

A SOURCE OF HOPE:
A TEXTUAL AND LITERARY EXPLORATION OF
LAMENTATIONS 3 IN MT & CODEX B

by

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ABSTRACT
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Textual criticism of the Old Testament is important for our understanding of the content of the biblical text, but the standard method employed often favors a particular manuscript tradition, which is the Masoretic Text. Variations from this tradition are often explained by how they deviated from this text with little consideration as to the meaning the variant readings communicate. This study investigates the variant reading of Lamentations 3:22-24 as represented in codex *Vaticanus* in two ways. First, it considers and offers a clearer description of the textual situation based on manuscript evidence. Second, it explains how this variant reading affects the theological implications of Lamentations 3. In short, this study investigates how variations in one's text may affect one's theology and response to that text.

*To my wife, Laura, and my children, Emma, Madeleine, and
Winter. Whether in joy or sorrow may you always find
the Lord close at hand, His arm mighty to save.
He is your singular source of hope.
May you find your comfort, rest,
joy, delight, and life
in Him*

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CHAPTER 1

LAMENTATIONS & MANUSCRIPT TRADITIONS

Introduction

From the earliest of times God has communicated to his people primarily through the written word. This was so with Moses, the prophets, the hymnic literature of the psalms, and continued on into the New Testament writings. We now stand millennia removed from those initial writings with manuscripts and methods to help us understand what God has communicated. This communication is not without its difficulties. Old Testament manuscript evidence paints a picture of fidelity to the text but also, at times, a pluriformity of textual "editions." This pluriform situation may have come about by intentional work of scribes or, in other cases, random happenings. Nonetheless, we need to make sense of the various readings that may exist for a given passage of Scripture. Such work falls squarely in the field of textual criticism.

For the past few centuries Old Testament textual criticism has operated under a basic paradigm. The diplomatic

edition of *Codex Leningradensis* was used as the base text for this discipline. Most variant readings were explained by their internal deviation from that codex.¹ Septuagint studies tended to operate in the background of this work with only the more pressing variant readings making their way to the foreground.²

1. Often *Codex Leningradensis* is referred to as the Masoretic Text (MT), but that is not an entirely accurate appellation for this codex (B19a) is one of several Masoretic texts (e.g. Aleppo). More often than not, B19a is referred to as the MT as it is an efficient means of communication. I will use this nomenclature throughout this study.

When referring to "internal" explanations within textual criticism I refer to, in part, the more common refrain of *lectio deficiior, parablepsis*, etc. One effect from this common approach was it inadvertently discounted the "variant reading" as it was situated within an extant reading, whether a Hebrew MS or another version. Whether the reading was deemed an error or not, a literary explanation-making sense of the reading in light of its immediate and larger context-of the variant reading was not often sought.

In more recent history, the *Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition* (HBCE), formerly the *Oxford Hebrew Bible*, is an attempt at an eclectic Hebrew text. Rather than reproducing B19a or the Aleppo codex (as is the case for the *Hebrew University Bible Project*), HBCE sets out to produce the "earliest recoverable text of a particular book." Projects such as this one suggest that the traditional approach to producing a critical edition of the Hebrew Bible is undergoing some much needed refinement. [The Society of Biblical Literature. "The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition," [website]; available from <http://hbceonline.org/>; Internet; accessed 03 April 2017.]

2. Karen H. Jobes and Moises Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), 149.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls brought about changes in Old Testament text-critical methods and assumptions.³ One significant shift was that "variant readings"—whether in Hebrew MSS or other versions—may be due to differing Hebrew texts; it is not merely the case that an extant variant reading was generated by some scribal error. A fascinating example of this is the book of Jeremiah which has two literary traditions: MT and LXX.⁴ Such findings have affected how one approaches a variant reading.⁵

Lamentations is another book that exhibits some variations in the text depending on the manuscript. In this study I investigate the textual causes for this situation, but more than that I am interested in the theological implications of these variant readings. Due to the unique variant reading in Lamentations, I focus my efforts on Lamentations 3 as

3. It may perhaps be more fitting to refer to the *Dead Sea Scrolls* as the discoveries in the Judean Desert or the Qumran Manuscripts as MSS were found outside of the Dead Sea area.

4. Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 319.

5. If a particular variant(s) is shown to have support from a Hebrew source that reading may gain further support as "legitimate". Such findings also prompt a question into what it means to recover the "original" text of a particular passage for it is now made evident that there was not always just one form of a text.

represented in *codex Vaticanus (B)*. Codex *B* is one of the three most prominent Greek uncial MSS, which is why it is featured in this study.⁶ Its prominence is due to its provenance, its date (4th c. AD), and its completeness.⁷ This codex's prominence was identified early in its history such that it has had substantial influence in the field of LXX studies.⁸ Therefore a decision made about this MS may have substantial repercussions. Given its historic prominence it is a reasoned (and highly probable) assumption that this MS and its daughters were used in Christian communities as their Scripture. This is textually and theologically important because Lamentations (*B*) lacks 3:22-24. Aside from the fact of missing a few verses, their content and placement within Lamentations 3 creates several unique problems.⁹

6. The other two Codices are Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus. See Jobes and Silva, 59 for several other important, but less prominent, uncials.

7. Tov, 138.

8. Kreuzer indicates *B* is the primary text for the *editio major* and *minor*. Most LXX editions were based on it from the 16th-20th century. One may also infer then that *B* has also greatly influenced a large portion of LXX research. [Siegfried Kreuzer, "B or Not B? The Place of Codex Vaticanus in Textual History and in Septuagint Research," in *Text-Critical and Hermeneutical Studies in the Septuagint*, ed. Johann Cook and Hermann-Josef Stipp (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 69-70.]

9. See Youngblood who comments that 19 MSS lack these

Several features of Lamentations make this anomaly all the more intriguing. For example, chapters 1-4 are individual Hebrew acrostic poems with their own distinct features.¹⁰ Chapter three stands prominent among the other poems primarily due to each strophic section being comprised of three lines and each line beginning with the same consonant. This acrostic structure is significant to this study because vv. 22-24 comprise the entire π strophe. So those MSS lacking vv. 22-24 are missing an entire strophic section from the acrostic poem. This is related to another important feature found in various Greek MSS: the inclusion and use of strophic headings.¹¹ Hebrew manuscripts do not include strophic headings for the simple reason that the reader of Hebrew could clearly see the

verses. [Kevin Youngblood, "Lamentations," in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, ed. James K. Aitken (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 510.]

10. Hillers notes some of these differences stating "chapters 1 and 2 are of a relatively simple type, in which each stanza has three lines, and only the first of each line is made to conform to the alphabet. Chapter four is of the same type, but here each stanza has only two lines." Another unique feature of these four poems-i.e. chs. 1-4-relates to the ordering of the Hebrew alphabet. Chapter 1 has the more standard order of γ followed by δ . Chapters 2-4 invert this order which, though not as common, is an attested ordering. [Delbert R. Hillers, *Lamentations* (New York City, NY: Doubleday, 1972), xxiv-xxv.]

11. See Appendix 1 for an example of these headings as found in codex B.

acrostic structure of each poem.¹² But when these poems were translated into other languages that structure could be lost. So during the textual history of some MSS headings were included.¹³

Before engaging in the text-critical issues of Lamentations (B) a word is needed on defining terminology and method. As with the term "Masoretic Text," the term "Septuagint" is fraught with imprecision. The Septuagint (LXX) is not a monolithic text but an eclectic text. To refer to the Septuagint is not entirely accurate.¹⁴ In this study I use the term "Septuagint" to refer to the *editio major-Göttingen*

12. This is the case for B19a. See Kotze for comment on 3QLam, which appears not to include heading markers, [Gideon R. Kotze. "A Text-Critical Analysis of the Lamentations Manuscripts From Qumran (3QLam, 4QLam, 5QLam A, and 5QLam B) Establishing the Content of an Old Testament Book According to Its Textual Witnesses Among the Dead Sea Scrolls." Ph.D. diss., University of Stellenbosch, 2011, 27.]

13. See chapter 2 for discussion on dating the strophic markers. This is even the case with many English translations of Psalm 119 (118 in Gk) where the translation committee includes transliterated headings e.g. *Aleph, Beth, Gimel* etc. It is interesting (and even questionable) why similar headings are *not* included for Lamentations 1-4 in English translations.

14. Moreover it has multiple layers, revisions, etc. interwoven such that referring to such a text as *the* Septuagint is done only as a matter of communicating efficiently at the expense of clarity. Sometimes that is a worthwhile expense.

Septuagint-and/or the *editio minor*-Rahlfs' *Septuaginta*.¹⁵ Since the focus of this study is specifically concerned with one Greek manuscript-codex *B*-and its reading of Lamentations, I will clearly delineate between this codex and the *Septuagint* where appropriate. Unless stated otherwise the Greek used in this study is the text from codex *B*.

Rather than employ the standard Old Testament text-critical model discussed above, this study proceeds on the following assumptions. An extant manuscript is an explicit artifact whose readings were not reconstructed but are known empirically.¹⁶ This evidence should not only be used to explain how that manuscript's text deviated from a standard Hebrew source. That MS was used by a community of people and thus served that community-to whatever extent, small or great-as Scripture.¹⁷ Therefore effort should also be placed on

15. Alfred Rahlfs and Robert Hanhart, eds. *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007); and, Joseph Ziegler, ed. *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976).

16. There are of course exceptions to this statement when it comes to MSS that are so deteriorated that educated estimations are made. But even here such estimations are often suggested based on "hard data" e.g. line length, whether plene or defective writing was employed, the use of scribal hand or hands in a particular MS, etc.

17. See, for example, Childs who says (regarding the Hebrew canon, but the same sentiment applies here): "he [the

understanding a manuscript's extant reading of a particular passage, book, etc. Iain Provan offers a perceptive comment on the standard method employed by most commentators on the biblical text. Many assume "their task is to write a commentary on the original Hebrew text...rather than simply on one of the Hebrew texts or translations of a Hebrew text of a book which we actually possess."¹⁸ He continues by saying "a possible response to any given 'corrupt' text is the readjustment of our system to accommodate it."¹⁹ While there certainly are good reasons to seek to uncover the most original reading of a particular text, the bulk of literature tends towards that approach to the neglect of explicit readings in extant manuscripts. To that end this study focuses its efforts and investigation on Lamentations 3 (B).

canonical critic] attempts to analyze how the literature, made up of disparate parts, was constructed to perform a theological role as scripture for a continuing religious community." [Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979), 96.]

18. Iain Provan, *Lamentations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 25.

19. *Ibid.*, 26.

Previous Work

The present study is indebted to two main works: Rahlfs' *Septuaginta (editio minor)* and an article written by Albert Pietersma, "The Acrostic Poems of Lamentations in Greek Translation."²⁰ The former work set the standard for the LXX text which influenced later studies.²¹ Regarding Lamentations 3:22-24, Rahlfs opted to leave these verses out of his critical edition. This affected Septuagint studies in the subsequent years including the digital age.²² It was only when Pietersma wrote his 1992 article that a substantial critique was put forward against Rahlfs' position. This has affected

20. Albert Pietersma, "The Acrostic Poems of Lamentations in Greek Translation," in *VIII Congress of the IOSCS: Paris 1992*, ed. Leonard Greenspan and Olivier Munnich (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992).

21. I have yet to come across work on LXX Lamentations produced prior to Pietersma's article that gives evidence to scholars following Rahlfs' opinion that 3:22-24 is not original. This is most likely due to other LXX MSS which include these verses, not to mention the Hebrew evidence which is compelling.

22. Consider Bible software programs such as *Accordance* which uses Rahlfs as its text for the Septuagint module. Since Rahlfs lacked 3:22-24 so does the *Accordance* Septuagint module. But note that not all earlier works and translations of the LXX left out 3:22-24. Brenton's 1844 edition includes 3:22-24. This is most likely due to his comparative approach where he used codex *B* as the base text and supplemented it with codex *Alexandrinus* when prudent. [Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton, *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1844), xi.]

subsequent Lamentations scholarship, regardless of it being based on MT or LXX. Aside from Pietersma's short article, which numbers only 18 pages, few other works have provided an in-depth text-critical assessment of Lamentations (B) or OG Lamentations.

If any comment is made about this text-critical issue in scholarly literature, it is often limited to the suggestion that *parablepsis* is to blame, which is a core premise of Pietersma's article. This is the case for the editors of *BHS* and *BHQ*, and scholars such as Kevin Youngblood (2015), Peter Gentry (2007), Ian Provan (1991), Johan Renkema (1998), and R.B. Salters (2010).²³ Some such as Paul House (2004), simply comment that 3:22-24 are not found in LXX.²⁴ And others—Delbert Hillers (1972), Robin Parry (2010), Adele Berlin (2004),

23. Einfeldt Alt, Kahle, and Kittel, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967); Godman Van Der Schenker, ed. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta: Megilloth: Ruth, Canticles, Qoheleth, Lamentations, Esther* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004); Youngblood, "Lamentations."; Peter Gentry, "Lamentations," in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (Oxford: Oxford, 2007); Provan, *Lamentations*; Johan Renkema, *Lamentations* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998); R.B. Salters, *Lamentations* (New York City, NY: T&T Clark, 2010). Salters also suggests that the text-critical issue could be due to a lacuna in the *vorlage*, 224.

24. Duane Garret and Paul R. House, *Song of Songs & Lamentations* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004).

F.W. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002), Robert Gordis (1974), and Th. H. Robinson (1932)-leave off commenting on the text-critical issue altogether.²⁵

In light of the relatively scant discussion of Lamentations (B) reading, the present study will investigate the text-critical issues in Lamentations (B) by critiquing current solutions and offering a more plausible solution based on extant MS evidence. This will be accomplished primarily by interacting with Pietersma's article, critiquing his position and offering an explanation more firmly rooted in the text of codex B. This textual work is used to lay a foundation for the subsequent discussion on how this variant reading impacted one's understanding and theology of Lamentations (B).²⁶

25. Hillers, *Lamentations*; Robin Parry, *Lamentations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010); Adele Berlin, *Lamentations* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004); F.W. Dobbs-Allsopp, *Lamentations* (Louisville, KY: John Knox, 2002); Robert Gordis, *The Song of Songs and Lamentations* (New York City, NY: KTAV Publishing, 1974); Th. H. Robinson, "Notes on the Text of Lamentations," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 51 (1933): 255-259. It is important to keep in mind some scholars focus their efforts primarily on the MT. Therefore their lack of comment may merely be due to the focus of their project and not indicative of their assessment of the OG and 3:22-24.

26. This is not an entirely novel approach. Consider the good work being done on the Septuagint by the committee producing the *Commentary on the Septuagint*. But even here the base text of the Septuagint in this series is the Göttingen text though it may be corrected by each book's editor. Since

Kevin Youngblood is the editor of the Lamentations volume and he has already written on this matter in *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint* including 3:22-24 as original contra Zeigler and Rahlfs, it is only fitting to assume he will also include these verses as original. So the benefits of the present study would not come to light in that project.

CHAPTER 2

TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF LAMENTATIONS 3:22-24 (B)

A Critique of Pietersma's Article

Pietersma's 1992 article countered Rahlfs' conclusions in his *Septuaginta* and affected textual opinions regarding OG Lamentations.¹ Pietersma raised several poignant arguments in support of his thesis that 3:22-24 are original to the Old Greek. Central to his argument is 1) *parablepsis* caused the lacuna 2) which took place within Greek transmission (not translation) or in Hebrew transmission, and 3) the strophic markers are original.² As helpful as Pietersma's article has

1. There are more text-critical issues in ch. 3 than I address in this study. I limit my selection mainly due to space constraints. See Duane Garret and Paul R. House, *Song of Songs & Lamentations* [Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004] for a fuller discussion on other text-critical issues relating to OG Lamentations.

2. Albert Pietersma, "The Acrostic Poems of Lamentations in Greek Translation," in *VIII Congress of the IOSCS: Paris 1992*, ed. Leonard Greenspan and Olivier Munnich (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 194, 196. Though he seems to equivocate on this last point a bit stating that the markers were perhaps added by a later hand.

proven to be there are some discrepancies which consideration of manuscript evidence may help.

Parablepsis and Manuscript Evidence

At first glance it is reasonable to suggest *parablepsis* by homoioteleuton as the cause for the lacuna. The last verse in the ι strophe is v. 21 which ends with $\text{זֹאת אָשִׁיב אֶל־לִבִּי עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל}$. The last verse in the η strophe is v. 24 which ends with $\text{חֲלָקִי יִהְיֶה אֶמְרָה נִפְשִׁי עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל לֹא}$. If one considers the printed editions of the Hebrew Bible (e.g. BHS, BHQ) one is predisposed to conclude that the translator looked up from his translation and, since the text was aligned and each line ended with the almost identical עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל , his eye merely skipped from v. 21 to v. 24. So the translator continued on to verse 25 thus leaving out the entire η strophe. The same logic applies to transmission in Greek, which is Pietersma's argument. The Greek translator concluded v. 21 with $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\ \acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\tilde{\omega}$ and v. 24 with $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\ \acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\tilde{\omega}\ \alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omicron\nu$.³ When a later scribe copied the Greek text his eye skipped from the end of v. 21 to the

3. The Greek text from v. 24 is taken from Kevin Youngblood, "Appendix 1: A Translation of LXX Lamentations," [in *Great is Thy Faithfulness?: Reading Lamentations as Sacred Scripture*, ed. Robin A. Parry and Heath A. Thomas (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 220.]

end of v. 24. He then carried on with v. 25 entirely missing vv. 22-24.

At the surface reading this explanation may seem probable, but there are several things to consider. First, such text-critical discussions and suggestions ought to consider manuscript evidence in addition to printed editions.⁴ When one considers only printed editions, one might arrive at conclusions not supported by MS evidence. In other words MS evidence may lead one in a different direction than printed editions. Consider *Leningradensis*. Lamentations 3 is not laid out as one finds it in the printed editions. Rather each three-line strophic section runs together.⁵ A *sof pasuq* separates each verse, but the precise alignment we find in printed editions is not a feature of this prominent manuscript.⁶ This does not mean that one ought to disregard the suggestion of *parablepsis*—such explanations are fitting in

4. I argue it is important to teach our students to use manuscript evidence (not only printed texts) as manuscripts give the reader a first-hand account of what a text looked like and thus lend weight to or detract from text-critical suggestions.

5. See Appendix 2 for plate of B19a which illustrates this point.

6. We need to keep in mind that this is a (helpful) feature of the *Masoretic* manuscripts, features which we do not find in earlier MSS, at least as evidenced by the DSS.

many circumstances. But one ought to consider MS evidence as a helpful partner as one seeks an explanation to a particular text-critical problem. One should also consider the Greek manuscript evidence in this discussion especially if arguing along similar lines as Pietersma.⁷ Codex *B* includes strophic markers which help delineate sections in the text. But the Greek manuscript evidence (as with the Hebrew manuscript evidence) is not aligned with the same precision as one finds in printed editions.

A second and more specific critique of Pietersma's argument relates to the 3ms pronoun at the end of v. 24. If one argues that *parablepsis* by homoioteleuton is the most probable explanation for the lacuna in Greek MSS, then one should expect the following scenario based on the text. Once the translator completed אֹחֵל in v. 21, his eye then skipped to the end of v. 24 where he would be looking at the word אֹחֵל.⁸ Thinking he just translated that instance of the word he would then have translated the next word, לוֹ. So one should find

7. See Appendix 1 for a plate of Lamentations (*B*) which illustrates this point.

8. The same argument follows for an inner-Greek transmission. Here I focus on the translator for sake of clarity. The transmitter would have seen YΠOMENW in v. 21 and then accidentally moved on to YΠOMENW in v. 24.

v. 21, not v. 24, to read διὰ τοῦτο ὑπομενῶ αὐτόν.⁹ But that is exactly what one does not find in v. 21. The expected 3ms-αὐτόν-is lacking, which leaves the reader with a perplexing problem: How could *parablepsis* be the culprit if it does not square with the evidence?¹⁰ To continue this line of argumentation one would have to posit that after committing *parablepsis*, the translator's eye somehow also skipped over the 3ms pronoun of v. 24 and continued on to v. 25. But that is rather unlikely.

Parablepsis and Manuscript Evidence Strophic Headings

Another key feature of Pietersma's thesis relates to the strophic headings found in codex *B*. Rahlfs opted to leave the headings out of his *Septuaginta* indicating that they are not

9. At this point I use the translation offered by Youngblood, 220 for the 3ms pronoun. But see below for a discussion of how one might more accurately reconstruct the 3ms in light of the grammar of LXX Lamentations.

10. See Albrektson who comments that *P* includes the 3ms in v. 21 but that is due to, according to Albrektson, influence from v. 24. [Bertil Albrektson, *Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations With a Critical Edition of the Peshitta Text* Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1963.] See also the textual apparatus of Ziegler for comment on *L* inclusion of the 3ms in v. 21. [Joseph Ziegler, ed. *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 482.]

original to the Old Greek but were inserted at a later time.¹¹ Pietersma argues the contrary: they are original. His argument proceeds along the following lines. First, the Greek headings align with the Hebrew strophes, which indicates whoever inserted the Greek headings had knowledge of where they belonged with respect to each strophic section.¹² Second, the vast majority of manuscripts include the headings so that it makes more sense that they were included earlier on in Greek transmission. Third, there is scant evidence that Greek scribes attempted to insert a Hebrew structure onto a poem if it were not already present.¹³ Fourth, though the acrostic structure in chs. 2-4 includes a reversal of the consonants ψ and ϕ , the Greek headings follow the standard Hebrew alphabet. The result is the headings are mismatched. This mismatched situation is due to transmission in the Greek when a scribe corrected the headings from ΦH , AIN to AIN, ΦH which created

11. On this decision Pietersma comments "since Rahlfs judged the alphabetic markers to secondary, it was of course to be expected that he omit them from his lemma text; he went, however, a step farther by also excluding them from his *apparatus criticus*, a decision rather difficult to understand, in view of the fact that the *apparatus* is meant to function as the repository for all secondary materials." [Pietersma, "The Acrostic Poems of Lamentations in Greek Translation", 186.]

12. Ibid., 187, 192.

13. Ibid., 191.

the mismatched headings to strophes.¹⁴

In addition to these four points Pietersma posited an intriguing idea which is correlated to his text-critical analysis. *Parablepsis* is the means of the problem. But the cause may be the ending of v. 21/24 (see above) or the cause may be the headings themselves. He argues that the η marker was transliterated as H θ and the following υ as TH θ . So as the Greek scribe looked up from his copied text his eye skipped from the H θ heading to TH θ thus skipping over vv. 22-24. If this were the case, then one should find either H θ or TH θ as a heading missing in the Greek manuscripts. If the scribe wrote H θ , and his eye skipped down to TH θ , then the latter heading should not be in the MS. If the scribe's eye skipped H θ and he copied TH θ , one should find H θ missing. But, at least in codex B, all acrostic headings are present which creates a problem for Pietersma's thesis.

Pietersma raises some helpful issues in his article, but there are a few oversights that need to be addressed. First, Pietersma's argument that the Greek headings align themselves with the appropriate strophes does not entirely align with the

14. Ibid., 194.

evidence, at least as represented in codex *B*.¹⁵ In fact the heading alignment in Lamentations 3 (*B*) is entirely inconsistent.¹⁶ If the Greek headings were consistent, then one should see a marker every 3 verses so that ΑΛΕΦ is the heading of vv. 1-3, ΒΗΤ vv. 4-6, etc. Rather one finds, for example, that ΑΛΕΦ contains vv. 1-4, ΒΗΤ vv. 5-7, ΓΙΜΕΑ v. 8.¹⁷ Moreover, the ΗΘ heading is included, though that entire strophe is missing as previously mentioned. So based on the extant MS evidence of codex *B*, Pietersma's statement is too simplistic.

Second, Pietersma argues that the LXX ΦΗ/ΑΙΝ headings that mismatch the Hebrew strophes in chs. 2-4 is due to a corrector who sought to place the headings in the more normal order of ϣ followed by ϛ. Yet he also argues that there is little evidence that Greek scribes would correct a text to more accurately reflect the Hebrew structure of a poem. Granted Pietersma's corrector would not be creating the Hebrew

15. This statement is not even taking into account the issue of the ϛ and ϣ reversal.

16. There is also some misalignment in chs. 2 and 4. See below for further details on the exact nature of the misalignment in each respective chapter (excepting ch. 5 as it is not in a formal acrostic structure).

17. See Appendix 3 for a breakdown of *B* strophic headings.

structure—the headings were supposedly already there—but the corrector would still be adjusting some Hebrew structure. But to what end? It is important to keep in mind that it is most likely the case that those reading the Greek translation had little to any idea of the meaning of the transliterated headings.¹⁸ So it is not likely that the rearrangement of these Hebrew consonants was for the benefit of Greek readers. Pietersma's suggestion may be accurate but he does not make clear if there is demonstrable evidence of this activity from MSS. Furthermore, one should note it is well documented that the two Hebrew consonants of **ד** and **ך** interchanged their positions within the Hebrew alphabet order for some time.¹⁹ So

18. This is most likely the case given the plain fact that codex *B* is a translation from the Hebrew into Greek. If the religious community for whom this codex was produced was fluent in Hebrew there would be little to any reason to produce a translation into Greek. It is of course possible that the headings were copied for the sake of the scribes who may have understood the transliterated Hebrew headings. But even if this were so the value of the headings would only serve the scribe and not the community.

19. See Shmuel Ahituv, *Echoes From the Past* [Jerusalem: Carta, 2008] for a discussion of various abecedaries which bear evidence to the reversed order of **ד** then **ך** namely the *Tel Zayit Abecedary* (p. 17) and *Kuntillet Ajrud* (p. 319). What is fascinating about this reversal is the inscription evidence is from the 10th c. and 8th c. BCE respectively and are found on abecedaries scrawled into a boulder or pithos, respectively. But the literature of Lamentations is an impressive work of literary art. One is left wondering how this reversal came about in this piece of literature. Moreover, given the focus

it is not the case that the rearrangement of these consonants was entirely out of place.

In short, Pietersma's arguments and thesis may set one on the right track to explain what took place in LXX Lamentations, but his arguments lack substantial support based on the text. To offer a helpful methodological corrective and firmer foundation for this discussion this study places its focus on codex *B*. The following analysis will be constrained to that codex, but the findings are applicable to the wider Greek text of Lamentations.

A Proposal for Understanding the Text
of Lamentations 3:22-24 (*B*)

Integral to understanding a translation is understanding the technique used in producing that translation. There is of course some subjectivity in this enterprise but that does not neglect the validity and value of the exercise. To consider the nature of this text and in what ways it reflects or differs from its *vorlage*, it is important to understand the translation technique of LXX Lamentations generally, and if possible, the specific technique of codex *B*.²⁰ Kevin

of this research, one must investigate whether this reversal was known to Greek scribes.

20. Consider Pietersma who suggests a 5 step procedure to

Youngblood, an authority on LXX Lamentations, wrote a helpful piece on the translation technique of the LXX.²¹ He argues the Greek translator of Lamentations stayed relatively close to the Hebrew *vorlage*, suggesting that the translator utilized a "quantitative formal equivalence" as his technique.²² By "quantitative formal equivalence" Youngblood means that on the whole one Greek constituent was used per one Hebrew constituent. If Youngblood is correct, there is a high probability that what one finds in LXX Lamentations is a direct reflection of its *vorlage*.²³ Though Youngblood's analysis is of the LXX, one needs to keep in mind that codex B played a substantial role in LXX studies and is the codex which serves as the basis for the *editio minor* and *major* of the LXX. Therefore it is a reasonable conclusion to apply

establish a critical text of the LXX. In this discussion his first point is that translation technique "must be studied as exhaustively as humanly possible." [Albert Pietersma, "Septuagint Research: A Plea for a Return to Basic Issues," *Vetus Testamentum* 35 (1985): 299.]

21. Youngblood is also the scholar slated to write the *Lamentations* volume for the SBL Commentary on the Septuagint.

22. Kevin Youngblood, "Lamentations," in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, ed. James K. Aitken (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 501.

23. This statement does not nullify the reality that errors and mistakes may have crept in through a text's history.

Youngblood's analysis of the LXX to that of codex *B* more specifically. This analysis of translation technique is significant for if there are differences in LXX Lamentations, then one has a higher probability to argue for a different LXX *vorlage* than what one finds in the Masoretic tradition.²⁴ This also extends to codex *B*.

Linguistic Issues in Codex *B*

This study employs a method of text-critical analysis focused on what light manuscript evidence can shed on a given situation. This method is employed versus offering reasoned hypotheses with little to no explicit evidence. There is no doubt that the text of Lamentations 3 (*B*) varies significantly from the Masoretic tradition primarily due to the lacuna of vv. 22-24. The cause of this lacuna may be due to *parablepsis*, but one should also consider the possibility that codex *B*'s *vorlage* differed from the Masoretic tradition.

The previous discussion makes clear that Lamentations 3 (*B*) differs from the Masoretic tradition. But the extent and significance of this variance is of greater importance. From a

24. See Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 121-124.

simple glance one might conclude that the extent of the variance between these two literary traditions is primarily related to the strophic headings.²⁵ While that is indeed an important issue it is not the only relevant variance. The variances between these two traditions is reflected in the linguistic data which is laid out in figure 1.²⁶

MT	B
3:21 זאת אָשִׁיב אֶל-לִבִּי עַל-בֶּן אוֹחִיל: ס	3:21 ταύτην τάξω εἰς τὴν καρδίαν μου, διὰ τοῦτο ὑπομενῶ.
3:22 חֲסֵדֵי יְהוָה כִּי לֹא-תִמְנֹו כִּי לֹא-כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו: ס	--
3:23 חֲדָשִׁים לְבַקְרִים רַבָּה אָמוֹנָתָד: ס	--
3:24 חֶלְקֵי יְהוָה אָמְרָה נַפְשִׁי עַל-בֶּן אוֹחִיל לֹ: ס	3:25 Ἀγαθὸς κύριος τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν αὐτόν, ψυχῆ ἢ ζητήσῃ αὐτόν ἀγαθόν.
3:25 טוֹב יְהוָה לְקוֹן לְנַפֵּשׁ תִּדְרָשׁנוּ: ס	

Figure 1-Lamentations 3:21-25

Consider the biblical Hebrew infinitive absolute + imperfect verb construction-יִזְכֹּר יִזְכֹּר-*in v. 20*. This is no abnormal construction but is used throughout the Hebrew Bible

25. Codex *B*'s heading arrangement of AIN and ΦH is mismatched with the more abnormal consonantal order of פ then ץ in the MT.

26. See Appendix 4 for translation.

to convey a heightened sense of the action.²⁷ Codex B translates this construction with the singular verb $\mu\eta\sigma\theta\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\iota\alpha\iota$. Clearly the construction of infinitive absolute + (im)perfect verb is a Hebrew idiom. That said it is common for Greek translators to carry over this Hebrew idiom, though it does not make good Greek sense.²⁸ When one looks at other instances of this construction in Lamentations, one finds that the Greek translator translates the infinitive absolute as a present participle and the imperfect/perfect verb as an aorist.²⁹ The only exception to this is in 3:20 where the translator used $\mu\eta\sigma\theta\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\iota\alpha\iota$, a future passive. This is a rather odd anomaly if codex B's vorlage is identical to the Masoretic tradition. Since the LXX translator's technique is that of "quantitative formal equivalence" one should expect a reading of present participle + aorist resulting in

27. See Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, IN, 1990, §35.3.1], for a discussion of this use of the infinitive absolute.

28. See F.C. Conybeare, *Grammar of Septuagint Greek* [Boston, MA: Ginn and Co., 1905, §81], for a brief discussion on this abnormal use of Greek participles.

29. Based on a search in *Accordance* the results are: בָּכוּ קְלָאִיוּסָא $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\lambda\alpha\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\nu$, 1:2; $\text{פָּרָאִיקְרָאִינוּסָא}$ / פָּרָאִיקְרָאִנָא , 1:20; עָתְרֵשׁוּנְטֵי / $\acute{\epsilon}\theta\eta\rho\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\acute{\alpha}\nu$, 3:52; אֲפֻשׁוּמֵנוֹס / $\acute{\alpha}\pi\omega\theta\acute{o}\upsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ $\acute{\alpha}\pi\acute{\omega}\sigma\omega$, 5:22.

μιμνησκομενη ἐμνήσθη. The analysis of Rezetko and Young is helpful for, though their focus is on the MT and Qumran Samuel, they demonstrate that slight variations in textual transmission can-perhaps even should-be viewed as a normal procedure in textual transmission and not an immediate flag indicating a textual error. Related to the present issue of the *paranomastic* use of the infinitive absolute they state:

Thus, for example, where one text has a paronomastic infinitive absolute plus finite verb, whereas the other just has the finite verb, the typical explanation offered is that the shorter text is the result of scribal oversight (see Qumran Samuel, 4.5.1). Other approaches to the evaluation of such minor variants are available, however. In this section we discuss recent work by two scholars whose research indicates that in ancient texts like the Hebrew Bible minor rephrasings, such as the use of different linguistic forms, were an accepted part of "accurate" transmission of the text.³⁰

This may be the case, but one needs to consider the rest of the textual analysis. Combined these points provide a clearer picture of the textual situation.

30. Robert Rezetko and Ian Young, *Historical Linguistics & Biblical Hebrew: Steps Toward and Integrated Approach* (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2014), 80. Young et. al provide a helpful analysis of the infinitive absolute + finite verb and its placement within the development of biblical Hebrew, [Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2008), 134.]

Second, the LXX text of 3:22-24 translates הָ in v. 24 as αὐτόν.³¹ When one considers how the LXX translator handles לְ prepositions + pronouns a different picture emerges. Most often this construction is translated using the dative not the accusative.³² This is of key importance to the present discussion due to how the dative αὐτῷ appears in the codex B manuscript versus the suggested αὐτόν. One can find an explicit example of the dative of ἑαυτου-ἑαυτῷ-for comparison purposes in 3:28. When one considers the same verse in codex B it appears as EAYTW.³³ The subscripted iota in a minuscule script is lost in the uncial script. This is significant because it increases the likelihood that *parablepsis* is the cause behind the lacuna of vv. 22-24 due to the fact that the

31. Kevin Youngblood, "Appendix 1: A Translation of LXX Lamentations," in *Great is Thy Faithfulness?: Reading Lamentations as Sacred Scripture*, ed. Robin A. Parry and Heath A. Thomas (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 220.

32. 1:2 הָ/אֲטִיחֶ; 1:4 הָ/עֵן עֲטִיחֶ; 1:7 הָ/ אֲטִיחֶ; 1:10 אָ/סוּ; 1:12 וְ/עֵן עֲמוֹי; 1:19 וְ/אֲטוֹי; 1:22 וְ/אֲטוֹי; 2:13 אָ/סוּ; 2:14 אָ/סוּ, אָ/סוּ; 2:18 אָ/סַעֲטִיחֶ; 3:10 וְ/מוֹי; 3:44 אָ/סַעֲטִיחֶ; 3:47 וְ/הִמִּינֶ; 3:60 וְ/עֲמוֹי; 3:64 וְ/אֲטוֹי; 3:65 וְ/אֲטוֹי; וְ/אֲטוֹי; 4:4 וְ/אֲטוֹי; 4:10 וְ/אֲטוֹי; 5:1 וְ/הִמִּינֶ; 5:16 וְ/הִמִּינֶ. The exception being the piel participle וְ/אֲטוֹי + לְ preposition, which is translated as ὁ παρακαλῶν + the accusative αὐτήν (1:2; 1:9; 1:17; 1:21) (also 1:20 וְ/אֲטוֹי/θλίβομαι).

33. The uncial ω in codex B is not what the modern reader might expect which is Ω. Rather it is written as "W."

ending in v. 21 of ΥΠΟΜΕΝΩ terminates with the same letter as the 3ms pronoun ΑΥΤΩ. This line of argument offers a more sound explanation of the data without raising the text-critical issues previously mentioned.

Third, in 3:19 there are two issues related to the use of prepositions in codex *B* which are not extant in MT.³⁴ The equivalent prepositions ἀπο and ἐκ are not reflected in MT which may lead some to suggest a textual error with codex *B* on this point. But in light of the "quantitative formal equivalence" technique this linguistic evidence should be granted further analysis. Where the prepositions ἀπο and/or ἐκ are used in Lamentations, there is always a preposition in the MT except for 3:19.³⁵ This should lead one to strongly consider the option that the *vorlage* of codex *B* contained prepositions which are not extant in the MT. This would be entirely in keeping with the technique of the translator and the manuscript evidence.

34. Lamentations (*B*) reads Ἐμνήσθην ἀπὸ πτωχείας μου καὶ ἐκ διωγμοῦ πικρία καὶ χολῆ μου.

35. απο is used in: 1:2, 1:3, 1:16; 2:3, 2:8; 3:18, 3:33; 4:9; 5:9, 5:10, 5:14. π used. εκ is used in: 1:6, 1:7, 1:13, 1:15 (α used); 2:1, 2:17; 3:17, 3:38, 3:50, 3:55; 4:13; 5:4, 5:8, 5:14

Following this line of argumentation the *B* reading creates complications if *parablepsis* is the cause for the lacuna of vv. 22-24. Some versional MSS give evidence to the addition of the 3ms pronoun *וְ* at the end of v. 21.³⁶ The editors of *BHQ* suggest these readings are due to an assimilation with v. 24b. At first blush one can easily understand this suggestion. Yet one ought to consider if these versions reflect an original Hebrew reading, the existence of which was not due to error or happenstance. In fact it is quite interesting (and noteworthy) that the Lucianic recension includes this reading. This is potentially crucial for the scholarly opinion regarding *G^L* has changed throughout recent years, especially post-DSS. Readings that were attributed to Lucian, a 3rd. c. AD biblical scholar, were found among the DSS which required scholars to reformulate hypotheses. This reformulation pushes the potential genesis of Lucianic readings to a much earlier date.³⁷ All this evidence opens the

36. *BHQ* indicates this reading is found in Syriac and, *G^L*.

37. Kreuzer comments "Things changed with the discoveries from Qumran, especially the biblical texts from Qumran and other places in the Judean desert. The first scroll of the book of Samuel (4QSam A) presented a text that was very close to the Lucianic text, or rather its Hebrew Vorlage. This means that a substantial portion of the idiosyncrasies of the Lucianic text is not Lucianic, but rather old, if not

door to the high probability that the *vorlage* of codex *B* differed from the MT tradition. So rather than arguing the 3ms at the end of v. 21 is an assimilation and an error, it may well be the case that this reading is original to a MS family evidenced by *B* and Lucian.

Strophic Headings in Lamentations

A unique feature of the acrostic structure of Lamentations (*B*) is the inclusion of strophic headings.³⁸ These headings are Greek transliterations of each Hebrew consonant which mark the acrostic structure of each poem.³⁹ They are important to this study for their potential role in the lacuna of 3:22-24 and the fact that all headings are accounted for in Lamentations 3 (*B*) despite the fact that the entire *n* strophe is missing.

original." [Karen H. Jobes and Moises Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), 54-55; Siegfried Kreuzer, "B or Not B? The Place of Codex Vaticanus in Textual History and in Septuagint Research," in *Text-Critical and Hermeneutical Studies in the Septuagint*, ed. Johann Cook and Hermann-Josef Stipp (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 78.]

38. This is not a feature unique only to codex *B* but to a variety of Greek MSS.

39. This only refers to chapters 1-4 as chapter 5 is not an acrostic poem in the same way the previous chapters give evidence.

The two key voices in this discussion are Rahlfs and Pietersma. The former argued that the headings were a later addition to the text. He held this position mainly due to the misaligned headings of ΑΙΝ and ΦΗ in ch. 3.⁴⁰ Pietersma, on the other hand, argued the headings were written soon after the original translation if not part of the original work themselves. He argued his point based on the fact that most MSS contain the headings and that the headings align with the appropriate Hebrew strophe.⁴¹

Admittedly there is simply not enough data to draw a definitive conclusion on this issue. But there are several points to be made from the data itself that can help point one in the right direction. First, there are a few instances in chs. 2 and 4 where a strophic section begins earlier than one finds in MT. Beginning with ch. 4, the α strophe ought to begin in v. 18, but in codex *B* it begins at v. 17c. This problem is also reflected with the ρ strophe which should

40. That is, in chs. 2-4 of MT Lamentations α precedes γ . But in these chapters in codex *B* the strophic headings are in the more common order of γ then α . [Pietersma, "The Acrostic Poems of Lamentations in Greek Translation," 186.]

41. Ibid., 187, 193. Also note that this discussion has some bearing on Pietersma's explanation of the *parablepsis* of 3:22-24. See discussion above.

begin in v. 19 but in codex *B* it begins at v. 18b. The same is found in ch. 2 with the ב strophe which ought to begin with v. 2, but in codex *B* it begins with v. 1c. In all three instances where the codex *B* strophe is misaligned, it is due to a misreading of which Hebrew word actually began that strophe. In ch. 4 the צ strophe begins with צדו in MT, but codex *B* begins with the equivalent of צפיו. The ק strophe of MT begins with קלים, but codex *B* begins with the equivalent of קרב. Lastly, in ch. 2 the ב strophe begins with בלע but codex *B* begins with the equivalent of ביום. Thus it is quite clear that, at least for codex *B*, the headings were inserted at a time when the scribe was clearly aware of the Hebrew text. More intriguing still is that the misalignment of ch. 2 is shared by codex א.⁴² So whether these two codices have a sister relationship, share a parent text, or were corrected toward one or the other, it is

42. It is unclear whether the same misalignment points in ch. 4 are shared by codex א as only ch. 1 and some of ch. 2 are extant in this MS. There are multiple views on the relationship between codex *B* and א which Skeat outlines well. He concludes that *B* and א "are the work of the same scriptorium and were written at approximately the same time. *Vaticanus* therefore, like *Sinaiticus*, was written at Caesarea" [Theodore Skeat, "The Codex Sinaiticus, the Codex Vaticanus and Constantine," *Journal of Theological Studies* 50, 603.] In light of Kreuzer's analysis he concludes it is safer to refer to the provenance of *B* as "Eastern Mediterranean". [Kreuzer, 71.]

highly probable that the headings were inserted quite early into the Greek text of Lamentations.

Second, OG Lamentations ch. 1 includes a "preface" which sets the scene for the the book.⁴³ This preface is not found in MT or other Hebrew MSS.⁴⁴ This is important for the acrostic poem of ch. 1 does not begin with this preface but begins with the cry אֵיכָה. Now if the headings in the Greek MSS were added substantially later without a reference to a Hebrew MS, it would be most probable to find the ΑΛΕΦ marker placed prior to this preface. But the acrostic heading for ch. 1 in both codices B and א begins after the preface, rightly indicating the א strophe of 1:1. It should also be noted that the Greek which begins Lamentations is Καὶ ἐγένετο, which is often translated from the Hebrew וַיְהִי. This is of substantial consequence to this discussion for it is further evidence that the scribe behind the strophic headings rightly understood that καὶ ἐγένετο did not reflect the beginning of the א

43. "And it happened, after Israel was taken captive and Ierousalem [sic] was laid waste, Ieremias [sic] sat weeping and gave this lament over Ierousalem [sic] and said", [Peter Gentry, "Lamentations," in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (Oxford: Oxford, 2007), 935.]

44. But some preface is found in V^{MSS} and T.

strophe. This also indicates that this scribe at the very least was fully aware of the Hebrew text and its strophic arrangement if not having access to a Hebrew MS. Moreover this scribe rightly identified that the א strophe did not begin until after the preface.⁴⁵ This evidence makes it clear that the headings in Lamentations are quite early if not original to the Old Greek. But Lamentations 3 (B) creates turmoil to this hypothesis due to several resolute factors.

First is the issue of heading alignment. The misalignment of codex B headings in chs. 2 and 4 coincide with the correct Hebrew consonant for a respective strophe but the translator misidentified which word began that strophe. This is unfortunately not the predominant case in Lamentations 3. In this chapter heading misalignment occurs for the דהוחט strophes (not including the order of ט and פ). One may posit that the *parablepsis* of vv. 22-24 created an alignment issue which a later scribe sought to correct. That may in fact be the case, but one would expect the misalignment in

45. It is perhaps helpful to note that the Greek "preface" begins with και ἐγενετο. Regardless of how one might retrovert the και-the Greek Lamentations scribe uses και to translate ו (though at times also ׀)-it is certainly not the case that it reflects a word beginning with א. Moreover the collocation, και ἐγενετο, is a common phrase often reflecting ויהי.

Lamentations 3 (B) to occur after the lacuna. However, what one finds is most of the misalignments occur prior to the lacuna.

Second, codex B includes the HΘ heading in its MS which indicates one of two possibilities. It is possible that the scribe copied this heading and then committed some sort of *parablepsis* of vv. 22-24. But as already argued this is highly improbable for codex B also includes the THΘ marker. What is more probable (and consistent with the textual analysis) is the HΘ marker was skipped at some point in the textual history of this chapter. So the inclusion of this marker is evidence that a later scribe sought to correct the chapter (if not the entire book) based on that scribe's knowledge of Hebrew.

These two points prompt the question: are the Lamentations (B) headings original or late? Based on the MS evidence and translation technique of the scribe the extant evidence suggests that the headings are original. A substantial distortion took place in ch. 3-perhaps due to the loss of the n strophe-which necessitated a later scribe's work to correct that heading.⁴⁶ This correction was done with little

46. This distortion could also be due to some point in the transmission history of codex B where a heading/spacing was inadvertently left out. See Appendix 5 for codex α which

knowledge of the MS' Hebrew *vorlage* as is evidenced by the misalignment of headings after the correction. This corrective act accounts for the normalized order of the headings AIN and ΦH though they are placed over the incorrect strophe.⁴⁷ It also accounts for the variation in spelling of the headings as is seen between codices *B* and *κ*.⁴⁸

bears evidence to this effect with respect to the ΦH section.

47. Pietersma, "The Acrostic Poems of Lamentations in Greek Translation," 194. Though I want to clarify that the corrective action sought to utilize the common order of *ν* then *δ*. I do not think the corrector sought to adjust chs. 2-4 order to ch. 1 just because the latter was the first poem in the book. Rather the corrector sought to adjust chs. 2-4 due to, in his opinion, an improper arrangement of the strophic headings.

Given the translation technique is of a formal nature, one should expect that the original codex *B* headings coincided with the Hebrew strophes. When the corrective activity took place the later Greek scribe would have considered the reversal of these headings-ΦH and AIN-as just another issue needing correction.

48. Matthew Lanser, "Great Is Your Faithfulness: Assessing the Scribal Practices of the OG Lamentations Translator and its Impact on Received Scripture." Paper presented at the ETS Northwest Regional Conference, Portland, Ore, March 2016. "For example consider ΑΛΕΦ and ΑΛΦ, ΝΟΥΜ and ΝΟΥΝ, ΡΗΞ and ΡΗΧΞ and ΣΕΝ and ΧΣΕΝ." This demonstrates just some of the variation between *κ* and *B* respectively.

Summary

This analysis clarifies the textual situation of Lamentations 3 (B) based on its MS evidence and from other MSS. Though the main tenets of Pietersma's argument are accurate, these points were refined and grounded in textual evidence. In sum, I argue that the cause of the lacuna in codex B was *parablepsis* which occurred within the Greek transmission, but the "proto-B" manuscript included the 3ms pronoun at the end of verse 21.⁴⁹ This solution alleviates some of the substantial difficulties discussed above with Pietersma's proposal. I also argue that based on the evidence the strophic headings were original to this Greek translation. The familiarity of the Hebrew language displayed in codex B makes this position quite suitable. Misalignment of those strophic headings occurred in the Greek transmission of that MS and were later corrected by a scribe with little if any

49. I use the term "proto-B" in order to distinguish codex B from the OG. It may be that these are one in the same, but such a position would need to be argued in much greater depth. Moreover that argument would derail the focus of this study.

One could argue that the *vorlage* of B (or proto-B) contained the 3ms pronoun at the end of verse 21, but that is not imperative to my argument. Therefore I left of pursuing that line of argumentation.

access to a Hebrew manuscript.

This textual work lays the foundation for what follows. The next chapter engages in a comparative literary analysis of MT and codex *B*. Regardless of the causes and reasons for the variant reading found in codex *B*, this MS (as well as MT) functioned as Scripture for believing communities. Therefore those who had the variant reading within their Scripture would have understood Lamentations differently than those having MT. The subsequent chapter and conclusion will engage these issues, seeking to understand what main differences would occur with each reading.

CHAPTER 3

A LITERARY & THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS of READINGS in LAMENTATIONS 3

The Scriptures are a theological writing of the history of God's people. They depict God establishing his relationship with humanity, the various shades such a covenant relationship take, the consequence of disobedience, the worship of that God, and his steadfast faithfulness to the entirety of his covenant.¹ What one finds within the pages of Scripture will inform one's theology while at the same time one's theological understanding and commitments will inform how one reads the text. It is no large stretch to state that one's theology is predicated, in part, on the words that are present, or absent, within a given biblical text. For example, for those who had access to the MT, or other MSS with the same reading that

1. That Scriptures are theological history does not indicate nor necessitate the conclusion that they lack historical veracity. Such a knee-jerk response is, in my opinion, motivated by other previous philosophical commitments and assumptions through which one views religious literature in general and the Christian Scriptures more specifically.

include vv. 22-24, hope was rooted in the Lord's covenantal nature. But for those who had access to *B*, or other MSS with the same reading wherein vv. 22-24 are missing, hope was rooted elsewhere and was not to be found in the Lord's covenantal nature, at least in this text.² Rather, one was to take comfort in the fact that the Lord is not angry forever. The presence and absence of words will have some effect on one's theology.³ This chapter explores how theology is shaped in Lamentations 3 depending on which text one accesses.⁴

The Reading in the Masoretic Text

Several ways have been presented on how best to understand the five poems in Lamentations, especially in light of the acrostic structure of poems 1-4.⁵ For example Johann

2. See Appendix 4 for a translation comparison of MT and Vaticanus.

3. I would suggest that, on the whole, the fewer the words that are missing from a text the lesser the potential effect to one's theology. The converse would also apply namely the greater amount of words absent from a text the greater the potential for one's theology to be affected.

4. Due to the nature and scope of this study I will not fully address many text-critical issues in the MT apart from what was discussed in the previous chapter regarding 3:22-24.

5. See Norman K. Gottwald, [*Studies in the Book of Lamentations* (London: SCM Press, 1954), 24ff] where he describes the various views of the acrostic nature of the poems and the potential reason(s) for utilizing this literary

Renkema argued that each acrostic section has a "responsive" relationship with identical sections across the entire book.⁶ Though creative, this approach misses the most obvious conclusion. Each poem is a unit unto itself by nature of the acrostic structure.⁷ On the other hand, Adele Berlin argued that one should consider each poem as a separate composition and a reflection on the destruction of Jerusalem.⁸ At a later date all five poems were collected to create the book of Lamentations. Whether one adopts Berlin's conclusion or not,

device within the composition of Lamentations. See also Iain Provan, *Lamentations* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991, 4ff] where he discusses specific literary aspects of Lamentations including the acrostic structure, the form of laments, the speaker, etc. Lastly, Thomas offers a thorough overview of perspectives on Lamentations and how each perspective explains the relationship between the poems. [Heath Thomas, *Poetry and Theology in the Book of Lamentations: The Aesthetics of an Open Text* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013), 17ff.]

6. Johan Renkema, "The Meaning of the Parallel Acrostics in Lamentations," *Vetus Testamentum* 45 (1995), 379. In my opinion Renkema's analysis is highly subjective which is ironic for that is his very charge against other scholarly opinion on Lamentations.

7. Chapter five is the exception to this though it is rightly considered a poem unto itself. I am not convinced of arguments that chapter five utilizes a quasi-acrostic structure since it contains 22 verses. It is obvious by looking at chapters 1-4 that the poet(s) and/or editor(s) of the book of Lamentations understood what constituted an acrostic poem.

8. Adele Berlin, *Lamentations* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 6.

seeing each poem as a complete unit is at least a step in the right direction. The reader of Lamentations should first consider how a particular poem functions and its meaning before proceeding to investigate how one poem affects another.⁹ One should also give thought to the placement of Lamentations 3 within the entire book for, regardless of its compositional history, what lies before the reader is the book of Lamentations.¹⁰ Lamentations 3 is foundational to the book as a whole primarily due to its confessional statement of God's character and his covenantal nature. It is upon that confession that hope flowers even in the midst of such great tragedy as the destruction of the temple. Put another way, ch. 3 is the "thematic and logical center" of Lamentations.¹¹

9. This view is driven by the acrostic structure and not a theory or history of composition.

10. On this point consider Brevard Childs canonical criticism.

11. Duane Garret and Paul R. House, *Song of Songs & Lamentations* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 307. Some disagree on what the main focal point of ch. 3 is. Some suggest vv. 22-24 due to their content of hope. Others such as Bo Johnson argue that the core of ch. 3 is vv. 31-33 where the poet recounts that the Lord will not reject his people forever (p. 66). But even here Johnson notes that the main theological question in Lamentations relates to the punishment Judah faces and what the Lord is doing through it (p. 59). The locus of the answer to this theological question is found in 3:21-41. [Bo Johnson, "Form and Message in Lamentations," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 97 (1985): 58-73.]

Lamentations 3 begins with the subject "I," the speaker who recounts their experience and reflection of Jerusalem's destruction.¹² The first section of the poem (vv. 1-16) utilizes various metaphors to communicate the affliction the subject has experienced or seen as Jerusalem fell.¹³ Key to

12. Many have attempted to identify the subject who speaks in the singular person in ch. 3. Gordis presents an honest and perhaps less than desirable situation of the identity of the subject. He indicates that attempts to 1) divide ch. 3 based on the singular and plural subjects do not work; 2) identify the "I" do not work; 3) understand the plural passages as a collective does not work; 4) divide ch. 3 into multiple poems distorts the acrostic and does not work. In other words the identity of the subject creates a conundrum—at least for those who have a penchant desire to pursue questions which, at times, it seems texts do not care to answer—which he "resolves" by suggesting a "fluid personality" as the way to understand all these variations in the subject. Brevard Childs takes a more novel approach, though one that is right in line with his canonical approach to the biblical text. He suggests to align the identity of the "I" as Jeremiah (based either on tradition and/or the superscription as found in LXX) would distort and disrupt Israel's experience as depicted in Lamentations. For what it is worth, I am not perplexed by the movement from "I" to "we" and other persons within this poem. Such shifting does not require all the consternation that is raised. [Robert Gordis, *The Song of Songs and Lamentations* (New York City, NY: KTAV Publishing, 1974), 170-173; Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979), 596-597.]

13. The poet refers to the afflictions by describing the erosion of his flesh v. 4; his way is walled up v. 7; ravenous animals such as bears and lions v. 10-11; the bow and arrow v. 12; mockery v. 14; his being filled with bitterness v. 15; being made to grind teeth on gravel v. 16.

this section of the poem is the adversary who is none other than the Lord himself.¹⁴ He is the author of this affliction, the weight of which is seemingly unbearable.¹⁵ Upon reflecting on such misery and suffering the poet exclaims "my soul is bereft of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is" (v. 17). He then concludes "so I say, 'My endurance has perished, so has my hope from the Lord'" (v. 18). The suffering is such that it has worn away the last remaining semblance of endurance and hope. With all hope and endurance gone, the poet cries out to the Lord that he would not forget him for it seems he has. The section closes as the poet recalls the affliction that weighs down his soul (v. 20).

It is at this point a dramatic shift takes place. The poet not only remembers his afflictions (vv. 1-18) but recalls

14. The "Lord" is not mentioned until v. 18—"so I say, 'My endurance has perished so has my hope from the Lord'" (ESV)—but phrases such as "rod of his wrath" (v. 1) are indicative that the Lord is the adversary.

15. One should keep in mind how horrendous the destruction of Jerusalem was by the Babylonians. So though it is made clear in this poem that the Lord is the one bringing this affliction to Jerusalem, the modern reader ought not sanitize what took place in 587-586 BC. By application of this poem (also the book of Job) one should be careful that they do not gloss over one's suffering with a theological platitude, however orthodox it may be. Orthodoxy can be used both as a light to the lost and a stick to sorrowful and weary.

something far greater that ushers in hope: the Lord's steadfast love (חסד) and mercy (רחם) never cease (vv. 22-23). The poet's soul reminds him that the Lord is his portion which reignites the hope and endurance that were lost (v. 18) due to the weight of affliction (vv. 1-17). With a glimmer of hope yet on the horizon, the poet recalls that it is good for one to wait patiently on the Lord. Even in the midst of suffering, one should wait for the Lord's faithfulness to the covenant. He will again turn his face to his people (vv. 25-33). But it is precisely because of the Lord's חסד and רחם that the poet has any semblance of restored hope and endurance.

The poem progresses by addressing the disparity between afflictions wrought by mankind (vv. 34-36) and the rightness of the Lord to bring affliction (vv. 34-39). The affliction Judah now faces is only due to her rebellion against the Lord. She ought not shy away from it, rather she should confess her sin to the Lord for his faithfulness is what endures (vv. 22-24) not his wrath (vv. 40-42). It is because he will not break his covenant that his people can and should return to him.

Towards the end of the poem, the poet shifts focus from the Lord being the adversary to human oppressors. Attention is

brought once again to the grief endured from these oppressors, concluding with a plea and statement of confidence that the Lord will repay them for their deeds.

Significance of vv. 22-24

Most literature on Lamentations inevitably discusses the meaning and significance of vv. 22-24 within the third poem and the book of Lamentations as a whole, demonstrating their importance and value.¹⁶ The significance of these verses resides in their content. The theme of endering hope stands in sharp relief to most of Lamentations 3 and the book as a whole.¹⁷ In order to understand what is communicated one needs to address several that issues are tied up within these verses.

16. See the standard commentaries mentioned in the literature review of the first chapter. But also take specific note of House who says "Lamentations also confesses that the God to whom the people pray is endlessly faithful and compassionate (Lam. 3:22-23). This statement of faith is the cornerstone of the book's central chapter and serves as a reference point for the nation's hope in the midst of lament." [Garret and House, 328.]

17. But take particular note of Longman and Dillard who state "But the theological message of Lamentations is not purely negative. There is also hope, but it is of minimal significance in the book...." [Tremper Longman III and Raymond Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 353.]

Chief among these issues is the referent of the demonstrative *נני* in v. 21.¹⁸ One potential argument for the demonstrative is that it functions anaphorically, referring to the litany of afflictions that precede v. 21. It is the overwhelming flood of afflictions that drives the poet somewhere, namely towards hope. But Heath Thomas is more correct when he says "there is simply nothing there" in vv. 1-21 to ground hope.¹⁹ The reader must push on. The more common view is to take the demonstrative cataphorically. It refers to that which follows in vv. 22-24, namely the Lord's steadfast love and mercy are never-ceasing.²⁰ In the midst of such anguish, despair, loss of peace and happiness, the poet turns his heart to the Lord's steadfast love (*חסד*) and his mercy (*רחם*)

18. It is most likely the case that the use of this demonstrative as found in its feminine form is that of a neutrum pronoun. See Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, IN, 1990, §17.4.3] for further discussion on this usage.

19. Heath Thomas, *Poetry and Theology in the Book of Lamentations: The Aesthetics of an Open Text* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013), 182.

20. See for example Berlin who refers to what follows as "the description of the nature of God" which is the locus and source of the poet's hope. See also Dobbs-Allsopp for a mediating position. He argues the pain of vv. 1-18 is what propels the poet toward the hope which is depicted in the Lord's nature in v. 22. [Berlin, 92; F.W. Dobbs-Allsopp, *Lamentations* (Louisville, KY: John Knox, 2002), 116-117.]

which do not end. To the grieving soul this fresh recollection of these aspects of God's nature ought to rekindle hope. But these aspects of his nature are not set within a vacuum. The collocation of אמת, רחם, חסד, and חלק are covenantal language through and through.²¹ So the poet not only recalls aspects of God's nature, he recalls the covenantal nature of God's relationship to his people. It is this that renews his hope in the midst of great tragedy.

Two other grammatical issues need to be addressed before focusing on the content of covenantal language in these verses. First, the content of v. 21 and its previous verses are brought to a conclusion with the first instance of על כן.²² This collocation of particles connotes the idea *therefore* which prompts the question what is being concluded and what are the constituents of this construction?²³ As with the demonstrative there are one of two ways this adverb can function. Either it can draw a conclusion from the material that comes after it, or it can draw a conclusion from that

21. Thomas, 183.

22. The second and correlated instance is at the close of v. 24

23. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardon, eds, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

which comes prior to it. Albretkson addresses this specific issue stating, "It seems to be almost universally agreed that על־כן in v. 21 refers to the following verses. This common interpretation is, however, extremely improbable in view of the normal use of על־כן."²⁴

At first blush his statement makes sense especially as one takes into account the semantics of the adverb. The adverb operates by drawing a conclusion from data. Albretkson continues his argument for his position stating:

This [על־כן] expression occurs about 135 times in the O.T. but among all these cases there seem to be no parallel to the use which the prevailing opinion would presuppose in Lam. 3.21. Generally על־כן refers to something already mentioned.²⁵

This logic makes sense, but there are some significant drawbacks to Albretkson's reasoning.

First among these is exactly what he points out, "but this would require that something comforting be expressed in v. 20, something which can serve as a foundation for hope and trust and thus justify the על־כן in v. 21." Most translations of

24. Bertil Albretkson, *Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations With a Critical Edition of the Peshitta Text* Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1963, 143-144.

25. Ibid., 144.

the MT lack exactly this content, but Albrektson opts for a reading of v. 20 in accordance with the *tiqqun soferim* resulting in "Yea, thou wilt surely remember, and thy soul will give heed to me."²⁶ It is suggested that נפשי of v. 20 is an instance of the *tiqqun soferim* that was inserted in place of נפשך.²⁷ Additionally Albrektson takes the verb ותשיח as a 2ms (not 3fs). Combining these two readings results in his translation, which fits quite nicely into his scheme and argument for his understanding of עליכן. But the instance of נפשך is used elsewhere regarding the Lord and it is not deemed irreverent of any sort. This calls into question Albrektson's translation of v. 20 and subsequently his reading of עליכן.

A second draw back of Albrektson's argument is that it does not factor in the demonstrative זאת in the first half of v. 21. The adverb עליכן indeed offers a conclusion to what is mentioned before it. But the apodosis is marked by a cataphoric use of the demonstrative which points to that which comes after v. 21. This line of argumentation allows a common reading of the adverb עליכן, provides sufficient semantic

26. Ibid., 145.

27. Garret and House, 403.

content for hope, and does not require opting for the *tiggun soferim* of v. 20.

The second grammatical issue needing attention is the use of כִּי in v. 22. The syntax of this verse is a bit difficult to navigate, which has resulted in multiple suggested readings. There are multiple uses of this conjunction, but most commentators opt either for reading it in some nominal sense, asseverative, or causal function.²⁸ Though there are some good arguments for the latter two options, the first option is more fitting in the context for several reasons. First, reading both כִּי clauses as nominals is fitting for in this way both כִּי clauses indicate the object of the verb in v. 21 which is אָשִׁיב. In other words, the כִּי clauses function as the referent to the demonstrative in v. 21. The poet recalls חֲסֵדֵי יְהוָה and רַחֲמָיו which bring out hope. Both of these objects are marked with כִּי.

Second, some have argued that the syntax of כִּי in v. 22 is such that it cannot be used in a nominal sense, therefore other options are needed.²⁹ But such arguments do not take into

28. Ronald J. Williams, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2007), §444. See also Gordis [179] for the asseverative argument.

29. Delbert R. Hillers, *Lamentations* (New York City, NY: Doubleday, 1972), 115.

account the acrostic structure of the poem. The use of the acrostic will at times override the expected syntax of Hebrew. I suggest that this is the case in v. 22. The phrase חסדי יהוה is fronted in the first stich precisely because this section of the poem is the π section. This can also be seen by the second stich which begins with כִּי. In other words, if this were not an acrostic poem, the first stich would read כִּי לֹא־תִמְנוּ חֲסָדֵי יְהוָה. Therefore both כִּי clauses ought to be considered as functioning in a nominalizing manner.

With the grammatical issues addressed, let us consider the content of these verses. The role of the covenantal language operates in a dual fashion. As previously stated it serves as the locus of renewed hope in v. 21 amidst grief and tragedy. But it also serves as the source of encouragement to endure the Lord's punishment (v. 25ff) and for his people to confess their sin (v. 40ff).³⁰ Because of the Lord's covenant

30. The reader of Lamentations needs also to reckon with the dual nature of a covenant: blessings and cursings. This is, of course, clearly depicted in Deuteronomy 27-28 as is also reflected in suzerain/vassal treaties of the ANE. Berlin highlights a significant issue relating to the cursing dynamic of the covenant by contrasting what is depicted in Lamentations with Assyrian reliefs. In Assyrian reliefs exiles are depicted as taken to the king. In Lamentations 3 the exiles are depicted as *banned from their King*. "An unbridgeable distance between God and his people" is the issue the poet addresses in ch. 3. [Berlin, 88.]

with his people, they ought to endure with patience whatever he brings against them for his wrath is for a moment while his covenant is for ever. They should freely confess their sin to the Lord without fear that he may utterly reject them for "each new day dawns with the possibility of covenant renewal for a punished people."³¹

The covenantal dynamics of vv. 22-24 should not be overlooked for the Lord's covenant is central to his relationship with his people. It is his promise to his people that grants them any hope at all. This relationship is not predicated on what his people have done, rather God laid claim to Israel through the covenant. Israel has laid no claim on God.³² The covenantal wording found in vv. 22-24 is distinctly reminiscent of Moses' encounter with the Lord on the mountain

31. Garret and House, 415.

32. Norman K. Gottwald, [*Studies in the Book of Lamentations* (London: SCM Press, 1954), 99. See also passages such as Deut 7:6-8 wherein the Lord says to Israel "The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt".

after he demolished the first set of torah after witnessing Israel's sin with the golden calf (Ex. 34:6-7). Upon returning to the mount, the Lord passed before Moses and it was proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful (רחם) and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love (חסד) and faithfulness (אמת), keeping steadfast love (חסד) for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." (ESV)

The covenantal terminology of vv. 22-24 is not the only verbiage that has connections to other biblical contexts. The terminology of "the Lord is my portion" has multiple connections in the Torah as well as the Psalter. In general the idea of a portion (חלק) is one's share or right to property, spoil from a loot, and the like.³³ It is also used in a metaphoric sense when referring to the Lord, either as one's portion or as the Lord's people as his portion.³⁴ This

33. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardson, eds, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*.

34. Consider Num 18:20 where the Lord instructs Aaron the high priest of the duties and responsibilities of Levites and priests. In that context the Lord tells Aaron that he will have no portion or inheritance in the Lord for I am your

expression "came to be a way of asserting that when every other support for life failed, Yahweh remained."³⁵ One finds similar language in the psalter where, for example in Ps 16, the poet who has undergone persecution proclaims, "The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup, you hold my lot (16:5)."³⁶ The point of all of this is to highlight that the language of חלק is not a word that was simply thrown into the poem in Lamentations 3. Its usage is tying into a biblical thread of one's relationship to the Lord, especially in the midst of difficulty and suffering. The poet did not simply resign to his suffering, considering it to be his portion and lot.³⁷ Rather the poet offers his confession of faith in the Lord for he is his portion. When all else fails the Lord still remains. This resolute confession is, once again, dependent on the nature of God as one finds it described using the covenantal language found in vv. 22-24.

portion.

35. Hillers, 129.

36. See also Pss 73:26; 119:57; and, 142:6.

37. See for example Qoh. 3:22 which states "So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot [חלק]. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?"

Lamentations 3 is a substantial poem within the book of Lamentations and within the larger corpus of biblical literature. The poet recounts the egregious suffering he has seen but is not overcome by it. The reason rests, in part, on the covenantal nature of the Lord. Because of the Lord's steadfast love, faithfulness, and mercy, the poet is not undone. Rather he gains strength from recalling the Lord's nature, which enables him to carry on through the suffering and difficulty. All this is made clear in the MT reading of Lamentations 3, which raises a key question. In what ways does one's understanding of Lamentations 3 and its theology change if vv. 22-24 are not present?

In asking this question one should also consider how a particular text was used within believing communities. The book of Lamentations is among the *Megillot*, the five scrolls used by Jewish communities that commemorate historic situations. Historically, Lamentations was read to commemorate the destruction of the temple within a communal liturgy most often during the 9th of Ab. At times it was also used for other national calamities.³⁸ The potential loss of 3:22-24 would be problematic enough if one were simply reading the

38. Garret and House, 303-304.

text by oneself. But also considering the communal life the text had-for Jews and later for Christians-the loss of these verses could be quite profound.

The Reading in Codex B

The previous text-critical analysis of Lamentations (B) concluded that the n strophe which is absent should be present; that strophic section is original.³⁹ To arrive at that conclusion does not clear up the textual situation one finds in codex B for that reading is still extant and was used by believing communities for centuries. To elucidate what meaning is communicated-and its potential impact on theology-I first consider the negative dynamics of the reading in codex B followed by a positive assessment of its reading.

A Negative Assessment

Whatever the specific cause, at some point in its textual history codex B was deprived of Lam. 3:22-24. Chief among

39. The language of an/the "original" text can be cumbersome and confusing due to many people meaning many different things. Here I use the term "original" to mean 3:22-24 was part of the original poem that is Lamentations 3. As argued earlier in this study these verses most likely fell out of the Greek during transmission not translation.

those things lost are the lexical items related to the covenant. And it is not merely the words that are missing but the theological weight they carry within the biblical corpus which is substantial to say the least. The MT reading grounds the poet's hope in the Lord's covenantal nature, his enduring faithfulness, and the reality that the Lord is the poet's portion. As Berlin states, "God's loyalty and mercy are infinite and therefore hope never ends."⁴⁰ Such weighty anchors are absent in codex *B*. This loss affects the exhortation and encouragement for one to endure difficulties because such encouragement cannot now be grounded in covenantal dynamics. Thus another source of encouragement must be found if one can be sourced textually.⁴¹

40. Berlin here refers to vv. 22-24 but also v. 32 where another references to **חסד** is present. [Berlin, 92.]

41. Of lesser consequence is the impact of this loss to literary aspects of the poem. The most obvious and striking is an entire strophe within the acrostic structure of the poem is gone. This loss prompted later adjustments to the text of *B* specifically regarding the headings, their placement and arrangement. See ch. 2 for a fuller discussion. This loss is not entirely noticeable within translations because the acrostic nature is not readily recognizable outside of the Hebrew language. That said, such a loss may have some impact on the acrostic structure within a translation if strophic headings were inserted early within the textual history of the translation. But even if that were the case one would have to demonstrate that the reader of the translation would know the purpose of the (assumedly) transliterated names of the Hebrew consonants. A second literary loss is the inclusio of **על כן אוהיל**.

A Positive Assessment

We now come to the crux of the matter: what is communicated, both textually and theologically, in Lamentations 3 (B)?⁴² There are several important issues related to this main question though the most pressing issue involves vv. 21ff. As discussed above, v. 21 marks a shift in the content of Lamentations 3 primarily by the use of the

This phrase closes v. 21 and, in MT, closes v. 24 thereby encapsulating vv. 22-24 and all that it contains.

42. There are other issues within and around vv. 22-24 that also have some affect on meaning, but their impact is less significant to the issues I am raising. That said, here is a brief comment on these secondary issues. The Hebrew of v. 19 (זכר) is treated either as an imperative or infinitive absolute. But codex B translated it with an aorist passive indicative 1cs. This does shift the focus from a cry to the Lord-reading the Hebrew as an imperative-that he might hear and respond to a focus on the poet who rehearses that he recalls all manner of difficulty he has endured.

The other issue worth mentioning here occurs in v. 21 with codex B's reading of TAEW (*to appoint, station*) which correlates to MT's reading of אשיב (*to return*). According to Albrektson "The LXX translator has probably read the word as אשים. Tασσω is nowhere used for השיב but frequently found for שים." It is possible that the LXX translator misread the *vorlage*. But, keeping with the argument of this thesis, it is equally possible-and probable given the technique employed by the translator-the *vorlage* differed from MT's reading. Regardless of the cause for this reading, its presence in Lamentations 3 has little effect on what is communicated in codex B contra MT. Codex B reads "I will place it in my heart". This is slightly different from the MT *this I call to mind* [ESV] but not drastically so. [Albrektson, 143; Gentry, 939.]

demonstrative ταυτην (την). The referent is found in the following verses (vv. 22-24).⁴³ Since the covenantal language which is indicative of God's nature is not present, the demonstrative in codex *B* must point to another means of engendering hope after presenting the litany of afflictions (vv. 1-16).⁴⁴ The locus of hope for codex *B*, the cause for the literary shift from the litany of afflictions to a confession of endurance, is that the Lord is good to the one who endures and waits on him. Despite all the horrendous experiences of the city and its people, the thing that ought to be an anchor for them and a rock of hope is that the Lord is good to those who faithfully endure such trials. This is of course a soundly

43. See previous discussion about other alternative suggestions to the referent which I find unconvincing. One might expect if the referent were, for example, vv. 1-18 the demonstrative would be in the plural indicating a translation of "These (things) I recall therefore I have hope." But the singular use of the demonstrative may indicate a singular focus which engenders hope.

44. One must keep in mind that the present discussion of the meaning found in Lam. 3 of codex *B* is concerned with the present textual situation of that codex. If it is accurate—and it is most certainly so—that codex *B* contained the *n* strophe within its textual history, then this discussion rightly refers to its present state and is not an indicator of its reading through its entire textual history. This also raises another interesting problem namely the reality that a codex, which is Scripture, can communicate two varying ideas due to issues involved within its textual history. Further work needs to be done on this point.

biblical and theologically orthodox statement. But it is a substantial shift away from the Lord's covenantal character as locus-of-hope.⁴⁵ The notion of the long-suffering servant of the Lord is furthered by vv. 26-30 wherein the imagery of subservience is used. It is good for one simply to wait for the Lord to bring salvation when it pleases him. All the while it is good that one sit alone in silence and give one's cheek to whomever might strike it.⁴⁶ Now certainly this is not a case of the Lord delighting in the suffering of his people nor his desire that they appease him through suffering.⁴⁷ Verse 31 sets vv. 25-30 in the right perspective by stating that this long

45. Consider House who comments that the theology of Lamentations is based on the character of God. It is from this character that the notion of hope that God will maintain his covenant makes any sense at all. Removing comment and reference to God's covenant pulls the rug out from any discussion of hope. [Garret and House, 320.]

46. Note codex *B* also lacks v. 29, which reads "let him put his mouth in the dust—there may yet be hope." Such a phrase furthers the imagery of subservience and indicates one's humiliated state and humbled posture. So though codex *B* communicates that the locus of hope is found in quietly waiting on the Lord, this statement is not as harsh as that found in MT. The loss of this phrase in codex *B* is most likely due to homoioteleuton. In MT verses 29 and 30 both begin with **וְיָ**.

47. One need only recall the Mt. Carmel pericope where Elijah mocked those who worshipped Baal (1Ki 18). The reader is given a glimpse into pagan practices aimed at appeasing their gods by inflicting wounds upon themselves.

endurance and abasement is good because the Lord will not reject his people forever. At this point in the poem the warmth of restoration begins to radiate, which can certainly be (and is) a source of hope, especially in codex *B*. But vv. 31ff do not replace the covenantal language of MT vv. 22-24, nor do they function as the source of hope due to their placement within the poem. These verses do not immediately follow the demonstrative in v. 21.⁴⁸ The demonstrative in codex *B* thus points not to vv. 22-24 but to vv. 25-27. Berlin's summary of vv. 25-27 aptly captures the crux of the source of hope for the reader of codex *B*: "God is good, and the

48. This situation in Lamentations can be equated to the first question in the Heidelberg Catechism: "What is your only comfort in life and in death? That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him." The "comfort" here stems from who Jesus Christ is and what he has done on behalf of the sinner. This is quite different from an answer which might say one's only hope in life and death is that the Lord is good to whomever might patiently endure all trials in this life. Such a statement is theologically ambiguous and leaves open a host of unanswered questions.

suffering he sends is also good for a person."⁴⁹ While this is certainly true it lacks the warmth of the Lord's covenant and his steadfastness to his promises and his people. Consider the book of Job and how his "friends" counseled him regarding his present circumstances. While it is true that if one sins they ought to confess their sin to the Lord, the friends' approach is a sterile and harsh one.⁵⁰ Likewise the source of hope for

49. Berlin, 92.

50. I find a far better approach to addressing suffering can be found in the consolation St. Chrysostom gave to a grieving young widow. He begins his letter to her in this way: "That you have sustained a severe blow, and that the weapon directed from above has been planted in a vital part all will readily admit, and none even of the most rigid moralists will deny it; but since they who are stricken with sorrow ought not to spend their whole time in mourning and tears, but to make good provision also for the healing of their wounds, lest, if they be neglected their tears should aggravate the wound, and the fire of their sorrow become inflamed, it is a good thing to listen to words of consolation, and restraining for a brief season at least the fountain of thy tears to surrender thyself to those who endeavour to console thee. On this account I abstained from troubling you when your sorrow was at its height, and the thunderbolt had only just fallen upon you; but having waited an interval and permitted you to take your fill of mourning, now that you are able to look out a little through the mist, and to open your ears to those who attempt to comfort you, I also would second the words of your handmaids by some contributions of my own. For whilst the tempest is still severe, and a full gale of sorrow is blowing, he who exhorts another to desist from grief would only provoke him to increased lamentations and having incurred his hatred would add fuel to the flame by such speeches besides being regarded himself as an unkind and foolish person. But when the troubled water has begun to subside, and God has allayed the fury of the waves, then we may freely spread the sails of our

the reader of codex *B* is a sterile and cold one.

The second issue deals with the impetus to return to the Lord in the latter part of the poem (vv. 40-42). Leading up to these verses the main content of the poem revolves around the supreme, exalted, and just nature of the Lord. This is contrasted with the experience and response that one ought to have to him even in the midst of suffering. There are of course respites from this overall tenor. For example, vv. 32-33 convey the Lord is compassionate and does not bring such calamities against his people from his heart. The Lord is not being fickle or random in his actions unlike the pagan deities of the ancient Near East and Greco-Roman worlds. But these brief interludes are overshadowed by the depiction of the Lord as sovereign over the universe. Verse 38 makes this quite plain stating, "Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and bad come?" Considering codex *B*, what is the impetus

discourse. For in a moderate storm skill may perhaps play its part; but when the onslaught of the wind is irresistible experience is of no avail. For these reasons I have hitherto held my peace, and even now have only just ventured to break silence because I have heard from thy uncle that one may begin to take courage, as some of your more esteemed handmaids are now venturing to discourse at length upon these matters, women also outside your own household, who are your kinsfolk, or are otherwise qualified for this office." [St. John Chrysostom, *Letter to a Young Widow*, 121.]

for the poet's exhortation that though they acted impiously they should return to the Lord? There are several answers to this question.

First as the people of God, they ought to confess their sin to him regardless of his affliction, for all that the Lord does is just (vv. 38-39). A second and perhaps more encouraging tone is set in vv. 31-33, where the poet reminds his hearers that the Lord will not hold his anger forever against the people. A break from their calamity will come but at what point no one knows. Even here one must take careful note of the language in v. 32 specifically the verb **רחם** and the noun with pronominal suffix **חסדיו**.⁵¹ As just mentioned, one potential encouragement to confess their sin to the Lord is he will not keep his hand extended forever; he will have mercy according to his steadfast love. This is precisely the same covenantal language found in vv. 22-24 that is lost in codex *B*. Surely v. 32 is meant to direct one further back into the poem to vv. 22-24 where the Lord's covenantal nature is made clear and is presented as the locus of hope. Codex *B* comes up short on this account. The exhortation to confess one's sin and the consolation offered to the poet whose eyes stream with

51. This is the *Qere* reading for the *Ketiv* **חסדיו**.

tears continually is that the Lord will not remain angry. Now this is certainly encouraging to those enduring his displeasure. But such language shifts the locus of hope from the Lord's covenantal character to the idea that the Lord will not remain angry forever.

These are certainly two very different messages. More than this, the second best option as a locus of hope in codex B-vv. 31-33-has no previous grounding in the poem. This is contrasted with MT where vv. 31-33, as encouraging as they are, find a surer footing in vv. 22-24. The poet (in MT) speaks of the Lord's covenantal character and faithfulness, which lays the groundwork for vv. 31-33. The question, "What is the guarantee that the Lord will not reject his people forever?" finds its answer in vv. 22-24. Therefore to lose these verses is to lose the foundation of hope. The best one can do is to patiently endure all that the Lord will hand out and to do so without complaint.⁵²

52. There is a bit of irony in Lam. 3 namely the poet states that it is good for a man to be silent while under the hand of the Almighty (vv. 26ff). That statement is made within a poem where the poet laments all that the Lord has brought upon his people. In other words the poet is giving voice to his grief and suffering rather than remaining silent and waiting for the Lord's salvation.

Speech Act

To conclude this chapter a brief comment is needed on another aspect of the text as it relates to speech act theory and the present issue in Lamentations. Speech act theory describes what an author does with a text using the terms *locution*, *illocution*, and *perlocution*. So as not to derail this study, I think it pertinent only to consider the last mentioned at this point, the perlocutionary act of a text. This act describes what type of response an author intends by their communication. Scripture as a whole is not merely communication of a one-way sort, God simply relaying information to his people. There is certainly an intended response to Scripture. In this way, Scripture should be viewed as a perlocutionary act with its intention to "lead [one] to Christ."⁵³

Kevin Vanhoozer notes the Holy Spirit's involvement in Scripture and God's people can be described as the perlocutionary act. His role is to help God's people respond rightly to Scripture.⁵⁴ As argued above, the variance between

53. Kevin Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2009), 380.

54. *Ibid.*, 428.

MT and *B* of Lamentations affects the theological understanding of that specific poem. More than that, this variance also affects the perlocutionary act of the text. What one can understand as a right response to that text will also differ because the text itself is different. The Scriptures are not there merely for someone to read them. One is to understand them and gain understanding by them:

Attaining understanding is a matter of knowing how to respond to something (or someone) according to its (or his) nature. We show that we understand a text when we exercise the right capacities in responding to it. We show that we understand a hammer, for instance, when we "recognize" it and use it correctly. Similarly, we show that we understand Scripture when we recognize Christ, the wisdom of God, and follow him.⁵⁵

Certainly the lacuna of Lamentations (*B*) does not impinge on core aspects of Christian doctrine. But one should not create a false dichotomy here. The lacuna does affect what the text says and, by inference, the meaning it communicates. This, in turn, impacts what a right response to the text might be. A thing must exist in order for one to respond. To quote

Vanhoozer again:

The Spirit's agency consists, then, in bringing the illocutionary point home to the reader and in achieving the corresponding perlocutionary effect—belief, obedience, praise, and so on. The Word is the

55. Ibid., 381.

indispensable instrument of the Spirit's persuasive (perlocutionary) power. On the one hand, the Spirit is "mute" without the Word; on the other hand, the Word is "inactive" without the Spirit. Word and Spirit together make up God's active speech (speech act).⁵⁶

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the MT includes 3:22-24 and it is clear that these verses are part of the original composition of this poem. So the lack of these verses in codex *B* creates several unique and potentially problematic situations. Perhaps the apex of these problematic situations is how the codex *B* reading affected the theological conclusions a community could draw from their scripture. This is certainly a significant theological issue which will not be readily resolved. But there are some ways forward from this study which are given slight treatment in the concluding chapter.

56. Ibid., 428.

CHAPTER 4
CONCLUSION

This study has addressed the theology that Scripture, as used by specific communities, communicates. If one argues, as I do, that Lamentations (*B*) should be considered Scripture then the theology, the meaning, of the text differs from what one finds in the MT.¹ Certainly the variance is not connected to nor does it impinge on core aspects of orthodoxy (i.e. the Trinity, the Incarnation, Atonement, etc.), but as demonstrated above, the variance between codex *B* and MT does present different ways to understand God, a right response to suffering, and the locus of hope.

The focus of this study is textual but that does not mean one is restricted to linguistics, mechanics of language, etc. I would argue to be "textual" one also needs to be concerned with the ramifications of what the text does, or does not, say. The issues related to texts-MT and *B*-were primarily

1. I would also argue and affirm that the MT is Scripture just as well.

addressed in chapter one with a survey of some particular text-critical issues. The issues selected were predicated on their relevance to 3:22-24 given the highly significant content of these verses and their absence in *B*. Past research offered several ways to understand what took place textually to create the varied readings of MT and *B*. Though some of those opinions—Pietersma in particular—were on the correct trajectory, I offered additional elements of research in order to situate them more squarely on the textual and manuscript evidence we have. Given the acrostic structure of Lamentations 3, it is patently evident that Lamentations 3 (*B*) ought to have vv. 22-24; those verses are original to the poem. Therefore the conclusion reached regarding the textual character of Lamentations (*B*) is its lacuna of 3:22-24 was most likely created during the Greek transmission stage and caused by homoioteluton which came by way of 3:21 including the 3ms pronoun AYTW.

This analysis only explains what took place to the text-as-artifact. It does not directly address how each extant reading might differ and, given the nature of the book of Lamentations, the theology derived from each reading. Words do not reside in a vacuum but are contextual and convey meaning when in relation to other words. So a text-critical study, as

helpful as it may be to understand what happened to a textual artifact, should not stop here. Whether a text has a plus, minus, or some variance due to transmission or translation, such variances ought to be investigated as to their meaning and how the meaning of one text would differ from another. Drawing out the implications of textual studies in this manner helps scholarship and the Church understand and evaluate the value of one reading over another.²

Within the method of Old Testament textual criticism it is a common practice for the MT to be used as the primary text. When variant readings are found they are typically explained with respect to their proximity to MT and how they most likely developed from MT. That work is necessary but often does not address the variant readings themselves as received by particular communities. Whether one reading is more "original" than the other or not, both were used by communities as their Scripture.³ To this end I laid out the

2. Of course many textual critics demonstrate how one reading may differ from another, but I have often found that discussion to be too narrowly focused.

3. This is certainly a reasoned judgment at this point and a safe one to make. I suppose there are certain readings found in manuscripts that were not used by communities. In those cases one would not expect to find the textual history and relationship *B* has with other MSS.

different theological conclusions one might draw from each respective text. The greatest difference between the two—and this difference is not inconsequential—is the locus of hope for God's people in the midst of suffering. Is it grounded in the Lord's commitment to his covenant (MT) or is it that the people should patiently endure the Lord's discipline which will subside in due time (B)? These are two very different ways to understand this poem and these readings also invite different responses from God's people to suffering.

Suffering will always be a part of this life until the Lord redeems all things. Texts like Lamentations offer a perspective on how one might navigate those difficult waters, but Lamentations does not provide the singular source of hope for God's people. This text ought to be taken in concert with the rest of Scripture so that one may receive the whole counsel of God. With respect to the B reading, echoes of it may be found elsewhere in Scripture (e.g. Hebrews 12), which lends credence to its perspective on the source of hope. As argued in this study, this perspective, though biblical, lacks the richness of the MT. The latter maintains the richness of the covenantal nature of the Lord as the source of hope. The steadfast love of the Lord, his mercy, and his faithfulness are core aspects of this covenantal nature, which find their

fulfilment in the person and work of Christ who said, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

Appendix 1

Codex Vaticanus of Lamentations 3



Appendix 2

Codex Leningradensis of Lamentations 3



Appendix 3

Variance in Strophic Headings

Hebrew Transliterated Strophe	Verses	Hebrew Strophes (MT)
ΑΛΕΦ	3:1-4	3:1-3
ΒΗΘ	3:5-7	3:4-6
ΓΙΜΕΛ	3:8	3:7-9
ΔΑΛΕΘ	3:9-11	3:10-12
Η	3:12-14	3:13-15
ΟΥΑΥ	3:15-18	3:16-18
ΖΑΙΝ	3:19-21	3:19-21
ΗΘ	3:25-26	3:22-24
ΤΗΘ	3:27-28	3:25-27
ΙΩΔ	3:30-31	3:28-30
ΚΑΦ	3:32-33	3:31-33
ΛΑΒΔ	3:34-38	3:34-36
ΜΗΜ	3:39	3:37-39
ΝΟΥΝ	3:40-42	3:40-42
ΣΑΜΧ	3:43-45a (απωσθηται)	3:43-45
ΑΙΝ	3:45b-48	3:46-48 ς
ΦΗ	3:49-51	3:49-51 γ
ΣΑΔΗ	3:52-54	3:52-54
ΚΩΦ	3:55-57	3:55-57
ΡΗΧΣ	3:58-60	3:58-60
ΧΣΕΝ	3:61-64	3:61-63
ΘΑΥ	3:65-66	3:62-66

Appendix 4

Translation of MT and B in Lamentations 3:21-25¹

MT	B
3:21 But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:	3:21 I will place it in my heart; therefore I will wait.
3:22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;	--
3:23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.	--
3:24 The LORD is my portion, says my soul, therefore I will hope in him.	--
3:25 The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him.	3:25 The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that will seek him.

1. MT translation is taken from the English Standard Version. Codex B is from Peter Gentry, "Lamentations," [in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, eds. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (Oxford: Oxford, 2007), 939.] Gentry includes vv. 22-24 in his translation as he (rightly) indicates these verses are original (at least to the Hebrew). I have left out those verses in this translation to reflect the textual situation of codex B.

Appendix 5

Codex Sinaiticus of Lamentations 3



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