, that is, as the technical term for Jeremiah's "challenge" of Yahweh's unfulfillment of the "mutuality" of the covenant. Using the formula Jeremiah has tried to reach Yahweh as Suzerain.

Jeremiah uses the formula in connection with his prophetic office as Covenant-Mediator-Intercessor. As used by him it appears as the introduction of the case of the plaintiff in the Covenant Lawsuit with Yahweh. Within the "mutuality" of the covenant Jeremiah can stand before Yahweh as Suzerain.

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Of course Jeremiah understands his prophetic office as the messenger or speaker of Yahweh. Since Israel had broken the covenant, Jeremiah proclaimed that the covenant curses would overtake Israel. He is convinced that Yahweh's punishment is unavoidable because Israel has broken the covenant. He understands the crisis of the covenant.

However, Jeremiah is also the representative of the people, the plaintiff who "charges" Yahweh. As a true Israelite Jeremiah could not cut himself off from his nation for
he was a part of the community. When he was called to be a prophet by Yahweh, he had in mind Moses's function as Mediator-Intercessor. Jeremiah understood the covenant between Yahweh and himself as the Suzerain-treaty, especially in its "mutual recognition" motif.

Through his personal experience, he understands that this is not only his personal struggle, but also the struggle of the community with Yahweh. Without God's liberality it is impossible to renew the covenant that Israel has already broken. Thus, Jeremiah stands before Yahweh the Suzerain, as the vassal, the covenant-Mediator-Intercessor, and utters in the "I" of "I- Thou" motif:

Through such a serious conflict with Yahweh, Jeremiah heard once more the promise of the renewal of the covenant with Yahweh, based on his ḫīḇ-controversy with Yahweh.

"I accepted you back into the covenant." (v. 19)
"You shall stand before me." (v. 19)
"I am with you." (v. 20)
"I will make you (םֵלֶדֻךְ) a bronze wall." (v. 20)

Thus, it is shown that the formula יִמְּךָ נַחַל has a central position in the structure of Jeremiah's "confession".

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1M. Buber, The Prophetic Faith (New York, 1966), p. 180f. "His 'I' is so deeply set in the 'I' of the people that his life cannot be regarded as that of an individual; ... the 'I' of the individual remains transparent into the 'I' of the community."
Whether or not the results of this study of the formula נְתַן עָלָיו can apply to other instances in the confession (Jer 12:3, 17:16, 18:23) must remain an open question.
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