

**For King and Country:**

**An Ideological Critical Study of Covenant in Jeremiah 11:1-17 and  
Kingship in Jeremiah 22:1-23:8 as Examples of Cultural Violence**



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## **Declaration**

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## Abstract

This study offers an ideological critical investigation of the notion of covenant in Jeremiah 11:1-17 and kingship in Jeremiah 22:1-23:8 as examples of cultural violence. Employing the theoretical framework of Johan Galtung with reference to direct, structural and cultural violence, the ideological-literary aspects and ideological-contextual aspects of the world in, behind and in front of these texts are explored.

In Chapter 2 of this study the theoretical framework of Galtung pertaining to direct, structural and cultural violence is critically discussed. Cultural violence as exemplified by, for instance, religion and ideology is shown by Galtung to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence. Cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right – or at least not wrong. Cultural violence thus plays a crucial role in legitimising acts of direct violence, and rendering the fact of structural violence acceptable in society.

In Chapter 3, the world of Jeremiah is investigated. Textual aspects of structure, genre and the Deuteronomistic source informing Jeremiah are brought into conversation with the historical, social and religious aspects of the world of Jeremiah.

In Chapter 4 the notion of covenant is defined and interrogated. After offering a diachronic as well as a synchronic analysis of covenant in the Hebrew Bible in its Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) context, this chapter addresses the way in which covenant features in Jeremiah 11:1-17. This includes the ideological-literary manifestation of judgement; the text's close affinity to the Deuteronomistic ideological worldview; and Jeremiah 11's correspondence with the temple sermon of Jeremiah 7. These aspects are then used to investigate the ways in which the temple in Jerusalem can be perceived as an example of structural violence and the process of the centralisation of the cult as an example of direct violence. Thereafter, covenant as cultural violence is explored in terms of the covenantal ideology of election; the covenantal ideology of Zion; and the covenantal ideology of the Deuteronomistic. Lastly, it is demonstrated how the direct, structural and cultural violence of covenant in Jeremiah 11:1-17 are closely related to each other by utilising the violence triangle and violence strata image of Galtung.

In Chapter 5 of this study the notion of kingship is defined and interrogated. The monarchical state is identified as a theoretical vehicle that is useful for investigating kingship in Israel. The synchronic focus of kingship on divine election and the upholding of justice in the ANE and Israel is investigated, where after diachronic aspects of the divine election and the upholding of justice of selected kings of Israel are explored in conjunction with aspects of direct and structural violence pertaining to the monarchical states during the reign of these kings. The direct violence of the monarchical state of Jehoiakim is discussed in terms of the practise of corvée labour, as well as the structural violence of the monarchical state pertaining to functions of the state as introduced by Solomon but continuing to the time of Jehoiakim. The theology of kingship is discussed especially with reference to the way in which the future promise of a just king is used in Jeremiah 22:1-23:8 to save the institution of kingship. Mention is also made of how the royal psalms can be seen as the popular discourse that kept the elective position of the king before YHWH alive, even if the prophets saw this relationship as a thing of the past. Lastly, the direct, structural and cultural violence of kingship in Jeremiah 22:1-23:8 are once again brought into conversation with each other by employing the violence triangle and violence strata image of Galtung.

Finally, the study shows how an understanding of the theoretical framework of Galtung regarding violence may help one to better understand the direct, structural and cultural violence of the ideology of Apartheid in a contemporary South African context. The study concludes by

showing the dangers of an inerrant view of Scripture, but also cautions against limiting the violence of Scripture to only texts that contain visible direct violence.

## Opsomming

Hierdie studie bied 'n ideologiese kritiese ondersoek na die begrip van die verbond in Jeremia 11:1-17 en koningskap in Jeremia 22:1-23:8 as voorbeelde van kulturele geweld. Met verwysing na die teoretiese raamwerk van Johan Galtung aangaande direkte, strukturele en kulturele geweld, word die ideologies-literêre aspekte en ideologies-kontekstuele aspekte van die wêreld binne, agter en voor hierdie tekste ondersoek.

In Hoofstuk 2 van hierdie studie word Galtung se teoretiese raamwerk van direkte, strukturele en kulturele geweld krities bespreek. Kulturele geweld, soos byvoorbeeld verteenwoordig in godsdiens en ideologie, word volgens Galtung aangewend om direkte en strukturele geweld te regverdig. Kulturele geweld laat direkte en strukturele geweld reg lyk of reg voel – of ten minste nie verkeerd nie. Kulturele geweld speel dus 'n deurslaggewende rol in die legitimering van daad van direkte geweld, asook om die realiteit van strukturele geweld in die samelewing aanvaarbaar te maak.

In Hoofstuk 3 word die wêreld van Jeremia ondersoek. Tekstuele aspekte van struktuur, genre en die Deuteronomistiese bron van Jeremia word in gesprek gebring met die historiese, sosiale en godsdienslike aspekte van die wêreld van Jeremia.

In Hoofstuk 4 word die begrip verbond gedefinieer en ondersoek. Na die aanbidding van 'n diakroniese sowel as 'n sinkroniese analise van die verbond in die Hebreeuse Bybel in die Ou Nabye Oosterse (ONO) konteks, fokus hierdie hoofstuk op die manier waarop die verbond in Jeremia 11:1-17 voorkom. Dit sluit in die ideologies-literêre manifestering van oordeel; die teks se noue verband met die Deuteronomistiese ideologiese wêreldbeskouing; en die ooreenkomste van Jeremia 11 met die tempelpreek van Jeremia 7. Hierdie aspekte word dan gebruik om die maniere te ondersoek waarop die tempel in Jerusalem beskou kan word as 'n voorbeeld van strukturele geweld, en die proses van die sentralisering van die kultus as 'n voorbeeld van direkte geweld. Daarna word die verbond as kulturele geweld ondersoek in terme van die verbonds-ideologie van uitverkiesing; die verbonds-ideologie van Sion; en die verbonds-ideologie van die Deuteronomis. Ten slotte word die geweldsdriehoek en geweld-stratabeeld van Galtung gebruik om aan te toon hoe die direkte, strukturele en kulturele geweld van die verbond in Jeremia 11:1-17 nou aan mekaar verwant is .

In Hoofstuk 5 van hierdie studie word die begrip koningskap gedefinieer en ondervra. Die monargiese staat word geïdentifiseer as 'n teoretiese voertuig wat nuttig is om koningskap in Israel te ondersoek. Die sinkroniese fokus van koningskap op goddelike uitverkiesing en die handhawing van geregtigheid in die ONO en Israel word ondersoek, waarna diakroniese aspekte van die goddelike uitverkiesing en die handhawing van geregtigheid van uitgesoekte konings van Israel ondersoek word saam met aspekte van direkte en strukturele geweld met betrekking op die monargiese state tydens die heerskappy van hierdie konings. Die direkte geweld van die monargiese staat van Jojakim word bespreek in terme van die beoefening van korrupie-arbeid, sowel as die strukturele geweld van die monargiese staat wat betrekking het op die funksies van die staat soos deur Salomo bekend gestel, maar wat nog in plek was in die tyd van Jojakim. Die teologie van koningskap word veral bespreek met verwysing na die manier waarop die toekomstige belofte van 'n regverdige koning in Jeremia 22:1-23:8 gebruik word om die instelling van koningskap te red. Daar word ook melding gemaak van hoe die koninklike psalms gesien kan word as die gewilde diskoers wat die uitverkiesingsposisie van die koning voor YHWH lewend gehou het, selfs al was geen verhouding meer moontlik

volgens die profete nie. Laastens word die geweldsdriehoek en geweld-stratabeeld van Galtung gebruik om die direkte, strukturele en kulturele geweld van koningskap in Jeremia 22: 1-23:8 weer in gesprek met mekaar te bring.

Ten slotte toon die studie hoe 'n begrip van die teoretiese raamwerk van Galtung aangaande geweld, kan help om die direkte, strukturele en kulturele geweld rondom die ideologie van Apartheid in 'n kontemporêre Suid-Afrikaanse konteks beter te verstaan. Die studie sluit af deur die gevare van 'n onverskillige siening van die Skrif aan te dui, maar waarsku ook daarteen om die geweld van die Skrif te beperk tot slegs tekste wat sigbare direkte geweld bevat.

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*This study is dedicated to the marginalised in our communities.*

*May my sins not destroy you.*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

*When I left my home and my family, my mother said to me "Son, it's not how many Germans you kill that counts, it's how many people you set free!" So I packed my bags, brushed my cap, walked out into the world. Seventeen years old, never kissed a girl. Took the train to Voronezh that was as far as it would go. Changed my sacks for a uniform, bit my lip against the snow. I prayed for mother Russia, in the summer of '43. And as we drove the Germans back, I really believed that God was listening to me. We howled into Berlin, tore the smoking buildings down. Raised the red flag high, burnt the Reichstag brown. I saw my first American and he looked a lot like me. He had the same kinda farmer's face. Said he'd come from some place called Hazzard, Tennessee. Then the war was over. My discharge papers came. Me and twenty hundred others went to Stettiner for the train. Kiev! said the commissar. From there your own way home. But I never got to Kiev. We never came by home. Train went north to the Taiga. We were stripped and marched in file, up the great Siberian road for miles and miles and miles and miles. Dressed in stripes and tatters in a gulag left to die, all because Comrade Stalin was scared that we'd become too westernized! Used to love my country. Used to be so young. Used to believe that life was the best song ever sung. I would have died for my country in 1945. But now only one thing remains. The brute will to survive!*

(Waterboys – Red Army Blues. Songwriter: Michael Scott)

*In your majesty ride on victoriously for the cause of truth and to defend the right; let your right hand teach you dread deeds. Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; the peoples fall under you.*

(Psalm 45: 4-5)

### 1. Background and Motivation

The significant conflicts of the nineteenth to twentieth century left millions of people dead, destitute and dying. In the song by the Waterboys, one can see how in the name of his country, a Russian soldier left his home and his family to kill people he did not know, and then, when he thought that liberation was imminent, he became the victim of a cruel and dehumanising ideology he thought he was protecting. It was only when Stalin started using the culturally loaded symbols from the time of the Tsars that he could really rally the country to fight for Mother Russia in World War II. At the start of the war, Russia was still reeling and bleeding from the violent excesses of the Cheka, the GPU and the NKVD, all state enterprises formed to control the population by means of fear and violence (Bailey, 1994, pp. 104-116).

Thinking of these significant conflicts gives one cause to also reflect on other countries, for example the United States of America, which used God as a powerful rallying cry to build its empire of steel and blood. “God is on our side” lifted the enterprise of nation-building above the ordinary and banal to something religious and divinely justified, as if God himself had ordered the near extermination of the Native-American and forged the chains of the African-American (Seibert, 2012, pp. 6-12).

And closer to home, here in South-Africa, the powerful cultural symbol of covenant gave a minority of people the apparent divine right to rule over a larger population and to subject this larger population to the cruel and dehumanising chains of Apartheid (Cilliers, 2006).

These are all examples of violence – in different forms and manifestations, but violence, nevertheless. These are all examples of violence that are highly contestable as examples of violence, depending on who you are, the victim or the perpetrator. These are all examples of violence that managed to kill and to maim; to destroy and to traumatise; and to build empires and to pluck down ordinary lives.

I first became interested in the subject of religion and violence during my MTh study on intimate partner violence in Ezekiel 16 and 23. Patriarchy and violence were identified as the pillars of intimate partner violence based on a study by Rachel Jewkes (2002, p. 1427). In the study, Jewkes also described patriarchy and violence as forms of ideologies. Therefore, my master’s study on Ezekiel 16 and 23 conducted an ideological critical study of Ezekiel 16 and 23, which led me to my current focus on the link between violence and ideology and the various justifications offered for act/s of violence. Violence as a visible deed is incontestable in its cruelty and the public abhorrence of such deeds. It is not necessarily a socially constructed ideology in its most basic form, but it can become a socially constructed ideology on a much bigger scale as in warfare and internal conflict.

Violence has always been part of the history of humankind. Now, more than ever, violence has become such an integral part of our society that one tends to not even notice its existence anymore. But even with the almost unlimited presence of violence in our societies, societies do seem to resist the normalisation of violence. Violence tends to disturb people, maybe because it runs counter to the “Renaissance faith in the goodness of humankind” (Niebuhr, 2011, p. 48). Maybe a common humanity where an injury to one is an injury to all does really exist. Karl Jaspers (1947, p. 26) argues:

Amongst men there exists, because they are men, a solidarity through which each shares responsibility for every injustice and every wrong committed in the world and especially for crimes that are committed in the world and especially for crimes that are committed in his presence or of which he cannot be ignorant. If I do not do whatever I can to prevent them, I am an accomplice in them. .... Somewhere in the heart of human relations, an absolute command imposes itself: in case of criminal attack or of living conditions that threatens physical being, accept life for all together or not at all.

If these abovementioned thoughts conjure a positive dream for a non-violent future, the present paints another picture altogether. War, as an extreme form of violence, has changed in the past few decades from something that was relatively short, to something that is still brutal but has now become a daily part of people's lives. Scherrer (2008, p. 2) shows that interstate conflict accounted for only 11 percent of all conflicts in the last ten years, whereas ethnic nationalism contributed to almost two-thirds of all contemporary conflict. These conflicts also tend to drag out and escalate to among the deadliest conflicts. The Clausewitzian<sup>1</sup> type of interstate conflict has been replaced almost completely by intrastate conflicts (civil wars) with mass violence such as genocide also becoming an issue. Interethnic wars (gang wars included) have increased in comparison to both interstate and ethno-nationalist wars (Scherrer, 2008, p. 3).

It is moreover not difficult to find statistics and horror stories that prove that we as South Africans live in violent times – the fact that one has to be selective in crediting the load of horror stories, is in itself an indication of just how violent. For instance, in an article in the *Daily Maverick* Richard Poplak (2015) writes:

There are 10 mortuaries in Gauteng, serving 13.2-million residents – or, rather, their corpses. The province's health MEC was recently obliged to release statistics regarding the bodies kept within those refrigerated facilities. It should not be surprising (but should nonetheless be horrifying) to learn that of 14,866 bodies, 3,846 showed signs of violent trauma. Gunshots, stabbings, assault: this is how 32% of Gauteng residents die. The number is increasing slightly every year: in 2012/2013, 3,324 died by violence, increasing to 3,618 in 2013/2014. This is not, by any means, a salutary trend.

These statistics reveal just a section of the overall situation in South Africa concerning direct violence.

However, beyond these numerous instances of direct violence, there are also other forms of violence of which one should take cognisance. Johan Galtung (1990, pp. 292-293)

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<sup>1</sup> The Prussian general and military theorist Carl Philipp Gottfried von Clausewitz underlined certain aspects of war such as the political and moral aspects, arguing that "(interstate) war is not an independent phenomenon, but the continuation of politics by different means" (Von Clausewitz, 1874).

differentiates between three levels of violence namely direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence. Direct violence occurs when actual violence (hurting or killing) takes place (Galtung, 1990, pp. 292-293). Scherrer's list of war, homicide and suicide, capital punishment, robbery and assault, domestic violence, and female genital mutilation can all be seen as examples of direct violence (Scherrer, 2008, p. 3).

Galtung identifies structural violence as violence committed without a subject but where the subject is built into the economic, political and social structures of a society (Galtung, 1975, p. 114). In this regard, Scherrer (2008, p. 3) maintains that structural forms of violence can at times be more destructive than genocidal or direct military violence. These general trends, analysed in a study of "contemporary warfare, mass violence and genocide within the dataset of 1985-2005," show that violence may exist in more forms than only the visible direct violence which can disturb one so greatly.

Structural violence is a step away from direct violence in the sense that violence is still committed but assumed to be justified because it is committed under the auspices of the state. One tends to feel compassion for the victims of police violence, but many people consider it just a case of the police doing their work for which as they are paid. They may even commend the police for "taking a tough stance against criminality." Few South Africans see themselves as being as guilty as the units of the South African Police Services who actively massacred the striking mineworkers at Marikana.<sup>2</sup> However, after a careful analysis of structural violence, one may conclude that every citizen of South Africa can be considered to share the guilt of the massacre at Marikana. This admittedly contentious remark serves to illustrate that people's conceptualisation of what encapsulates the phenomenon of violence, can be limited, and this also limits serious objective non-emotional discussions on violence.

Galtung (1990, p. 292), however, identifies a third form of violence, namely cultural violence. This pertains to "those aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence." He states that symbols such as stars, crosses and crescents, flags, military parades and anthems, the omnipresent portrait of the Leader, posters and provocative speeches, are all aspects of cultural violence. Cultural violence "makes direct and structural

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<sup>2</sup> At Marikana, a small mining town in the North West Province of South Africa, on the 16th of August 2012, the South African Police Service (SAPS) killed 34 striking mineworkers, seriously injuring a further 78, and arresting 250 of the miners (Siboniso, 2012).

violence look, even feel, right – or at least not wrong.” The legitimising of violent acts is an important factor in the difficulty of identifying cultural violence (Galtung, 1990, p. 292).

Cultural violence also helps one to understand the important role religion can play in creating a society in which violence is normalised. Galtung (1990, p. 296) lists six cultural domains as examples of cultural violence: “religion and ideology, language and art, empirical and formal science,” of which, according to Galtung (1990, p. 296), religion and ideology are distinct domains in which violence can be normalised.

It is also difficult to distinguish between ideology and religion. Considering the example of the Afrikaner as a distinct cultural group, the usefulness of covenantal theology as an identity marker vis-à-vis other cultural and ethnic groups in South Africa, probably contributed to ideology and religion becoming interchangeable terms in an Afrikaner context (Cloete, 1992, pp. 42-44; Olivier, 2010, pp. 6-7).

An example that illustrates the intrinsic link between violence, ideology and religion appears in Dana Snyman’s book *Onder die Radar* (Snyman, 2013, pp. 176-177). He writes that violence has been a part of his life since birth – from the physical punishment he received as child to the violent behaviour he had to learn in order to survive on the playground. Snyman writes that he had to learn to fear many things: Communism, the Chinese, Russians, black people. The fear had to be addressed by being prepared. Snyman writes how at the age of ten he had his own airgun and pocketknife. He had to learn to hunt, to kill and to eat the liver of his first kill as a rite of passage. He had to learn to play rugby at school because strong men play rugby. He relates how one morning on his way to a rugby game on the bus he threw a hard-boiled egg at a black man because “they understand only one language.” He planned his first kiss like a military operation. After ages of physical punishment at school, he found himself on the army parade grounds. His corporal shouted at him: “I will pluck your arm from your body and I will hit you with the bloody side.” He is now a normal citizen, but he finds himself driven by fear and anger. He finds himself hating almost everyone. He is heavily burdened by the weight of the past; and he concludes poignantly: “The germ of violence is in me” (Snyman, 2013, pp. 176-177).

Although Snyman’s thoughts on the societal violence he experienced during his upbringing can be subscribed to a subjective viewpoint of violence, it is hard to miss the undercurrents of violence experienced but not always understood by the author as well as the violence committed by the author but not always liked.

If one can then conclude that violence is multi-faceted, an in-depth study of violence that explores these various facets, can greatly contribute to our understanding of the phenomenon of violence.

This is particularly important when studying of the Bible. For instance, many texts in the Hebrew Bible can be described as exceedingly violent. A brief look at the book of Jeremiah shows a number of violent texts that illustrate siege warfare and the military invasion of countries. In Jer 5:6 the invading forces are compared to predatory animals:

Therefore, a lion from the forest shall kill them, a wolf from the desert shall destroy them. A leopard is watching against their cities; everyone who goes out of them shall be torn in pieces – because their transgressions are many, their apostasies are great.<sup>3</sup>

The violence associated with the military invasion is further illustrated in Jer 5:15-17:

I am going to bring upon you a nation from far away, O house of Israel, says the LORD. It is an enduring nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know, nor can you understand what they say. Their quiver is like an open tomb; all of them are mighty warriors. They shall eat up your harvest and your food; they shall eat up your sons and your daughters; they shall eat up your flocks and your herds; they shall eat up your vines and your fig trees; they shall destroy with the sword your fortified cities in which you trust.

In Jer 11:22-23 YHWH judges the people of Anathoth (Jeremiah's birthplace) for their persecution of Jeremiah and their fate is described in violent terms:

Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: I am going to punish them; the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine; and not even a remnant shall be left of them. For I will bring disaster upon the people of Anathoth, the year of their punishment.

Do these texts reflect the violence already active within humans or do they condone, influence or confirm the validity of violent acts? Is there more to the violent texts of the Hebrew Bible than meets the eye?

## 2. Problem Statement

Studies on religion and violence tend to focus on texts that feature incidences of direct violence, as evidenced in the examples cited above. In the *Princeton Reading of Religion and Violence*, where authors attempt a comparative study between the violent texts of the Qur'an, the Hebrew

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<sup>3</sup> Scripture citations are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Bible and various other religious texts, Deuteronomy 20 and Exodus 23 are identified as violent texts. This creates a problem because scholars do not attempt to break out of the direct violence typology in the text. When the perpetrators of violence try to justify the act/s of violence, one finds oneself in the field of ideology. This is particularly evident when a nation such as Israel kills people of another nation and justifies these acts in terms of YHWH's covenantal justice or faithfulness. In a sense one could say that all texts in which covenant plays a central part, can be characterised as violent texts. The same can be said regarding texts where an Israelite king orders violent actions against an individual or another nation. Because the king ordered the violent action, the action or actions are therefore justified. If the texts in which the king orders these violent actions are violent texts, then the office of the king is a violent office, and this can mean that all texts with a kingship thrust can be typecast as violent texts.

Hence the violence of and in the Hebrew Bible is more than the sum of its parts. This means that one can read violence even in peaceful texts such as Isa 2:2-4:

In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. <sup>3</sup>Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

In her essay "The 'Problem' of Violence in Prophetic Literature: Definitions as the Real Problem," Tamar Kamionkowski (2008) seeks to investigate the intersection between violence and religion. She proposes that as scholars we seek "neither to condone nor to condemn, but to understand and elucidate." In this process, she uses a theoretical framework designed by Galtung in order to conduct an ideological critique of Isa 2:2-4 – a theoretical framework of cultural violence which allows one to examine texts in which violence appears to be absent.

Kamionkowski concludes that Isa 2:2-4 envisions the eradication of war, but not the eradication of violence. Violence still exists in the text, because the eradication of war (direct violence) is achieved only by the establishment of one incontestable centre of authority (cultural violence) to which all will submit, namely Zion (Kamionkowski, 2008, pp. 44-45).

Kamionkowski (2008, p. 45) raises some further important points in her concluding remarks on religion and violence in the prophets. She states that:

Divine violence in prophetic literature is not simply a justified, proportional response to human violence. Human imaginations of divine violence cannot be studied as an isolated phenomenon; it is part of the same system that both condones and condemns the monarchy, that demands absolute loyalty to a single deity, that assigns distinct roles to individuals based on gender, circumstances of birth, and so on. All of these marginalize some while centring power with others; all of these involve levels of coercion; all of these are based on an “us versus them” model. The prophets were products of their age; cultural violence was so embedded in their world, as it is in ours today, that they were unable to step outside of themselves (Kamionkowski, 2008, p. 45).

In the final part of her article, Kamionkowski mentions that further studies of violence in the prophets are needed. Such studies should offer a more nuanced in-depth analysis of the structures of violence which confronted various prophets (Kamionkowski, 2008, p. 46).

### **3. Research Focus**

Kamionkowski’s essay inspired me to conduct further research on the existence of cultural violence in and of prophetic texts. Prophetic texts include some of the most violent texts in the Hebrew Bible. The texts of Ezek 16 and 23 I studied in my MTh thesis are a good example. Julia O’Brien (2010, p. 112) states that the “book of Nahum has long been noted for its fascination with war and the glee with which it calls for revenge. Graphic depictions of the siege of Nineveh describe war in bloody detail and refuse any empathy or care for those about to be destroyed” (O’Brien, 2010, p. 112). The prophetic books also give us a look into the workings of some of the most important institutions of the Hebrew Bible such as Covenant and Kingship.

Among the Major Prophets, the book of Jeremiah stands out as a violent book, particularly the poetic texts, which are exceedingly violent. Kathleen O’Connor (2012, pp. 47-55) describes the War Poems in Jer 4:5-6:30 as some of the most violent parts of the book. The war imagery in these texts continues in Jer 8:16-17; 10:17-22; and 13:20-27, with the latter focussing on the rape of Zion.

Emerging from the particularly violent period in Judah’s history before and during the Babylonian invasion (597-587 BCE), the discourses in the book of Jeremiah bear witness to the “haunting reality of a crumbling world” (Stulman, 1998, p. 11). With distinctive clarity, the imminent unravelling and approaching dissolution of well-established institutions, belief

systems and social structures, which for centuries appeared to be permanent and invincible, are announced in the book of Jeremiah (Stulman, 1998, p. 11).

Kathleen O’Conner (2012, p. 15) sums up the violent turmoil of the time, remarking that the book of Jeremiah shows in dramatic fashion the collapse of Judah, which experienced a major disaster of Babylonians attacks and consequent unspeakable suffering. The multiple invasions of the Babylonian empire caused major devastation and interrupted ordinary life vastly. Survival became doubtful. This destruction drained the “population through deaths in battle, starvation, disease, deportation, and by the creation of internal refugees in the wake of warfare.” The banishment of many of the monarchical state dignitaries, landowners and business owners, and functionaries of the courts and temple, would furthermore have caused immense economic and social disorder (O’Connor, 2012, p. 15).

There is also ambivalence concerning violence in the prophetic texts in general, which is significant for indicating that violence in the biblical texts and in religion is not as clear-cut and simple as one may assume. There are important shifts in the language of violence in the prophets. Alonzo Valentine (2008) states that with the exile of first Israel and then Judah, the prophets perceived YHWH to be acting in a different way. The image of YHWH as a warrior was replaced by another image of YHWH, where obedience to YHWH entailed seeking and pursuing peace within a “covenant of shalom” (Ezek 37:26; Isa 2:2-4; Mic 4:1-4) (Valentine, 2008).

Also, in the book of Jeremiah, at first glance a violent book with some of the most violent images in the Hebrew Bible, one finds non-violent texts, which will be the focus of this study. I will argue that in at least two of these texts, Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8, which may appear not to be violent in nature, violence lurks beneath the surface in the form of what Galtung calls cultural violence.

A study of violence and religion is quite a hefty undertaking which necessitates limiting the scope of such a research undertaking. It spans disciplines such as anthropology, the biomedical field, communications, criminology, cultural studies, economics, ethics, history, international relations, peace and conflict studies, political studies, psychology, public policy, sociology, and warfare and military studies. Therefore, it is necessary to identify a specific typology of violence in the field of violence studies. Kamionkowski used the theoretical framework of Galtung’s concept of cultural violence in her ideological critical study of Isa 2:2-4.

Galtung's concept of cultural violence was selected as it offers a different angle of incidence in the problem of violence and religion. The concept of cultural violence can make it possible to also read ostensibly non-violent texts as violent texts. Identifying the violent underpinnings of non-violent texts is one of the main aims of this research. I will focus on two aspects of cultural violence, as identified by Galtung, that show the intersection between ideology, religion, and violence, and how covenant can be identified as an example of religious/ideological cultural violence and kingship as an example of ideological/religious cultural violence.

In this regard, the book of Jeremiah offers insight into the question of non-violent texts that are actually quite violent. It offers information about the workings of the institutions of covenant (Jer 11:1-17) and kingship (Jer 22:1-23:8), and descriptions of covenant and kingship in texts in the corpus of those that can be considered violent in the book. Aligning with Kamionkowski's hypothesis that violence in the prophets must be examined in the texts where violence seems to be absent, one can argue that covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 offer examples of non-violent texts that can be studied in terms of an underlying framework of cultural violence.

With this research focus in mind, one can formulate the following research questions.

#### **4. Research Questions**

The primary research question of this study is:

- How does a clear understanding of cultural violence help the reader to identify the ways in which violence is depicted in the book of Jeremiah?

A secondary research question is:

- How does insight into cultural violence in the book Jeremiah help to create awareness of the problem of cultural violence in society today?

## 5. Research Objectives

In the first instance, this study seeks to understand the notion of cultural violence as a way to identify covert forms of violence that are not really viewed as such. This study seeks to situate the theory of cultural violence as propagated by Galtung in the locus of the larger conversation about violence and religion. It will thus explore the problem of cultural violence in selected texts in Jeremiah 1-25.

The study will conduct an ideological critical analysis of covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 as examples of cultural violence. These texts were chosen because they contain pertinent references to covenant and kingship. Also, the placement of these texts within the book of Jeremiah is important. The book of Jeremiah was formed around the actions and prophecies of the prophet Jeremiah in Jerusalem at the end of the seventh century (perhaps as early as 626 BCE or as late as 609 BCE) (Brueggemann, 2002, p. 177). The texts of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 are positioned in the first part of the book of Jeremiah (Chapters 1-25), namely the Oracles against Judah and Jerusalem.

According to Stulman (1998, pp. 30-31), Jer 11:1-17 resorts under a larger text unit namely Jer 11:1-17:26 that focusses on the dismantling of covenant ideology. Jer 22:1-23:8 forms part of a larger text unit namely Jer 21:1-24:10 that focusses on the dismantling of royal ideology (Stulman, 1998, pp. 30-31).

The two texts that will be the focus of this study also inform the title of this study namely “For King and Country.” This phrase is indicative of the way in which “For King and Country” has become a marker of cultural violence in a contemporary context.

## 6. Methodology

The following interrelated methodological approaches will be followed in this study:

Firstly, the selected texts of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 as representing the ideologies of covenant and kingship in Jeremiah respectively will be read through the hermeneutical framework of cultural violence. Therefore, Chapter 2 will be dedicated to a detailed summary of Galtung’s theoretical framework regarding direct, structural and cultural violence. This framework of Galtung will also be brought into discussion with other theories on violence as

well as with key arguments on religion and violence. This exposition will also discuss the exegetical approach of ideology criticism as a means of identifying the cultural violence embedded covertly in the direct and structural violence in the selected texts. An ideological analysis uses literary critical methods in a historical and social-scientific framework to analyse the social and historical world of the texts and how the texts try to convey a certain message (content) in a certain manner (rhetoric) (Yee, 1995).

Secondly, in Chapters 4 and 5 of this study, two texts from Jeremiah that deal with the theme of covenant and kingship will be read using the exegetical approach of ideology criticism. This particular methodological approach and how it relates to the study of Jeremiah will be outlined in greater detail in Chapter 2.

## **7. Research Outline**

This dissertation will follow the following outline:

In Chapter 1 the background and motivation to this study were explained. Attention was paid to the problem statement, research focus, research question/s, research objectives, and methodological approach of this study.

Chapter 2 will attend to violence as a phenomenon before turning to Galtung's discussion of cultural violence, which will serve as the hermeneutical framework for this study. It will show how Galtung's notion of cultural violence as it relates to structural violence and direct violence, is helpful for understanding the broader phenomenon of violence, especially as it pertains to the important conversation about religion and violence. I will also explore Galtung's theories about violence in discussion with other theories about violence. Lastly, I will examine ideological criticism as an exegetical approach to help me identify instances of cultural violence that are embedded in the book of Jeremiah. In this regard, time will be spent on defining ideological criticism. Then, ideological criticism will be applied practically, with an explanation of why ideological criticism will be helpful for investigating the cultural violence embedded in the texts of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8. This discussion on ideological criticism will also serve as the springboard from which contextual aspects of the book of Jeremiah will be highlighted to place one in the "world" of Jeremiah.

In Chapter 3 of this study, the world of the book of Jeremiah will be explored. Attention will be given to literary aspects of the book, including genre, structure, and exegetical problems. Attention will also be paid to historical, social and political aspects of the world of Jeremiah. The book originated in some of the most tumultuous political times of the Ancient Near East (ANE). These historical events will also be outlined in Chapter 3. The social world of Jeremiah was a world of inequality which the prophets frequently criticised harshly, therefore the social world of Jeremiah will also be investigated. Lastly, covenant and kingship as theological ideas originated and were practiced as religious institutions, besides purely political institutions, in the theological world of Israel and the ANE.

Chapter 4 will focus on covenant, as an ideological *and* a religious concept. Attention will be given to covenant's diachronic as well as synchronic aspects. A detailed exegetical analysis of Jer 11:1-17 will follow, focussing firstly on the literary aspects of covenant and how the concept features in the prose and poetry parts of Jer 11:1-17. The study will look at the actors and addressees in the text and their relationships. The intertextuality of covenant in the text with other parts of the Hebrew Bible and even other biblical and extra-biblical texts will also be investigated. The focus will then narrow to consider the cultural violence in Jer 11:1-17. In this part of Chapter 4, specific attention will be given to how the historical, social, and political aspects of the world of Jeremiah could have interacted with covenant, to imply that covenant in Jer 11:1-17 presents an example of cultural violence. The direct and structural violence aspects of covenant will come to the fore in this part of the investigation. Specific attention will also be paid to the theological aspects of Jer 11:1-17 that focus on the covenantal idea of divine election. Divine election will then be investigated as the one aspect of Jer 11:1-17 that makes it an example of cultural violence.

The focus of Chapter 5 will be on kingship, both as an ideological *and* a religious concept. The diachronic as well as synchronic aspects of kingship will be investigated, and a detailed exegetical analysis of Jer 22:1-23:8 will follow. The exegesis will firstly analyse the literary aspects of kingship and how it is used in the prose and poetry parts of Jer 22:1-23:8, which is a more elaborate text than Jer 11:1-17 and will therefore require a lengthier exegetical analysis. The study will look at the actors and addressees in the text and their relationships. The intertextuality of kingship in the text with other parts of the Hebrew Bible and even other biblical and extra-biblical texts will also be explored. Then the cultural violence in Jer 22:1-23:8 will be investigated, with specific attention to how the historical, social, and political aspects of the world of Jeremiah could have interacted with kingship to imply that in Jer 22:1-

23:8 kingship is an example of cultural violence. The direct and structural violence aspects of kingship will also emerge in this part of the investigation. The theological aspects of Jer 22:1-23:8 that focus on the kingship idea of divine favouritism will be considered. Divine favouritism will then be investigated as the one aspect of Jer 22:1-23:8 that makes it an example of cultural violence.

In conclusion, Chapter 6 will consider how the phenomena of cultural violence embedded within kingship and covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 respectively, pertains to the way in which these concepts feature in a contemporary South African context. Attention will be paid to how such an understanding can contribute to structural and direct violence in a South African and African context and can therefore apply to the cultural violence inherent in these ideas. Lastly, I will consider the contribution of the research to the church and academia in contemporary society, in addition to considering further avenues of research.

## CHAPTER 2

### JOHAN GALTUNG'S THEORIES ON VIOLENCE

#### 1. Introduction

At the heart of this chapter lies the quest to understand the phenomenon of violence better. But can violence be isolated as a distinct phenomenon and then studied *per se*, much like dissecting a frog and studying only the frog? Is it possible to study a phenomenon such as violence objectively, or is violence embedded too deeply in one's subconscious to be unearthed realistically and then discussed objectively? Studies of violence have been attempted from various angles. It may be easier to study occurrences of violence in which one is not involved directly. Closely related to this issue is the question of occupying the moral high ground if the violence being investigated is in a form which oneself has never committed. One cannot ignore the syllogism that states: humans are violent; I am human therefore, I am violent.

It can be argued that in its most basic form (as in the cases of direct violence), violence is an essential aspect of human nature as has been propagated through the ages. John Renard (2012, p. 1) quotes Thomas Hobbes having famously observed in his book *Leviathan* that human life is "nasty, brutish, and short." He also remarks that Hobbes and other influential philosophers have identified violence as virtually a "state of nature" that has haunted humankind endlessly (Renard, 2012, p. 1). John Carlson (2011, p. 14) argues that violence has always been part of human societies, which used religious, economic, ethnic, tribal and political reasons to justify their violence. To the question of the relationship between violence and the secular state, Carlson (2011, p. 14) answers that "violence and war neither began nor ended with the secular nation-state and therefore are not essentially religious, secular, nor even political: they are human" (Carlson, 2011, p. 14).

One can also reason that violence is not necessarily an essential aspect of humanity as there are peaceful cultures. Aggressive behaviour is not only the result of biological or genetic factors, environmental interactions do play a role in aggressive behaviour (Benkelfat, et al., 2008). It can be stated that people are violent because society is violent. This can open a "chicken and egg" debate: Are people essentially violent and that causes society to be violent?

Or does an inherently violent society breed individuals who are violent? A strong case can be made for the latter argument.

Violence then, can be described as multi-faceted and inherently human, although societal factors cannot be ignored. If one argues that violence is inherently human, why is it not more prevalent? I would argue though that it may be more prevalent than meets the eye. This brings one to the multi-manifesting nature of violence, which approaches the multi-faceted nature of violence. Violence can be perceived differently by different people, depending on whether one is on the receiving or dispensing end of the violence. As was argued with regard to the example of the Marikana massacre, what can be perceived by some as the rightful responsibility of the police to maintain law and order, can be perceived by the victims of the massacre as a blatant act of violence. At Marikana, the police allegedly used force to pacify a violent situation; i.e., violence manifested itself as lawful force. But this is from the viewpoint of the authorities. From the viewpoint of the victims of the massacre, violence was committed against them.

The chapter will then demonstrate how the notion of cultural violence, as developed by Johan Galtung<sup>4</sup>, offers a helpful framework according to which a number of selected texts of Jeremiah pertaining to the themes of covenant and kingship will be analysed. First this chapter will discuss the development of the concept of cultural violence as Galtung's concept of cultural violence is deeply embedded in the wider theoretical field of the study of violence. Galtung (1975) uses medical terminology, like "prognosis" (the likely outcome without intervention), "diagnosis" (the source of suffering), and "therapy" (efforts to reduce violence and suffering), to understand and address conflicts around the world. Galtung (1975) furthermore uses the metaphor of a sick body to explain his definitional search in the field of violence to assist with his study in peace research. According to this definition of the body metaphor, the "peaceful" body is the ideal state. Unless this ideal state exists, there is a disease, viz., the presence of violence. As in the field of medicine in which a thorough study of diseases,

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<sup>4</sup> Johan Galtung was the founder of the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO). In 1964 he founded the "Journal of Peace Research." Galtung is internationally referred to as "the father of peace studies". Galtung's theories on direct, structural and cultural violence still have an influence on academic discourses covering different disciplines. It is mentioned (cf. p. 56. Chapter 2 of this study) by fellow academics that "Galtung's work remains relevant to contemporary theory and practice, and that his approach is particularly well suited to understanding our present moment and our collective past".

viruses and germs is necessary to develop the medical science of health, it is impossible to develop a science of peace if violence is not also studied thoroughly.

## 2. Galtung's Definition of Violence

Galtung (1975, p. 111) argues that “violence is present when human beings are influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations.”<sup>5</sup> He then unpacks this definition by showing that violence is defined as what causes the difference between the “actual” and “potential”, thus between what is and what could have been. By this definition, violence is that which increases the space between the actual and the potential, and that which will hamper the narrowing of this space. He uses the example of someone dying of tuberculosis in the eighteenth century, when his/her death would not have been seen as violent because death would have been unavoidable. However, if someone dies of tuberculosis today despite living in an age when tuberculosis does have a cure, then violence is present according to the definition of the difference between the actual and the potential. Galtung (1975, p. 111) further argues that when “the potential is higher than the actual, the difference is avoidable, and when it is avoidable, then violence is present. Also, when the actual is unavoidable, then violence is not present, even if the actual is at a very low level.” He also uses the example of life expectancy – a life expectancy of thirty years would not have been violent for a person who lived in the Neolithic age, but if a person’s life expectancy is thirty years as a result of wars and social injustice, or both, then violence is present (Galtung, 1975, p. 111).

Galtung (1975, p. 111) states that “the potential level of realisation, is that which is possible with a given level of insight and resources.” When this potential level of realisation is used for other purposes or is monopolised by a group or class, then the actual falls below the potential, and there us violence in the system. These types of indirect violence do not even include direct violence where the means of realisation are not merely withheld, but directly minimised. To explain this, Galtung uses the example of a war. War consists of direct violence since hurting or killing someone certainly places his/her “actual somatic realisation” below his/her “potential somatic realisation.” But indirect violence also exists in war. Wars are normally started by nations and are sometimes prolonged by the nations involved for political

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<sup>5</sup> Galtung does not accept the limited concept of violence as physical damage, or the denial of health alone, caused by an actor with the intention of this being the consequence. This definition of violence does not take cognisance of the fact that highly unacceptable social orders are also forms of violence.

and/or economic reasons, with the result that participants in the war cannot realise their potential (Galtung, 1975, p. 111).

### **3. Galtung's Dimensions of Violence**

To frame his discussion of the dimensions of violence, Galtung (1975, p. 111) considers it helpful to envisage violence in terms of influence. A “complete influence relation” presupposes an influencer, a person who is influenced, and a mode of influencing. With people, this relation is simple: a subject, an object and an action. The problem with this relation is that it focusses on the interpersonal relation between the subject and the object alone and does not take cognisance of the relation where either the object or the subject or both are absent. To approach these truncated versions of violence, Galtung (1975, pp. 111-112) describes two dimensions of violence characterising the mode of action, or the violent action itself (Galtung, 1975, pp. 111-112).

Galtung's (1975, p. 112) first distinction is between physical and psychological violence. He states that “physical violence occurs when human beings are hurt somatically, to the point of killing”. The scope of physical violence can also include “biological violence” which reduces physical efficiency (below what is potentially possible), and physical violence which increases the limits on human movements. He uses the example of people who are put in chains or are imprisoned, but it can also include people who are not given fair access to transportation, thus monopolising mobility for the elite and immobilising the rest of the population. The main distinction between physical and psychological violence is that physical violence “works on the body” and psychological violence “works on the soul.” The scope of psychological violence includes brainwashing, lies, various kinds of indoctrination, threats, etc. – actions that can minimise mental potentialities (Galtung, 1975, p. 112).

Galtung's (1975, pp. 112-113) second distinction, which expands a conceptual framework of violence, is the distinction between “a negative and a positive approach to influence”. By this reasoning, a subject (influencer) can influence an object by punishing the object for misbehaviour or wrongful actions, thus revealing a negative approach to influence. A positive approach to influence is where no or few limits are placed on the potential realisations of an object, but a culture is created in which the object starts to limit his/her own potential realisations – violence is also committed in that the object can still not realise his/her

potential. Galtung uses the contemporary example of a consumer culture to illustrate this point. A consumer culture is a created culture whereby the object being influenced gives his/her consent to be influenced. A consumer society is rewards-oriented, rewarding the object with a feeling of euphoria, but can also put the object in debt, thereby limiting his/her potential realisations (Galtung, 1975, pp. 112-113).

Galtung (1975, p. 113) makes a third distinction in terms of the object who is hurt by violent action. With this distinction Galtung (1975, p. 113) stretches the conceptual framework of violence to actions that do not initially appear to be violent. He argues that

when a person, a group, a nation is displaying the means of physical violence, whether throwing around stones or testing nuclear arms, there may not be violence in the sense that anyone is hit or hurt, but there is nevertheless the threat of physical violence and an indirect threat of mental violence that may even be characterised as some kind of psychological violence since it constrains human action.

Galtung (1975, p. 113) uses an example of the balance of power doctrine to illustrate this point: The balance of power doctrine cannot hurt an object, but in constraining other nations in terms of realising their own potentialities by displaying the means of physical violence, violence is still committed (Galtung, 1975, p. 113).

Galtung's fourth distinction (1975, pp. 113-114) concerns the subject (person) who acts out violence. The question here is whether one can speak of violence if direct violence is not committed. It is at this stage in Galtung's argument that the distinction between direct violence and structural violence becomes clear. With direct violence and structural violence, influenced objects may be killed, mutilated, hit, hurt or manipulated. Direct violence is inflicted by tangible and real influencers. However, in the case of structural violence, it is possible that no tangible and real influencer exists because the violence is, as Galtung says "built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances". Galtung (1975, p. 114) elucidates further on structural violence by pointing out that the uneven distribution of resources, the distortion of income distribution, or the uneven distribution of education and literacy are all examples of the existence of structural violence. According to Galtung the pinnacle of structural violence occurs when the "power to decide over the distribution of resources is distributed unevenly". This can cause an influenced object with low income to also be low on health, low on education, and low on power. Touching briefly on how Marxist criticism of capitalist societies and liberal criticism of socialist societies both point out the structural violence of the other's ideology, Galtung (1975, p. 114) emphasises that

structural aspects can seem innocent, but when “people are starving when this is objectively avoidable, then violence is committed, regardless of whether there is a clear subject-action-object relation”.

Galtung (1975, p. 114) summarises the difference between structural violence and direct violence by showing that “direct violence with a clear subject-object relation is manifest because it is visible as action”. Direct violence is dramatic and personal because influencing subjects act violently towards influenced objects. Galtung also remarks that direct violence is “easily captured and expressed verbally since it has the same structure as elementary sentences in most (Indo-European) languages, namely subject-verb-object, with both subject and object being persons”.

Structural violence, on the other hand, does not have the same subject-object relation as direct violence, because the violence is part of the structure. Galtung (1975, p. 114) uses the example of intimate partner violence to differentiate between direct and structural violence. Direct violence happens when one husband is violent towards one wife, but when millions of husbands keep millions of wives in ignorance, then structural violence is possible. In societies where the life expectancy of the upper classes is double that of the lower classes, structural violence is active. Violence exists even when there are no tangible and real influencing subjects directly attacking and killing influenced objects (Galtung, 1975, p. 114).

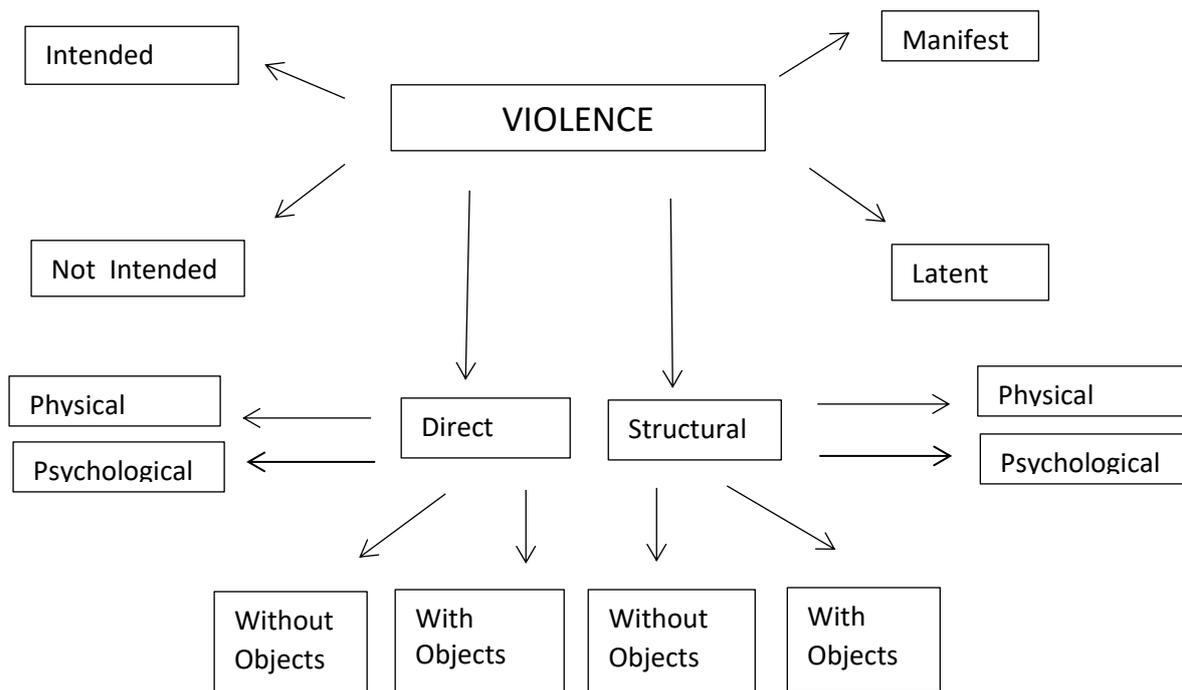
Galtung (1975, p. 115) draws a fifth distinction between “intended” and/or “unintended” violence. This distinction becomes relevant in apportioning guilt. In Roman jurisprudence and Judaeo-Christian ethics the concept of guilt is linked to intention more than to consequence, with the result that the present definition of violence leans strongly towards the consequences thereof. This creates a bias in thinking about violence, in which violence becomes the focus of ethics, which leaves structural violence outside the scope of ethics (Galtung, 1975, p. 115).

Galtung (1975, p. 115) identifies a sixth traditional distinction between “manifest” and “latent” violence. Manifest violence can be observed in the direct and structural forms, but not every time, since “potential realisations” are difficult to observe. Latent violence is violence that does not exist but has the “potential” to happen (Galtung, 1975, p. 115). In the case of direct violence, latent violence is when a small challenge can instigate considerable atrocity and killing. According to Galtung (1975, p. 115), direct violence therefore existed in a latent form the moment before the first direct violence erupted. The concept of latent direct violence

indicates an unstable equilibrium, where stabilising mechanisms fail to protect the level of actual realisation sufficiently against deterioration (Galtung, 1975, p. 115). According to this definition, an example of latent violence would be the situation that existed in Rwanda before the mass genocide of 1994.<sup>6</sup>

One can summarise the abovementioned six dimensions of violence in terms of the following typology of violence suggested by Galtung (Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1: A Typology of Violence**



In the case of latent structural violence Galtung (1975, p. 115) describes “a relatively egalitarian structure that is insufficiently protected against sudden feudalisation or against crystallisation into a much more stable, even petrified, hierarchical structure” (Galtung, 1975, p. 115). For instance, one may argue that in South Africa the ANC led government after 1994 may have envisioned a relatively egalitarian society, but one wonders whether such society is

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<sup>6</sup> The mass genocide that took place in Rwanda involved Hutu extremists who systematically killed perhaps as many as three quarters of the Tutsi population (Anon., 2015).

sufficiently protected against structural changes that seek only to exchange one petrified hierarchical structure with another.

Galtung (1975, p. 117) offers concluding remarks on the important distinction between direct and structural violence, which show the “movement in perception” between direct and structural violence and assist with understanding cultural violence more fully because cultural violence is in constant interaction with direct and structural violence. To understand cultural violence, one should “see” structural violence and not be caught up in only seeing and analysing direct violence. Direct violence is visible in that the influenced object of direct violence usually observes and experiences the violence and may want to make his/her voice heard in objection to the violence. Structural violence is normally invisible, because the influenced object of structural violence may be convinced not to observe the violence committed against his/her person at all. Direct violence represents change – it is usually active and dynamic, whereas structural violence is silent, normally invisible and essentially static (Galtung, 1975, p. 117).

Furthermore, Galtung (1975, p. 117) makes the interesting observation that in a stable society, direct violence is noticeable, and structural violence is not. On the other hand, in a fast-changing society, direct violence becomes less noticeable and more accepted, whereas structural violence becomes more visible. Structural violence also appears more stable compared to direct violence, whereas direct violence shows noticeable variations over time.

According to Galtung, (1975, p. 111) the stability of structural violence can be explained by the fact that social structures normally do not change much over time, therefore violence that is built into social structures, will not change much over time either. Direct violence is more dependent on the actions of individuals and, because individual actions are usually more subjective by nature, direct violence tends to be less stable over time. Direct violence is therefore more easily noticeable even though the inherent stability of structural violence contains much more violence (Galtung, 1975, p. 117). However, Galtung stresses that one must investigate how direct and structural violence are practised to make these distinctions less abstract.

### **a. Direct Violence**

Galtung (1975, p. 118) states that direct violence can be analysed more easily because “an instrumental approach to the problem of violence” can be followed according to the subject-

task-object relation. The task is well-specified – the influencing subject physically hurting an influenced object. Galtung interestingly also shows that this is a production relation, that can follow a developmental path much the same as in the economic sector of society, where labour is made more productive by introducing better tools. Therefore, direct violence can also be made more productive by the introduction of increasingly destructive weapons and effective armies (Galtung, 1975, p. 118).

Galtung (1975, p. 118) argues that one can follow a number of approaches in developing a typology for direct, physical violence. The tools used become important, beginning with the human body itself. The influencing subject can use his/her fists to damage the influenced object even to the point of death. An organisation can also be a tool used in direct violence, beginning with an individual representing the organisation, and moving up to modern armies (Galtung, 1975, p. 118).

Galtung (1975, pp. 118-119) prefers a more “systematic approach” which he can infer from observing the influenced object of violence. The influenced object has an anatomy (structure) and functions that this anatomy can perform, making the development of typologies based on these aspects possible. Direct violence is the process which aims to destroy the structure (the human anatomy) itself, a process which aims to prevent the machine from functioning by the prohibition of output (movement) and the prohibition of input (air, water, food in the case of the body, and sources of energy). Output (movement) can be somatic, with no movement being the limiting factor (Galtung, 1975, pp. 118-119). Galtung (1975, p. 119) admits that it is hard to differentiate between psychological and physical direct violence, because psychological techniques can influence physical movements, and vice versa where physical actions can have mental consequences.

**Table 2.1: A Typology of Direct Somatic Violence** (Galtung, 1975, p. 119)

<b>Focussed on the Anatomy</b>	<b>Focussed on the Physiology</b>
Crushing (fist fights, catapults)	Denial of air (choking, strangulation)
Tearing (hanging, stretching, cutting)	Denial of water (dehydration)

Piercing (knives, spears, bullets)	Denial of food (starvation due to siege, embargo)
Burning (arson, flame thrower)	Denial of movement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By bodily constraints (chains, gas)</li> <li>• By space constraints (prison, detention, exile)</li> <li>• By brain control (brainwashing)</li> </ul>
Poisoning (in water and food, in gases)	
Evaporation (as in nuclear explosion)	

In Galtung's later research (1990), theorising on direct violence, where he brings direct and structural violence into discussion with cultural violence, he expands on the abovementioned typology by introducing the four classes of basic needs, which include: survival needs (survival, life, absence of violence, security); well-being needs (water, food, shelter, clothes, education, growth, well-being, togetherness); identity needs (politics, participation, human rights, social justice); and freedom needs (work, creativity, freedom, mobility).

**Table 2.2: An Expanded Typology of Direct Violence** (Galtung, 1990, p. 292)

	<b>Survival Needs</b>	<b>Well-Being Needs</b>	<b>Identity Needs</b>	<b>Freedom Needs</b>
Direct Violence	Killing	Maiming Siege Sanctions Misery	De-socialisation Resocialisation Secondary Citizenship	Repression Detention Expulsion

In this typology, the basic need of survival is negated by death and mortality; the basic need of well-being is negated by misery and morbidity; the basic need of identity is negated by alienation; and the basic need for freedom is negated by repression.

Galtung (1990, p. 293) acknowledges that killing (survival needs) and maiming (well-being needs) constitute two clear categories of direct violence. The other categories under well-being needs, namely sanctions (modern term) and siege/blockade (classical term), can be seen

as non-violent because nobody gets killed or hurt. But for the influenced objects of these forms of violence the intentional killing is just slower – by means of lack of medical attention and malnutrition. The influenced objects of these forms of violence are typically the vulnerable, namely children, the elderly and the poor. The influencing subject of such a form of violence does not have to deal with the violence directly because the influencing subject has succeeded in lengthening the causal chain of the violence. The influencing subject of the violence can also be non-violent because the influencing subject offers the influenced object a “chance to submit,” thereby expunging the influenced object’s freedom and identity (Galtung, 1990, p. 293).

Direct violence also influences identity needs. The influenced object can be alienated from his/her own culture but not fully accepted in a new culture. This means that the influenced object gets de-socialised away from his/her own culture to be re-socialised into another culture. These processes of de-socialising and re-socialising create an influenced object with identity needs that do not fully realised their potential. Re-socialisation and de-socialisation do not necessarily go hand in hand, but these terms can indicate the creation of a second-class citizenship. These terms entail the subjugation of a group, be it a minority or not, by forcing the group to submit to a dominant culture that is not its own (Galtung, 1990, p. 293).

Concerning freedom needs, Galtung (1990, p. 293) states that repression can take various explicit and implicit forms, in comparison to detention and expulsion that are self-explanatory. Detention points to the locking *in* of people in concentration camps and prisons, whereas expulsion points to the locking *out* of people as in exiling them to distant parts of the country or even abroad (Galtung, 1990, p. 293).

## **b. Structural Violence**

Galtung (1975, pp. 119-120) argues that the construction of a corresponding typology for structural violence is possible. If one follows the point of departure that structural violence is all about inequality, especially in the distribution of power, then structural violence is measurable. Inequality tends to survive even if its world changes. If inequality survives, the world behind the influencing subjects of direct violence, needs to be investigated. It is this world that upholds inequality. To investigate this world and its structural violence, it pays to comprehend the “science of social structure,” and particularly stratification. Understanding the

ideas of the mechanisms of system, actor, rank and level, and structure are fundamental for understanding structural violence (Galtung, 1975, pp. 119-120).

Galtung (1975, p. 120) describes actors as goal-oriented entities, organised in systems in which they interact with each other. This interaction between actors takes place in a system. Actors can also interact in multiple systems. A structure is the sum of all of these systems of interactions for a given set of actors. In any given structure, an actor may have a low rank in one system, and a high one in another; or actors may have either consistently low or consistently high ranks.

Galtung (1975, p. 120) also states that any given actor in a nation can be a structure. Actors can manifest in term of territories, organisations, and associations. Interaction, however, is part and parcel of all systems; interaction that make it possible for values to be somehow exchanged. Galtung (1975, p. 120) points out that it is sensible to investigate the value-distribution in a particular system after a continuous operation, and whether this distribution has been non-egalitarian or egalitarian (Galtung, 1975, p. 120).

Galtung (1975, p. 121) identifies six factors that make it possible for non-egalitarian distribution to be maintained, and can consequently be mechanisms of structural violence:

(1) Linear ranking order – the ranking is complete, leaving no doubt as to who is higher in any pair of actors; (2) A-cyclical interaction pattern – all actors are connected, but in a one-way flow; there is only one “correct” path of interaction; (3) Correlation between rank and centrality – the higher the rank of the actor in the system, the more central the actor’s position in the interaction network; (4) Congruence between the systems – the interaction networks are structurally similar; (5) Concordance between the ranks – if an actor is high in one system, then the actor also tends to be high in another system in which the actor participates; (6) High rank coupling between levels –the actors in each substructure are represented in the integrated structure by the highest-ranking actor in the given substructure.

Galtung presents examples to illustrate these factors, examining their negation starting with number six.

The example Galtung uses to illustrate high rank coupling between levels is a government that is supposed to be represented abroad by the foreign minister but is represented by the president or prime minister. If the top actor in the substructure is made the representative of the integrated structure, it means the top actor can enhance his/her power by monopolising information from the integrated structure, which he/she can then convert into power at the substructure level (Galtung, 1975, p. 121).

To explain the other factors that uphold non-egalitarian distributions, Galtung (1975, p. 122) pictures a situation where the opposite occurs. When there is no concordance between the ranks, it means that all ranks are the same. As a result, systems of inequality will be less reinforcing and less consistent. The amount of disequilibrium in the system, would also counter any stability. Also, when there is no congruence between structures, interaction systems between actors will be flexible and generalisations of these systems will be minimised. Moreover, if the central position in a given system does not belong to the actor with the highest rank, his/her power will be curtailed, with a further decrease in power made possible by actors with a lower rank being permitted direct interaction. Finally, non-linear pyramidal ranking order also allows for more flexibility and leeway in a particular system (Galtung, 1975, p. 122).

Galtung (1975, p. 122) develops the basic proposition that states that “social systems will tend to develop all six mechanisms unless deliberately and persistently prevented from doing so. Social systems will thus set the pattern for an aggravation of inequality.” This aggravation can be of such magnitude that in some structures the lowest ranking actors are disadvantaged not only in terms of their potential realisations, but even to below their bare minimum actual realisations. The aggravation of inequality will manifest in increased mortality and morbidity rates. The lowest ranking actors are disadvantaged structurally to a point where chances to organise become almost impossible, increasing their fragility (Galtung, 1975, p. 122). As with direct violence, Galtung also expands his theorising on structural violence by incorporating the four classes of basic needs (Table 2:3).

Galtung (1990, p. 293) furthermore emphasises that to discuss the categories of structural violence, one needs an example of a violent structure in conjunction with a discourse identifying the aspects of the violent structure and their relation to the needs categories. Galtung (1990, p. 293) presents, as an archetypal violent structure, the category of “exploitation”. This occurs when a structure, and even more so an unequal structure, contains a certain interaction between people and the structure where one group of people can be rewarded more than another, which is called exploitation. Galtung (1990, p. 293) describes the people who are advantaged the most as the top dogs, and the people who are disadvantaged the most as the underdogs in these interactions with a structure. When the underdogs starve or die as a result of lack of medical treatment, they suffer from this unequal treatment Galtung calls this “exploitation A” under the survival needs heading. The unequal treatment the underdogs receive from the structure can also cause “a permanent state of misery,” that includes illness

and malnutrition. Galtung puts this unequal treatment under the well-being needs heading, called “exploitation B.”

Galtung (1990, p. 294) makes an interesting point when he argues that a violent structure “is able to leave marks not only on the human body but also on the mind and spirit.” The four terms of structural violence under the headings of identity needs and freedom needs functions therefore impede consciousness formation and mobilisation. Consciousness formation and mobilisation are also the conditions necessary for resisting exploitation. With penetration, the structure inserts the top dog in the underdog’s environment. With segmentation, the structure gives the underdog only a very limited view of reality. Penetration and segmentation will help to limit the formation and mobilisation of the underdog’s identity needs. Marginalisation, where the underdog is kept on the outside, in combination with fragmentation, where the underdogs are kept away from each other, will help to limit the formation and mobilisation of the underdog’s freedom needs (Galtung, 1990, p. 294).

**Table 2.3: An Expanded Typology of Structural Violence (Galtung, 1990, p. 292)**

	<b>Survival Needs</b>	<b>Well-Being Needs</b>	<b>Identity Needs</b>	<b>Freedom Needs</b>
Structural Violence	Exploitation A	Exploitation B	Penetration Segmentation	Marginalisation Fragmentation

### **c. The Relation between Direct and Structural Violence**

Galtung expands the relation between direct and structural violence by posing a number of specific questions. The first question is whether it can really be said that there is a distinction between direct and structural violence. Galtung (1975, pp. 122-123) points out that this distinction is not so obvious because it neglects marks of the structural element in direct violence, and the direct element in structural violence. According to Galtung, an influencing subject may decide to be violent, not for any particular personal reason, but more because of expectations forced on the influencing subject by the norms and roles of the structures he/she is part of. A violent structure can be perceived as merely an abstract idea if it is not supported by individual action. Galtung warns that these arguments of whether there is a distinction

between direct and structural violence, can minimise the real distinction between direct violence and structural violence. This minimisation can cause an influencing subject partaking in direct violence to use, as an excuse, the expectations of the structure. This minimisation can also help maintain an exploitative social structure (Galtung, 1975, pp. 122-123).

Galtung (1975, pp. 122-123) admits that a distinction nevertheless remains between violence that has a clear subject-action-object route, and violence where the subject is immersed in the structure. One way to determine this, is to determine how the violence is seen by the influencing subject and by the influenced object of the violence. The primary concern then is not the subjective intentions, but the objective consequences (Galtung, 1975, p. 123).

Following this line of argumentation, Galtung (1975, p. 123) then asks the second question: “Does one type of violence not presuppose the manifest presence of the other? Or are direct and structural violence not only logically but also empirically, independent of each other?” He agrees that there can be a correlation in that structures permeated with structural violence, also display above average prevalence of direct violence. What Galtung (1975, p. 123) emphasises, is that structural violence is “person-invariant.” Therefore, it will continue even if the influencing subjects change. On the other hand, direct violence is “structure-invariant” – the violence will continue even if the structures change.

The third question Galtung (1975, pp. 122, 124) asks, is whether there is any causal relationship between direct and structural violence where incidences of structural violence can be traced back to past incidences of direct violence, or where incidences of direct violence can be traced back to past incidences of structural violence. He uses the example of an exploitative race society or caste system to elucidate the first incidence of structural violence arising from direct violence. This society or system could have been caused by a large-scale invasion that left only the top dogs of the victors in charge after the ending of the hostilities. This example shows that incidences of structural violence can be traced back to incidences of direct violence. Galtung uses the example of a bully to elucidate the second incidence of direct violence arising from structural violence. A bully can be the final product of socialisation in a violent structure, thus making the bully’s tendency to partake in direct violence a consequence of the violent structure that existed before the bully was even born (Galtung, 1975, p. 124).

It stands to reason then, according to Galtung (1975, p. 125), that the possibility does exist that “manifest structural violence” presupposes “latent direct violence”. Galtung (1975, p. 125) mentions an interesting phenomenon in structures to ground his argument. In the event

that a particular structure is threatened, the actors most benefitting from structural violence (normally the high-ranking actors), will make an effort to “preserve the *status quo*” to safeguard their interests. According to this phenomenon, various groups and persons will be active in maintaining or rescuing the structure when the structure is threatened. The higher up in ranks the actor is, the more he/she will make an effort to maintain or rescue the structure. These actors may not be directly involved in direct violence but will not hesitate to use direct violence indirectly to maintain or rescue the structure. Galtung (1975, p. 125) describes this in another way: the high ranking members may “mobilise the police, the army, the thugs, the general social underbrush” while they remain at a more discreet distance from the turmoil of direct violence. The violence consequently carried out by the police can be seen as direct violence, but is actually violence expected by the structure (Galtung, 1975, p. 125).

Galtung argues further that one can also underestimate the significance of a number of factors in the aforementioned example of structural violence:

(1) the extent to which the “tools of oppression” may have internalised the repressive structure so that their direct violence is an expression of internalised norms as well as institutionalised norms; (2) the extent to which those who benefit from the structural violence may themselves have severe and sincere doubts about that specific structure and prefer changes, even to their own detriment; (3) the extent to which any challenge to the structure reveals more about the dynamics of interpersonal relations than about the structure where personal confrontations with the police is just that: personal confrontations with police; and (4) the extent to which all members in a violent structure are involved in the structure and are therefore all responsible because they could have impeded the functioning of the violent structure seriously by their non-cooperation (Galtung, 1975, p. 126).

Galtung (1975, p. 126) turns this proposition around by stating that “manifest direct violence” can also presuppose “latent structural violence”. He uses the example of an egalitarian structure kept in business by direct violence, where structural violence will emerge as soon as the direct violence is abolished. Even if a structure such as this has not been identified, Galtung emphasises that “if the absence of direct violence is combined with a pattern of structural violence, then direct violence is nevertheless close by”. He also emphasises that “if the absence of structural violence is combined with direct violence, then structural violence is close by” (Galtung, 1975, p. 126).

Galtung (1975, p. 127) reaches the centre of contemporary political debate by turning to the question: “Is one type of violence necessary or sufficient to abolish the other type?” In this regard, the following four points become relevant:

1. *Structural violence is sufficient to abolish direct violence.*

Galtung (1975, p. 127) states that this point's validity is limited and short-term. A situation can exist where structural violence is sustained to a degree that direct violence between the groups divided by the structure is dissolved. This can mean that the lower ranking actors are too isolated and too awed by the higher-ranking actors of the structure and therefore the higher-ranking actors have nothing to fear. Furthermore, the structure is only practised between the groups and not inside the groups. This can cause this structure to be stable, but it cannot remain so forever, and when this social structure is upset, it can release outbursts of direct violence. Therefore, it can be said that it is possible for a specific structure to compartmentalise direct violence for a time. This can lead to a continuity of periods where direct violence is absent (Galtung, 1975, p. 127).

2. *Structural violence is necessary to abolish direct violence.*

This statement can be questioned since direct violence will stop when the decision is made not to practise direct violence. The question then begs whether certain conditions existed which influenced the decision not to practise direct violence. Structural violence does represent an alternative to obtain order in the sense that the same results can probably be obtained by using structural violence as using direct violence (Galtung, 1975, p. 127).

3. *Direct violence is sufficient to abolish structural violence.*

According Galtung (1975, p. 127), the validity of this position is also limited and short-term. It is possible that direct violence aimed at the higher-ranking actors in a structure can limit their physical capacities, causing a dereliction of duties necessary for the structure to function properly. To overthrow the higher-ranking actors in a violent structure does not mean that the violent structure itself is abolished. Galtung (1975, p. 127) points to the rule and not the exception when he describes how "the new power group may immediately fills the vacancies, retaining the structure, only changing the names of the incumbents and possibly the rationalisation of the structure, in which case the structural violence is not even abolished for a short term" (Galtung, 1975, p. 127). Galtung's example may ring true for the regime change after 1994 in South Africa. Galtung (1975, pp. 127-128) also paints a scenario where the structure may reappear in due time, because of "internal dynamism" or because it has after all been "firmly imprinted on the minds of the new power holders and has been present all the time in latent form".

4. *Direct violence is necessary to abolish structural violence.*

Galtung (1975, p. 128) refers to this point's revolutionary currency. Even so, he still thinks that one can argue against this premise on empirical grounds, on theoretical grounds, and

on axiological grounds. Empirically one can refer to all the cases where structural change was able to decrease the amount of structural violence inherent in the structure. It can also be argued that there are cases where no basic change in structure took place, as higher-ranking actors would have resorted to direct violence if there had been a fundamental threat to their security. Theoretically, it just makes more sense to change a structure structurally. Galtung (1975, p. 128) rephrases the theoretical argument by stating that the indispensability of direct violence could be the fetishising of direct violence. Galtung's axiological argument frames the other two arguments by stating that even if direct violence could be crucial, on theoretical and/or empirical grounds, it would only mean that a good reason exists for a systematic search not to make direct violence so crucial (Galtung, 1975, p. 128).

Galtung (1975, pp. 128-129) closes his arguments on structural and direct violence by pointing out that even if one could find more data in researching direct violence, it would become more difficult when researching and finding data to show the functioning of structural violence (Galtung, 1975, pp. 128-129).

Although the focus of this study is on cultural violence, this extensive description of direct and structural violence in Galtung's earlier research in 1975 is still necessary to investigate the relations and causal links between direct and structural violence of covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8. Furthermore, this extensive description of direct and structural violence introduced Galtung's more integrated typology of direct and structural violence which he used in his theorising on cultural violence in the later parts of the twentieth century. It therefore bridges the theoretical gap between Galtung's theorising on structural and direct violence in his earlier work and his later work. Galtung's theorising on violence did not stop with direct and structural violence. Cultural violence is a later development in Galtung's reflection on violence, but one that is closely associated with both direct and structural violence.

## **d. Cultural Violence**

### **i. Definition of Cultural Violence**

According to Galtung (1990, pp. 291-292), cultural violence is defined as “those aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence”. He furthermore states that symbols such as stars, crosses and crescents, flags, military parades and anthems, the omnipresent portrait of the Leader, posters and provocative speeches are all aspects of cultural violence, and although representing aspects of culture, they do not necessarily reflect whole cultures (Galtung, 1990, pp. 291-292).

To explain the proportional violent character of culture, Galtung (1990, p. 291) uses an example where a person can trigger a potential killer by arguing that killing is a form of self-realisation. The person arguing thus may prove that the English language can express such a thought, but not that the English language is a violent language. Violence cannot permeate entire cultures. In the process of identifying cultural violence in cultures, the danger of culture stereotyping is a distinct possibility. Therefore, it is better to state “Aspect A of culture C is an example of cultural violence,” than “culture C is violent”. It is also possible that a specific culture can have so many aspects that are of a violent nature, that the specific culture can seem violent (Galtung, 1990, p. 292).

According to Galtung (1990, p. 292), a specific culture can reveal violence so diverse and extensive, permeating the whole culture, that it can warrant being considered a violent culture (Galtung, 1990, p. 292). To identify a specific culture as containing aspects of cultural violence, it is necessary to have an even closer look at what exactly constitutes cultural violence.

Galtung (1990, p. 292), defines the phenomenon of cultural violence by stating that “cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right – or at least not wrong”. The legitimising of violent acts is an important reason why cultural violence is so hard to identify.

Galtung (1990, p. 292) again stresses that violence studies are mostly concerned with acts of violence and why violence is committed. Cultural violence focusses on the way in “which the act of direct violence and the fact of structural violence is legitimised and thus rendered acceptable in society”. Galtung uses another way of explaining cultural violence by

showing that cultural violence “changes the moral colour of an act from red/wrong to green/right or at least yellow/acceptable” (Galtung, 1990, p. 292). Thus, killing in a conflict situation such as in war can be right as it is for one’s country, whereas killing a person in self-defence can be perceived as murder (Galtung, 1990, p. 292).

## ii. Examples of Cultural Violence

Galtung lists six cultural domains with potential for cultural violence: (1) Religion, (2) Ideology, (3) Language, (4) Art, (5) Empirical Study, and (6) Formal Science.

For the purpose of this study, I am going to focus on religion and ideology and their intersection with cultural violence. Galtung points to the simple logic of the scheme where identifying the cultural element can lead one to discover how it can, or in this study’s case, has been used, potentially or empirically, to “legitimize direct or structural violence”. The study will show how examples of such cultural elements functioning in the cultural domains of religion and ideology in the time of the prophet Jeremiah for instance include the concepts of covenant and kingship. Therefore, one should be able to show how covenant and kingship were potentially used in the literature available, namely the texts in the book of Jeremiah. It is also possible to look at archaeological and epigraphical data available as examples where covenant and kingship were used empirically to legitimise direct or structural violence. This investigation takes this research further than the ideological critical scope it hopes to cover. In this regard, it is important to discern what Galtung means by religion and ideology as examples of cultural violence.

### 1. Religion<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Religion can be a contested conceptual field and it is therefore helpful to explain just what is meant when “religion” is discussed. Carlson (2011, p. 8) points to the earlier definition of religion where reading (*legere*) was linked by Cicero to religion. The term *relegere* entailed “either rereading or reading carefully or treating thoughtfully all things pertaining to the gods”. This etymology was disputed by Christians like Lactantius who linked religion to *religare*, meaning “to bind together (i.e., as a ligament binds or connects)”. The common “re”-prefix underwrites the divine centre point, whether “recovering God, binding oneself back to God, rebinding oneself to others through deities, or reading again matters involving the divine” (Carlson, 2011, p. 8).

Religion can be furthermore be defined as the “practices, rituals, beliefs, discourses, myths, symbols, creeds, experiences, traditions, and institutions by which individuals and communities conceive, revere,

Galtung (1990, p. 296) argues that in all religions there is a “god” within a sacred domain. He refers to the Judaism of the Torah, which differentiates between a transcendental deity outside us and an immanent deity inside us. Judaism therefore, according to Galtung (1990, p. 296), conceives “God as a male deity residing outside planet Earth”. According to Galtung, this case of transcendentalism as a metaphor was a catastrophic idea with many consequences and was also adopted by Islam and Christianity. With the placement of the deity outside humanity or “above” humanity, it is likely and even inevitable that some people will seem closer to the deity than others, even as “higher”. Galtung (1990, p. 296) further extrapolates this transcendentalism by arguing that the “general occidental tradition of dualism and Manichaeism, with sharp dichotomies between good and evil, will allow for something like an evil deity (Satan) corresponding to the good deity (God) for reasons of symmetry”. Although Galtung (1990, p. 296) allows for an immanent representation of a good deity and an evil deity within us (think of the popular image of the devil on one shoulder and the angel on the other, helping one to make ethical decisions), it is the transcendental belief in a good deity and an evil deity that is worrying (Galtung, 1990, p. 296).

The question therefore should be: Whom does God choose? Galtung (1990, p. 297) states that if one presumes that God chooses the parts of humanity that are most in His image, it stands to reason that Satan takes the rest. Galtung (1990, p. 297) illustrates the symmetry of who or what belongs to God and who or what belongs to Satan in Table 2.4. Table 2.4 further illustrates the double dichotomy that will leave the Chosen Ones with God and the Unchosen Ones, because they were not chosen by God, with Satan. The chosen, therefore, according to the idea of transcendentalism, will be closer to salvation and God in heaven, whereas the unchosen will be closer to Satan in Hell and the resulting damnation.

Galtung (1990, p. 297) further explains examples cited in Table 2:4 within the Judo-Christian tradition. The dichotomies of human species/animals etc.; men/woman; and His people/the other can be found as early as in Genesis. The dichotomy of true believers/heretics and pagan’s reveals, according to Galtung, a predominate New Testament focus on right belief, rather than right deeds. The dichotomy of whites/coloureds can be assumed from the scattered references to slaves and is also much more implicit, whereas the dichotomy of upper classes/lower classes can lean towards three classes that have traditionally been much closer to

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assign meaning to, and order their lives around some account of ultimate reality generally understood in relation to God, gods, or a transcendent dimension deemed sacred or holy” (Carlson, 2011, pp. 8-9).

God: “Clergy, for the obvious reason that they possessed special insight in how to communicate with God; Aristocracy, particularly the *rex gratia dei*; and Capitalists, if they are successful.” Galtung (1990, p. 297) agrees that there is a strong biblical tradition whereby the poor and the lower classes were also chosen, but this “chosenness” seemingly only happened in the afterlife (Galtung, 1990, p. 297).

**Table 2.4: The Chosen and the Unchosen** (Galtung, 1990, p. 297)

<b>God Chooses</b>	<b>And Leaves to Satan</b>	<b>With the Consequences of</b>
Human Species	Animals, Plants, Nature	Speciesism, Ecocide
Men	Women	Sexism, Witch-burning
His People	The others	Nationalism, Imperialism
Whites	Coloureds	Racism, Colonialism
Upper Classes	Lower Classes	“Classism”, Exploitation
True Believers	Heretics, Pagans	“Meritism”, Inquisition

Galtung (1990, p. 297) uses the contemporary example of Israel’s policies towards the Palestinians to further illustrate how religion can function as a cultural domain of cultural violence that can, potentially or empirically, be “used to legitimize direct or structural violence”. In this example, Israel are the Chosen People with the Promised Land, the *Eretz Israel*. Israel, according to Galtung, translates chosenness, as a type of cultural violence, into all four types of direct violence listed in Table 2.4. In the case of direct violence killing, maiming and material deprivation manifests when the inhabitants of the West Bank are deprived of their livelihood needs. De-socialisation manifests when Israel only allows second class citizenship to non-Jews. Detention is common, as well as individual expulsions and the continual threat of mass expulsions (Galtung, 1990, p. 297).

Galtung (1990, p. 297) further explains that structural violence is present where the four structural parts of exploitation near full development. Efforts are made to make Palestinians see themselves as born underdogs; people who have to get used to their status as second-class citizens. There are also efforts to give Palestinians small segments of economic activity. What

is interesting in Galtung's focus on the non-visible nature of cultural and structural violence, is that neither massive exploitation nor massive extermination exist in Israel's dealings with the Palestinians. The violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict covers the four types of structural violence, in contrast to only "exploitation A" manifesting in Third World countries caused by spiralling debt. Thus, when one is used to describing structural violence on a massive scale (cf. e.g. the millions of Jews who were exterminated by the Nazi-state, and the millions of Russians who were exterminated by the organs of the Communist state under Stalin, or the economic sanctions that were introduced against Libya by the USA under the presidency of Reagan), the structural violence perpetrated by the state of Israel can seem humane (Galtung, 1990, p. 297)

## 2. Ideology<sup>8</sup>

Galtung sees ideology and religion as closely correlated in that ideology is seen as the child of religion. Galtung (1990, p. 298) argues that the end of the transcendental but also of the immanent god caused by secularisation, introduced political ideologies as the replacement of religion and the modern state as the replacement of God. One can therefore expect political ideologies and the modern state to display the same characteristics as religion and God. In this regard Galtung (1990, p. 298) points out that religion and God may be perceived as dead – but the "basic idea of sharp and value-loaded dichotomies" has a longer shelf life. Even if the modern state rejects the idea of God and Satan, the modern state still asks for a division between chosen and unchosen, which can be called the self and the other. The archetype of this process of division is called nationalism, where the modern state is seen as the replacement of God. With this process of nationalism, Galtung perceives a steep gradient, whereby the "value of the self is inflated and exalted in contrast to the value of the other that is deflated and even debased" (Galtung, 1990, p. 298).

Structural violence has its origin at the point where a sharp division is drawn between the self and the other. The steep incline of the gradient of the self towards an inflated identity mirrors the steep decline of the gradient of the other towards debasement and the resultant

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<sup>8</sup> Heywood (2007, p. 45) defines ideology from a social-scientific viewpoint as a "more or less coherent set of ideas that provides a basis for organized political action, whether this is intended to preserve, modify or overthrow the existing system of power relationships. All ideologies therefore (a) offer an account of the existing order, usually in the form of a "worldview," (b) provide a model of a desired future, a vision of a Good Society, and (c) outline how political change can and should be brought about" (Heywood, 2007 3ed, p. 45).

exploitation. Galtung (1990, p. 298) paints a chilling but also familiar picture where the other has not only been dehumanised, but has also been successfully converted into an “it”, stripped of humanity. The stage is then set for any type of direct violence to take place, which can then also be blamed on the victim. The idea of the “dangerous it” reinforces the other “it”. One can hear the familiarity of the “dangerous it” in the categories of “vermin” or “bacteria” (Hitler’s description of the Jews); the “class enemy” (Stalin’s description of the “kulaks”); the “mad dog” (Reagan’s description of Gadhafi); the “cranky criminals” (Washington experts’ description of “terrorists”). Extermination then becomes psychologically possible, making heroes of SS guards who devoted themselves to their duty (Galtung, 1990, p. 298).

Galtung (1990, p. 298) points to the similarities between religion and ideology by noting that the six dimensions of Table 2:4 can exist between the chosen ones and the unchosen ones even with the absence of a transcendental god. Value-loaded dichotomies can perceive human beings as more capable of self-reflection; men can be perceived as more logical and stronger than women; certain nations can be perceived as “modern carriers of civilisation and the historical process” more than others; whites can be perceived as more logical or intelligent than non-whites; the modern “equal opportunity” society can also cause the best to be closer to the top and hence entitled to privilege and power. The interesting dimension is between the believer and the unbeliever where certain doctrines of belief in development, modernisation, and progress are apodictic, therefore unbelief in these doctrines mirrors badly on the unbeliever, not on the belief (Galtung, 1990, p. 298).

Galtung (1990, p. 299) states that the “ideology of nationalism, rooted in the figure of the chosen people and justified through religion or ideology, should be seen in conjunction with the ideology of the state called “statism”. In this ideology of statism, the state can also be seen as a replacement of God, where the state inherits the right to destroy life (execution), and even the right to create life. If nationalism is combined with steep self-other gradients, and statism is combined with ultimate power which the state can exercise as its right and duty, one gets the “ideology of the nation-state”. Galtung (1990, p. 299) sees the development of the ideology of the nation-state as catastrophic because killing in war can now be done in the name of the “nation”. Executions is another example of killing that can be done in the name of “the people of the state X”. If one furthermore combines the “ideology of the nation-state” with a theologically based “chosen people complex”, the potential for violence only increases. Galtung (1990, p. 299) presents some examples of this combination, namely Iran (Allah); Israel (YHWH), South Africa (a Dutch “Reformed” God), Japan (Amaterasu-okami), and the United

States (the Judeo-Christian YHWH God), which are only some of the relatively clear cases (1990, p. 299).

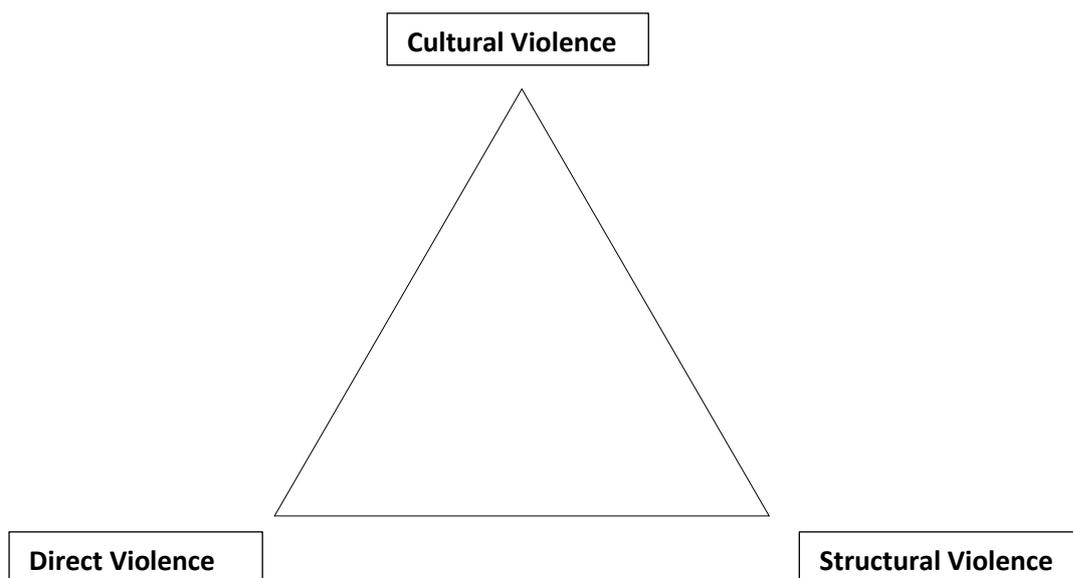
It is made clear by Galtung that religion *or* ideology are cultural domains within which cultural violence can take root. What stands out in his reasoning, is the phenomenon of the combination of religion *and* ideology. This combination has the potential for using the strong cultural material of both domains. What is worrying, is that the church as a “keeper” of the cultural domain of religion, can utilise a strong state with powerful nationalism to support it in any form of moral rectifying the nation. The state can, moreover, use the church to keep the nation in line, by appealing to the nation’s Christian duty to be obedient to the state.

In terms of Galtung’s theorising on violence, it is important to heed the close interrelationship that exists between cultural, structural and direct violence.

### e. The Interrelatedness of Cultural, Structural and Direct Violence

Galtung (1990, p. 294) uses the violence triangle (Figure 2:2) as an image to explain the interrelatedness of cultural, structural and direct violence

**Figure 2.2: Violence Triangle**



In this “violence triangle,” both structural and direct violence is legitimised by cultural violence. When the triangle is turned on to its “direct violence” head, the images of cultural and structural violence can be shown as sources of direct violence. The “violence triangle” can produce six positions (three pointing upward, three downward) whereby different scenarios are sketched. Despite the symmetries, Galtung (1990, p. 294) points out that these three concepts of violence differ in their temporal relations with each other. Where direct violence manifests itself as an event, structural violence manifests itself as a “process with ups and downs;” and cultural violence manifests itself as an invariant, or “permanence”, over time. The invariant nature of cultural violence stems from the fact that culture does not really show change over time, given that basic culture shows a slow transformation over time. Galtung (1990, p. 294) uses earthquake theory to explain this phenomenon. According to “earthquake theory” the earthquake is the event (direct violence), the movement of the tectonic plates is the process (structural violence), and the fault lines are the invariant condition over time (cultural violence).

“Earthquake theory” gives Galtung (1990, p. 294) another point of incidence in the interrelatedness of direct, structural and cultural violence namely the “violent strata” image. While this resultant “violent strata” image (Figure 2:3) complements the triangle, it has its own limitations. The “violent strata” image can however help one to generate a wide variety of hypotheses.

### **Figure 2.3: Violent Strata**

Direct violence

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Structural violence

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Cultural violence

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The violent strata image (figure 2.3), according to Galtung (1990, p. 294), helps one picture the relations of the different types of violence with each other. The bottom shows cultural violence as the “steady flow through time”, functioning as a substratum from which the other two types of violence can derive their nutrients. The next stratum shows the rhythms of

structural violence. In this next stratum “patterns of exploitation are building up, worn out, or are torn down”. Direct violence is located at the top stratum and is the violence that is visible (Galtung, 1990, pp. 294-294).

Galtung (1990, p. 295) shows that a causal flow exists from cultural via structural to direct violence. The culture “preaches, teaches, and admonishes one into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them at all, particularly exploitation”. The eruption happens when direct violence is used by people caught up as the objects of exploitation and repression, to escape the structural violent stratum. Counter-violence is used to keep the objects of exploitation and repression in the structural violent stratum. Galtung (1990, p. 295) emphasises that “both direct and structural violence creates needs-deficits”, which demand dealing with the resultant trauma. When trauma hits a group or a collective, the result is “collective trauma that can sediment into the collective subconscious and became raw material for major historical processes and events”. According to Galtung (1990, p. 295), the assumption can be made that violence breeds violence.

The violence strata image does have limitations as it can show only one causal chain, whereas the violence triangle image makes linkages and causal flows in all six directions possible. Cycles connecting all three types of violence may also start at any point. Galtung (1990, p. 295) uses an example to illustrate the interrelatedness of the types of violence<sup>9</sup>, citing the case of “militarization as a process and militarism as the ideology accompanying that process”. The ideology and the process will incline towards direct violence as a form of threatened or real military action, whether there was provocation or not, wherever the settling of conflict or the initiating of conflict is deemed important. The bias towards military action can stimulate the growth of the defence industry (Galtung, 1990, p. 295).

Galtung’s three-strata paradigm (1990, p. 295) furthermore provides a more in-depth idea of the functioning of structural and cultural violence within an ideology of militarisation. Therefore, structural and cultural aspects that can produce a heightened readiness for military production, deployment and action, need to be identified. This can include various structural aspects such an increase in arms production, leaving other industries in dire straits, thereby

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<sup>9</sup> The example Galtung uses, is important not only to see the interrelatedness of the types of violence, but also to see the similarities between Galtung’s example and the situation that existed in Apartheid South Africa.

contributing to unemployment. The introduction of military classes and military exercises in high school can surely be seen as cultural aspects of this ideology of militarisation.

#### **f. The Violence Triangle in Practise**

The Violence Triangle has been used in further research. Taleh Ziyadov (2006) shows that it is useful for understanding the root causes and the basic nature of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Ziyadov concludes that the structural aspect of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict concerns Azerbaijan's territorial integrity versus the right of self-determination of the Armenian side. These two seemingly contradictory concepts needed to be harmonised in order to solve the conflict. Azerbaijani thinking was dominated by concern for territorial integrity, since the possibility of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (an Armenian splinter republic) joining Armenia, was unacceptable to Azerbaijan. On the Armenian side, it was deemed necessary for the unification of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast with Armenia to prevent the extermination of Armenians should they stay in Azerbaijan. During the early stages of the conflict, cultural violence prevailed on both sides. Armenians experienced the forced relocations and massacres of 1915 as strong myth – making Armenia a “survival nation”. Azerbaijanis perceived Armenians as people stealing their land. National stereotypes and myths, combined with historical prejudices, became the bedrock of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and further contributed to the cultural violence already in existence. These structural and cultural factors precipitated direct violence. On the Azerbaijani side, the massacres of Azerbaijanis were the major triggers of direct violence. On the Armenian side, the Sumgait pogroms unleashed the direct violence originating from the structural and cultural violence already in existence (Ziyadov, 2006).

#### **g. Summary**

At this point of the study, I wish to summarise the extensive theoretical framework of Galtung concerning direct, structural, and cultural violence. This summary could be helpful when briefly discussing the critique as well as corroboration offered by scholars of Galtung's work coming from within his own discipline of knowledge. The summary will also help when I bring the theoretical framework of Galtung into conversation with some theories on violence in other disciplines, also with the broader issue of religion and violence, which in itself is an important

conversation. Furthermore, a summary of Galtung's theoretical framework is important to help in investigating the notion of covenant and kingship in Jeremiah as examples of cultural violence.

In describing the dimensions of violence, Galtung sees violence in terms of influence; in a subject-action-object relationship the influencer will be the subject and the one being influenced, the object. The dimensions of violence are greatly magnified in a situation where there is no clear subject or object. One can then distinguish between violence that is intended or not intended; manifest or latent; and direct or structural. Direct violence can furthermore be in a physical or psychological form and can be applied with or without objects. The same applies to structural violence.

The typology of direct somatic violence shows how violence can influence the survival needs; the well-being needs; the identity needs; and the freedom needs of an influenced object.

In the case of structural violence, one has to look at the incidences of inequality in a given system, and especially the distribution of power. The science of social structure comes into play here for understanding the role of stratification and the mechanisms of system, actor, rank and level, and structure in a given system. Social systems will develop these mechanisms unless "deliberately and persistently prevented from doing so". Social systems thus set the "pattern for aggravation of inequality". The typology of structural violence shows how violence can influence the survival needs, the well-being needs, the identity needs, and the freedom needs of an object.

What is important in the relation between direct and structural violence, is that both can have the same objective consequences even if there is no subjective intention to be violent. Structural violence, in comparison to direct violence, is "person-invariant". Therefore, it will continue even if the influencing subjects are changed. On the other hand, direct violence is "structure-invariant". Therefore, the violence will continue even if the structures change. Manifest structural violence presupposes latent direct violence where this direct violence can be an expression of internalised norms as well as institutionalised norms. It can also be possible that manifest direct violence presupposes latent structural violence. What is clear, is that where direct violence is visible, structural violence is close by. The opposite is also true: where structural violence exists, direct violence is close by.

Cultural violence is defined as “those aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence”. This can include symbols such as stars, crosses and crescents, flags, military parades and anthems, the omnipresent portrait of the Leader, posters and provocative speeches. Cultural violence makes “direct and structural violence appear right”. Cultural violence also focusses on the way in which “the act of direct violence and the fact of structural violence are legitimised and thus rendered acceptable in society”.

Religion and ideology are two of the six cultural domains in which cultural violence can function. In the case of religion, a “god” is presumed within a sacred domain. If this deity is placed outside humanity or even “above” humanity, it is not only inevitable but also likely that some people will be seen as closer to the deity than others, even as “higher” than the deity. This transcendentalism combined with the general occidental tradition of dualism and Manichaeism, with sharp dichotomies between good and evil, will allow for something like an evil deity (Satan) and a corresponding good deity (God). What is important in the cultural domain of religion, is who God chooses, because, according to the above argument, it means that Satan gets the rest. Ideology can be seen as a child of religion in that political ideologies replace religion and the modern state replaces God.

Cultural, structural and direct violence relate to each other in the violence triangle in that both direct and structural violence are legitimised by cultural violence. These types of violence also differ in their temporal relation to each other. Where direct violence manifests itself as an event; structural violence manifests itself as a “process with ups and downs”; and cultural violence manifests itself as an invariant, or “permanence” over time. One can also use the violent strata image to show the interrelatedness of the different types of violence according to which the culture “preaches, teaches, and admonishes one into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural”. Direct violence keeps the ones being exploited and/or repressed in that state, whereas the ones being exploited and/or repressed will have to use direct violence to escape their state.

What is important, is that direct and structural violence create needs-deficits that can result in trauma. When a group or a collective is traumatised, the “resultant collective trauma can sediment into the collective subconscious and became raw material for major historical processes and events”, therefore creating violence. Thus, it can be concluded that violence indeed breeds violence.

Galtung's theories on violence can now be brought into conversation with other theories on violence. One can draw on the "minimalism" and "maximalism" modes of theorising to cope with the immense body of existing theories on violence.<sup>10</sup> A maximalist mode of theorising on violence sees violence manifesting in more ways than that which are visible (direct violence). A minimalist mode of theorising will see violence as only direct violence. It is not difficult to see that Galtung has adopted a maximalist approach. Galtung sees violence as existing in more forms than only the direct violence that is visible. The danger in the maximalist approach is that the broadening of the categories or definitions of violence can render them too inclusive, so that almost any human or societal phenomenon can be captured this way. This danger does not seem to effect Galtung in his attempt to make the circle of violence as wide as possible. It is also clear that this mode of theorising is important to Galtung, because previous theoretical narrow theories of violence confined it to only direct violence, which resulted in many forms of violence basically escaping the net of violence theories. In bringing Galtung's theories on violence into conversation with these other theories on violence, it becomes clear that the minimalist mode of theorising still has its proponents. Others follow the maximalist approach, which will also inform this research.

## **4. Discussions with and Critique of Galtung**

### **a. Revisiting Galtung's Work in 2012**

It is widely accepted that Galtung's theories on structural violence can still be said to be the dominant academic discourses spanning divergent disciplines. In a 2012 symposium revisiting Johan Galtung's concept of structural violence, the contributors stated that "Galtung's work remains relevant to contemporary theory and practice, and that his approach is particularly well suited to understanding our present moment and our collective past". A short summary will be given of the contributions that formed part of this symposium.

In an article titled "Violence and Visibility" Yves Winter (2012) critiques Galtung's temporal understanding of violence. According to Galtung, the persistence of structural

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<sup>10</sup> According to Lendering "minimalism" and "maximalism" are terms describing certain approaches to the biblical witness. He states that "maximalist scholars assume that the Biblical story is more or less correct, unless archaeologists prove that it is not; whereas the minimalists assume that the Biblical story must be read as fiction, unless it can be confirmed archaeologically" (Lendering, 2016).

violence over time makes structural violence invisible. Galtung states that if one can only “see” the violence, an end can be made to the violence. Winter thinks that structural violence becomes invisible because it is ceaselessly repeated in the open, rather than because it is hidden away. Thus, everyday violence becomes “normal”. This enables the violence to be “inherited” across generations, causing the violence to become invisible. Winter’s critique of Galtung’s work tries to reverse Galtung’s assumption that the repetition of violence is caused by the invisibility of violence. Where Galtung argues that if violence can become “visible”, an end can be made to the violence, Winter argues that if violence is made “visible”, it may hasten its repetition (Winter, 2012).

As is clear from a later article by Simon Springer, the advent of neoliberal economics reintroduced Galtung’s theories on structural violence as a form of challenge of neoliberal economic policy. Thomas Biebricher and Eric Vance Johnson’s article (2012) “What is Wrong with Neoliberalism?” uses Galtung’s theories on violence to show the inherent problem with neoliberalism, where specifically Galtung’s theory on structural violence can reveal neoliberalism’s inherent structural violence. The structural violence inherent in neoliberalism, structurally visible in the local and global distribution of resources, negates neoliberalism’s “foundational argument of the unencumbered individual”. The empirical fact of the income inequality inherent in the social-economic order of neoliberalism, can also be conclusive of the system’s violence (Biebricher & Johnson, 2012).

Antonio Vázquez-Arroyo’s (2012) article “The Antinomies of Violence and Catastrophe: Structures, Orders, and Agents” investigates the “relationship between the political and the economic as it is differentiated within capitalist organization of production”. The article identifies how the notion of “big C” catastrophes can be distinguished from “small C” catastrophes. These two forms of catastrophes can be compared to subjective and objective violence; just like agent and structure, subjective and objective violence, mediate each other. Vázquez-Arroyo uses the example of colonialism, where he sees the violence of the conquest as a “big C” catastrophe that, once normalised, became “small C” catastrophes such as the structures of colonialism still pervasive in formerly colonial countries that, in turn, mediated the advent of new catastrophes: global warming and famine. The latent, invisible structural violence of “small C” catastrophes has a way of precipitating into manifest and visible “big C” catastrophes (direct violence) (Vázquez-Arroyo, 2012).

Simon Springer (2011) criticises the neoliberalist rationalism that sees itself as the “sole provider of non-violence and the lone bearer of reason”. In neoliberal reasoning, violence is focalised in a place and especially a certain type of people, namely the Oriental (see Galtung’s identifying of the “Other” as the counterpoint of the violence of the “Self”). Springer shows the structural violence inherent in neoliberal reforms and the cultural violence that makes itself visible in the discourse needed to support these reforms. Therefore, according to Springer, violence cannot be fixed in place or culture, but is socially constructed and can more aptly be understood as “an unfolding process, derived from the broader geographical phenomena and temporal patterns of the social world” (Springer, 2011).

Joan Cocks’ article (2012) “The Violence of Structures and the Violence of Foundings” investigates how Galtung’s categories of direct, structural and cultural violence can underwrite what she calls “foundational violence”. She sees foundational violence as those seemingly “peaceful” processes of historical conclusion treaties and contracts. Cocks argues that while Galtung’s taxonomy of violence introduces important thoughts on the concrete but yet invisible violence of structures, these thoughts do not seem to take cognisance of the “secret *and* transparent violence that occurs when a new order of things comes into being”. Cocks furthermore argues that foundational violence may establish “political communities” that may be seen as “liberal” but have violence to thank for their foundation. Pointing to the American Indian Treaty system, she notes that contracts, deliberations, and promises of friendship and harmony are not necessarily the answer to the direct violence beforehand, but in themselves forms of violence (Cocks, 2012). Cocks’s argument does not take cognisance of the fact that Galtung himself, in his third question concerning the causal relationship between direct and structural violence, admits that something like foundational violence is a strong possibility, whereby direct violence in the foundational era of a nation, can cause structural violence to manifest, although he does not explicitly call it foundational violence.

Although numerous scholars have appropriated Galtung’s work, there has also been criticism. Kenneth Boulding (1977) wrote on the shortcomings of Galtung’s work when reviewing the 1975 and 1976 “Essays in Peace Research: Vol. 1, Peace, Research, Education, Action: Vol. II, Peace, War and Defence”. In this review, Boulding engages in “twelve friendly quarrels with Johan Galtung”. I will focus my attention on the arguments (quarrels) that pertain specifically to this current study. For instance, Boulding criticises Galtung’s dislike of structures, which Galtung sees as the enemy of equality. According to Boulding, Galtung makes too much of equality. Equality can be reached at the cost of quality, but also at the cost

of liberty (Boulding, 1977, pp. 79-80). Boulding also has a quarrel with Galtung's dislike of hierarchies, holding that although hierarchies have their disadvantages, especially in the concentration of power, such problems can only be dealt with within the hierarchies themselves and not by abolishing them (Boulding, 1977, p. 80).

Furthermore, Boulding identifies besides Galtung's dislike of structures and hierarchies, also a dislike of dominance. Galtung sees the "oppression of the dominant" as resulting in inequality and poverty. Therefore, to solve the oppression, the dominant must be removed from their positions. Boulding argues that this is a fallacy common to a structural view of inequality which overlooks the different dynamic processes that could have caused inequality (Boulding, 1977, pp. 80-81). Finally, Boulding criticises Galtung's metaphor of structural violence. He argues that the "processes which create and sustain poverty" (Galtung's structural violence) are not at all like the "processes which create and sustain violence". Violence, according to Boulding, is a "threshold" phenomenon where the structure is incapable of preventing the violence. Violence ensues when the "strain" on the social system far outweighs the "strength" of the social system (Boulding, 1977, p. 83).

One can now bring Galtung's theories on violence into discussion with theories on violence from other disciplines. Given the limits of this current study, these discussions cannot be exhaustive. However, these discussions do give us a glimpse into the theoretical and interdisciplinary complexities of the phenomenon of violence.

## **b. Galtung in Discussion with other Theories of Violence**

Galtung's theories on violence have been used, criticised, discussed, and analysed by numerous academics and it is interesting to look at some of Galtung's discussions with other theories of violence. Galtung's concept of cultural violence is new, whereas his concept of structural violence has been the source of much of the following discussions. What is firstly important, is to see how Galtung's typologies compare to other typologies of violence.

John Carlson (2011, p. 16) enlarges our definitional fields in understanding violence. Carlson (2011, p. 15) defines violence as a "physical force, often vehement or excessive, used to inflict injury or damage". He also states that there is more to violence than just physical force. Carlson states that to be able to cast the net wider in search of an apt way to define violence, the etymology of the Latin word *violentia* is frequently used by scholars. Three (only

two will be discussed) “distinct but associated” meanings stem from the Latin cognates of *violentia* (Carlson, 2011, p. 15).

Carlson (2011, p. 15) notes that at “a basic descriptive level, *violentia* usually entails energy or force (*vis*) that causes destruction”. Violent storms and automobile crashes fall under this description. The physical force inherent in political acts such as terrorism, revolt, war, coercion, insurgency, or revolution, also reveal violent dimensions. The “empirical or effectual meaning” of the violence experienced furthermore exists with the victim or recipient of the violence. Although at this level violence can seem to be only physical in nature, the psychological and emotional trauma resulting from these forms of violence, can be crippling. The empirical dimensions of this basic type of violence are also useful for persons or organisations that seek to mitigate or respond to destruction caused by violence (Carlson, 2011, pp. 15-16). Therefore, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or real, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation”. The WHO’s definition of violence broadens violence to “any human-related actions or social structures and the harm they cause” (Carlson, 2011, p. 16) – clearly a minimalist approach.

Carlson (2011, p. 16) first of all agrees with Galtung that direct violence tells only one side of the story, so one therefore must abandon this minimalist approach. There is a shortcoming in the cognitive field of direct violence, namely the use of facts and not values as the primary measurement for violence. Dimensions of violence that are morally relevant (e.g. human motivation and agency), are normally marginalised when physical and empirical effects are prioritised. Carlson therefore mentions a second Latin cognate of *violentia*, namely *violere* (“the basis of the word *violation*”). Where violence almost certainly causes “harm”, it also causes “injury”. According to Carlson (2011, p. 16), there is an important distinction between harm and injury. He mentions that the “Latin word *injuria* stems from the root *jur* or *jus*, which is the basis for ethical terms such as right and justice”. Therefore, an injury is a form of injustice for which there is an ethically defensible claim (Carlson, 2011, p. 16). In this cognitive field of violence, Carlson moves to evaluative and normative ways of “measuring” violence. Where violence is real when experienced by the recipient, the cognitive field of violence in which injustices are committed, is less clear-cut. In short, a person or organisation using force can cause an injustice to be committed. The person or organisation using force can see their actions as justifiable whereas it is not experienced as such by the recipient. The subject of violence

then sees their actions as force, whereas the object of the force sees the actions committed against him/herself as violence.

In both of his cognitive fields of violence it is important for Carlson (2011, p. 17) to distinguish between force and violence. He therefore defines force as a “legitimate means by which to influence or enforce the choices people make”. When this force is used in “irascible or excessive ways” one finds oneself in the domain of violence.

The problem with the justification of violence is where the multi-faceted and multi-manifesting natures of violence meet. To be able to justify acts of violence, one must have access to state power. Access to state power makes it possible to entrench violence in lawful structures (structural violence) and to manipulate the dominant discourse on who and what is violence and who and what is legitimate force (cultural violence).

Even though it can be said that the state possesses the “monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force”, the state is not normally seen as violent by nature. The state can use force for a myriad of reasons that it may not see as particularly violent but can be seen as violent by the receptors of the force. Therefore, the institutional status of the state cannot excuse the violence of the state, and the state’s immoral or unjust use of force can be defined as violence (Carlson, 2011, p. 17).

Carlson (2011, p. 18) also agrees with an important point that was previously made in terms of the example of the Marikana massacre cited in the introduction to this study. What is conceived as violence or not, depends more on one’s position than on any fixed definitional field on violence. Thus, it can be said that “different perspectival approaches to the problem of violence” exist; the empirical and consequential effects of violence will always be primary from the recipient’s (influenced object’s) perspective; from the inflictor’s (influencing subject’s) perspective, justification is usually foremostly provided by the non-violent nature of the actions committed (Carlson, 2011, p. 18).

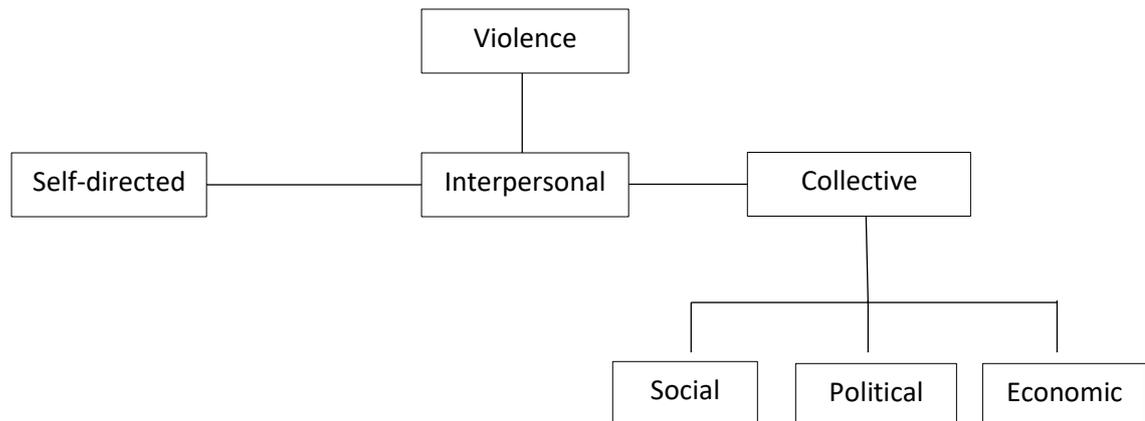
In his explanation of this cognate form of *violentia*, namely *violere*, Carlson also uses Galtung’s subject-action-object relation of violence to describe direct and structural violence. Carlson’s also sees that both cognitive fields of violence can combine to form a more comprehensive cognitive field of violence. Intentionality and agency play a role in Carlson’s cognitive field of violence: they shift the focus of violence from only the object of violence towards the subject of violence, in agreement with Galtung’s theory of structural violence.

Carlson, (2011, p. 18) furthermore names state power as a major cause of violence. State power not only entails the sheer power or might of the state, but also the legitimacy that empowers the state “to act in concert on behalf of others”. Carlson points to Hannah Arendt’s idea of power and violence as opposites. Where power presupposes legitimacy, violence normally presupposes illegitimacy. Arendt argues that “when power is weak and contested, thus when power struggles with legitimacy, violence results”. Violence can therefore destroy power but cannot in itself create power. Thus, when states are weak and ideologically poor, they need more violence to keep them entrenched in power. Violence is also used by the state’s opponents to challenge state power (Carlson, 2011, pp. 15, 18). Galtung’s explanation of the workings of structural violence also touches on the immense capacity of the state to be violent. Direct violence is when this violence is visible. Therefore, a weak state is a state where structural violence (normally invisible) is changing into direct violence. Structural violence, as a type of collective violence, is not discussed often because it is normally invisible and, when not contested and therefore legitimate, not seen as violence at all.

Carlson is helpful in showing how to replace a minimalist mode of theorising on violence with a more maximalist mode. When one brings Galtung’s theories on violence into conversation with theories on violence in the sphere of Public Health, one can already see a matching broadening of the scope of theorising.

### **c. Galtung’s Theories of Violence and Public Health**

When considering how Galtung’s theories of violence apply to Public Health, it is important to refer to the typology of violence in figure 2:4 and the discussion around this typology of violence, because Galtung’s typology of violence (figure 2.1) unpacks the collective aspect of figure 2.4. The first two aspects of the typology shown in figure 2.4, namely self-directed violence and interpersonal violence, can resort under Galtung’s first combination of direct violence with survival needs and in certain cases under the combination of direct violence and well-being needs.

**Figure 2.4: Typology of violence** (Dahlberg, et al., 2008)

The scope of collective violence from figure 2.4 manifests in forms such as terrorism, wars, and other inter-nation political conflict, but can also include intra-nation violence such as state-perpetrated torture, human rights abuses, organised violent crime and genocide. Galtung's typology of violence can therefore help one understand more clearly the collective aspect of violence.

Collective types of violence also contribute to Galtung's typology (1990, p. 193), when he states that it pays to also keep in mind the mega-versions of collective violence. Killing could mean holocaust or extermination; misery could mean "silent holocaust"; alienation could mean "spiritual death"; repression could mean gulag/concentration camps. He argues that these words have an apocalyptic feel to them, making it even more frightening that these forms of mega-collective violence have been part and parcel of the last fifty years of the history of humanity (Galtung, 1990, p. 292).

This typology of violence compares well to one from the field of Public Health. Public Health practitioners consider violence "a complex problem with many causes and manifestations". Violence is also a learned form of behaviour, which is preventable. They also conclude that "differing rates among nations and within a single nation over time indicate that violence is a product of a complex but modifiable set of social and environmental factors" (Dahlberg, et al., 2008). Public, and not just individual case perceptions of violence, inform the way in which health practitioners define the phenomenon viz. "as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or

community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation” (Dahlberg, et al., 2008).<sup>11</sup>

It is also mentioned (Dahlberg, et al., 2008) that the above definition of violence includes certain terms that broaden the definition of the field of violence. The definition furthermore “associates’ intentionality with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of its outcome”. This excludes “unintentional incidents such as traffic injuries and burns”. The terms “physical force” and “power” furthermore include particular relational acts whereby the perpetrator (the influencing subject) is more powerful than the victim (the influenced object). This can manifest in parent-child relationships, and relationships between armed perpetrators and unarmed victims. The modes of influencing can include intimidation, threats, neglect and all types of sexual, physical, and psychological abuse (Dahlberg, et al., 2008).

It is furthermore mentioned (Dahlberg, et al., 2008) that this definition of violence can also include several outcomes. There is growing recognition among public health practitioners that violence is not limited to acts that result in injury or death, but also acts that pose a “substantial burden on individuals, families, communities and healthcare systems”. These acts of violence against children, the elderly and women can cause immediate or latent psychological, physical and social hardships that can still be felt years after the particular incidents of abuse. Just because there is no immediate injury, disability, or death, the violence committed is not any less real (Dahlberg, et al., 2008).

In a discussion on the legitimising of violent acts, it is important to emphasise the intentional agency of social actors. It can be argued that if one is not personally involved in acts of direct violence, then one is not a violent person. Cultural violence is a theoretical concept that is useful for showing that one is involved in acts of violence even if one is not aware of this fact or even when one is a self-acclaimed non-violent person.

#### **d. Anthropological and Ethical Perspectives**

From an anthropological point of view, an important aspect of violent behaviour is that it is subject to contested legitimacy, which can be considered to be “inherent to violence” Violence is thus more than merely physical force, but physical force used in contexts where one or more

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<sup>11</sup> The definition of the World Health Organisation corresponds with this one.

parties may consider the violence to be legitimate. The definition of what can be deemed as legitimate, can also have interpretative difficulties (Stewart & Strathern, 2008). This means that a group can decide whether actions are violent or not. This will not render the actions any less violent but will help the group to see themselves as inherently non-violent.

From an ethical point of view, Alonso Valentine (2008, p. 2) finds that the texts and rituals of religious traditions such as the Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions do “present support for violence and therefore do not support peace-making or conflict reduction consistently”. Valentine presumably sees a “fundamental strand of dualism running throughout the Western traditions that supports the resort to conflict, violence and war”. While he agrees with Galtung’s dualistic viewpoints concerning cultural violence in terms of, for instance, ideology and religion, Valentine goes further and states that the dualism of the Scriptures of the religious traditions mentioned above runs deeper and appears everywhere including “God and the world, good and evil, life and death, friend and enemy, faith and unbelief, and violence and non-violence”. Since it can be argued in a dualistic worldview that “only one side has the final word on what is good, true and beautiful”, it stands to reason that this side must be defended. Valentine uses an example that Galtung also mentions: “When humanity gives God too many difficulties, then God’s violence toward humanity is holy judgement.” Followers of a certain tradition can thus argue that “when their enemies ask too much of them, then their violent response is justified” (Valentine, 2008, pp. 2-3).

Considering Valentine’s and Galtung’s dualistic views on religious thought, it is important to understand the role that further distinction within the good-bad dichotomy plays, namely bad-evil. Loye, (2008, p. 2) states that “by the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century research indicates that what has in the past been classified as evil, seems to have at least five sources: cultural, physiological, biological, evolutionary, and existential” (Loye, 2008, p. 2).

To illustrate this point, one may consider Loye’s discussion of the cultural source of evil. Loye (2008, p. 2) argues that the idea prevailed in the West in the time before the Enlightenment, that all people are inherently evil and therefore need to be kept in check by supposedly divinely ordained rulers. The triumph of the Enlightenment changed this idea to a more systemic view of evil whereby evil inhabits the political, economic, or more general cultural systems of the day. Thus, people are “basically good, made evil by the system, which can be changed”. A logical result of this thinking is that the concept of evil has helped in the

“naming” of cultural groups of people for “social constructionist” purposes. Enemies are labelled evil in the promotion of wars, other faith groups are labelled evil in the promotion of religious conquest, and “social deviants of all types” are labelled evil to help in the consolidating of power by the ruling classes, castes, or elites (Loye, 2008, pp. 3-4).

Loye (2008, p. 11) further states that what religion and philosophical thought regards as evil, science has identified as violence. The scientific identification of violence as evil has more to do with the nature and effects of violence than with an abstraction of violence. As with evil, “violence breeds more violence and is potentially destructive to the stability and well-being of persons, families and neighbourhoods, as well as nations” (Loye, 2008, p. 11). Loye (2008, p. 14) agrees with Galtung when he concludes:

It is then understood that what determines our violence is not in our genes, or otherwise in us at birth, or even – as some contend – the trauma we may suffer in being born. It mainly depends on what happens to us afterward. It seems to depend on whether we are born into a family in which the parents have been maimed by cultural systems orienting to domination, violence, and gender and other forms of inequality, or into a family in which the parents have themselves been nurtured by cultural systems orienting more to the encouragement of equality, love, and caring (Loye, 2008, p. 14).

Eleftherios Michael and Ho-Won Jeong (2008, p. 5) contribute to this discussion between Galtung and scholars in the field of ethics when they remark on social identity, gender and violence as well as on structures of authority. According to Michael and Jeong (2008, p. 5), “every person has multiple individual and collective identities”. These identities are predominantly “fluid, situational, and socially and culturally constructed”, even if they are important in providing a steady supply of sense and meaning to who people are. Therefore, they argue that “social discourse on collective traumas and national myths is an essential element in the construction and transformation of any ethno-political identity”. It can then be deduced that conflict situations provide the incubator in which the social identities and group memberships of individuals are formed concerning the relation between the individual and members of other groups (Michael & Jeong, 2008, p. 5).

In terms of conflict between groups, Michael and Jeong (2008, p. 6) argue that it stands to reason that the inner-group cohesion must be strong. But within social groups and relations, as Galtung has also explained, there are status differences that can result in a power imbalance, causing an “unequal distribution of decision-making power”. These unequal power configurations can be the origin of “latent conflict,” whereby the modes of influence of domination and subjection are inferred from the way in which the different actors are arranged

in the system (roles), and which can result in inner group conflict (Galtung describes these roles as the top dog and underdog respectively) (Michael & Jeong, 2008, p. 6).

Michael and Jeong (2008, p. 6) state that the dominant group seeks stability as well as the safeguarding of a social structure in which their authority is legitimised. The dominated, on the other hand, will pursue changes to the said social structure. These changes, according to Michael and Jeong (2008, p. 6), are curbed by the dominant party, which benefits from the structure. It is interesting to note that the dominant party construes conflict in terms of “law and order”, while the dominated group sees conflict as combating an unjust and exploitative order.

When Michael and Jeong (2008, p. 9) move to conflict theory, they theorise that “conflict involves a struggle between the forces of status quo and challenge”. It should be noted that a given structure can only be maintained or changed by the powers that be. This issue of the legitimising authority of the powers that be, that can also spill over to legitimising violence, is discussed in some detail by Galtung. Since the tensions between dominated and dominant groups result in conflict, “conflict regulation mechanisms” may prevent violence but are unable to target the origins of conflict. Conflict resolution therefore needs to target structural changes that can make egalitarian relations a possibility (Michael & Jeong, 2008, p. 9), a point also emphasised by Galtung.

Michael and Jeong (2008, pp. 9-10) then address the important role language plays in the maintenance of dominant groups in each social world. In critical social theories, according to Michael and Jeong (2008, pp. 9-10), the social world consists of “a multitude of communities, cultural traditions, and knowledge”. Conflict results from the domination of a specific cultural group’s “understanding of their reality” by another cultural group. The process of discourse is therefore important in shaping a specific cultural group’s social institutions, politics and subjectivity (Michael & Jeong, 2008, pp. 9-10).

Michael and Jeong (2008, pp. 9-10) elaborate on the meaning of discourse when they describe it as a “set of rules for speech”. They touch on the question of power when they state that the “rules of discourse dictate who is accorded the right and the status to make authoritative statements”. Therefore, “mechanisms” such as the media make it possible for a dominant structure to survive under “the mask of knowledge”. There is furthermore a close connection between power and knowledge. All “authoritative claims to knowledge” are in themselves manifestations of power, and can be construed as instruments of social control by dominant

groups (Michael & Jeong, 2008, pp. 9-10). It has been pointed out that cultural violence focusses especially on the “language” aspect of power in general but more specifically on the exploitative nature of uncurtailed structural power.

## **5. The Significance of Cultural Violence for the Conversation on Religion and Violence**

In the following conversation, relating religion and violence to Galtung’s theory of cultural violence, religion first needs to be defined clearly. Carlson (2011, p. 10) emphasises that religion is a socially constructed phenomenon that is “easily formed, dangerous to hold, and difficult to break down”. Religion is a social construct, according to Carlson, and failing to recognise it as such, makes it possible for “essentialists” to characterise religion as “universal, across human communities in time and space”. This characterisation can then be foisted on “Others”, thus reinforcing notions of what people perceive as the “true nature” of religion: “Good religion” is seen in secular societies as non-violent, private and “subject to reason”, whereas “bad religion” is seen as violent, public, and irrational (Carlson, 2011, p. 10).

The other point that Carlson (2011, p. 10) makes, is that comparisons across cognitive fields of sociology, cultural studies, economics, and most importantly ideology, can be useful in investigating religion and violence. Religion shares important similarities with political beliefs, including its understanding of power and its support for or opposition to violence. The concept of “civil religion” could therefore “straddle different religious and political categories”. Religious symbols can permeate wars that are waged for anything but religious reasons.

William Cavanaugh (2011, p. 24) hones the similarities between religious and political beliefs even more when he quotes Émile Durkheim<sup>12</sup> who stated that “many different things could be treated as sacred by society. Religion refers to the sacred, and the sacred is whatever serves as the symbolization of communal solidarity. It does not matter that the flag is not explicitly worshiped as a god; as long as it functions as a sacred object of veneration in a given society, it is considered a religious object”. Cavanaugh furthermore argues that different institutions and ideologies can be perceived by people as “absolutes”; altars on which they have

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<sup>12</sup> Cavanaugh quotes from Émile Durkheim’s work on religion, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. 1912.

to lay their sacrifices of “resources, toil, common sense, and even lives”. Ideologies and institutions can therefore be perceived as religious in function if not by nature (Cavanaugh, 2011, pp. 24-25).

Following Cavanaugh’s argument (2011, p. 25), one can talk of a “religion of politics”, where a party or nation-state presents itself as the “supreme entity”, making all else subordinate. Fascism and communism are examples of this phenomenon, as well as democratic nation-states such as the United States. It is also argued by Cavanaugh (2011, p. 25) that public Christianity in the United States and other Western states made place for the “sacralisation of the nation as the central object of worship” (this is what Carlson sees as civil religion). The “sacralisation” of the nation-state also made it possible for the legitimising of violence to become a project of the nation-state. What is worrisome to note from Cavanaugh’s argument, is that the “ability to mobilize violence” enables civil religion to become all-powerful in the United States as a religion. Cavanaugh remarks that most American Christians would find the idea of killing on behalf of Jesus Christ abhorrent at most, but will consider the idea of organised slaughter on behalf of the nation – or perhaps on behalf of some ideal like freedom – as sometimes necessary and laudable (Cavanaugh, 2011, p. 25)<sup>13</sup>.

Cavanaugh concurs with Carlson that any substantivist or essentialist account of religion poses its own inherent problems of definitional and categorical limits. Cavanaugh concedes and thinks that a functionalist account of religion is also limited. He agrees with Carlson that religion can be socially constructed, however he introduces the historical or diachronic aspect of the socially constructed nature of religion. Therefore, religion does exist, but only as a “constructed category, constructed in different ways in different places and times, and according to different modalities of power” (Cavanaugh, 2011, p. 26).

Cavanaugh (2011, p. 27) makes an important point when he states that in a historical/diachronic investigation of the “concept of religion,” one must note that the dichotomy between what is ideology and what is religion, is a modern Western creation. He states the concept of religion, defined as “a universalized and interiorized human impulse, expressing itself in beliefs held on a non-rational basis, and essentially different from secular

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<sup>13</sup> According to Cavanaugh the United States currently spends over \$600 billion a year on its military, more than all the other nations of the world combined (Cavanaugh, 2011, p. 25).

pursuits like politics”, is a European creation which originated between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries (Cavanaugh, 2011, p. 27).

Cavanaugh’s (2011, p. 29) argument that the secular/religious distinction is made primarily by those who have the power to make it, returns one to the power of the nation-state to legitimise violence. The view of religion, as somehow distinct from other aspects of human actions, can be employed in arguments which point to the particular tendency of religion to be violent. These arguments can even be used to authorise violence against those deemed “religious”.<sup>14</sup> To summarise, Cavanaugh states that what he calls the “myth of religious violence” is a historical invention that is invoked in our times to “marginalise certain religious practices while simultaneously promoting American civil religion” (Cavanaugh, 2011, p. 30).

As one can see from the arguments of Carlson and Cavanaugh, the relationship between religion and violence is complex. Both terms have definitional and categorical challenges. The realisation that religion is a socially constructed phenomenon with certain historical/diachronic aspects, has a role in the ideological analysis of covenant and kingship in the book of Jeremiah. Carlson’s and Cavanaugh’s arguments hinge on the fact that from the subject’s point of view in the subject-action-object relation, violence can be legitimised more easily when the subject appears to be legitimately violent. This is more easily accomplished when the subject is a state that has access to the means to produce meaning that can be accomplished by propaganda, symbolism and historical reinventions. A state can also more easily institutionalise forms of violence so that the violence can seem more benign and for the “good of the country”.

David Freedman and Michael McClymond (2008) concur that the topics of religion and violence are complex and many-sided. They also agree that this is in part because religion never functions separately from economics, politics, sexuality and other fundamental aspects of human actions. However, they disagree with Carlson and Cavanaugh, stating that violence is easily identifiable, but this can be because they only define violence in its direct form and do not include structural and cultural conceptions in their perspective. They concede that religion comprises such an interpretative depth that it is difficult to say whether any given act of violence that is interpreted as religious violence, does in fact constitute such (Freedman &

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<sup>14</sup> What Cavanaugh describes as the ‘myth of religious violence’ made it possible for American foreign policy to justify secular violence against religious Others, especially Muslims. According to this reasoning the West was able to “tame the violence of religion” while the Muslim world has not been able yet to separate politics from religion, so that Muslim religion is often perceived as a violent religion (Cavanaugh, 2011, p. 31).

McClymond, 2008). Hence, Freedman and McClymond (2008) provide a working definition of “religious violence” as “violence that is somehow directly sanctioned by religious authorities – leaders or councils, rituals, myths, symbols, or sacred texts”.

In this regard, Johan Galtung’s explanation of cultural violence is most helpful for understanding how religious texts can still be perceived as violent texts even if they are not or never have been used by religious authorities to sanction violence. The concepts of covenant and kingship can be seen to underwrite structural and cultural violent aspects of society. It then pays to understand fully what Galtung means when he theorises on the three dimensions of violence, namely direct, structural and cultural violence. As one moves toward a more inclusive understanding of violence, the concept of religion is extended to include the notion of religious violence. Today, violence can be considered an essential aspect of human nature. It is also possible that cultural and religious aspects may mitigate the feeling of responsibility of the perpetrator for his or her actions. Therefore, humans may still be a greatly violent species; we have merely become better at justifying our violent natures. Religion is just one, perhaps the most important, justification of violence.

### **a. Cultural Violence and Ideological Criticism**

Thus far, we have seen how Galtung’s theories on direct, structural and cultural violence continue to be influential in the broader academic world. In the conversations outlined above between Galtung and the scholarly community it becomes clear that a concerted effort to move away from minimalist modes to more maximalist modes of theorising on violence exists. These conversations are helpful in that one can place Galtung’s theories on violence at the centre of theorising on violence. Furthermore, the two cultural domains of religion and ideology that were highlighted as a central aspect of cultural violence are helpful in positioning this research within the important discussion on religion and violence and in particular the close relationship between cultural violence and religious violence.

In this regard, the cultural domain of ideology is important too. I propose that the exegetical approach of ideological criticism may be a helpful tool for identifying forms of cultural violence when it comes to texts with the themes of covenant and kingship in the book of Jeremiah. The close correlation between religion and ideology as cultural domains will also make it difficult to say exactly when one is working with religion in the biblical texts of

Jeremiah and when one is working with ideology – realms which should ideally be kept distinct. This discussion will be followed by the application of ideological criticism to texts, and consideration of why ideological criticism will be helpful in investigating the cultural violence embedded in the texts of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8.

## **b. Ideology and Religion in Biblical Texts?**

John Barr states in his book *History and Ideology in the Old Testament* (1997), that, although ideology does seem to be well-defined in the political sciences, there is some confusion in the social sciences and theology as to what exactly can be seen as ideology and what not (Barr, 1997, p. 107). Barr (1997, pp. 103-140) gives a detailed report on the state of ideological criticism and the problems and challenges pertaining to this field of criticism, that is too detailed to discuss fully at this time, but does offer some correspondence with Beverly Stratton's viewpoint on ideological criticism. Stratton (2000, p. 123) states that the term ideology reflects an important turn in scholarship, but is also a word not yet in common or legitimated usage. She suggests that two reasons for the lack of scholarly interest in the terms ideology and ideological criticism, may be that these terms are used rather loosely and sometimes have negative connotations. She shows that scholars apply the terms differently: Whereas modernists and positivists see ideology as an illegitimate imposition of one's political perspective into scholarship, Marxists and materialists see ideology as a "false consciousness that allows both dominant and oppressed classes to perpetuate their uneven class relationships". A third group of scholar's view ideology as a perspective and therefore a term that is not necessarily as politically charged as the Marxists and materialists think or as political dangerous as the modernists and positivists would believe. The third group views ideology in a more generic and neutral way, according to which ideologies or modes of discourse shape everyone's interpretation of reality (Stratton, 2000, p. 125).

Barr (1997, p. 140) thus argues that there is no reason why the concept of ideology should not be used in biblical criticism, but a proper analysis and a clear explanation of what exactly ideology entails, as well as the expected advantages to be gained from such an endeavour, need to be explained. Barr does agree with the viewpoint that it is not easy to differentiate between what is "ideology" and what is "religion" in the texts studied.<sup>15</sup> In

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<sup>15</sup> Stratton (2000, p. 123) states that where biblical scholars can see ideological criticism as just another method of interpretation, like text criticism or redaction criticism, scholars engaged in ideological

conclusion, Barr seems to follow the argument that the people of the world of the biblical texts did not really distinguish between what was seen as “ideology” and what was seen as “religion”. In this study, it makes no sense to follow different theoretical viewpoints of what ideology entails other than what Galtung explains under his cultural domain of ideology. The advantages expected to follow from the exegetical method of ideological criticism in this research were briefly discussed in Chapter 1 and will feature in more detail in the concluding chapter.

### **c. Ideological Criticism and Cultural Violence**

Yee (1995, p. 149) presents a method of ideological criticism that can be applied when exploring covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 through the hermeneutical lens of cultural violence. Yee states that “ideological criticism presumes that the text is firstly a production of a specific, ideologically charged historical world that secondly reproduces a particular ideology with an internal logic of its own”. In order to identify such ideological constructions in the text, one has to conduct what Yee calls an extrinsic (ideological-contextual) analysis and an intrinsic (ideological-literary) analysis of the text. For the purpose of this study, the thought process of Yee concerning ideological criticism will be used, the

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criticism see its implementation as being “less of a method and more of a hermeneutical stance”. This means that although scholars using ideological criticism have “specific methodological concerns” and prefer particular interpretive methods, they also assume certain specific relations between the author, the text and the reader. They also hold forth ways that people do and should interpret texts. Stratton (2000, p. 125) shows two ways of thinking about the ideological nature of texts. The first group of critics insists that texts do have ideologies – an assumption based on the ideological embeddedness of the biblical authors in particular societies that also shaped their worldviews. These authors thus sought to influence their readers by rhetorical strategies to shape arguments to either challenge or support a community’s predominant ideologies. The second group of critics feels that although texts do not necessarily have ideologies, people do have ideologies. Scholars of the second group, like those of the first group, seek to uncover ideologies that shaped the writing of biblical authors and their original readers. They argue that texts have multiple ideologies that do not reside in the text but rather emerge in the meeting of the worlds of author, text, and reader. Stratton (2000, p. 125) remarks that according to this group of scholars, “ideology like meaning, is not captured in texts to be excavated by diligent scholars. Rather, they shape the ways authors and communities of hearers and readers make meaning of the texts they share”. The scholarly position that “texts do not have ideologies, but people do”, does have certain advantages. Stratton (2000, p. 125) claims that this position allows scholars to continue to pursue investigations about the ideologies of the authors, editors, redactors, and communities who heard the biblical texts as they were told, written, collected, become canonical, and continue to be used both as sacred Scripture and as biblical literature. The other advantage is that texts remain open-ended in the sense that a multiplicity of interpretations of particular texts can be explained. Another important advantage is that readers of the texts can hold each other accountable for continuing to read texts, especially such influential texts as the Bible, in ways that oppress some people to the advantage of others (Stratton, 2000, p. 125).

language of an ideological-literary analysis and an ideological-contextual analysis is considered more descriptive of the methodology used in this study than Yee's terminology of an intrinsic and an extrinsic analysis.

An *ideological-contextual (extrinsic) analysis* analyses the circumstances under which a text was produced by making use of social sciences and historical criticism to understand the "complex social structures of specific social groups and their interrelationships with other parts of the society". The mode of production dominant in the society that produced a particular text then becomes important. This mode of production is defined as the "complete operation of social relations (family organizations, status, class gender, etc.) and forces (technological, political, juridical, etc.) of a society's material production" (Yee, 1995, p. 150). In this regard Yee (1995, p. 150) isolates three modes of production, namely the familial mode, the tributary mode, and a slave mode. Each mode has its own political economies, social structures and relations, power groups, and dominant ideologies. Moreover, Yee (1995, p. 150) identifies certain explicit questions that an ideological critic ought to ask:

(1) What are the major social, political, and economic structures in a society at a particular time? (2) Where are the sites of power located in these structures, and what kind of power do they exhibit? (3) How do these groups break down according to class, race, gender, ethnicity, region, religion, and occupation? (4) What control do they exert over the means of production? (5) What are the conflicts, struggles, and contradictions among these various social arrangements? What are the ideologies produced by these groups? Which one is dominant? (6) On whose behalf do these ideologies speak? Whose voices, what groups, do they exclude or distort? (7) What is the social location of the author of the text? (8) What ideology does this author hold in relation to the dominant ideology? (Yee, 1995, pp. 150-151).

These questions will be helpful in revealing the structural violence that underlies the presentation of covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8. To investigate the cultural violence inherent in covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8, one can also use an ideological-literary (intrinsic) analysis of these texts as proposed by Yee.

An *ideological-literary (intrinsic) analysis* investigates the text's "reproduction of ideology in terms of its rhetoric and determines how the text encodes the conflicting circumstances of its material-ideological production". Therefore, an ideological-literary analysis requires the investigation of the text's rhetoric. Rhetoric refers to a text's "artful ability to persuade its audience to accept a particular ideology". A text's rhetoric is therefore a means of persuasion and thus a "form of power". Ideology is reorganised by the text, and the social strategies, namely the universalisation, rationalisation, or legitimation of certain values and

behaviours, are re-inscribed in written form by the rhetorical features of persuasion. Some of these rhetorical features include elements of structure, such as characterisation, repetition, plot, symbolism, point of view, foreshadowing, framing and irony (Yee, 1995, pp. 151-152).

One can therefore conclude that an ideological critical analysis uses “literary critical methods in a historical and social-scientific framework”. In an ideological critical study, the ideological thought processes of the time pertaining to the institutions of the covenant and kingship, are important. Covenant and kingship as institutions and as theological themes have a long history; hence it is important not only to analyse the synchronic elements of these institutions, but also their diachronic elements. An ideological-literary and ideological-contextual analysis can also be found to supply an exegetical approach in which one typically has to study and investigate the literary dimensions of a text and the social and historical dimensions of a text.

The next chapter will show how cultural violence cannot be investigated without also investigating structural and direct violence. Close scrutiny for signs of cultural violence reveals evidence in the texts of Jeremiah, and possibly other texts in the Hebrew Bible. In the case of kingship, the explicit presentation of the king’s military strength in fortified buildings and weapons can be seen as cultural violence, combined with the visible royal attire of crown and sceptre. The texts identified in Jeremiah as examples of covenant (Jer 11:1-17) and kingship (Jer 22:1-23:8) will be investigated in depth in order to unearth the cultural violence embedded in these texts.

The same can be said for structural violence. Although attention will be given to the presence of cultural violence in these texts, the manifestation of structural violence will be discussed at length and particularly its close relationship with cultural violence. In this regard, Yee’s ideological-literary analysis model, which takes cognisance of the literary dimensions of the texts as well as the social and historical dimensions of the texts, will be most helpful.

Before we continue to investigate the notion of covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 as examples of cultural violence, it is important to place the Book of Jeremiah within in a larger literary, historical, and theological context. The particular literary form and structure in the Book of Jeremiah may influence the interpretation of these two texts. In addition, pertinent aspects regarding the literary, historical and theological context of the book Jeremiah will be identified in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

### READING THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

#### 1. Literary Aspects

##### a. Structure

The Book of Jeremiah is a difficult book to read. It has no apparent chronology, form or literary coherence. There are also a multitude of genres, speakers and competing theological voices (Stulman, 2005, p. 11). Thompson (1980, p. 27) states that part of the problem of Jeremiah, “is that the book, like other prophetic books, is not a book in the modern sense but rather a collection of prophetic oracles and other materials which has passed through a long and complex history of transmission.<sup>16</sup> There does seem to be evidence of what originally were shorter “books” with some unifying features. The first part of Jeremiah, Chapter 1-25, is structured around the theme of the divine judgement upon Judah and Jerusalem. This collection appears to conclude with Jer 25:1-13a that ends with the words “all that is written in this book”. The original scope of this collection of material is set out in Jer 25:1-3, which refers back to the beginning of Jeremiah’s ministry in 627 BCE. Several striking verbal similarities between Jer 25:3-9 and Jeremiah 1 (esp. vv. 15-19) give reason to think that the collection of material beginning with Jeremiah 1 and concluding with Jer 25:1-13a covers the period between 627 and 605 BCE (the fourth year of Jehoiakim) (Thompson, 1980, p. 28).

Thompson (1980, pp. 125-128) suggests the following broad structure of Jeremiah 1-25.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT) of Jeremiah is far longer than the Greek text (LXX). The Greek omissions comprise single words, phrases, sentences, and some entire passages, of which the longest is about 180 words, while others are more sizable, e.g., 33:14-26; 39:4-13; 51:44b-49a; 52:27b-30. In addition to these textual variants, there is also a major difference in the order of the oracles against the nations, which in the MT are at the end of the book, but in the LXX are in the middle, inserted after 25:13 (v. 14 is lacking in LXX) (Thompson, 1980, pp. 117-118). Conrad Schmid (2012, pp. 431-432) also offers a detailed discussion of the differences between the MT and the LXX of Jeremiah.

<sup>17</sup> A choice of broad structure of Jeremiah 1-25 is important in the placing of Stulman’s units within this structure. The structures of Thompson (1980, pp. 125-128) and Allen (2008) were compared and it was decided to follow the structure of Thompson, because his structure is much more detailed. Although

- I. Superscription (1:1–3)
- II. The Call of Jeremiah and the two visions (1:4-19)
  - i. The Call of Jeremiah (1:4-10)
  - ii. The Two Visions (1:11-16)
  - iii. The Divine Charge and Promise (1:17-19)
- III. The Divine Judgement in Judah and Jerusalem (2:1-25:38)
  - A. Israel’s Guilt and Punishment (2:1-6:30)
    1. Israel Indicted for Her Sins (2:1-37)
      - i. The Faithfulness of Israel’s Youth: Her Ideal Status (2:1-3)
      - ii. Israel’s Apostasy (2:4-13)
      - iii. The Consequences of Israel’s Apostasy (2:14-19)
      - iv. The Fascination and Futility of Baal Worship (2:20-28)
      - v. Israel Deserves Judgement (2:29-37)
    2. A Plea for Israel’s Repentance (3:1-4:4)
      - i. The Alarm – Invasion is Threatened (4:5-10)
      - ii. Apostate Israel and Faithless Judah (3:6-11)
      - iii. Israel Summoned to Repent; Future Promises (3:12-18)
      - iv. The Need for True Repentance (3:19-4:4)
    3. The Coming Judgement (4:5-6:30)
      - i. The Alarm – Invasion is Threatened (4:5-10)
      - ii. The Scorching Hot Wind of Judgement (4:11-18)
      - iii. Jeremiah’s Anguished Cry (4:19-22)
      - iv. A Vision and an Oracle about the Coming Destruction (4:23-28)
      - v. The Death Agony of Zion (4:29-31)
      - vi. The Unpardonable Sin and Moral Depravity of Jerusalem (5:1-9)
      - vii. False Security in the Face of a Terrible Foe (5:10-19)
      - viii. YHWH Warns a Foolish, Rebellious, Complacent People (5:20-31)
      - ix. Jerusalem Under Siege (6:1-8)

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Thompson himself acknowledges that any analysis of contents has a certain artificiality about it, it is still important to be able to navigate within this complex Book of Jeremiah. The passages that will be analysed in this research, are in cursive.

- x. Judgement Falls on a Corrupt People (6:9-15)
- xi. Elaborate Ritual No Substitute for Obedience (6:16-21)
- xii. The Terrible Foe from the North (6:22-26)
- xiii. Jeremiah, The Assayer of His People (6:27-30)

B. False Religion and Its Punishment (7:1-10:25)

- 1. The Temple Sermon and False Religion (7:1-8:3)
  - i. The Temple Sermon (7:1-15)
  - ii. The Cult of the Queen of Heaven (7:16-20)
  - iii. Obedience rather than Mere Sacrifice (7:21-28)
  - iv. Sinful Deeds in the Valley of Hinnom (7:29-34)
  - v. Astral Worship and its Awful Punishment (8:1-3)
- 2. An Incurable People and Their Fate (8:4-10:25)
  - i. Blindly Complacent and Heading to Ruin (8:4-12)
  - ii. No Grapes on the Vine (8:13-17)
  - iii. The Prophet's Passionate Grief over Jerusalem (9:1 [MT. 8:18-23])
  - iv. A Depraved People and YHWH's Judgement (9:2-9 [MT. 9:1-8])
  - v. Jerusalem's Ruin (9:10-16 [MT. 9:9-15])
  - vi. A Dirge over Jerusalem (9:17-22 [MT. 9:16-21])
  - vii. Man's Only Grounds for Boasting (9:23-24 [MT. 9:22-23])
  - viii. The Worthlessness of Circumcision (9:25-26 [MT. 9:24-25])
  - ix. A Satire on Idolatry: YHWH and the Idols (10:1-16)
  - x. The Coming Exile: Lament and Intercession (10:17-25)

C. Warning and Judgement (11:1-15:9)

- 1. The Broken Covenant and Warnings of Judgement (11:1-13:27)
  - i. *The Broken Covenant (11:1-17)*
  - ii. A Plot Against Jeremiah's Life (11:18-12:6)
  - iii. YHWH Laments His Ravaged Inheritance (12:7-13)
  - iv. YHWH's Conditional Promise of Death or Life for Israel's Neighbours (12:14-17)
  - v. The Linen Waistcloth: A Symbolic Act (13:1-11)
  - vi. The Parable of the Wine Jar (13:12-14)
  - vii. A Plea and a Last Warning (13:15-17)

- viii. A Lament over the King and The Queen Mother (13:18-19)
- ix. Jerusalem's Incurable Sickness and Punishment (13:20-27)
- 2. Laments in a Time of Drought and National Defeat (14:1-15:9)
  - i. Lament, Supplication, and Divine Response in a Time of Drought (14:1-16)
  - ii. A Further Lament and Supplication in a Time of Defeat and Famine (14:17-15:4)
  - iii. Jerusalem's Terrible Fate (15:5-9)

D. Confessions, Symbolic Acts, and Preaching (15:10-25:38)

- 1. Some Personal Trials and Miscellaneous Sayings (15:10-20:18)
  - i. Jeremiah's Inner Struggle and YHWH's Answer (15:10-14)
  - ii. A Further Inner Struggle and the Divine Answer (15:15-21)
  - iii. Jeremiah's Life, a Mirror of His Message of Judgement (16:1-13)
  - iv. A New Exodus (16:14-15)
  - v. A Further Saying of Judgement (16:16-18)
  - vi. The Conversion of the Nations (16:19-21)
  - vii. Miscellaneous Sayings (17:1-13)
    - a. Judah's guilt that cannot be erased (17:1-4)
    - b. A personal affirmation: trust in God rather than in man (17:5-8)
    - c. God knows the heart and rewards justly (17:9-11)
    - d. YHWH, the hope of Israel (17:12-13)
  - viii. Another Lament (17:14-18)
  - ix. Keeping the Sabbath (17:19-27)
  - x. The Parable of the Potter's Vessel (18:1-12)
  - xi. Israel's Unnatural Behaviour and its Consequences (18:13-17)
  - xii. Jeremiah's Reaction to a Plot against His Life (18:18-23)
  - xiii. The Symbolic Action of the Broken Jar (19:1-20:6)
  - xiv. Jeremiah's Inner Struggle about His Calling (20:7-13)
  - xv. The Depths of Despair (20:14-18)
- 2. Kings and False Prophets Denounced (21:1-23:40)
  - i. *Zedekiah's Inquiry and Jeremiah's reply (21:1-10)*

- ii. *The Duties of the King (21:11-12) and an Oracle against Jerusalem (21:13-14)*
- iii. *The Duties of the King, continued (22:1-9)*
- iv. *Concerning Jehoahaz (Shallum) (22:10-12)*
- v. *Concerning Jehoiakim (22:13-19)*
- vi. *Jerusalem's Doom (22:20-23)*
- vii. *Concerning Jehoiachin (Coniah) (22:24-30)*
- viii. *Promises for the Future of the Dynasty and the People (23:1-8)*
- ix. Denunciation of the Prophets (23:9-40)
  - a. A land full of adulterers (23:9-12)
  - b. The prophets as leaders of national apostasy (23:13-15)
  - c. False prophets speak an unauthorised word from their own heart (23:16-22)
  - d. The dream and God's Word contrasted (23:23-32)
  - e. The burden of YHWH (23:33-40)
- 3. Two Visions and a Summary (24:1-25:38)
  - i. The Two Baskets of Figs (24:1-10)
  - ii. A Concluding Summary (25:1-14)
  - iii. Judgement on The Nations, YHWH's Cup of Wrath (25:15-29)
  - iv. The Universal Judgement of YHWH (25:30-38)  
(Thompson, 1980, pp. 125-128)

Stulman (2005, p. 14) also views Jeremiah 1-25 as a unit. The theme of this unit is the "Dismantling of Judah's Idolatrous World". Jeremiah 1-25 is further divided according to the following thematic divisions:

**The programmatic introduction:** Judah's New Place Among the Nations (1:1-19)

**Unit One:** Judah's Departure from YHWH: The Basis for Guilt and Penalty of Death (2:1-6:30)

**Unit Two:** Dismantling the Temple (7:1-10:25)

**Unit Three:** Dismantling the Covenant (11:1-17:27)

**Unit Four:** Dismantling of Insider Privileges (18:1-20:18)

**Unit Five:** Dismantling the Monarchy (21:1-24:10)

**Conclusion:** The Fulfilment of God's Plan for Judah Among the Nations (25:1-38)

(Stulman, 2005, p. 14)<sup>18</sup>

It is important to highlight the overall structure of Jeremiah as well as the thematic divisions of Stulman, as the themes of covenant and kingship can be said to feature in terms of a larger structure. The overall structure shows that covenant and kingship are in conversation with other passages in Jeremiah that could contribute to the rhetorical thrust of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8. The rhetorical thrust of these sections is thus important in determining the cultural violence inherent in these texts. Stulman's structure is important for demonstrating the larger symbolic meaning of Jeremiah 1-25. Covenant and kingship are but two of the four important pillars of the symbolic (cultural) world of Judah, the other two being the temple and insider privileges. An ideological-contextual analysis of covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 will show that the dismantling of covenant functioned parallel with the dismantling of the temple, as the temple in Jerusalem was Judah's structural means of practising a covenantal religion. It is also clear that kingship did not function separately from insider privileges. Even the monarchy did not function independently from the temple, as covenant certainly meant that there were insider privileges in following a covenantal religion.

## 2. Genre

Leslie Allen (2008, pp. 4-5) gives us some important pointers on the genre of Jeremiah. Like other prophetic books, a concentration of oracles of disaster constitutes a backbone for the book. Many of the oracles are composed of a reason for disaster and an announcement that the

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<sup>18</sup> McKane (2014, p. lxxxiii) introduces the concept of a "Rolling Corpus" in explaining the production of the final text of the book of Jeremiah. He states that Jeremiah is not a highly organised literary composition informed with all-embracing editorial principles or a theological plan which superintends the book. What he means by a "Rolling Corpus", is that "small pieces of pre-existing text trigger exegesis or commentary. MT is to be understood as a commentary or commentaries built on pre-existing elements of the Jeremianic *corpus*." The final text of the rolling corpus of Jeremiah therefore developed over a relatively long period, spanning the pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic periods of Israel history (McKane, 2014, p. lxxxiii). McKane therefore disagrees with Stulman who is of the opinion that the prose parts of Jeremiah 1-25 are placed strategically to give coherence to a larger theological message.

disaster will come in the double form of a divine intervention into the human situation and the dire consequences of that intervention. The beginning of the oracle may be expanded on in an attention-grabbing fashion, such as questions (e.g., Jer 5:7; 15:5; 18:13-14) and imperatives (e.g., Jer 5:10, 20-21; 7:21; 22:20). Allen points out that oracles of disaster are sometimes combined with disputations, which have a basic form of thesis, dispute, and counter-thesis. There are a surprisingly large number of disputations in the book, and their recognition provides exegetical insight (see e.g. Jer 2:23-25; 3:1-5; 8:8-9; 18:6; 28:2-4, 6-9, 14; 33:23-26; 37:9-10; 42:13-18; 44:1-30; 45:3-5a; 48:14-17) (Allen, 2008, pp. 4-5).

Allen (2008, pp. 4-5) also states that the oracle or its second part are frequently introduced by a quotation formula of the type “Here is what YHWH said” to indicate the prophet’s proclamation of the divine word. The quotation formula, “declared YHWH”, can also on occasion mark the start of divine speech, although it follows the first phrase or clause. It frequently signals the end of a unit or section. An oracle reception heading, generally in the form, “A message that Jeremiah received from YHWH”, has an important structural function in the book. An oracle reception statement, “I/Jeremiah received YHWH’s message”, often opens smaller sections. A recurring peculiarity of the book, seldom recognised, is that these and other introductory formulas can have an anticipatory role, alerting the reader to a divine oracle to be cited later (Allen, 2008, pp. 4-5).

Schmid (2012, pp. 435-436) states that twentieth century research on the book of Jeremiah has been largely shaped by the commentary of Bernhard Duhm (1901) and a succinct study by Sigmund Mowinckel (1914). Dumm, according to Schmid, delineated three stages in the development of the book of Jeremiah. The oldest section is composed of the poems of Jeremiah, found especially in Jeremiah 1-25. The second element is the book of Baruch, while later additions pervade the entire book. According to Mowinckel, the Book of Jeremiah was pieced together from the four sources he called A. the words of Jeremiah; B. narratives about Jeremiah; C. prose speeches in the Deuteronomistic style; and D. words of salvation in Jeremiah 30-31 (Schmid, 2012, pp. 435-436). Schmid (2012, pp. 436-437) further notes that Thiel brought to the study of the book Jeremiah the argument that a certain unified Deuteronomistic redaction (“D”) from the exilic period took place, essentially creating a three-stage model for Jeremiah’s development: (1) texts from Jeremiah; (2) Deuteronomistic redactional texts (“D”); and (3) Post-Deuteronomistic redactional texts (“PD”) (Schmid, 2012, pp. 436-437).

It can be argued that Jer 11:1-17 and a substantial part of Jer 22:1-23:8 falls under the third group of material namely the prose discourses of the Book of Jeremiah (Stulman, 1986, pp. 66-67, 79-81).<sup>19</sup> According to Thompson (1980, pp. 36-37) and Stulman (1986, pp. 9-11) these prose discourses are presented in a “verbose, repetitious, monotonous, and highly rhetorical style and include many stereotyped expressions”. Many scholars have noticed that these prose discourses were written in a type of Hebrew prose which is closely akin to that of the Deuteronomistic histories (Joshua-Kings) and Deuteronomy. It is also believed is that although there are profound resemblances between the Jeremiah prose and Deuteronomistic prose, there are differences that are almost as marked as the similarities. Thompson thus concludes that the prose of Jeremiah is presented in its own style, remarkably similar to the Deuteronomistic writings, but by no means an imitation thereof. Deuteronomy, the Deuteronomistic histories, and the Jeremiah prose may all be regarded as examples of the rhetorical prose of the late seventh and early sixth centuries BCE in Judah (Thompson, 1980, pp. 45-46).

As was argued earlier, Jer 11:1-17 and a substantial part of Jer 22:1-23:8 share the rhetoric or show distinct similarities with the Deuteronomistic worldview. It can be argued that the Deuteronomistic originators/school/writers wrote with a certain religious/ideological bias with the purpose of persuading listeners that their real-life experiences of trauma and violence have a bigger importance and meaning than what can be seen as merely the capricious actions of their deity. The advantage of similarities between Jer 11:1-17 and a substantial part of Jer 22:1-23:8 and the Deuteronomistic worldview is that it places this study amid a wider theology than only covenantal ideology and royal ideology. Even if covenantal ideology and royal ideology are as intensive and extensive as any other type of ideology, the Deuteronomistic worldview exhibits certain diachronic aspects, for example the slow political, religious, social and moral descent of the monarchies of Israel and Judah, the destruction of Israel with the trauma of the exile of its population, the emergence of Jerusalem as the cultic centre *par excellence* and the Davidic covenant as the only legitimate covenant. These historical events could give covenant a distinctive polemic nature. It is within this polemic atmosphere that language has the potential to create binaries and drive sharp dichotomies between binaries (Galtung, 1990, p. 298).

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<sup>19</sup> Contributing to the problem of genre and style is the mixture of poetry and prose in the book. Poetry dominates the first 25 chapters, interspersed by prose, whereas biographical prose dominates the second half of the book, interspersed by poetry (Stulman, 2005, p. 12).

The use of language and rhetoric in Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 also brings one in contact with Galtung's theory of cultural violence. Cultural violence is all about creating binaries and driving sharp dichotomies between binaries. Cultural violence is predominantly captured in language. According to Galtung, cultural violence has its origin where binaries are supported and enforced (Galtung, 1990, p. 298). Covenantal and royal language and rhetoric are fundamentally language and rhetoric of election. The concept of election has the potential to cause binaries, in that the act of electing naturally causes some people to be elected and some people not to be elected. It can also be argued that the more intensive the polemic atmosphere at the origin of the text, the more intensive the language and rhetoric of the text will be. The main task then is to see how the language and rhetoric of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 try to persuade a particular audience of their elected nature but also of the consequences of the said elected nature.

## 1. Historical Context

When one follows the textual clues in Jeremiah, one can likely place Jeremiah 1-25 between 627 and 605 BCE (Thompson, 1980, p. 9), although the "world" of Jeremiah spans the period of 627-587 BCE (Craigie, et al., 1991, p. 25). It is necessary to keep in mind the overall historical context because it places Jeremiah in a time of direct violence and structural violence influenced and deepened by fast moving and intense historical developments. To understand the geo-political situation of Jeremiah, one must take into consideration historical developments even before Jeremiah's time. According to Thompson (1980, p. 9), prophets were not simply teachers of Torah, but perceived themselves to be the messengers of YHWH with the task of delivering their divine messages to their given audiences. They had a "specific message to a specific people at a specific point in history". The Book of Jeremiah therefore reveals a clear *Sitz im Leben* that correlated with Jeremiah's responsibility to announce YHWH's oracles against kingdoms and nations, "to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow" (Jer 1:10) (Thompson, 1980, p. 9).

Thompson (1980, pp. 9-10) further describes the time of Jeremiah as an age of crisis. The beginning of Jeremiah's ministry saw the death throes of the already decaying Assyrian empire. Egypt, and then Babylon, were waiting to fill the power vacuum. Judah found itself caught up in this political drama of the day. Judah started out as vassal of Assyria, enjoyed a short period of independence, became a vassal of Egypt, and ended up as a vassal of Babylonia.

Judah's time as a vassal of Babylonia also saw the end of Judah's existence as a nation when Nebuchadnezzar exiled Judah's royal house, destroying Jerusalem and the temple in the process. Jeremiah lived in these momentous times, times that also imprinted its trauma on Jeremiah and his people. This trauma is reflected in the book of Jeremiah (Thompson, 1980, pp. 9-10).

Thompson is fairly certain that Jeremiah started his ministry in the thirteenth year of Josiah (Jer 1:6), i.e., 627 BCE. Jeremiah would have been a young man of 16 to 18 years of age. This places the date of his birth in the last days of the reign of the infamous Manasseh (687-642 BCE). Many of the evils Jeremiah made his audience attentive to, originated in the time of Manasseh. Manasseh's reign was known for large scale apostasy. During his reign Judah was a vassal of Assyria and had been since 732 BCE. A brief review of the history of Judah from the death of Solomon in about 922 BCE to the accession of Josiah in 740 BCE, will help to explain why Manasseh behaved as he did and why Josiah was seen to be in such sharp contrast (Thompson, 1980, p. 11).

Israel and Judah were the two kingdoms that formed after the death of Solomon. They were rival states, with two capitals, Samaria and Jerusalem, and two kinds of religious practice. Israel was the larger and the wealthier state. The states coexisted for almost 200 years, sometimes in conflict with each other, and sometimes living in peace. They existed independently, fighting their own wars with their neighbours. Sometimes there were enemy invasions for which they had to pay dearly, but they maintained their independence till the middle of the eighth century (Thompson, 1980, p. 11). This situation changed with the rise of the Assyrian empire as a world empire. During the ninth century Assyria probed areas to its west, to be resisted by coalitions of small states. King Ahab of Israel was involved in the battle of Qarqar against Shalmaneser III with 11 other kings in 853 BCE (859-825 BCE). During the first half of the eighth century BCE, a period of Assyrian withdrawal to defend its own frontiers to the north and when Aramean states to Israel's northeast were at war with one another, both Israel and Judah prospered greatly. The ascension of the Assyrian king, Tiglath-pileser III (745-727 BCE), about a century before Jeremiah's time, changed all this. This century was critical for the small kingdoms of Israel and Judah, in that they had to handle the manifestation of many religious and political problems in their national lives (Schoors, 2013, pp. 2-4; Nelson, 2014, p. 142).

In order to defend itself against a coalition between the Aramean state of Damascus and Israel, Ahaz of Judah had to call in the help of Tiglath-pileser against the advice of Isaiah (Isa 7:1-8:18). Tiglath-pileser set his sights on the destruction of this coalition, by advancing into Israel. He overwhelmed Galilea and Transjordan, turning them into three Assyrian provinces, and finally destroyed Damascus in 732 BCE. But Judah thereby became a vassal of Assyria and remained so till Assyria itself collapsed (Kelle, 2012, p. 405; Schoors, 2013, pp. 5-6; Nelson, 2014, p. 142; Thompson, 1980, p. 12).

Judah was thus the vassal of Assyria, which involved the obligations of a normal vassal, including regular tribute and the acceptance of Assyria's gods in Jerusalem's cultic environment. This degenerated into a situation where Ahaz was called to Damascus in order to appear before Tiglath-pileser, where he was ordered to acknowledge the Assyrian gods at a nearby bronze altar. This bronze altar was also copied so to appear in the Jerusalem temple (2 Kgs 16:10-15). Although Judah was spared military occupation and even the loss of its territory as happened to Israel and Damascus, this humiliating situation did not sit well with the people of Judah. Perhaps this submission helped Judah escaped the fate of Samaria in 722/1 BCE when, following renewed rebellion, Tiglath-pileser's successor, Shalmaneser V (727-722 BCE), invaded Israel (Kelle, 2012, p. 405; Schoors, 2013, pp. 5-6; Nelson, 2014, p. 142; Thompson, 1980, p. 12).

Judah was probably still rife with discontent when Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, (715-687 BCE) tried to overturn his father's policy decisions. He commenced with wide ranging religious reforms and also made his desire known to regain the independence of Judah, which naturally made the Assyrian ruler, Sennacherib, take notice in 701 BCE. Encouraged by unrest all over the empire, Hezekiah seems to have joined a coalition of states in open rebellion. Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem, forced Hezekiah's surrender, and laid a heavy tribute on Judah (2 Kgs 18:9-19:37). Hezekiah failed in his efforts to ensure an independent Judah. The immediate effect of Hezekiah's policy of resistance was a significant loss of Judahite territory in the Shephelah (Kelle, 2012, p. 406; Schoors, 2013, pp. 5-8; Nelson, 2014, p. 142; Thompson, 1980, pp. 12-13).

After the death of Hezekiah, his son, Manasseh (687-642 BCE), ensured that Judah once again became a royal vassal state of Assyria. He probably had no choice, for Assyria attained the height of its power during this period. Sennacherib's successors, Esarhaddon (681-669 BCE) and Ashurbanipal (669-627 BCE), were able to invade Egypt and even to sack the ancient

capital Thebes in 663 BCE (Kelle, 2012, p. 407; Schoors, 2013, p. 8; Nelson, 2014, p. 142; Thompson, 1980, p. 13).

Manasseh returned to the pro-Assyrian policy of his grandfather, Ahaz. Although a pro-Assyrian policy included political subservience and the acceptance Assyria's gods, Manasseh introduced many irregular religious practices. Jeremiah started his ministry under these conditions. Manasseh's rule ended in 642 BCE. Although it is possible that Manasseh's son, Amon, followed in his father's footsteps, his rule was brief (642-640 BCE), ending in his assassination, probably by high officials who may have been trying to organise an anti-Assyrian revolt. The assassins were executed and the eight-year-old Josiah, grandson of the notorious Manasseh, was placed on the throne. Josiah's rule saw Judah becoming independent once more, the start of a new age (Kelle, 2012, p. 408; Schoors, 2013, p. 8; Nelson, 2014, pp. 142, 153-154; Thompson, 1980, p. 13).

Josiah's reign was introduced during a period of general rebellion and civil war in Assyria, which seems to have lasted about four years (627-624 BCE). This weakened Assyria still further. After Cyaxares (c. 625-585 BCE) defeated the Assyrian army near Babylon and seized the throne, it was clear that Assyria could no longer survive. One can assume that in Judah a Council of State cared for the affairs of state while Josiah was a child. Josiah "began to seek the God of David his father" in the eighth year of his reign (2 Chron 34:3a), that is, when he was 16. This may be an indication of his intention to change the direction of national policy in Judah as soon as he was able to. In the twelfth year of Josiah's reign (629/8 BCE) Josiah began to act by commencing some sweeping reforms (2 Chron 34:3b-7). Josiah moved into areas which had been Assyrian provinces for a century or more, namely Samaria and Gilead, and even reached the Mediterranean Sea. But there was no Assyrian resistance (Kelle, 2012, p. 409; Nelson, 2014, pp. 154-155; Thompson, 1980, pp. 18-19).

Josiah opposed the passage of Pharaoh Necho II through Palestine on his way to bring help to the Assyrians (2 Kgs 23:29-30; 2 Chron 35:20-24). Josiah was subsequently killed, and Judah fell under Egyptian control. The end of the Assyrian empire was at that time almost assured. This great empire was carved up as the Medes extended their control through areas north and east of Assyria in Iran, Armenia and Asia Minor, while Babylon took the whole of the Mesopotamian plain, and Egypt held areas to the west of the Euphrates including Palestine. On Josiah's death, his son, Jehoahaz, became king (2 Kgs 23:31). His rule was short-lived and after three months, he was summoned by Necho, and sent to Egypt in bonds (Jer 22:10-12; 2

Kgs 23:31-35). In Jehoahaz's place, his brother, Eliakim, assuming the throne name Jehoiakim, was set in place as an Egyptian vassal. Judah was laid under heavy tribute (2 Kgs 23:34-35). Judah's short independence of 20 years was ended (Kelle, 2012, p. 410; Nelson, 2014, pp. 159-162; Thompson, 1980, pp. 22-23).

In 605 BCE Judah was again at a turning point. In that year, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Egyptian garrison at Carchemish (Jer 46:2ff.). The Egyptians were routed out of Syria and Palestine. After a short respite, the Babylonians invaded the Philistine plain where they took and destroyed Ashkelon (Jer 47:5-7) and deported leading members of the city's population. Consternation overtook Judah, and the fast of December 604 BCE (Jer 36:9) may have been one result. Jehoiakim transferred his allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar and become his vassal (2 Kgs 24:1). Once again Judah was subject to a Mesopotamian power. Jehoiakim's loyalty was divided, and setbacks suffered by Nebuchadnezzar in 601 BCE against Egypt probably convinced Jehoiakim to rebel against the might of the Babylonians (2 Kgs 24:1). Nebuchadnezzar sent a punitive force of Babylonians and guerrilla bands to retaliate (Jer 35:11; 2 Kgs 24:2). Jehoiakim died the very month that the Babylonian army set out again in December 598 BCE. Jehoiakim's rebellion against Babylon may have caused him to be assassinated (Jer 22:18-19; Jer 36:20) by his own people in the hope that Judah would be punished lightly. Jerusalem was not destroyed but the new king, the 18-year-old Jehoiachin (2 Kgs 24:8), was taken captive after a mere three months of rule, along with the queen mother, state officials and leading citizens, and a vast booty (2 Kgs 24:10-17). The king's uncle, Mattaniah (Zedekiah), was installed as ruler (2 Kgs 24:17-18) (Kelle, 2012, p. 410; Nelson, 2014, pp. 162-163; Thompson, 1980, pp. 23-24).

Within ten years, Judah was destroyed (597-587 BCE) The deportation of 597 BCE, even if not large, was significant enough to remove much of Judah's key personnel, leaving the ultranationalist king Zedekiah lacking in both experience and caution. Zedekiah was young (2 Kgs 24:18) and may have wished for better things; more than once he consulted Jeremiah (Jer 37:17-21; 38:7-28; cf. 21:1-7; 37:3). But Zedekiah was too fearful of public opinion and too weak to control the officials (Jer 38:5, 19, 24). Moreover, it seems clear that Jehoiachin was still perceived by many in Judah as the rightful king whom they wished to return as soon as possible (Jer 27). Thoughts on the exile were divided. Some prophets like Hananiah forecast that the exile would be over in two years (Jer 28:2-4), while Jeremiah spoke of 70 years (Kelle, 2012, p. 411; Nelson, 2014, pp. 163-164; Thompson, 1980, pp. 24-25).

In 595/4 BCE there was an uprising in Babylon in which some of the exiles may have been implicated (Jer 29:20-23). In 594/3 BCE, in Zedekiah's fourth year, plans for revolt were discussed among the small states in the west, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Sidon, and Judah (Jer 27:3), while prophets in exile and in Judah were encouraging revolt (Jer 29:20-23; 28:2-4). Zedekiah was at pains to assure Nebuchadnezzar of his loyalty (Jer 29:3; 51:59). But the threat of revolt was not over, and a re-emergence of Egypt could have pushed Judah in the direction of open revolt. In 589 BCE Judah was again speaking of revolt. Finally, Zedekiah rebelled (2 Kgs 25:1). The response of Babylon was swift. By autumn 589 BCE their army was in Palestine and by January 588 BCE Jerusalem was under siege. The Babylonians did not attack the city at first but slowly eliminated the fortified cities throughout Judah. When an Egyptian army entered the land in 588 BCE, the Babylonians raised the siege in order to meet the Egyptian threat (Jer 37:5), raising the hopes of all. After a very brief time, perhaps only a few weeks, the siege was resumed. Jerusalem hung on for approximately another year. Finally, in July 587 BCE, the walls of Jerusalem fell, just as the city ran out of food. The fleeing Zedekiah and his family were captured (Jer 52:7ff.; 2 Kgs 25:3ff.), Zedekiah's sons were killed, and he was blinded and taken in exile to Babylon, where he died. Nebuzaradan, the commander of the royal bodyguard, acting under Nebuchadnezzar's orders, (Jer 52:12ff.; 2 Kgs 25:8ff.), totally destroyed the city. The exact date of the fall of Jerusalem is attested to in the Babylonian Chronicle – the second day of Adar, 15/16 March, 597 BCE. Many of the leading citizenry were rounded up, some were executed, and others found themselves exiles in Babylon. The walled cities of Judah including Jerusalem were nothing more than ruins (Kelle, 2012, p. 411; Nelson, 2014, pp. 165-167; Thompson, 1980, pp. 25-26).

Nelson (2014, p. 169) sums up the effects of the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem. Judah had been a relatively independent and stable monarchy for three and a half centuries. The destruction of Jerusalem was in conjunction with the economic and demographic collapse of Judah, except in central Benjamin. Even though there was massive destruction in Judah south of Jerusalem, Benjamin was apparently largely untouched. The archaeological picture testifies to extensive destruction in Jerusalem, Ramat Rahel, Lachish, Gezer, and Hebron. In contrast, there was continued settlement in Benjamin, at Gibeon, Bethel, and Mizpah, for example. The Shephelah was lost, while the Edomites took the defeat of Judah as an opportunity to continue their expansion into southern Judah. This incursion had begun even before the fall of Judah, as witnessed by Arad Ostraca 24 and 40 (COS 3.43K–L:84–85).

Judahite reaction to this loss of ancestral land was venomous and long lasting (Ps 137:7; Obad; Mal 1:3-4) (Nelson, 2014, p. 169).

Judah was organised into the provincial system of the Babylonians. The remaining population consisted largely of poor peasants (Jer 52:16; 2 Kgs 25:12). These peasants were unlikely to cause trouble. Gedaliah ben Ahikam was appointed governor. Since Jerusalem was uninhabitable, the seat of government was placed at Mizpah. But even this plan failed, though Gedaliah tried hard to conciliate the population (Jer 40:7-12). Ishmael, a member of the royal house who must have escaped from the Babylonians, with backing from the king of Ammon, assassinated Gedaliah, who, though warned, would not believe the warning. Ishmael and his fellow conspirators also slew the Babylonian garrison and innocent people who were present. Ishmael escaped to Ammon. Gedaliah's friends in Mizpah, fearing repercussions from Nebuchadnezzar, were determined to flee to Egypt, taking with them an unwilling Jeremiah (Jer 42). Whether because of this senseless massacre or for some other reason, there was a third deportation in 582 BCE (Jer 52:30) (Kelle, 2012, p. 411; Nelson, 2014, p. 170).

Nelson (2014, pp. 170-171) offers a short summary of the exile situation. Deportees from Judah were settled in Babylon, Nippur, and along the Chebar Canal. Exiles were also settled for purposes of economic redevelopment. This is indicated by the names of some of their settlement sites, namely Tel Abib ("ruin with ears of grain"), Tel-melah, and Tel-harsha (Ezra 2:59; Neh 7:61; Ezek 3:15). From Ezekiel one learns that elders played a decisive role in community affairs. Yahwistic prophets were also active in the exile community. The exile proved to be a period of remarkable literary activity and theological ferment among Babylonian Jews. Years were reckoned according to the reign of Jehoiachin, at least by the author of Ezekiel. Jehoiachin was still viewed as the legitimate king. Babylonian records from the year 592 BCE indicate that at the time the Babylonian government was supplying Jehoiachin and his five sons with food rations. In these records he is still called "king of Judah". Jehoiachin was installed, with other captive kings, as a guest at the palace table as a sign of favour and probably also to monitor his behaviour (Nelson, 2014, pp. 170-171).

Nelson (2014, p. 171) states that suggestions that the territory of Judah was emptied of its inhabitants, are overstatements. These suggestions result from an uncritical acceptance of the viewpoint of the later returnees, who considered themselves the only true inheritors of Judahite (Jewish) identity. Nebuzaradan left vinedressers and tillers of the soil in the land (2 Kgs 25:12), because he would have desired the continuation of a robust agricultural economy

in order to produce taxes and export products such as grapes and olives. Religious life also continued with a sacrificial cult on the site of the destroyed Jerusalem shrine and an active temple functioning at Mizpah or Bethel (Nelson, 2014, p. 171).

## **2. Social and Theological Perspective**

This study agrees with Pete Diamond (1999, p. 17) that the “historical person of the prophet Jeremiah provides the anchor point for interpreting the disparate materials collected in the book”. It is noted in Chapter 2 of this study that “social discourse on collective traumas and national myths is an essential element for the construction and transformation of any ethno-political identity”.

Therefore, if it is argued that “social discourse on collective traumas and national myths is an essential element in the construction and transformation of any ethno-political identity”, it follows that conflict situations provide the incubator in which the social identities and group memberships of individuals are formed concerning the relation between the individual and members of other groups.

In terms of conflict between groups, there are status differences within social groups and relations that can result in a power imbalance, causing an “unequal distribution of decision-making power”. These unequal power configurations can be the origin of “latent conflict”, whereby the modes of influence of domination and subjection are inferred from the way in which the different actors are arranged in the system (roles), and which can result in inner group conflict. It is within this theorising that this study places the social contexts of Jeremiah.

But at who were these judgement oracles of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 directed? Here, this study runs into difficulties. There are differences of opinion as to at who the oracles of judgement of Jer 11:1-7 and Jer 22:1-23:8 were directed. The audience could have been a late monarchical audience (Leuchter, 2006, p. 159; Holladay, 1986, p. 351), or it could have been an exilic audience (Nicholson, 1970; Carrol, 1981, p. 96), or even a post-exilic audience has been suggested (McKane, 2014). These texts themselves do not say more than the fact that the judgement oracles of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 had an Israelite covenantal audience in mind. What is also important, in conjunction with the audience(s) of Jeremiah, are the social settings of the different groupings that could have been involved with the ongoing process of redaction and interpretation during the pre-exile, exile and also the post-exilic times. One has

to keep in mind that these social groupings were also power groupings within milieus of social differentiation and social stratification. These milieus tend to survive periods like the exile, and even to be “back in business” after the exile. Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 are part of a long history of redaction, mentioned by McKane (2014, p. lxxxiii) and Clements (1988, p. 130). The abstraction of Jer 11:1-17, mentioned by O’Connor (2012, p. 99), can make Jer 11:1-17 basically relevant for any covenantal audience. The specificity of Jer 22:1-23:8, naming the kings being judged, is less abstract, but still has enough abstraction in certain parts, especially the poetic parts, to also make it relevant for any covenantal audience.

The relevance of Jer 11:1-17 for any covenantal audience is argued by Raymond Person (2002, p. 121). Person states that, although Jer 11:1-17 refers to the Babylonian exile and the destruction of Jerusalem at the level of the narrative, it is nevertheless written in such a way that the theological message is predominant, and the historical level is simply a vehicle to express the theological understanding of covenant. Because of this, this text could easily have been interpreted during the time of Zerubbabel as follows: the fulfilment of YHWH’s punishment is at its end and, because the temple has been rebuilt, there is an opportunity to renew the covenant; if the people obey the commandments, this renewal will restore the land to a “land flowing with milk and honey” (Jer 11:5) (Person, 2002, p. 121).

There are thus three distinct periods in which these social groupings could have been active: the late monarchy, the exile, and the post-exilic time. During all these times Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 21:1-23:8 could have been written, heard, re-interpreted, heard again and so on, up to the time of the final form of Jeremiah. This study will now attempt to outline these three socio-historical contexts, within which one can find certain theological precepts. These precepts could have had the potential to cause structural violence and direct violence.

### **a. Monarchical Period**

In the late monarchy quite a few disparate social groupings existed in Judah. These groups formed in times of social and political unrest, accompanied by huge social and political disturbances. The political turmoil of the time was cited earlier. But what were the social and economic turmoil at the time that could have formed the incubator for these groups to grow in influence? Blenkinsopp (1996, p. 70) identifies two major players in the social and economic contexts of Judah and Israel during the second half of the eighth century BCE. On the one hand,

Assyria was starting to present a threat to the independence and even the existence of the Israelite and Judean kingdoms. On the other hand, the ruling elites of these kingdoms were also in the process of consolidating and extending their power. Important economic developments such as the expansion of trade caused luxury items to become more common, while the expansion of the size and the population of Jerusalem, caused important urban developments. These urban developments also took place in major centres like Lachish, Megiddo, Hazor, and Dan. The newfound wealth provided an indication, as Blenkinsopp (1996, p. 70) aptly states, of

the emerging and consolidating state system in the process of bearing down on and assimilating existing traditional social arrangements. These were based on the kinship network (household, clan, tribe), with its own customary mores and rituals, and the (theoretically inalienable) possession of a plot of land by each household. The extension into every sphere of existence of the coercive power of the state – including taxation, military service, the *corvée*, and the expropriation of patrimonial domain – created a situation of social disorientation, a starker contrast between rich and poor and, in general, increased hardship for the great mass of the population.

These factors made it necessary for certain groups to be formed, who could have been active at the time of the ministry of Jeremiah. However, who were these different groups and their placement in Judean society?

One of these groups can be described as the “people of the land”. The withdrawal of Assyria from the political stage, and the ensuing struggle between Babylon and Egypt to take centre stage, had a decisive effect on the internal situation in Judah. Active at the time of the ministry of Jeremiah was a nationalist anti-Assyrian faction called the “people of the land”, which was instrumental in putting Josiah on the throne after the assassination of Josiah’s father, Amon. These events certainly placed this group at centre stage during Josiah’s reign – a position they seemed to hold till the end of the monarchical state of Judah. The group opposed foreign rule, and its fierce struggle for independence caught the eye of many of the big political role players of the day. The Babylonians eventually executed quite a number of this group (Jer 1:18; 37:2; 2 Kgs 25:19). It can be deduced that much of their opposition to foreign rule was because of the annual tribute, which had a markedly negative influence on the agrarian class (people of the land) (Blenkinsopp, 1996, p. 112). Albetz (1992, pp. 201-202) contributes to the theorising on the “people of the land” and states that they were a “middle-class group among the land-owning farmers of Judah who became politically active, and, in succession to the assembly of arms-bearing men in the period of the early monarchy, allied with the royal house against the destructive upper class of the capital”. However, this political activity of the “people

of the land” would hardly have had any prospect of longer-term success had it not been supported by part of the Jerusalem upper-class. This group consisted of influential court officials trained in wisdom, and a large part of the temple priesthood of Jerusalem (Alberty, 1992, pp. 201-202).

Blenkinsopp (1996, pp. 114-115) points to another possible socio-political group that could have been active at the time of ministry of Jeremiah, namely the “humble of the land”. It is possible that the prophets Zephaniah, Micah and Amos identified with this group, demonstrating, according to Blenkinsopp, the “strength and consistency of the tradition of prophetic preaching against social and political corruption”. Both Micah and Zephaniah condemned “corrupt officeholders”, consisting of judges, princes, priests and prophets (Mic 3:9-12; Zeph 3:3-5). This “humble of the land” group was active from the time of Hezekiah and was fervently opposed to the political elite’s “worship of Baal” (2 Kgs 21:3; 23:4-5), “Assyrian-type cults of sun, moon, and stars” (cf. 2 Kgs 21:5; 23:4, 5, 11-12; Deut 4:19), and the worship of the “Ammonite deity Milcom” alongside YHWH (2 Kgs 23:13). This group also opposed members of the royal family and other aristocrats, who easily assimilated with these “foreign customs and dress” and who claimed an “enlightened scepticism” about traditional Yahwism religion and its prophets (Jer 1:7-13). For this group it was also important to conform to what YHWH expected from them, by seeking “righteousness” and living “in obedient submission” to YHWH. It is possible that this tradition had an influence on the incorporation of the Deuteronomistic law as a state document (Blenkinsopp, 1996, pp. 114-115).

Although these two groups could have been active during the ministry of Jeremiah and could have been responsible for the Deuteronomistic ideology in which Jeremiah’s oracles were set, it is also possible that these groups were at the time responsible for much of the situation in Judah against which Jeremiah directed his oracles of judgement. The fact that Jeremiah, who in his early period came out enthusiastically in support of the reform, complains after its failure in 609 BCE that the “lying pen of the scribes” falsified the “law of YHWH” (Jer 8:8), and asserts with disappointment that even the circles in the upper class who should really have known the “law of their YHWH”, no longer put it forward consistently (Jer 5:5), supports this (Alberty, 1992, p. 202).

Lundbom (2010, p. 65) gives some insight into the theological conflict of the time. Traditions from the North, particularly those associated with Moses, predominate in the call of

Jeremiah and in his earliest preaching. Jeremiah reflects upon the exodus, wilderness wanderings, and settlement traditions in Jer 2.2-9, where his indebtedness to the “Song of Moses” (Deuteronomy 32) is clear and from which it is evident how Jeremiah sees YHWH’s grace towards Israel as framing the entire sweep of world history. Within this framework of YHWH’s grace towards Israel also lies Israel’s ingratitude, its corrupt ways with other gods resulting from settlement in the land, and YHWH’s punishment of Israel. The wilderness, before the settlement of the land, is seen as an idyllic time in the history of Israel. Jeremiah also views Israel’s settlement in the land as the time when things began to go wrong (Jer 2.7; cf. Deut 32:13-18). Jeremiah learned, from the earliest version of the book of Deuteronomy which incorporates prior preaching and teaching from northern Israel, of the conditionality of the Sinai covenant, and that land tenure was dependant on covenantal obedience. The Sinai covenant could be broken, and repeatedly was, but it could also be reconstituted (Josh 24; 2 Kgs 23). Jeremiah emphasises, more than other prophets, that, although the covenant is broken, it is in YHWH’s power to reconstitute the covenant (Jer 2:20; 5:5; 7:5-10; 31:31-34; 32:37-41) (Lundbom, 2010, p. 65).

Lundbom (2010, p. 66) also points to the importance of the finding of a law book in the temple in Jerusalem in 622 BCE for Jeremiah. This event coincided with the beginning of Jeremiah’s ministry, and was a sensational finding followed by a ceremony of covenant renewal (2 Kgs 22-23; 2 Chron 34-35). It was presided over by the young king, Josiah. Jeremiah refers at one point to the finding of the law book and what effect it had on him personally (Jer 15:16) (Lundbom, 2010, p. 66).

Freedman highlights the influence of earlier prophetic preaching on Jeremiah, most likely that of Micah, Isaiah, and Amos, whose home was in the South, from who Jeremiah learned of YHWH’s anger over urban injustice. In Jerusalem, Jeremiah observed how the rich continued to exploit the poor while their own wrongdoings were going unpunished (Freedman, 1996, p. 721).

Lundbom (2010, p. 67) lastly points to the climax of the conflict between northern and southern theologies in the dramatic temple sermon of Jeremiah in Jeremiah 7. Jeremiah prophesied that tenure in the land and the continued existence of the temple in Jerusalem were contingent upon covenant obedience, and that the nation was fated to lose both. However, the Jerusalem audience, which included not a few prophets and priests, embraced an expanded Zion theology. This theology expanded the eternal and unconditional covenant with David to

include Jerusalem and the temple (Ps 132:11-18). The destruction of the city or temple was therefore precluded. Preaching northern theology on this occasion nearly cost Jeremiah his life, but in the end, it was this theology that prevailed (Lundbom, 2010, p. 67).

Jeremiah's sermons during the time of the late monarchy thus occurred at a time when Jerusalem and the temple played a central role in how Israel understood itself in its relationship with YHWH. The cult and the monarchy were viewed as important tenets of faith, and, as Thomas Römer (2007, p. 67) points out, part of an important process of ideological legitimisation concerning the politics of centralisation under Josiah, which was a hallmark of this time. The worship of YHWH alone was important. To make sure that this worship was not polluted, the cult of Jerusalem had to be centralised, a decision that could have been driven by political reasons.

## **b. The Exilic Period**

The exile is the next important context mirrored in the book of Jeremiah. The historical incidences of the two exiles, and where and in what situations these exiles occurred, were discussed earlier in this chapter. The two exiles greatly impacted the social situation in the time of Jeremiah's ministry. Dalit Rom-Shiloni (2009, pp. 13-21) notes the existence of contradictory voices in the Book of Jeremiah, pointing to a possible conflict between pro-golah and pro-Judean interests (as for instance in Jer 42:10-12 vs. Jer 24:5-7). Both interests appear to be entertained in the divinely inspired prophetic words of Jeremiah, coexisting as prophetic composition, and yet these interests are representative of hostile positions within the Judean population in the early sixth century and following (cf. Ezek 11:14-21; 33:23-29). According to this view, the Book of Jeremiah consists of a (primary) Jeremiah-Judean voice that coexists with (secondary) redactional strands expressing the outlook of the exiles in Babylon. This lastly mentioned pro-golah group could also have been the editors of the final shape of Jeremiah. The pro-golah group (the first exile) saw themselves as occupying a certain privileged theological position. They were in continuity with the theological traditions of Israel, thereby having gained the blessing, the prospect of regathering in the land, and were transformed by YHWH, so that they would be able to recommence the covenant relationship, continuing Israel's past history. YHWH's transformation, however, was dependant on the people's wholehearted submission to YHWH. To the other extreme, Zedekiah and the "Remnant of Jerusalem" faced total destruction, resulting in the emptiness of land, so necessary for the continuation of the

pro-golah group after the exile. The pro-golah group, according to the group's own thought, encompassed the entirety of the "people of YHWH". YHWH was furthermore only interested in returning them to the land; and would only recommence the covenant relationship with them. Thus, the pro-golah group reappropriated quite selfishly several national traditions pertaining to its own future concerning land, covenant and what Rom-Shiloni calls the "trajectory of exile redemption" (Rom-Shiloni, 2009, pp. 13-21).

According to Römer (2007, p. 67), the period of exile was when the law of centralisation was inserted in terms of the larger context of a Deuteronomistic history extending from Joshua to 2 Kings. It is clear that conflicts of the late monarchy spilled over into the exile. As Galtung stated in Chapter 2 of this study, direct and structural violence create needs-deficits that can result in trauma. When trauma happens to a group or a collective, the resultant collective trauma can be deposited into the collective subconscious, thus becoming the driving force behind "major historical processes and events", therefore creating violence. Thus, it can be reiterated that violence breeds violence.

It can be argued that the resulting trauma of the loss experienced in the exile from land, temple and monarchy caused the pro-golah group to over-protect what its members still had: their relationship with YHWH and YHWH's relationship with them. The covenant was thus reappropriated, but not without the purity of cultic worship envisioned as a part of covenant. What could have happened, is that pure cultic worship was still thought of as part of the covenantal people, but without a temple to centralise who was in and who was out, the pro-golah group decided to carry out that function. You were either part of the pro-golah group or not. You were on the side of YHWH (golah) or you were judged. Kessler (2008, p. 77) points to some economic conflict that could have existed between the monarchy and state on the one side, and the "people of the land" before the exile. It was not the lower classes who suffered the consequences of royal rule, but the well-to-do class of landowners. If the "people of the land" stayed behind in Judah after the exile, it makes sense that the elite pro-golah group would have wanted to theologically eliminate this group.

### **c. Post-Exilic Period**

The last period that is important for the purpose of this study, is the post-exilic period. Johnny Miles (2011, pp. 62-73) gives a summary of the social situation in post-exilic Judah (Yehud),

and points to the dynamics of the conflict in the province between what can be described as the pro-golah group and the “people of the land”. Given the importance of the temple as an economic, cultic, and literary centre, its control meant power. Whoever could exert control over the temple, wielded economic, religious, and ideological power within the province of Yehud, but would also define the ethnic identity of “Israel” and establish the criterion for group in/exclusion. The number of groups vying for control and definition of the identity “Israel”, to which they would have assumed some entitlement, could only have exacerbated the natural tensions within the social life of Persian Yehud, including, but not limited to, the inter-ethnic conflicts precipitated by a pervasive miscegenation (Ezra 9:1-2; Neh 13:23-24).<sup>20</sup> The social conflict between the pro-golah elite group and the “people of the land” was between a group (golah) that generated its own identity via the production of a history with the name “Israel” bound together by a law and covenant, and distinguished from other groups by religion and ethnic descent, and the “people of the land”. No doubt the asserted dominance of the pro-golah group would not have gone unchallenged. Those who had remained behind in the land would have developed functional village communities and indigenous traditions with local leaders even emerging in the interim. The indigenes put up a stiff resistance to the temple project (Ezra 4:1-5) as well as an apparent resistance to paying tithes after the temple had been built (Mal 3:10). The scribal class of the pro-golah community in Yehud would have been able to create an identity appropriating the name “Israel” vis-à-vis the large-scale composition of a primary history. In addition, the pro-golah community naturally drew boundaries for group in/exclusion, since members regarded themselves as the only true Yehudim (Miles, 2011, pp. 62-73).

Therefore, Römer (2007, p. 64) sees this as a period where the ideology of segregation took root. The main issue of the law of centralisation had now become the prohibition and destruction of what were regarded as illegitimate cults (Römer, 2007, p. 64).

Important historical and social aspects as well as important theological aspects of the time of Jeremiah give us a picture of a turbulent time at best. It seems likely that solid structural

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<sup>20</sup> Among those who would have felt a sense of entitlement to the name “Israel” would have been (1) those individuals remaining in Samaria and its surrounding territories – i.e. the literal remnant of historical Israel; (2) those forcibly immigrated into the territory of the kingdom Israel; (3) those who remained in Judah after each deportation; (4) those possibly imported into the Judean population by either Assyrians or Babylonians; (5) those Jewish refugees returning to the territory of Judah during the governorship of Gedaliah (Jer 40); (6) Israelite and Judean deportees and refugees in Assyria, Syria, Babylonia, and Egypt; and, finally (7) the pro-golah group returning to Persian Yehud from Babylonia (Miles, 2011, p. 64).

institutions like the temple cult, the state bureaucracy, and the monarchy gave hope to many Judeans during these traumatic times. It is also possible that these institutions contributed just as much to their own eventual collapse and destruction.

In discussing the diachronic aspects of the progression of the apostasy of Judah, it becomes clear why the actions of prophets like Jeremiah were so important. Even if Jeremiah was not believed during the time of his oracles, when Judah languished in exile, Jeremiah's words were revisited and eventually understood.

An important theological aspect of Jeremiah is the synchronic message of Jeremiah against the apostasy of Judah. Gowan (1998, pp. 9-10) sums up the theological existence of the prophetic books as follows, and we can also see Jeremiah's message in this summary:

YHWH has called a people into a special relationship with himself, giving them a land of their own, addressing them in their cultic ceremonies with the assurance that he had made a covenant with them, and defining their character as his people in terms of a law. He has given them priests to instruct them, kings to maintain justice, sages to guide them, and prophets to warn and exhort them when they forgot who they were. It had not worked. (Gowan, 1998, pp. 9-10)

More specifically, there were also certain theological traditions underpinning the words of Jeremiah. Freedman (1996, p. 720) states that Jeremiah's own prophetic experiences were supplemented by current as well as ancient beliefs concerning YHWH and YHWH's covenant people. What is also important, is that the book contains reflections by others, like the Deuteronomist, who perceived Jeremiah's preaching and life from an interpretative distance. Theologically these perspectives can be seen to coexist with Jeremiah's own theology in the Book of Jeremiah (Freedman, 1996, p. 720).

It is clear that the predominant thoughts on sin and judgment of Jeremiah's contemporaries were rooted in the abovementioned expanded theology of Zion, in which the eternal and unconditional weighed more than the now and the conditional. For Jeremiah it was important that the covenant can be broken. Therefore, as Freedman states (1996, p. 723), "behind all of Jeremiah's talk about sin and judgment lies a broken covenant". Although Jeremiah beseeched YHWH not to break the covenant (Jer 14:21), it still ended up broken. For this, Israel has to take responsibility (Jer 2:20; 5:5; 11:10; etc.). YHWH cannot be blamed (Jer 2:5, 31), therefore the blame must be put squarely on the shoulders of the people and their political and religious leaders, who failed in their "knowing" of YHWH (Jer 2:8; 4:22; 9:3 [MT 9:2]; 9:6 [MT 9:5]; cf. Hos. 4:1). "Knowing" YHWH in this sense means "knowing his way"

(Jer 5:4-5), “knowing his ordinances” (Jer 8:7), and doing “justice to the poor and needy” (Jer 22:16) (Freedman, 1996, p. 723).

These introductory remarks concerning the Book of Jeremiah offer an important background for situating the themes of covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 within the larger Book of Jeremiah. Discussing the literary aspects of Jeremiah, made it clear that structure plays an important role in seeing how and why these texts were placed where they exist today, and not randomly. The genre also importantly showed that the rhetorical genre of judgment functions predominantly in Jer 1-25, including in Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8. The rhetorical genre of judgment is followed closely by the Deuteronomistic ideology, which will be shown to be greatly influential in Jer 11:1-17 and to some extent Jer 22:1-23:8 in the next chapter. The significance of the rhetorical thrust of the Deuteronomistic ideology of divine election in creating and maintaining binaries, will also be illustrated.

Discussion of the historical contexts of the Book of Jeremiah make it clear that Jeremiah had its origin in violent times. It is important to note with the historical contexts and the theological perspectives, that the themes of covenant and kingship has a diachronic history of origin. This means that when covenant is mentioned, we are not speaking of only a synchronic meaning of covenant. This also pertains to kingship. Covenant and kingship would have meant different things for different people in the ANE, as it would probably mean different things for different readers of these texts today.

What is important to note, is that there were two main ideologies operative in the late monarchy period: the royal ideology with its important institutions of state and cult, and the prophetic ideology of social justice and pure YHWH cultic worship. These two ideologies were occasionally in sync, sometimes they were bad dancing partners, but most of the time, they were stepping on each other’s toes.

In the next two chapters, the theme of covenant as it is found in Jer 11:1-17 (Chapter 4) and the theme of kingship as it is found in Jer 22:1-23:8 (Chapter 5) will be investigated. In the exegetical parts of these chapters, ideological criticism will be helpful for seeing in which ways the literary aspects of Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 22:1-23:8 contribute to an ideological-literary analysis of these texts. Ideological criticism will also be helpful in bringing the historical and social contexts, as well as the theological perspectives of the text, in conversation with an ideological-contextual analysis with structural issues pertaining to the world of Jeremiah. The goal of these two chapters is to show how covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-

23:8 can be said to function as examples of cultural violence that, in terms of Galtung's theoretical framework, is closely associated with direct and structural violence.

## CHAPTER 4

### COVENANT AND CULTURAL VIOLENCE IN JEREMIAH 11:1-17

#### 1. Introduction

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “As for me, I am establishing *my covenant with you* and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. *I establish my covenant with you, ...* (Gen 9:8-11)

And I will make *my covenant between me and you*, and will make you exceedingly numerous.” Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, “As for me, *this is my covenant with you*: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. (Gen 17:2-4)

Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep *my covenant*, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine. (Exod 19:5)

*He declared to you his covenant*, which he charged you to observe, that is, the ten commandments; and he wrote them on two stone tablets. (Deut 4:13)

Is not my house like this with God? For *he has made with me an everlasting covenant*, ordered in all things and secure. Will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire? (2 Sam 23:5)

The biblical idea of covenant, as represented in these texts, is rich in meaning and application. There are 398 incidences of covenant in the *New Revised Standard Version* of the Hebrew Bible; 367 in the *Revised Standard Version*; 325 in the *English Standard Version*; and 321 in the *New American Standard Bible*. Just by the incidences of the word covenant over the “steady flow of time” (Galtung, 1990) that is the Hebrew Bible narrative, it is clear that covenant is a “permanence or an invariant over said steady flow of time” which, according to Galtung, is an aspect of cultural violence.

According to Galtung (1990, pp. 291-292), cultural violence is further defined as those “aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence”. Cultural violence thus focusses on the way in which the “act of direct violence and the fact of

structural violence are legitimised and thus rendered acceptable in society”. But can covenant be seen as an aspect of culture that was used in the Hebrew Bible to “justify or legitimise direct and structural violence”? In the above introductory texts, covenant is something that was made between YHWH and a human party. Can something that YHWH created be seen as an aspect of cultural violence, thus putting YHWH in a position where YHWH basically “legitimised acts of direct violence and the fact of structural violence”? Or was the covenant that YHWH made, wrongly appropriated by human parties to “legitimise acts of direct violence and the fact of structural violence”?

Another question is: Is it possible that Judah, in the time of Jeremiah, was “legitimising acts of direct violence and the fact of structural violence” by means of its understanding of covenant? In the book of Jeremiah, Jeremiah delivers two oracles of judgement, in Jer 6:14 and Jer 8:11, which share the exact same wording:

They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace. (Jer 6:14)

They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace. (Jer 8:11)

These verses speak of a situation where a kind of healing balm was given to Judah, convincing the people that everything was all right, although everything was not all right. The Hebrew term *šālôm* is generally used in the book of Jeremiah for peace and security (Allen, 2012, pp. 86, 110). These oracles thus imply that, although the religious authorities of the day considered their activities as ethical and above board, according to YHWH, this was not the case.

What then could have caused this misunderstanding? On the one hand, are the religious authorities of the day who thought and were convinced that the cult in Jerusalem was running according to certain religious standards and that the monarchy was indeed a just institution. They were so convinced of this fact, that they bitterly opposed the preaching of Jeremiah. They used the slogan “Peace, peace” to convince any doubters that everything was indeed fine. On the other hand, is the preaching of Jeremiah and other eighth century BCE prophets saying the opposite: Everything is not all right.

In Jer 11:1-17 it is evident why everything was not all right. The covenant between YHWH and Judah had been broken. It is clear that Jer 11:1-17 has a covenantal thrust. The covenantal thrust of Jer 11:1-17 can also be seen in the headings of Jer 11:1-17 in more contemporary Bible translations: “Jeremiah and the Covenant” (Good News); “Israel and Judah Have Broken the Covenant” (New Revised Standard Version); and “The Broken Covenant”

(The New Kings James Version). Jeremiah 11:1-17 thus forms a composite unit with a clear literary unity provided by the prose style and common words and themes that centre around covenant and covenantal language and rhetoric (Craigie, et al., 1991, p. 126).

Gerhard von Rad (1962, p. 130) observes that “the relationship guaranteed by a covenant is commonly designated by the word *šālôm*” (cf. Gen 26:30ff; 1 Kgs 5:26; Isa 44:10; Job 5:23). The Hebrew Bible furthermore refers to a *bērît šālôm*, which is translated as a “covenant of peace” (Num 25:12; Ezek 34:25; 37:26). This notion of a covenant of peace designates, according to von Rad, the “wholeness of a relationship” and thus a “state of harmonious equilibrium or communion”, which implies the balancing of all claims and needs between two parties. Thus, according to Von Rad, the making of a covenant is “intended to secure a state of intactness, orderliness, and rightness between two parties” in order to make possible, on the basis of this legal foundation, a relationship in matters affecting their common life (Von Rad, 1962, p. 130).

One can then argue that both Jeremiah and the religious authorities of the day in Jerusalem had the same concept of covenant as the foundation for the relationship between YHWH and Israel. But the religious authorities of the day made their claim of a covenantal relationship that is intact, orderly and right based on their concept of covenant. Jeremiah, however, made his judgements of a covenantal relationship that is not intact, orderly and right based on his concept of covenant. If the religious authorities of the day in Jerusalem considered covenant as the religious foundation of the structures and actions of the temple, and if these structures and actions of the temple were inherently structurally violent, as this study will argue, then covenant as an example of cultural violence could have caused the religious authorities to think that there was “peace, peace” in their time. This despite the fact that peace was impossible according to Jeremiah’s concept of covenant.

Certain questions then need to be asked: Was more than one idea of covenant functioning in the Hebrew Bible? Is it also possible to ascertain, from what is known of covenants in the Hebrew Bible, which forms of covenant could have been functioning in the Book of Jeremiah? If these understandings of covenant are then identified, are they all examples of cultural violence, or is it possible that the cultural violence of the one covenant was judged by the other covenant? It is also possible that all these expressions of covenant functioning in Jeremiah are examples of cultural violence?

This study will firstly look at the notion of covenant in general. In this regard, the definition and meaning of covenant is important, as well the various types of covenant that featured at different periods in Israel's history. The differences and similarities between these different types of covenant will be contemplated as well as how the notion of covenant found expression in the prophetic covenantal dialogue. Finally, covenant as a religious idea will be discussed, touching briefly on the difficulties in biblical scholarship in the study of covenant.

## 2. Covenant

### a. Covenant in General

#### i. The Definition and Meaning of Covenant

The definition of the term “covenant” (*bērit*) is debated. Gary Knoppers (1996, pp. 695-696), remarks that most definitions that define covenant as essentially an oath or an obligation, are reductive and comprehend comparatively few documents. Covenants as instruments of statecraft, were employed in a variety of polities, legal contexts, and periods, and therefore did not lend themselves to facile or one-sided definitions. Because covenants were subject to a variety of configurations in a variety of historical contexts, they tend to resist complete definition (Knoppers, 1996, pp. 695-696). James Barr (1977, pp. 27-31), in investigating the semantics of the term *bērit*, shows that *bērit* was highly idiomatic, with a wide semantic field, covering agreement, treaty, obligation, promise and more.<sup>21</sup> Also, no synonyms or plural for

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<sup>21</sup> Wood and Marchall (1996, p. 234) give a wide terminology pertaining to use of the word “Covenant” in the Hebrew Bible. The key-word for covenant in the Hebrew Bible is “*berit*” and in the Septuagint “*diathēkē*”. The word *berit* usually alludes to the “act or rite of the making of a covenant and also to the standing contract between two partners”. Various other terms are used in conjunction with *berit*, pertaining to a covenantal context. Of these are important *hesed* “covenant love” or “covenant solidarity”, *āhēb* “to love”, *šalom* “covenantal peace” or “covenantal prosperity”, *totôbâ* “goodness” or “friendship”, and *yāda* “to serve faithfully in accordance with the covenant”. All these terms, with the exception of *hesed*, can be correlated with Ancient Near Eastern treaty terminology. *Berit* is also used with various verbs. The technical term is *kārat berit* lit. “to cut a covenant”, pointing to the cutting of an animal in the ancient rite of forming a treaty or covenant. When the prepositions *le* or *im* are used in conjunction with the verb *kārat*, it is directed at the influenced object with whom the influencing subject contracts the covenant. Other verbs can also be used in the place of *kārat*, for example *nātan* “to give”, *hēqqim* “to establish”, *nišba* “to swear”, *he'emid* “to confirm”, *higgid* “to declare”, *sām* “to make”, and *šiwwâ* “to command”. The participation of other people in the covenant is also expressed by various verbs, for example *ab-ar* “to enter into such a relationship” (Deut 29:12), *bô* “to come into a covenant relationship with the Lord” (2 Chr 15:12), and *āmad* “to stand in a covenant relationship”. *Nāšar* and *šamar* are the verbs used for keeping the covenant, while the negative *lō* with *nāšae* and

*bērît* exist in Hebrew; although the Hebrew Bible presents a considerable number of covenants specifically connected to particular persons, times and places (Barr, 1977, pp. 27-31).<sup>22</sup>

Daniel Elazar (1995, pp. 21-22) offers a broad definition of covenant that is more political in scope but can be used for the purposes of this study. Elazar states that a covenant is a “morally informed agreement or pact based upon voluntary consent, established by mutual oath or promises, involving or witnessed by some transcendent higher authority, between peoples or parties having independent status, equal in connection with the purposes of the pact, that provides for joint action or obligation to achieve defined ends (limited or comprehensive) under conditions of mutual respect, which protects the individual integrities of all the parties to it”. Covenants involve “consenting” (in both senses of agreeing and thinking together) and “promising”. Few covenants have a time limit. Covenants are furthermore in essence political in that “their bonds are used principally to establish bodies political and social” (Elazar, 1995, pp. 21-22).

Gentry & Wellum (2012, p. 193) also propose a definition of covenant that can be helpful. They define covenant as an “enduring agreement which defines a relationship between two parties involving a solemn, binding obligation(s) specified on the part of at least one of the parties toward the other, made by oath under threat of divine curse, and ratified by a visual ritual”. In the history of Israel, a covenant always entails (1) a relationship (2) with a non-

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*šāmar*, denotes the breaking of the covenant. Other terms are also used as synonyms for breaking the covenant e.g. *ābar* “to transgress”, *šākah* “to forget”, *pārar* “to break”, *mā’as* “to despise”, *šahat* “to corrupt”, *hillēl* “to profane”, and *šāqar* “to be false to” (Wood & Marshall, 1996, p. 234). The prodigious amount of synonyms for breaking the covenant can give the impression that the breaking of the covenant was probably more par for the course in the Hebrew Bible than keeping the covenant.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Elazar (1995, p. 213) presents a Biblical Covenantal Chain that shows the considerable number of covenants in the Hebrew Bible. The sequence of covenants is as follows: Implicit covenant with Adam (Gen 2); the Noatic Covenant (Gen 6, 9); Covenants with Abraham (Gen 15, 17); Abrahamic Covenant renewed with Jacob (Gen 28); Abrahamic Covenant renewed with Israelites in Egypt (Exod 6); Covenant with Israelites at Sinai (Exod 19); Sinai Covenant completed after presentation of the Book of the Covenant (Exod 24); Sinai Covenant reiterated at writing of second set of tablets (Exod 34); Sinai Covenant again reiterated with added detail (Lev 26); “Covenant of salt” with Aaron and his house (Num 18); Covenant in the plains of Moab (Deut 28:69-30:20); Fulfillment of Covenant terms at Shechem (Josh 8); Joshua’s Covenant with God and Israel (Josh 24); Establishment of the Monarchy (1 Sam 8-12); Covenants with David (1 Sam 16:1-13; 2 Sam 2:1-4; 3; 5:1-3; 1 Chron 11:1-3); David and the nation “acknowledge and reaffirm the covenant of the forefathers” and YHWH who, in turn, establishes the Davidic dynasty (1 Chron 16 and 17); Solomon who, in conjunction with the “Elders of Israel” makes the temple in Jerusalem part of the Sinai covenant (2 Kgs 8-19; 2 Chron 5-7); Asa and the nation renew the Sinai covenant (2 Chron 15); The priest, Jehoiada, reestablishes the Davidic monarchy (2 Kgs 11; 2 Chron 23); Hezekiah reaffirms YHWH’s covenant with Israel through religious revival (2 Chron 29); Josiah reestablishes the covenant and restores the “Book of the Covenant” (2 Kgs 22-23:29; 2 Chron 34-35:19); Ezra’s covenant against foreign wives (Ezra 10); Reacceptance of the Torah (Neh 8-10) (Elazar, 1995, p. 213).

relative (3) with obligations (4) established by means of an oath (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 193).

Covenant then becomes important when it creates “familial categories for those who are not bound by ties of natural kinship”. Thus, people not kin of each other, are bound by a “ceremony or (quasi-) legal process” to each other, resulting in a new “family”. The institution of marriage exemplifies this process wherein a man and a woman, not related, become a new family, a unit as strong as kinship or any other bond of blood (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 194).

Mendenhall & Herion (1992, p. 1180) sum up these abovementioned categories of oath-bound commitments in various relationships. However, they also reiterate that the nature of ancient covenants “cannot be understood merely by regarding it as rigid literary forms, nor can it be understood by reducing it to literary law codes, ritual acts, or theological or political ideas or concepts” (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1180). Even though this study will seek to “reduce” covenant to a central religious idea, the reductionist programme of this study will still be kept in mind. In essence covenants are thus “complex enactments that combine historical events that create relationships”, usually (though not necessarily) between unequal partners, with descriptions of “norms for future behaviour” (not to be confused with “laws”) (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1180).

Within these broad definitional categories of covenant in general, Patrick Miller (2012, pp. 27-28) sums up the meaning of covenant as narrated and described in the Hebrew Bible, as follows: The covenant relation Israel has with YHWH is its “constitution, its vocation, and its salvation”. The complexity of covenant also includes “descriptive norms” – although it is more “a motive for justice than a source of law” – and “shared experience of YHWH’s saving acts”. Israel uses covenant as a hermeneutical key for “interpreting history as a continuance of these saving acts of YHWH”. For this hermeneutical process Israel adopts formal structures and involves ritual acts, therefore practising its religion as a *practice of covenant*. In this *practice of covenant* Israel found itself continuously active in receiving and affirming the covenant, maintaining and sustaining the covenant, while taking constant steps to renew and revive the covenant. Covenant involves a relationship between Israel and YHWH, always with YHWH as the influencing subject (initiator) of covenant (Miller, 2012, pp. 27-28). Although Miller sees YHWH as the influencing subject (initiator) of covenant, it pays to look at the types of covenant available in the Hebrew Bible with the aim of broadening the conceptual horizon of covenant.

For the aims of this study, it is important to reiterate that covenant comprises of a relationship between YHWH and an individual and/or collective human party, with YHWH as the (influencing subject) initiator of covenant. It can be argued that, at this point, one can already find a clear dichotomy between a divine *elected* human party and the “rest”. If the initiator of this covenant is also the “Almighty Creator of heaven and earth” (Gen 1, see also the Apostolic Creed, Article 1), then the human party’s divine election should also give the human party a certain elected status as more “special in God’s eyes” than the “rest”. It is important to understand that the action of divine election creates this dichotomy. Time can be spent arguing why a benevolent deity would decide to elect a human party, and thereby open the door for cultural violence to take place, causing structural violence to manifest, and resulting in direct violence as an end-product. Clearly, this thought would be abhorrent to most believers in just such a benevolent deity. It will then pay to look at covenant more closely, especially the types of covenant, to see if this divine election could not have been misappropriated at certain stages in Israelite history.

## ii. Types of Covenant

Gentry and Wellum (2012, p. 191) state that “covenant is used for a wide diversity of oath-bound commitments in various relationships”: (1) International Treaties: In international treaties a “covenant” can refer to a treaty between two nations. In 1 Kgs 5:12, Hiram, King of Tyre, a city in ancient Phoenicia, and Solomon, King of Israel, made an international treaty. This covenant confirmed already peaceful relations between the two countries and allowed for commerce and trade agreements. (2) Clan/Tribal Alliances: These types of alliances were essentially alliances between clans or tribes. Powerful nomads of the desert normally formed alliances to help each other in case of attacks by enemies (Gen 14:3). (3) Personal Agreements: These agreements were private agreements between individual persons. After years of attempting to best and outwit each other, Laban and his nephew, Jacob, finally made an agreement not to harm each other (Gen 31:44). (4) Loyalty Agreements: These agreements were used when friendships were formally solemnised by agreements of loyalty. Jonathan, the son of King Saul, developed a deep friendship with David during the years when Saul sought to kill David (1 Sam 18:3; 23:18). (5) Marriage: This well-known institution was essentially a loyalty agreement formally solemnised by a vow before YHWH. This is clearly indicated in Prov 2:17 and Mal 2:14. (6) National Legal Agreements: These agreements were somewhat

similar to a legal agreement or contract but were different in character from contracts and legal documents today. Since the covenant was made between a king and his people, it operated at a national level. In Jer 34:8-10 Zedekiah's covenant with the people to proclaim freedom for all the slaves, is an example of this type of covenant (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, pp. 191-192).

Scott Hahn (1995) succeeds in bringing some of these covenants together in a three-part typology. He firstly differentiates between secular kinship-type covenants and divine kinship-type covenants. Secular kinship-type covenants are e.g. (1) the covenant made between Abraham and Abimelech for the purpose of averting hostilities (Gen 21:22-23); (2) the covenant made between Isaac and Abimelech while Isaac sojourned in Gerar (Gen 26:26-33); and (3) and the covenant made between Jacob and Laban mentioned by Gentry & Wellum above (Gen 31:43-54). An example of a divine kinship-type covenant is the Sinai Covenant (Exod 24) (Hahn, 1995, pp. 38-41). According to Hahn (1995, p. 41), the Sinai covenant "represents a crucial theological adaptation of the kinship-type covenant, whereby a familial bond between YHWH and Israel is established on the basis of a father-son relationship" (Hahn, 1995, p. 41).

Furthermore, Hahn (1995, pp. 80-82) differentiates between secular treaty-type covenants and divine treaty-type covenants. An example of a secular treaty-type covenant is, for instance, the suzerain-vassal treaty made between King Ahaz of Judah and Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, as a defensive strategy against an attack on Jerusalem by a Syrian-Israelite coalition (2 Kgs 16:5-18). Although no covenant is specifically mentioned, the structure of the text shows similarities with biblical and ANE covenant texts. Another example would be the covenant that was made between Ahab, the king of Israel, and Benhadad, the king of Syria, where Benhadad's envoys sought a suzerain-vassal treaty with Israel as the suzerain, whereas king Ahab answered with a proposed kinship-type covenant (1 Kgs 20:31) (Hahn, 1995, pp. 80-82). An example of a divine treaty-type covenant would be the covenant of Deuteronomy. The book Deuteronomy, therefore, presents a covenant between YHWH and Israel with several close formal ties to the ancient treaty form (Hahn, 1995, p. 83).

Lastly, Hahn (1995, pp. 145-367) looks at the grand-type covenant where he identifies the Noahic covenant (Gen 6-9); the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 12-22); the Levitical covenants (the Levites, Exod 32; Phinehas, Num 25); and the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7; Ps 89; 110; 132) as grand-type covenants.

Gentry & Wellum (2012, pp. 196-197) provide a list of the major covenants of the Hebrew Bible to which can be added the types of covenants discussed by Scott Hahn. One can disagree with this list, but this list is important for moving this study from the broad field of covenants in the Hebrew Bible to a few covenants, where covenant, as is mentioned by Jeremiah in Jer 11:1-17, finds its place.

**Table 4.1: The Major Covenants** (Gentry & Wellum, 2012)

<b>Covenant</b>	<b>Main Scripture Texts</b>	<b>Scott Hahn's Typology</b>
1. The Covenant with Creation	Genesis 1-3	Not discussed
2. The Covenant with Noah	Genesis 6-9	Grand-Type Covenant
3. The Covenant with Abraham	Genesis 12/15/17	Grand-Type Covenant
4. The Covenant at Sinai	Exod 19:3b-8/20-24	Kinship-Type/Treaty-Type covenant <sup>23</sup>
5. The Covenant with David	2 Samuel 7/Psalm 89	Grand-Type Covenant
6. The New Covenant	Jeremiah 31-34/Ezek 33:29-39:29	Not discussed

## 1. Suzerain-vassal and Royal Grant Treaties

Gentry & Wellum (2012, p. 194) remark that covenants or treaties, either identical or similar to those mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, were common in countries throughout the ANE, for example in regions known today as Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 194). From the above research by Hahn, two types of covenants can be discerned: The “suzerain-vassal treaty” and the “royal grant treaty”. Alongside the question of to what degree these two types of treaties had an influence on the form and structure of covenants of the Hebrew Bible, one can also ask if these borrowed forms and structures did not transfer ideologies inherent in these treaties that contrasted with the religious “matrix of ideas” inherent

<sup>23</sup> Scott Hahn typecasts the covenant at Sinai as a kinship-type covenant, but he also typecasts the Deuteronomy version of the covenant at Sinai as a treaty-type covenant. In this study the focus will be on the Deuteronomy version of the covenant at Sinai, therefore it is included in the above table.

to YHWH's revelatory nature and plan with his creation. How did these two types of treaties present themselves?

1. *The suzerain-vassal treaty*: This type of treaty can be defined as a “diplomatic treaty between a great king or suzerain and client kings or vassals. The focus of these treaties was to reinforce the interests of the suzerain by arguments from history and oath-bound affirmations of loyalty on the part of the vassal states, backed up by divine sanctions” (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 194).<sup>24</sup> The vocabulary used in the covenant can also be traced to these treaties. Nicholson (1986, pp. 61-62) notes that William Moran traced the concept of the love of YHWH in Deuteronomy to a treaty background. Within this treaty background, particular emphasis is laid on the nature of this love as one “that can be commanded”, while being exemplified as a “love which is expressed in loyalty and service”, expressed in “an unqualified obedience to the law”. Nicholson (1986, pp. 61-62) further states that, prompted by Moran's suggestion, Dennis McCarthy and Charles Fensham argued that even the “father-son” imagery used in YHWH's covenant relationship with Israel or with the Davidic king, should be understood against the background of the use of the same imagery in treaty contexts from the second to the first millennium BCE.

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<sup>24</sup> Ernest Nicholson (1986, pp. 57-58), in his treatment of the history of research in covenant, mentions the studies in the treaty-forms of covenant as a third and succinct stage in covenantal research. He starts off by mentioning the research of George Mendenhall as an important starting point for the third stage of covenantal research. In his article “Covenant forms in Israelite Tradition” Mendenhall draws attention to what he believes to be close parallels between Hittite treaties and the nature and form of the Sinai covenant. He argues that to bind the tribes of YHWH in any kind of solidarity and to “adequately form a foundation for the normative conception” that it was in the Sinai event that YHWH become the God of Israel, the covenant at Sinai was modelled upon the Hittite suzerainty treaty “whereby a great king bound his vassals to faithfulness and obedience to himself and at the same time ordered relationships between the vassals themselves as subjects of the one overlord”. Mendenhall also reasons that this particular treaty-form would have been the default treaty-form in the time of Israel's origin in the late Bronze Age (c. 1400-1200 BCE). These treaty-forms consist of six elements that are present in some or other form: (1) a “*preamble*” identifying the suzerain with his listed ancestry and titles; (2) a “*historical prologue*” recording the history of the suzerain's relationship with the vassal and the vassal's relationship with the suzerain, stressing the beneficent acts which the Hittite monarch wrought in times past on behalf of the vassal; (3) the “*treaty stipulations*” binding upon the subject nation; (4) “*provisions*” for the depositing of the treaty documents in the vassal's temple and for the periodic reading of it – the subject state was constantly reminded of its obligations to the imperial authority; (5) a “*list of gods as witnesses*,” including both the gods of the suzerain and the vassals (those mentioned included deified aspects of nature, for example mountains, rivers, and weather phenomena); (6) “*curses and blessings formulae*”: the well and woe of the vassal depended upon his loyalty to the suzerain (Nicholson, 1986, pp. 57-58). Dennis McCarthy rejects Mendenhall's thesis on the early dependence of the covenant on the Hittite-treaty form and claims covenant's dependence on the Assyrian-treaty forms. He also draws attention to the use of treaty vocabulary in Deuteronomy and other parts of the Hebrew Bible (Nicholson, 1986, p. 59).

The term “slave” (*‘ebed*) also has a treaty background when it is used in a covenant context. Another word that designates Israel’s special, covenantal relationship with YHWH, is *s<sup>c</sup>gullāh* “special possession or property” (Nicholson, 1986, pp. 61-62). The word *yāda’* “know” also has a treaty meaning of “mutual legal recognition on the part of suzerain and vassal” as can be seen in texts such Jer 24:7 and Jer 31:34 where Israel “recognizes YHWH as its (sole) God”. Furthermore, the claim of suzerains upon the exclusive loyalty and subservience of their vassals, characteristic of the treaties, can prototypically refer to the “corresponding claim of YHWH upon Israel’s exclusive worship and service in the first commandment of the Decalogue”. The loyalty of the vassal to his overlord could also have been an important source in the development of the idea of YHWH as a “jealous” God, as well as the belief in the incomparability of the Hebrew Bible’s YHWH. Also important in the treaty context, is the curse formulae that is used in Deut 28:20-57, where the curses for not adhering to the demand of the covenant become more pronounced than the blessings for adhering to the demands of the covenant. Lastly, the vassal treaties also give the source of the nature and content of YHWH’s *rīb* “lawsuit” with Israel, exemplified in a number of texts in the Hebrew Bible such as Mic 6:1-8 and Jer 2:5-13 (Nicholson, 1986, pp. 63-64). Nicholson also refers to the work of Moshe Weinfeld, who identifies terms in Deuteronomy such as “to go after”, “to turn to others”, “to serve others” (in Deuteronomy “to go after other gods” etc.); “to love”; “to cleave to”; “to fear”; “to swear”; “to obey the voice of”; “to be perfect with (blameless before) him”; and “to act in truth” as terms which originated in the diplomatic vocabulary of the ANE.

2. *The Royal Charter or Land Grant*: This type of treaty can be defined as a “grant of property or even a privileged position of a priestly or royal office given as a favour by a god or king. The focus of these treaties is on honour and the interpersonal relationship” (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 194). Moshe Weinfeld (1970, pp. 184-185) points to two types of official judicial documents were part of the second millennium “Mesopotamian cultural sphere”: (1) The Hittite empire’s political treaty (already discussed); and (2) The royal grant, as exemplified in classical form in the “Babylonian *kudurru* documents” (boundary stones), but were also founded in the periods of the Syro-Palestine Hittites and the Neo-Assyrians. The covenant with Abraham, and so the covenant with David, can be seen to resort under the grant type and not the vassal type treaty. The covenants with Abraham (land) and David (dynasty), following the structure and vocabulary of the royal grants of the ANE, are “gifts bestowed upon individuals who excelled in serving their masters loyally” (Weinfeld, 1970, pp. 184-185).

Gentry & Wellum (2012, p. 194) expand on the differences identified by Weinfeld (1970, p. 185) between the vassal-treaty and the royal grant:

While the “treaty” constitutes an obligation of the vassal to his master (the suzerain), the “grant” constitutes an obligation of the master to his servant. In the “grant” the curse is directed towards the one who will violate the rights of the king’s vassal, while in the treaty the curse is directed towards the vassal who will violate the rights of his king. In other words, the “grant” serves mainly to protect the rights of the servant, while the treaty comes to protect the rights of the master. What is more, while the grant is a reward for loyalty and good deeds already performed, the treaty is an inducement for future loyalty. There is also another important difference between grant and suzerainty treaties. While a suzerainty treaty places the emphasis on the interstate relationships (expressed in terms of the monarch’s personal dealings), the grant treaty has its focus more on the interpersonal relationships, and the favour of the greater king to the lesser (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 194).

Weinfeld (1970, p. 185) furthermore notes structural similarities between the vassal-treaty and the royal grant, while also noting the same “historical introduction, border delineations, stipulations, witnesses, blessings and curses” between the vassal-treaty and the royal grant. Gentry & Wellum (2012, p. 195) add other important similarity to these structural similarities: Even if the grant is mainly a promise by the influencing subject (donor) to the influenced object (recipient), it does presuppose the loyalty of the influenced object. In the same breath, the treaty, with its main focus on obligation of the vassal, presupposes the influencing subject’s promissory protection of the vassal’s dynasty and country (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 195).

Elazar (1995, pp. 213-214) points to the different types of covenants of the Hebrew Bible, made in different times, binding together characters representing different parties, and concluded in diverse fashions (Elazar, 1995, pp. 213-214). This is certainly true of the Hebrew Bible, but can one argue that the covenant in the Hebrew Bible represents a permanence or invariant over a “steady flow of time” (Galtung, 1990, p. 294)? It is noted that covenant has no plural, therefore a central idea does exist in the Hebrew Bible, in terms of what a covenant is supposed to be and what a covenant is supposed to do. This central idea of covenant could have been operating from a much earlier time to a relatively late period in the history of Israel, where Israel “borrowed” in different times from her neighbours the analogies, structures and vocabulary to re-interpret the same covenant idea in different times and with different historical realities. But where covenant involves a relationship between YHWH and an individual and/or collective human party, with YHWH as the initiator of covenant, there is an important difference in accent between the suzerain-vassal type and the royal grant type of treaty. With

the royal grant treaty, the accent moves to the recipient of the grant. Therefore, the human party in the covenant, in effect, becomes more important than the initiator of the covenant. It can then be argued, that, with Galtung's (1990, p. 297) dichotomy of the divine elected (good) and the divine non-elected (bad) in mind, a royal grant type of treaty not only increases the divine elect's importance vis-à-vis the divine non-elect's importance, but also the divine elect's authority over the non-elect.

Up to this point, the focus of this study has been on a covenant initiated by YHWH with a human party as recipient. A covenant is also, in many ways, similar to a contract. The question then begs: Can a human party make a covenant with YHWH that looks like a covenant, but is actually a contract?

## **2. Covenant as a Contract**

In this study, it is also noted that quite a few covenants were made between a human party and YHWH in which YHWH was not the initiator of the covenant. Elazar (1995, pp. 213-214) points to the covenants made between Joshua and YHWH (Josh 8; 24) as covenants initiated by Joshua. The establishment of the monarchy (1 Sam 8-12) is also seen as a covenant initiated by the tribes of Israel. It seems that when David and the nation "acknowledge and reaffirm the covenant of the forefathers", this can also be a covenant initiated by David (1 Chron 16 and 17). Elazar (1995, pp. 213-214) also views the ceremony where Solomon, in conjunction with the "Elders of Israel", made the temple in Jerusalem part of the Sinai covenant, a covenant initiated by the king (2 Kgs 8-19; 2 Chron 5-7). Furthermore, the covenant renewals attested to in the Davidic dynasty such as Asa and the nation renewing the Sinai covenant (2 Chron 15), the priest Jehoiada restoring the Davidic monarchy (2 Kgs 11; 2 Chron 23), Hezekiah renewing the covenant with YHWH through religious revival (2 Chron 29), Josiah renewing the covenant and restoring the "Book of the Covenant" (2 Kgs 22-23:29; 2 Chron 34-35:19), can be seen as covenants made between human parties and YHWH with the human parties the initiators. Elazar (1995, pp. 223-230) does argue that the covenant renewals were necessary directly after a period of apostasy in the history of the monarchy of Judah. Elazar (1995, p. 214) includes Ezra's covenant against foreign wives (Ezra 10) and the reacceptance of the Torah (Neh 8-10) in the post-exilic times, as further examples of covenants initiated by human parties (Elazar, 1995, p. 214).

By comparing a covenant and a contract, one can also more fully understand the biblical idea of a covenant relationship (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 199). Elazar (1995, pp. 30-31) states that covenant and contract have an ambiguous relationship. On the one hand, although contracts are related to, and may even have as a source the concept of covenant, these terms can be used interchangeably. On the other hand, differences do exist between a covenant and a contract, that needs clarification.

The most obvious difference between contract and covenant is the form or literary structure. Yet, beyond the aspect of form, there are other fundamental differences (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 200). The occasion for a contract is determined by benefits each party involved expects from the contract. A contract is therefore “thing-oriented”. A modern example is the contract that is drawn up between the seller and the buyer of a motor vehicle. The main focus of the resultant contract is the selling and the buying of the motor vehicle. On the other hand, covenant can be seen as person-oriented and arises from the desire for a relationship between two parties. In a “contract negotiation” both parties need to reach a “mutually satisfactory agreement”. With a covenant, negotiation takes a back seat. In a covenant the “greater in grace” offers assistance and support. The initiative lies with the party who is “greater in grace”. “Gift” is a main aspect of covenant, whereas “negotiation” is central to a contract. Although both covenant and contract do have obligations, there are some differences: (1) The contract is conditionally set up to demand the fulfilment of the terms of the contract; while the inherent captured in a covenant pertains to loyalty. (2) A covenant, commonly, has no time limit; while a contract refers to a specified period contractually accepted by both parties. (3) Non-compliance with the terms of a contract can make a contract null and void, with the non-compliance clearly visible and understandable; while reaching the stage where a covenant becomes null and void is much less visible and understandable, because the issue is not non-compliance but a lost level of intimacy. What is striking about all the differences between contract and covenant, is the emphasis covenant places on “personal loyalty” (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, pp. 200-201).

**Table 4:2 Comparison and Contrast between Covenant and Contract** (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 200)

<b>Category</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Covenant</b>
Occasion	Expected benefit	Desire for relationship
Initiative	Mutual agreement	Stronger party
Orientation	Negotiation Thing-oriented	Gift Person-oriented
Obligation	Performance	Loyalty
Termination	Specified	Indeterminate
Violation	Yes	Yes

If one looks at the comparison and contrast between covenant and contract (Table 4:2), it is interesting to note that on “occasion” it could have happened that YHWH’s desire for a relationship with Israel was later misconstrued by Israel as an opportunity for an expected benefit such as national protection. It can then also be argued that the “obligation” was misconstrued by Israel, with Israel paying for YHWH’s expected national protection by cultic performance and not by covenantal loyalty as was expected by YHWH. In Elazar’s (1995, pp. 213-214) example of covenants made between a human party and YHWH, where YHWH was not the initiator, it is interesting to note that they were all made between the state (monarchy and/or temple institution) and YHWH after the birth of the monarchy. It can be argued that the force of the idea of covenant as a societal control measure was so powerful, that to mitigate its use, even after the real use of the covenant, as Israel’s ethical and moral relationship framework with YHWH fell in disuse. The making of covenant could then still have had the same apparent religious meaning and force, even without YHWH initiating the particular covenant. Because institutions representing YHWH initiated the covenant with YHWH, its religious force and meaning could be misconstrued as having YHWH’s blessing, therefore giving the said covenant divine authority.

This study will now look at two major types of covenant that were operative in the time of Jeremiah. The first covenant to be discussed is the covenant mentioned in Jer 11:1-17. Most

scholars (Lundbom, 1999, p. 620; Clements, 1988, p. 74; Brueggemann, 1998, p. 109; Holladay, 1986, p. 352; Huey, 1993, p. 133; Thompson, 1980, p. 341; Allen, 2008, p. 138; Longman III, 2008, p. 100; and Stulman, 2005, p. 123) agree that the covenant mentioned in Jer 11:2, 3, 6, 8, 10 is the covenant made by YHWH with Israel at Sinai (Exod 19:3b-8/20-24).<sup>25</sup> This covenant is an example of a suzerain-vassal type of covenant. The second covenant to be discussed is the Davidic covenant made by YHWH with David and his dynasty (2 Sam 7/Psalm 89). This covenant is an example of a royal grant type of covenant. It can be argued that the Davidic covenant was the covenant operative at the time of Jeremiah, because of the major influence the monarchy and the temple as institutions had on the preaching of Jeremiah.

## **b. Covenants in Particular**

### **i. The Covenant at Sinai**

Rolf Rendtorff (2005, p. 57) mentions that the covenant at Sinai's narrative framework begins with the introduction of the whole Sinai narrative in Exodus 19 and the report of the concluding of the covenant at the first climax of Israel's encounter with YHWH on Sinai in Exodus 24. In the divine speech in Exod 19:2-6 there is advance reference to the covenant: Israel is to keep the covenant (v.5). After the covenant is given content and concrete shape through the giving of the commandments in the Decalogue as well as the "Book of the Covenant", there follows confirmation with a solemn covenant-concluding ceremony (24:3-8) (Rendtorff, 2005, p. 57). Furthermore, Rendtorff (2005, p. 58) mentions that the word *bērît* "covenant" plays a central role in this narrative framework. Moses reads to Israel from the "Book of the Covenant" (*sôfer habb'rit*, v.7), whereby the people answer both times with the same words as at the arrival at Sinai: "All the words that the LORD speaks/has spoken, we will do" (Exod 19:8; 24:3, 7; in 24:7 the words "we will hear" are added in reinforcement). The covenant has thus been confirmed in all respects, and is concluded with the sprinkling of half the blood of the sacrificial

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<sup>25</sup> Brueggemann (2007, pp. 10-11) states that "immense unsolvable problems are connected to the Sinai tradition concerning its date, provenance, and character". In answer to these problems, it pays to see the Sinai tradition as a theological claim of Israel, standing outside time as an unqualified, unconditional absolute. Understood theologically, the meeting at Sinai between YHWH and Israel concerns, according to Brueggemann, the "exclusive, uncompromising, non-negotiable connection of Israel to YHWH".

animals on the people as the “blood of the covenant” (*dam-habb ‘rît*, v.7) (Rendtorff, 2005, p. 58).

With the covenant ceremony at Sinai, the first stage of Israel’s path to liberation from Egypt is concluded. Israel has met YHWH as a nation chosen by YHWH in a special way, as a “priestly” and “holy” nation. Through Moses YHWH has formed a covenant with the nation, and finally the nation itself has “beheld” YHWH through its representative Moses. The covenant at Sinai presents an ideal relationship between Israel and YHWH. Obedience to the “words of this covenant” on the part of Israel is expressed as an important condition for this ideal relationship (Rendtorff, 2005, p. 59).

After the conclusion of this covenant, the Israelites are disobedient to the commandments of the covenant and build, with Aaron’s help, a golden calf. YHWH’s answer to the disobedience of Israel is to remake the covenant, but not with Israel’s obedience as the basis for the continuity of the covenant, but his own grace and mercy as the basis (Rendtorff, 2005, pp. 60-63). It is this grace-obligation dichotomy that Katharine Dell (2008, p. 149) finds interesting – YHWH acts out of grace, and yet still demands something in return. Brueggemann (2007, p. 14) points to another interesting aspect in this narrative of covenant breaking and covenant making, in that YHWH’s relationship with Israel is dynamic and not one-dimensional. It is also probable that Israel developed within the Sinai covenant a liturgical practice (a pattern of worship), whereby disobedient Israel could return – over and over – to obedience. In return, the disobedient Israel was welcomed back to the covenant – over and over – by the demanding sovereign YHWH (see, e.g. Ps 50; 81; 95) (Brueggemann, 2007, p. 14).

The question then remains: Was the grace of YHWH something that in any way mitigated Israel’s obligation to adhere to the regulations and expectations of the covenant? Guinan (1992, p. 905) argues that the obligation of Israel to adhere to the regulations and expectations of the covenant was intrinsically part of the covenant at Sinai. He states that the basic description of the making of the Mosaic covenant in Exodus 19-24 contains three elements: (1) YHWH’s action; (2) Israel’s response; and (3) Israel’s obligation, in which Israel’s obligation cannot be seen as separate from Israel’s response to YHWH’s actions. (1) YHWH’s action: After experiencing YHWH’s salvific action in their exodus from Egypt with all the accompanying wonders and miracles, Israel is led to Sinai for another experience of YHWH. At Sinai, they experience YHWH in a theophany of dark clouds, thunder, and lightning. (2) Israel’s response: Shortly, this response can be summated in the sealing

ceremonies of the blood ritual (Exod 24:6-8); and the meal ritual (Exod 24:11, 5). (3) **Obligation:** The rituals of the blood and the meal are preceded in the text by a recitation of the words and ordinances of YHWH to which the people promise obedience, as was shown earlier (Guinan, 1992, p. 906). Guinan (1992, p. 906) argues that, although covenant involves obligation, this obligation should not be viewed as imposed from the outside, but as inherently part of the nature of covenant. Because Israel was gifted with life by YHWH, and because the covenant expressed this shared life, it was also expected that this new relationship would cause behavioural change (Guinan, 1992, p. 906).

According to Guinan (1992, p. 907), this new covenantal behaviour of Israel was to be manifested in two areas. The first is the vertical relationship with YHWH. YHWH freed Israel from the slavery of Egypt and therefore Israel now belongs to YHWH; they must live as YHWH's people and his special possession (Exod 19:4-6). Anderson (1999, p. 140) argues that Sinai symbolises the presence of YHWH, who is concerned for Israel's distress and chooses to enter into a personal relationship with them. The problem with this personal relationship, is that YHWH has to be at once near and far for this relationship to work. YHWH's holiness demands a distance from the people, while this covenantal relationship demands his nearness to the people. This paradox is dealt with at the summit meeting YHWH organises with Moses and the leaders (Exod 24:1-11), where the people were told to keep their distance. Of the leaders, only Moses, the covenant mediator, was privileged to approach YHWH.

When Moses and the leaders saw YHWH and ate and drank, YHWH's holy power was demonstrated not as life-threatening, but as life affirming, (Anderson, 1999, p. 140). Therefore, the divine deliverance of Israel was not just a freedom from, but also a freedom for. The goal of the liberation from Egypt was Israel's service to YHWH (Exod 4:23; 5:1, 3; 7:16, 26; 8:16; 9:1, 13; 10:3), and this goal is manifested in Israel's first obligation to worship only YHWH (Exod 20:2-3). Therefore, the first and basic sin against covenant, is idolatry (Guinan, 1992, p. 907).

Guinan (1992, p. 907) further points to a second area of new covenant life that involves the horizontal relationship with others. Anderson (1999, p. 141) states that, with the distance of YHWH overcome, YHWH and his people are brought near in covenant community, symbolised by the power of blood dashed upon the altar and upon the assembly. In this covenant community, YHWH's solidarity with Israel is emphasised, as is also their responsibility to obey covenant laws emphasised as a sign of their relationship with YHWH

(Anderson, 1999, p. 141). Brueggemann (2007, p. 11) concurs with Anderson in that YHWH's sovereignty at the meeting at Sinai is not a "brusque, one-dimensional assertion of power", but rather exemplifies a sovereignty that "willingly participates in the public process of history to evoke, form, and commit to a new community that is constituted by this gathering of emancipated slaves". YHWH, as the sovereign who takes ownership of Israel, can therefore expect Israel to adhere to his divine requirements and expectations (Brueggemann, 2007, p. 11). The divine deliverance of Israel from the Egyptians was then a divine involvement in social behaviour (Guinan, 1992, p. 907). According to Anderson (1999, p. 141), YHWH's holiness is not "destructive but creative; it does not negate human freedom but calls one to partnership" with YHWH and to the exercise of covenant responsibility, that is, obedience of YHWH's will as expressed in the Decalogue (Anderson, 1999, p. 141).

YHWH therefore calls upon Israel to be holy, because he is holy (Brueggemann, 2007, p. 13). According to Guinan (1992, p. 907), the covenant at Sinai reveals an intrinsic connection between the nature of YHWH and his demands for social justice, whereby the Israelites' treatment of each other would be a sign of how seriously they were devoted to YHWH. YHWH's demands for social justice have a special area of concern for the treatment of the poor, the oppressed, and the alien. A motivation frequently found in covenant law (e.g., Exod 22:21; 23:9; Lev 19:34; Deut 15:1-11) for not oppressing the weak is "because you were once strangers (aliens) in the land of Egypt". It would thus be a contradiction for Israelites, freed from oppression by YHWH, to become themselves oppressors of the weak (Guinan, 1992, p. 907).

Guinan (1992, p. 907) lastly states that the vertical and horizontal aspects of covenant living should not be viewed as separable and distinct; they are flip sides of one coin which are intrinsically connected and stand or fall together. If Israel fails to live according to its commitment, the existence of the covenant itself is in jeopardy (Guinan, 1992, p. 907). The contemporary fundamentalist-modernist controversy<sup>26</sup> can be seen as a modern dichotomy

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<sup>26</sup> It is important here to take note of the contemporary fundamentalist-modernist controversy, an extended conflict in the Protestant churches and American society at large between religious liberals, and militant theological conservatives. The religious liberals were involved in a project wherein they sought to make the Christian gospel more "relevant to modern sensibilities" by focussing on the social part of the gospel. This "social gospel" can be aligned to what Guinan refers to as the horizontal aspect of the covenant at Sinai. Opposed to this ethical test of religious truth, stood the conservative Protestants who, at the turn of the last century, began to forge alliances to defend supernatural Bible-based Christianity against the advances of social gospel. In the heat of the cultural crisis that gripped America after World War 1, fundamentalism emerged as a distinct movement and the long-developing differences between liberals and conservatives exploded in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy.

between the horizontal and vertical manifestations of the obligations of the covenant at Sinai, where the vertical and horizontal aspects of covenant living become separable and distinct.

It was shown in Chapter 3 that the genre of Jer 11:1-17 can be attributed to a Deuteronomistic influence. The covenant at Sinai as it is presented in Exodus was studied as the first important covenant for this research. The book of Deuteronomy also includes a covenant between Israel and YHWH and is full of covenantal language as found in Jer 11:1-17. This raises the question: Are the covenants of Exodus and Deuteronomy two different covenants? If they are, then the similarities and differences need to be investigated, as well as the importance of the one covenant against the other. Is the Exodus covenant the main covenant and the covenant in Deuteronomy secondary? A good argument can be made that the covenant in Exodus and the covenant in Deuteronomy are one and the same covenant, but the presentation differs, in that Deuteronomy is a covenant document fleshing out and reinterpreting the Exodus covenant in a different context.

McConville (1997, pp. 749-750) argues “that the most developed expression of the Mosaic covenant is in the book of Deuteronomy”. The covenant in Deuteronomy furthermore brings together the “patriarchal (Abrahamic) covenant” that consists of a sworn promise pertaining to land and blessings (Deut 4:31), and the Sinai covenant (always Horeb in Deut), which puts more focus on command (Deut 5:1-2). Therefore, according to McConville, the covenant in Deuteronomy attains a “careful balance between promise and command, between YHWH’s initiative and Israel’s required response” (e.g., Deut 7:9). This balance is illustrated by its varied use of *bērit*, sometimes in parallel with the idea of oath (4:31), and sometimes with that of command, or law (Torah); (Deut 4:13; 5:1-3; 31:26) (McConville, 1997, pp. 749-750). How then is the covenant in Deuteronomy presented?

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Modernists, more aggressive and influential than ever, and fundamentalists, sure that liberal theology and Darwinism were undermining Christianity and American civilisation, squared off for battle. As the controversy intensified, theological moderates moved to one extreme or the other, polarising church and society. Fundamentalism and modernism underwent significant changes after 1930. Conservatives emerged later in the century as evangelicals and fundamentalists. Liberals responded to the challenges of the Great Depression, growing international tensions and neo-orthodoxy by abandoning their sanguine view of humanity and history. Nevertheless, the battles of the 1920s profoundly altered the shape of American Protestantism. Henceforth, divisions between conservative and liberal Christians would far overshadow differences based on formal denominational ties (Marsden, G M; Longfield B J, 2016).

Meredith Kline (2012) describes the covenant in Deuteronomy as the “Treaty of the Great King”. He argues that Deuteronomy is a “covenant renewal document which in its total structure exhibits the classic legal form of the suzerainty treaties of the Mosaic age”. He presents an outline of Deuteronomy, showing this classic legal form:

(1) Preamble (1:1-5). (2) Historical Prologue (1:6-4:49). (3) Stipulations (5-26). (4) Curses and Blessings or Covenant Ratification (27-30). (5) Succession Arrangements or Covenant Continuity, including the invocation of witnesses and directions for the disposition and public reading of the treaty (31-34) (Kline, 2012, p. 28).

Craigie (1976, pp. 37-38) argues that this treaty form was necessary to remind Israel of its bondage as “vassals to the worldly power in Egypt”, countered by YHWH’s saving acts in the exodus that freed it from this worldly vassalage. Israel therefore submits to a new vassalage under YHWH, which is made concrete in Israel’s meeting with YHWH at Horeb. Craigie (1976, p. 38) describes this state of affairs: “In the old servitude, Israel had served a worldly master and had no freedom to worship YHWH (Exod 8:1); in the new covenant, Israel had freedom to worship YHWH and is servant to no worldly state.”

Gentry & Wellum (2012, p. 494) agree with the outline followed by Kline and Craigie. They furthermore state that if the book of Deuteronomy is considered from the perspective of the form of the suzerain-vassal treaty, the command in Deut 6:5 (“you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might”) is placed immediately after the Preamble and Historical Prologue in the section providing the General Stipulation of the covenant. Therefore, the covenant stipulation commanding complete devotion and loyalty to YHWH, is also the greatest command among all the covenant stipulations. This command is the foundation for all the requirements and stipulations of the covenant (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, p. 494). Christensen (2001, p. lvi) agrees, and states that Deuteronomy expounds the implications of the historic agreement at Mount Sinai between YHWH and Israel by which the latter became the chosen people, and which is essentially an exposition of the abovementioned great commandment (Christensen, 2001, p. lvi).

Craigie (1976, p. 41) states that this love is a recurring theme in the remaining parts of the general stipulations, both “YHWH’s love for man and the love man must have for YHWH”. The imagery employed to illustrate this covenantal relationship of love, which is also employed in the political treaties, is that of a “father’s love for his son”. Craigie enlarges on the idea of YHWH’s “fatherly love” as consisting of two characteristics: YHWH’s “fatherly love” can be made explicit by YHWH’s “compassionate care for his people” (see Deut 1:31) or it can be

made explicit by YHWH “disciplining them” (see Deut 8:5). The stern and compassionate natures of YHWH are both essential aspects of “fatherly love” (Craigie, 1976, p. 41).

Therefore, the father-son imagery clarifies the reason why love can be stipulated. Just as in the commandments the young are instructed to honour their parents (Deut 5:16), so too in the covenant relationship the people of God are commanded to love him (Deut 6:5). Craigie (1976, p. 41) points out that the “command to love, however, does not reduce the covenant to a legalistic relationship, the command to love *furthermore* does not reduce the element of response but recognizes that it is in the nature of man to forget and to be faithless” (Craigie, 1976, p. 41).

Lastly, Craigie (1976, p. 43) points to the specific stipulations of Deuteronomy with a detailed nature, expounding on the totality of the manner of life fitting for a people who claim a relationship with the Lord of the covenant (Craigie, 1976, p. 43). Joseph Blenkinsopp (1996, pp. 118-119) emphasises the advanced state of the social legislation of Deuteronomy. Even though a “utopian character” can be discerned in Deuteronomy, in its “abolition of poverty in principle” (Deut 15:4), precise provisions are laid down for the marginalised and disadvantaged, including “resident aliens, the fatherless, widows, and unemployed clergy”, which makes Deuteronomy a test case in social welfare. Examples are the “triennial tithe destined for these classes of people” (Deut 14:28-29; 24:17-22; 26:12-15), remission of debts every seventh year (Deut 15:1-3) with built-in sureties against abuses (Deut 15:7-11), the prohibition of usury (Deut 23:19-20) and abusive debt collection (Deut 24:6, 10-13, 17), insistence on the proper administration of justice (Deut 16:18-20) etc. A distinctive feature of Deuteronomy is, according to Blenkinsopp, the “concern to preserve a traditional agrarian way of life together with rights of the small farmer”. It is also noteworthy that the support of the cult is restricted (Deut 18:1-18), keeping in mind the increasingly onerous burden the cult became for ordinary Judeans as its operation became more and more complex. The monarchy itself escapes condemnation, but finds itself under the law, making it a constitutional monarchy (Blenkinsopp, 1996, pp. 118-119).

Guinan (1992, p. 908) sums up the morality of the Mosaic covenant as a morality of response and a morality of dialogue. (1) Morality of response: Israel is called to respond to the blessings and gifts received from YHWH, of which the gift of salvation is the most basic. (2) Morality of dialogue: Just as YHWH loves Israel, so Israel is to love YHWH; just as YHWH is faithful to the covenant, so Israel is to be faithful to the covenant; just as YHWH is righteous,

so Israel is to be righteous; just as YHWH freed Israel from injustice and oppression, so Israel is to free others from injustice and oppression (Guinan, 1992, p. 908).

Rainer Albertz (1992, pp. 63-64) argues that a “personal bond between a god and a larger group is a peculiarity of Israelite religion”. In the light of the special initial conditions of Israelite religion, YHWH is not primarily the owner of the land, but the deity of a larger group (“God of the Hebrews”, later “God of Israel”). YHWH is the one who freed Israel and therefore the disposition towards the sole worship of YHWH in Israelite religion can be explained quite plausibly from the social conditions of the exodus group. Under changed social conditions, where the establishment of the monarchy led to a differentiated and complex Israelite society, Israel also fell victim to syncretism and polytheism. The prophetic fight for the exclusiveness of Israel’s relationship with YHWH therefore included also the fight against the political and social developments characterising the pre-exilic monarchical state, as well as the fight against the dissolution of Israel’s society into what Albertz calls “competing classes and its political alliances and the foreign infiltration into it” (Albertz, 1992, pp. 63-64).

It already has been stated that it is possible that covenant can be a permanence or an invariant within “steady flow through time”, which Galtung points to as an aspect of cultural violence. This study also has to consider the vertical (religious) and horizontal (social) aspects of Mosaic covenant in Exodus and Deuteronomy. Therefore, covenant has a strong moral and ethical base, even if Deuteronomy covenant’s moral and ethical base is more pronounced than the moral and ethical base of the Exodus covenant. Why then was the Davidic covenant necessary? It was also discussed that the Davidic covenant is, in form and structure, a different type of covenant (royal grant treaty) than the Mosaic covenant (suzerain-vassal treaty). Can one then still claim that one is talking about the same covenantal permanence or invariant?

Albertz (1992, pp. 74-75) mentions that Israelite society in the period before the monarchy was known for its lack of social differentiation. This was matched by minimal social stratification (Albertz, 1992, pp. 74-75). As the god who ruled Israel, YHWH was also the symbol of the early Israelite society and its opposition to domination. The solidarity that YHWH created was outside the institution, therefore a solidarity from below, on a voluntary basis, and not a solidarity from above, forced by political compulsion. Since there were religious restrictions on disposing of land, an accumulation of economic power was prevented. The egalitarian tendency of early Israelite society also found symbolic support in the YHWH religion (Albertz, 1992, p. 79). This situation changed to a state under the monarchy where

YHWH became the “guarantor of state power” with its own newly built “mechanisms of oppression”, not only of foreign groups (expansionists wars), but also of its own kin (e.g. forced labour and the *corvée*) (Albertz, 1992, p. 122).

Galtung (1975, p. 111) argues that “violence is present whenever human beings are influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations”. Violence then is the “cause of the difference between the actual (what is) and the potential (what could have been)”. The “potential level of realisation is that which becomes possible with a given level of insight and resources”. When these “insights and resources are monopolised by a group or class or are used for other purposes, then the actual level falls below the potential level, and violence is present in the system” (Galtung, 1975, p. 111). Thus, within the change of Israelite society from an egalitarian society to a society with markedly pronounced social differentiation, matched by even more pronounced social stratification, structural violence took root.

It can then be argued that, if covenant was used by the monarchy as an ideological tool for the upkeep of the structural violence of the monarchy, and the structural violence caused ordinary Judeans’ actual somatic and mental realisations to fall below their potential realisations, causing the presence of direct violence, then covenant is an example of cultural violence. If this same argument is used for covenant in the earlier times of Israelite society, one can argue that, if covenant was used as a religious tool for the moral and ethical wellbeing of the people and their relationship with YHWH, and this society was an egalitarian society with a lack of social differentiation, matched by minimal social stratification, with most of the direct violence caused by outside influences, then covenant in the earlier Israelite society is not an example of cultural violence. One can then argue that covenant moved from a place where it did not represent cultural violence to a place where it did represent cultural violence.

One also finds cultural violence where a clear dichotomy presents itself between the divine elected and the divine non-elected. As was argued previously that, in this dichotomy, the royal grant type of covenant, can only increase the importance and authority of the divine elected. It looks as if the Mosaic covenant, as a covenant where the accent was firmly on YHWH as the initiator of covenant, and where Israel, as the recipients of covenant, had a clear moral and ethical obligation to uphold the covenant, in a sense, qualifies the status of the divine elected. The reason for this, is that their status of divine election was only and exclusively for

the sake of YHWH and not for their own sake over and above the sake of the divine non-elected.

The question now, is what changed from the Mosaic covenant to the oracle in Jer 11:1-17, where the brokenness of the covenant became so irrefutable as to necessitate the curses of Deuteronomy 28?

## **ii. The Davidic Covenant**

Shamai Gelandar (2011, pp. 140-141) sees the Mosaic covenant and the Davidic covenant as two distinct traditions, where the Mosaic tradition is the “foundation of the relationship between YHWH and Israel” based on a mutual commitment forged in the historic event of the exodus. In contrast, the Davidic covenant is largely based in an alternative ideology, in which YHWH’s commitment to Israel is linked to, and conditional upon, YHWH’s promises to David and his descendants, as well as YHWH’s choosing of Zion as the dwelling place of YHWH’s name. In the establishing of the Davidic covenant, Gelandar (2011, p. 143) sees 2 Sam 7 as the key text (Gelandar, 2011, pp. 140-143).

Jonathan Bishop (1982, pp. 117-118) also views Nathan’s prophecy in 2 Sam 7 as the key text of the Davidic covenant. In this prophecy, David is reminded that YHWH has called David away from his sheep. YHWH has been with David in all David’s battles, and YHWH promises to make David’s name great and to establish Israel securely in its own land. Furthermore, David’s dynasty will be established forever (2 Sam 7:12-13). Lastly, YHWH’s promise to David of an everlasting dynasty will have no conditions (Bishop, 1982, pp. 117-118). The Davidic covenant is therefore grounded in YHWH’s promise to David, the king, to preserve his dynasty forever, even if YHWH never explicitly calls it a covenant. If the Mosaic covenant prepared the ethical and moral grounds for Israel’s habitation of the land Canaan, why then was the Davidic covenant necessary? As we can see from a diachronic perspective on covenant making, different contexts ask for different covenants. What then was the context of the Davidic covenant? Can the covenant with David be separate from establishing the monarchy?

Rainer Kessler (2008, p. 73) argues that certain reasons pressurised Israel into establishing the monarchy. The establishment of the monarchy will be the topic of inquiry in Chapter 5 of this study. However, at this point, it is important to note that the focus on the

establishment of the royal covenant with David, cannot be considered in total isolation. For now, one can argue that the covenant with David did come later, but more in answer to certain internal problems whereby his monarchy needed divine authorisation to confirm his rule over all of Israel.

Mendenhall & Herion (1992, p. 1189) elaborate on the divine authorisation David needed for his monarchy. David first had to become king according to two distinct covenants enacted by the two major demographic groups of ancient Israel (each accompanied by the attendant rite of anointing): first with Judah in the South (2 Sam 2:4, though no covenant is specified), and subsequently with the elders of Israel in the North (2 Sam 5:1–3). In the new kingship of David an ideological resolution of the latent conflict between the northern and southern tribes was necessary. In the first place, both groups presumably existed as a result of a prior commitment to YHWH and, despite their differences, both had agreed to Davidic rule. For David to transcend the regional and tribal conflict, he had to represent the will of YHWH, who would have wanted the people to be one (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1189).

Another reason for the Davidic covenant was that, as a result of his military conquests, David ruled over a population comprising far more than the original twelve tribes of Yahwist villagers. Included in his realm were most, if not all, of the old lowland Canaanite urban power centres that had never been incorporated into the community of YHWH and were only now beginning to recover from the ravages of the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age transition period. The Mosaic tradition, with its belief that community can proceed directly from the will of YHWH unmediated through ritual or political organisations, would have been incomprehensible to these populations (conditioned as they were to the inevitability and the propriety of ritually reinforced political organisations). In the religious ideology of Jerusalem there existed a type of sanctification of political authority that David and Solomon could promulgate and that the non-Yahwist populations could comprehend (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1189).

Anderson (1999, p. 196) furthermore sees the covenant that YHWH made with David as a royal covenant that was also associated with Zion. “Zion” is the ancient name for the south-eastern ridge of the hill on which the city of Jerusalem was founded. Where the abovementioned reason of Mendenhall & Herion of the establishing of the monarchy was the incomprehensibility of Israel’s polity to the non-Israelite population of Canaan, Anderson also states that the symbolic vista of monarch and temple, was incomprehensible to the Israelite theological way of thinking (Anderson, 1999, p. 196). The task therefore was to conform the

institutions of the dynastic monarchy and the temple with Israel's faith, therefore making them symbols for expressing the relationship between Israel and YHWH.

In this adaptation of the monarchy and the temple to Israel's faith and vice versa, Mendenhall & Herion (1992, p. 1188) point to an added aspect of the Davidic covenant that is noteworthy for this study: The Davidic covenant is an important transition from covenant as a "historical enactment that furnished the foundation of a community" (Mosaic covenant), to a simple ideological assertion presupposing not only an existing religious community already ostensibly in a relationship with YHWH, but also a specific socio-political and economic organisation that is given legitimacy in the context of the existing historical situation. Unlike the Mosaic covenant, nothing really new is created by the Davidic covenant. The Davidic covenant is therefore merely an ideological legitimisation of the existing status quo – an expression in traditional theological terms of the value system of the dominant power structure that in the first place created the narratives and in the second place profited by their claims (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1188). Anderson (1999, p. 197) agrees with this legitimising function of the Davidic covenant and calls the Davidic covenant an ideology that was intended to justify or sanction a socio-political programme (Anderson, 1999, p. 197).

Earlier it was shown that the Davidic covenant demonstrates similarities with the royal grant treaty. It can be argued that this type of treaty contributed to the legitimising capability of the Davidic covenant. In what way did the Davidic covenant share similarities with the royal grant type treaties? Firstly, from the previous discussion on suzerain-vassal and royal grant treaties, it can be argued that the Davidic covenant as a "grant" constituted an obligation from YHWH to promise an everlasting dynasty to David. Because YHWH initiated the covenant, YHWH was the only source of David's position and authority. Secondly, the grant provided mainly the protection of the rights of David and his dynasty and was therefore an inducement for future loyalty. Lastly, the grant had its focus more on the interpersonal relationships between YHWH and David, where Israel was, according to Hahn (1995, p. 359), implicitly included, but not explicitly mentioned. It is important to note both that in David's dynasty loyalty was of importance for the Davidic covenant to "work", and that YHWH's initiating of the covenant could have had a contributing effect on the authority of the monarchy and the temple.

Although there are clear differences between the Mosaic and the Davidic covenants, discussed by Guinan (1992, p. 71); Anderson (1999, p. 206); and Hahn (1995, p. 359),

including the conditionality of the Mosaic covenant as opposed to the un-conditionality of the Davidic covenant, it is important to not see the Davidic covenant as a separate covenant from the Mosaic covenant. This even though Gelande above describes the Davidic covenant as an alternative ideology. The Davidic covenant was necessary for its time and as a theological idea, not strange and incomprehensible for Israel. As Anderson (1999, p. 205) rightly states, because it was unconditioned by human behaviour, it could assure stability, security and hope for the future, despite the contingencies of history. The problem is not in the theological function of the Davidic covenant from the start, but in the structural violence the institutions of the temple and monarchy started to legitimise, as the dynasty of David was confronted with geo-political and economic matters beyond its control. It is possible then to argue that the Mosaic and the Davidic covenants are a permanence or an invariant within “a steady flow through time” which Galtung (1990, p. 294) sees as an aspect of cultural violence.

It is important then to take note, before the prophetic covenantal dialogue is discussed, that the Mosaic covenant was the basic covenant that gave Israel its distinct identity, and therefore the covenant that the prophets continually referred to.<sup>27</sup> Brueggemann (2007, p. 10) is right when he points out that “neither the book of Jeremiah nor the person of Jeremiah appeared amid Jerusalem’s climactic crisis *de novo*. Behind the person and the book is a long tradition of faith that goes back to the very origins of Israel as the people of YHWH, of which the memory and authority of the covenant at Sinai stands central” (Brueggemann, 2007, p. 10).

### c. Prophetic Covenantal Dialogue

As was mentioned previously, a continuity existed between the Mosaic covenant and the Davidic covenant. Mendenhall & Herion (1992, p. 1191) state that within the oracles of Jeremiah specifically and the prophets in general one can find a surviving “matrix of ideas” about covenant that has antecedents in the Bronze Age (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1191).

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<sup>27</sup> Guinan (1992, p. 71) states that it is never textually suggested that the Mosaic covenant was replaced by the Davidic covenant. In particular, there is not much difference between the covenant obligations that were expected in terms of these two covenants. The king, too, was expected to be a faithful Yahwist and to obey the covenant commandments, especially in their concern for justice (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 89:31-32 [MT 32-33]). Guinan (1992, p. 71) argues furthermore that attempts to localise the two traditions (the Mosaic covenant flourished in the North, the Davidic in the South) seem oversimplified. Some texts do suggest that attempts were made to bring the Davidic in line with the Mosaic by making its promises conditional (e.g., 1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; 9:4-5; Ps 132:12), but these were not carried out consistently (Guinan, 1992, p. 71).

Mendenhall & Herion point to an important aspect of the Late Bronze treaties and some biblical traditions concerning covenant, where certain formal procedures existed by which the suzerain declared the covenant to be broken and the vassal to be susceptible to the imposition of the curses. In the prophetic voices, these formal procedures exist in the *rîb* “indictment, lawsuit”. Later in this chapter this study will consider whether there is evidence in Jer 11:1-17 of such a lawsuit.

The *rîb* form flows from the idea that there is an inseparable link between the receipt of past benefits and the consequent obligations binding the recipients, according to which an appeal can be made to “one’s sense of gratitude and obligation as a basis for re-establishing a covenant bond”. Divine “grace” then precedes and becomes the foundation for human obedience to the divine will, which is not a fixed code of social and legal norms, but more a sense of gratitude for what was received but not earned. It is this divine grace, and not some “politically determined, legally defined, and socially enforced set of formal patterns” that determine the good a community can hope to realise its future choices in community life and in its dealings with other people. This “matrix of covenantal ideas” was determinative in the prophetic tendency to think of covenant obligations more broadly in terms of “social justice” than narrowly in terms of “sacred rites” (cf. Deut 24:17-22, esp. vv. 18 and 22) (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1191).

In the Mosaic and Davidic covenants, it is YHWH who was the giver/initiator of the covenant. Since the obligations of the covenant were to YHWH, they were binding upon Israel in whatever context Israel may have found itself. Therefore, the obligations were not mere cultural duties and/or political norms and laws. Covenant is then the “ethical transcending of political legal systems and ritual cultic systems”, and therefore also the ethical transcending of social and ethnic differentiation: “Are you not like the Ethiopians to me?” (Amos 9:7) (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1191).

Hence it can be argued that the prophets, with their idea of covenant, were in constant dialogue with the monarchy in Jerusalem’s idea of covenant. One can concur with Kessler (2008, p. 77) that one of the main arguments against the monarchy, especially in the text of the latter prophets, was that the monarchy did not realise its own function, namely to protect the poor and the weak in society (Kessler, 2008, p. 77). Another constant dialogue between the prophets and the monarchy was in connection with the idolatry of the state, where political

alliances and treaties brought foreign gods into the cultic life of Israel. Ronald Clements (2005, pp. 107-108) notes four central themes in the Deuteronomistic version of prophecy:

(1) The Northern Kingdom of Israel has been disloyal to YHWH, and this is proven by its idolatry. (2) YHWH has warned Israel through the prophets, but Israel has rejected the prophetic warnings. (3) Israel was punished by being sent into exile, but Judah also has disobeyed YHWH. (4) Disloyal kings, who followed the path of Jeroboam and disobeyed YHWH's law, were primary causes of Israel's downfall (Clements, 2005, pp. 107-108).

The prophetic dialogue with the main cult in Jerusalem was not only about idolatry. Bishop (1982, p. 96) makes an important point when he argues that the cult played a significant part in the covenantal understanding of Israel. The moral obligations of the covenant were predominantly negative – the addressee should not do this or that, on pain of falling out of the covenant. The positive commandments are for the most part general and rhetorical: love, keep, do. Bishop notes that the rules of the cult were also positive:

They give the addressee something to do to enact his part of the relationship. And these specifics are wholly concrete. The cult repeats the connection established by the covenant in the most convincing terminology of all, the language of the body. Ritual is to religion as poetry is to the individual...For within the cult the promise (of the covenant) can be kept sacramentally at any time, whether or not it is being confirmed historically (Bishop, 1982, p. 96).

Bishop's (1982, p. 96) remarks on the necessity of the cult, are important, and touch on what Miller says concerning the meaning of the covenant, whereby Israel adopts formal structures and performs ritual acts to practise her religion as a *practice of covenant*. In these ritual acts, according to Bishop, Israel "maintains and sustains the covenant and take steps to renew and revivify the covenant" (Bishop, 1982, p. 96). Bishop's argument offers insight in why Israel focussed so much on the cult, even to the detriment of social responsibilities: It is just easier to do! Bishop's argument also offers insight in why the centralisation of the cult became such an important rationale for the Deuteronomistic movement. It is easier to control things, if it is done in one place.

#### **d. Covenant as a Religious Idea**

As was shown in the previous chapter, the notion of covenant as an important part of Israel's religious worldview, features prominently in the book of Jeremiah. The idea that an only, omnipotent, omnipresent deity has specifically chosen Israel to be his beloved people,

grounded much of Israel's inward identity and enforced much of how Israel looked at the world around them<sup>28</sup>.

Covenant was also not a flimsy intellectual exercise, reserved only for the intellectual elite. Covenant was concrete. Covenant was central to how the Israelite people saw their right to exist.<sup>29</sup> Covenant was the golden thread in the stories told by the old to the young of YHWH protecting, leading, helping, and loving a nation. In these stories YHWH was able to protect, lead, help and love through deeds of wonder, through people of significance, and through institutions of importance. Covenant was the script for understanding everything from the laws of the land to the poetry of the poets. Covenant then, was a theological concept pregnant with religious meaning.<sup>30</sup> Covenant was also the expression of the value system for the ideological

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<sup>28</sup> Mendenhall & Herion (1992, p. 1179) argue that two factors can curtail the ability of “modern Western readers” to fully appreciate the biblical portrayal of the covenant between YHWH and Israel. The first is the problem of the so-called “sociology of knowledge” in the modern Western world. On one hand, the English word “covenant” is not used that often, and today is limited to certain highly technical legal matters. On the other hand, except for the institution of marriage, covenant-based relationships in the West, as a practical form of social organisation and behaviour, have become almost obsolete. The second is a problem associated with the “sociology of knowledge” in ancient Israel. How fully did the ancient Israelite scribes themselves understand what it meant to live in terms of a covenant? Firstly, covenant, as was already discussed, could describe “many different types of oath-bound promises and relationships”, each with its own social and/or ideological contexts, and care must be taken not to use one meaning for all of them. Especially in the later periods of biblical history and in connection with the subsequent utilisation of covenant imagery in early Judaism and early Christianity, the necessity for distinguishing between different types of covenant can become crucial. Covenants could have functioned as “socially enacted historical realities that were expected to bring about functional changes in patterns of behaviour”, but it is also possible that other covenants could have functioned differently as “formal or symbolic dogmatic concepts that were supposed to be the objects of tradition and belief” (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, pp. 1179-1180).

<sup>29</sup> Much research has gone into “covenant” as a religious concept in the history of Israel. Viewpoints tend to differ from covenant as an important foundation for the beginning of Israel's history to covenant as a relatively late invention in the history of Israel. Nicholson (1986, pp. 3-117) gives an extensive history of the research into covenant as a basis for his own point of view of covenant as a theological idea relatively late in Israel's history. Nicholson identifies four phases in the research on covenant: The first stage started with the publication of Wellhausen's *Prolegomena* in 1878, where Wellhausen's “reconstruction of the history of Israelite religion led him to the conclusion that the presentation of Israel's relation with YHWH in terms of a covenant was a late development and came about as a result of the preaching of the great prophets” (Nicholson, 1986, p. 3). In the controversy stimulated by the work of Wellhausen, it was widely agreed that covenant was an early religious invention in the history of Israel and therefore covenant could be seen as the foundation of much of the institutions of Israel. This first phase was then followed by a second phase where there was widespread agreement on essentials. The third phase stayed with covenant as an early invention but introduced new evidence from a study of Ancient Near Eastern “inter-state treaties” which, it was argued, can explain the origin, nature, and form of the covenant traditions as well as covenantal text in the Hebrew Bible. The fourth and current phase began in the 1960's and represents a sharp reaction to the two preceding ones. It argues that the covenant traditions were a late development in Israelite religion and were as yet unknown to the prophets of the eighth century (Nicholson, 1986, p. 56).

<sup>30</sup> Gentry and Wellum (2012, pp. 493-494) argue that the historical books (Former Prophets in the Hebrew Canon) evaluate the history of Israel through the prism of the (Deuteronomistic) Israelite

legitimisations of the status quo of the monarchy and temple in the time of Jeremiah. Covenant gave the script for these dominant power structures to create the narratives for these claims of legitimisation and to profit by these claims (Mendenhall & Herion, 1992, p. 1188).

But by saying this, covenant also seems to resist any attempt at oversimplification. John Barton (2003, pp. 31-32) presents two options for a biblical theology of covenant. One option is to follow a canonical approach, where the biblical texts are treated as a unified Scripture, even though it has a complex compositional history and even though the idea of covenant could have been a late development in the religious history of Israel. Miller (2012, pp. 16-17) agrees with Hahn (1995, p. 107) that the canonical approach enables one to do covenant theology without having to commit to one (or another) historical-critical view, much less wait for consensus, should it ever come. On the other hand, a canonical approach cannot reduce to a single idea the plurality of covenant theologies in the Hebrew Bible (Miller, 2012, p. 17). Barton's (2003, pp. 33-34) second option is to consider covenant within a "history of ideas" or a "history of traditions", alongside the history of other institutions. Miller (2012, p. 17) argues that it must be noted that the traditions of the Hebrew Bible do not converge on their own into certain overriding themes, but that each addition involves a change in the meaning of the whole. Miller (2012, p. 17) makes another important point when he states that the historical meaning of covenant has been acutely coloured by the meaning in Deuteronomy.

Concerning the early or late origin of the covenant, there are differences of opinion. On the one hand, scholars like Albertz (1992, p. 66) remark that covenant, in the full theological and legal sense, was not likely in the early period, though there was a special personal relationship between YHWH and the exodus group which had grown out of the experience of liberation and was consolidated by theophany and worship. Even without a formal covenant, this relationship with YHWH helped in the social integration of the group. Also, this relationship embodied elementary norms of conduct within the group, even without an explicit proclamation of commandments (Albertz, 1992, p. 66). However, scholars like Gentry &

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covenant. For example, the evaluation of Israel and Judah is based on their obedience/disobedience to the command concerning the centralisation of the cult in Jerusalem, according to Deuteronomy 12. Chapter 17 of Deuteronomy evaluates the history of the monarchy. Chapter 18 of Deuteronomy evaluates the effectiveness of the prophetic word (e.g., 2 Kings 24:2). The Israelite covenant, especially the expression or form of the covenant as it is constituted in Deuteronomy, was also the basis and foundation for the Latter Prophets namely Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve Prophets. The central concern of the prophets was to preach obedience to the covenant. The people constantly violated the covenant by following idols and failing to fulfill the covenant stipulations (Gentry & Wellum, 2012, pp. 493-494).

Wellum (2012, pp. 250-295) and Dumbrell (2013, pp. 1-57) see covenant as operative even from creation. It is therefore plausible that the questions of the late or early origin of the covenant are not in any way satisfactorily answered. It is also not certain if these questions find themselves beyond further extensive scholarly investigation.

Concerning covenant as a religious idea, there are also differences of opinion. On the one hand, scholars like Robert Carrol (2006, p. 270) sees covenant as a theory used to explain too much. According to Carrol, covenant, used as a regulative principle to organise and present the history of Israel from the exodus to the fall of Jerusalem, is too little theory for too much reality. Covenant, therefore, serves a theological purpose in describing the programme of the Deuteronomistic ideology centring around the fall of Jerusalem. To make more of covenant, is to allow ideology to distort reality (Carroll, 2006, p. 270). On the other hand, scholars like Rendtorff (2005, p. 432) sees the Hebrew Bible as centring around three main groups of statements: (1) YHWH's covenant with the world and with his people, Israel. (2) Israel's election from the nations. (3) The formula "I will be your God and you will be my people" (the so-called covenant formula). For Rendtorff basically everything in the Hebrew Bible refers to covenant (Rendtorff, 2005, p. 432).

This study will have to decide concerning covenant and these abovementioned problems. Therefore, this study will adopt the following premises: (1) A canonical approach will be followed. Because this study follows an ideological approach of critique that is a reader-centred approach, the canonical shape of the text before the reader, is of importance. Furthermore, this approach allows this study to do covenantal theology without being overtly dependent on any historical critical approach, even if these approaches can be helpful. Lastly, as one can see from the introductory texts, covenant is a central religious idea throughout the Hebrew Bible, which one knows in its canonical form. For the purposes of this study, the covenant idea has to be made as simplistic as possible, keeping in mind that this study argues that covenant is a permanence or invariant over time. (2) As to the early or late origins of covenant, this study takes the view that covenant was part of the distinctiveness of the Israelite faith from even before the exodus, but it was with prophetic critique against the structural and direct violence of the monarchy and temple, that covenant really came into power by giving the prophets a "matrix of ideas" within which to serve divine judgement and divine hope. (3) In doing so, the prophets gave covenant a religious meaning that could be appropriated by religious communities, even after the prophetic narrative of the Hebrew Bible had run its course. Therefore, covenant, as a religious idea, is bigger than the Hebrew Bible, in that

covenant concerns YHWH electing human parties, up to today. It can be argued that covenant, as a religious idea, describing the grace of YHWH, can be as big as YHWH's grace itself, therefore unmeasurable.

### **e. Summary**

Thus far, this study has shown that covenant involves a relationship between YHWH and an individual and/or collective human party, with YHWH as the initiator of covenant. The Hebrew Bible also attests to different types of covenants, which were made in different times, binding together characters representing different parties, and concluded in diverse fashions. Even so, covenant is never in plural, attesting to a central idea of covenant. As was mentioned, this central idea of covenant could have operated from a much earlier time to a relatively late period in the history of Israel. Israel then "borrowed" in different times from its neighbours the analogies, structures and vocabulary to re-interpret the same covenant idea in different times and with different historical realities.

It was also mentioned that an important accent shift took place from the suzerain-vassal type Mosaic covenant, where YHWH, as the initiator of covenant, was still the important party in the election of Israel, and where Israel had certain obligations towards the covenant; to the royal grant type Davidic covenant, where Israel's elected status became more important than the one doing the electing, and where Israel's obligations towards the covenant became less important than the stability, security and hope that this covenant could provide.

In discussing the various types of covenant, contract as a type of covenant was also considered. While similarities do exist, it is important to note that the benefits that Israel could expect from YHWH, as in national protection, could outweigh the desire for a relationship inherent in the covenant. The obligation of perceived cultic performance from Israel could also outweigh Israel's obligation of cultic loyalty expected from YHWH. In terms of my own South African context, it is not difficult to see the similarities between a contract and a modern day covenant as was made between the "Voortrekkers" and their God, and was also the foundation of the ideological idea of "covenant" so prevalent in Apartheid South Africa (Cloete, 1992, p. 43; Ehlers, 2011).

It is furthermore important to state that this study sees covenant as a relationship between YHWH and Israel, as constituting a permanence or invariant over a "steady flow of

time” (Galtung, 1990, p. 294). Even if the argument can be made that covenant was a theological invention of the late monarchical period, and not operative in the early Israelite religion, covenant is still very much part of the religious “matrix of ideas” of the contemporary Christian church and is therefore a permanence or invariant over a “steady flow of time” (Galtung, 1990, p. 294). This permanence or invariant can increase the potential of covenant being an example of cultural violence.

If one then continues to argue that covenant in the Hebrew Bible can be seen as an example of cultural violence, it is clear that covenant can cause a dichotomy between a divine *elected* human party and the “rest”. If the initiator of this covenant is also YHWH, then the human party’s divine election should also give the human party a certain elected status as more “special in God’s eyes” than the “rest”. As the Davidic covenant became more important in the monarchy for the stated reasons, it can be argued that the accent of the covenant moved to Israel. Therefore, the human party in the covenant, in effect, became more important than the initiator of the covenant, increasing this special status as the divinely elected (good) vis-à-vis the divinely non-elected (bad) status. One can argue that the prophetic covenantal dialogue at the time of the monarchy was a critique of this accent shift in importance from YHWH to the human party in the covenantal relationship. It is clear that the language of the suzerain-vassal treaty, as attested to by the Deuteronomistic, provided the language, shaping the *rîb* form, which the prophets use to first critique and ultimately judge Israel as the disobedient covenant partner.

The prophet Jeremiah used this same *rîb* form when he delivered his oracles of judgement in Jeremiah 1-25. In the selected text, Jer 11:1-17, the prophet must “hear the words of this covenant and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem”. Furthermore, Jeremiah was instructed to bring the message that anyone not heeding the words of this covenant, is cursed. The “words of this covenant” is qualified as the words with which YHWH brought Jeremiah’s “ancestors out of the land of Egypt”, whereby their obedience to YHWH’s voice and his commandments made them his people and him their God, realising the oath which YHWH swore to Jeremiah’s ancestors, promising them the land they presently lived in. Jeremiah affirms this oracle.

YHWH then commands Jeremiah once again to “proclaim the words of this covenant in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem”. Again, the nation is to be judged for failing to obey YHWH persistently from the exodus to now. More than just being disobedient,

they also “walked in the stubbornness of an evil will”. Therefore, YHWH has “brought upon all the words of this covenant”.

YHWH then says to Jeremiah, that he should take note that there is a conspiracy “among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem”. “They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors of old”. They have furthermore “gone after other gods to serve them”, therefore breaking the covenant that YHWH made with their ancestors.

As a result, YHWH will assuredly be bringing unescapable disaster upon them. Even if they cry out for YHWH, he will not listen to them. Thereafter, they will “cry out to the gods to whom they make offerings”, of whom there are plenty, also without results.

Jeremiah is moreover commanded “not to intercede on behalf of the people”. YHWH will not listen. Even an increased cultic performance will not force YHWH to listen. Therefore, the nation’s destruction is assured.

In the light of this theological discussion, it is evident that covenant is a main theme in Jer 11:1-17. The people of Judah were disobedient to the obligations of the covenant, as their ancestors were disobedient before them. Therefore, they will face certain destruction. Even if conversion is implicitly offered, at the beginning of the text, to ward off this destruction, the rest of the text presents a clear and present judgement of destruction, from which there is no escape.

Does this assured destruction then mean that this covenant is null and void? What can one surmise from the text concerning the audience of this oracle? What “matrix of ideas” concerning covenant was prevalent with this particular audience? What is the judgement (curse) inherent within the covenant? Questions like these can be asked concerning the text of Jer 11:1-17.

With an idea of which covenant or covenants were functioning in Jeremiah, it pays to make sure how covenant features in the text of Jer 11:1-17. For this exercise, this study will do an ideological-literary analysis of Jer 11:1-17. It will then firstly investigate the rhetoric of Jer 11:1-17. Chapter 3 of this study showed that the genre of an oracle of judgment is predominant in Jeremiah 1-25. It also showed that this oracle of judgment is structurally in conversation with others. Therefore, it can be said that Jer 11:1-17 shares important motives and themes with for example Jer 7:1-8:3 (The Temple Sermon and False Religion), including the overwhelming

Deuteronomistic influence shared by both texts. The degree to which these two texts are in conversation with each other and the importance thereof need to be investigated.

This study now moves to an ideological-literary analysis of Jer 11:1-17. Within such an analysis, certain questions need to be asked of the text: Firstly, to what degree and for what purpose is the *rîb* form of judgement oracle utilised in Jer 11:1-17? Although, Chapter 3 of this study demonstrated that the genre of an oracle of judgment is predominant in Jeremiah 1-25, one still needs to be more specific. The study has also shown that the *rîb* form of judgement oracle was an important way in which the prophets used the “matrix of ideas” of the covenant, to pass judgement on Israel/Judah. Was this form of judgement oracle used for a certain rhetorical effect, and if so, how effective was it? Secondly, if Jer 11:1-17 is in conversation with other texts in Jeremiah, what are these texts, to what degree are they in conversation with each other, and what is the importance of these conversations? As this study has already mentioned, it is quite certain that the covenant operative in Jer 11:1-17, is the Mosaic covenant at Sinai. It has also been mentioned that two versions of this covenant exist: one in the book Exodus, and one in the book Deuteronomy. One needs to determine which of these two covenants are prevalent in Jer 11:1-17, for even if they are one and the same covenant, the focus of the Deuteronomy covenant is more on the obligations of the covenant, and is a product of the Deuteronomist, who was a main originator of the texts produced in the time before, during and after the Babylonian exile. Therefore, the ideology of the Deuteronomist is important.

An ideological-literary analysis can be helpful for answering these questions on the *rîb* form of judgement oracle in Jer 11:1-17 and the conversations Jer 11:1-17 may have with other texts in Jeremiah and in the Hebrew Bible. Jer 11:1-17 was also written as Yee (1995, pp. 150-152) has suggested in a “specific ideologically charged historical world”, reproducing a “particular ideology with an internal logic of its own” (Yee, 1995, pp. 150-152), whether during the monarchy in Judah before the exile, during the exile or even after the exile. Jer 11:1-17 “encodes in its rhetoric the conflicting circumstances of its material-ideological production” (Yee, 1995, pp. 150-152). An ideological-literary analysis will be helpful in investigating the textual production of Jer 11:1-17 within a specific context/s. The following question also needs to be asked: Were the ideologies prevalent during the exile and after the exile the same ideologies as before the exile? These questions become important when this study moves to an investigation of the ideological-contextual aspects of Jer 11:1-17.

### 3. Exegetical Aspects of Jer 11:1-17

#### a. Ideological-Literary Analysis

An ideological-literary analysis aims to investigate the text's rhetoric whereby the text has an "artful ability to persuade its audience to accept a particular ideology" (Yee, 1995, pp. 151-152). These rhetorical features include elements of structure, such as characterisation and repetition. Therefore, these literary aspects of Jer 11:1-17 need to be investigated.

#### i. Rhetoric and Structure

The rhetorical strategy underlying Jer 11:1-17 can be described as covenantal rhetoric.<sup>31</sup> Although the word "covenant" appears only five times in the 17 verses, there are ample occurrences of stock phrases with covenantal meanings and other language that is covenantal in nature. Jer 11:1-17 is composed of numerous phrases invoking images of the covenant:

(1) "I brought them out from the land of Egypt" evokes images of the original Mosaic covenant. (2) "Obey the (my) voice (commandments)" is a common covenantal phrase used both in the Pentateuch (cf. Gen 22:18; 26:5; Exod 19:5; Deut 4:30; 8:20; 11:13, 27, 28; 13:4, 18; 15:5; 27:10; 28:1, 2, 13, 15, 45, 62; 30:2, 8, 10, 16, 20) and in Jeremiah (cf. Jer 3:13; 7:23; 9:12; 11:7; 18:12; 22:21). (3) "All I command you" appears in both the Priestly traditions (Gen 6:22; 7:5, 9, 16; 21:4; Exod 7:2; 25:22; 29:35; 31:6, 11) and in Deuteronomy (cf. Deut 8:1; 11:22; 12:14, 28, 32; 13:18; 27:1; 28:1, 15; 30:2, 8; 31:5). (4) "You shall be my people and I will be your God" is a covenant formula (cf. Jer 7:23; 30:22; 31:33; Exod 6:7). (5) "A land flowing with milk and honey" is also common in the Priestly traditions (cf. Exod 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Lev 20:24; Num 16:13-14) and in Deuteronomy (Deut 6:3; 11:9; 26:9; 26:15; 27:3; 31:20) (Craigie, et al., 1991, p. 169).

In accepting that these words and phrases carry ideological weight, it becomes important to study the literary use of these words and phrases and by what manner they function in Jer 11:1-17.

Moreover, the placement of Jer 11:1-17 within the book of Jeremiah is significant. According to Stulman (2005, p. 113), the third major literary unit in the book of Jeremiah, i.e. Jeremiah 11-17, highlights the repercussions of breaking the covenant. From start to finish, one

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<sup>31</sup> The concept of "covenant" does appear elsewhere in the book of Jeremiah. Jer 11:1-17 contains five of the 21 verses in Jeremiah that use "covenant"; Jeremiah 31-34 contains 12 verses which use "covenant" (Craigie, et al., 1991, p. 169).

finds a community that refuses to repent and obey YHWH. This defiant autonomy leads to divine judgment: Judah will soon fall into the hands of its enemies. Jeremiah appears here as the YHWH's covenant mediator insisting that the claims of the covenant are still urgent (Stulman, 2005, p. 113).

Stulman (2005, p. 113) also states: "Like other literary units in Jeremiah 1-25, Jeremiah 11-17 is introduced by a prose sermon that exhibits many common features" (Jer 11:1-17). The formulaic prescript with which the prose sermon starts, "The word that came to Jeremiah from [YHWH]," shows at a basic level the beginning of most structures in Jeremiah 1-25 (Jer 11:1; cf. 7:1; 18:1; 21:1). The introduction is followed by YHWH demanding from and prescribing to the prophet certain actions (Jer 11:2; cf. 7:2; 18:2; 21:2). Thereafter, the content of the message or action is provided in the remaining verses (Jer 11:3-17; cf. also 7:3-15; 18:5-11; 21:3-7). The main theme of the literary unit: "YHWH judges Judah for breaking its covenant obligations", is also presented by the first prose speech (Stulman, 2005, p. 113).

Furthermore, according to Stulman (2005, p. 113) Jeremiah 11-17 presents the undoing of covenant as an important aspect of Judah's pre-exilic theological systems. Jer 11:1-17 therefore focusses intensely on covenant itself. In the same breath as the temple sermon of Jer 7:1-15 which undermines the foundational beliefs relevant to Israel's established structures of cultic worship and Jer 18:1-12 which undermines Judah's election tradition and Jer 21:1-10 which dismantles the Davidic dynasty, Jer 11:1-17 critically examines Israel's established covenant with YHWH (Stulman, 2005, p. 113).

Stulman (2005, p. 114) also states that Jer 11:1-17:27 ends with a prose sermon as it has begun with a prose sermon. The "people of Judah and [those who live in] Jerusalem" is the addressees of both sermons. The texts bracketed by the prose sermons, the introductory speech on covenant and the concluding one on Sabbath observance, includes three of the five major confessions of Jeremiah. This bracketing of the text has three literary purposes:

In the first instance, these prose sermons serve to create a dark tone by focussing on the crucial consequences of not adhering to the covenant regulations. The "Deuteronomistic curse" introduced by Jer 11:1-17 targets those "who are disobedient to the covenant". Jer 17:19-27 also concludes with an urgent call for covenant obedience and the consequences of not adhering to the covenant obligations. Seeing these verses with the desolation of Jerusalem all around, it was clear that Judah made the wrong choice: it did "not [heed]" and so sealed its destiny. Therefore, Jer 17:19-27 seen in combination with Jer 11:1-17 demonstrates Judah's guilt from

which there will be no respite. Secondly, the prose sermons framing these texts establishes consistency within texts that overflows with inconsistency. The covenant metaphor with its known language and categories smooths out the literary and symbolic chaos of the texts. Finally, the prose texts also organise the major cycles of the unit: Jer 11:1-12:17; 13:1-15:21; 16:1-17:27. Each of these cycles consists of a prose speech or a prose account followed by a lament (Stulman, 2005, pp. 114-115).

Jeremiah 11:1-17 also contains a strong rhetorical thrust and a certain structure. Craigie (Craigie, et al., 1991, p. 169) and Brueggemann (1998, p. 109) states that Jer 11:1-17 contains a formal, highly stylised statement of covenant theology. The sequence followed in this chapter can be said to offer the following outline of the old covenant formula, used to offer an entirely fresh reading of Israel's life with YHWH.

- a) Covenant foundation (vv. 1-5)
- b) Covenant violation (ancient) (vv. 6-8)
- c) Covenant violation (contemporary) (vv. 9-13)
- d) Harsh judgement, end of covenant relationship (vv. 14-17)

(Brueggemann, 1998, p. 112)

Jeremiah 11:1-5 thus functions, according to Brueggemann (1998, p. 109), as an “initial summons to the prophet to articulate the covenant and its demand”. The covenant that is articulated in this text can be said to be Sinai covenant with all of its Torah demands. Brueggemann (1998, p. 110) moreover argues that in this text the “Torah demands of the Sinai covenant are held in confrontational tension with the confident guarantees of the royal (Davidic) covenant so cherished by the powerful elite in Jerusalem” (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 110). The prophet's response in v. 5b makes clear the individual nature of this oracle (Allen, 2008, p. 138).

Allen (2008, p. 138) furthermore states that the somehow easily overlooked “Israel's God” in the quotation formula (v. 3), along with “your God” in Jer 11:4, gives a seemingly positive stepping stone for sermon's negative theme. The curse in Jer 11:3, moreover, is regarded as a finalising element of the covenant. The curse formulations in Deut 27:15-26, including the final extensive curse relating to “the words of this law” in Deut 27:26 are furthermore alluded to in the unique application of the curse (*'ārûr* “cursed”) as well as the “Amen” response of Jeremiah in Jer 11:5. The curse is presented as warning curse, but in this instance both the exhortation and the warning is put forward in a way that presupposes that this

warning curse will be not be taken seriously, and therefore the warning curse is rather a justification for the oracle of disaster in Jer 11:17, like the exhortations in Jer 7:3-6 (Allen, 2008, p. 138).

The general terms with which covenant is defined in Jer 11:4-5 furthermore points to the Sinai covenant. The rescue of Israel from the oppression of Egypt and the gift of the land as attainment of an earlier promise to the patriarchs, functions as a call to previous and consequent expressions of divine grace that should have cause the people's sense of commitment and duty to intensify in a firm force. Israel's disobedience is implicitly contrasted with the historical fulfilment of YHWH's promise. The historical fulfilment of YHWH's promise also means that YHWH's side of the covenant had been kept. The fact that the people has failed to adhere to the covenant, on the other hand, is hinted at in the shifting of Jeremiah to the position of respondent and not the people. This failure is conveyed in terms of a double covenant formula (cf. Jer 7:23), of which the order is reversed, placing the divine secondly thereby showing the divine exclusiveness of the covenant (Allen, 2008, p. 138).

Brueggemann (1998, pp. 110-111) notes that there are also three overriding themes of the tradition present in Jer 11:1-17. Firstly, it is necessary that Judah and Jerusalem listen. To "listen" means more than just listening to words spoken, but to react in obedience to what was said. Secondly, the reaction in obedience to what was said makes the covenant formula of Jer 11:4 possible. This covenant formula shows YHWH and his people are bound together. The third theme of the tradition are put forward by the stylised formula of Jer 11:5. This "Mosaic-Sinaitic" assertion was made to the "ancestors" in Genesis and is combined with the promise of land. This connection of promise and command, inherent in the text, therefore proclaims the covenantal conditions of Judah keeping the land (Brueggemann, 1998, pp. 110-111).

Jeremiah 11:6-8 takes on the form of a historical retrospect. Jeremiah is, once again, commissioned to remind the people of Judah that in their historical memory they had a habit of not listening to the commands of the covenant. The old generation of Sinai did not listen either. This retrospect to Sinai serves to create a context for the immediacy of Jeremiah's present proclamation of broken covenant (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 111).

Jeremiah 11:9-13 continues with the historical retrospect regarding disobedient Israel, made contemporary in terms of the challenges facing the current community. YHWH speaks to Jeremiah a third time. YHWH brings a charge of revolt against Judah. The substance of the "revolt" is given in the highly stylised language of the tradition: Judah refused to listen, they

served other gods, they broke the covenant. This charge lacks temporal and circumstantial specificity, and therefore has a rhetorical thrust further than its immediate horizon (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 111). Allen (2008, p. 140) elaborates on the use of “revolt” in Jer 11:9-10. Metaphors of a political nature is used to explain why YHWH will punish Judah. Although the image of a nation conspiring against YHWH is used here to mean cultic betrayal, it can also have political undertones (cf. 2 Kgs 17:4). That the breaking of the covenant has strong political undertones are also alluded to in the Hebrew phrase used in 1 Kgs 15:19 for the breaking of an alliance. Furthermore, the first clause between these political metaphors takes up the historical background to Israel’s continuing disobedience to YHWH of which Judah is also guilty, whereby the second clause gives more insight to the essence of this failure namely cultic betrayal. As Israel (v. 8) was found guilty of these charges in the past, so now Judah will be found guilty of these charges (Allen, 2008, p. 140).

At the end Jer 11:14-17 gives three reasons why Judah will be destroyed. Firstly, whereas YHWH has changed his mind in the past driven by the people’s lamenting (cf. Exod 2:23-25; 3:9), this will not now be the case. YHWH’s punishment fits the crime of covenantal disobedience (Jer 11:8, 10). Secondly, there is no comparison between the false gods that Judah follows and YHWH as the historical deliverer of Judah. Thirdly, the chance of prophetic intervention, that was still an option in Jer 7:16, will not be an option anymore (Allen, 2008, pp. 140-141).

Clearly the rhetorical thrust of judgement is prevalent in Jer 11:1-17. In the following section, the genre of judgement oracle will be investigated in more detail.

## ii. Oracles of Judgement

Lundbom (1999, pp. 614-615) agrees with the repetitive nature of Jer 11:1-17 but divides the common vocabulary and phraseology of the text in different divisions which he sees as distinct and separate oracles. These three covenant oracles are concentrated in Jer 11:1-13: a) Hear the curse of the covenant (11:1-5); b) The covenant is something you do (11:6-8); and the broken covenant (11:9-13). The use of *setumahs* at the end of v. 5, v. 8, and v. 13 also confirm this delimitation. The common vocabulary and phraseology are clustered in vv. 4-5, 7-8, and 10 (Lundbom, 1999, p. 615). The separate oracles are typically – but not always – preceded by an introduction containing:

(a) the superscription identifying Jeremiah as the recipient of the divine word (v. 1); (b) a setting and/or audience relative to the delivery of the word; and (c) a message summary statement (Lundbom, 1999, p. 615).

<b>Oracle 1</b>		
v. 1	Superscription	The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord:
vv. 2-3a	Setting/audience	Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. You shall say to them, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel:
vv. 3b v.4 v.5	Message	Cursed be anyone who does not heed the words of this covenant, which I commanded your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron-smelter, saying, listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. <i>So shall you be my people, and I will be your God,</i> that I may perform the oath that I swore to your ancestors, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day. Then I answered, “So be it, Lord.”

In Jer 11:3b-5 the key words are parallel except for “in the day” and “as at this day,” which are reversed. At the centre are the climatic words, “Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you”, followed by the equally important covenant formula (*italic*). Oracle 1 is linked to its introduction (v. 2) by these key phrases (Lundbom, 1999, p. 617):

v. 2a	Hear the words of this covenant	<i>šim ‘û ’et-dibrê habbērît</i>
v. 3b	... who does not heed the words of this covenant	<i>’āšer lō’ yišma ‘ ’et-dibrê habbērît hazzō ’t</i>

The introduction to Oracle 2 (vv. 6-8) contains a briefer superscription (v. 6a), a directive to Jeremiah regarding the setting where his oracle is to be delivered (v. 6b). The sequence of Oracle 2 follows the typical introduction of prose oracles in Jeremiah, with the directive features first and the message summary second (Lundbom, 1999, p. 617).

<b>Oracle 2</b>		
v. 6a	Superscription	And the Lord said to me
v. 6b	Setting/audience	Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem:
v. 6c v.7	Message	Hear the words of this covenant and do them. For I solemnly warned your ancestors when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice.

v.8		Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of an evil will. So I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not.
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The oracle itself (vv. 7-8) has no messenger formula. The key verb is *šāma* ‘hear’, which is repeated at the centre (Lundbom, 1999, pp. 617-618).<sup>32</sup>

v. 7b	Hear my voice	<i>šim 'û bēqōwlī</i>
v. 8a	But they did not hear	<i>wēlō' šāmē'û</i>

The introduction to Oracle 3 is different from the other two oracles and also longer. The superscription of Oracle 3 is the same as the superscription of Oracle 2. In the place of the normal directive to Jeremiah, YHWH tells the prophet about the conspiracy among ‘the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem’, adding up to nothing less than a broken covenant (v. 9b). The summary message here (v. 10) is an indictment anticipating a judgement oracle, which comes next in vv. 11-13 (Lundbom, 1999, p. 618).

<b>Oracle 3</b>		
v. 9a	Superscription	And the Lord said to me
v. 9b	Setting/audience	Conspiracy exists among the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
vv. 10	Message	They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors of old, who refused to heed my words; they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken the covenant that I made with their ancestors.
v.11		Therefore, thus says the Lord, assuredly I am going to bring disaster upon them that they cannot escape; though they cry out to me, I will not listen to them.
v. 12		Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they make offerings, but they will never save them in the time of their trouble.
v.13		For your gods have become as many as your towns, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars to shame you have set up, altars to make offerings to Baal.

Clearly the language of an oracle of judgement pervades these three oracles in Jer 11:1-17. The separate oracles are also linked to each other by certain phrases. Oracle 1 (vv. 1-

<sup>32</sup> Lundbom (1999, p. 618) discusses briefly the textual problem of the difference between the LXX and the MT versions of Oracle 2. The LXX is the shorter text: “Hear the words of this covenant and do them (verse 6b), but they did not do [them]”. Many textual critics accept the shorter version as the correct one, whereas others see the MT version as a better text.

5) and Oracle 2 (vv. 6-8) are connected by phrases in their introduction (Lundbom, 1999, p. 619):

Oracle 1		Oracle 2	
v. 2	Hear the words of this covenant	v. 6	Hear the words of this covenant

Oracle 1 (vv. 1-5) and Oracle 3 (vv. 9-13) share these link phrases in their introductions (Lundbom, 1999, p. 619):

Oracle 1		Oracle 3	
v. 2	people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem	v. 9	people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem

Oracle 2 (vv. 6-8) and Oracle 3 are linked differently with phrases repeated in the introduction to Oracle 2 and in the conclusion of Oracle 3 (Lundbom, 1999, p. 619):

Oracle 2		Oracle 3	
v. 6	the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem	v. 13	For your gods have become as many as your towns, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem.....

The entire unit of Jer 11:1-13 contains catchwords – all appearing in Oracle 3 – that connect the following prose in Jer 11:14-17 (Lundbom, 1999, pp. 619-620):

v. 11	I will not listen	<i>wēlō' 'ešma'</i>
v. 12	in the time of their trouble	<i>bē'ēt rā'ātām</i>
v. 13	to make offerings to Baal	<i>lēqattēr labbā'al</i>
v. 14	I will not listen in the time of their trouble	<i>wēlō' 'ešma' ... bē'ēt rā'ātām</i>
v. 17	to make offerings to Baal	<i>lēqattēr labbā'al</i>

Other catchwords in Oracle 2 (vv. 4, 6) and Oracle 3 (v. 8) link up with the poetry (v. 15) and prose (v. 17) comments of Jer 11:14-17 (Lundbom, 1999, p. 620).

vv. 4, 6	do them	<i>wa ʾāšītem</i>
v. 8	to do, but they did not	<i>la ʾāšōw wēlō ʾāsū</i>
v. 15	when she has done	<i>ʾāšōwtāh</i>
v. 17	they did ( <i>for themselves</i> )	<i>ʾāsū lāhem</i>

Another important rhetorical aspect of the judgement oracles of Jer 11:1-17, elucidated by Lundbom (2010, pp. 15-22), is syllogistic reasoning, or enthymeme. Lundbom argues that the oracles in the book of Jeremiah, conveyed a basic understanding of logic and argumentative strategy by arranging selected oracles in clusters of three, with the result that the prophet's preaching moved from a general principle to indictment to judgement. In another way the oracles can be seen to exhibit a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion.

Lundbom (2010, p. 2010) analyses the Covenant Oracle of Jer 11:1-17, subsequent to the Temple Oracle of Jer 7:1-15, and concludes that the structural markers and messenger formulae, already discussed previously, clearly show that Jer 11:1-17 also belongs to the judgement oracles in the book of Jeremiah that employ the rhetorical device of syllogistic reasoning. In Jer 11:1-17 there is a clear movement from a general principle, to a specific violation of the principle, to judgement.

As one can see from the above analysis, Jer 11:1-17 shows aspects of a type of prophetic speech called a judgement oracle. Moreover, this form of judgement oracle – an indictment followed by a sentence of judgement – seems to have its origin in the law courts of ancient Israel (Petersen, 2002, p. 29). The rhetoric of judgement is clearly quite strong in Jer 11:1-17. What was the purpose of this strong judgement rhetoric?

Brueggemann (2007, p. 77) states that “by the end of the seventh century BCE, the covenantal–Deuteronomistic–prophetic tradition had concluded that Jerusalem was in serious breach of its covenant with YHWH”, negatively influencing the survival of the urban elites. The possible demise of Jerusalem was furthermore “grounded in YHWH's wrathful assault on a covenant partner who had defaulted on the relationship”. Therefore, it was Jeremiah's divinely ordained task, to “pluck up and break down, to destroy and to overthrow” (Jer 1:10; and also Jer 11:1-8).

Brueggemann (2007, pp. 77-78) sums up the rhetoric of judgement contained in Jer 11:1-17 by stating:

The intention of this rhetoric of judgment is to exhibit the failure, dismantling, and demise of the Jerusalem establishment and to employ rhetoric that is artistic and

powerful enough that the listener can, in the very hearing, experience the failure and soon to come dismantling and demise of the beloved city. The rhetoric is a vehicle whereby the fierce sovereignty of YHWH, in the face of challenge, is vigorously reasserted over a recalcitrant covenant partner (Brueggemann, 2007, pp. 77-78).

The intention of this rhetoric of judgment, furthermore, is to state that YHWH does have power to influence the situation of covenantal breach by the establishment, and that he is going to act on this power (Brueggemann, 2007, p. 79). One cannot be sure of the effect that this rhetoric of judgment had on the audience, but if one uses the reaction of the temple establishment to Jeremiah's temple sermon (Jer 7:1-8:3) as an example, it could not have been pleasant!

But at whom was this judgement oracle of Jer 11:1-17 directed? Here, this study runs into some difficulties. There are some differences of opinion as to whom the oracle of judgement of Jer 11:1-7 was directed at. The audience could have been a late monarchical audience (Leuchter, 2006, p. 159; Holladay, 1986, p. 351), or it could have been an exilic audience (Nicholson, 1970; Carroll, 1981, p. 96), or even a post-exilic audience has been suggested (McKane, 2014). The text itself does not say more than the fact that the judgement oracle of Jer 11:1-17 has an Israelite covenantal audience in mind. However, in conversation with other texts in Jeremiah, one can perhaps make an informed decision on the audience of Jer 11:1-17, keeping in mind Jeremiah's long history of redaction (McKane, 2014, p. lxxxiii; Clements, 1988, p. 130) and the abstraction of the text, (O'Connor, 2012, p. 99), that can make the text relevant for any covenantal audience.

### **iii. Covenant in Jer 7:1-17 and Covenant in the Hebrew Bible**

#### **1. Conversations with Deuteronomy**

Holladay (1986, p. 351) remarks that both Jer 7:1-8:3 and Jer 11:1-17 have been considered as prime examples of Deuteronomistic diction. Jer 7:1-8:3 has been characterised as the temple sermon of Jeremiah which led to his arrest for heresy and blasphemy, although Nicholson (1970, p. 68) remarks that only Jer 7:1-15 can probably be related to that sermon. In Holladay's comparison of these two texts, he finds important differences: (1) In Jer 7:1-8:3 one finds irony and several striking syntactical constructions, while in Jer 11:1-17 the diction is more conventional. (2) In Jer 7:1-8:3 there is also an appeal to change (vv. 3, 5-6), while in Jer 11:1-17 the appeal to change is indirect (vv. 3, 4, 6-7) (Holladay, 1986, p. 351). Holladay (1986, p.

351) makes an important point when he says that it would seem that the time for irony (Jer 7) is now past and that traditional covenantal forms (Jer 11) are what the present situation demands.

There are also similarities between Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 7:1-8:3. Jeremiah 11:1-17 bears the marks of a prose sermon characterised by stereotyped phraseology (e.g., Jer 7:1-8:3). Some of these phrases are remarkably similar, so that Jer 11:1-17 underscores the message of Jer 7:1-8:3 concerning Judah's failure to honour the covenant obligations of the Torah by adopting pagan religion (Allen, 2012, p. 136). It is obvious that Jer 11:10-17 also has inappropriate cultic activity in its sights, similar to Jer 7:6; 9; 18; 30-31 that speak out against cultic activities directed at other gods.

<b>Jer 11:1-14</b>		<b>Jer 7:1-13</b>	
v. 1	The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD	v. 1	The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD
v. 4	which I commanded your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt	v. 22	For in the day that I brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt
v. 7	For I solemnly warned your ancestors when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt	v. 24	From the day that your ancestors came out of the land of Egypt
v. 4	Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God	v. 23	Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people
v. 8	Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of an evil will	v. 26	yet they did not listen to me, or pay attention, but they stiffened their necks

Nicholson (1970, p. 33) sees striking similarities between the prose sermons of the book of Jeremiah and the literary features of the Deuteronomistic literature. In the Deuteronomistic literature, Nicholson sees certain structures, matching the suzerain-vassal treaties already discussed.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Historical retrospect and/or hortatory prologue</b>	<b>YHWH's command; Call to obedience; warning against apostasy or description of apostasy already committed</b>	<b>Blessings and curses</b>
Deut 6	1	2-3	4-14, 16-17	15, 18-19
Deut 7		1-2a	2b-8	9-11, 12-15
Deut 8	1	2-10	11-17	18-20
Josh 1	1-2	3-5	6-8a	8b-9
Josh 23	1-2	3-5	6-11	12-16
Judg 2	10a	10b	11-13	14-15
2 Kgs 17	13aα	(7, 8)	13aβ-17(7-12)	18-20

Nicholson (1970, p. 34) sees these same structures repeated in the prose sermons of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 7; 11; 17; 25; 34; and 35), of which only Jer 7:1-8:3 and Jer 11 will be highlighted by means of example.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>YHWH's command; call to obedience</b>	<b>Description of Israel's apostasy and disobedience</b>	<b>Judgement announced</b>
7	1-2	3-7	8-12	13-15
	1-2	3-7	16-19	20
	21-22	23	24-28	29
	21-22	23	30-31	32-8:3
11	1-2	3-7	8-10	11-17

Although Jer 11:1-17 does not expressly qualify the sins of Judah (social abuses), except apostasy in Jer 11:10-17, Jeremiah 7, is more forthright, and the social disobedience of Judah is qualified throughout the chapter. Social issues that are raised concern the oppressing of the “alien, the orphan, the widow”, as well as the “shedding of innocent blood” (Jer 7:6); and includes stealing, murder, the committing of adultery, and making false oaths (Jer 7:9). In Jer 7:11, the temple is said to have become a “den of robbers” with the implied permission and oversight of the temple authorities.

Allen (2012, pp. 94-97) sees the temple in Jerusalem as the setting of Jer 7:1-8:3. Jeremiah delivers this judgment oracle to the Judeans, living in Judah. He makes an important point when he emphasises that land, temple, and people function as a vital triangle, and the type of people the Judeans should be, is the focus with which the oracle begins. The basic connection between temple and land for the people in the Hebrew Bible was that their privilege of worshiping in the temple carried with it the further privilege of living in YHWH's land.

Allen (2012, pp. 94-97) therefore sees the social situation of the people's lifestyle as the criterion for "living in the land" and in Jer 7:11 as the criterion for temple worship. Moreover, the "land- temple-people triangle" is of such importance that, if minimised, it has the potential of rescinding both the temple and the land privilege. Allen (2012, pp. 94-97) further sees Jer 7:6 as an explicit conditional statement that defines "good" behaviour (Jer 7:3), sketching the sins to be avoided. Failure to avoid such sins will lead to "bad" consequences.

In Jer 7:9, 11, the oracle moves to a direct accusation. Jer 7:9 points to the false religious peace that can be experienced, replacing the sincere acknowledgment of a moral deity with nominal worship. In this text, the offences mentioned, focus especially on religious misdemeanours that are specifically connected to the temple. Jer 7:9 is reminiscent of the formal summary found in the Decalogue (Exod 20:1-17; Deut 5:1-21). The novelty of pagan worship invokes Deut 11:28; 13:2, 13:3, 14. The claim to be "saved" invokes Zion theology, whereby YHWH's protection of Israel is unconditional, protecting both Jerusalem and the land. The accusatory section of the oracle is furthermore capped in Jer 7:11a by the comparison of a hideout for "criminals" (cf. 1 Sam 22:1-2; 24:3; 27:8-9) (Allen, 2012, pp. 94-97).

Stulman (2005, p. 86) makes some structural remarks concerning Jeremiah 7-10. Firstly, comparable to the other important demarcations in Jeremiah 1-25, Jeremiah 7-10 starts off with a prose sermon (Jer 7:1-15) enveloping the claim that the temple in Jerusalem, the traditional safe haven for Judeans from trouble and violence, will be incapable to save Judah from forthcoming calamity. Secondly, Jeremiah 7-10 shapes the poetry introducing the oracles of Jeremiah 7-10 (Jeremiah 2-6). Thirdly, Jer 7:1-15 introduces a direction of oracles that will expose and undo, according to Stulman (2005, p. 86) "Judah's long-standing belief systems, institutions, pivotal values, and power structures". Judah's foundational beliefs, including covenant, will be prophetically decimated after the oracles of Jeremiah 7-10, and therefore it is understandable that Jeremiah's oracles start with a critical look at the focal point of Judah's life, the temple in Jerusalem. Jeremiah 7-10, in total, censures cultic infidelity, putting forward its serious consequences, and expresses the anguish of YHWH, Jeremiah, and the people of what fate awaits the nation (Stulman, 2005, p. 86). In Jer 7:1-15 the central principle of the Decalogue, namely "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might," is not adhered to, and YHWH, as an untamed and dangerous reality, will not let Judah get away with abuses of worship and social violence. Consequently, Stulmann (2005, pp. 90-91) reiterates, the prose functions as a form of theodicy, spelling out the reasons for the "dismantling of Judah's social system and hierarchical power arrangements

– especially those associated with the temple”. The temple, therefore, does not provide unqualified protection. Stulman (2005, pp. 90-91) furthermore states that “liturgy and ethics are inseparable” in the book of Jeremiah, and “spirituality divorced from right conduct is a dangerous distortion (*šeqer*)” of the practise of faith. Therefore, “worship without compassion does represent an obscene caricature of true Yahwism” (Stulman, 2005, pp. 90-91).

What is important in investigating the conversation between Jer 11:1-17 and Jer 7:1-8:3, is that a probable audience for Jer 11:1-17 can conceivably be inferred from this conversation. Other audiences are probable, but for now it can be assumed that a priestly audience is one of the intended audiences of Jer 11:1-17. The other important aspect of this conversation, is that it connects the disobedience of the apostasy of Jer 11:8-10 with the structural violence of the Jerusalem temple, where Jer 7:8-12 sees apostasy as one of the sins of Judah, but includes, with apostasy, certain social crimes such as stealing, murder, adultery, and making false oaths. Jer 7:11, especially, points to the temple becoming a “den of robbers.” These are all examples of direct violence. If the temple authorities used their understanding of covenant to legitimise, or even allow, these examples of direct violence, then it can be argued that structural violence also manifested at the Jerusalem temple.

It is already clear that a Deuteronomistic influence can be inferred in Jer 11:1-17. This study now moves to a closer investigation of the Deuteronomistic influence of Jer 11:1-17. It can be asked if this investigation can give a clearer answer to the specific ideologically charged historical world of Jer 11:1-17? This specific “ideologically charged historical world, also reproduced a particular ideology with an internal logic of its own” (Yee, 1995, pp. 151-152). It is already clear that the covenant mentioned in Jer 11:1-17 is the Mosaic covenant. The Deuteronomy covenant also has a more pronounced focus on the obligations of the covenant, therefore implying a strong social justice thrust. Can this aspect be helpful in finding the socio-political audiences of Jer 11:1-17? Can the social justice thrust of covenant also be helpful in finding the covenantal ideology inherent in the Deuteronomy covenant, and thereby in finding the covenantal ideology of the Deuteronomist?

## **2. The Deuteronomistic Influence**

Carroll (2006, p. 267) notes that the repetitiveness of the phrases used throughout Jer 11:1-17 reveals the mark of the Deuteronomist. According to Stulman (2005, p. 120) the prose sermon of Jer 11:1-17 expresses the language, style, and theology of Deuteronomy. Like Deuteronomy,

the language of Jer 11:1-17 is prolix, repetitive, sermonic and rhetorical. A number of words and phrases in the text are virtually identical to those found in Deuteronomy.

<b>Jer 11:1-17</b>		<b>Deuteronomy</b>	
v. 3	You shall say to them, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Cursed be anyone who does not heed the words of this covenant	27:26	Cursed be anyone who does not uphold the words of this law by observing them.
v. 4	which I commanded your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron-smelter, saying, listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God	4:20	But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron-smelter, out of Egypt, to become a people of his very own possession, as you are now.
v. 5	that I may perform the oath that I swore to your ancestors, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day. Then I answered, "So be it, LORD."	7:8 8:18 9:5	It was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath that he swore to your ancestors.... ...so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today. ...in order to fulfil the promise that the LORD made on oath to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.
v. 7	For I solemnly warned your ancestors when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice.	4:30 8:20	In your distress, when all these things have happened to you in time to come, you will return to the LORD your God and heed him. Like the nations that the LORD is destroying before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.
v. 8	Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of an evil will. So I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not.	29:1 29:9	These are the words of the covenant.... Therefore, diligently observe the words of this covenant, in order that you may succeed in everything that you do.
v. 10	They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors of old, who refused to heed my words; they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of	8:19 11:28	If you do forget the LORD your God and follow other gods to serve and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD

	Judah have broken the covenant that I made with their ancestors.		your God, but turn from the way that I am commanding you today, to follow other gods that you have not known.
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(Stulman, 2005, p. 120).<sup>33</sup>

Stulman (2005, p. 121) also remarks that the prose sermon of Jer 11:1-17 reflects a Deuteronomistic theology in which YHWH promises to bless adherence to his covenantal obligations and threatens to punish neglect of his covenantal obligations (Deut 28). Therefore, happiness and wealth will follow if Israel adhere to YHWH's covenantal obligations, but if Israel does not adhere, calamity and judgement will follow. Stulman (2005, p. 121) agrees with Nicolson in that Jer 11:1-17 shows structural similarities to speeches in the Deuteronomistic corpus (e.g., Deut 6, 8; 2 Kgs 17:7-18): it comprises of an introduction (Jer 11:1-2), the commandments of YHWH is put in the imperative (Jer 11:3-6), disobedience is mentioned (Jer 11:7-10), and YHWH's judgement follows (Jer 11:11-17). Another important point that Stulman (2005, p. 121) makes concerns the "re-performance of covenant". Jer 11:1-17 "re-performs" the obligations of the covenant in a "new setting for a new generation", just as Deuteronomy "re-performs" the Sinai covenant to meet acute concerns of successive communities. Stulman (2005, p. 121) makes an important point when he states that "covenant is not a souvenir from a museum, but a living word that makes fresh demands on the people of YHWH". Jeremiah acknowledges himself the imperative worth of the covenant when he replies, "So be it, LORD" (Jer 11:5) (Stulman, 2005, p. 121).

Brueggemann (2007, p. 20) states that the "book of Deuteronomy constitutes the decisive and most powerful antecedent to Jeremiah, providing the interpretive milieu in which the book of Jeremiah emerged". The book of Deuteronomy, therefore, "brings to precise and powerful expression the claims of covenant that are inchoate in the Sinai covenant". Brueggemann (2007, p. 20) further remarks that it is "widely thought that the tradition of the book of Deuteronomy emerged in the seventh-eighth centuries BCE as a powerful re-articulation of covenant traditions focussed on the Torah that had been largely eclipsed in the royal ideology of Jerusalem". The importance of this tradition will be discussed later in this chapter.

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<sup>33</sup> Stulman (1986, pp. 66-67) argues that the characteristic Deuteronomistic features in Jer 11:1-17 are proportionally larger than any other in the book. Linguistic indices are dispersed relatively evenly throughout the text, but are more densely grouped in vv. 7f. More than 70 percent of these indices appear at least once in Deuteronomy. Several long phrases of Deuteronomy occur in this text almost verbatim (Stulman, 1986, pp. 66-67).

At the end of the ideological-literary analysis of Jer 11:1-17, this study has identified a number of conclusions with which to approach the ideological-contextual analysis of the text. It is clear that the covenantal rhetoric of Jer 11:1-17 is a judgement oracle that aims to pass divine judgement on the royal covenantal ideology practised by the establishment in Jerusalem. Although this ideology of YHWH's unconditional protection in perpetuity, had its advantages at the time of Nathan's prophesy and David's young monarchy, it soon ran into covenantal trouble when the challenges of the state, the demands of the monarchy, and the cultic regulations of the temple, made this royal covenantal ideology a clear and present challenge to the covenantal demands of social justice, inherently part of the covenant at Sinai. Jer 11:1-17 speaks of the breaking of the covenant, whereas Jer 7:1-8:3 focusses more on who was responsible for this breaking of the covenant, but both texts contributed to the choice of the temple authorities and the temple institution as an example of structural violence. The Deuteronomist was a vocal critic of the royal ideology of Jerusalem, but whereas one would think that this prophetic critique would have been slanted more towards the issue of social justice, it was the apostasy of the nation that was the determinative in the prophetic critique. The centralisation of the cult became a project whereby this group could control the syncretistic necessities of the people and the political aspirations of the king, but this could have become in itself a form of structural violence.

The next section will further explore the role and place of the temple in late-monarchical Judean society.

## **b. Ideological-Contextual Analyses**

### **i. The Cult in Jerusalem**

In the next part of this chapter, the temple in Jerusalem will be investigated as a possible example of an institution that demonstrated aspects of structural violence. According to Galtung (1975, p. 111), violence presents itself whenever "human beings are influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations" (Galtung, 1975, p. 111). Violence then is the "cause of the difference between the actual (what is) and the potential (what could have been)" (Galtung, 1975, p. 111). The potential level of realisation is that "which is possible with a given level of insight and resources". When these "insights and resources are monopolised by a group or class or are used for other purposes, then the

actual level falls below the potential level, and violence is present in the system” (Galtung, 1975, p. 111).

The question needs to be asked: Did the temple in Jerusalem, as a major political, economic and social structure in the Judean society in the time of the prophet Jeremiah, cause ordinary Judeans to live lives where their actual lives were much lower than their potential lives? This can be difficult to ascertain. But what can be investigated, are the incidences of inequality in the temple system, especially in the distribution of power. Galtung (1975, p. 121) identifies “six factors that serve to maintain in-egalitarian distributions, and consequently can be mechanisms of structural violence”:

(1) linear ranking orders; (2) a-cyclical interaction patterns; (3) correlations between rank and centrality; (4) congruencies between the systems; (5) concordances between the ranks; and (6) high rank couplings between levels.

These factors can be considered investigated in the temple system as depicted in the book of Jeremiah. Galtung’s expanded typology of structural violence can also be investigated in conjunction with these six factors.

Furthermore, Galtung’s typology of structural violence can be used in conjunction with an ideological-contextual analysis (Yee, 1995, pp. 150-152) that ask some important questions: Firstly, where were the sites of power located in the structures of the temple, and what kind of power did they exhibit? Secondly, how did these groups break down according to class, race, gender, ethnicity, region, religion, and occupation? Thirdly, what control did they exert over the means of production? Therefore, what were the “conflicts, struggles, and contradictions” that permeated these various social groups? Fourthly, did these groups produce any ideologies? Which one was dominant? Fifthly, on whose behalf did these ideologies speak? Whose voices, what groups, did they exclude or distort? Sixthly, what was the “social location” inhabited by the author of the text? Finally, what ideology did this author adhere to in relation to the dominant ideology?

Following an investigation in the structural violence of the temple system in Jerusalem, one can also deduce the effects of this structural violence on ordinary Judeans. A further number of questions then need to be asked: How then did the structural violence inherent in the temple system effect the “survival needs; the well-being needs; the identity needs; and the freedom needs” of ordinary Judeans? At this point the relation between structural violence and direct violence can be brought in conversation to further strengthen the argument that structural violence and direct violence were indeed part and parcel of the temple system in Jerusalem.

Cultural violence can then be inferred by showing how these forms of violence relate to each other in the violence triangle and also in the violent strata image.

Albertz (1992, pp. 128-129) remarks that the establishment of the Davidic monarchy constitutes an “important turning point in the history of the main cult”. In conjunction with the simple local sanctuaries, supported by the population of a locality or region, there now emerged a new type of royal sanctuary, which permanently changed the organisation, institutionalisation, equipment and function of the main Israelite cult. These royal sanctuaries were splendid constructions, first in Jerusalem and then in Bethel. In Amos 7:13 the royal sanctuary in Bethel, in other words, the private chapel of the king, is called the “house of the kingdom” (*bet mamlākā*) and “sanctuary of the king” (*miqdaš hammelek*). Therefore, these sanctuaries were both private and public, in that it was still expected that the whole kingdom was to find its cultic centre in these royal sanctuaries. The centralisation of political authority soon resulted in the centralisation of the main Israelite cult and also in the close institutional fusion of political power and the cult. Therefore, Albertz (1992, p. 128) argues that the main cult at the central sanctuary was to a large degree a matter of state. This state support of the main cult was also mutually advantageous, in that the economic boom which Israel experienced through the monarchy, made possible the equipping of the main cult with large liturgical festivals that could compare with state splendour. A cult of this magnitude presupposes financing and organising by a system of state taxation and distribution and by planned cattle-breeding on the royal domains, which could only be made possible by a considerable surplus production in the economy (Albertz, 1992, p. 128).

Douglas Knight (2011, p. 227) denotes the importance of understanding systems of laws, especially systems of laws that existed during the time the Davidic monarchy. During the monarchy, the government and other institutions (priesthood, military, construction, commerce) were centralised, political sovereignty or vassalage (Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian) indicated some measure of self-determination, social and economic inequality was evident, habitation was spread throughout rural and urban contexts, and the country experienced some degree of geo-political importance. All such characteristics fostered the development of laws and customs in the diverse contexts where power and special interests converged. The domain of religion is one such context (Knight, 2011, p. 227). He then proceeds to describe the domestic and regional cults, but for this study, the focus will be on the state cult in Jerusalem. The headquarters of the state cult were in Samaria and Jerusalem respectively, where impressive and lavishly appointed cultic sites could function as political and ideological

symbols for the whole country. The state cult legitimised the royal house and the kingdom by serving as the earthly dwelling of the national deity (Knight, 2011, p. 228).

The temple in Jerusalem was where the central priesthood and related functionaries were located. This was the established religion, sanctioned by the kings, visited by the elite, and supported by taxes and income from its own commercial dealings. The priests serving the cult were dependent on how much they were needed. They had to celebrate high festival days, relay divine blessings on the royal house, respond with divine oracles when approached by individuals, appoint the temple with treasures, and maintain a conspicuous place for religion in as many affairs of the kingdom and society as possible. A hierarchical order gave structure to the central priesthood, with a chief priest at the head and other priests situated according to roles, seniority, and abilities. The biblical texts also mention a plethora of other cultic functionaries that were common during the successful times of the First Temple: Levites, prophets, temple singers, servants, gatekeepers, scribes, and more. Especially vital were the personnel needed to manage the estates, herds, and other commercial interests of the temple (Knight, 2011, p. 231).

Also important in understanding the structural violence inherent in the cult in Jerusalem is that, according to the model of the agrarian society, the high priest belonged to the governing elite of the nation, while most of the other temple functionaries fit in the privileged but dependent class, those who served the interests of the elite while remaining in positions only tenuously separated from the common people (Knight, 2011, p. 231).<sup>34</sup>

Knight (2011, p. 233) lastly states that, because religious practices were diffused and varied throughout the country, it is difficult to ascertain the religiosity of ordinary Judeans. Their cult was important because their practices, rituals, cultic sites, religious objects, leadership structures, and regulations emerged over time and formed the venerated heritage that provided them with the means for expression and performance. Knight (2011, p. 233) is sure of one thing: political and economic interests played a significant role in the cultic life in

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<sup>34</sup> Knight (2011, p. 231) points to the scholarly discussion concerning the actual presence and roles of a high priest in Israel's history. Most scholars envision a difference between the Iron II and the Persian periods: during the former, the king was superior to the high priest, while during the latter, when the monarchy had disappeared, the high priest assumed both cultic and civil leadership roles. According to Knight, such a division, however, is questionable. It is more likely that other emerging elites, sanctioned by the Persian powers, controlled the civil affairs of the country while the high priest's standing remained primarily in the cult, including the Second Temple's economic interests (Knight, 2011, p. 231).

ancient Israel. The state cult in Jerusalem helped to legitimise the kings by proclaiming divine favour for the royal house and participating in kings' acts of going to war, building cities, erecting monuments, and other actions of significance for the country. A king could also access the cult and participate in key rituals. In turn, the high priests in service at the temple in Jerusalem presumably frequented the royal court as well, serving as advisers or consultants in matters of state. The traditions regulating these roles were, to be sure, developed and transmitted by the same persons who benefited most from them (Knight, 2011, p. 233).

Regarding the economic situation of the Jerusalem cult, Marty Stevens (2006, pp. 171-172) remarks that the Jerusalem temple functioned as an economic institution in ancient Israel/Judah in ways similar to other ANE temples, specifically Mesopotamian temples in the seventh to fifth centuries BCE. In its role as collector, user, and disburser of goods and financial services, the Jerusalem temple functioned as a financial intermediary. The Jerusalem temple did demonstrate an economic dimension to temple operations. The Jerusalem temple was also a collection site for tithes and taxes, and stored commodities and precious metals for use in the internal temple economy in the cultic rituals associated with the "house of YHWH" and in the housing, feeding, and clothing of the "household of YHWH", the temple personnel. Stevens also mentions that the Jerusalem temple assumed fiduciary responsibility for deposits, engaged in regional trade, made loans of surpluses, and was concerned for the welfare of the needy in ways similar to Mesopotamian temples (Stevens, 2006, pp. 171-172).

From the abovementioned discussion, one can already answer some the questions with which this part of the chapter started. Clearly in a hierarchical system such as the cult, the sites of power were located with the high priest and his immediate subordinates, and one can be sure that they exhibited power close to the power of the monarchy, if not explicit, then in influence. Although there was a plethora of cultic personnel, one can be sure that there was a certain degree of homogeneity in ethnicity. This homogeneity probably did not stop them from having widely held political and religious beliefs, that compared well with the heterogeneity of beliefs manifesting in the nation at the time. Economically, the cult was an important player. It can be deduced that the Davidic ideology and the Sinai ideology were the dominant ideologies in the cult. The royal ideology was probably the preferred ideology, for survival reasons, but as one can see from the Deuteronomistic influence, it was not the only ideology and especially not the only prophetic ideology.

The abovementioned discussion is not exhaustive but does give a broad view of the cult in Jerusalem, focussing on the important aspect of the hierarchy of the cult in conjunction with the close co-operation between cult and state. But can it be said that structural violence was part and parcel of the Jerusalem temple?

## **ii. The Structural Violence of the Cult in Jerusalem**

Chapter 2 of this study showed how Galtung frames his discussion of the dimensions of violence with the notion of influence. A complete influence relation presupposes an influencer, the person who is influenced, and a mode of influencing (Galtung, 1975, p. 111). Some of these dimensions will be important in our discussion of the structural violence of the temple. Firstly, the Jerusalem cult can be seen as a major influencer in the time of the monarchy. With the first dimension (the second in Galtung's framework) (Galtung, 1975, pp. 112-113), it is difficult to ascertain if the temple, as an influencer, had a negative or a positive influence on the cultic audience, although a positive influence seems logical. In terms of the second dimension, it is also difficult, but not impossible, to ascertain if members of the cultic audience were hurt by violent action, although the discussion on cult centralisation can support this. According to Galtung's (1975, p. 113) third dimension of violence, the question arises whether the subject of the violence committed, was not a person. Here the distinction between direct violence and structural violence becomes clear. With direct violence and structural violence "individuals may be killed, mutilated, or hurt in both senses of the words". In terms of direct violence, "these consequences can be traced back to concrete persons or actors". In terms of structural violence, there is no person meting out the violence. The violence is "built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances". Galtung (1975, p. 114) elucidates further in Chapter 2 on structural violence demonstrating that structural violence exists when "resources are unevenly distributed, as when income distributions are heavily skewed". The pinnacle of structural violence is when "the power to decide over the distribution of resources is unevenly distributed".

In Chapter 2 of this study, it was further shown how Galtung (1975, p. 114) summarises the difference between structural violence and direct violence by showing that "direct violence with a clear subject-object relation is manifest because it is visible as action". Structural violence, on the other hand, lacks the subject-object relation of direct violence because the violence is built into the structure. The next important two distinctions are between violence

that is “intended or unintended”, and violence that is “manifest or latent”. Latent violence is violence that does not exist but has the “potential” to happen.

One can already make a few connections between the dimensions of violence, and the distinctions between structural and direct violence, to see possible examples of violence committed by the cult in Jerusalem. Kathleen O’Connor (2012, pp. 10-12) presents striking imaginary first-hand accounts of people experiencing the fall of Jerusalem. It would be equally informative to imagine certain Judeans experiencing the structural violence of the cult in Jerusalem. To draw up biblical individual experiences of possible examples of structural and/or direct violence, is difficult. What is possible, is to look at the degree of inequality inherent in the cult in Jerusalem as an indicator of structural violence inherent to the cult in Jerusalem.

In Chapter 2 of this study, Galtung (1975, pp. 119-120) constructs a typology for structural violence. If one follows the point of departure that the “general formula behind structural violence is inequality, especially in the distribution of power”, then structural violence is measurable. Inequality has a “high survival capacity despite changes elsewhere”. If inequality persists, it pays to look for factors, excluding direct violence and the threat of direct violence, that tend to uphold inequality. It is also necessary to understand the science of social structure, and particularly stratification, to understand structural violence. Some ideas of the mechanisms of actor, system, structure, rank and level are therefore fundamental in understanding structural violence.

If one applies the above remarks to what one knows about the cult of Jerusalem, it is possible to identify the following actors: the monarchy and its representatives, and the cult and its representatives. It is also clear that these two actors interacted with each other, organising them in systems. The “set of all such systems of interactions, for a given set of actors, can then be referred to as a structure” (Galtung, 1975, pp. 119-120). The temple-palace complex is perhaps a close description of such a structure. In these interactions, value is somehow exchanged.

Galtung’s (1975, p. 120) six factors regarding what it takes to maintain in-egalitarian distributions, which can consequently be mechanisms of structural violence, that were identified and discussed in Chapter 2, can be used to determine the possible mechanisms of the structural violence of the cult.

In looking at Galtung’s (1975, p. 120) first factor, i.e. linear ranking orders, it is clear that, both in the cult and in the monarchy, the ranking is complete. The high priest and the king

are the highest pair of actors. In terms of the second factor, i.e. a-cyclical interaction patterns, it can be argued that all actors of the cult and the monarchy are connected, but one (right) way of interaction, is in an official capacity. The third factor, i.e. correlation between rank and centrality, is easier to ascertain in that the king and the high priest both ranks highly in their respective systems, and are both central in the interaction network. The fourth factor, i.e. congruencies between the systems, is also possible in the cult, in that the monarchy and the cult have interaction networks that can be seen as structurally similar. With the fifth factor, i.e. concordance between the ranks, one can say that the king, who is high in his own system, also features in a high position in the cult, where he sometimes participates. The sixth factor, i.e. high rank coupling between levels, is also possible in that lower ranking actors in the cult or the monarchy are represented by the highest-ranking actors, namely the king and the high priest.

In Chapter 2 of this study, Galtung (Galtung, 1975, p. 122) proposes that “social systems will have the tendency to develop all six mechanisms unless deliberately and persistently prevented from doing so”. Social systems thus set the “pattern for an aggravation of inequality”. This aggravation can be of such magnitude that “in some structures, the lowest ranking actors are deprived not only relative to the potential, but indeed below subsistence minimum”. The lowest ranking actors are prevented for organising by the structures, because they are “atomised and disintegrated” and partly because they are overwhelmed by all the authority presented by the highest-ranking actors.

From the above discussion, it can be argued that the cult in Jerusalem was an institution in which structural violence was part and parcel of the way the cult operated. The ideological-literary analysis makes it clear that Jeremiah had a lot to say concerning the cult in Jerusalem. The question then needs to be asked if there was more widespread criticism of the cult in Jerusalem?

### **iii. Prophetic Critique**

Albertz (1992, p. 171) remarks that the prophets were prolific in their accusations against the cult in Jerusalem. They attacked individual abuses such as dereliction of duty by cultic personnel or debauchery on the part of those taking part in worship. However, the prophets did not stop at this individual criticism. Amos, Micah and Isaiah rejected the cultic practices of their time that aimed to cover up the societal injustices practised around them, therefore

critiquing cultic practises and societal injustices. Amos rejected the worship practices of the urban elite who displayed their ill-gotten riches, speaking out against worship in which the upper classes put their plundered riches on show and sought to achieve religious security (Amos 2:8f.; cf. Jer:7.9). According to the prophets, everyday worship without justice and solidarity with the weak (Isa 1:16f.; Amos 5:24), is nothing else than *peša'*, rebellion against YHWH (Amos 4:4f.). Religious songs and sacrifices need to be replaced by justice and righteousness in the name of YHWH (Amos 1:17) and solidarity with the poor (Isa.1:17). It is important to note that these accusations did not try to negate the cultic worship of YHWH, as has been stated, but did try to correlate cultic worship with the social justice YHWH demands of everyday life (Albertz, 1992, p. 171).

Albertz (1992, p. 171) also notes that the cultic critique of Amos and Micah even demanded the destruction of the national sanctuaries of Bethel and Jerusalem, centres which, according to them, housed a “godless cult,” (Amos 3:14; 9:1-4; Mic 3:12; cf. Jer 7:12, 14). Micah explicitly points to the foci of the Jerusalem temple theology namely that safety from any calamity lies in the presence of YHWH in the temple (Mic 3:11; cf. Jer 7:4). In terms of the structural violence discussed above, the cult of Jerusalem provided the urban elite with a “certainty of salvation”, resulting in an insensitivity to the injustice they caused. According to the prophets, YHWH’s connection to (social) justice and YHWH’s “partisan support for those without rights”, trumped YHWH’s connection to YHWH’s own cult (Albertz, 1992, p. 171).

Albertz (1992, pp. 175-176) lastly makes an important point when he states that the cult in Jerusalem before the fall of Israel, was largely unreflecting and uncritical of cultic syncretism. Hosea, in the face of the threat of a loss of national identity, insisted on the difference between the YHWH cult and other religions by making a theological assessment and condemnation of it in the light of the specific historical origins of the YHWH religion. This critique and condemnation of cultic syncretism ushered in a development which subjected the cult that had arisen over the centuries to a fundamental theological revision and excluded many institutions and practices. This development began with Hezekiah’s reform and found its first climax in the Deuteronomistic reform of the cult (Albertz, 1992, pp. 176-177).

The Deuteronomistic reform of the cult brings one to the important process whereby attempts were made to centralise the cult in Jerusalem, first by Hezekiah and then by Josiah.

#### iv. Centralisation of the Cult

Nelson (2014, pp. 157-159) notes that cult centralisation grew out of an intersection of nationalistic politics, economic dynamics, an ambition to concentrate royal power, and a reduction in the size of Judah. The roots of Josiah's centralisation policy can likely be found in the crisis of Hezekiah's rebellion in 701 BCE. To meet the Assyrian threat, Hezekiah required more concentrated political and economic structures than had previously operated in Judah. The following the debacle of the Assyrian invasion, Judah's significant loss of territory, and the devastation of most of its second- and third-rank cities, naturally have naturally led to an increase in the economic and religious significance of Jerusalem. At the same time, shrinking royal tax revenues as a result of this loss of territory, increased the apparent advantages of consolidating and controlling the economic engine of sacrifice in the capital city. As political policy, centralisation would have been a strategy for control and supervision favourable to the economic and political interests of the king, the royal court, and priests of the central sanctuary. Consolidating sacrifices at one place was simply a functional parallel to gathering taxes into a central treasury (Nelson, 2014, pp. 157-159).

Nelson (2014, pp. 157-159) further argues that the devastation of Sennacherib's invasion ruined many local sanctuaries, and the loss of Judahite territory to the West may have cut off access to others. As a result, there would have been a natural increase in religious traffic to Jerusalem. Sacrifices formerly taken to other shrines, would be offered there instead. At the same time, a smaller Judah could more easily bear the logistic burdens that centralisation entailed. Centralisation also increased the prestige and governmental supervision of the royal sanctuary at Jerusalem. At a single location, authorities could more easily monitor ritual behaviour and public expressions of potentially disloyal religious opinion (one thinks of Amos and Jeremiah). Judah's kings would have especially wanted to increase the prestige of their own royal shrine over that of its rival Bethel, which continued to be a focal point for sacrifice and devotion even after the end of the kingdom of Israel (2 Kgs 17:27-28) (Nelson, 2014, pp. 157-158).

Nelson also argues that the prestige of Jerusalem must have skyrocketed after the events of 701 BCE, which were seen as evidence of YHWH's election and special protection of the city. It is therefore reasonable to hypothesise that the ideal of centralisation was preserved and transmitted from the time of Hezekiah to that of Josiah by a reform movement that produced the "book of the law" discovered by Josiah's officials (that is, the core of Deuteronomy).

Apparently, a clandestine reform movement took root among the powerful, aristocratic scribal and priestly families of Jerusalem, whose position was threatened by Manasseh's religious and political policies. The existence of this resistance movement, both inside and outside the royal court, is demonstrated by the assassination of Manasseh's son, Amon, by his court officials, and the subsequent installation of the pliable child, Josiah, by the people of the land (Nelson, 2014, pp. 156-158).

It can be said that the boy king Josiah was moulded by the opinions of those who served as his regents. When the time was ripe, he would be ready to co-opt religious opinion for political advantage. Reform and centralisation supported Judah's claim as the authentic heir of Israel's legacy over rival groups in the northern Assyrian provinces of Samaria, Gilead, and Megiddo. Centralisation also provided the social unification and economic strength Josiah would need to profit from the new opportunities presented by increasing Assyrian weakness and the emergence of new configurations of power. Besides this, people still venerated the "god of Dan" and the deities of Samaria and Beer-sheba (Amos 8:14), as well as the "YHWH of Teman" and the "YHWH of Samaria". A single place for sacrifice would counter divisive popular notions of multiple YHWH's associated with individual shrines (Nelson, 2014, pp. 157-159).

In the end, cult centralisation advanced the emerging concept of monotheism advocated by the nascent Deuteronomistic movement by replacing a plurality of shrines with a single central place of authorised sacrifice supervised by approved cultic personnel who were under the control of the royal establishment (note the repetition of the concept "the king commanded the priest"; 1 Kgs 16:15-16; 2 Kgs 22:12; 23:4) (Nelson, 2014, pp. 157-159).

Thompson (1980, pp. 20-21) states that the reform of Josiah was extensive and significant. Also contributing to the reform could have been a prevailing world disquiet and a sense of imminent calamity. In this period of unrest, the canonical prophets Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk came to the fore. The reform of Josiah gave a glimpse of the change that is possible, therefore both Zephaniah and Jeremiah favoured the program of reform, although Jeremiah later concluded that it was all too brief and cursory. Thompson (1980, pp. 20-21) argues that it is possible that most Judeans never had a "change of heart". Jeremiah's later preaching confirm that many Judeans never had a "change of heart", and as soon as Josiah took his leave, the old ways were reintroduced under Jehoiakim. Thompson (1980, p. 22) notes that a government cannot regulate how people feel or think and he

furthermore states that the unemployment of the rural priest resulting from the closing of the rural sanctuaries and the spiritual deprivation of the people caused by the negation of local forms of cultic worship, far exceeded the “hopeful” increase in national righteousness and virtue. While the temple in Jerusalem did increase in importance, the cultic practises and observances hid away flagrant abuses of covenant law (Jer 7:1-15, cf. vv. 21-31) (Thompson, 1980, pp. 20-21).

Thompson (1980, p. 22) alludes to the possibility that Jeremiah saw through the whole hypocrisy of outward compliance without inward correction and he therefore became disappointed. The surge in cultic life (Jer 6:16-21) also went hand in hand with Judah’s deep-seated dissent (Jer 7:1-5; 8:4-9). The nation also became complacent as a result of their newfound independence and the preservation against all odds by YHWH of the monarchical state and temple. While Josiah’s untimely death shook the nation, it did not lead to the changing of their ways (Thompson, 1980, p. 22).

Finkelstein and Silberman (2006, p. 279) offer a concise background to these reforms that can also be helpful. The great social and economic transformations of Judean society have already been discussed. But what was the intellectual thrust behind these reforms? These new challenges created the opportunity for the Davidic royal house to “remake” the nation. This meant that North and South had to be united into one unified Israelite society. The process of the “remaking” of the nation, and the process of strengthening the “authority and prestige” of the Davidic royal house, was centred on the conceptual ideological importance of “temple” and “dynasty”. The king, with his royal and cultic functionaries, centralised the cult in the Jerusalem temple, eliminating the rural shrines, resulting in the weakening of the “legitimacy and religious authority of the rural aristocracy”. These projects were combined with a court-sponsored narrative pertaining to the early “history” of the Davidic royal house. This narrative combined formerly contradictory northern and southern traditions into a “single narrative” pertaining to a United Monarchy of Israel (Finkelstein & Silberman, 2006, p. 279).

The background, reasons and effects of the cult centralisation have been outlined above. But what happened in the process of cult centralisation? Did the process of cult centralisation influence ordinary Judeans to such a degree that “their actual somatic and mental realisations fell below their potential realisations”? Violence can then be inferred from the difference between the actual (what is) and the potential realisations (what could have been) of these ordinary Judeans. If their potential level of realisation could be made possible with a certain

level of insight and resources, did it happen? Or were these insights and resources monopolised by a group or class and used for other purposes, causing the actual level to fall below the potential level, resulting in violence in the system. This definition of violence is helpful in looking at the centralisation of the cult as just such a process: where the cult in Jerusalem monopolised the insights and resources of the cultic life of Israel, thereby causing the actual levels of cultic personnel throughout Judah to fall below their potential level. The process of cult centralisation was already a violent process. Obviously, with the monopolising of resources, the structural violence of the temple only became more intense and entrenched. But what about direct violence committed in the process of cult centralisation?

Robert Carroll (1981, pp. 97-98) describes the centralisation of the cult using the purported “historical accurate” narrative in 2 Kgs 22-23 (cf. 2 Chron 34-35): While Josiah was in the process of renovating the temple in Jerusalem, a law book was found wherein the “word of YHWH” warns the nation that judgement will befall them if they do not obey what the law book requires of them. Josiah reacted by making a covenant before YHWH with the nation, before commencing with the destruction of all the non-Yahwist cultic centres and sanctuaries in Judaea and Jerusalem. This destruction involved countrywide blood shedding and ransacking. Priests and their followers were slaughtered while their shrines and temples were defiled (Carroll, 1981, pp. 97-98).

It was through this ideological project of the Judean state that structural violence caused direct violence. In discussing the direct violence accompanying these reforms, one has to look at two forms of direct violence. The first form is direct violence focussing on the anatomy. In Chapter 2 of this study, Galtung’s (1975, pp. 118-119) views were introduced that direct violence can be analysed more easily, because an “instrumental approach to the problem of violence” can be followed, according to the subject-task-object relation. The task is well-specified, i.e. “doing bodily harm unto others”, and there are persons-subjects to do it. In the 2 Kgs 22-23 version of Josiah’s reform, he “slaughtered on the altars all the priests of the high places who were there and burned human bones on them”. Indeed, some of Galtung’s (1975, p. 119) examples of direct somatic violence are present: Crushing, tearing and piercing could all have been part of Josiah’s murderous activities. The second form of violence focusses on the physiology. This form of direct violence is the process which prevents the body from functioning by “denial of input (sources of energy, air, water, and food in the case of the body), and denial of output (movement)”. The human output can be somatic, recorded on the outside as movement (with standing still as a limiting case), or mental, not recorded directly from the

outside” (Galtung, 1975, p. 119). The 2 Kgs 22-23 version of Josiah’s reform also relates of high places being destroyed, therefore negating the employment of domestic and regional cultic personnel, influencing their physiological functioning.

In Chapter 2 of this study (Galtung, 1990, p. 292), the four classes of basic needs were underscored:

(1) survival needs (life, survival, security, absence of violence); (2) well-being needs (food, water, clothes, shelter, health, education, togetherness, growth, well-being); (3) identity needs (politics, participation, human rights, social justice); and (4) freedom needs (work, creativity, freedom, mobility).

It can be argued that the reforms of Josiah also influenced these specific needs of domestic and regional cultic personnel.<sup>35</sup>

This study looked at the functioning of the cult in Jerusalem during the time of Jeremiah. The cult in Jerusalem can be considered an example of structural violence. Although the prophets accused the cult of social abuses, and therefore of trying to mitigate the structural violence of the cult, the prophets also spoke against the syncretism of the cult, thereby influencing the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah in centralising the cult in Jerusalem, causing direct violence.

The question is if covenant played a part in legitimising the structural and direct violence of the cult in Jerusalem and/or the centralisation of the cult? It is important to know if covenant could have caused the creation of dichotomies or could have caused already existing dichotomies to be strengthened? In the next part of this chapter, this study will look at covenant in Jer 11:1-17 as a theological concept with a focus on election.

Galtung (1990, p. 296) argues that religion, as a cultural domain wherein cultural violence can function, holds forth the idea of a deity within a sacred domain. If this deity is placed outside humanity or even “above” humanity, it is not only likely, but also inevitable that some people will be seen as closer to the deity than others, even as “higher”. This transcendentalism combined with the “general occidental tradition of dualism and Manichaeism, with sharp dichotomies between good and evil” will allow, for reasons of symmetry, something like an evil deity (Satan) and a corresponding good deity (God). What is important in the cultural domain of religion, is who does God choose, because according to the

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<sup>35</sup> The cult centralisation does not meet with the scholarly agreement everywhere. Diana Edelman (2008, p. 429) argues that “from a religious perspective, cult centralization would not have made sense under the monarchy” (contra e.g. Nicholson, 1963, 384-86; McKay, 1973, 17-18; Albertz, 1992, I, 180).

above argument, it means that the Satan gets the rest. Were these thoughts on election prevalent among the audience of Jeremiah? The next part of this study will investigate the “election” aspect of covenant, where after it will look at the dominant Zion theology of the monarchy’s thoughts on “election”, followed by the Deuteronomist’s thought on “election”.

### **c. Theology of Covenant**

#### **i. Election**

Rendtorff (2005, p. 440) states that the term “chosen” is often used in a broader sense without direct connection with a particular term in the Hebrew Bible. In this comprehensive sense YHWH’s special affection for his people, Israel, means the choosing of this people. In the Abraham narrative, a specific element of the idea of election emerges meaning both selection and the giving of prominence over others. This aspect occurs where the verb *bhr* is used. It means the “election of Israel *out of all the nations*” (Deut 7:6 etc.). This is a very loaded word in Deuteronomistic parlance and stands in a broad theological context where the election of Israel from among the nations presupposes that YHWH has the whole earth and all the nations that inhabit it at his disposal and thus has the power to choose one of them (Rendtorff, 2005, p. 440). Miller (2012, p. 197) remarks that Deuteronomy offers a clear presentation of the doctrine of election, and Deut 7:6 presents its core. YHWH, because of his love for Israel, acted “unilaterally in choosing Israel” (Deut 1:31; 7:8; 14:1).

The greatest manifestation of this understanding of election was the exodus and YHWH’s action of initiating a covenant with Israel. Miller (2012, p. 198) presents four aspects of election: (1) Separation, that is, selection in history by a unilateral act of YHWH. There is no suggestion that Israel had the option of declining its election. (2) YHWH’s preferential love of Israel (Deut 4:31, 37; 7:12, etc.). (3) YHWH’s approbation of Israel, the elect is declared just (Isa 24:16; Ps 33:1; 97:11-12). (4) The project of saving Israel by divine providence.

It is important to note that election traditions unanimously attest to Israel having no inherent value or qualifications to warrant being chosen. Miller (2012, p. 199) further points to the purpose of election, namely service (1 Kgs 8:41-43; Isa 43:10-12). The one elected hold the position of servant. There is thus no doubt that election brings responsibility (Deut 7:6; 9-11; Josh 24:15, 22) (Miller, 2012, p. 199).

What is important in terms of the notion of divine “election”, is that it is firmly rooted in service. Therefore, there is a conditionality in divine election. This divine election is the origin of covenant, and there is no doubt that YHWH, and only YHWH, can be the initiator of covenant. Covenant makes Israel, according to Nicholson (1986, p. 209), a “people of YHWH”. Because Israel is appropriated by YHWH as his possession, it stands to reason that Israel has to live in “exclusive allegiance and total commitment to YHWH”. By its very nature, the covenant between YHWH and Israel dispels any belief that Israel was destined to be elected, and therefore election by YHWH guaranteed. Israel’s election must be understood in a vocational sense as only operative in Israel’s societal sphere. The act of election therefore includes decision and choice on the side of YHWH *and* on the side of Israel. Further choice and decision then confront each generation of Israel, for the opposite of election could also become true; Israel being not elected by YHWH (Nicholson, 1986, p. 209). It has already been discussed that this understanding of the conditionality of election was opposed by the dominant state belief in the un-conditionality of the Davidic covenant. This belief also coincides with the belief in the inviolability of the Jerusalem temple as Zion. Did this Zion ideology showed signs of being an example of cultural violence?

## ii. Zion and Cultural Violence

It pays to follow Albertz’s (1992, pp. 132-138) discussion on the Jerusalem temple theology in as far as it helps one to discern the cultural violence inherent in this theology. The forced fusion of the YHWH religion with certain aspects of the surrounding belief systems, turned the YHWH religion, as a religion of freedom and equality, into a religion of oppression and bondage. The traditional image of YHWH was bombarded with syncretistic influences, resulting in the development of an exclusive “Jerusalem sanctuary theology”, by means of which the cultic functionaries aimed to make the temple in Jerusalem the centre of the Yahwist religion. They claimed that YHWH had a soft spot for the temple in Jerusalem and even made the temple his home, making Jerusalem “the city of God” (*‘ir ’elōhīm*), “the holiest of Elyon’s dwellings”; “YHWH is in her midst” (Ps 46:5f.; cf. 48:3; 87:3); and YHWH’s dwelling place on Zion (Ps 76:3; 87:1f.). A typical feature of this “Zion theology” was its total identification of YHWH with Jerusalem and the temple (Ps 48:4, 13-15). Rainer Albertz (1992, p. 137) has argued that according to the conception of Jerusalem as the centre of the world, Jerusalem was “founded for ever” (Ps 48:9) by YHWH, whereby his presence in the temple will also furnish

the temple with his indelible and absolute assurance of security and deliverance (Ps 46:6; 48:4). This made Jerusalem a buttress against the chaotic powers of nature (Ps 46:2-4) and against nations attacking the city (Ps 46:7; 48:5-8; 76:4-6). By securing his city Jerusalem against all treats, nature or human, YHWH also blesses the world with firmness and peace (Ps 46:9-11; 76:11-13). Theologically, Jerusalem claims to take centre stage in what Albertz (1992, p. 137) calls a “universal realm of peace” (“the joy of the whole world”, Ps 48:3) (Albertz, 1992, pp. 132-138).

The theology of the Jerusalem state cult thus had universal features. However, the “universal realm of peace” portrayed here is also of course a *pax israelitica*, which includes the subjugation and submission of the nations under the reign of Israel (Ps 46:9f.; 76:4). This theology becomes problematic in that it “contracts” YHWH almost exclusively to the protection of the cult and the city (Ps 48:13-15), thereby insensitizing the nation to the worrying plans of conquest that the bigger nations had and the worrying social abuses from within their own ranks (cf. Mic 3:11; Jer 7:4). These worrying aspects of the Jerusalem state cult theology was not without its rivals, fighting against such an unrefined “contracting” of YHWH as only a cultic and political ally. It also showed that there was a potential for difference within YHWH religion (Albertz, 1992, pp. 132-138).

Both the concepts of YHWH electing a people and YHWH electing a city, create a dichotomy between the “elected” and the “non-elected”. It is not difficult to see the cultural violence inherent in divine election. It was already discussed how the prophets tried to mitigate the cultural violence inherent in divine election, by focussing on the horizontal aspect of the covenant relationship (social justice). By forcing this programme, they also opened the door for the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah, causing direct violence. It was already mentioned that Jer 11:1-17 exhibits a strong Deuteronomistic influence. In the discussion up to this stage, covenant can be seen as a form of violence, be it direct, structural or cultural violence, or all of them. The Deuteronomist, on the other hand, can be seen as the saviour of covenant, trying to mitigate the inherent violence of covenant.

### **iii. The Deuteronomist and Cultural Violence**

This study has shown that the Deuteronomistic covenant opposed the cultural violence inherent in covenant. It also opposed the structural violence of the cult in Jerusalem, although it could accept responsibility for the direct violence of the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah. But is it

possible that the Deuteronomistic influence could also be the originator of covenantal cultural violence even bigger in scope than the Deuteronomistic writers envisioned? Nicolson (1986, p. 206) states that the indictment of Israel by the prophets concerns their condemnation of Israel in the ethical sphere, in the sphere of YHWH's righteousness. Against YHWH's righteousness, the prophets rigorously measured Israel's life and pronounced it as standing condemned by YHWH. No amount of cultic religiosity could uphold a relationship between this righteous God and this unrighteous people. These prophets relativised the whole social order in the face of this radicalised perception of YHWH's righteousness. YHWH's righteousness, and not Israel's well-being, therefore, takes centre stage. Nicolson (1986, p. 207) makes another important point when he states that:

the presupposition of such relativizing of the social order was a radical differentiation between the divine and the human world, between YHWH and his creation, so that the human world is not viewed as simply continuous with the divine: the divine-human continuum is split apart, so that the human world even can be viewed as being at loggerheads with its creator.

According to the prophets, YHWH is not continuous with his creation, does not permeate it, is not to be identified with, or represented by, anything within it, but stands outside his creation, confronting it with his righteous will (Nicolson, 1986, pp. 207-208).

This idea that the Deuteronomistic prophets created, concerning YHWH's total separateness from the world, was profound. One can argue that the Deuteronomistic prophets basically loosened YHWH from the moor of nationalistic and ethnic expectations and made YHWH a truly international god. The Deuteronomistic prophets "allowed" YHWH to choose who he wants and when he wants who. In itself this may seem theologically sound and preferable. But from the viewpoint of cultural violence, the prophets actually made YHWH available for any other group to appropriate YHWH's covenantal election as their own, giving them the sense of being chosen, and therefore better than the rest. This worldview can cause a chosen group to become important in their own eyes and to serve their own structural and direct violence. The Deuteronomistic prophets tried so hard to prevent and even stop the cultural violence inherent in the Davidic ideology, that they basically made that specific type of cultural violence available to everybody else. In the study of covenantal violence in the book of Jeremiah, this study will work with a nationalistic-ethnic understanding of covenant, but in the discussion on covenantal violence in South Africa, it is already possible to see the "gift" the Deuteronomistic prophets gave the world.

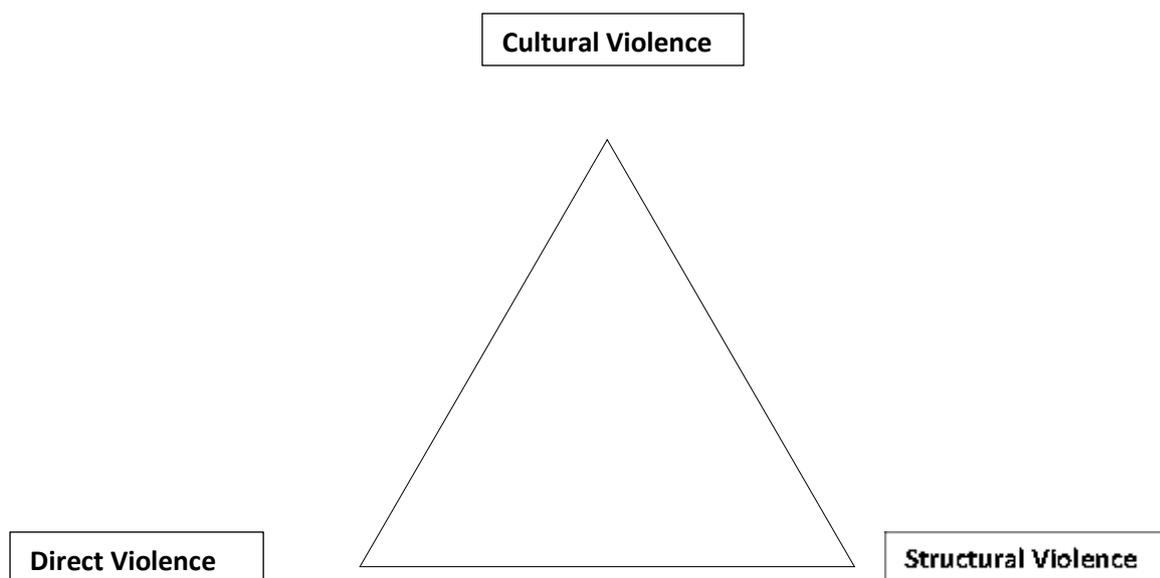
## 4. Covenant as Cultural Violence

### a. Covenantal Violence in the Book of Jeremiah

This study will now attempt to bring together all the discussed manifestations of covenantal direct, structural and cultural violence in the book of Jeremiah to ascertain to what degree a clear understanding of cultural violence can help the reader to identify the ways in which violence is depicted in the book of Jeremiah.

Galtung (1990, p. 294) uses the violence triangle (figure 2.2) as an image to try to explain the interrelatedness of cultural, structural and direct violence.

**Figure 2.2: Violence Triangle**



In using the information from the discussion on the violence triangle, covenant as an example of “cultural violence” can be the legitimiser of both the direct violence of the centralisation of the cult and the structural violence of the temple in Jerusalem. If one puts the triangle on its direct violence (centralisation of the cult) head, it yields the image of the structural (temple) and cultural (covenant) sources of the centralisation of the cult. The triangle makes it possible to even invoke further scenarios. Despite the symmetries, Galtung (1990, p. 294) points to the basic temporal difference between these three concepts of violence. Therefore, the direct violence of the centralisation of the cult is an “event”; the structural violence of the temple is a

“process with ups and down”; and covenant as an example of cultural violence is an invariant, or “permanence.” The invariant nature of cultural violence is because culture remains “essentially the same for long periods of time, given the slow transformation of basic culture”. Galtung uses the earthquake theory to explain this phenomenon where the three forms of violence enter time differently. According to earthquake theory, the earthquake is the centralisation of the cult, the movement of the tectonic plates is the temple and the fault lines are the covenant.

The earthquake theory gives Galtung (1990, p. 294) another point of incidence in the interrelatedness of direct, structural and cultural violence. This resultant violent image strata (figure 2.3) complements the triangle image but has its own limitations. The violent strata image can however be useful as a paradigm for generating a wider variety of hypotheses.

### **Figure 2.3: Violent Strata**

Direct violence

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Structural violence

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Cultural violence

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The violent strata image (figure 2.3), helps one to picture the interrelatedness of the different types of violence. At the bottom is the “steady flow through time” of covenant as an example of cultural violence, a substratum from which the other two types of violence can “derive their nutrients”. The rhythms of the structural violence of the temple are in the next stratum. In this stratum “patterns of exploitation are building up, are worn out, or are torn down”. The rhythms of the structural violence of the temple are protected by penetration-segmentation that prevents “consciousness formation”, and fragmentation-marginalisation that protects organisation against repression and exploitation. The direct violence of the centralisation of the cult is located at the top stratum and is the violence that is visible.

Galtung shows that a causal flow from covenant via temple to the centralisation of the cult, therefore “cultural via structural to direct violence”, can be identified. The covenant, especially the Davidic covenant, preached, taught, and admonished ordinary Judeans to perceive repression and/or as normal and natural, or not perceive it at all, particularly exploitation. In using Galtung’s violence triangle and his violence strata images, this study has shown that a clear understanding of cultural violence can help the reader to identify the ways in which violence is depicted in the book of Jeremiah.

In the next chapter, we will continue to investigate kingship as an example of cultural violence in Jer 22:1-23:8.

## CHAPTER 5

### KINGSHIP AND CULTURAL VIOLENCE IN JEREMIAH 22:1-23:8

#### 1. Introduction

But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; and they said, “No! but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battle.” (1 Sam 8:19)

“I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.”  
I will tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me, “You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel”. (Ps 2:6-9)

And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, from that which is in the charge of the Levitical priests; and it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them (Deut 17:18-19)

Do you think you are a king because you compete in cedar? (Jer 22:15)

At first glance, these examples cited above indicate that kingship is an institution that is widely discussed, praised, critiqued, judged and narrated in the Hebrew Bible. The noun “kingship” appears 18 times in the Hebrew Bible, most of the times in the 1 Samuel to 2 Kings narrative. The noun “king” appears 2242 times in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>36</sup> One can barely open a book in the Hebrew Bible, without reading something concerning a king. In the previous chapter it was shown how covenant is considered a permanence or an invariant “over a steady flow of time”, according to Galtung’s argument on the permanent nature of cultural violence over a “long period of time” (Galtung, 1990, p. 294). In terms of the concept of kingship, based on the

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<sup>36</sup> In 1 Sam there are 86 incidences of the word “king” (*melek*); in 2 Sam there are 284 incidences; in 1 Kgs 305 incidences; in 2 Kgs 370 incidences; in 1 Chron 69 incidences; in 2 Chron 277 incidences; and in Jer 269 incidences (Soggin, 2004, p. 863). The number of incidences of “king” in the book of Jeremiah are notable.

frequency of appearances in the Hebrew Bible, one can probably say the same of kingship. However, although one reads of kings from the beginning of the Hebrew Bible to the end, can the concept of kingship also be a permanent institution of cultural violence over this said period?

One can see from the biblical narrative that, although kingship, as a concept, was a permanent institution over a long period or an invariant “over a steady flow of time” in the ANE contexts from an early time,<sup>37</sup> kingship was not necessarily a permanent institution or an invariant for Israel from an earlier time. According to the biblical evidence, Israel instituted kingship with Saul as the first king in 1 Sam 14:47 (1050 BCE), and the last king, Jehoiachin, was exiled according to 2 Kgs 24:9-13 (598 BCE). This gives a timespan of about half a century, and not millennia, as with other more prominent kingdoms of the ANE.

According to Galtung (1990, pp. 291-292), cultural violence is defined as “those aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence”. Cultural violence thus focusses on the way in which “acts of direct violence and the reality of structural violence are legitimized and thus rendered acceptable in society”. Galtung (1990, pp. 291-292) further notes that cultural violence also has a permanent nature or can be seen as an invariant “over a steady flow of time”. But can kingship be an aspect of culture used in the Hebrew Bible to justify or legitimise direct and structural violence? Was kingship, like covenant, a concept originating only from Israel? Was kingship appropriated by Israel for certain reasons, and did it later start legitimising “acts of direct violence and the fact of structural violence”, in turn activating prophetic reaction? Or did Israel know exactly what they were getting themselves into, that is to say, were the “elders” who gave permission for kingship in 1 Samuel 8, the real victims of the coming structural and direct violence of kingship? What is also interesting, is to determine if the socio-economic circumstances of pre-monarchic Israel was instrumental in the development of kingship or did kingship cause most of the socio-economic circumstances of monarchic Israel to develop. In other words, did the average Israelite on

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<sup>37</sup> Kingship in Israel did not develop in an ANE vacuum. There were kings in the ANE before Israel even appeared on the scene. The Old Kingdom in Egypt ruled from 2686-2160 BCE. Israel appeared on the scene much later, from the start of the New Kingdom 1550-1069 BCE (LeMon, 2016, p. 171). The regions of Sumer and Akkad flourished under the so-called Third Dynasty of Ur, during approximately the last century of the third millennium BCE. It reached its apogee culturally and geographically under the rule of Shulgi (2094-2047 BCE), the successor of Ur-Nammu (2112-2095 BCE), when Ur exercised control as far as Mari on the upper Euphrates (Vanderhooft, 2016, p. 110).

his/her farm ask for kingship because they were suffering without it, or did their suffering really started when kingship was introduced?

The average Judean, in the time of Jeremiah, suffered as a result of kingship, if one is to believe Jeremiah. Jeremiah's judgement against the kings of Judah was, to say the least, vitriolic. Jeremiah's ministry stretched over the reign of a number of different kings. As one reads in the introduction of the book of Jeremiah:

The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiyah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of *King Josiah son of Amon of Judah*, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of *King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah*, and until the end of the eleventh year of *King Zedekiah son of Josiah of Judah*, until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth month. (Jer 1:1)

Jeremiah's quarrel with the kings of Judah almost immediately follows the introduction and is evident in the following texts:

And I for my part have made you today a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall, against the whole land – *against the kings of Judah*, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land. They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, says the LORD, to deliver you. (Jer 1:18-19)

In the next chapter, the house of Israel, including the kings, officials, priests and prophets would be "shamed as a thief is shamed when caught" (Jer 2:26). In following passages (Jer 4:9; 13:8; 19:13), the judgements against the kings and their entourages, are also explicit in their aim.

Jeremiah's altercations did not stop with oracles of judgement against the kings of Judah. Interesting to note, is that in Jer 1:18-19; 2:26; 4:9 the oracles of judgement are against a bigger group than only the kings and could include those who Jeremiah later in Jer 23:1 calls the "shepherds". Especially in the second part of the book of Jeremiah, Jeremiah is in conflict with Zedekiah concerning the emancipation of the slaves (Jer 34:8-22), and with Jehoiakim concerning the scroll of Baruch that Jehoiakim burns (Jer 36:1-32). Why was this relationship between YHWH, with Jeremiah as his spokesperson, and the last kings of Judah, so strained? What actions of the last kings of Judah could have worsened the relationship between YHWH and the kings to such an extent, that YHWH would surely banish Jehoiachin, the last king of Judah (his own signet ring), into exile and also see to it that Jehoiachin has no dynasty?

In Jer 22:1-23:8 the oracles of judgement against the kings of Judah have a finality, which is made even more pronounced by the poetic devices of lament that are used extensively

throughout the oracles. These are the final oracles of judgement concerning the last kings of Judah. There will be no escape from the wrath of YHWH.

The question then needs to be asked: Did the kings of Judah have a different idea of just what kingship entails, so that they so flagrantly disobeyed YHWH and his prophets? It makes no sense that the kings of Judah, who were also the cultic leaders of the temple, therefore both king and priest, could have it so wrong? Even if all Judeans were avid monotheists with exactly the same idea of who YHWH was and what he expected from his people, it is still difficult to believe that the kings of Judah were so far off the beaten path. Is it not possible that, even if you tried your utmost best, as king, to follow YHWH and his commandments to do justice, it was an impossible task to fulfill? As king you were set up for failure, and that was just how it was?

Given that one must rely almost exclusively on biblical evidence regarding the kings in order to discuss kingship, one has to be content with the writer's/redactors' schools of thought on different kings. But in investigating the cultural violence of kingship, it is necessary to also investigate the structural and direct violence that can be put at the doorstep of kingship. One can then argue that, at the hand of the direct and structural violence found, kingship was an inherently violent institution. While Jeremiah was intent on judging the kings, and while the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler were intent, for different reasons, on narrating the lives of the kings of Judah and Israel to make certain theological points, this study will have to look at "the world behind the text" in order to find the structural and direct violence inherent to kingship. The biblical evidence will surely help to a degree, but one will have to also make use of socio-economic evidence and hypotheses to find the "violent" world behind the text. At this point it is necessary to remark that it stands beyond reason that the kings of the ANE, Israel included, necessarily experienced or even imagined their kingdoms to be violent kingdoms. In their world, it was probably just how things were done. Having said this, it is also possible that a king could have seen himself as a just and righteous king, even though he was a violent king.

To reach the world behind the text, one must discuss the phenomenon of the state. In the Hebrew Bible, one reads of certain kings and their actions and achievements, forgetting sometimes that behind a king, was a state with departments and officials. In discussing kingship, one must also discuss the monarchical state and its functions.

In the discussion on kingship and cultural violence, this study is also moving in the direction of ideology. This study uses two of the cultural domains of Galtung in which

cultural violence can function, namely religion and ideology. In Chapter 2 of this study, Galtung (1990, p. 298) pointed out that with the “decline, and perhaps death, not only of the transcendental but also of the immanent god through secularization, one could expect successors to religion to be in the form of political ideologies and successors to God to be in the form of the modern state”. Galtung (1990, p. 298) further argued that one can therefore expect political ideologies as well as the modern state to exhibit the “same character traits as religion and God”. Thus, in a contemporary context, God and religion may be dead, but their sharp and value-loaded dichotomies did not die with them, resulting in the rise in importance of the Self and the Other as examples of these value-loaded dichotomies. The archetype of this process of distinction is called “nationalism”, where the state can act as God’s successor (Galtung, 1990, p. 298). According to Galtung (1990, p. 298), the process of nationalism constructs a steep gradient whereby the Self ends up with an inflated value and is even exalted in contrast to the value of the Other, who ends up with a deflated and even debased value (Galtung, 1990, p. 298).

Another important point made by Galtung (1990, p. 299) in Chapter 2 of this study, is that the “ideology of nationalism”, based on the idea of a Chosen People, justified through religion, compares well with the “ideology of the state”, called statism. In the “ideology of the state” the state evolves into a successor of God, with the inherited right and even duty to apply ultimate power. Therefore, if “nationalism” with its elevated Self-Other gradient, and “statism”, are combined, it results in the ideology of the nation-state (Galtung, 1990, p. 299). Galtung (1990, p. 299) emphasised in Chapter 2 of this study the catastrophic effects of the development of the ideology of the nation-state, whereby any injustice can be legitimised in the name of the state. When the resultant “ideology of the nation-state” combines with a “theologically based Chosen People complex”, the potential for violence increases exponentially.

Looking at kingship in Jeremiah, one can thus attempt to argue that kingship in Judah was operating as a nation-state, albeit a monarchical nation-state. If the Judean “ideology of a monarchical nation-state” combined with a “theologically based Chosen People complex” (cf. Chapter 4 of this study), then the potential for violence could have increased in the time of Jeremiah.

As early as the implementing of kingship in 1 Samuel 8, Samuel warns the people of Israel that kingship, even if it will be at times be advantageous, will entail forms of violence

such as misery, secondary citizenship, repression and exploitation. Even taking into consideration that 1 Samuel 8 could have been a late redaction in hindsight of the dangers of kingship, Samuel warned Israel that kingship is a violent institution.

In this chapter, the relationship between the cultural, structural, and direct violence of kingship will be investigated. The main aim of this chapter is to more specifically investigate kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 as an example of cultural violence. In order to investigate the cultural violence of kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8, the structural and direct violence of kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 also needs to be investigated. It pays to keep in mind that the structural aspects of the office of kingship in the time of the late monarchy in Judah is important for this study, even beyond the kings mentioned by Jeremiah in Jer 22:1-23:8, because the process nature of structural violence indicates that the structural aspects of the office of kingship did not materialise out of thin air by the time these kings of Jeremiah came to power. The proverbial “wheels of government” were squeaking along even before Jehoahaz started his brief rule after his father, King Josiah’s, untimely death.

## **2. Kingship**

Before this study moves to the specific investigation of kingship in the time of Jeremiah, certain definitional categories pertaining to kingship, need to be clarified. What is meant by king? One gleans from 1 Samuel 8 that kingship was a common institution in the ANE at the time of the Hebrew Bible (v. 20: “that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may govern us”).

The question then arises, was kingship in Israel and Judah a distinctive kind of kingship wholly different from its context, or was it the same? If there were differences between kingship in Israel and Judah and its surrounding contexts, what were these differences, and is it of importance for this study? Also, important, is the types of kingships in the ANE, and if kingship in Israel at certain stages in its history shared similarities with some of these kingships?

Questions focussing on the specific attributes of Israelite kingship, can then be raised. Attributes such as the sonship of the king to YHWH and the justice of the king, are important in this regard. Is it possible that Israel’s idea of kingship was never meant to be a form of cultural violence? If kingship was a form of cultural violence at the time of Jeremiah, when did it go wrong and how did it go wrong?

In the focus text of this study, Jer 22:1-23:8, a few kings have already been mentioned. In Jer 22:2 there is an oracle of judgement concerning the “king of Judah, sitting on the throne of David”. King David will therefore be part of the investigation. One cannot discuss the birth of Israelite statehood without also looking at King Solomon. After the disintegration of the United Monarchy, the monarchy again became united in a way in Jerusalem, with the disappearance of Israel from the scene after the Assyrian exile in 724 BCE. It is furthermore necessary to address briefly the time period between the dissolution of the United Monarchy and Israel’s exile, to throw some light on important diachronic development of kingship in Israel. Kingship in Judah, after the disappearance of Israel, is also important, because the next king alluded to in Jer 22:15 is Josiah, but Ahaz will also be discussed. The kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin will be studied in the synchronic discussion of kingship later in this study. From what one can see in Jeremiah; the prophets were in constant dialogue with the kings of Israel and Judah. This prophetic interaction will also be discussed. With the discussion on kingship as a religious idea, the problems and challenges experienced by scholarship in studying kingship, and whether these challenges need to be taken into account in this study, will also be addressed.

### **a. The Definition and Function of Kingship**

A king can be defined as a “male sovereign ruler who exercises authority over a defined territorial area, the state” (Whitelam, 1992, p. 40). The source of this authority can be “purely or partly hereditary or, as in some cases, elective”. The king acts as a “central symbol for the territory and population he rules over”. The king, moreover, symbolises the territory’s and population’s prosperity, fertility, and security. Kingship, on the other hand, refers respectively to the “rank, authority, or office and dignity of the king, including the exercise of power over the subjects of the state” (Whitelam, 1992, p. 40). From this definition, kingship, other than king, can be seen as an office, meaning that the term “kingship” is inclusive of all the apparatus of the state. Another term that can be used to describe “kingship”, is “monarchy.” From this it can be deduced that kingship can be seen as a form of government.

Heywood (2007, p. 27) presents Aristoteles’s classic typologies of government as the still dominant way of understanding government. Although these typologies were put forward centuries after the lives of the kings of Judah and Israel, it can still be used to widen and deepen an understanding of kingship in comparison to other more contemporary forms of government.

Aristoteles argued that it pays to categorise government on the basis of two questions: “who rules?”, and “who benefits from rule?” He identified six forms of government (Fig.5.1) according to these questions.

**Fig. 5.1. Classic Typologies of Government** (Heywood, 2007, p. 27).

		Who rules?		
		One person	The few	The many
Who benefits?	Rulers	Tyranny	Oligarchy	Democracy
	All	Monarchy	Aristocracy	Polity

Heywood (2007, p. 366) therefore defines monarchy as a “system of rule dominated by one person”, where he/she is the head of state of the institution of the monarchy through inheritance or dynastic succession. It can be deduced from fig.5.1 that a monarchy rules for the benefit of all. It can also be deduced from fig.5.1 that when a monarchy rules for the benefit of only the rulers, it is a form of tyranny. Another important point Heywood (2007, pp. 90-91) makes, is that monarchy is a form of political government that can be differentiated from the state. In this regard, it is in the first instance necessary to define what is understood under the state.

The state is defined as a “political association that establishes sovereign jurisdiction within territorial borders, and exercises authority through a set of permanent institutions” that are recognisably “public”, such as a bureaucracy, courts, a standing army etc. (Heywood, 2007, pp. 90-91). A state can also be defined as a “politically organized series of institutions exercising authority over a defined territory and population”. States possess the power to compel compliance to their norms and standards and typically exercise some degree of autonomy from surrounding entities (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 291).

Heywood (2007, pp. 90-91) furthermore identifies five key features of the state, of which only three will be discussed for the purpose of this study:

- (1) The state is sovereign. It exercises absolute and unrestricted power in that it stands above all other groups in society.
- (2) The state is an exercise in legitimation. The decisions of the state are usually (although not necessarily) accepted as binding on the members of society, because, it is claimed, they are made in the public interest or for common good.
- (3) The state is an instrument of domination. State authority is backed up by coercion; the state must have the capacity to ensure that its laws are obeyed and

that transgressors are punished. A monopoly of “legitimate violence” is therefore the practical expression of state sovereign (Heywood, 2007, pp. 90-91)..

Heywood (2007, pp. 91-92) lastly offers some major differences between government and the state:

(1) The state is more extensive than government. Government can be seen as the political head of the state at a given time and for a given period. (2) The state is a continuing, even permanent, entity, whereas governments can change. (3) Government is the means through which the authority of the state is brought into operation. (4) The state exercises impersonal authority (Heywood, 2007, pp. 91-92).

To initiate this study’s discussion on king and kingship, one can thus argue that a particular king of Judah and/or Israel at a certain time in history was the government of the day and kingship or monarchy was the form of the state. The monarchical state will continue to manifest its structural violence, even if a benevolent king takes over from a tyrant king or vice versa. This continuing of violence in kingship is of importance if one argues for the permanent or invariant nature of kingship as a form of cultural violence.

In defining this form of monarchical state, one must note the centralisation trend of the monarchical state. Whereas Whitlam (1992, p. 40) stresses the king’s responsibility “for the maintenance of law and order within a defined territory through the use of a professional and permanent military force and a dedicated central bureaucracy”, one can argue that at an advanced stage of the monarchy in Judah, it was the centralised monarchical state that took on the responsibility of maintaining law and order, and the king was already a kind of figurehead. The tail was wagging the dog and not the other way around. In any case, it is important to stress that, according to Whitlam (1992, p. 40), monarchical states were “politically centralized societies based on social stratification and specialization”. For these centralised societies to function properly, one has to look at the monarchical state’s use of power. Therefore, before this study looks at kingship in other contexts in the ANE, a few remarks on kingship and power are necessary.

## **b. Kingship and Power**

Douglas Knight (2011, p. 9) emphasises that the “sovereign states of Israel and Judah largely fit the macro-sociological pattern termed the agrarian state or society”. Fundamental to the agrarian pattern is a “pronounced social inequality in power, privileges, and honour”, and the centralised state itself functions as the immediate source of this disparity. In addition to the

royal house of the king, there was also an elite or governing class. This class is normally a small minority, often much less than 2 percent of the whole population. They exercise political and economic power at national level through offices such as chief military officers, high state officials, wealthy merchants, large landowners, cultic functionaries, and others who stand at the dispensing side of the king's granting of land, offices, or special rights (Knight, 2011, p. 9).

It is interesting that Knight (2011, p. 9) attests to a balance of power between the king and the monarchical state on the one hand, and the ruling class or elite on the other. This balance of power could fluctuate as each would often try to dominate the other and thereby gain the upper hand in controlling the country and its economy. But mostly these two groups collaborated to hold the populace in check, both the peasants in the countryside and the artisans and labourers in the cities, in order to extract from them as much of their economic surplus as possible. This inequality was staggering in that typically less than 2 percent of the total population received in excess of fifty percent of the national income (Knight, 2011, pp. 9-10).

This inequality also influenced the power relations of the monarchy. Ultimate power resided securely in the top 2 percent of the monarchy, but even this 2 percent, namely the king and the monarchical state, was not homogeneous in their internal power structure. In agrarian states the religious institution of the cult intermeshed with the centralised monarchical state with its own accompanying internal strife (Knight, 2011, p. 10). In discussing the general characteristics of the monarchical state, this study has already familiarised itself with certain theoretical aspects of king and kingship that can be useful further in the study. Fruitful discoveries may also be made if one investigates king and kingship in the wider ANE context. Both these endeavours may offer important perspectives regarding king and kingship in Israel and Judah in general, and more specifically in Judah at the time of Jeremiah's oracles of judgement in Jer 22:1-23:8.

### **c. Kingship in the ANE**

At this point it pays to distinguish between primary and secondary state-construction. Rainer Kessler (2008, p. 72) describes the primary construction of states as when central government develops for the first time, without influence from other, already-existing states, in the environment of the society in question. Kessler (2008, p. 72) provides ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt among others as examples of primary state-construction. Secondary state-

construction is where states form in an environment of already-existing states. He then argues that Israel and Judah represent secondary state-constructions (Kessler, 2008, p. 72).

The distinction between primary and secondary state-construction is important in placing the construction of the states in Israel and Judah within the influence sphere of ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. Israel found itself very much in the influence sphere of Mesopotamia and Egypt: Of the kings receiving judgement oracles in Jer 22:1-23:8, Jehoiakim was made king by the Egyptians, and after Jehoiachin was taken away in exile by Nebuchadnezzar, Zedekiah was made king in Jehoiachin's place by the same Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. These examples show to what degree Babylon and Egypt were politically involved in Judah's affairs by the time of Jeremiah. This involvement was probably not always at the same level of intensity, but nevertheless it was there. It is also not the purpose of this study to produce an exhaustive investigation of kingship in the ANE context in general and of kingship in Mesopotamia and Egypt in particular. Therefore, only some introductory remarks will be made concerning kingship in these two contexts, where after the similarities and differences between kingship in Israel and kingship in these two contexts will be considered. Therefore, kingship in the ANE will be researched only in so far as there are similarities and/or differences with kingship in Israel and Judah.

John Walton (2018, p. 97) states that literature from throughout the ANE emphasises that the gods had needs that were met by human beings. The king and the priests had their own duties in the process. The king's duty was to make sure that the gods were well looked after and in return the gods would look after the king and his realm. If the king made sure that society was run in an orderly manner, the gods were satisfied. The basic premise of what Walton (2018, p. 97) calls the "Great Symbiosis", was basically a situation of "happy gods, happy life". The gods therefore were the providers and the protectors of the people, making it possible for the people, represented by the king, to (ritually) take care of and pamper the gods in a manner befitting the gods (Walton, 2018, p. 97).

Kingship was therefore the "central institution of society and civilization in the ancient world". Where the king stood between the human and the divine realms, he could mediate the "power of the deity" locally as well as nationally, while enjoying the favour and protection of the gods. Some of the responsibilities of the king entailed leading in battle, maintaining justice, the initiation and completion of public building projects, and making sure that the cult was

operative. Beyond these responsibilities, the king's execution of his role had possible cosmic influences (Walton, 2018, p. 226).<sup>38</sup>

From this list of functions of the king, it is clear that the institution of kingship was a central and important institution in the ANE. Kingship covered a wide area of human needs, be it on an economic, social, religious or political level. One is forced to ask just how a country could have survived in the ANE without the institution of kingship? Although Israel was a relative latecomer to the institution of kingship, there were important similarities and differences between kingship in Israel and kingship in Mesopotamia<sup>39</sup> and important similarities and differences between kingship in Israel and kingship in Egypt.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Gnuse (2011, pp. 1-4) provides an even more comprehensive list of the duties of a king: (1) Kings organised the life of the community or the territory they ruled over. (2) Kings were supposed to lead their country in battle against threats from within or from outside, or they were supposed to have close cooperation with the generals leading their armies. (3) Kings were responsible for collecting and then redistributing food to sustain their population. In sustaining the people, the kings' role in bringing fertility to their respective regions, was important. (4) In the ANE, strong kings with strong central governments were necessary for "agricultural intensification," where the natural resources had to be intensively used for greater yields and fewer incidences of famine. (5) Kings had a religious function, as the persons most closely connected to the gods. The function could put the kings in opposition to prominent cult figures, such as prophets and priests. (6) Kings played a central role in trade. They also played an important role in international trade via their international connections and much of international trade was royal monopolies. (7) The responsibility for law and order in society lay with the kings, in that their offices had to issue law codes and standardise or update laws, which on their part they normally received from the gods. Normally these royal law codes had no practical effect on the law courts. They did function as advisory material, useful in training scribes in the scribal schools, where its educative richness eventually influenced judicial decisions. (8) Kings fulfilled a religious and psychological role as a symbol, exemplifying the unity and health of the community in the minds of the community. If the king was healthy and fertile, his country was supposed to be healthy and fertile, but the reverse was also true. If the king was sick or impotent, it was believed that the life of the people would be affected by his personal adversity. (9) Kings also personified virtues such as courage, wisdom, justice, and power. (10) Finally, kings did fulfil cultic duties. The king was normally expected to perform important sacrifices, for example the sacrifices offered by Mesopotamian kings at the New Year festival of Akitu, ensuring the non-destruction of the world (Gnuse, 2011, pp. 1-4).

<sup>39</sup> Focussing on the ancient civilisation of Mesopotamia, Walton (2018, p. 228) remarks that kingship in Mesopotamia had a mythological origin where a council of gods decided to provide kingship after founding the lands and building cities for the humans (Walton, 2018, p. 228). The kings, as individuals who stood between the divine and human worlds, were expected to discern the divine will and facilitate its execution. In comparison to Egypt, where the actions of the pharaoh were the actions of the gods, in Mesopotamia the divine will was not that clear. Therefore, much was made of discernment of the will of the gods. Wrong decisions could mean that the king had to forfeit divine sponsorship and that the gods had withdrawn their authority to act on their behalf from the king (Walton, 2018, p. 236). Divine sponsorship was an important issue with Mesopotamian kings and was therefore also an important element in the Mesopotamian ideology of kingship. Kings had a certain authority because of their close proximity to the gods, but this authority was contractual, and could be withdrawn by the gods at any time (Walton, 2018, p. 237).

<sup>40</sup> Caroline Nolan (2003, pp. 35-36) remarks that the land of Egypt was an important concept for the birth of the institution of the monarchy in Egypt. The geography of Egypt lends itself to a strong sense

Levinson (2001, pp. 512-518) offers a summary of some of the important similarities between kingship in the ANE context and kingship in Israel, concerning key functions of the monarchy:

(1) It was a commonplace notion at Ugarit, that the king is the adoptive son of the god who heads the pantheon. Kirta, as king, was called “a scion of El-/Son of the Gentle and Holy One”. YHWH similarly affirmed the Davidic king, thereby legally adopting the king and appointing the king as YHWH’s earthly counterpart, representing YHWH as “king” of the divine council. For internal reasons, the metaphor of legal adoption, symbolising the close bond between king and deity, can be found in Ugaritic and Israelite literature, but is less prevalent in Mesopotamian literature. Although the Akkadian dynasty of Sumer was the source of the notion of divine kingship, the Semitic rulers of Babylon rejected the idea, and the Ur III period (2112-2004 BCE) saw the end of this idea. Thus, the idea of divine appointment replaced the

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of duality where the river Nile divides Egypt in two distinct countries, namely the delta area and the lower Nile, each with its own tribal groups. To mitigate inter-regional tension, the concept of one representative leader for both areas came into being. This leader had to be a symbol that both regions could identify with. Therefore, kingship in Egypt had its origin in the need for a central figure that could navigate shared issues pertaining to agriculture and borders (Nolan, 2003, pp. 35-36). The whole concept of a monarchical institution in Egypt, with all its structures, had its roots in this one central ruler, namely the pharaoh. The pharaoh was seen as the divine representative of the people, but he was also the symbolic leader representing cosmic order. Moreover, he was also deemed to be part of the cosmic order, as a co-worker with the gods, helping the gods to maintain order in the world (Nolan, 2003, pp. 36-37). Walton (2018, p. 226) notes that the king of Egypt was divinised to a higher degree than kings in the other cultures. The persona of the king was to such an extent immersed into the divine realm, that one could conclude that the acts of Pharaoh were the acts of the gods themselves (Walton, 2018, p. 226). The institution of the monarchy in Egypt was therefore the representative symbol of the true order of being and existence, since it was modelled upon the order of the universe which was called *maat*. This *maat* was the order, justice and truth of the cosmic order and the pharaoh had to use his internal *maat* to ensure an effective order of society through his administration. Therefore, this *maat*, emanating from the gods, channelled through the pharaoh, had to spread to every facet of the Egyptian political structure (Nolan, 2003, p. 39). What is important, is that the structures of the Egyptian institution of the monarchy was set in time, with no clear sense of historical time. Therefore, the structures, although ordered and neat, did not have flexibility to change with changing times and changing circumstances (Nolan, 2003, p. 44). What is different in the Mesopotamian understanding of kingship in comparison to the Egyptian understanding of kingship, is that historical time had an influence on the development of kingship in Mesopotamia. Where the office of a domestic ruler (*ensi*) was sufficient in Sumerian times, changing international circumstances asked for a warrior king (*lugal*), who could protect the city-states of Mesopotamia against outside threats (Nolan, 2003, pp. 27-28). The initiation of the monarchy was then understood as a natural progression from one form of leadership (mediator) to another, with the blessing of the gods. With this said, it was expected of the king firstly to dispense the law. His second function was to protect the land from external attacks. Thirdly, he had to ensure that the spiritual needs of the people were addressed, making the cult an irreplaceable aspect of the monarchy (Nolan, 2003, pp. 29-33). Lastly, it is important to note that the dynamic nature of the Mesopotamian kingship, with frequent monarchical rivalries and power struggles, was also reflected in the dynamic nature of their pantheon of gods, with their own inter-deity power struggles and rivalries (Nolan, 2003, p. 35).

idea of divine adoption, and became, according to Levinson, the “standard motif of royal legitimation in Babylon and Assyria, whose kings thus ruled under divine aegis” (Levinson, 2001, pp. 512-514).

(2) The idea of divine adoption or appointment of the king is also combined with the idea of “special judicial insight” granted by the deity. Samas, the sun god, thus endowed king Hammurabi with the “special ability to perceive the principles of justice and righteousness” (*kittum u misarum*) informing his laws. The psalmist petitions use the same typology: “Give the king thy justice, O God, and thy righteousness to the royal son!” (Ps 72:1). Similarly, when YHWH granted Solomon the opportunity to ask whatever he wishes, Solomon’s reply was: “Give thy servant therefore, an understanding mind to govern thy people, that I may discern between good and evil” (1 Kgs 3:9) (Levinson, 2001, pp. 514-515).

(3) This divine gift of judicial wisdom gave the king a primary duty to administer justice. In particular, he had to ensure equal access to legal protection for the socially marginalised. Standing in judgement for the cases of the widow and the orphan, the king himself represented the “adult male missing from their family units”. One can find the commitment of the king to hear the cases of the widow and the orphan in diverse literary genres in the ANE. Ugaritic literature tells of Dan El in the Aqhat epic and of prince Yassib, who reproofed his mortally ill father Kirta, in that he did not behave in a manner befitting a king. In Babylonian literature Hammurabi elegantly claims that he was commissioned by Marduk himself “so that the strong might not oppress the weak, to rise like Samas over the black-haired ones, and light up the land”. The king’s duty to protect the widow and the orphan, also meant that he had to eliminate injustice. Hammurabi thus commits himself “to eliminate evil and the evildoer”. The psalmist, on the other hand, in a doxology delivered upon the accession of the Davidic king, integrates the king’s fight for justice with the king’s fight against injustice: “May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor!” (Ps 72:4) (Levinson, 2001, pp. 515-516).

(4) Every Babylonian king that ascends the throne had an opportunity to “proclaim a special remission of debts, free slaves, restore land to its owners, adjust prices, and ensure correct weights and measures”. This “royal initiative” had the purpose of “establishing righteousness/freedom.” David also established, after he consolidated his rule, “justice and equity” for all his people (2 Sam 8:15b). The difference is, where in the Akkadian context, this proclamation of the king was primarily a “special one-time dispensation upon accession”, in

the Israelite context, justice was expected from the king's entire rule. The king's ongoing commitment to justice would also determine the king's adequacy as king. The king's ongoing commitment to justice can be attributed to the Davidic dynasty and was a key expectation of the classical prophets of current and future kings (Jer 22: 3, 5, 15; 33:15; Ezek 45:9). The messianic new age king would also be a paragon of this ongoing commitment to justice (Isa 42:4) (Levinson, 2001, pp. 516-517).

(5) The Israelite and Judean kings furthermore served as "defenders and patrons of the cult", similar to Hammurabi, who emphasises how he diligently repaired and rebuilt temples. Israel's most distinguished kings were also primarily measured by their cultic commitments: When David proposed to build the temple, he immediately received his dynastic oracle (2 Sam 7); Solomon becomes the chief architect and planner of the temple in Jerusalem and had the honour of dedicating the temple (1 Kgs 1-8); Hezekiah took initial steps to purify the cult (2 Kgs 18:1-8); while Josiah repaired and purified the temple in Jerusalem, and started the process of centralising the cult (2 Kgs 22-23) (Levinson, 2001, p. 517).

(6) The king was also expected to serve as the military "commander-in-chief", leading his city or nation personally in war. In Mesopotamian literature, one reads of ill-fated military campaigns as well as military successes of its kings. The same expectation existed for Israelite kings (Levinson, 2001, p. 517).

Concerning the Egyptian thoughts on kingship, Von Rad (2005, p. 178) identifies important similarities between Egyptian and Israelite kingship, specifically relating to the enthronement ceremony. During his enthronement ceremony, the Egyptian pharaoh had to receive and to deliver the royal protocol that, according to von Rad, "contained in particular the ancient titles and sovereign rights and duties conferred on Pharaoh by the god, in brief, the king's authority to rule as the surrogate of the god". This protocol matches Psalm 2, where YHWH's anointed states: "I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my son, today I have begotten you". This assumption is corroborated by the fact that in the Egyptian royal protocol the divine sonship of the pharaoh played an important part. Thus Amun-Re of Karnak says to Hatshepsut: "My beloved daughter ... I am thy beloved father. I establish thy dignity..." (Von Rad, 2005, pp. 178-179).

Von Rad (2005, p. 208) then pointedly remarks that despite these similarities between the royal rituals of Judah and ancient Egypt, there is nevertheless a profound difference between them with regard to the relationship between YHWH and his anointed one. In Egypt,

the divine sonship of the pharaoh was conceived in mythological terms, and the deity was regarded as the king's father in a wholly physical sense. Such a concept was quite impossible within the context of Yahwism, whereby the king became the son of YHWH by adoption. In Yahwism, the king entered, on the day of his accession, the filial relationship which had been promised to each succeeding king in the prophecy of Nathan in 2 Samuel 7 (Von Rad, 2005, p. 208).<sup>41</sup>

As stated before, Israel and Judah, as secondary state-constructions, were in the influence sphere of these two abovementioned kingdoms. It stands to reason, that much of Israelite statecraft was borrowed from these kingdoms in the same way as contemporary smallish companies (small to medium enterprises) borrow “best practises” from bigger companies, in order to be more efficient and effective. Kingship in the ANE was also very much a divine-human enterprise in that it is difficult to talk of kingship, without mentioning divine-human understanding. In this case, Israel, in the sense of how Israel understood YHWH and YHWH's relation with Israel, was in important ways different from its surrounding kingdoms. Walton (2018, p. 242) notes that in the Mesopotamian pantheon, the “chief god” of the pantheon was also the “king of the gods”. The human king represented this “chief god”, making this “chief god” the king over the people. In Israel YHWH also ruled through the king, but YHWH was the only deity, not “chief god”. Wilson points to the importance of this difference, in that the hierarchical Mesopotamian pantheon served as one of the most significant analogies or metaphors describing the human king's rule over the people. In Israel no such metaphor existed (Walton, 2018, p. 242).

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<sup>41</sup> From the above discussion, it is important to note that the king had a different position pertaining to his position vis-à-vis the divine realm in both the Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures. In the Egyptian culture, the pharaoh was a man-god being, the sole conduit between the divine realm and the kingdom, with one-way traffic coming from the divine realm, going through the pharaoh, for the end-user, namely the pharaoh's subjects. In nature, the pharaoh was more deity than human. Because the pharaoh was divinely instituted, he could not be replaced. In the Mesopotamian culture, the king was a “mediator between the divine and profane realms”. In nature, the king was more human than deity, while, as a conduit between the divine realm and the kingdom, the king had to represent divinity in the profane realm and the profane in the realm of the divine. As a mediator, he could be replaced, if he lost the authority of the divine and/or the profane realms.

#### **d. Kingship in Israel**

Except for this difference, many important similarities between kingship ideas in Israel and in the rest of the ANE existed. As in the ANE context, the Israelite king was the “agent of the divine plan, concerned with the will of deity, and representative of divine authority” (notice that authority was taken from Saul and would never be taken from David’s son). The Israelite king was also “responsible for justice and accountable to YHWH for protecting the vulnerable” (Walton, 2018, p. 242).

Levinson and von Rad’s arguments concerning the responsibility of the king in maintaining justice, and the divinity/humanity of the king, are important for the next discussion. Concerning the divinity of the king, although the Israelite king is depicted as YHWH’s son and clearly enjoys divine sponsorship, overall, he is situated less in the divine realm. It seems that the Egyptian king found himself almost entirely in the divine realm and the Mesopotamian king firmly in the middle, while the Israelite king was almost entirely in the human realm (Walton, 2018, p. 242).

The following aspects of Israelite kingship, namely the dispensing of justice, and the divine authority of the king, will be focussed on next, for specific reasons. As was discussed in Chapter 4 of this study, the social justice aspects of the Sinai covenant were used to counter the social injustices gradually manifesting in Israelite kingship and ignored by subsequent kings. Although the prophets did not agree with these injustices, this did not prevent the kings from carrying them out. In this regard, the relation between YHWH and the king, where kingship saw itself as divinely authorised, is important. But even if the kings were able to legitimise the structural violence of kingship through divine sanction, surely the emphasis on social justice as an inherent aspect of kingship, could have mitigated the worst effects of the structural and direct violence of Israelite kingship? How then did Israelite kingship see itself in relation to YHWH? The king as the son of YHWH, is an important motive in this regard. It can also be argued that the ongoing influence of the neighbouring Egyptian and Mesopotamian ideas of kingship was constant and strong enough to influence at specific times in Israel’s history Israel’s ideas of divine authority. At times Israelite kings could have seen themselves as more divine than human (the Egyptian model), or firmly in between (the Mesopotamian model), or firmly a human, ruling other humans for the welfare of both (the Israelite model).

### **i. The King as “Son of YHWH”**

In the ANE context, kings had filial relationships with their deities, and were even thought to be begotten by the deity. The idea of Egyptian kingship emphasised this point, since the pharaoh was seen as begotten from the divine realm. The pharaoh was therefore seen as conceived by Re, the sun god. Ugaritic literature sees Keret, king of Khubur, as the “son of El, the chief god of the Canaanites”. Iconographic evidence also alludes to “two princes suckling the breasts of the goddess Anat”. The Aramean kings even took the designation “son of” as part of their throne names (Ben-Hadad means “son of Hadad”). In the Mesopotamian context it was part of the royal prerogative to claim divine heritage. In the Israelite context, however, kings were “sons of the deity” on the basis of a covenant, and not by nature (see Ps 89:26; 2 Sam 7:14) (Matthews, Chavalas, & Walton, 2000, p. Ps 2).

In the phrase “Son of YHWH” one can already surmise a degree of election. However, the phrase also points to a certain degree of divinity inherent in kingship. Therefore, the phrase “Son of YHWH” can put the person of the king more in the divine sphere than in the human sphere, thus increasing the king’s authority exponentially. The divinity of the king underpins his power and authority, and this also contributes to the ideological weight of kingship in legitimising structural and direct violence. More simply put, the people of Israel had to listen to the king, because the king says so. But the king says so, because YHWH says so, therefore when the king speaks, YHWH speaks. This special relationship the king had with YHWH, as YHWH’s son, could have put the king far above any other religious office of the time. But where did this notion of the king as the son of YHWH come from? One can see from the surrounding ideas of kingship that this particular idea better fits the Egyptian take on kingship but can also be attributed to Mesopotamian ideas of kingship, in so far as the king had a special relationship with the gods.

First, one has to look at the king as the son of YHWH in the sense of his consequent elected status. Chapter 4 of this study has indicated the ways in which a divinely elected status creates the potential for cultural violence. Marty Stevens (2012, p. 9) argues that as far back as there are written records, kings were heads of territories. To be able to legitimise this authority, the king had to have backing from the divine sphere. Thus, it came to be that the virtually universal underpinning of royal governance was the ideology of divine selection. In other words, the Divine King chooses the earthly king; therefore, the earthly king serves at the pleasure of the Divine King (Stevens, 2012, p. 10). The particulars of kingship in Mesopotamia

have already been touched on, but it pays to examine the following example of divine selection that Stevens (2012, p. 10) provides. In a sixth century BCE Cyrus cylinder: “[Marduk, the chief deity of Babylon] inspected and checked all the countries, seeking for the upright king of his choice. He took the hand of Cyrus, king of the city of Anshan, and called him by his name, proclaiming him aloud for the kingship over all of everything.” Stevens (2012, p. 10) proceeds to show just how this ideology of election can be perused in the Psalms. It pays to later in this study look more closely at the Psalms concerning the kings. At this stage, it is important to state that it was probably not in a real physical sense that ordinary Judeans believed that the king was the son of YHWH. But in a culture where it was possible for a father to adopt a boy and by the act of adoption make the boy his lawful son, it was probably not such a long shot to see YHWH’s adoption of a king as changing the king’s relationship with YHWH in quite a substantial manner.<sup>42</sup>

On the other hand, even if the divinity of the king could have made it possible for the king to legitimise direct and structural violence, the “closer” the king was to YHWH, who was the epitome of justice and righteousness, the higher the degree of justice and righteousness that could have been expected from the king. If the king was almost divine or had a high degree of divinity, and the king acted consistently in an unjust and unrighteous manner, then the logical argument could have been that YHWH was also unjust and unrighteous. This could have been an untenable situation for the prophets. But how was the justice of the king understood? Was it possible that the populace expected a certain degree of justice and righteousness, but the king had a different mode of justice and righteousness that was important for the monarchy and not necessarily for the populace?

## ii. Justice of the King

Gerstenberger (2002, p. 184) remarks that justice towards the needy was the king’s business because it was YHWH’s business. According to Irwin (2012, p. 721), the concept of justice is found throughout the Hebrew Bible in widely varying genres. In prophetic literature the parallel word pair *mišpāt* “justice, judgment” and *šēdāqā* “righteousness” is used frequently in the

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<sup>42</sup> Adoption in the ANE can be described as the “creation of a kinship relationship between two individuals that is recognized as essentially equivalent to one stemming from natural descent”. In the ANE context one can find such ties between adoptive parent(s) and a son or daughter. It was common for the parties to have had pre-existing familial relations (Knobloch, 1992, p. 76).

demand for justice. The term *ḥesed* “loving-kindness, mercy, loyalty” appears as a component of justice in Jer 9:24, used in conjunction with *mišpāṭ* and *šēdāqā*, as characteristics employed by YHWH (cf. Ps 33:5). In Micah, “love of *ḥesed*”, along with humility and righteousness, is a quality that characterises the “person of YHWH” (Mic 6:8). Concepts related to social justice are *’ēmet* “truth” (e.g., Ps 89:14; Isa 59:14; Ezek 18:8; Zech 8:16), *’emûnâ* “faithfulness” (e.g., 1 Sam 26:23; Ps 40:10; 143:1; Isa 59:4; Jer 5:1), and *rahāmîm* “mercy, compassion” (e.g., Ps 119:156; Hos 2:19; Zech 7:9). In a negative sense, injustice is often indicated by use of the terms *’āwel* “perversity, injustice” (e.g., Ezek 18:8; 28:18; 35:15) and *reša* “wickedness” “injustice” (e.g., Is 58:6; Mic 6:10-11), as well as *ra* “evil” (e.g., Isa 33:15-16; 59:15; Amos 5:15) (Irwin, 2012, p. 721).

When these terms are used in conjunction with a range of groups or people associated with vulnerable or marginalised individuals or groups, including *’almānâ* “widow”, *yātôm* “orphan”, *gēr* “sojourner, alien, refugee”, *’ānî* “poor, afflicted”, *’ebyôn* “needy, oppressed” and *dal* “weak, helpless”, then one can speak of social justice (Irwin, 2012, p. 720). Irwin (2012, p. 720) furthermore argues that “individuals included in these categories were those who fell outside the social support system of land ownership, family and/or patriarchy that served ancient Israel”. Contemporary language would use the words “systemic discrimination” to describe the ordeal faced by individuals left outside the “systems” designed to protect. Outside these “systems” designed to protect, they were easily exploited and ignored, left with not much recourse if their rights were denied. The realities of life in ancient Israel, with its warfare, disease and famine, also ensured that widows, orphans and refugees were always present. Therefore, individuals such as the *’almānâ*, *yātôm*, and *gēr* came under the special care of YHWH, the care of YHWH’s surrogate, the king, and the care of the people at large as part of their covenantal obligation (Irwin, 2012, p. 721).

In Israel and in the ANE, the administration of justice was therefore a royal responsibility that was exercised by virtue of the king’s connection with the divine realm. The royal obligation to manage the behaviour and values of YHWH on earth can be summed up by the words spoken by YHWH in the last days of Judean monarchical state: “but let those who boast, boast in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the LORD; I act with steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, says the LORD” (Jer 9:24). In all of its dealings, Israel was to follow YHWH’s example and act with *ḥesed* “faithfulness” (Hos 6:6; Mic 6:8; Zech 7:9), *’ēmet* “truth” (Ezek 18:8; Zech 7:9; 8:16), and *mîšôr* “fairness” (Ps 67:4; Is 11:4) (Irwin, 2012, p. 720).

The administration of justice was, therefore, the task of the government. Justice was normally dispensed at the cities where the crimes took place. What is noteworthy from Psalm 72, is that punishment of the oppressor is as important as protecting the rights of the needy (Goldingay, 2009, p. 499). What can be deduced from the punishment of the oppressor, is that the lack of justice of the king could just as well have been his lack of effectively acting against oppressors. This failure of the king to act against the oppressors could have been because these oppressors were part of his own fellow royal entourage. One can imagine that the difficult and important web of patronage that was probably built up over years, could not have been as important as the fate of the needy and the disempowered.

But if justice was not exclusively the responsibility of the king, who else was also responsible? Could a situation evolve where the king took away other justice offices by centralising them and by this action actually cause even worse structural and direct violence? This is possible, if the decentralised justice offices were an effective counter measure against the king's possible take-over of judicial functions. Goldingay (2009, p. 501) places the day-to-day functioning of justice firmly within the auspices of the village elders. Social justice, in this sense, was known as *mišpāṭ ūšēdāqā* “judicious righteousness”. The village elders were responsible for seeing that *mišpāṭ ūšēdāqā* was a reality in the community's life. The first of the two words, *mišpāṭ* “justice, judgment”, means that the person dispensing justice has the authority to do so. The second word, *šēdāqā* “righteousness”, means that the person dispensing justice does so in accordance with the standards and values of the village (Goldingay, 2009, p. 501). Clearly receiving justice would probably have been better in the context of the village, but more in the sense that the village could in some way mitigate the cruel effects of the state by trying to normalise situations of injustice, and not in explicitly countering monarchical judiciary power.

In the investigation of kingship in general, two important aspects of kingship came to the fore: The king had an important relationship with the deity; and the king was responsible for upholding social justice. With the next avenue of investigation, the focus will be on the development of kingship in Israel. As was discussed, it is important to see the development of kingship in Israel as intertwined with the development of the monarchical state of Israel. Although specific kings will be mentioned, according to their importance in the establishment, maintaining and building of kingship in Israel, the diachronic development of the monarchical state will be of importance. The reasons are that the monarchical state was arguably the biggest role player in any structural violence experienced by ordinary Israelites, and that the

monarchical state probably had more to contribute to the development of a royal ideology than any specific king alone. A diachronic view of the process of monarchical state formation can also point to the establishment of structural inequality that could have contributed to the structural violence of the monarchical state system.

Interspersed in this discussion on the development of kingship and the monarchical state in Israel, comments will be made on the relationships some of these kings had with YHWH; and how these kings can be evaluated concerning social justice. This discussion will start with the kingship of David. Not only can his rule be seen as the springboard for discussing the monarchical state, but David can also be viewed as probably the king that would serve as the prime example for kings to come.

Another important question concerning structural and direct violence, relates to the incidences of these types of violence in the time of these kings. Although the direct and structural violence of the kings of Jer 22:1-23:8 are of importance for the study, it will be helpful to point out where direct violence was visible and structural violence became structural within the diachronic development of kingship. The incidences of direct violence show that the shedding of innocent blood was always the job of kings, while the incidences of structural violence can show that there was more violence in the structures than just the shedding of innocent blood. The direct violence will probably be more visible, and the structural violence more hidden. But one can investigate the structural violence pertaining to a particular king, by investigating the effectiveness of their states in amassing wealth, and in their capacity to uphold the inequality in their respective reigns.

## e. The Development of Kingship in Israel

### i. The Kingdom of David

It is important to show that Israel moved from a relatively equalitarian pre-monarchical society<sup>43</sup> to an un-equalitarian monarchical state.<sup>44</sup> This move can explain why there was a constant polemic against the monarchical state, especially from prophetic circles, but also why

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<sup>43</sup> Israelite society was in many respects the polemical obverse of the Canaanite city-states. At the heart of the contrast was Israel's system of land tenure. In Israel's pre-monarchic period, YHWH alone was king. But more than this, YHWH, who manifested himself at the exodus, epitomised the defeat of the monarchic power of the agrarian state on behalf of the "have nots". The land belonged to YHWH. Any absolute claim on the land was an arrogation of rights appropriate only to YHWH. But pre-monarchic Israel also understood YHWH to "distribute this economic base to peasant vassals in a manner which sought to assure secure and sufficient access to arable land and thereby to livelihood". Whether as a specific plot, a right to be included in the periodic redistribution of lands held by the village as a whole, or some combination of the two, each extended family of producers was conceived to hold as an inalienable inheritance the land which it worked. Since, as landlord of the hill country, YHWH left with their peasant producers the "surpluses" greedily extracted by the human overlords of the nearby plains, the extended families who formed the building blocks of Israel's upland society were relatively viable and stable. Called "father's house" (*bêyt ab*), the extended family was a patrilineal and patrilocal unit of three or four generations. The family members shared a dwelling in the village and together held and worked a portion of its arable land. These hill country farmers practised mixed, subsistence agriculture, producing most of what they consumed and consuming most of what they produced (Chaney, 1986, pp. 61-62).

<sup>44</sup> There were internal and external reasons for the emergence of the monarchical state. **Internal reasons:** (1) "In the coastal plain, the major valleys of the Jezreel and Nahal Tavor, the Hula Basin, the northern Jordan just north of the Sea of Galilee, and the Beth Shean Valley, the need for centralized management of land drainage and irrigation supported and was supported by political centralization, and also positively affected the importance and power of the indigenous city-state systems of Palestine" (Frick, 1986, p. 22). (2) Population growth (Coote & Whitelam, 1986, pp. 124-125). (3) Warfare, where successful warfare requires a high degree of subordination, that is, obedience to leaders. This "subordination within the military" made "subordination within the political community" possible too. Warfare also had the ability to negate evolutionary constraints inherent in ranked societies and to cause the wealth and popularity of military leaders to increase. The wealth and popularity of military leaders such as Saul and David basically created a new dispensation of new "top dogs", who created new hierarchies of power around them (Frick, 1986, p. 23). (4) "Technological innovations – terracing, plastered water cisterns and especially the use of iron, brought about the intensification of agricultural activities, the production of surpluses and economic independence" (Finkelstein, 1989, pp. 51-52). (5) The "limiting ecological conditions of the hill country resulted in a competition for land when the population increased. This competition necessitated stabilizing institutions" (Finkelstein, 1989, p. 52). **External reasons:** (1) The Philistine threat to Israelite economy (Finkelstein, 1989, pp. 51-52). Coote and Whitelam (1986:127-141) claim that the "Philistine threat was the catalyst for the creation of the Israelite state, since it initiated complex internal economic, social, political and religious processes". Although the "developing horticulture economy" was dependent on long-term stability, it also increased the importance of markets and furthermore created a class of land-owners. The stratification of Israelite society was caused by the "emergence of an elite of wealthy farmers and town dwellers (around the markets), but the external threat of the Philistine threat was the catalyst in the establishment of a chiefdom, and finally of a state" (Coote & Whitelam, 1986, pp. 127-141).

the “royal ideology of divine legitimation” needed to be well developed and skillfully applied. The royal ideology of the monarchical state basically had to counter the inherent equalitarian ethos of the Israelite people at every turn. Although this pre-monarchical equalitarian state of life was probably preferred by the rank and file of Israel, it could not stand the test of time. Coote and Whitelam (1986, pp. 123-124) characterise pre-monarchical Israel as a loose confederation of various groups, at times competitive with or hostile to one another, held in equilibrium by a particular configuration of circumstances. The inherent fragility of this configuration based on short-term objectives meant it was inevitable that the result of a change in circumstances would be either fission or fusion into a more centralised society. The gradual re-establishment of trade and an upturn in the interregional economy provided the trigger which produced the fusion and the rise of the Israelite monarchy.

Marvin Chaney (1986, p. 67) gives some insight into the rise of the Israelite monarchy. David not only defeated the Philistines, restricting them to their pentapolis and laying solid Israelite claim to the alluvial plains of Canaan for the first time, but succeeded in subjugating his neighbors on all sides. In this process of empire building, David incurred some monetary debts as well as personal debts. He rewarded his loyal military retainers with positions in his newly created administration, as well as grants of landed estates from the newly conquered lowlands that became patrimonial estates. Once ensconced, these groups increasingly assumed values typical of agrarian elite, and sought to broaden their powers of taxation and control. Yahwism was concurrently undergoing transformation into the official religion of the monarchic state of Israel. Most of its institutional expressions above the local level came to be dominated by the newly risen elite and its values (Chaney, 1986, p. 67).

From this point on, Israel exhibited two conflicting systems of land tenure which were the material bases of two fundamentally different understandings of society and its proper values. What is certain, is that these two conflicting systems did not compete on equal terms. Crises such as the vicissitudes of periodic drought, blight, and pestilence could be weathered, albeit with difficulty. As long as the freeholding producers of pre-monarchic Israel were able to retain all or most of their own “surpluses”, and had the added security of covenantal mutual assistance, they could survive. Their survival was only endangered when the monarchical state and its ruling elite started targeting these “surpluses” in order to pay for strategic and luxury items. With the margins of the freeholding producers growing slimmer, they were forced into debt by the occurrences of natural disasters. Even if they could borrow “surpluses”, these were

stored by the large landlords who also controlled the price (Chaney, 1986, p. 68; Lowery, 1991, pp. 58-59).

A freeholding peasant family had only its land and its persons as collateral. Usurious interest rates caused frequent foreclosures of freeholding peasant farms. This only hastened the transfer of land from these freeholding families to large estates, thus reducing previously independent farmers to debt-slaves and landless day-laborers. Despite biblical laws that were instituted to mitigate the violence of these processes, large plots of land, once considered to belong to YHWH, found their way into fewer hands, with unhappy results for the peasant majority (Chaney, 1986, p. 68; Lowery, 1991, pp. 58-59).

One hears of the kingship of David when Jeremiah delivers his oracle of judgement in Jer 22:2 against the “king of Judah, who sit on the throne of David”. Three pertinent questions concerning David’s kingship, will now be addressed: (1) David’s relationship with YHWH; (2) David’s stance on social justice; and (3) the evidence of structural and direct violence during David’s reign. With regards to the reign of David, there is a plethora of biblical textual evidence available. But, having said this, it will also be difficult to choose what to include and what to leave out. For example, it is questionable if the United Monarchy of the biblical witness collaborates with archeological evidence (Finkelstein, 2007, pp. 110-113). One is left with the text to work with, and staying within the ambit of ideological criticism, certain aspects concerning the reigns of David and Solomon can be identified.

Rainer Albertz (1992, p. 110) states that the form of central authority which David initiated was already very different from the earlier forms of government in Israel. Albertz (1992, p. 110) concurs with Chaney that David founded himself a strong band of mercenaries, which helped him to accrue for himself extensive plots of land, making him economically autonomous while binding his mercenaries permanently to him. This support David garnered for himself made him independent from the tribes. The tribes knew this. Therefore, his anointing as king by the representatives of the tribes (2 Sam 2:4; 5:3) and the subsequent treaty that was concluded between David and the tribes, was the tribes adapting to the already existing political, military and economic powerbase of David. The Jebusite city of Jerusalem was captured with the help of these mercenaries, where after it became David’s capital with no strings attached to the tribes (2 Sam 5:6-9). What followed was what Albertz calls a “rapid build-up of central political authority in Israel” (Albertz, 1992, p. 110).

David's ambitious determination to rule took kingship from its humble beginnings to the onset of a fully-fledged monarchical state. The creation of this monarchical state, without its build-in counterbalances against single-rule domination, became a reality. Hereafter, the monarchical state, with its exclusive hold on power via its bureaucratic control of land, no longer needed the nation to approve its hold on power (Albertz, 1992, p. 110).

According to Steven Ortiz (2014, p. 228), David was after control. David needed to control the people and he needed to control the land. These two factors have a symbiotic relationship. If you control the land (e.g., trade and communication routes, agriculture/ herding lands), you control the population; if you control the population (e.g., they submit to your leadership), you control the land. The establishment of his kingship, his reputation, and his support were therefore David's highest priorities. Concerning his domestic and a foreign policy, David established a high view of kingship, with which he could control the population. The tribe's loyalty was now to the crown. To establish and to ensure this high view of kingship, David needed divine authorisation. David held that YHWH established David's kingship; the king was YHWH's anointed (Ortiz, 2014, p. 228).

Keeping in mind that the divine authorisation for David's rule could have been a later redaction, the narrative of David's kingship makes the close relationship between YHWH and David abundantly clear. Goldingay (2003, p. 553) states that David, like Saul, started off as *nāgîd*, one designated as ruler by YHWH (2 Sam 5:2; cf. 1 Sam 13:14; 25:30; 2 Sam 6:21; 7:8). He was appointed "according to the word of the LORD by Samuel", and his position consolidated "according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel" (1 Chron 11:3, 10). Israel again has a leader who can be called YHWH's servant (2 Sam 3:18; and 12 times in 2 Sam 7). He is YHWH's son (2 Sam 7:14). He is "the man lifted up high" or "lifted up by the Most High" or "the man YHWH lifted up" (2 Sam 23:1) (Goldingay, 2003, p. 553).

Therefore, the writer of the narrative of David's kingship in 2 Samuel, had to present David as divinely chosen. Public proclamations of rule, like coronations, serves as a marker of legitimacy. Coronations often formalise monarchies by gathering concerned parties and investing the king or queen with symbols of their position, such as a crown. Performing such rituals attempts to assign power and encourages others to recognise and support the leader. In ancient Israel, the pouring of oil on the head, or anointing, ceremonially marked the selection of an individual for specific office – in this case, as the monarch. The narrative presents David as the recipient of an anointing on three different occasions. In 1 Sam 16:1-13, the prophet

Samuel anoints David as a young boy. The people of Judah anoint him to serve as king of the tribe of Judah in 2 Sam 2:4 and David is again anointed to symbolise his ascension as king of the tribes of Israel in 2 Sam 5:3 (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, pp. 281-282).

Whereas later readers could still see the last two public acts of anointing as not really with divine consent, the first anointing by Samuel serves to secure David's kingship in YHWH's choice and preference. This anointing also served a legitimising function when David assumed the throne in Israel. The text says that the people saw David as a leader because "the LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel" (2 Sam 5:2). It is notable that the people saw David, and David alone, as the object of YHWH's communication in making him king (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, pp. 181-182).

Goldingay (2003, p. 555) points out that this relationship between YHWH and David also included YHWH's choice of Jerusalem as YHWH's city (Goldingay, 2003, p. 555). The narrative tells that David chose Jerusalem, a Jebusite stronghold, as his capital, a city neither under Israelite control nor associated with any of the tribes. Situated between Hebron – David's home in Judah – and the area occupied by the more dominant northern tribes, the city unites Judah and Israel. (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 285). David's next step was to move the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. The ark of the covenant was the symbol of YHWH's presence. In Jerusalem it affirmed YHWH's defense of Jerusalem as well as protection of and favour towards its human administrative structure (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 286). From these few aspects of David's kingship, it can be argued that David, according to the biblical witness, enjoyed a special relationship with YHWH. With YHWH's choice of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and YHWH's choice of Jerusalem as the place where "my Name shall dwell" in the sense that YHWH would later instruct Solomon to build him a temple in Jerusalem, the logical assumption by any Judean will probably be that whatever originates from the royal authorities in Jerusalem, certainly had to have the knowledge of YHWH. Furthermore, YHWH's tacit approval was probably already given for any royal endeavour.

The second question then needs to be answered: What was David's stance on social justice? It is interesting that David and Jerusalem became the objects of YHWH's election in the place of the people of Israel (Goldingay, 2003, p. 557). YHWH is committed to David

independently of a commitment to the people. YHWH becomes David's rock and deliverer and refuge, the one who responds to David's cry and defeats David's enemies, the one who makes a covenant with David (2 Sam 22-23) (Goldingay, 2003, pp. 557-558). It can then be argued that YHWH's justice also had to run through the king to the people. This then begs the question if David was a moral king?

On the one hand, it can be said that David is represented, in the narrative of 2 Samuel, as a moral king. Several accounts are highlighted in the narrative to illustrate that David acted in such a manner that nothing could be named against him. Examples include not harming YHWH's anointed, Saul (1 Sam 24:1-7; 26:1-12); accepting Abigail's advice not to act rashly against her husband, Nabal (1 Sam 25:23-35); public mourning of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 1:11-12, 17-27); public mourning of Abner (3:31-38); and kindness to Saul's household (2 Sam 9). In a summary account of David's accomplishments, it is stated that he "administered justice and equity to all his people" (2 Sam. 8:15) (Ortiz, 2014, p. 229).

On the other hand, Goldingay (2003, p. 554) states that social justice (*mišpāṭ ūšēdāqâ*) was expected from the justice systems of the villages. If one keeps in mind the abovementioned statement of David administering "justice and equity to all his people with faithfulness" (*mišpāṭ ūšēdāqâ*), David's development of an administration could have further marginalised people such as the elders of the villages. In this new development of kingship in Israel, David could have become more and more like the kings of the ANE. David is the only king who is ever said to dispense *mišpāṭ ūšēdāqâ*. YHWH's commitment to David's dynasty therefore implies not merely keeping a Davidic king on the throne, but ensuring that he exercises authority with faithfulness (e.g., Jer 22:1-23:6; Ezek 34:1-24; 37:24-25) (Goldingay, 2003, p. 554).

Thus far, questions concerning David's relations with YHWH and David's focus on justice have been considered. One can already deduce from the above remarks that David's rule was paramount in the establishment of the state of Israel. Just his process of the centralisation of the infant cult and state apparatus in Jerusalem was already a significant step in the direction of a fully-fledged monarchical state of Israel. Therefore, it can be said, according to Galtung's definition of structural violence, that David's rule was the first step towards the structural violence of kingship in the Hebrew Bible. Concerning direct violence in the rule of David, one can probably point to the reason 1 Chron 22:8 gives as to why David could not build a temple for YHWH: "But the word of the LORD came to me (David), saying,

‘You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood in my sight on the earth’.

Solomon took over as king of Israel after his father David’s death. The same questions concerning Solomon’s relationship towards YHWH, his focus on social justice, and evidence of direct and structural violence during Solomon’s reign need to be asked that were asked of David’s reign.

## **ii. The Kingdom of Solomon**

Solomon, after David, pressed his agrarian economic base to breaking point. The peasant majority, from whose experience the royal court became increasingly buffered and alienated, paid by all accounts. Much of their agricultural production was taxed away and either exported to pay for the imports secured from maritime Phoenicia and other trading partners (1 Kgs 5:1-11 [MT. 5:15-25]) or consumed by the lavishly provisioned court (1 Kgs 4:22-28). Within the constraints of the situation, the peasantry of Israel had no good options for meeting this increased demand for agricultural commodities (Chaney, 1986, p. 69).

The peasantry could increase the number of person-hours expended in the cultivation of each unit of arable land in the hope of increasing productivity. Solomon's heavy use of *corvée* (1 Kgs 5:13-18 [MT. 5:27-32]), however, meant that only a diminution of labour intensity was possible. Another alternative for increasing output would have been to improve somehow the efficiency of production. In this case, too, Solomon’s military and building policies allowed only the opposite. Solomon’s chariot horses were procured by the export of foodstuffs, but the maintenance of these pampered symbols of elite power put them in direct competition with the peasant population for the grain which remained (cf. 1 Kgs 4:28). The extent to which they consumed pasture, hay, and straw, reduced the only too finite quantities of resources available to support the oxen which provided peasant agriculture its major tractive power. The splendour and might of YHWH's temple and Solomon's palace therefore meant hunger for the peasant masses (Chaney, 1986, p. 69). These factors contributed to the stark inequality that increasingly became the hallmark of the structural violence of Solomon’s rule.

Three pertinent questions concerning Solomon’s kingship will now be addressed: (1) Solomon’s relationship with YHWH; (2) Solomon’s stance on social justice; and (3) the evidence of structural and direct violence during Solomon’s reign.

Much is made in the biblical witness of Solomon's relationship with YHWH. According to Norman Habel (1995, pp. 22-23) the account of the dream vision of Solomon at Gibeon can be seen as a political propaganda story (*Königsnovelle*) that legitimates Solomon's accession to the throne (1 Kgs 3:4-15). Solomon's request for the understanding required to rule the land, is recognised as an idealistic expression of the inner wisdom and integrity appropriate to a genuine son of David ascending the throne (cf. Isa 11:1-3). The text also provides, according to Habel, an "ideological charter for the accumulation of wealth, status, and honor in the hands of the monarchy, where wisdom serves as the means, not the end, of Solomon's rule". After a lavish holocaust of a thousand animals, YHWH is portrayed as appearing to Solomon, who offers his prayer of legitimation. Solomon uses the diplomatic rhetoric of a would-be monarch when he uses all the appropriate language of humility and reverence to express his dependency on YHWH. Solomon's place on the throne is due to YHWH's kindness (*hesed*) to David (1 Kgs 3:6), his capacity to rule is only that of an inexperienced child (1 Kgs 3:7), and his people constitute an innumerable host (1 Kgs 3:8). In the end, he exclaims, almost disarmingly, "Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?" (1 Kgs 3:9). This prelude, however, is to the pronouncement by YHWH of a series of blessings, namely wealth and honour, high status among other monarchs, and long life (1 Kgs 3:12-14). Of these blessings, a long life is linked specifically to continued obedience to the ways of YHWH (Habel, 1995, pp. 22-23).

From this narrative in 1 Kings, one can draw a few conclusions: Firstly, it is obvious that YHWH had a relationship with Solomon, and that this dream constituted a divine legitimisation of Solomon's rule. Secondly, it is also clear that the exercise of justice was an important subcategory under "wisdom". Therefore, when people were amazed by Solomon's wisdom, this included, in a way, his justice. It is also interesting that this dream of Solomon is immediately followed up with a case study concerning Solomon's wise exercise of justice to the two women and the baby (1 Kgs 3:16-28), where after the whole Israel "stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice" (1 Kgs 3:28). One can also argue that, if Solomon's rule was exemplified by justice, and Solomon established the monarchical state, then the monarchical state was the epitome of Solomon's justice in practice. Therefore, a strong monarchical state, with subsequent kings, could be seen as the result of a rule of justice. But a strong monarchical state, even with a just king, was still

structural violence in practise, because of the stark inequality inherent to the monarchical state, made even more pronounced during Solomon's rule.

Concerning the disparity in wealth between the "have's" and "have nots" which is such an integral part of structural violence, Solomon's reign was known for its affluence. Gnuse (2011, pp. 91-92) provides a summary of some of the important accomplices of the state of Israel under the reign of Solomon: (1) He instituted the *corveé*, the practice of forcing people to work on the royal building projects, as was already discussed (1 Kgs 5:13-18; 9:15; 12:4). The temple was constructed in 7 years (1 Kgs 6:38) while his palace required 13 years (1 Kgs 7:1). (2) He amassed wealth, in that he owned 12 000 horses and horsemen, plus 1 400 chariots, a sign of tremendous military power. (3) He created 12 administrative districts for the country (1 Kgs 4:7-19), which differed from the old tribal borders. (4) Solomon also led a conspicuously consumptive lifestyle. In 1 Kgs 4:22-23, 26-27 Solomon's provision for one day was "30 cores of choice flour, and 60 cores of meal, 10 fat oxen, and 20 pasture-fed cattle, 100 sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl". Solomon also had "40 000 stalls of horses for his chariots". Gnuse (2011, pp. 91-92) makes a last important remark concerning the reign of Solomon. He states that under Solomon, "economics of privilege" replaced any concern for the equitable distribution of resources to the general citizenry (Gnuse, 2011, pp. 91-92).

In another step towards making the structural violence of the monarchical state more entrenched, Solomon centralised the power of the monarchical state by purging the military and the cult of its pre-monarchic equalitarian roots and influences. David maintained a dual military organisation, with Joab in command of the citizen army and Benaiah in command of the foreign mercenaries (2 Sam 8:16, 18; 20:23). Violating the sanctuary of the altar, Solomon ordered Benaiah to purge Joab and then consolidated command of a unified, professional army under Benaiah (1 Kgs 2:28-35). The citizen-soldier had become expendable. David also maintained a dual cultic organisation. Abiathar represented cultic continuity with the more egalitarian institutions of pre-monarchic Israel, while Zadok appeared much more the religious apologist for the new monarchic order. Solomon resolved both tensions in favour of the total embrace of a starkly stratified, monarchic order (Chaney, 1986, p. 70).

From these purges, Solomon established a fully-fledged state bureaucracy. Even with the knowledge of these machinations of state being a later redaction, it is still important that in Solomon's rule one can clearly discern a state that functioned separately from the tribal

organisation (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 295). Richard Nelson remarks that according to the roster of state functionaries mentioned in 1 Kgs 4:2-6, Solomon's court was elaborate enough to require (1) three officials dealing with records and written matters, (2) an army commander, (3) a secretary of state supervising deployed envoys or representatives, (4) a friend of the king to advise him on public and private affairs, (5) an administrator for the palace and crown property, and (6) an overseer of conscript labor (Nelson, 2014, p. 66). According to Walter Dietrich (2007, p. 92) there was a definite increase in the amount of state functionaries that Solomon needed for his kingdom.

Because it has already been argued that the structural establishment of the state has a certain permanence, where officials will probably change but not their offices, one can look at certain offices of importance. (1) Priests: priests serve YHWH, but under the direction of the king. However, even as these priests appear to function in the service of YHWH, they work for the state, and their loyalty rests with the king (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 196; Albertz, 1992, p. 129). (2) Secretaries: the high placement of these officials on both Solomon's and David's lists of administrative personnel (2 Sam 9:17; 20:25) indicate that they likely functioned as principal aides to the king. In this capacity, they managed how power circulated around the king by controlling who got access to him and when (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 197). The secretary was also responsible for all non-war and non-religious matters such as foreign affairs and domestic policies. His authority could also extend to other important people such as the political advisors of the king (Dietrich, 2007, p. 192). (3) Recorder: by managing the official archives, the recorders exercised the power to shape information about a king and his actions. A recorder possibly served also as a herald. As a court official, this person took charge of making royal proclamations and oversaw diplomatic communications between kings (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 298; Dietrich, 2007, p. 192). (4) Military Commander: states need military forces to protect their interests, but kings require loyal servants in this role given the ability of an army to unseat a ruler (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, pp. 298-299). The military commander was also in charge of the militia and the mercenaries in case of war (Dietrich, 2007, p. 191). Although more offices existed, only these are mentioned, because these offices held the most power, and the lower one moved on the hierarchy, the more access to power diminished (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, pp. 296-299).

Concerning the shedding of innocent blood as direct violence, Solomon's reign started out with a copious amount of direct violence. Robert Gnuse (2011, pp. 90-91) gives some

insight into these turbulent times. Solomon became king instead of the expected heir, Adonijah. For this, Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, and the prophet Nathan were crucial. While Adonijah was being crowned king, Bathsheba and Nathan convinced David that Solomon had been promised the throne. There is no account of such a promise. Bathsheba and Nathan held a counter coronation ceremony with David present, so that Adonijah and his supporters were intimidated and relinquished their claim to make Adonijah king (1 Kgs 1:5-53). Solomon then proceeded to kill Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei (1 Kgs 2:13-46) (Gnuse, 2011, pp. 90-91).

After Solomon's rule, the United Monarchy broke up in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. This raises the question if Israel continued with Solomon's monarchical state, albeit by itself, or not, leaving only the monarchical state of Judah an example of structural violence.

### **iii. The Monarchical State of Israel**

Chaney (1986, p. 71) makes an important point when he notes that the half century between Jeroboam's assumption of the throne and the accession of Omri (ca. 931-883 BCE) saw the North continuing to reject the Solomonic model for society without apparently finding a stable alternative. A lack of dynastic succession, with its accompanying murder and mayhem and multiple capitals and cultic sites, was preferred over political and religious centralisation. Political instability, however, left the army the only locus of organised power, and Omri emerged the victor in a struggle between rival officers. Omri's accession marks a systemic watershed, for he appropriated the Solomonic model of a monarchical state for his new kingdom. Just as David and Solomon had made Jerusalem the centre of the so-called United Monarchy, Omri and Ahab built Samaria as the capital of Israel to which all else became hinterland. The effect of these developments was traumatic for the peasantry of Israel. Solomon had 1 400 chariots (1 Kgs 10:26 cf. 2 Chron 9:25). The annals of Shalmaneser III (*ANET*: 278-79) indicate that at the famous battle of Qarqar, Ahab had 2 000. It stands to reason that the economic cost of more chariots for an area smaller than the United Monarchy, was crippling (Chaney, 1986, p. 71).

What then was the situation on the ground in the development of kingship in Israel and Judah? The highlands were not safe from encroachment by the elite. The highland fields with their mixed crops that previously provided nutritional variety for peasant families, were soon combined and enlarged into single crop olive orchards and vineyards, producing large volumes,

and contributing to the “increasingly consumptive lifestyle of the local elite” Wine and oil were also more valuable than most mix crops, making it ideal for export in exchange for the strategic and luxury imports so desired by the elite (Chaney, 1986, p. 91; Lowery, 1991, pp. 59-60).

But the peasants who produced these "efficient" cash crops, did not receive enough from these crops to live on. The old system of freehold farming provided the peasant majority with secure access to a modest living. The cyclical demands of viticulture and orcharding, on the other hand, made them work the same fields, but not during lulls in the agricultural calendar, and at the low wages for day-labours. With less money and at times unemployed, they were forced to the marketplace, of which they had little or no experience, to buy the staples of their diet, namely wheat and barley. They had previously produced these cereals sufficiently for themselves in their hillside plots, but now the same grains were grown “efficiently” on the large estates of the alluvial plains and piedmont region and shipped to the market. In the marketplace, the low and erratic wages for day-labourers did not provide for enough sustenance as they were cheated with deceptive weights and measures as well as adulterated grain. Finally, the vulnerable peasants founded the justice system stacked against him. Where the courts were supposed to stop foreclosures based upon “illegal forms of interest”, these corrupt courts rather approved the foreclosures (Chaney, 1986, p. 73; Coomber, 2010, p. 91; Lowery, 1991, pp. 59-60).

These diachronic changes in the “social world behind the text” of Israel and Judah were dependent on the world around these states. Coomber (2010, p. 84) states that the cyclical urban activity in Early Bronze Age Palestine was characteristic of ANE societies that did not fully develop their own political economies, but rather functioned as peripheral economies that revolved around core states, like Egypt and Babylon (Coomber, 2010, p. 84). It can also be argued that the development of the economies of Israel and Judah continued, increasing centralisation, social stratification and the sharp differences in lifestyle between the rich and the poor, where the rich became richer, and the poor, poorer.

With the emergence of Assyria, as a major world player, the ball game changed. The tribute that had to be payed to Assyria, forced Israel into open rebellion and therefore to its end, but forced Judah into vassaldom (Richter, 2014, p. 336).

## **iv. The Monarchical State of Judah**

### **1. From Ahaz to Manasseh**

Even with the added liability of tribute, the reign of Ahaz saw a societal transformation in Judah where Judah transformed still further from a “land of scattered agrarian communities into a state, with flourishing urban-based economic activity”.<sup>45</sup> There was also increased demographic upheaval with an increase in population (Coomber, 2010, pp. 113-114). Even if the vassaldom of Judah, under Assyrian hegemony, was advantageous for some of the urban-based elite, the situation did not really change for the peasant masses. During the rule of Manasseh, Sennacherib captured 46 walled towns and their associated villages, captured or exiled more than 2 000 Judeans, increased the kingdom’s vassal payments, and gave away substantial portions of Judean land to the Philistines, resulting in the creation of refugees and the reduction of resources. Even if the Assyrian claims are exaggerated, the evidence suggests significant devastation, death, and deportation, especially in western and south-western Judah (Kelle, 2014, p. 335). These destructive Assyrian influences on the Judean social landscape only increased the problems of the peasant masses already mentioned by Chaney (Kelle, 2014, p. 337; Lowery, 1991, pp. 37-38). With the lapse of Assyrian influence, it stands to reason that the decrease in tribute would have change the situation of the elite, but did anything change for the poorest of poor?

### **2. The Kingdom of Josiah**

The next important king, mentioned by Jeremiah, albeit implicitly, in Jer 22:1-23:8, is King Josiah. Galvin Garrett (2016, p. 30) states that little extra-biblical evidence exists of Josiah, and even internal evidence contradicts the importance of Josiah. What can be deduced, is that Josiah’s kingdom probably would have shown the signs of stress after much warfare. Hezekiah and Manasseh’s accommodations to Assyria were replaced by Josiah’s extirpation of all

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<sup>45</sup> At the level of the monarchical state, there was centralisation of administrative power (Coomber, 2010, p. 114). It can be argued that the Solomon monarchical state formation was actually the monarchical state formation under the reign of Ahaz. This is possible, but does not change the argument of structural violence inherent in the monarchical state. It will make the diacronic argument less clear, but will not change the synchronic analysis significantly.

foreign influences in Judah. Rather than being a great centraliser and reformer, perhaps his reforms were much more limited (Garrett, 2016, p. 30). Be it as it may, in Josiah one discovers a reformer who embodies the hopes of the book of Deuteronomy more perfectly than any other king, including David. He resonates more with Joshua and Moses than any king. Josiah “is the only king to comply with the law of the king” (Deut 17:15-20). He fulfils the prescriptions of Deuteronomy 12:3 in terms of tearing down *masseboth* and *asherim* and Deuteronomy 16 in terms of celebrating Passover (Garrett, 2016, p. 118). In summary, Garrett (2016, p. 126) states that Josiah is a carefully constructed figure; contemporaries like Jeremiah may have seen him as very different to the person he is ultimately presented as in both Kings, Chronicles, and much contemporary biblical scholarship (Garrett, 2016, p. 126).

Alison Joseph (2015, pp. 154-156) concurs with this image of Josiah as the perfect king of Deuteronomy and states that Josiah’s reign is characterised by the formula: He did “what was right in the eyes of YHWH”, and he was “like David”. Josiah compares even more emphatically with David than Asa and Hezekiah, who were also compared positively to David. Josiah “walked in all the way[s] of David his father. And he did not stray to the right or left” (2 Kgs 22: 2). Josiah is the only one to “walk in all the ways of David”, thereby making him obedient to Deuteronomistic law. The phrase “to walk in the way(s) of YHWH” is used extensively in Deuteronomy and expresses covenantal loyalty. David on his deathbed instructed Solomon “to walk in the way(s) of YHWH”. Josiah also did not “stray to the right or left”, making him the only king to whom this Deuteronomistic phrase applies (Joseph, 2015, pp. 154-156).

Concerning the questions of Josiah’s relationship with YHWH, and Josiah’s commitment to justice, one can come to the same conclusion as with David and Solomon, i.e., that Josiah’s reign was exemplified, according to the biblical narrative, by justice and walking in the ways of YHWH.

In Chapter 3 of this study, one could see that Josiah’s reign was commenced at a time of relative respite from outside influences, economic growth, and a strong nationalistic sentiment resonating through Judah. In Chapter 4 of this study, the cult centralisation of Josiah was discussed as an example of direct violence, with the temple administration as an example of structural violence. Therefore, it is clear that although Josiah is presented in the biblical narrative as an exemplary king, according to Galtung’s definitions of violence, he was a violent

king. If one adds the state apparatus that was still being maintained by Josiah's kingship, the violence of his rule increases.

What can then be deduced from a diachronic perspective on the development of the monarchical state in Israel? If one uses the structure of an early monarchical state proposed forward by Frank Frick (1986, p. 20), one can postulate that the structure did not really change from the time of Solomon to the time of the last three kings of Judah. It was already remarked that Omri probably borrowed Solomon's monarchical state structure for his own kingdom. Galtung also concurs that structures do not necessarily change over time, only their effectiveness in increasing the inherent inequality of the system, changes over time. Certain of the main characteristics of an early monarchical state,<sup>46</sup> can be combined with aspects of the monarchical state of Solomon:

- (1) A sufficient number of people to make possible social categorisation, stratification and specialisation (*Solomon's royal functionaries are evidence of this*).
- (2) Citizenship determined by residence or birth in the territory.
- (3) Government is centralised and has

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<sup>46</sup> Frick (1986, pp. 41-42) points to certain structural characteristics of the early monarchical state. Territorially, the early monarchical state had a definite territory, divided into territorial divisions, which were usually loosely demarcated. People permanently residing in them (with few exceptions) were considered as subjects or citizens of these states. The early monarchical state was an independent organisation, normally with a governmental centre. Urbanisation was, however, not necessarily a characteristic of the early monarchical state. Trade and markets were an important source of income for the ruling hierarchy of the monarchical early state. The early monarchical state was known for its social stratification, with only the lower social classes involved in producing their own food. All other categories were only indirectly related to it. Except for traders, all social categories had the obligation to perform services for the state. Access to the basic means of production, in *casu land*, in early monarchical states, was unequal. Tribute was the main source of income of the king and aristocracy, although the main source of income of smallholders and tenants was primary production. The king was the formal lawgiver in the early monarchical states although there were also informal influences on law-giving. The king was the supreme judge in early monarchical states. The king was also considered as the supreme military commander. Early monarchical states were known for their inequality. The king belonged to the aristocracy. Tenure of high office rendered one eligible for classification with the aristocracy. In early monarchical states the "heads of certain clans belonged to the aristocracy". In early monarchical states the aristocracy was also internally stratified according to rank order of birth and function occupied. The lower stratum was occupied by the commoners, who had the obligation to pay taxes, tributes, or comparable levies. In early monarchical states commoners generally had the obligation to perform military service and the obligation to perform menial services for the state, the aristocracy or functionaries. It is important to note that in these states there were no kinship relations between the king and his family on the one hand, and commoners on the other. Structurally, in all early monarchical states the delegation of tasks and powers, within a three-tier administrative apparatus, constituted a principle of political organisation. This three-tier administrative apparatus had functionaries on a regional level, but less on a national and local level. In early monarchical states specialist functionaries were usually found at the top level of the administrative apparatus. The members of the king's family, as well as the priests, exercised an influence on political decisions in all early states (Frick, 1986, pp. 41-42).

the necessary power for the maintenance of law and order using both authority and force, or the threat of force. (*David already centralised the government at Jerusalem*). (4) It is independent at least de facto, and the government possesses enough power to prevent fission and the capacity to defend its integrity against external threats. (5) Productivity level is enough that there is a regular surplus which is used for the maintenance of the state organisation. (6) Population shows a degree of social stratification to the extent that two emergent social classes (ruler and ruled) can be distinguished. (7) A common ideology exists on which the legitimacy of the rulers is based. (*The royal ideology of a perpetual Davidic dynasty was already active in Solomon's time*) (Frick, 1986, p. 20).

To summarise, one finds in the biblical witness, the formation of an unequal monarchical state, first under David, and then more pronounced under Solomon. With a diachronic view of the development of the monarchical state, it was noted that the structural inequality of the monarchical state only became more intense, having a marked effect on the welfare of the ordinary peasant Israelites. A brief look at the synchronic structural inequality of the monarchical state, shows that the inequality of the monarchical state was inscribed in the structure, and would probably have stayed that way, with slight changes over time, but only in the direction of a more effective state of inequality. But this inequality, inherent to the unequalitarian monarchical state, that was so different from the equalitarian pre-monarchical society, had to be legitimised. A way to accomplish this, was to legitimise the monarchical state in the eyes of YHWH, thereby making any opposition to the monarchical state, opposition against YHWH. A royal ideology was needed for this.

## **f. Royal Ideology**

The sites of power in the monarchical state were firmly located with the king and his closest advisors and entourage. Even if the prophets confronted these localities of power multiple times, they still did this to their own detriment. The power the kings and his entourage exhibited, was unadulterated power. Even if the biblical narrative mostly presents the kings as weak and sinful, an ordinary peasant could not just confront a king on his/her own terms. It was only in the case of internal powers struggles with other powerful persons and/or groups, and powerful external primary state encroachments, that the king found himself weak, but never as weak as an ordinary peasant.

According to the biblical narrative, within the development of the monarchical state in Israel and Judah, there were three dynastical changes in a relatively short time in Israel before Omri, and only one dynastical change after Omri. In Judah, the Davidic dynasty was relative

stable, except when Egypt and Babylonia started meddling in Judah's internal affairs, first with the kingship of Jehoiakim (Egypt), and then with the kingship of Zedekiah (Babylonia). Internal influencers, such as the military (North) and the "people of the land" (South), seemed to be kingmakers. The monarchical state's control over the means of production, was absolute. Within a royal ideology of land, all land was seen as belonging to the king (Habel, 1995, pp. 24-26; Brueggemann, 2002, pp. 93-94). The main ideology produced by the monarchical state of Judah, was the royal ideology of perpetual unconditional legitimation of the cult and the monarchy in Jerusalem by YHWH. One can see that this royal ideology was a strong legitimation and could probably only be ended by the destruction of the cult and the monarchy with the destruction of Jerusalem. Although there were some voices that tried to mitigate and/or dilute this ideology (the Deuteronomist in certain cases, and the prophets most of the time), this ideology seems to have been so enduring that elements probably still exist today. Therefore, one finds a polyphony of voices concerning the king in the Hebrew Bible: Love the king, or hate the king, but you will certainly take notice of the king. The prophets can indeed be said to have taken notice of the kings.

### **g. Prophetic Dialogue with Kingship**

Albertz (1992, p. 164) mentions that the prophets "felt driven to disclose the social, political and cultic abuses of their society, to name the guilty ones and to present those responsible, above all in the leading classes". Such total opposition on a religious foundation soon brought these prophets into conflict with state and cultic officials (Amos 7:10ff.) and isolated them in society (Hos 9:7-9; Mic 2:6ff.; Isa 8:11ff.; cf. Jer 16) (Albertz, 1992, p. 164). Albertz (1992, pp. 165-177) summarises the prophetic dialogue with kingship under four headings: (1) Criticism of social abuses; (2) Criticism of military policy and alliances; (3) Criticism of officialdom and monarchy; and (4) Criticism of the cult and "syncretism".

Amos and Micah, and also Isaiah, addressed specifically the upper classes, whose economic and social behaviour was apprehensible for these prophets. Important issues for the prophets, were:

- (1) The unbridled economic expansion of the great landowners, who put estate alongside estate until they are the sole property-owners in the land (Isa 5:8);
- (2) their greed for more and more land, which forces out the small farmers and their families from their ancestral properties (Amos 8:4; Mic 2:9f.); and
- (3) their disregard for the

principle of ancient Israelite property law: “a man and his house, a man and his inheritance” (Mic 2:1f.) (Alberty, 1992, p. 165).

Also pertinent is the prophetic criticism of the “heedless manipulation by the upper classes of the law of pledges and credit: for only tiny debts they require grievous pledges from the smallholders (Mic 2:9) and drive them into slavery for debt, even selling them off as slaves” (Amos 8:6; 2:6) (Alberty, 1992, p. 165).

It was also the view of the prophets that the ancient law of credit with its leases and pledges (Amos 5:11), is nothing else than plunder and robbery (Isa 3:14; Mic 2:2; cf. 3:2f.; Jer 5:27; Ezek 22:29), and debt slavery amounts to oppression and terror (Amos 3:9f; 4:1). Finally, the careless life of luxury which the upper classes engage in from their extortionate gains, is judged: they build fine town houses for themselves out of hewn stones (Amos 3:10, 15; 5:11), celebrate drunken feasts in them (Amos 6:1-7; Isa 5:11f.), and are not afraid to boast, even in worship, of the pledges that they have taken (Amos 2:8). The prophets also saw Israelite jurisprudence as being corrupted to the core. Local justice is dominated by the upper classes who prevent objective judgments by bribery and intimidation (Isa 5:20, 23; Amos 5:10). They reject the claims of the small farmers (Amos 2:7; 5:12), and they put undue pressure on a poor man seeking justice for a crime punishable by death, committed by a rich man (Amos 5:12). The prophets therefore saw local justice as used by the ruling classes, in a partisan manner, to oppress the poor. This judgement on justice equally applies to state justice in Jerusalem, which, according to Isaiah and Micah, made a corruptible and arbitrary friend of the rich, in order to exploit not only the small farmers, but even the poorest of the poor, the widows and orphans (Isa 1:23; 10:1f.; Mic 3:1-3, 9, 11) (Alberty, 1992, p. 165).

Although these prophets’ critique concerning social abuses were directed more towards the rich classes, it can be argued that the monarchy is also implicitly judged. Goldingay (2003, p. 656) states that the kings and prophets played a key role in YHWH’s struggle with Israel. The kings had institutional power, but not religious or moral authority. Their responsibility was to see that religion and politics were shaped by the teaching of Moses and the prophets. The criticism of the prophets suggests that other groups, such as the royal court, elders, priests, prophets and their wives, shared responsibility with the kings for Israel’s social, religious and moral malaise, but the prophets put the responsibility on the kings, who were ultimately responsible. While prophets may have had religious and moral authority, they did not have institutional power. But as leaders, the kings’ obligation was to listen to prophets, to speak prophetically and to pray prophetically (2 Chron 12-14), and to submit to prophets (2 Chron

36:12). The teachings of Moses also had more authority but less power than king or temple. Both king and temple had their origin in human initiatives about which YHWH was equivocal. YHWH's subsequent commitment to them still left them subordinate to Moses. Deuteronomy 17:14-20 requires the king to keep alongside himself a copy of the teachings of Moses, and David challenges Solomon to live by it (1 Kgs 2:3) (Goldingay, 2003, pp. 656-657).

What can also be deduced from the prophetic dialogue with kingship, is that kingship never really enjoyed wholehearted prophetic agreement and complicity. Gnuse (2011, pp. 36-38) makes the argument that biblical witness of the prophets and kings, presents them as sometimes uneasy bedfellows, but most of the time, in open conflict with each other. He also argues that the prophetic office was hierarchically above the office of the king. In the light of this, one can understand the negativity of Jeremiah concerning the last kings of Judah. He was part of a long line of agonistic prophetic dialogue with kingship (Gnuse, 2011, pp. 36-38). What can also be deduced from the prophet's dialogue with kingship, is that the prophets saw and judged the direct violence that the monarchical state not only condoned but also actively supported.

## **h. Kingship as a Religious Idea**

Up to this point in this study, one can argue that the biblical witness concerning kingship is fraught with ambivalence. In discussing kingship as a religious idea, it pays to compare what was said on covenant in Chapter 4 of this study, with kingship. Kingship also features prominently in Jeremiah, but as to the question if kingship was an important part of Israel's religious worldview, the jury is still out. In Israel's history, kingship arrived quickly, stayed for a while, and then disappeared from the scene. While covenant was central to how the Israelite people saw their right to exist, kingship was something borrowed from the surrounding primary states to make it easier to survive. Covenant was also conveniently close by to offer the script for the monarchical state structures to create the narratives for their claims of divine legitimisation and to profit by these claims.

One has to agree with Whitelam, who says the "inauguration and development of kingship in Israel was one of the most significant episodes in its history, affecting the formation and transformation of traditions now preserved within the Hebrew Bible", with a profound effect on the history of Israel's religious and literary traditions. The ideologies which emerged

from Israelite and Judean thought pertaining to kingship, have had significant influence on the advancement of messianic beliefs, shaping major world religious traditions. It is also essential for understanding and appreciating the religious ideas and movements which culminated in the formation of the canon of the Hebrew Bible (Whitelam, 1992, p. 40).

To summarise, one can probably approach kingship as a religious idea from four angles, which will be discussed in more detail in the rest of this chapter. The first direction is the Deuteronomistic take on kingship. In Deut 17:14-20, according to Ian Wilson (2017, p. 43), one finds “specific knowledge concerning the institution of Israelite kingship, whereby YHWH, through Moses, acknowledges the inevitability of kingship in the promised land and even hints at its usefulness, in that the king should be a purveyor of YHWH’s Torah” (Wilson, 2017, p. 43).<sup>47</sup> Another approach is the connection between the kings of Israel and the presentation of the kings of Israel in the royal psalms.<sup>48</sup> A third direction of approach is the issue of the promise of a perfect future king, which is especially prominent in Isaiah, but of which one also takes notice in Jer 23:5-8. A final angle, is the prophetic critique of kingship, referred to earlier. It is interesting to note that the ambivalence concerning the kings of Israel is of such a degree, that it would be difficult to find a unified religious approach to kingship.

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<sup>47</sup> It is probably widely agreed that a connection exists between the law of the king in Deuteronomy and the rest of the Deuteronomistic history. The degree and direction of influence is contested. David Jantzen (2013, p. 228) describes kingship, according to the Deuteronomist, as necessary, because Israel was incapable and morally too apprehensible to govern themselves, and the law of the king in Deut 17:14-20 was barely sufficient for such a nation. Levinson (2001, p. 534) sees the law of the king in Deut 17:14-20 as re-conceptualising the king in a way that “rejects all prevailing models of monarchic power, both Israelite and ANE.” Deuteronomy suggests a “Utopian manifesto for a constitutional monarchy” that significantly “delimits the power of the king”. This is part of a larger exercise (Deut 16:18-18:22), in which all the branches of public office are subordinate firstly to the “requirements cultic centralisation,” and secondly, to the “textual authority of Deuteronomistic Torah” (Levinson, 2001, p. 534). Ian Wilson (2017, pp. 224-225) agrees with Levinson, but also puts a necessary focus on the multiple discursive issues of the narrative of the kings of Israel: “issues of dynasties’ successes and failures, of cultic devotion and apostasy, of divine promises and judgements”. In terms of these issues, kingship is ambivalent, “simultaneously possible and impossible”. Wilson does help to divide the narrative of Israel in four broad periods: “(1) no king; (2) king; (3) no king again; and (4) visions of future kingship, human and /or divine” (Wilson, 2017, pp. 224-225). Joseph (2015, p. 226) sees the Deuteronomist transforming the character of David into a figure who is programmatically useful to him in his goal of writing a theologically based, cultic focussed history. The David seen in Kings is transformed. He is YHWH’s servant, one who follows the commandments, statutes, laws, and ordinances (esp. 1 Kgs 9: 4-5). He is loyal to YHWH through the covenant. And he would, of course, only support one centralised shrine in Jerusalem (Joseph, 2015, p. 226).

<sup>48</sup> Galvin Garrett (2016, p. 131) confirms the domineering position of the Deuteronomist in the narrative of Israel’s kings. Chronicles is also influenced by the Deuteronomist. What is not taken into consideration in most research concerning the kings of Israel, is the probable influence of the royal psalms on Israel’s religious ideas of kingship (Garrett, 2016, p. 131).

This is problematic, in the sense that kingship is one of the most enduring theological concepts of the Jewish and Christian religions.

Clearly the divine legitimisation of a particular king and the office of the king, is a contentious issue. If one follows the biblical witness, YHWH legitimises some of the worst excesses in Israelite history, through the office of the king. The question is, what can be considered real divine legitimisation and what is merely ideological redaction to push an ideological point. But who is to make this decision? Moreover, to legitimise kingship as divinely sponsored and favoured, and then use this legitimisation to put structures in place of authority, whereby direct violence is justified as divinely sanctioned, takes a certain degree of power. If YHWH, the King of the world, legitimises a king's reign, what is to stop the particular king from doing whatever he wants, and to establish and maintain a monarchical state to help him to do whatever he wants. No wonder the prophets were so suspicious of kings.

### **i. Summary**

Thus far, we have seen how even though kingship in Israel can be said to be a relative late invention, and also short-lived in comparison to kingship in the surrounding ANE cultures, it nevertheless was an institution that was heavily judged in the book of Jeremiah, made even more pronounced by the use of “woe saying” and the language of lament.

It was also shown how a king can be defined as a “male sovereign ruler who exercises authority over a defined territorial area, the state”. The source of this authority could have been “purely or partly hereditary or, as in some cases, elective”. The king furthermore acts as a “central symbol for the territory and population he rules over”. He also symbolises the territory's and population's prosperity, fertility, and security. Kingship, on the other hand, refers respectively to the “rank, authority, or office and dignity of the king, including the exercise of power over the subjects of the state”.

The state, therefore, is a “political association that establishes sovereign jurisdiction within territorial borders, and exercises authority through a set of permanent institutions” that are recognisably “public” such as a bureaucracy, courts, a standing army. The combination of kingship and the state result in a monarchical state.

Comparing the monarchical state of Israel to the monarchical states of the dominant cultures of Egypt and Mesopotamia, reveals important views on how the king is related to the deity, and the king's task in maintaining justice. These were also important aspects of Israelite kingship.

In discussing the relationship that particular kings in the history of Israel had with YHWH, it was clear that David and Solomon are still presented as YHWH's chosen kings. Josiah is also presented as a king like David.

In looking for tentative signs of direct and structural violence associated with kingship, one could thus argue that David, Solomon, and Josiah were cut from the same cloth.

Turning to the book Jeremiah, one finds that kingship is a central theme in Jer 22:1-23:8. (Jer 22:1, 2, 4, 6, 11, 15, 16, 24, 25, 30; 23:5). The prophet Jeremiah is ordered by YHWH to go "to the house of the king of Judah" and deliver an oracle against the "king of Judah, sitting on the throne of David", including his whole retinue and entourage. The king is implored "to act with justice and righteousness". This includes delivering one who was robbed, from the hand of the oppressor, as well as refraining from doing wrong "against the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or the shedding of innocent blood" at the palace. If the king obeys, there will be kingship worth mentioning, but if the king does not obey, YHWH will destroy the kingship of Judah. The coming destruction will be because the king has abandoned the covenant of YHWH and served as well as worshiped other gods.

Jeremiah continues to deliver an oracle specifically against Shallum (Jehoahaz), Josiah's son, who succeeded his father Josiah, and who was exiled: He will not return and will die in exile. Subsequently, Jeremiah delivers an oracle against Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah, who is king in the place of Jehoahaz. His unrighteousness and injustice, especially concerning his building operations, has raised the ire of YHWH. He compares poorly to his father, Josiah, and he will die an ignoble death outside Jerusalem. Jeremiah's next oracle is against the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem, and its allies will go into exile. This oracle flows from Jerusalem's longstanding and regular disobedience to YHWH. Jeremiah delivers his last oracle against Coniah (Jehoiachin), who succeeded his father, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin's mother. They will be exiled by Nebuchadnezzar, and they will die in exile. On top of this, Jehoiachin's bloodline will not inherit the throne of David.

These oracles are followed by a general oracle against Israel's divinely appointed leadership who did not look after YHWH's people as they were supposed to do. A remnant of these people who were exiled because of leadership dysfunctionality, will be collected by YHWH himself, "and bring them back and they will be fruitful" and without fear. YHWH will also appoint new leaders to lead his people.

YHWH finally predicts a time when he will himself give a king who will rule "wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land". At this time, "Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety". This king will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness". Furthermore, the exile will define YHWH's people, and no longer the exodus event.

These judgement oracles of Jer 22:1-30 against three of the last kings of Judah are alternated with an oracle of hope in a future kingship in Jer 23:1-8, that will be the opposite of the kingship experienced by Judah in the time of Jeremiah. The justice and righteousness of this future kingship is opposed to the "lack of justice and righteousness" of the last kings of Judah, with the "lack of justice and righteousness" of king Jehoiakim deserving a special mention. Whereas the existing king's lack of justice and righteousness has a detrimental effect on the people of Judah, the future kingship will see the people of Judah blessed in many ways.

The next step in this study is an ideological-literary analysis. Some preliminary remarks concerning Jer 22:1-23:8 can be made. It is clear that the *riḅ* form of judgement oracle, predominantly in poetic form, is central in Jer 22:1-23:8. Is there a correlation between this form of judgement oracle and the relationships of the kings of Jer 22:1-23:8 with YHWH? Certainly, a judgment oracle precludes nothing good. But just how intense is the judgement language in Jer 22:1-23:8 and does the intensity of the language of judgement in Jer 22:1-23:8 say something about the relationship between YHWH and kings in general? One then also has to ask if judgement language is the only language visible in Jer 22:1-23:8?

Although kingship is a central theme in Jer 22:1-23:8, justice and righteousness, cast in covenantal language, is a contributing theme. The text under discussion is also much longer than Jer 11:1-17, and it is necessary to determine if Jer 22:1-23:8 is also in conversation with other texts in Jeremiah or in the Hebrew Bible as was found with Jer 11:1-17.

Another important aspect to investigate in an ideological-literary analysis of Jer 22:1-23:8, is the prophetic language concerning kingship in this text. The reason for the importance of prophetic language, is that one can presume that kings in the ANE context commanded a

certain degree of respect and veneration. Is this the case with the prophetic language of Jer 22:1-23:8? Can the prophetic language of Jer 22:1-23:8 be said to be language of respect and veneration? If this is not the case, does a good reason for this present itself? Following this question pertaining to the prophetic language against the kings, the ideological-literary analysis will also investigate the specific ideologically charged historical world within which Jer 22:1-23:8 was generated. Again, it can be asked, what was the setting of the whole text or parts thereof? At first glance, a late monarchy setting can be assumed, but this is not necessarily the case for the whole text. The setting of the text “reproduces a particular ideology with an internal logic of its own” and “encodes in its rhetoric the conflicting circumstances of its material-ideological production” (Yee, 1995, pp. 151-152). An ideological-literary analysis will be helpful in investigating the material-ideological production of Jer 22:1-23:8 within a specific context/s concerning kingship as well as the ideologies of kingship prevalent during these times.

### **3. Exegetical Aspects of Jer 22:1-23:8**

#### **a. Ideological-Literary Analysis of Jer 22:1-23:8**

##### **i. Rhetoric and Structure**

Kingship, which will be investigated in in Jer. 22:1-23:8, resorts under the fifth unit of Stulman’s division (2005, p. 204), namely the dismantling of the monarchy. Chapters 21-24 of Jeremiah mark the final literary unit of the first half of the book (Jeremiah 1-25) and can be divided into four complex parts. The first is the prose narrative in which King Zedekiah sends envoys to Jeremiah to seek respite from the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem (Jer 21:1-10). The second part addresses matters related to the Davidic dynasty and the fate of the final kings of pre-exilic Judah (Jer 21:11-23:8). This part focusses mainly on a series of oracles for breaches of royal duties and concludes with a promise of a new exodus and a “righteous branch” of David’s line, who will execute justice, practise righteousness, and usher in a time of salvation for YHWH’s people. The third part renounces prophets who speak unauthorised words (Jer 23:9-40). Jeremiah is cast in a positive light as a true spokesperson of YHWH by the condemnation of these prophets. The final part is a vision report of two baskets of figs (Jer 24:1-10). The rotten figs in one basket symbolise Zedekiah and his court officials as well as

Judeans who remain in this land or migrate to Egypt. The good figs in the other basket represent the refugees in Babylon (Jer 24:4-7) (Stulman, 2005, p. 204).

The passage under discussion is a lengthy text that needs to be subdivided in order to do a more thorough analysis of the separate parts. What further complicates this analysis, is the alternate prose and poetic parts that together contribute to the overall rhetoric of judgement inherent to these oracles. What can be helpful in trying to hold such a lengthy text together, is to compare different structural divisions of different scholars. From these comparisons, one can make some preliminary remarks. Lundbom (2008, pp. 117-177) approaches Jer 22:1-23:8 with a focus on the rhetorical aspects of the text. Therefore, Lundbom identifies more divisions and themes, because he handles the poetry and lament parts separately. Huey (1993, pp. 203-212) and Thompson (1980, pp. 472-492), treat the kings of Judah separately but do not focus on the divisions between poetry and prose. Lastly, Allen (2008, pp. 243-260), Brueggemann (1998, pp. 161-175); and Stulman (2005, pp. 210-214) focus the least on divisions, but do agree on keeping the judgement oracles on the kings separate from the first prose introduction (Jer 22:1-9) and the last oracle of hope (Jer 23:1-8).

At a cursory glance regarding the main themes featuring in this pericope, kingship is an important theme, as well as the theme of justice and righteousness inherent to the office of the king. The oracles of judgement against specific kings, makes these oracles difficult to apply to other persons and circumstances outside the lives and times of these specific kings. The ending (Jer 23:1-8) and the beginning (Jer 22:1-9) can give the specific oracles (Jer 22:10-30) a wider appeal than only the particular kings and their circumstances. Brueggemann (1998, p. 160) notes that the lack of contextual clues in Jer 22:1-9 makes this oracle a free-floating oracle which could have been used and placed in various contexts.

<b>Lundbom (Anchor Yale Bible Commentary)</b>		<b>Huey (New American Commentary)</b>		<b>Thompson (New International Commentary of the Old Testament)</b>	
22:1-5	Once Again, O King: Do Justice and Righteousness!	22:1-9	A Message for the King and the City	22:1-9	Duties of the King
22:6-9	A Cutting in Lebanon South				
22:10-12	Lament Jehoahaz, Not Josiah!	22:10-12	A Message of Judgment on Shallum	22:10-12	Concerning Shallum

22:13-17	A King with an Edifice Complex	22:13-19	A Message of Judgment on Jehoiakim	22:13-19	Concerning Jehoiakim
22:18-19	A Non-lament for Jehoiakim				
22:20-23	Lebanon South to Be Strangely Favoured	22:20-23	The Consequences of Jerusalem's Disobedience	22:20-23	Jerusalem's Doom
22:24-27	Coniah: A Rejected Seal	22:24-30	The Fate of Coniah (Jehoiachin)	22:24-30	Concerning Coniah
22:28-30	Is Coniah a Throwaway Pot?				
23:1-4	The Call Is Out for New Shepherds	23:1-4	Wicked Shepherds and Their Fate	23:1-8	Promises for the Future of the Dynasty and the People
23:5-6	For David: A Righteous Shoot	23:5-6	Announcement of a Coming Righteous King		
23:7-8	New Exodus, New Oath	23:7-8	Return of a Banished People		

Allen (Old Testament Library)		Brueggemann (A Commentary on Jeremiah)		Stulman (Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries)	
21:1-22:9	Doom for Court and Capital	22:1-9	The Royal House	22:1-9	Kings and Their Weighty Responsibilities
22:10-30	Further Doom for Court and Capital	22:10-30	The Failure of Monarchy	22:10-30	Scathing Oracles of Judgment Against the Kings of Judah
23:1-8	A Restored Court and Community	23:1-8	A Righteous Branch	23:1-8	Bad and Good Shepherds

Most of the scholars above (Allen combines Jer 21:1-14 with Jer 22:1-9) see Jer 22:1-9 as a distinct oracle. According to Stulman (2005, pp. 210-211), Jer 22:1-9 focusses on the further details of the king's judicial role in community life as well as on the consequences of him not fulfilling this responsibility. YHWH instructs Jeremiah to visit the palace and deliver

an oracle with dire consequences for the nation (Stulman, 2005, pp. 210-211). It may be considered strange that an oracle against the king and the machinations of the state, will have an influence on the whole nation. Brueggemann (1998, p. 171) remarks that the Jeremiah tradition sees Jerusalem as a comprehensive social reality, where the king and his dynasty embodies the entire urban establishment. The conduct of the king is therefore decisive for the good and the bad of the entire social system. The prophetic critique of kingship in Jer 22:1-30 furthermore has a double focus. On the one hand, the monarchy in principle is criticised. On the other hand, specific kings are addressed in relation to specific items of conduct and policy. Brueggemann (1998, p. 171) makes an important remark when he states that the tradition of Jeremiah takes a critical view both of specific kings and of the foundational claims of the institution of monarchy. Jer 22:1-30 therefore asserts that the trouble coming upon Jerusalem, is trouble caused by the monarchy (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 171). The specific verses of Jer 22:1-23:8 will now be approached by focussing on the relations between YHWH and the kings of Jer 22:1-23:8; and the kings' relations towards social justice.

## ii. The King as “Son of YHWH”

The ambivalence of the relationship between YHWH and the kings of Israel, whereby kingship is, on one hand, castigated and judged by YHWH, but, on the other hand, also confirmed and entrenched by YHWH, has already been noted. In Jer 22:1-23:8 this ambivalence is noticeable in the shift in focus between Jer 22:1-30 (judgement) and Jer 23:1-8 (confirmation). The judgement oracles of Jer 22:1-30 are also influenced by the *rîb* form of judgment oracles. What can one then deduce from the judgement language of Jer 22:1-23:8 pertaining to the relationship between YHWH and the respective kings mentioned in this passage? At this stage it pays to point out that text about the relationship between YHWH and the kings, taken up in the oracles of judgment and the oracles of hope, are intermittently dispersed within the text about the kings' relation with social justice.

### 1. Oracles of Judgement and Promise

In Jer 22:1-23:8 the following oracles of judgement can be identified:

<b>Oracle 1</b>	Jer 22:2-4	Hear the word of the LORD, O King of Judah sitting on the throne of David ... Thus says the LORD: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor
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		anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place ...
<b>Oracle 2</b>	Jer 22:5-7	But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself, says the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. For thus says the LORD concerning the house of the king of Judah ...
<b>Oracle 3</b>	Jer 22:11-12	For thus says the LORD concerning Shallum son of King Josiah of Judah ...
<b>Oracle 4</b>	Jer 22:18-19	Therefore thus says the LORD concerning King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah ...
<b>Oracle 5</b>	Jer 22:20-23	I spoke to you in your prosperity, but you said, "I will not listen."
<b>Oracle 6</b>	Jer 22:24-30	As I live, says the LORD, even if King Coniah son of Jehoiakim of Judah were the signet ring on my right hand ... O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the LORD: ...
<b>Oracle 7</b>	Jer 23:1	Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD
<b>Oracle 8</b>	Jer 23:2	Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds ... So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD.
<b>Oracle 9</b>	Jer 23:3-4	Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock ..., says the LORD
<b>Oracle 10</b>	Jer 23:5-6	The days are surely coming, says the LORD, ...
<b>Oracle 11</b>	Jer 23:7-8	Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the LORD ...

Oracles of judgement are predominant from Jer 22:1-23:2, whereas Jer 23:3-8 has three oracles of hope as the main rhetorical thrust. This study will first look at the oracles of judgement, to determine the rhetorical weight of these oracles. The study noted that the rhetoric of judgement can create binaries and to enforce dichotomies. In Jer 22:1-10 the oracles are directed at a more general audience, while the oracles concerning the last kings of Judah (Jer 22:11-19) are directed at specific kings. The last oracle concerning Jerusalem (Jer 22:20-23) is more abstract, while the oracle concerning Jehoiachin is quite specific. The last oracles concerning the shepherds are also more general. The question needs to be asked whether the generality or specificity of these oracles effect the rhetorical weight of these oracles? Another question is whether the generality of some of these oracles makes them applicable to other contexts and circumstances? It is also worth mentioning that there is a definite increase in the finality and intensity of the judgement oracles from Jer 22:1-5, where there is still a choice of corrective behaviour, to Jer 22:6-30, where no such choice is presented.

### a. Lament regarding the Kings

Stulman (2005, pp. 209-210) states that the larger context of Jer 22:1-5 reveals that the choice Jeremiah offers, is really no choice at all. Judah's final rulers have already sealed their own fate. Jer 22:6-9 expels all doubts to the contrary when Jeremiah depicts the total decimation of the "royal palace" and the "city". According to Lundbom (2008, pp. 121-122), Jer 22:6-9 consists of an oracle with expanded messenger formula (vv. 6-7), followed by a wisdom comment added later (vv. 8-9). The oracle of vv. 6-7 leads in a rhetorical structure in 22:6-23, which forms the core of the King Collection. This core consists of three "Lebanon-cedar" poems, within which are interspersed an oracle and lament, and an oracle of non-lament. The poems are linked by key words, the whole forming a large chiasmus.

- Gilead you are to me  
the top of *Lebanon* (*hallēbānôn*)  
A .....
- .....  
And they will cut down your choicest *cedars* (*ʾārāzeykā*)  
and fell them upon the fire  
(22:6-7)
- Weep not for the dead ...  
..... [Josiah]  
B weep continually for the one who goes away  
..... [Jehoahaz]  
(22:10-12)
- Woe to him who builds his house ...  
.....  
C And he frames for himself windows  
and panels *in cedar* (*bā'ārez*)  
.....  
Are you a king because you compete *in cedar*? (*bā'ārez*)  
.....  
(22:13-17)
- They shall not lament for him  
B' ..... [Jehoiakim]  
(22:18-19)
- Go up to *Lebanon* and scream (*hallēbānôn*)  
and in the Bashan raise your voice!  
.....  
A' You who dwell *in Lebanon* (*ballēbānôn*) ...  
nested *in the cedars* (*bā'ārāzîm*)  
.....  
(22:20-23)  
(Lundbom, 2008, pp. 121-122)

One can see how pronounced the rhetorical device of lament is in Jer 22:1-22:8. Stulman (2005, p. 211) agrees, while remarking that the oracles of Jer 22:10-30 are held together by not only disdain for Judah's rulers, but also by the language of lamentation. Images of death and the funeral dirge frame the denunciation of Judah's kings, now often mentioned by name (Stulman, 2005, p. 211).

Lundbom (2008, p. 124) makes some rhetorical remarks on the short poem in Jer 22:6b-7. The "Gilead" and "Lebanon" referred to in v. 6b are more commonly metaphors (not similes) for the royal palace. In biblical times, both Gilead and Lebanon were richly forested, making them suitable descriptions of palace buildings with interiors lavishly supplied with cedar and other choice woods. One building in the royal palace was called "The House of the Forest of Lebanon" (1 Kgs 7:2-5). The point being made here, according to Lundbom (2008, p. 124), is that YHWH thinks very highly of the royal palace, and is just as proud and possessive of its extraordinary beauty as Solomon himself was. However, he will destroy it because of a blatant disregard of covenant obligations by the king residing there, viz., Jehoiakim. The expression *'im lō'* in Jer 22:6 has the force of an oath. In Jer 22:7 YHWH is preparing destroyers against the royal palace. Jeremiah's use of *wēqiddaštī* "I will prepare destroyers against you" introduces holy war language, where the "destroyers" (*mašhūtīm*) are attacking forces of the Babylonian army (cf. Jer 4:7). The *kēlīm* that these destroyers will use, are tools used to fell trees, which will in fact be wielded by the enemy to wreck the palace's wooded interior (Lundbom, 2008, p. 124).

## **b. Lament regarding Shallum**

Although Jer 22:10 is separate from the oracle concerning Shallum, it is actually a lament composed in honour of the beloved king Josiah. Now YHWH directs the people not to lament for Josiah any further. Rather, they should lament for Shallum (Jehoahaz), who was exiled and would never return to Judah.<sup>49</sup> Jer 22:11-12 is then a prose comment on the poetic announcement of the preceding verse (Huey, 1993, p. 205).

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<sup>49</sup> These words could apply to Jehoiachin (2 Kgs 24:15) or Zedekiah (2 Kgs 25:7), but the following verse indicates Shallum was intended. Shallum, also known by his throne name, Jehoahaz, was the fourth son of Josiah (1 Chron 3:15). He was chosen by the people of the land as Josiah's successor (2 Chron 36:1). No explanation is given for the choice of him over his older brothers. He must have been

### c. Lament regarding Jehoiakim

Allen (2008, p. 249) sees Jer 22:13-19 as an oracle of disaster against Jehoiakim, consisting of a double presentation of the reason for the oracle in Jer 22:13-17, followed by a briefer announcement of coming disaster in Jer 22:18-19. The oracle takes the form of a woe saying that sharpens the protest to Jehoiakim's treatment of his fellow covenantal partners (Allen, 2008, p. 249). Lundbom (2008, p. 133) gives some perspective on the use of the woe saying. The Hebrew *hōy* (and also the very similar *'ōy*) often appears in Jeremiah, sometimes as a genuine cry of lament (Jer 4:13, 31; 6:4; 10:19; 15:10; 22:18; 34:5; 45:2), sometimes as a prophetic invective (Jer 13:27; 22:13; 23:1), and sometimes as an outcry in which there is a little of both, particularly if used ironically or against a foreign nation (Jer 30:7; 47:6; 48:1, 46; 50:27). In Jer 22:13 *hōy* is a prophetic invective portending disaster (Lundbom, 2008, p. 133). Allen (2008, p. 249) further states that both sections of accusation (Jer 22:13-14 and Jer 22:15-17) refer to justice and righteousness. In Jer 22:15-16 there is an expansion that increases the blame on Jehoiakim by means of an unfavourable comparison with Josiah (Allen, 2008, p. 249).

In Jer 22:18-19 the aftermath of Jehoiakim's death is marked by a double reversal of the ostentation he indulged in during his life. Firstly, he would be accorded no proper burial with its ritual cries of *hōy*, "woe, alas" (here rendered "So sorry"; cf. Jer 34:5). The absence of any *hōy*, in a funerary sense, balances in an ironical play the *hōy* of the prophetic woe saying in v. 13 that anticipates coming disaster. "Jehoiakim's situation calls for a *hōy* now ... because there will be no *hōy* later." The mourning in Jer 22:18-19 is presented at two levels, grieving for a fellow member of the community (cf. 1 Kgs 13:30) and for a person of royal rank, as in Jer 34:5. Jehoiakim lived up to neither role. Secondly, instead of a decent burial, the king is promised dishonourable exposure of his corpse. A "donkey's burial" is an oxymoron, for a donkey would not be buried. It was an epitaph the king deserved (Allen, 2008, p. 250). After this poignant judgement on Jehoiakim the text is interspersed with a general judgement in Jer 22:20-23.

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anti-Egyptian, for Pharaoh Neco deposed him after a brief rule of three months and imprisoned him in Egypt, never to return (2 Kgs 23:31-33; 2 Chron 36:2-3) (Huey, 1993, p. 205).

#### **d. Lament regarding Jerusalem**

According to Lundbom (2008, p. 147), Jer 22:20-23 is a divine speech to Jerusalem complementing the divine speech to the royal palace of Jer 22:6-7. Lundbom (2008, p. 147) furthermore states that “both speeches are riveting judgments, and it is fitting that the whole of Jerusalem should be asked at the end to lament, for judgment against kings and royal buildings will inevitably mean judgment on the entire city, and following judgment will come the weeping of bitter tears”. Jer 22:20-23 is basically a judgment oracle, even though there is no messenger formula. YHWH is the speaker in v. 21 (“I spoke to you in your good times”) and can without difficulty be shown to speak the entire poem. Stulman (2005, p. 213) points to some important features in this oracle. The poem is apparently connected to its context by the catchwords “shepherds” (cf. Jer 23:1-4) and the critique of Judah’s shepherd in Jer 21:11-22:30) and “cedar” (Jer 22:23 and Jer 22:7, 14, 15) (Stulman, 2005, p. 213). The Hebrew feminine singular references throughout this unit are addressed to a personified Jerusalem (Allen, 2008, p. 213). This personified Jerusalem also draws upon the wayward wife motif of earlier chapters in Jeremiah (especially Jer 2-3). YHWH presumably addresses unfaithful Jerusalem, who still insists on following her many lovers. Jerusalem’s lovers are not “other gods”, but Judah’s corrupt kings, suggested by the parallel construction of shepherds (rulers) and lovers in Jer 22:22. These lovers/rulers will be crushed and deported, even while YHWH’s wife, headstrong and insubordinate since youth (Jer 22:21), shall be humiliated (Jer 22:22) (Stulman, 2005, p. 213).

#### **e. Lament regarding Jehoiachin**

The last part of Jer 22:1-30 is an oracle of judgement against Jehoiachin. Jehoiachin was eighteen years of age when he became king (2 Kgs 24:8-17; 2 Chron 36:9-10). He ruled for only three months before being taken to Babylon as a prisoner. He remained in prison until Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BCE. Nebuchadnezzar’s successor, Evil-Merodach (or Amel-Marduk, his Babylonian name), freed him and provided for him for the rest of his life, but did not allow him to return to Jerusalem (Jer 52:31-34) (Huey, 1993, pp. 209-210).

Jehoiachin’s punishment is introduced by the solemn oath, “As I live”. YHWH’s unequivocal rejection of Jehoiachin is expressed in the words, “even if ... were the signet ring on my right hand, even from there I would tear you off”. The signet ring was a symbol of the

authority of its owner. This ring was guarded jealously and never removed from one's person. It was used to imprint the owner's name on official documents (Esth 8:8; Hag 2:23). Jehoiachin, his mother and others, were taken to Babylon as prisoners (2 Kgs 24:12, 15-16). There he would die without ever being allowed to return to the land he longed for, but he was remembered favourably (2 Kgs 25:27-30) (Huey, 1993, pp. 209-210).

In Jer 22:28-30 Jehoiachin is called a "broken pot", i.e., one who is totally worthless. Along with his children, he will be "hurled out" of the land. The appeal "land, land, land" furthermore has an air of exasperation as well as the emphasis associated with repeated words. There is no conflict in the statement in Jer 22:30, "as if childless", and 1 Chron 3:17, which says Jehoiachin had 7 children. Although Jehoiachin had children, the fact that no son of his will succeed him to the throne, made him childless in the eyes of YHWH (1 Chron 3:19; Ezra 2:2; 3:2, 8) (Huey, 1993, pp. 209-210).

According to Brueggemann (1998, p. 178), Jehoiachin receives two distinct treatments in biblical tradition. On the one hand, he bears the hopes of this people and keeps the thread of the royal promise alive; on the other hand, he is clearly helpless and historically impotent, as he has no chance to act on the hopes he embodies. In Jer 22:22-30, Jehoiachin is not a figure of hope. He is only an object for deep pity. Jehoiachin is therefore rejected, the royal line beginning with David is ended, and the royal promise nullified (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 178).

#### **f. Lament regarding the Shepherds**

Huey (1993, pp. 209-210) makes an important remark concerning Jer 22:1-30. Although Jer 22:1-30 contains messages directed at different kings of Judah, the underlying message is the same: "YHWH gave warning after warning to the rulers who could have changed the course of Judah's history had they listened. Their refusal to turn back to YHWH and influence their people also to return brought punishment on each of them and on the entire nation" (Huey, 1993, pp. 209-210). Jeremiah 23:1-2 can therefore be seen as a summary of Jer 22:1-30. Brueggemann (1998, p. 169) concurs and states that Jeremiah 23:1-2a brings to a close the general comments about the kings of Jer 22:1-30 and can thus be seen as a general indictment of the monarchy.

More specifically, the indictment in Jer 23:1-2a is a general statement about kings ("shepherds"). The "sheep" refer to Judah. There has been a scattering of the sheep (exile)

because the shepherds have been inattentive to the sheep, because they have been preoccupied with themselves and their own well-being. Brueggemann (1998, p. 169) rightly states that “the metaphor of sheep and shepherd makes a powerful political statement. Mismanaged royal power is the single cause of exile. Neglected sheep will predictably be scattered” (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 169).

From the above list of oracles, one can see that judgement is the main rhetorical thrust of Jer 22:1-23:2. The intensity and finality of the judgement oracles are also increased by the language of lamentation and the “woe” sayings. Concerning the relationship between YHWH and the monarchical state on the one hand, and specific kings on the other hand, it is clear that Jer 22:1-23:3 presents a ruined relationship; not a partially destroyed relationship with some implicit signs of restoration, but an utterly destroyed relationship. The text’s movement from general oracles of judgement against the monarchical state and all it includes, to more specific oracles of judgment against specific kings, gives this text a rhetorical thrust of all-encompassing judgement and a total dismantling of the office of kingship. The reason for this judgement is obvious in the text. In the majority of the oracles of judgement in Jer 22:1-23:2 the lack of justice and righteousness of the kings of Judah is explicitly stated and implicitly inferred. But the text does not leave one in the midst of judgement. From Jer 23:3-8 there is a sudden and even unexpected turn of events, a turn that is, according to Lundbom (2008, p. 169), filled with divine initiative, action and promise.

### **g. From Lament to Promise**

Brueggemann (1998, p. 169) sees the promises of Jer 23:2b-4; 23:5-6; 23:7-8 as quite an unexpected turn on events. The first promise in Jer 23:2b-4 asserts that, although YHWH will act through no human agent, he will directly cause a homecoming of Judah. The verb “gather” is a precise resolution of “scatter” in vv. 1-2a and stays with the metaphor of sheep. The gathering of sheep refers specifically to the ending of exile that will only occur after new “shepherds” have been established, kings who will do what shepherds are supposed to do (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 169).

The second promise in Jer 23:5-6 is, according to Brueggemann (1998, p. 170), “the most explicitly Davidic promise in the tradition of Jeremiah” (cf. also Jer 33:14-16). The promise affirms the sentiment that YHWH is still committed to the Davidic house. The

envisioned Davidic king will “embody righteousness”, attested to in his name. Brueggemann (1998, p. 170) points to the somewhat intentional and ironic meaning of the name of the “real king” who will be called “YHWH is our righteousness” (*YHWH tsidqenu*), while the last king of Judah is Zedekiah (“YHWH is righteous”). The coming king therefore will embody genuine “righteousness” (*tsedagah*), whereas Zedekiah was probably far from righteous (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 170).

The third promise in Jer 23:7-8 asserts that the homecoming out of exile will be more dramatic than the initial exodus. Brueggemann (1998, p. 170) states that:

Liberation from Babylon will be so overwhelming that liberation from Pharaoh will be superseded and therefore not be remembered or spoken of ... There will be a new wonderful deed which will displace the exodus memory. Israel's hope outdistances even its powerful memory. The great gathering of liberated Judeans evidences that YHWH is faithful and powerful.

Although in the setting of these oracles against the last kings of Judah in which the old cannot be mended (Jer 19:11), YHWH himself will work a newness (Jer 23:7-8). This newness is wrought precisely by YHWH, and precisely in exile. No newness can be expected from the old institutions of Judean religiosity, with which the new promise of an own land after the exile, is in discontinuity. YHWH, according to Brueggemann (1998, p. 170), will create totally new, a newness underived from what has gone before.

The turn in Jer 22:1-23:8 from judgement to promise leaves one with an ambivalence concerning YHWH and kingship. On the one hand, YHWH wants to destroy the monarchical state, and according to the biblical witness this was what happened. But on the other hand, YHWH also wants to resurrect the monarchical state. Again, according to the biblical witness, a divinely resurrected monarchical state did not become a reality after the exile. At the end of Jer 22:1-23:8 one cannot say with conviction if YHWH is anti-kingship or pro-kingship. What can be said, is that the monarchical state in general and specific kings are judged by YHWH according to their covenantal obligation towards social justice.

### iii. The Justice of the King

#### 1. Kingship and Justice in Jer 22:1-23:8

According to Brueggemann (1998, p. 171), Jer 22:1-7 consists of a stylised speech part (vv. 1-6a) plus a poetic fragment (vv. 6b-7). Lundbom (2008, p. 121) sees the first oracle (Jer 22:2-4) as a command that the king and his house do justice and righteousness and rescue any and every victim of oppression coming to their attention. They are also to do no wrong and no violence to the sojourner, orphan, and widow. They are not to shed innocent blood, which the king has power to do. YHWH says that if they comply, then the royal horses and chariots carrying the Davidic king and his retinue, will continue to pass through the palace gates on festival days and every ordinary day. A second oracle (Jer 22:5-7) follows with a consequence for noncompliance. If the royal house does not comply with these words of warning, YHWH swears that he will make the royal palace a ruin (Lundbom, 2008, p. 121).

According to Brueggemann (1998, p. 171), the main programme of a covenant-based monarchy is laid down in v. 3, namely to “act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. Also, to do no wrong or violence to the sojourner, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place.” The two words “justice” (*mišpāt*) and the correlative term “righteousness” (*šēdāqâ*) read together characterise social power and social practice in which there is strong support and care for the socially weak and marginal. To care for the socially weak and marginal is, therefore, the business of kings (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 171).

Although Lundbom (2008, p. 117) describes Jer 22:4-5 as containing two oracles, these two oracles can also be seen as one main oracle containing a positive conditional followed by another oracle containing a negative conditional. According to Lundbom (2008, p. 117), this oracle is set in a protasis-apodosis construction. The effect upon the audience are no different from hearing one oracle with both positive and negative conditionals, since the two oracles will be heard in succession. Wording in the negative conditional of v. 5, indicates that there are two oracles here, not just one (Lundbom, 2008, p. 117). Brueggemann (1998, p. 171) states that the options in Jer 22:4-5 may be formally symmetrical, suggesting a choice for the monarchy. But judgment for the monarchy is announced, because the monarchy has not and will not meet the requirements of justice and righteousness. The “if-then” structure of these verses, is also

remarkable, for this rhetoric makes the monarchy explicitly conditional (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 172).

According to Brueggemann (1998, p. 173), the following verses (Jer 22:8-9) appear to be a prosaic clarification of what has preceded. In the poetry of vv. 6-7 no specific reason is given for the harsh judgment. Jer 22:8-9 supplies the reason for the harsh judgement of Jer 22:6-7 with a simple "why ... because" structure of question and answer. The answer is that they have forsaken "the covenant of YHWH their God". The punishment matches the affront. Israel "abandoned" (*azab*) the covenant and is now an abandoned people (cf. Isa. 54:6). Again, the decisive term *azab* is used, in parallel with worship of other gods. Jer 22:8-9 brings together the ethical conditions of YHWH's covenant in Jer 22:3 with the theological conditions of YHWH's covenant, namely, not to serve and worship other gods. Brueggemann (1998, p. 173) argues from this combination between ethical and theological that even such a powerful institution as the monarchy must meet elemental requirements of human compassion and responsibility in order to survive (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 173). Up to Jer 22:9, the demands of social justice from the monarchical state is in general, not pertaining to a specific king. This despite the fact that Jeremiah is commanded to deliver these oracles at the gates of the palace implying that Zedekiah is the target of these oracles. However, as was mentioned previously, these two oracles are general enough to be used against any king. From Jer 22:10 onward the oracles of judgement are directed at specific kings, although no specific justice violation is laid at the feet of Shallum (Jehoahaz).

## 2. The Justice of King Jehoiakim

Allen (2008, p. 249) remarks that Jehoiakim is judged specifically in Jer 22:13-17 for "conduct unbefitting a member of the covenant nation". The great example of this lack of solidarity with his own people, is the building and remodelling programme of the royal quarters he undertook. But kings were known for building programmes. What made this building different? Firstly, it was achieved by forced labour that was uncompensated and claimed as a fiscal right. Secondly, and here Jeremiah uses irony, this building programme was marked by ostentation and self-aggrandisement (Allen, 2008, p. 249).

Brueggemann (1998, p. 200) sees the poetry of Jer 22:13-17 as a radical critique of the mismanagement of power by Jehoiakim. The verbs following the "woe" of Jer 22:13-14 – "who

builds”, “who makes”, “who says”, and “who cuts”, express this mismanagement of power in that it exemplifies economic exploitation, rendering others subservient to Jehoiakim’s self-aggrandisement. The injustice and unrighteousness of Jehoiakim, stated in Jer 22:13, is a key concern of the poem and is the antithesis of the imperative of Jer 22:3 that states “Thus says the LORD: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place.” By being an unjust king, Jehoiakim violated the most elemental responsibility of covenantal kingship (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 200).

Brueggemann further sees the poem of Jer 22:15-16 in the light of social criticism, in that the question is asked, what constitutes legitimate social power? Is it the visible luxury of the palace that constitutes legitimate social power or is it by doing justice and righteousness? Jehoiakim is negatively compared to his father Josiah, who is characteristically portrayed as an exemplary king according to the covenantal requirements of being a just king (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 200). The covenantal requirements of being a just king, are summarised in Jer 22:16: “He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well.”

As Josiah is remembered for administering justice and righteousness and for judging the “cause of the poor and needy”, it is also implied that Josiah did this out of obedience to YHWH (Josiah “knew” YHWH). On the other side of this dichotomy, Jehoiakim does not administer justice and righteousness and he does not judge the cause of the poor and needy, thereby implying and stressing Jehoiakim’s disobedience towards YHWH (Jehoiakim does not “know” YHWH).

The last poem describing Jehoiakim’s wrongdoings, before the judgment oracle of Jer 22:18-19, is again an antithesis of the imperative of Jer 22:3, where Jehoiakim is said to have wholeheartedly applied himself to “dishonest gain, the shedding of innocent blood, and for the practicing of oppression and violence”.

The issue of justice and righteousness is not raised again until Jer 23:5, where YHWH promises a future king, as opposed to Jehoiakim, who will execute justice and righteousness in the land. Concerning issues of the justice and righteousness of kingship, Jer 22:1-23:2 is decidedly negative, although only Jehoiakim is explicitly named and shamed. What is important, is that the last kings of Judah, called out by Jeremiah in Jer 22:1-23:2, were not kings who exemplified the covenantal idea of kingship, which expected kings to be just kings.

The questions at the beginning of this textual analysis can now be addressed. To the question, in what manner can the generality or specificity of these oracles contribute to the use of the oracles in other contexts or circumstances, one can answer that it is not difficult to see how an experienced orator can use these oracles of judgement in Jer 22:1-23:4 in situations where binaries are already created, to drive home dichotomies. If the orator can place him/herself at the elected side of God in a covenantal setting, then it will probably not be difficult to judge with divine intent anyone who is not elected. The language of lamentations and the “woe sayings” will only increase the rhetorical effect of judgement. The opposite is also true. Because these oracles are basically delivered against the rulers of Judah, who saw themselves as the elected of YHWH in a special way, these oracles actually contain a pronounced “anti-establishment” focus.

Jeremiah critiques the kings of Judah in a way that was unknown in the ANE. His language of judgement is devoid of respect and veneration, as is befitting language for a king. These oracles also “encode in its rhetoric the conflicting circumstances of its material-ideological production”. While Jer 22:1-23:4 has a clear anti-monarchical ring to it, it can be argued that Jer 23:5-8 was inserted to mitigate in a way the anti-monarchical language of Jer 22:1-23:4. It is clear that the last oracle concerning Jehoiachin’s lack of a dynasty, conflicts with the oracle of hope in Jer 23:5-8. From where will YHWH “raise up for David a righteous Branch, that shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land,” if Jehoiachin has no heirs? From an ideological-textual analysis of Jer 22:1-23:8, it can be argued that not everyone in Judah liked kings, but that not everyone disliked them either. This study will now look at the conversations of Jer 22:1-23:8 with other parts of Jeremiah and also with other parts in the Hebrew Bible.

#### **iv. Kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 and Kingship in the Hebrew Bible**

At first glance, Jer 22:1-23:8 touches on important themes in other parts of the Hebrew Bible. Most noticeable, is the theme of kingship. Kingship is an important theme in much of the 1 Samuel to 2 Kings corpus as well in 1 and 2 Chronicles. Jer 22:1-23:8 also addresses the theme of justice and righteousness, which is an important theme in much of the whole Hebrew Bible. But one needs to be more specific. Previously in this chapter, it was mentioned that kingship in the Hebrew Bible can be approached in four ways: (1) the Deuteronomistic view on kingship;

(2) the Psalmist view on kingship; (3) the promissory view of a resurrected kingship after the exile; and (4) the prophetic critique of kingship. In this next part of the study, the conversations between Jer 22:1-23:8 and these approaches will be investigated.

## 1. Conversations with Deuteronomy

In Jer 22:1-5, Lundbom (2008, p. 119) points to the protasis-apodosis construction of Jer 22:2-4. He states that this construction is a formal element in prophetic covenantal speech, seen most prominently in Deuteronomy (Deut 11:26-28; 28:1-68), but also found in law codes and treaties of the ANE, where the formulations have their provenance in royal proclamations. Lundbom (2008, p. 119) furthermore states that there is no allusion in Jer 22:2-4 to the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7. Rather, the covenant at issue is the Sinai covenant, which is conditional and concerned largely with land tenure (Lundbom, 2008, p. 119).

Brueggemann (1998, p. 172) remarks on the conditionality of the Sinai covenant and states that the question of conditionality is the subject of a very old dispute in Israel. The Mosaic community knew the covenant was based on the fragile condition of obedience (cf. Exod. 19:5-6), but the royal ideology of Jerusalem regarded YHWH's commitment as unconditional (2 Sam. 7:14-16; Ps. 89:24-37). Brueggemann (1998, p. 172) furthermore remarks that while the "if ... then" argument in Jer 22:2-4 may be a statement under the influence of the Deuteronomist, it is also consistent with the old Mosaic covenant tradition, which one expects Jeremiah to articulate. The net effect of the "if ... then" formula, is to subordinate the monarchy to the Torah, its requirements, and its sanctions. This subordination de-absolutises the monarchy and makes the king, like everyone else, subject to the demands of the Torah (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 172), which, argues Lundbom (2008, p. 119), required special care for the alien (sojourner), the orphan, and the widow in society (Deut 10:18-19; 14:29; 16:11) (Lundbom, 2008, p. 119). In the event of the covenant people not adhering to these obligations of the covenant, certain curses of the Sinai covenant will fall on them, and the Promised Land will be reduced to a burned-out wasteland (Lundbom, 2008, p. 126).

According to Lundbom (2008, p. 126), one finds in Jer 22:8-9 an adaptation of Deut 29:23-25 [MT 29:24-26], which envisions these curses of the Sinai covenant falling on the covenant people, and the Promised Land reduced to a burned-out wasteland. The parallel texts:

Deut 29:24-26 [MT 29:23-25]	Jer 22:8-9
<p>they and indeed all the nations will wonder,  “Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What caused this great display of anger?”  They will conclude, “It is because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. They turned and served other gods, worshiping them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them</p>	<p>And many nations will pass by this city, and all of them will say one to another,  “Why has the LORD dealt in this way with that great city?”    And they will answer, “Because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD their God,    and worshiped other gods and served them.”</p>

Furthermore, in the comparison between Josiah and Jehoiakim in Jer 22:15-17, the phrase “then it was well with him” (*’āz tōb lô*) in Jer 22:15, is an echo of Deuteronomy, where the fruit of covenant obedience is that it will “go well” (*yṭb*) with the people (Deut 4:40; 5:16, 29; 6:3, 18, 24; 10:13; 12:25, 28; 19:13; 22:7) (Lundbom, 2008, p. 138).

## 2. The Promise of a Future King

In Jer 23:3 there is a noticeable shift in the rhetoric of Jer 22:1-23:8. Where YHWH was the judging deity in Jer 22:1-23:2, YHWH now takes the initiative in promising Judah a new king. According to Lundbom (2008, p. 168) YHWH admits to having dispersed the covenant people (cf. Deut 28:64) but says that they will be brought back to “their pasture” (*nēwēhen*), which is the land of Israel, where they will be fruitful and multiply. The same message is conveyed to Judean exiles in Babylon (Jer 29:10–14). In Jer 31:10, YHWH is celebrated among the nations as the God who scatters (*mēzārēh*) but then gathers (*yēqabbēšennû*) (Lundbom, 2008, p. 168).<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Lundbom (2008, p. 168) explains that the idea of a remnant, expressed often but not exclusively in the Hebrew Bible by the terms *šē’ār*, *šē’ērīt*, does not originate with Jeremiah. It is at least as old as the Song of Moses (Deut 32:26-27, 36) and appears often in the eighth century prophets, particularly Isaiah, in whose time Judah was nearly exterminated by Sennacherib’s army (Isa 1:9; 4:3; 7:3; 10:20-23; 11:1-9; 37:4, 31-32; Mic 2:12; 4:6-7; 7:18). In Jeremiah, the remnant idea first appears with reference to Northern Israelites who survived the Assyrian destruction of 722 BCE, to whom YHWH gave the hope of a return to Zion (Jer 31:7-9; cf. Isa 11:16). Jeremiah also uses “remnant of Israel” to include those who survived the Assyrian invasion of 701 BCE (Jer 6:9; cf. Jer 50:17). Judeans who survived Jerusalem’s destruction in 586 BCE and remained in the land (Jer 39:9-10; 40:6; 41:10) but then went to Egypt are called the “remnant of Judah” (Jer 40:11, 15; 42:15, 19; 43:5; 44:12). Jeremiah says most of these people will die in Egypt, though a small number will return to Judah (Jer 44:11-14, 27-28). Judean exiled to Babylon were the favored remnant, according to Jeremiah, and to them he gives an

According to Brueggemann (1998, p. 182), the possibility of a Davidic king who will practise righteousness as was required in Jer 22:3 and rejected in Jer 22:13-14, is envisioned. The Davidic line's new shepherd will furthermore implement the old promise that the remnant "will live in safety" (Jer 23:6; cf. Lev. 26:5; Ezek. 34:25) (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 182).

### 3. Conversations with the Prophets and Jeremiah

Lundbom argues that the protasis-apodosis construction of Jer 22:2-4 is a formal element in prophetic covenantal speech, which then occurs in Jer 7:3-7; 17:24-27; 22:1-5; and 26:4-5. The phrase, "sitting on the throne of David" (Jer 22:2) and "sit on the throne of David" (Jer 22:4), has the same function as in Jer 21:12, where the reference to David refers indirectly but intentionally to a king of Israel who executed justice (2 Sam 8:15) (Lundbom, 2008, p. 119). Furthermore, the directive in Jer 22:3 to do justice and righteousness and rescue the robbed from the oppressor's hand, can be said to be terms that denote covenant responsibility in Amos 5:7 and Isa 1:21. In these texts, the prophets issue stern reminders of the consequences should the mandate go unheeded, which it often does (Isa 1:17; 11:3-4; Jer 7:5-6). More specifically, Jehoiakim is judged in Jer 22:17 for the crime of shedding innocent blood, which is an idiom for murder. In the temple oracle of Jer 7:6, Jeremiah warns the people to keep the sixth commandment; a commandment Jehoiakim had grossly violated (Lundbom, 2008, p. 120).

In Jer 22:20-23 there is a reference to a theme that reverberates through the whole of Jeremiah: "I spoke to you in your prosperity, but you said, 'I will not listen.' This has been your way from your youth, for you have not obeyed my voice," (Jer 22:21). YHWH refers here to the divine word that came to the people via the prophets but was met with their refusal to listen. The people's response is reported as being the same in Jer 6:17 and 19. In Jeremiah's early preaching, the people were also disobedient. The charge of disobedience is a major prose theme in Jeremiah (Jer 16:12; 25:3-4, 7, 8; 26:5; 29:19; 36:31; 37:2; 44:4-5). This disobedience can also be traced back to the early days of the covenant relationship between YHWH and Israel (Lundbom, 2008, p. 150).

In Jer 22:28-30, the threefold series of questions common to Jeremiah's poetry reappears. These questions culminate in a "why" question that explains the essential point of

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unqualified word about eventual return to their homeland (Jer 24:4-7; 29:10-14; 50:19-20) (Lundbom, 2008, p. 168).

the two striking previous questions. This format is used in three genres in Jeremiah: in divine oracles (Jer 2:14, 31; 8:4-5; 49:1; cf. 30:6), in petitionary communal laments (Jer 8:19; 14:19), and in Jeremiah's own dirge-like lamentation of hopelessness (Jer 8:22). Jer 22:28 is parallel to Jer 8:22 (Allen, 2008, p. 253). The metaphor of a broken pot not valued in Jer 22:28, echoes the metaphor of potter and clay (already employed in Jer 18:1-4). YHWH is not going to reshape this clay (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 178). The dynastic promise rooted in 2 Sam 7:13-16, is now terminated. Whereas the royal promise of 2 Sam 7:13-16 appeared to be absolute and unconditional, according to Jer 22:30, the reality is that it no longer is (Brueggemann, 1998, p. 179).

A main theme in Jer 22:1-4 is the Shepherd motive. The phrase *šō'n mar'ūt*, "flock of shepherding" with a divine pronoun, is standard cultic language (Ps 74:1; 79:13; 100:3). Here the assumption is that YHWH is the shepherd to whom other shepherds report. The notion is a development of the metaphorical covenant formula that builds into it the common ANE concept of the human king as shepherd of his people. Another development in this verse, one that takes the metaphor further, is the description of the king's irresponsibility in terms of losing sheep under their care and causing them to stray outside the land into exile (Allen, 2008, p. 256). The indictment, judgment, and messianic promise of Jer 23:1-8 are presented along lines similar to those in Ezekiel 34 (Lundbom, 2008, p. 165).

To summarise, one can focus on four dominant conversations in Jer 22:1-23:8 that also compare favourably to the previously discussed four approaches to kingship as a religious idea: (1) The Deuteronomist's contribution is prominent in Jer 22:1-23:8; (2) There are allusions to the royal psalms in Jer 22:1-23:8; (3) A perfect future king is promised in Jer 23:5-8; and (4) Jeremiah's oracles of judgement are firmly in the prophetic tradition of doing justice to the sojourner, widow, and orphan (social justice). These themes will be discussed in more detail later in the study.

The ideological-literary analysis of Jer 22:1-23:8 has identified a number of conclusions with which to approach the ideological-contextual analysis of the text. The judgement oracles are much more pronounced in Jer 22:1-23:8 than in Jer 11:1-17. The text of Jer 22:1-23:8 is naturally longer, hence a larger amount of judgement oracles are apparent, but the language of lament and the "woe saying" surely contribute to the intensity of the oracles of judgement. The monarchical state is under severe judgement, and it could be of value to find the "world behind the text" that an ideological-contextual analysis of the text will hopefully unearth. Just what

did the monarchical state do, to justify these terrible judgements from YHWH? Therefore, the monarchical state will be the object of the ideological-contextual analysis. The diachronic element of the ideological-contextual analysis has been addressed in a discussion of the development of the monarchical state, from the young state of David, to the fully-fledged monarchical state of the late-monarchic times. The focus now will be on the synchronic element in the monarchical state system that was active at the time of Jer 22:1-23:8.

### **b. Ideological-Contextual Analysis of Jer 22:1-23:8**

In the next part of this chapter, the monarchical state will be investigated as a possible example of an institution that demonstrated aspects of structural violence. According to Galtung (1975, p. 111), “violence is present whenever human beings are influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations”. Violence then is the “cause of the difference between the actual (what is) and the potential (what could have been)”. “The potential level of realisation”, furthermore, is that “which is possible with a given level of insight and resources”. When these “insight and resources” are monopolised by a group or class or are “used for other purposes”, the “actual level falls below the potential level, and violence is present in the system” (Galtung, 1975, p. 111).

In this regard, it is important to consider the following questions: Did the monarchical state, as a major social, political, and economic structure in the Judean society in the time of the prophet Jeremiah, subject ordinary Judeans to a condition in which their actual lives were much lower than their potential lives. Henceforth, the incidences of inequality in the monarchical state need to be investigated, especially in the distribution of power.

Following an investigation into the structural violence associated with the monarchical state, one may deduce the effects of this structural violence on ordinary Judeans. In this regard, the following questions need to be asked: How, then, did the structural violence inherent in the monarchical state system effect the “survival needs; the well-being needs; the identity needs; and the freedom needs of ordinary Judeans”? At this point the relation between structural violence and direct violence can be brought in conversation to further strengthen the argument that structural violence and direct violence were indeed part and parcel of the monarchical state. Cultural violence can then be inferred by showing how these forms of violence relate to each other in the violence triangle and also in terms of the violent strata image.

## i. The Monarchical State of Jer 22:1-23:8

### 1. The Direct Violence of the Monarchical State

Chapter 2 of this study described how Galtung (1975, p. 111) frames his discussion on the dimensions of violence with the notion of influence. A complete influence relation presupposes an influencer, a person that is influenced, and a mode of influencing. Some of these dimensions will be important in our discussion on the structural violence of the monarchical state in the time of the kings of Jer 22:1-23:8.

In Jer 22:13 Jeremiah delivers an oracle of judgement against Jehoiakim who, in the building of his ostentatious palace, “makes his neighbours work for nothing and does not give them their wages”. Jeremiah implies in this oracle of judgement that this practice of Jehoiakim is paramount to a deed of unrighteousness and injustice. What exactly was this practice of Jehoiakim according to which he forced his fellow Judeans to work for no wages? The discussion of the monarchical state of Solomon pointed out that Solomon introduced the practice of *corvée*. According to Irwin Mendelsohn (1962, p. 32) and Walter Houston (2018, p. 30), this practice in monarchical states in the ANE “used levies of forced labour from their subjects, the *corvée*, to work on all their large-scale public works”. In the case of Jehoiakim, the text refers to him building his palace with the use of the *corvée*. Using Galtung’s model of “the influencer – modes of influencing – the person that is influenced”, one can investigate the dimension of direct and structural violence in the time of Jehoiakim in the use of the practice of *corvée*.<sup>51</sup>

The first distinction Galtung (1975, pp. 118-119) makes in Chapter 2 of this study is between physical and psychological violence as dimensions of violence: “Physical violence occurs when human beings are hurt somatically, to the point of killing, whereas psychological violence works on the soul of the person”. It stands to reason that the practice of *corvée* did not include killing, maiming or the other forms of physical violence that Galtung describes, which would have left Jehoiakim with too few workers to do the actual work. What can be argued, is that psychological violence was probably at the order of the day. In Chapter 2 of this study, Galtung (1990, p. 292) expands his typology of direct violence, which focusses mainly on

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<sup>51</sup> The oracles of judgement in Jer 22:1-23:8 are delivered to kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin. The rules of King Jehoahaz and King Jehoiachin were too brief to discuss.

anatomical and physiological damage to the person who is being influenced, by introducing the four classes of basic needs, namely “survival needs (killing); well-being needs (maiming, siege, sanctions, misery); identity needs (de-socialisation, resocialisation, secondary citizenship); and freedom needs (repression, detention, expulsion)” (Galtung, 1990, p. 292).

Using these expanded needs of Galtung, one can argue that during his reign Judean peasant workers were influenced by the *corvée* in several ways that can be seen as direct violence (actual realisation falls below potential realisation). According to Mendelsohn (1962, pp. 33-35) a few aspects of *corvée* labour need to be kept in mind: (1) *Corvée* labourers did not receive payment but did receive a food ration. (2) Tenant farmers were mostly exempted from *corvée* labour, leaving only the dependent and lower classes to do the work. (3) Although Mendelsohn (1962, p. 35) argues that Jehoiakim only used fellow Jerusalemites in the construction of his palace, an argument can be made that peasants from the rural areas who became impoverished by the structural violence of the monarchical state of over a period of time and resorted to seeking work in Jerusalem, also performed *corvée*, even if it was just to have something to eat. (4) Regarding the duration of *corvée*, the *corvée* imposed by Solomon lasted four months (1 Kgs 5:28). The duration most probably depended on the circumstances, although not all *corvées* lasted this long.

The various ways in which Judean *corvée* workers were then influenced, so that their actual realisation fell below their potential realisation, can be listed as follows: (1) The worker who came from the rural areas was far from home, and keeping in mind that the Babylonian army had already by this time destroyed large parts of the countryside, unsure to the well-being of his people at home. One cannot imagine that these circumstances, combined with his already impoverished situation, could make for a happy, contented person. Misery, as a result of well-being needs not being met, was probably part of his life as a *corvée* labourer. (2) Regarding the *corvée* worker's identity needs not being met, one can argue that, being far from home, the worker was de-socialised from his family and the familial structure of home. It was conceivably business as usual on the home front, making him a stranger to his own family after a while. It was probably difficult for the *corvée* worker to re-socialise in the strange environment of Jerusalem with different customs, making the worker as second-class citizen, something his impoverished situation already contributed to. (3) The *corvée* worker was probably not free to leave his employment. His freedom-needs were therefore also affected, although it is difficult to ascribe the same notion of freedom the modern person has to the *corvée*'s notion of freedom. These ways in which the *corvée* worker was influenced so that his actual realisation fell below

his potential realisation, are all examples of direct violence. It should be kept in mind that the corvée labourer probably did not experience the direct violence of the monarchical state in the form of the corvée, as violence. It was probably just the way things were. His fathers had to do it, so he had to do it. But according to Galtung, these influences are direct violence, even if the person influenced did not see it as such.

## 2. The Structural Violence of the Monarchical State

Galtung (1975, pp. 113-114) makes a fourth distinction<sup>52</sup> concerning the subject (person) who acts when it comes to violence. In Chapter 2 of this study, Galtung (1975, p. 114) argues that at this stage the distinction between direct violence and structural violence becomes clear. In direct violence and structural violence “individuals may be killed, mutilated, or hurt in both sense of the words”. With direct violence, “these consequences can be traced back to concrete persons or actors”. In terms of structural violence “there is no person meting out the violence”. The violence is therefore “built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances”. Galtung (1975, p. 114) elucidates further in Chapter 2 on structural violence to show that structural violence exists when “resources are unevenly distributed, as when income distributions are heavily skewed”. The pinnacle of structural violence is when “the power to decide over the distribution of resources, is unevenly distributed”.

Chapter 2 noted how Galtung (1975, p. 114) summarises the difference between structural violence and direct violence by showing that direct violence with a “clear subject-object relation is manifest because it is visible as action”. Structural violence, on the other hand, is not characterised by the subject-object relation of direct violence, because the violence is built into the structure.

In Chapter 2 of this study, it was proposed that, according to Galtung (1975, pp. 119-120), it is possible to construct a typology for structural violence. If one adheres to the point of

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<sup>52</sup> The second distinction Galtung makes between the negative and positive approach to influence and the third distinction in terms of the object being hurt, will not be used due to the restrictions of space. An effort to make these dimensions applicable to the practice of the corvée at the time of Jehoiakim, can seem forced. The first dimension can suffice to show direct violence taking place in the “world behind the text” of Jer 22:1-23:8.

departure that the “general formula behind structural violence is inequality, especially in the distribution of power”, then structural violence can be measured. Inequality furthermore has a “high survival capacity despite changes elsewhere”. If inequality persists, it pays to look for factors apart from direct violence and the threat of direct violence, which “tend to uphold inequality”. It is necessary to understand the science of social structure, and particularly stratification, to understand structural violence. Some ideas of the mechanisms of “actor, system, structure, rank and level” are fundamental in understanding structural violence (Galtung, 1975, pp. 119-120).

If one applies the above remarks to what is known about the monarchical state, it may be possible to identify the following actors: the king and his state functionaries “You (king of Judah), and your servants, and your people who enter these gates” (Jer 22:2). The king constantly acted with these functionaries concerning matters of state, but he also interacted with other primary state actors, such as Egypt and Mesopotamia, and some secondary state actors, such as Edom, Moab etc. The set of all such systems of interactions for a given set of actors, can be referred to as a structure. The monarchical state is a description of such a structure. In these interactions, values are somehow exchanged.

Galtung’s (1975, p. 120) six factors for maintaining in-egalitarian distribution, and consequently the mechanisms of structural violence, identified in Chapter 2 of this study, can be used to determine the possible mechanisms of structural violence in the monarchical state of the late monarchy. These factors are:

- (1) Linear ranking orders; (2) a-cyclical interaction patterns; (3) correlations between rank and centrality; (4) congruencies between the systems; (5) concordances between the ranks; and (6) high rank coupling between levels.

These factors can be used to determine the possible mechanisms of structural violence in the monarchical state.

Galtung (1975, p. 120) describes the first factor, linear ranking orders, as a situation within a certain structure where the ranking is complete, leaving no doubt as to who is higher in any pair of actors. One can argue that the king is the highest actor in the ranking order of the monarchical state. But taking into account the political interference of the primary states in the time of Jeremiah, (cf. i.e., when Jehoahaz was crowned by the “people of the land” and then, after only three months of rule, toppled by Egypt; when Jehoiakim set his sails to whichever country of Egypt and Babylonia seemed the strongest at the time; and when Jehoiachin was

dethroned by Babylonia), it does not seem as if the king was really the highest actor in the ranking order of the monarchical state of Judah. Also, considering the plethora of groupings within Judah who could function as kingmakers, for example the “people of the land”, who had a say in the kingship of Josiah and Jehoahaz, King Jehoiakim certainly knew that he was not the top dog. Even if Jehoiakim was implicitly not the highest-ranking member in the order of the monarchical state of Judah, he was still king and the nominal head of state with far-reaching powers within his influence sphere. In terms of the *corvée* worker’s situation, Jehoiakim’s position vis-à-vis the primary states of the region, and his relation to the other power groupings in his kingdom, probably did not matter that much, as one authoritarian monarchical state would probably be exchanged for another authoritarian monarchical state, that also makes use of the practice of *corvée*.

In terms of the second factor (Galtung, 1975, p. 120), concerning the a-cyclical interaction patterns where all the actors are connected, but there is only one “correct” path of interaction, a-cyclical interaction patterns clearly assume a relatively stable structure over time. It can be argued that the “servant of the king” (Jer 22:2) was a member of the dynasty and even if not, these persons were part of the wide circle of monarchical patronage. Although other more informal paths of interaction may have existed, the effective management of the monarchical state of Jehoiakim probably made the official path of action, the preferred path of interaction.

In terms of the third factor (Galtung, 1975, p. 120), concerning the correlation between rank and centrality, i.e., the higher the rank of the actor in the system, the more central the actor’s position in the interaction network, one can argue that Jehoiakim, as the highest ranking actor in the monarchical state, was also the central actor in the interaction network between the monarchical state and other primary as well as secondary monarchical states. It can be assumed that kings preferred to talk to kings (2 Kgs 18:18). It is also possible that other primary or secondary states would have known if this was not the case anymore and would have known who to talk to.

This chapter also ascertained that regarding the fourth factor (Galtung, 1975, p. 120), the congruence between systems, according to which the interaction networks are structurally similar, the monarchical state, as a relative latecomer on the ANE scene, borrowed best practices from other primary monarchical states. Solomon did not establish the first

monarchical state, and therefore probably borrowed best practices from other primary monarchical states.

The fifth factor (Galtung, 1975, p. 120), concerning the concordance between ranks – if an actor is high in one system, then the actor also tends to be high in another system in which he participates –reminds also of the third factor. This situation probably would have changed when a king was defeated by another king, and when the defeated king’s subjugation forced the defeated king lower down the ranks. But in this case, one can also assume that the subjugated king’s monarchical state was no more. Even if Jehoiakim was king by proxy of the Egyptians, he still was nominally king of Judah. This fifth factor becomes obvious when Jehoiachin, even after his exile to Babylonia, was still treated as a king.

In terms of the sixth factor (Galtung, 1975, p. 120), concerning the high rank coupling between levels, where the actors in each substructure are represented in the integrated structure by the highest-ranking actor in the given substructure, it was noted that the different functionaries within the monarchical state, were placed in a hierarchical structure, with the king representing the whole monarchical state. It stands to reason that certain state functionaries such as the high priest, the military commander, and the secretary also represented their own hierarchical substructures.

In Chapter 2 of this study, it was noted that social systems will have the tendency to develop all six mechanisms unless deliberately and persistently prevented from doing so (Galtung, 1975, p. 122). One can argue that these factors already existed with reference to Solomon and became more ingrained as time went by, therefore making Jehoiakim the ruler of a monarchical state that went by its business, even if the kings changed. What is clear from Jer 22:1-23:8, is that Jehoiakim was not judged because he was the head of a monarchical state that practised structural violence, but that his “eyes and heart were only on dishonest gain, that he shed innocent blood, and that he practised oppression and violence”.

Social systems will also, according to Galtung (1975, p. 122), set the pattern for an aggravation of inequality. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the monarchical state of Solomon was the same monarchical state of Jehoiakim. What probably did change, was an increase in the effectiveness of the aggravation of inequality. It has been asserted that the aggravation of inequality, in the case of the monarchical state, was of such a degree and magnitude that the peasant majority lived lives of abject misery and deprivation at the time of

Manasseh, and that this situation probably had not changed significantly in the time of Jeremiah.

From the above discussion, it can be argued that the monarchical state of Judah, in the time of Jeremiah, was an institution where structural violence was part and parcel of the way the state operated. The ideological-literary analysis indicates that Jeremiah's oracles of judgement concerning the kings of Judah, agrees with this assessment.

If one focusses on only Galtung's definition of violence, one can argue that the peasant majority of Israel was influenced by the monarchical state so that their actual somatic and mental realisations were below their potential realisations. If this difference between the actual (what was) and the potential (what could have been) was large, then violence was present. The peasant majority probably could only move closer to a place where their actual realisation was level with their potential realisation, with a given level of insight and resources. But if these insights and resources were monopolised by the monarchical state, and used for other purposes, then their actual level probably did fall below their potential level, and violence was present in the system.

In terms of the question whether the monarchical state of Jehoiakim, as a major social, political, and economic structure in the Judean society in the time of the prophet Jeremiah, caused ordinary Judeans to live lives where their actual realisations were much lower than their potential realisations, the answer can only be in the affirmative.

An important aspect of this ideological cultural violence is that the monarchical state succeeded in legitimising the structural and direct violence of the system of state. In a brief theological discussion on certain important conversations in Jer 22:1-23:8, one can see to what degree this legitimation could have been successful.

### **c. Theology of Kingship**

#### **i. The Deuteronomist and Cultural Violence**

The conversation generated between Jer 22:1-23:8 and Deuteronomy is probably not as prolific as the conversation between Jer 11:1-17 and Deuteronomy. But concerning kingship, Deuteronomy makes important contributions in Deut 17:14-20. It is important to take note of

the Deuteronomist as a significant voice in the Hebrew Bible concerning kingship and the monarchical state. Theologically, it is certain that the Deuteronomist saw the office of the king as “one of the reasons for the destruction of the temple and the monarchy”. In what way the Deuteronomist tried to save the office of the king to be used again in a post-exilic time, is debatable. In this discussion, the last kings of Judah will be evaluated on the basis of the kingship text of Deut 17:14-20.

Eben Scheffler (2007, p. 775) offers the following structural analysis of Deut 17:14-20:

#### The Conditions for Kingship in Israel: Its Occasion and Outcome

- A. The Occasion and Circumstance (v. 14)
  - I. When Settled in the land (v. 14a)
  - II. When the Need for a King arises (v. 14b)
- B. Nine Conditions for Successful Kingship (vv. 15-19)
  - I. Eligibility for Kingship (v. 15)
    - i. The one chosen by YHWH (v. 15a)
    - ii. A male compatriot (v. 15b)
  - II. Social Limitations to the King’s Power (v. 16)
    - i. Not many horses (i.e. no excessive military power) (v. 16a)
    - ii. No exploitation of the people (i.e. no oppressive power) (v. 16b)
  - III. Personal Limitations to the King’s Power (v. 17)
    - i. Not many wives (can be the influence foreign wives will have on the religious practices of the king [my interpretation]) (v. 17a)
    - ii. Not much gold and silver (i.e. no excessive wealth) (v. 17b)
  - IV. Submission to Divine (Deuteronomistic) Law (vv. 18-20a)
    - i. Keeping and reading a copy of the law (vv. 18-19b)
    - ii. Observe the law in order to fear God (v. 19b)
    - iii. Observe the law in order to respect fellow citizens (v. 20a)
- C. Outcome: Prolonged Kingship and Dynasty (v. 20)
  - I. Long Individual Rule (v. 20b)
  - II. Long Dynastical Rule (v. 20c)

If one compares Jehoiakim to this straightforward list of Deut 17:14-20, then Jehoiakim appears to be a “bad” king, according to the standards of Deut 17:14-20. In the ideological-literary analysis of Jer 22:13-18, Jehoiakim’s ostentatious building projects are mentioned. According to Jeremiah, Jehoiakim opposed the law of the king, in that he exploited his workforce (Deut 17:16b; Jer 22:13b), and he flaunted his excessive wealth with these building projects (Deut 17:17b; Jer 22:14). By these standards, Jehoiakim did not observe the law in obedience to YHWH (Deut 17:19b), and he most certainly did not observe the law in terms of respecting his fellow citizens (Deut 17:20a). This disobedience of Jehoiakim to the law of YHWH is mentioned by Jeremiah in Jer 22:16 in the form of a rhetorical question: “He (Josiah)

judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not this to know me? says the LORD.” One other condition of kingship that Jehoiakim did not meet, is the condition of election by YHWH. It is stated in 1 Kgs 23:34 and 2 Chron 36:4 that Egypt chose Jehoiakim as king and not YHWH. One can say that Jehoiakim was still part of the Davidic dynasty, but with the choice of Jehoahaz and Josiah as kings by the “people of the land”, the dynastical principles of primogeniture already became diluted.

In the case of Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, whose oracles of judgement are not expanded on to compare them to the conditions in Deut 17:14-20, the Deuteronomistic redaction in Jer 22:3, 8, effectively makes these kings as bad as Jehoiakim. In this case, judgement in Jer 22:3, 8 can be seen as umbrella terms to also judge both these kings at the same time as Jehoiakim, according to Deuteronomistic conditions. It can then be argued that, although the Deuteronomist tried to halt kingship excesses that had structural and direct violence aspects ascribed to them, Chapter 4 of this study also argued that the Deuteronomist, in his cult centralisation enthusiasm, was also a practitioner of structural and direct violence. But was kingship only seen as bad, as Jeremiah and the Deuteronomist want one to believe, or did other, more positive, ideas of kingship exist?

## **ii. The Psalmist and Cultural Violence**

Regarding the social justice expected from the kings, which features prominently in Jer 22:13-17, Psalms 72 and 89 place the burden of care squarely on the king (Lundbom, 2008, p. 120). Furthermore, in Jer 22:29 one finds a reference to a dirge “O land, land, land”. Brueggemann (1998, p. 179) states that it is important to note that in Jer 22:29 this cry of grief belongs to YHWH, who weeps over land and king. This good land (cf. Jer 3:19) is now brought to death. In Psalms 72, it is the justice of the king that brings prosperity in the land. The opposite is also true.

Although the social responsibilities of the king, according to the Psalms, are important, the question is whether the Psalms have a high or a low regard of kingship. If the Psalms have a high regard of kingship, then the Psalms can be seen as a counter-voice to the low regard of the prophets for kingship. Also, keeping in mind the open-ended function of the poetry of the Psalms which can be of religious value to other times and contexts, the Psalms could have been used to carry over high regard of kingship to a time after Jeremiah.

Kingship is an important theme in the book of Psalms. The royal psalms focus on events closely connected to the life of the king. Psalm 2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; and 144:1–11 are all examples of royal psalms. A king’s coronation fills in the background of psalm 2, with possible noises of vassal nations considering rebellion (vv. 1-3). Psalm 18 is a royal thanksgiving psalm, expressing gratitude for a victory in battle (vv. 6-19, 31-45). In psalm 20 the king prays for victory in the upcoming battle. Psalm 21 gives “thanks for answered prayers” (vv. 1-7) and promises “future victories” (vv. 8-12). Psalm 45 alludes to a royal wedding. Psalm 72 is a “prayer for the king”, probably prayed at his coronation or at his anniversary. Psalm 89 is a lament and a “prayer for deliverance from enemies”. Psalm 101 is a promissory psalm wherein the king “promises to rule with loyalty and justice”. Psalm 110 is a psalm for the coronation of the king. Psalm 132 evokes the divine choice of the Davidic line (vv. 11-12, 17-18) and of Zion (vv. 13-16). In Ps 110:1-4 the king “prays for victory” (Limberg, 1992, p. 533).

Garrett (2016, p. 10) argues that, although the royal psalms are almost mute concerning individual kings, they are very helpful in giving an idea of the original sacral nature of the king. The royal psalms, therefore, represent the fullest expression of the sacral nature of kingship in the Hebrew Bible. The royal psalms also view the king as a wholly transformed being - the anointed of YHWH. This signifies a transformation of his being to that of a man who is fully committed to YHWH’s side, as YHWH’s representative and heir, as the administrator of YHWH’s lordship over Israel (Garrett, 2016, p. 10).

Before moving to specific psalms that show this ideology of election as inherent to the royal psalms, a few remarks pertaining to the genre of the royal psalm are necessary. Goldingay (2006, p. 71) gives an overarching sense of the elective nature of the king in the royal psalms, when he notes that YHWH’s commitment to the king who reigns in Jerusalem, is closely associated with a commitment to continue dwelling in Jerusalem (Ps 132). From the Jerusalem sanctuary, YHWH acts to strengthen the king (Ps 20), from where the king is the instrument for exercising YHWH’s authority in the world (Ps 2; 110). Sometimes the king is in a position to testify to this (Ps 18; 118), though sometimes YHWH’s acts do not match the theory (Ps 89). The king’s challenge is to trust in the strength that comes from YHWH (Ps 21) and (implicitly) to see that he has the right socio-moral priorities (Ps 72) (Goldingay, 2006, p. 71).

Therefore, the elective nature of the king in the royal psalms cannot be separate from the important sacral position Jerusalem plays in his authority, or without a strong social justice command coupled to his authority. The language of the royal psalms is important in this regard,

because, as Elazar (1995, p. 326) states, the psalms can be perceived as “religio-political documents designed to strengthen the kingship as a religious value and source of religious inspiration”. The psalms then function to “emphasize national, monarchic, and messianic themes, tying them together to establish or strengthen the links between the king and national religious aspirations”.

As a type of discourse, which Michael and Jeong discussed in Chapter 2 of this study, the royal psalms can also play an important role in maintaining the monarchical state in its social world. The royal psalms is “set rules of speech” that show and determine who has the “right and status to make authoritative statements”. Therefore, the royal psalms function to “ensure the survival of the dominant structure” of the monarchical state under the mask of knowledge, keeping in mind the close connections between knowledge and power that Michael and Jeong refer to in Chapter 2. The “process of discourse” furthermore “plays an important role in shaping subjectivity, social institutions, and politics, while mediating between individuals and the conditions of their existence”. This study will look briefly at Psalm 2; 89; and 110.

Stevens (2012, p. 10) defines Psalm 2 as an exemplar of the ideology of election.

Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his anointed, saying, “Let us burst their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us.” He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD has them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, “I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.” (Ps 2:1-6)

While the other nations conspire against the king of Israel, YHWH (in heaven) rejects their conspiracy by saying, “I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill” (Ps 2:6).

I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, “You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. (Ps 2:7-8)

The Israelite king publicly affirms the divine selection “I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, ‘You are my son; today I have begotten you’” (Ps 2:7). The psalmist uses adoption language common in the ANE, thereby legitimating the king’s rule using the ideology of divine selection (Stevens, 2012, p. 10).

Psalm 89 moves closer to the special relationship between the king who rules from Zion, and YHWH, the Lord of Zion. In Psalm 89, the agreement between David and YHWH

surpasses the covenantal relationship described in 2 Sam 7. The psalm begins with YHWH speaking about the covenant with the Davidic dynasty (Ps 89:3-4), but then moves directly to lengthy praise of YHWH as the securer of cosmic order (89:5-18). In this section of the psalm, YHWH is the one who (1) rules all heavenly beings (89:6-8); (2) controls the chaos of the sea (89:9); (3) ensures order by destroying the chaos dragon, Rahab (89:10); (4) owns the cosmos (89:11); and (5) works through the king to defend the people (89:18) (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 326).

YHWH's final act in securing the cosmic order, reveals a special relationship with David. YHWH has secured order by ruling the sea, and now the king has those powers (Ps 89:25). The Davidic monarchy and the created order are now in sync, in that David's dynasty will be as constant as the sun and the moon in the sky (Ps 89:36-37). It is ideologically assumed then that YHWH and the king together control the order of the cosmos through their joint rule in the temple (the location at which the psalm is sung). To deny this YHWH-David relationship, is to risk stepping outside of ordered "reality" into chaos (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, pp. 326-327).

According to Psalm 110, YHWH is affirmed as the power behind the throne:

The LORD says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool." The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your foes! (Ps 110:1-2)

In Psalm 110, therefore, YHWH authorises the human king as the deputy ruler on earth (Stevens, 2012, p. 10). In this psalm, the martial language is also clear, together with the lowly place the enemies have to take in subjugation to the king, already enforcing the steep gradient whereby the value of the Self is inflated and exalted in contrast to the value of the Other that is deflated and even debased, as Galtung pointed out.

The issue of the divine election of the king has been dealt with, but the question as to whether the king could be divine, needs further exploration. It was already surmised that the king ruling on Zion and YHWH ruling on Zion enjoyed a close relationship. They served similar cosmic functions and exercised similar mundane powers. But in the language of Psalm 89, more can be made of this special relationship between the king and Jerusalem. After YHWH grants the Davidic king control over the chaotic forces of sea and river, the king cries out that YHWH is his father (Ps 89:26). YHWH responds that YHWH will make the king the firstborn (Ps 89:27). The language of birth and family implies adoption. As was also noted in

Psalm 2, the exact same idea of adoption is put forward, where YHWH says to the king, “You are my son; today I have begotten you” (Ps 2:7). In this (coronation) text, the king is given a status above all other people. This close relation between the king and YHWH could have made the kings of Israel and Judah sacral figures in that they joined with the divine in ways ordinary mortals could not (Gravett, Bohmbach, Greifenhagen, & Polaski, 2008, p. 327).

Even saying this, one cannot be sure if the kings of Israel and Judah were seen as divine. As was previously discussed, it is possible that the divinity of the Israelite kings depended on whether the influence from Egypt or Mesopotamia was the strongest. If this was not true for the general populace, it could have been true for the kings, as royalty of different countries probably mixed and traded ideas concerning kingship more often than the general populace. Therefore, the Mesopotamian idea of kingship would probably have influenced the Israelite kings to make less of their semi-divine status, while the Egyptian idea of kingship would have influenced the Israelite kings to see themselves as divine. One can argue that kingship in Israel was operating on this human-divine continuum. Gerstenberger (2002, pp. 168-169) notes that there was a tradition in Hebrew Bible times which elevated the king of Judah far – and in the course of time further and further – in the direction of the divine. He mentions that the writings of the Hebrew Bible contain “clear traces of ANE court etiquette in which the king is treated as divine or semi-divine, completely in line with the mythologies of the ANE”. In the case of appearing before the king, protocol demanded full proskynesis, prostrating oneself on the belly, nose in the dust. The vocabulary used in the proskynesis before the king, served to glorify his figure, thus also diminishing the person of the petitioner (Gerstenberger, 2002, pp. 168-169).

The fact that it is not sure just how divine certain Israelite kings thought themselves to be, does not lessen the authority the Israelite kings could muster in being so close to YHWH and by having this special relationship with YHWH. It is important, at this point, to take stock of the historical issues pertaining to the Israelite kings. The abovementioned psalms make much of the sacral space of Zion as the place from where this favoured king rules. But not all Israelite kings ruled from Zion. After the breakup of the monarchy, the Northern States did not have a Zion from which to rule. So from where did these kings receive their authority?

### iii. The Davidic Covenant and Cultural Violence

After the Davidic dynasty is emphatically halted by YHWH in Jer 22:30, the Davidic dynasty is effectively restored in Jer 23:5-8 by a righteous Branch raised up for David “and who shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land”. Firth (2012, p. 539) notes that a crucial element in the messianic understanding of the prophets focussed on the continuation of the Davidic dynasty, and in particular on a representative of David’s family who would provide a reign consistent with YHWH’s promise to David. Such a king’s reign would be comparable with YHWH’s reign. In the theology of kingship in Deut 17:14-20, the king who can follow the nine conditions of successful kingship, will have a long dynastical rule (Deut 17:20c). This theme is also explored in the books of Samuel, which interpret kingship as one manifestation of YHWH’s reign, though emphasising that human kings always stand under YHWH’s authority (Firth, 2012, pp. 43-45). Even before the exile, texts such as Hos 3:4-5; Isa 9:1-7, 11:1-5; and Jer 23:5-8 anticipated a Davidic king who will truly reign on YHWH’s behalf. Consistently, as the prophets reflect on this theme, they stress that YHWH is the one who brings restoration to and through Davidic kingship. YHWH alone is the nation’s saviour, but a future king is integral to his purposes (Firth, 2012, p. 539).

Only a brief discussion is necessary, although the theme of a Davidic dynasty after the exile can lend itself to a far more exhaustive study. One can argue that the promise of a Davidic dynasty that shall be raised up after the exile, is something like a cultural violence “get out of jail card”. What is meant by this remark, is that one can see in this study that the monarchical state was a clear perpetrator of structural and direct violence. Even if the Deuteronomist tried to halt and/or mitigate the excesses of the monarchical state, the royal psalms just went ahead in justifying the structural and direct violence of the monarchical state by given the king divine authorisation, based on the king’s special relationship with YHWH. In fostering the hope of a future king, a hope was fostered for a future monarchical state, and therefore a hope was also fostered for continued structural and direct violence. The only way that the structural and direct violence of the monarchical state could have been be tamed, was if the monarchical state heeded the calls for social justice, which are explicitly stated in the hope for a future Davidic king. The call for social justice was also a prophetic task. But it is doubtful if the prophets really instigated society to wide changes, to seek justice for the alien, widow, and orphan.

From just Jer 22:1-23:8 Jeremiah propagated “justice for the poor and the weak”. In the discussions on the prophetic critique against the cultural violence of Zion and the royal

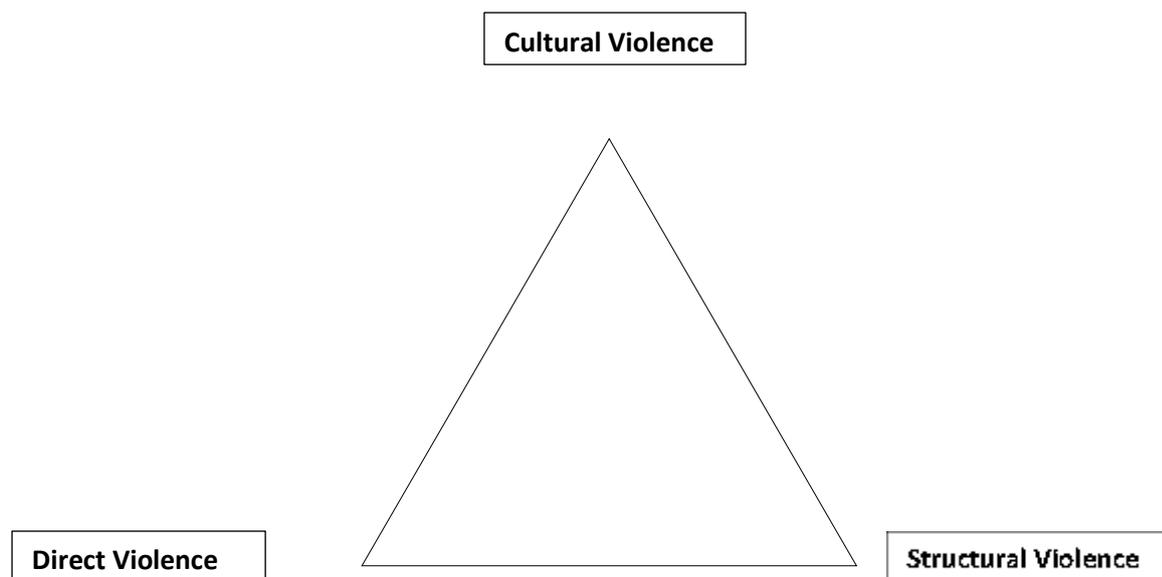
ideology of kingship held by the Davidic dynasty in Chapter 4 of this study, the prophets' opposition to the kings justifying excesses by claiming divine election of the temple and the palace in Jerusalem, was evident. Just because YHWH chose the king in Jerusalem to rule and chose the temple for his Name to dwell in, it was no blank cheque for the king to commit excesses against his own people. But when the prophets started propagating the centralisation of the cult, to halt syncretic influences in the Yahwist religion, they facilitated the committing of structural and direct violence.

#### 4. Kingship Violence in the Book of Jeremiah

This study will now attempt to bring together all the discussed manifestations of the direct, structural and cultural violence of the monarchical state in the book of Jeremiah, so as to ascertain to what degree a clear understanding of cultural violence can help the reader to identify the ways in which violence are depicted in the book of Jeremiah.

Galtung (1990, p. 294) uses the violence triangle (figure 2.2) as an image to explain the interrelatedness of cultural, structural and direct violence.

**Figure 2.2: Violence Triangle**



In using the information from the discussion on the violence triangle, the ideology of kingship, as cultural violence, can be the legitimiser of both the direct violence and the structural violence of the monarchical state. If one puts the triangle on its direct violence (the negative influence on the survival needs; well-being needs; identity needs; and freedom needs of ordinary Judeans) head, it yields the image of the structural (monarchical state) and cultural (YHWH's choice of king) sources of kingship. The triangle can produce six positions (three pointing downward, three upward) that invoke different scenarios. Despite the symmetries, Galtung points out that there is a basic difference in the temporal relation of the three concepts of violence. Therefore, the direct violence of the monarchical state can be seen as separate but connected events; the structural violence of the monarchical state as a process with ups and down; and kingship, as an example of cultural violence, as an invariant, or "permanence", although kingship was less of an invariant compared to with covenant. Covenant was to a greater extent central to Israel's understanding of their relationship with YHWH, and how YHWH understood his relationship with Israel. Conversely, kingship was effectively borrowed from surrounding states for various reasons, but also found itself in constant conflict with the equalitarian aspirations of the Israelite people. Even if the hope for a Davidic dynasty existed in the post-exilic times, the monarchical state, as it was known in the times from Saul to Jehoiachin, was never really re-established, keeping in mind that the establishment of the later Hasmonean monarchical state was against the conditions of Deut 17:14-20 in that Israel cannot have a foreigner as a king. The invariant nature of cultural violence is because culture remains essentially the same for long periods of time, given the slow transformation of basic culture. The three forms of violence thus enter time differently. Galtung uses the earthquake theory to explain this phenomenon. According to this theory, the earthquake is the direct violence caused by the monarchical state, the movement of the tectonic plates is the monarchical state, and the fault lines are kingship.

The earthquake theory gives Galtung (1990, p. 294) another point of incidence in the interrelatedness of direct, structural and cultural violence. This resultant violent image strata (figure 2.3) complements the triangle image but has its own limitations. The violent strata image can however be useful as a paradigm generating a wide variety of hypotheses.

**Figure 2.3: Violent Strata**

Direct violence

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Structural violence

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Cultural violence

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The violent strata image (figure 2.3) helps one to picture the interrelatedness of the different types of violence. At the bottom is the steady flow through time of kingship as an example of cultural violence, a substratum from which the other two types of violence can derive their nutrients. The rhythms of the structural violence of the monarchical state are in the next stratum. In this stratum, patterns of exploitation build up, are worn out, or are torn down. The rhythms of the structural violence of the monarchical state are protected by penetration-segmentation that prevents consciousness formation, and fragmentation-marginalisation that prevents organisation against exploitation and repression. The direct violence of the monarchical state is located in the top stratum and is violence that is visible.

Galtung (1990, p. 294) shows that a causal flow from kingship via the monarchical state to the direct violence of the monarchical state, can be identified. Kingship, especially the royal ideology that saw the king as YHWH's representative, preached, taught, and admonished ordinary Judeans into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them at all, particularly exploitation. In using Galtung's violence triangle and his violence strata images, this study has shown that a clear understanding of cultural violence can help the reader to identify the ways in which violence is depicted in the book of Jeremiah.

Lastly, as was already explained in the discussion on kingship and cultural violence, this study is also moving towards ideology. This study uses two of the cultural domains of Galtung in which cultural violence can function, namely religion and ideology.

An important point made by Galtung (1990, p. 299) in Chapter 2 of this study, is that the ideology of nationalism, rooted in the nature of the Chosen People and justified through

religion, should be seen in conjunction with the ideology of the state called statism. In the ideology of statism, the state can also be one of the successors to God, inheriting the right and even the duty to exercise ultimate power. Therefore, if one combines nationalism, with its steep Self-Other gradient, with statism, one gets the ideology of the nation-state. Galtung (1990, p. 299) emphasised in Chapter 2 of this study, the catastrophic effects of the development of the ideology of the nation-state, whereby any injustice can be legitimised in the name of the state. A combination of the ideology of the nation-state with a theologically based on the Chosen People complex, only increases the potential for violence.

In the discussion up to this point, it has been argued that the monarchical state on its own terms, was an example of structural and direct violence. Combined with a newfound nationalism manifesting at the time of Josiah, the monarchical state preached the importance of social justice, but more specifically, the importance of cultic centralisation to keep the chosen nation of Judah religiously pure. A strong belief existed that YHWH had a special place for his king in Jerusalem, and therefore would always protect his king in Jerusalem with his covenantal favour. Therefore, Judean nationalism, with a steep Self-Other gradient, was combined with the monarchical state, and in the time of Jeremiah the nation-state of Judah existed. The combination of this nation-state of YHWH, with the theological Chosen People complex, only increased the structural and direct violence already inherent in the monarchical state.

In the final chapter of this study we will see how insights in the direct, structural and cultural violence manifesting in the time of Jeremiah, can help us to see direct, structural and cultural violence in a South African context too.

## CHAPTER 6

### CULTURAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### 1. Introduction

*Oh my name it ain't nothin'. My age it means less. The country I come from. Is called the Midwest. I's taught and brought up there. The laws to abide. And that the land that I live in. Has God on its side. Oh the history books tell it. They tell it so well. The cavalries charged. The Indians fell. The cavalries charged. The Indians died. Ah the country was young. With God on its side. The Spanish-American. War had its day. And the Civil War too. Was soon laid away. And the names of the heroes. I's made to memorize. With guns in their hands. And God on their side. The First World War boys. It came and it went. The reason for fightin'. I never did get. But I learned to accept it. Accept it with pride. For you don't count the dead. When God's on your side. The Second World War. Came to an end. We forgave the Germans. And then we were friends. Though they murdered six million. In the ovens they fried. The Germans now too. Have God on their side. I've learned to hate the Russians. All through my whole life. If another war comes. It's them we must fight. To hate them and fear them. To run and to hide. And accept it all bravely. With God on my side. But now we got weapons. Of chemical dust. If fire them we're forced to. Then fire them we must. One push of the button. And a shot the world wide. And ya' never ask questions. When God's on your side. Through many dark hour. I been thinking about this. That Jesus Christ was betrayed by a kiss. But I can't think for ya'. You'll have to decide. Whether Judas Iscariot. Had God on his side. So now as I'm leavin'. I'm weary as Hell. The confusion I'm feelin'. Ain't no tongue can tell. The words fill my head. And they fall to the floor. If God's on our side. He'll stop the next war.*

(With God on Our Side. Songwriter Bob Dylan)

*We stand here before the Holy God of heaven and earth, to make a vow to Him that, if He will protect us and give our enemy into our hand, we shall keep this day and date every year as a day of thanksgiving like a sabbath, and that we shall build a house to His honour wherever it should please Him, and that we will also tell our children that they should share in that with us in memory for future generations. For the honour of His name will be glorified by giving Him the fame and honour for the victory.*

(The Vow/covenant taken before the Battle of Blood River 1838)

In Chapter 1 of this study, the secondary research question put forward was how insight into cultural violence in the book Jeremiah helps to create awareness of the problem of cultural violence in society today. One cannot open the newspapers without being confronted with violence that hints at more than just isolated acts of direct violence committed by some

unhinged individual. The most recent event was when four assailants murdered 49 Muslims in prayer in two Mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. Jacinda Ardern, the New Zealand premier, described this senseless act of murder as one of the darkest days in the history of New Zealand. In South Africa, a night watch was organised at the Anglican Church in Cape Town by local clergy of all denominations in sympathy for the victims of this act of violence. One of these clergy members was castigated by members of his own denomination concerning his act of praying for the victims of this senseless slaughter, for calling them Muslim brothers and sisters.

Is there more to these acts of direct violence than just random acts of xenophobic violence? Why is the act of praying to one deity, wrong for the followers of another deity? Is it because God is on the side of Christians, and not Muslims? Implicitly this can be construed that God favours Christians just a little more than non-Christians. Therefore, the lives of Christians matter just a little more than the lives of non-Christians.

In the beginning of this study, it was mentioned that some significant conflicts over the past centuries give cause to reflect on the way in which other countries, for example the United States of America, used God as a powerful rallying cry to build its empire of steel and blood. It was mentioned that the rallying cry of “God is on our side” lifted their enterprise of nation-building above the ordinary and banal to something religious and divinely justified, as if God himself had ordered the near extermination of the Native-Americans and forged the chains of the African-Americans (Seibert, 2012, pp. 6-12).

But in my own country, in South Africa, the powerful cultural symbol of covenant gave a minority of people the apparent divine right to rule over a larger population and to subject this said larger population to the cruel and dehumanising chains of Apartheid (Cilliers, 2006).

## **2. Covenantal Violence in South Africa**

Anton Ehlers (2011, pp. 2-4) gives a short overview of the events associated with the making of the covenant between Sarel Cilliers, representing the Voortrekkers, and God. What happened to make this covenant necessary? Both the vow/covenant and the Battle of Blood River/Ncome took place during a part of Afrikaner history called the Great Trek. From 1836 to 1854 almost 15 000 Voortrekkers (Afrikaner farmers and their families) exchanged their homes in the

eastern district of the Cape Colony for new homes in the interior regions of what is South Africa today (Ehlers, 2011, pp. 2-4).

Piet Retief was one of the Voortrekker leaders who crossed the Drakensberg mountain range into the current KwaZulu-Natal, hoping to purchase land from Dingane, the Zulu king. While Piet Retief was in the process of negotiating with Dingane in Mgungundlovu, Dingane's capital city, Dingane requested from Retief some cattle that Tlokwa stole from Dingane, before he would be able to grant land to the Voortrekkers. Retief did return the cattle but was killed with some 100 of his companions by Dingane, who feigned a willingness to part with quite a substantial part of KwaZulu-Natal between Thukela and Umzimvubu Rivers and signed a contract with Retief to put this alleged property transaction into effect. The ink was not even dry on the contract, when Zulu warriors launched a pre-emptive attack on the homes (wagons) of the Voortrekkers, killing approximately 300 Voortrekker men, women and children and a further 250 workers of the Voortrekker (Ehlers, 2011, p. 5).

Andries Pretorius, another Voortrekker leader, arrived in KwaZulu-Natal, and immediately found himself on a war footing with Dingane and the Zulu nation. Pretorius conceived the idea of a vow/covenant with God and discussed this idea with Cilliers (the spiritual leader of the Voortrekkers in Natal). They in turn discussed this idea with other leaders, and after receiving the consent of the leaders and Voortrekkers, a vow/covenant was made with God on 9 December 1838 at a place called Wasbank. In the vow/covenant, taking the form of a prayer, Cilliers and the Voortrekkers beseeched God to make them victorious against the Zulus. If God gave them victory, they would build a church and keep the day of the victory as a Sabbath in honour of the salvation made possible by God (Ehlers, 2011, p. 5).

On the morning of 16 December 1838, the Voortrekker "laager" (wagons that were pulled into a protective semi-circle with the Voortrekkers and their cattle inside and the enemy outside) was attacked by a force of 14 000 Zulu warriors. A few hours later the Ncomo river ran red with the blood of killed Zulu warriors. The Zulu army lost 3 000 warriors with not even one casualty on the side of the Voortrekkers (Ehlers, 2011, p. 6).

When the famous Afrikaner singer, Steve Hofmeyer, declares publically that he is an Afrikaner, and sings only the Afrikaans part of the anthem of South Africa, what is his purpose? What happened between this vow/covenant at Blood River/ Ncomo and Steve Hofmeyer's declaration? Did this vow/covenant play a central role in the formation of the national identity of the Afrikaner? The Afrikaner who, a century later, would be responsible for the structural

violence of Apartheid and the direct violence of the “total onslaught” of the state of emergency in the late 1980s. Did this vow/covenant of Cilliers contribute to the Afrikaner belief that the Afrikaner, as a member of a distinct national/social/ethnic group, was elected by God as his possession and was therefore more “elected” than the other groups in South Africa and also more loved than the other groups in South Africa? If this is the case, then this vow/covenant is an example of cultural violence. How did the cultural violence of this covenant contribute to the structural violence of Apartheid and the direct violence of the state of emergencies in the 1980s?

Hermann Giliomee (1991, pp. 14-20) argues that the Afrikaner’s feeling of being part of a distinct identity group namely the Afrikaner, did not come to fruition before 1870. Before the turn of the nineteenth century, the Afrikaner still saw itself as a Capetonian or a *burgher* (citizen) of the ZAR. With the finding of diamonds, gold and the accompanying industrialisation, the Afrikaner’s wealth increased. This sudden increase in wealth changed the makeup of the Afrikaner from an equalitarian society to a society of social stratification and differentiation. Outside pressures, such as English hegemony, and internal pressure, such as the forming of competing groupings, forced the Afrikaner to form its own national identity. From the early twentieth century, the ethnic consciousness of the Afrikaner increased, formed by two wars of independence and the change of Afrikaans to a language (Giliomee, 1991).

Ehlers (2011, p. 7) picks up on the evolution in time of the “vow/covenant and battle of Blood River/Ncome mythology” in Afrikaner nationalism and states that “the annual celebration of the Battle of Blood River/Ncome served as a reliable barometer of the historical, national and political thought of the Afrikaner”. The “Day of the Vow” could even be conceptualised as a type of “civil religion”, in which the significance of Blood River/Ncome was emphasised by “Day of the Vow” celebrations, uniting religion and history (Ehlers, 2011, p. 7).

Ehlers (2011, p. 7) alludes to an example where this civil religion could be observed. On 16 December 1881, at the Transvaal (a former South African “republic” which later became a northern province in the Republic of South African) state festival, with the celebrations of Blood River/Ncome and Transvaal regaining its independence, Paul Kruger, the President of Transvaal, affirmed that Transvaal independence was divinely orchestrated. The *volksleiers* (leaders of the people) were merely tools in the hand of God. God was therefore the real victor at Blood River/Ncome and Majuba (the place of the final defeat of the British during

Transvaal's war of independence). The Afrikaners' freedom and their country were thus divine gifts, bestowed upon them because they were *God's volk* (God's people) (Ehlers, 2011, p. 7).

Ehlers (2011, p. 7) gives another example of this civil religion. Kruger warned in 1891 that Dingaan's Day is a religious day and not a worldly festival. He furthermore saw the loss of Transvaal's independence in 1877 and the resultant war in 1880 as divine punishment for the non-compliance of the people to the obligations of the vow/covenant of 1838. History was thus used to bolster the historical consciousness of the Transvaal Afrikaners, while their divine election and the similarities between them and the Israelites of the Old Testament, were extensively broadcast (Ehlers, 2011, p. 7).

Ehlers (2011, p. 7) furthermore points out that the twentieth century saw the extensive application of the vow/covenant of Blood River/Ncome by Afrikaner religious, political and community leaders (nationalist culturalists) to the "real life" social, political and economic situation of Afrikaners. This of course was fat on the fire of Afrikaner nationalism (Ehlers, 2011, p. 7).

The twentieth century, according to Ehlers (2011, p. 8), also saw Dingaan's Day celebrations increasingly being appropriated as a political "pulpit" for preaching Afrikaner nationalism to the *volk*. President MT Steyn of the Free State (another previous "republic" which became a South-African province) referred in 1910 to the events of the Battle of Blood River/Ncome as follows:

It can be that it (the "native question") will lead to a blood bath ... Maybe the growth in civilisation will bring a solution that nobody has dreamt of up till now. When Pretorius broke the back of the barbarians God placed the natives ... under the guardianship of the white man ... That is a burden the white man must carry. The Afrikaners will have to keep their blood "pure", and work to stay on top. Under God's management we are heirs of centuries of civilisation. The native is only now touching the fringes of civilisation.

Hertzog, according to Ehlers (2011, p. 9), deliberated in 1929 on the meaning of Blood River/Ncome at a Dingaan's Day celebration. He believed "Dingaan's Day 1838 was decisive for the existence (*Volksbestaan*) of the European race from the Cape to Nyassa". It was, according to Hertzog, "the birth of a new European nation (*volksiel*) on African soil, as well as a victory of civilisation over barbarism". Hertzog saw "the power of the assegaai replaced by the authority of the law", in other words the authority of "a new-born Afrikaner nation".

Therefore, South Africa had to be kept “a white man’s country under the white man’s authority” (Ehlers, 2011, p. 9).

The centenary celebrations of the 1838 Great Trek, according to Ehlers (2011, p. 9), also saw the vow/covenant and Blood River/Ncome being appropriated as main reference point in the development of Afrikaner nationalism. This (populist) phase in the development of Afrikaner nationalism reflected the struggle/salvation/survival rhetoric of populist movements. Dr DF Malan, leader of the National Party, in a speech at the Blood River/Ncome site in December 1938, pointed to the difficult task of keeping South Africa a “white man’s country”:

At the Blood River battleground, you stand on sacred soil. It is here that the future of South Africa as a civilised Christian country and the continued existence of the responsible authority of the white race was decided... You stand today in your own white laager at your own Blood River, seeing the dark masses gathering around your isolated white race.

Malan saw the city, where black and white confront each other in the labour field, as the site of the “new Blood River”. “If there is no salvation”, Malan declared, “the downfall of South Africa as a white man’s country” would reach fruition. Forceful intervention could halt this (apocalyptic) scenario, or “the victory of faith at Blood River would be transformed into one of despair and ruin” (Ehlers, 2011, p. 9).

Ehlers (2011, p. 9) gives two last examples of speeches/sermons permeated by divine election favouring the Afrikaner against other groups. In 1938 Rev JD Vorster declared:

In answer to prayer and covenant God Almighty confirmed on 16 December 1838 that it is his will that the Afrikaner *volk* shall live... And on December 16 the Almighty gave his approval to the *volk’s* direction and our fathers bound us with a holy, unimpeachable covenant never to be untrue to the *Volk* and God. For the Afrikaner, Dingaan’s Day is therefore a holy day of covenant.

On 22 September 1938. Dirk Mostert declared at Pearston:

We are a chosen nation. We did not choose ourselves. God chose us. We were given a commission.

It is striking how the rhetoric of these discourses emphasises a dichotomy between the elected (white, good, pure, civilised) and the non-elected (black, barbarians). The covenant at Blood River also changed from a contract between God and the Voortrekkers, where the Voortrekkers took the initiative for a covenant where God chose the modern Afrikaner. What is even more striking, are the similarities of the social and economic settings of late seventh century Judah with the social and economic settings of South Africa’s Afrikaner in 1870.

Clearly the religious idea of covenant was appropriated by later Afrikaner power to legitimise a certain ideological world view. Appropriating covenant from an early time “obscured by the mist of time” in the twentieth century, certainly gave covenant a permanence over time.

Even if the Afrikaners knew covenant and could immerse themselves in the religious language and “matrix of ideas” of covenant, it is possible that kingship was a strange concept for Afrikaners to appropriate on a religious level, except in Calvin’s three-fold office of the believer, namely priest, prophet, and king.

### **3. Kingship Violence in South Africa**

It was argued in Chapter 5 of this study that the real enforcers of the structural violence of kingship were the various functionaries of the monarchical state of Judah. Analogously, it can be argued that the South African state under the National Party government from 1948 to 1994 showed striking similarities with the workings of the monarchical state of Judah. Both flames were fanned by nationalism.

Galtung (1990, p. 299) points out in chapter 2 of this study, that the ideology of nationalism, rooted in the concept of the Chosen People, justified through religion, and functioning in conjunction with the ideology of state called statism, produces the ideology of the nation-state with its steep Self-Other gradient. The top dogs of this nation-state, as earthly representatives of God, also had the right and even the duty to exercise ultimate power. Galtung (1990, p. 299) emphasises in Chapter 2 of this study, the catastrophic effects of the development of the ideology of the nation-state, whereby any injustice can be legitimised in the name of the state. A combination of the ideology of the nation-state with a theologically based Chosen People complex, only increases the potential for violence.

In Chapter 5 of this study, it was argued that the monarchical states of the United Monarchy of Israel and Judah were examples of structural and direct violence. Combined with a newfound nationalism manifesting at the time of Josiah, the monarchical state of Judah preached the importance of social justice, but more particularly the importance of cultic centralisation, in keeping the chosen nation of Judah religiously pure. There existed a strong belief that YHWH had a special place for his king in Jerusalem, and therefore would always protect his king in Jerusalem with his covenantal favour. Therefore, Judean nationalism, with

a steep Self-Other gradient, was combined with the monarchical state, and in the time of Jeremiah the nation-state of Judah existed. The combination of this nation-state of YHWH, with the theological Chosen People complex, only increased the structural and direct violence already inherent in the monarchical state.

Using the same scenario as with late-monarchical Judah, one can argue that the nation-state of Apartheid South Africa was born from a strong national feeling among Afrikaners. They felt that God gave them South Africa to rule. The nation-state that came into being, also preached that the chosen Afrikaners should stay religiously and racially pure. Although one cannot say that God (YHWH) chose the president of the country in a certain city and promised the survival of the city, there did exist the idea that, what YHWH has done for Israel, he will also do for the Apartheid nation-state (Deist, 1994; Cilliers, 2006). Therefore, Afrikaner nationalism, with a steep Self-Other gradient, was combined with the modern state, which gave birth to Apartheid South Africa. The combination of this nation-state, favoured by God, with the theological Chosen People complex, could also have increased the structural and direct violence already inherent in many modern states. Looking at the structural violence of the Apartheid state, it is evident that it was a violent structure that made blacks live lives of actual realisation far below their potential realisation.

Numerous examples can be cited as to what extent the Apartheid state can be said to be an example of structural violence. Ivan Evans (2009, pp. 95-97) interestingly also uses Galtung to show how the Apartheid state revealed signs of structural violence. He points out that state formation encouraged a pattern of structural violence in South Africa's administered economy. Three motifs stand out in this pattern.

Firstly, whites were given the impression that the direct violence used to institutionalise segregation, was just policy and administrative measures which were benign, remote and unintentional. The measure of the Native Land Act of 1913, responsible for transforming 13 percent of South Africa into "tribal reserves", exemplifies the logic of structural violence. While Native administrators saw the Land Act as the "cornerstone of Native administration", it marked a fundamental attack on Africans. Africans' access to land outside the reserves was taken away, while the poverty of too many people on too little land, forced males into the migrant labour system. The reserves became havens of hardships that included malnutrition, increasing infant mortality rates, violent disputes over access to scarce land, the immigration of able-bodied men from the peasant economy, the dilution of family systems and the "double

oppression” of women left behind by migrant male family members. While Native administrators attributed the deteriorating conditions in the reserves to “inefficient farming methods” of subsistence agriculture, it was the unsustainably high population densities that the Act itself created, which caused these conditions (Evans, 2009, p. 96).

Secondly, the predominance of structural violence in South Africa overshadowed the persistence of direct personal violence throughout the South African economy. Whites in authority positions within the structures of Apartheid sometimes used their authority in acts of direct violence. Because they functioned within the structures, their propensity for violence was normally excused or even seen as just actions of “some bad apples” (Evans, 2009, pp. 96-97).

Thirdly, the extensive institutionalisation of structural violence in South Africa, which codified the use of direct violence against blacks, made direct violence the job of the state. This ensured that white citizens would not inflict collective violence on black individuals (Evans, 2009, p. 97). It probably also made it possible for direct violence that was committed on a larger scale, such as the Sharpeville shooting, to not be seen as violence personally committed against blacks, but “only the Police doing the job they were payed to do”. It is also not difficult to see the comparisons between the lives of blacks during Apartheid and the lives of corvée workers during the rule of Jehoiakim!

#### **4. The Way Forward**

In this study the example of the Apartheid state was used to show how insights on the direct, structural and cultural violence of covenant in Jer 11:1-17 and kingship in Jer 22:1-23:8 can be helpful to neither condone nor condemn, but to understand and elucidate the situation in South Africa. It also stands to reason that the sharp dichotomies of the Apartheid era were not left behind after the inauguration of Nelson Mandela in 1994. This remark is important in that it can be argued that the direct, structural and cultural violence of the Apartheid nation-state lies in the past and does not need to concern ordinary South Africans anymore. This argument is a fallacy, because Galtung has shown the longevity of cultural and structural violence. Concerning structural violence, the Apartheid nation-state was transformed after 1994 to focus more on issues of social justice for all, for example housing, social services, health and education, whereas the Apartheid nation state spent more on the instruments for upholding the

structures of the nation-state such as the police and the defence force. This focus on social justice does not make state structures any less susceptible to the pitfalls of structural violence.

Cultural violence, which makes direct and structural violence seem right, is another aspect of violence that one can be sure has not disappeared completely. The legitimising of violent acts is an important factor in why cultural violence is hard to identify. It can be said that the temptation to incorporate God within national plans, thus creating value-loaded dichotomies between those against national plans and therefore against God, and those in favour of said plans and therefore with “God on their side”, will always be a clear and present danger.

The question remains how one can go about mitigating the dangers of covenant in creating dichotomies between chosen and non-chosen, as was demonstrated in this study. First of all, the issue of social justice needs to be affirmed as the covenantal check. Covenant without social justice, is not covenant. It can be argued that the Apartheid state also practised social justice, but it is known that this was slanted much more to the side of whites than other populations groups. The question then remains if covenant can be redeemed in a South African context.

Dirkie Smit (2007, pp. 212-213) argues that the idea of covenant was not explicitly used in defining the chosenness of the Afrikaner in the Apartheid years, although a strong sense of election did permeate the general discourse (Smit, 2007, pp. 212-213). He put forward four discourses in which covenant can still be of use: (1) The doctrinal covenant discourse where the Biblical and typically Reformed notion of covenant can still be used in dogmatics, particularly in soteriology. (2) The ecclesiological covenant discourse where the true church – God’s covenant people – receives God’s promises and carries God’s message. Baptism is the entry point to the covenant. (3) The ecumenical covenantal discourse where members of large international religious bodies (e.g., World Council of Churches) share the responsibility (covenanting) for reaching certain ethical goals. (4) The “political-ethical covenant discourse” where the biblical idea of covenant can be used to develop political thought (Smit, 2007, pp. 215-223).

Smit (2007, p. 223) presents some possible covenantal discourses in South Africa today that are worth taking note of. Because a doctrinal or religious discourse on covenant takes vocation and calling seriously, it can lead to an ethics of responsibility. An ethics of community is made possible by the ecclesiological discourses on covenant. The ecumenical covenant

discourse on “covenanting” together in search of ethical goals, makes possible an ethics of liberative solidarity. The political-ethical covenant discourse can be used to relate covenant to life in the real world. In these discourses covenant serves an ethics for a public church in civil society (Smit, 2007, p. 223). All of these ethical considerations can be helpful in mending souls and building destroyed bridges between people in South Africa (Smit, 2007, pp. 223-228).

## **5. The Challenges of Ideological Criticism**

It is important to stress that it is not easy to critique powerful religious symbols such as covenant and kingship. These symbols not only present to Christians ways of understanding God’s salvific-historical acts, but also brings comfort through the sacrament of baptism. To critique these symbols can sometimes be scratching where it does not itch. But it does itch! Therefore, sound and ongoing ideological critique of these symbols is a necessity.

Saying this, it pays to keep in mind the challenges for scholars doing ideological criticism. Carol Newson, in her comparison between post-critical and ideological criticism, points to the place the critic or scholar inhabits (his/her embeddedness) in this exercise of ideological criticism. If the critique is exclusively from outside a religious community, the critique can assume a moral superiority regarding the world critic or scholar inhabiting the world imagined by Scripture (Newson, 2009, p. 555). The other possibility is that the critique has no community of believers for which it is responsible. In an environment such as an academic institution that has a certain responsibility towards such a community, one may still raise questions regarding the potential damage of such irresponsible critique. But this does not preclude ideological criticism from outside the religious community. Newson (2009, p. 555) quotes David Clines who remarks that critique does not necessarily imply negative evaluation, but it does imply evaluation of the text by a certain standard of reference. It can be difficult to ascertain what this standard of reference is for critique from outside the religious community, but certainly not impossible. One can maybe practise a “hermeneutic of suspicion” towards such attempts at critique. As Newson (2009, p. 555) correctly states, ideological criticism does not assume a non-ideological reader and therefore the process of reading may be an occasion for mutual critique.

There are also ideological critics in biblical studies (like me) who do belong to a religious community. Newson remarks that ideological critics who belong to religious communities, like ideological critics from outside the religious community, use ideological

criticism to study and evaluate the meeting of two worlds of external value to one another. Newson (2009, pp. 555-556) identifies a challenge for such critics: “How such readers negotiate the tensions of a dual hermeneutics of assent and of suspicion vary considerably and is perhaps one of the issues requiring more explicit attention from ideological criticism”.

The determination of ideological criticism not to be complicit with the ethical oppressiveness of the Bible, is also challenged by an uncertainty felt by some ideological critics that the text and traditions can be presented so clearly or the issues posed so simply (Newson, 2009, p. 556). The biggest challenge can therefore be for ideological critics, who do belong to a religious community, to be critical of that which they love and cherish: Scripture.

For instance, burning questions in my religious community of the Dutch Reformed Church, are inclined to be reduced to the question of the authority of Scripture. The tendency of believers to make the authority of Scripture the “be all and end all” of the church and the only, if sometimes precarious, foundation in the lives of believers, is responsible for the tragic reality that Scripture is used to exclude and to oppress. Just who is oppressed and excluded, and who is doing the oppressing and exclusion, naturally depends on the time one lives in and the structures that hold sway. Although the religious foundation of the authority of Scripture is something to cherish, there are some real dangers in approaching Scripture as a source of infallible truths.

John Collins (2004, p. 604), after mentioning that the Hebrew Bible speaks with a passionate urgency on the subject of social justice like no other collection or document in antiquity, does state that the Bible, and especially the Hebrew Bible, is often viewed with suspicion by the modern world because of its association with religious fundamentalism. He argues for an own “hermeneutic of suspicion” when he states that although there are laws that can be described as narrow-minded and intolerant, the collection as a whole cannot be characterised as such. He argues that the Bible is a “collection of writings that is marked by a lively internal debate, and a remarkable spirit of self-criticism”, directed not only at the people of Israel, but sometimes at the myths and certainties of the tradition. It can then be considered somewhat ironic that fundamentalist readings of the Bible so often treat it as a bedrock of certainty. Collins (2004, p. 604) therefore reiterates that “the portrayal of the Bible as a source of infallible truth does not arise from a reading of the Bible itself, but is a monstrous imposition upon it, even if it is one that is backed by a long tradition” (Collins, 2004, p. 604).

Collins (2004, p. 604) furthermore pointedly writes:

One of the most persistent themes in the Hebrew Bible is the critique of idolatry. This applies not only to carved or molten statues, but to the human tendency to absolutize things that are merely part of the created order. Perhaps the greatest irony in the history of the Bible is that it itself has so often been treated as an idol and venerated with a reverential attitude while its message is ignored. Biblical figures from Abraham to Job do not hesitate to argue with the Almighty. The least that might be expected of readers of the Bible is that they bring the same critical spirit to bear on the biblical text (Collins, 2004, p. 604).

Ideological criticism therefore gives one the opportunity, in a religious community, to “argue with the Almighty”. Ideological criticism gives one the opportunity to see what has been made “idols” in Scripture and to ask questions of these idols. Ideological criticism moreover gives one the opportunity to read “with the grain” on the subject of social justice.

## **6. The Importance of this Study**

This study maintains that violence in texts is more insidious and more deeply imbedded than just the direct violence that is read at first glance. The horrible and bloody incidences of direct violence in texts can result in the avoidance of these texts by scholars, ministers and lay persons. The brutal nature of direct violence in certain texts also makes it possible for readers of the texts to isolate these texts from the surrounding texts. This can finally result in creating a non-violent canon in the canon. In the introduction to the *Princeton Readings of Religion and Violence* it is stated that it can be argued by the defenders of religion that the overall voice of religion is peaceful and that the misuse of religion leads to violence. Even if this is the case and religion does preach acceptance and tolerance, and advocates mercy and forgiveness, the brutal passages in the Bible do exist, and even if religious traditions present themselves as peaceful, religious traditions are still permeated with the language and symbols of violence (Juergensmeyer & Kitts, 2011, p. 1). This study showed that it is possible that even “peaceful” texts are imbedded in environments of structural and cultural violence. This study also contributed to the expansion of the conceptualisation of violence within biblical studies to include forms of structural and cultural violence.

This study furthermore aims to advance the ongoing debate on violence. It can be argued that there are two impediments to this necessary debate. Firstly, the cruelty associated with violence can make any debate on violence a difficult undertaking. Violence is a multi-faceted phenomenon that can be debate worthy for most people, but not for the victims of violence. Victims of violence sometimes have difficulty discussing violence because of the

trauma that is normally associated with violence. Charles Figley (2008) argues that human beings have a “psychological boundary of endurance and coping with stress” which, if crossed, can lead to a stress injury. A psychological stress injury is much the same as a physical stress injury (e.g., tennis-elbow). The “stress injury model” within the field of traumatology can give insight into psychological stress injuries. Figley (2008) states that the “quality and quantity of distress overwhelms an individual’s resilience, capacity and causes a psychological stress injury in the form of traumatic stress reactions, stress-related exhaustion, and if the situation involves loss, a grief reaction” (Figley, 2008). Nigel Hunt (2008) argues that when the effects of violence on a communal scale, as in war and political violence, are computed, one finds oneself within the PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) spectrum of disorders. War and political violence have serious mental health consequences, for example anxiety and depression, and other problems such as substance abuse (Hunt, 2008).

Secondly, people sometimes tend to underplay the violence inherent in their own social/cultural/religious group and overplay the violence inherent in another social/cultural/religious group. This phenomenon can be intensified if other levels of conflict are active between said groups. In religion, violence can be a major problem in other religions but not necessarily in one’s own religion. Renard (2012, p. 1) remarks that “religionists are too seldom willing to entertain the possibility that their own faith tradition is as much a contributor to the problem as a counterforce”. Adherents of a given tradition often insist that it could hardly be more obvious that someone’s else’s sacred text and historical records are rife with a divine mandate for the indiscriminate slaughter of unbelievers and all they hold dear, while claiming that their own revealed patrimony sanctions only “self-defence” (Renard, 2012, p. 1). In most pluralist societies, it is possible that the lines are figuratively drawn in the sand in connection to violence and religion, and that any discussion or most discussions on violence and religion can be such an emotive issue within religious traditions that they are also difficult to discuss in an objective, non-emotional manner.

Hopefully, this study, which investigated violence as a multi-faceted, inherently human, and multi-manifesting phenomenon contributed to making any discussion and/or debate on violence more multi-faceted, inherently human, and multi-manifesting too. Research about the phenomenon of violence and especially research about the interconnectedness of violence and religion can, furthermore, contribute to the current body of theoretical knowledge on different societal issues, for example intimate partner violence and gang violence that continues to plague our fragile democracy.

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