

Edom and Babylon: Archetypal Enemies of God and His People. A Comparative Analysis of Obadiah and Isaiah 13:2–14:23

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ABSTRACT

*The similarities between Obadiah and Jer 49:7–22 are well-known and discussed thoroughly in scholarly literature. The thematic and linguistic links associating Edom and Babylon are equally well known and treated, particularly in H.G.M Williamson's *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction*. However, Edom, as depicted in Obadiah, is seldom mentioned or compared with Babylon in Isa 13–14. Through similarities in motif, linguistics and thematic development, Obadiah intentionally differs from Jer 49:7–22 to cast Edom as a type of Babylon as seen in Isa 13:2–14:23. Thus, Obadiah should not be viewed merely as a variation of Jer 49 but rather as an oracle against Edom in Isaianic style.*

KEYWORDS: Obadiah; Isaiah; deification; hubris; exile

A INTRODUCTION

Formulating and systematising a particular ethos between a people group and their lived experience is prevalent in prophetic texts.² By separating the "righteous" from the "wicked," it becomes possible to provide a paradigm that will justify the respective statuses between the protagonist and the antagonist. As a covenantal people, the ancient Judeans saw themselves as the protagonists with Yahweh and the "wicked" Gentile nations as the antagonists. Babylon is perhaps the first nation one considers the ultimate enemy and antagonist of Yahweh and

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² David Litwa, *Desiring Divinity: Self-deification in Early Jewish and Christian Mythmaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 38–40. Litwa, specifically, refers to Isa 14 and how various texts in Jeremiah helped the exilic and post-exilic community to form a particular outlook and interpretation of historical events concerning Babylon.

his people.³ It sacked Jerusalem, deported its people and razed the temple of Yahweh (Jer 52:1–30). Edom, too, is often portrayed as the ultimate enemy of Yahweh and his people.⁴ Its people also looted Jerusalem, handed over its civilians for deportation and razed the temple (cf. 1 Esd 4:45).⁵

In short, Edom was not only complicit with Babylon in destroying Jerusalem but active in Jerusalem's demise. Thus, in many biblical passages on the fall of Jerusalem, a text will intentionally link Edom with Babylon.⁶ The literary connection between the two nations in Isaiah is through redactional insertions which reinterpret Babylon in Edomic terms to characterise the enemy of God's people (cf. Ps 137:7; Lam 4:21; Ezek 25:12–14, 35:5).⁷ When reading Isa 13:2–14:23 and Obadiah, this essay will discern when and where the authors and redactors were trying to link or compare Babylon and Edom as the ultimate enemies of God and his people.

Often overlooked in the comparative scholarship of prophetic literature are the connections between Isa 13:2–14:23 and Obadiah. As oracles against foreign nations, Obadiah and Isa 13:2–14:23 share various thematic and verbal links. The focus of this essay is to investigate the notion that Obadiah and Isa 13:2–14:23 portray their antagonists, Edom and Babylon, as the archetypal enemies of God and his people. Obadiah achieved this through the phrase *ki qarob yom Yahweh*, the shared links of *lex talionis* judgment, the ally betrayal motif and the trope of self-deification, in a similar fashion to how Isaiah employed these in the oracle against Babylon. Additionally, we see that Obadiah, though using Jeremaic language, deliberately reworked details in their shared material to create an Isaianic effect to depict Edom as a type of Babylon. Thus, in their final forms, Obadiah and Isa 13:2–14:23, by thematic development, semantics and rhetoric, portray Edom and Babylon as being prophetically synonymous entities.

³ Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39* (trans. R.A. Wilson; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974), 12–13. Egypt, Assyria, and Philistia are also prominent enemies. However, from Gen 11 to Rev 18, Babylon is often seen portrayed as the enemy *par excellence* of God and his people.

⁴ Hugh G.M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 217–220. John R. Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), 186.

⁵ Paul R. Raabe, *Obadiah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 42–44.

⁶ Leslie C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 129.

⁷ Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 220. Williamson states that the characterisation of Edom in chapter 34 is a post-exilic attempt to compare Edom to Babylon in chapter 13.

First, this article will examine the *ki qarob yom Yahweh* phrase and its unique purpose within Obadiah and Isaiah and how it differs from its use in other passages. Second, the importance of the *lex talionis* principle in Obadiah and Isa 13:2–14:23 and the similarities of the judgments pronounced on each nation will be examined. Third, Obadiah, though using Jeremiad base material, presents the language of self-deification to portray Edom as the Tyrant in Isa 14:4b–21. Lastly, this article will discuss the significance of Obadiah's re-arrangement of the material of Jer 49 for its rhetorical purposes to align more closely with Isaiah.

B RHETORIC AND THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT

A prominent theme in the prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible is “the day of the Lord.” The specific phrase *ki qarob yom Yahweh* occurs in Isa 13:6, Joel 1:15, 4[3]:14, Obad 15, and Zeph 1:7. Isa 13:6 is often associated with Joel 1:15 and Zeph 1:7, which employ the phrase *ki qarob yom Yahweh*.⁸ Moreover, Joel 1:15, in its immediate context, is concerned with the inhabitants of the holy land and the severe famine in the land following the phrase *ki qarob yom Yahweh* (cf. Joel 1:15–20). Zeph 1:7 contains the *ki qarob yom Yahweh* phrase and pronounces judgment upon Jerusalem (cf. Zeph 1:7–13). Zephaniah 1:14 repeats the refrain of the Day of the Lord being near, followed immediately by Yahweh consuming the earth and making an end of humanity (cf. Zeph 1:14–18) but Zeph 1:14 excludes the *ki* particle in “*ki qarob yom Yahweh*” phrase.⁹

Obadiah 1:15, Isa 13:6, 11 and Joel 4[3]:14 maintain the entirety of the phrase and instead have universal judgment following thereafter whereas Joel 1:15 and Zeph 1:7 employ the phrase in relation to the judgment of the land of Israel. These judgments are for Israel’s covenantal unfaithfulness (cf. Joel 2:12 and Zeph 1: 4–9) and not on account of pride and cruelty *per se*, as in Obad 1–15 and Isa 13:6–11. Douglas Stuart also sees the similarities between Obad 15 and Isa 13:11 as they pertain to foreign nations as the addressees as well as the universal scope and purpose of the judgments during the day of the Lord.¹⁰ Additionally, the use of the “the day of the Lord” theme in Obadiah and Isa 13–14 and Joel 4[3]:14, suggests that the “day” has already occurred on Israel, as indicated by the anticipation of restoration for Israel (cf. Obad 15–21; Isa 14:1–3; Joel 4[3]:14). On the other hand, “the day of the Lord” is still anticipated for both Israel and the nations in Joel 1:15 and Zeph 1:7. Moreover, Joel 4[3]:14–21

⁸ Seth Erlandsson, *The Burden of Babylon: A Study of Isaiah 13:2–14:23* (trans. George J. Houser; Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1970), 116. Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39*, 16.

⁹ Moreover, Zeph 1:14 is preceded by judgment on Jerusalem whereas Isa 13:6 and Obad 15 are preceded by Gentile judgment. Lastly, Ezek 30:3 has a similar phrase, *ki qarob yom, we qarob yom laYahweh*, sharing obvious thematic similarities but it does not have the same word order neither does the Day of the Lord in Ezekiel include universal judgment. Only Egypt, Ethiopia, Put, Lud, Arabia, and Libya will experience judgment in Ezek 30: 4–5.

¹⁰ Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah* (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 419–420.

appears to be dependent on Obadiah for its quotations and content, as such, chronological preference should be given to Obadiah and Isaiah concerning their use of this "day of the Lord" formula.¹¹ The point is not to discredit the thematic links that "the day of the Lord" cited above have with one another. Rather, the point is to see how Obadiah and Isaiah uniquely employ this phrase to achieve their rhetorical purposes that are not found in the other related passages.

A distinct aspect between Obadiah and Isa 13:2–14:23 is the use of *lex talionis* judgment for "the day of the Lord." The phrase "for the day of the Lord is near" in Obadiah 15a precedes the *lex talionis* principle found in Obad 15b, "As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head." The immediate context and support for the *lex talionis* are from its preceding verses (Obad 10–14), which detail Edom's/Esau's violence against his brother during the destruction of Jerusalem.¹² Joel 4[3]:19 says that Edom shall become a "desolate wilderness" and, as in Obadiah 10, Edom's judgment is warranted because of the violence done towards Judah.¹³ However, Joel 4[3]:19 lacks a *lex talionis* principle but merely states that Edom will receive punishment for its evil.¹⁴ Isaiah 13:6b–22 describes the Day of the Lord concerning Babylon

¹¹ John Merlin Powis Smith et al., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah, and Joel* (ed. Samuel Rolles Driver, Alfred Plummer and Charles A. Briggs; Edinburgh T&T Clark, 1911), 51–62. The authors also date the completion of Joel to the middle of the fourth century b.c.e. However, Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 118–119, notes that Joel quoting and alluding to Isa 13:4–6. James L. Crenshaw, *Joel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 191–191, also sees an influence from Isa 13:4–6 on Joel. It appears that Joel was influenced by both Obadiah and Isaiah but since Isaiah and Obadiah came first, this article focuses on Obadiah's affinities with Isaiah.

¹² Assis, "Structure, Redaction and Significance," 215.

¹³ Dicou, *Edom*, 35, 41.

¹⁴ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 138, notes that Joel 4[3]:4–8 has a *lex talionis* judgment upon Tyre, Sidon and Philistia. However, this use of *lex talionis* is within its own pericope; thus, not connected with the Day of the Lord formula in Joel 4[3]:14.

and is seemingly void of a *lex talionis* principle. However, one finds an embedded *lex talionis* in Isa 13 when it is cross-referenced with Ps 137:7–9.

Psalm 137: 7–9 (NASB)	Isaiah 13:16 (NASB)
<p>⁷Remember, O Lord, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, "Raze it, raze it To its very foundation." ⁸O daughter of Babylon, you devastated one, How blessed will be the <i>one who repays you</i> <i>With the recompense with which you have repaid us.</i> ⁹<u>How blessed will be the one who seizes</u> <u>and dashes your little ones</u> <u>Against the rock</u> (my emphasis).</p>	<p>¹⁶ Their <u>little ones</u> also will be dashed to <u>pieces</u> Before their eyes; Their houses will be plundered And their wives ravished (my emphasis).</p>

Figure 1

Psalm 137:8b introduces the *lex talionis* principle in "How blessed will be the *one who repays you with the recompense with which you have repaid us.*" Verse 9, using the same evocative phrase of "How blessed will be the one who..." begins an extended synonymous parallelism with verse 8, and is further complemented by the description of the *lex talionis* to be measured out against Babylon.¹⁵ Artur Weiser, commenting on the emotional outrage of the psalmist, links this *lex talionis* judgment and sentiment to Isa 13:16, though he does not comment on its direction of influence.¹⁶ Nevertheless, this shows that the exilic and post-exilic Jewish community read and interpreted the contents of Isa 13:16 and Ps 137:7–9 with *lex talionis* connotations.

Additionally, connections between Edom and Babylon are present in this psalm. Mitchell Dahood states, concerning Ps 137:9, that *sela* in "against the rock (*sela*)" is a wordplay on the place name Sela in Edom which is mentioned

¹⁵ John Ahn, "Psalm 137: Complex Communal Laments," *JBL* 127/2 (2008):287. Ahn sees the synonymous parallelism between "O daughter of Babylon" with "you devastated one" in verse 8a. Moreover, parallelism in verse 8 is to also be seen in the matching of "How blessed will be the one" phrase in verses 8b and 9, coupled with the proceeding descriptions of what "the one" will do in each of the verses. Simango, also notes that Ps 137:8–9 forms a chiasm in abcb'a' where c is the phrase "With the recompense with which you have repaid us" (nasb). Thus, the centrepoint of the chiasm is the *lex talionis* principle. See Daniel Simango, "A Comprehensive Reading of Psalm 137," *OTE* 31/1(2018):227–228.

¹⁶ Artur Weiser, *The Psalms* (trans. Herbert Hartwell; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), 796–797.

in verse 7.¹⁷ Though Dahood's comments on *sela* in Ps 137 might be overstated, he points out that Edom and Babylon were related entities in the Jewish literary and historical conscience.¹⁸ If Dahood's comments regarding the *sela*/Sela wordplay are correct, then, it would be an attempt to associate Edom with Babylon as the object of this pun;¹⁹ the recompense being having their children dashed against the rocks. Moreover, Isa 13:15–16 and 14:22 state that Babylon will be without survivors, descendants and offspring, which is a fate that Edom shares too in Obad 18; thus, stressing the similarity of the totality of their judgment both from the announcement of the Day of the Lord and the declaration of *lex talionis* retribution.

As a post-exilic text, the content of Ps 137 reflects events of the fall of Jerusalem.²⁰ It continues the sentiment and anticipation of the exilic community into the post-exilic period that *lex talionis* would be meted out to their antagonists. The language of Ps 137, being reflective in viewpoint and content, demonstrates that Babylon, in the exilic and post-exilic mind, was to receive an allotment of judgment in proportion to the violence done to the Judeans. As such, the context of Isa 13:6–16 contains the content of *lex talionis*, as seen in Ps 137, in relation to the "day of the Lord" judgment. Thus, both Obad 15 and Isa 13: 6–16 display a *lex talionis* as part of the judgment allotted to their antagonists, whether explicitly or implicitly stated, which further accentuates their similarities between these passages containing the phrase *ki qarob yom Yahweh*, when read canonically and theologically.

Another similarity in their judgments is the role their former allies play in judging Edom and Babylon. The judgments on Edom and Babylon in Obadiah and Isa 13:2–14:23 are executed by Yahweh and he has amassed an army to enact his judgment (Isa 13:3–4; Obad 1b–2).²¹ In both passages, the armies consist of members from among the nations but both Edom and Babylon have the misfortune of experiencing betrayals from their allies. Obadiah clearly states that Edom's allies will betray him, however, he is non-descript about the identity of the allies (Obad 7). All we know of Edom's allies is that they once shared an alliance, peace and mutual friendship.²² They commit three treacherous acts against Edom—sending Edom from their border,²³ deceiving and overpowering

¹⁷ Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms III: 101–150* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), 273–274.

¹⁸ Dahood, *Psalms III*, 269–274

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 273–274.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 269. Ahn, "Psalm 137," 285. Weiser, *The Psalms*, 796.

²¹ Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1–39* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 116–117. Raabe, *Obadiah*, 116–117. Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39*, 14–15.

²² Raabe, *Obadiah*, 148–155.

²³ *Ibid.*, 150. The idea of sending suggests that the former allies expel Edom from their homes and territory.

Edom²⁴ and, lastly, they set an ambush against Edom.²⁵ The betrayal and violence of Edom's allies, under the primary agency of Yahweh, leads to the death of every man and the universal depopulation of Edom (cf. Obad 7–9).²⁶

Babylon too, in Isa 13:17–18, has its former ally, the Medes, attacking it,²⁷ being Yahweh's main assailant in enacting his judgment.²⁸ Likewise, the Medes' betrayal is characterised by three actions. They regard neither silver nor gold; thus, their loyalty cannot be sustained by Babylon's bribes.²⁹ Moreover, they "mow down" Babylon's young men (Isa 13:18a). Lastly, they do not have compassion on the "fruit of the womb" neither do they take pity for Babylon's children (Isa 13:18b–c). The Medes, in like manner as the allies in Obadiah, will show no concern for the future posterity of Babylon³⁰ and will destroy all hope of any future for the Babylonian people.³¹

²⁴ Raabe, *Obadiah*, 151. Raabe notes that the covenant that Edom had with his allies would have included a non-aggression pact. Those at peace (*shalom*) have deceived Edom in breaking the non-aggression *shalom* by overpowering their former ally. P. Kyle McCarter, "Obadiah 7 and the Fall of Edom," *BASOR* 221:87–91 (1976), 88, states this might form a *hendiadys*. Thus, deceiving and prevailing would be the same act.

²⁵ Raabe, *Obadiah*, 154–155. Raabe translates this phrase in Obad 7 as "will establish a place of foreigners in your stead." Instead of "will set an ambush for you" as the *nasb* and other translations in similar fashion render the phrase, Raabe, following McCarter in, "Obadiah 7 and the Fall of Edom," takes the noun *mazor* to be derivative of *zwr* (to be a foreigner or stranger) instead of taking *mazor* to mean "snare or trap" (Raabe, 154–155). Furthermore, they translate the prepositional phrase *tachteyka* as "in your stead" instead of "under you" as most translators (Raabe, 155). If their reconstructions of Obad 7 are correct, it would be another variation between Obad and Jer 49. Jeremiah 49:17–18 states that no person will live in the land of Edom, not that all of Edom will be destroyed. Moreover, their proposed reading of Obad 7 would lend further internal consistency with the closing section Obad 18–21.

²⁶ Daniel I. Block, *Obadiah: The Kingship Belongs to YHWH* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 68; John D. W. Watts, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 58.

²⁷ Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 158. John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33 Revised* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 242, 253. The Medes and Babylon fought together against Assyria, taking Assur in 614 b.c.e. and Nineveh in 612 b.c.e. Their final battle with the Neo-Assyrian Empire was in 610/609 b.c.e. at Haran. John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 308, has noted that mentioning the Medes solely is evidence of a pre-539 b.c.e. date for this passage, for it was written *Vaticinium ex eventū*; thus, we should expect the author to name the Persians since they were the main assailants in 539 b.c.e. against Babylon.

²⁸ Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 200), 277–278.

²⁹ Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 253. Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah 1–18* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 426.

³⁰ J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2009), 132.

³¹ Kaiser, *Isaiah: 13–39*, 19.

There are noticeable differences in the ally-betrayal motif in both passages, (e.g. Edom having multiple allies that betray him whereas Babylon only has one). Obadiah only gives the vague designation of “allies” but Isaiah mentions the ally by name. In Isa 13:17, Yahweh stirs up the Medes to attack Babylon, but the allies in Obad 7 do not receive such a distinct charge to attack Edom. Rather, they seem to be a part of the original summoned army in Obad 1. However, in both passages, the ally-betrayal motif distinguishes the allies from the other nations that Yahweh musters to attack—Edom and Babylon—which heightens the rhetorical effect as to the kind of violence that will be meted to the two nations. Moreover, Jer 49:7–22 does not have ally-betrayal in his oracle against Edom, which may further suggest a deliberate attempt to rhetorically equate Edom and Babylon and to relate the book of Obadiah with the content of Isa 13:2–14:23. Additionally, Obadiah’s comprehensive annihilation of Edom, in the ally betrayal motif, differs from Jer 49:10–11 where Edom’s widows and orphans are spared from Yahweh’s judgment.

C ASCENT AND DESCENT—SELF-DEIFICATION AND HUMILIATION

The trope of ascent and descent is the most noticeable and significant literary connection and influence in Obadiah’s attempt to portray Edom as a type of Babylon. The *mashal* in Isa 14b–21 is known for the self-deified king who gets thrown into *Sheol*. However, in Obadiah, it is rather the self-deified nation that gets thrown down to the netherworld.³² Though the form of the poem in Isa 14 is in typical 3+2 *qinah* meter, which is used for laments and dirges, its meaning and tone are satirical, giving it a proverbial *mashal* nature.³³ Moreover, a dirge was used in the ANE to bless and assist a king’s journey to the netherworld and his reception among his predecessors and to announce the new king’s ascension to the throne.³⁴ However, the Tyrant in Isa 14 and the nation of Edom in Obadiah, are mocked and despised in their descent to and reception in the netherworld and the possibility of a future king is denied in Isa 14:21–22 with reference to the Tyrant’s dynasty and implicitly in Obad 2b–5, 18 since the entire nation is thrown down and killed.

³² Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 26, notes that the meter in this section of Isa is in 3+2 *qinah* format. John D. W. Watts, *Obadiah: A Critical Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 46–47, notes that in Obad 2–4 four lines have the standard 3+2 *qinah* meter, thus giving the tone of a dirge as well.

³³ Nissim Amzallag and Mikhal Avriel, “The Cryptic Meaning of the Isaiah 14 Māšāl,” *JBL* 131/4 (2012): 643–645.

³⁴ Mark Shipp, *Of Dead Kings and Dirges: Myth and Meaning in Isaiah 14:4b–21* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 61.

The central section in Isa 14:4b–21 dirge is verses 12–15, which is an independent subsection within the pericope.³⁵ In this section, the Tyrant's principal sin is hubris.³⁶ In the Hebrew Bible, hubris is expressed in two ways—the aspiration to be like God or the aspiration to ascend to heaven.³⁷ This was the intention of the Tyrant, who said "I will ascend to heaven" and "I will make myself like the Most High" (Isa 14:13–14).³⁸ This was also the claim of Edom, "Who will bring me down to earth?" and their denunciation "Though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," declares the Lord" (Obad 3–4). As Daniel Block notes regarding Ezek 28, another famous self-deification passage, to all worshipers of Yahweh, claiming to be divine is claiming to be Yahweh;³⁹ or, at the very least, claiming prerogatives that belong to and are only appropriate for Yahweh. Moreover, specifically, in the context of Edom's hubris, Elie Assis states, "Hubris is an affront against the Biblical perception of God's supremacy over humanity because mortal pride challenges God's omnipotence."⁴⁰

The challenge to Yahweh's authority is seen in Isa 14. The self-deifying one, the subject of this taunt in Isa 14:4, is addressed as the "King of Babylon." It has been popular to take the taunt in Isa 14:12–15 as against Satan in the Christian tradition.⁴¹ The Talmud's three references to Isa 14:12–15, mention that *Helel ben Sahar*, the one who attempts to achieve power over God, is Nebuchadnezzar.⁴² Additionally, the Reformers argued against seeing Satan as the figure in verses 12–15.⁴³ The original addressee in Isa 14:4, "the king of

³⁵ Willem S. Prinsloo, "Isaiah 14:12–15: Humiliation, Hubris, Humiliation," *ZAW* 93/3 (1981): 433. As indicated by the 'ek introductory particle found in Isa 14:12.

³⁶ Prinsloo, "Humiliation, Hubris, Humiliation," 437.

³⁷ Erlandson, *The Burden of Babylon*, 148–149. Litwa, *Desiring Divinity*, 46, points out that self-deification is the ultimate expression of pride and it makes Yahweh exceedingly irate.

³⁸ *El Elyon* (Most High/God Most High) is a designation of Yahweh in the Zion Tradition. See Thomas Renz, "The Use of the Zion Tradition in the Book of Ezekiel," in *Zion: City of Our God* (ed. Richard S. Hess and Gordon J. Wenham; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) 77–103. Isaiah 14:1–2 reflects a strong sentiment for Zion, for Yahweh will once again choose Israel and will dwell in their land.

³⁹ Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 95.

⁴⁰ Elie Assis, *Identity in Conflict: The Struggle between Esau and Jacob, Edom and Israel* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 147.

⁴¹ Mark Shipp, *Of Dead Kings*, 12–13. See also: Joseph Jensen, "Helel Ben Shahar (Isaiah 14: 12–15) In Bible and Tradition," in *Writing and Reading The Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, (ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 339–356, for the history, reception and interpretation of Helel in Second-Temple literature.

⁴² Shipp, *Of Dead Kings and Dirges*, 14, 42.

⁴³ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 320.

Babylon," is both identified and typified by the name *Helel ben Sahar*, who represents a specific ruler (Nebuchadnezzar), the kingdom of Babylon as a whole or perhaps both.⁴⁴ In the exilic and post-exilic mindset, when Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians attacked the Temple, they were attacking Yahweh and by attacking Yahweh, Nebuchadnezzar had made himself out to be God.⁴⁵ Therefore, if Babylon, by destroying the Temple in Jerusalem demonstrated self-deification, then, Edom did as well since its people too were complicit and active in the downfall of Jerusalem and the Temple in various textual and historical traditions.⁴⁶

Isaiah 14:12–15 (NASB)	Obadiah 3–4 (NASB)
<p>“How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ “Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.</p>	<p>“The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, You who live in the clefts of the rock, In the loftiness of your dwelling place, Who say in your heart, ‘Who will bring me down to earth?’ “Though you build high like the eagle, Though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down,” declares the Lord.</p>

Figure 2

Elsewhere in Isaiah, Yahweh is described as the high and lofty one, and only his humble servant is able to be exalted and lifted up (cf. Ps 51:16–19; Isa

⁴⁴ Litwa, *Desiring Divinity*, 31–33.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 39: “It is not known whether Nebuchadnezzar personally gave the order for Yahweh’s sanctuary to be burned. Long after the ashes cooled, however, the king was blamed for both the consummate profanation and the ultimate sin: self-deification.”

⁴⁶ Raabe, *Obadiah*, 42–44. Bruce Cresson, “The Condemnation of Edom in Post-exilic Judaism,” in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1972), 144. Assis, “Structure, Redaction and Significance,” 216. See also 1 Esd 4:45 nrsv, “You also vowed to build the temple, which the Edomites burned when Judea was laid waste by the Chaldeans.” Juan Manuel Tebes, “The Edomite Involvement in the Destruction of the First Temple: A Case of Stab-in-the-back Tradition,” *JSOT* 36/2 (2011): 219–255, argues that Edom’s involvement in burning the Temple is a later ahistorical tradition, as seen in 1 Esdras. Nevertheless, Tebes notes that there were pre-exilic and exilic warrants for the Judeans to link the Edomites historically with the fall of Jerusalem.

6:1; 52:13; 57:15).⁴⁷ Conversely, in the cited passages above, both antagonists get thrown down because they expressed of the most heinous form of pride, which is self-deification.⁴⁸ In Isa 14:11, the king's *ga'on* pride is brought down to the grave (*sheol*), in response to the odiousness of the Tyrant's pride and self-deification.⁴⁹ The Tyrant and his pride are the passive subjects of the *hop'al* stem of *yarad* in Isa 14:11, 15, showing that both pride and self-deifiers are brought down to Sheol.⁵⁰ Obad 3 uses the term *zadon*, which can be translated as pride or arrogance. In Obad 4, Yahweh is the active subject of *yarad* who brings prideful Edom down to the earth, which should be seen as a semantic equivalent of *Sheol* (see below). Despite Obadiah's term for pride is different, nevertheless, both the Tyrant and Edom are thrown down because of their pride and its manifestation.⁵¹

The aspiration toward divinity, fuelled by hubris, in both Babylon and Edom is expressed in terms of ascending and dwelling among the stars, which were divine entities in the ancient Near East.⁵² In Isa 14:13–14, the king of Babylon (as *Helel ben Sahar*) says in his heart, "I will ascend to Heaven, I will raise my throne above the stars of God." In Isa 14:14 he continues to boast: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most

⁴⁷ Jaap Dekker, "The High and Lofty One Dwelling in the Heights and with His Servants: Intertextual Connections of Theological Significance between Isaiah 6, 53, and 57," *JSOT* 41/4 (2017):476.

⁴⁸ Litwa, *Desiring Divinity*, 46.

⁴⁹ The *ga'on*, "pride" of Babylon, has the aspect of such pride leading to ruthlessness, as seen in both Isa 13:11 and 14:11. Moreover, it was brutal acts, such as, destroying the Temple, that led the biblical authors to portray the pride of the Babylonians as one of self-deification as found in Isa 14:11–15.

⁵⁰ William Holladay, "Text, Structure, and Irony in the Poem on the Fall of The Tyrant, Isaiah 14," *CBQ* 61/4 (1999): 636, 642.

⁵¹ Moreover, the root for the term *zadon*, *zed* is also used in Isa 13:11b in connection with *ga'on* "I [Yahweh] will also put an end to the arrogance (*ga'on*) of the proud (*zed*)." In Jer 49:19 and 50:44, *ga'on* is used in reference to Yahweh attacking Edom and Babylon like a lion, respectively; thus, furthering the Edom-Babylon identity as it relates to pride in the Hebrew Bible.

⁵² Raabe, *Obadiah*, 133. In reference to Obad 4, Raabe notes that in the Bible to dwell among the stars is to attain divine status. Ronald Hendel, "God and the Gods of the Tetrateuch," in *Origins of Yahwism* (ed. Jürgen van Oorschot and Markus Witte; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 258.

High."⁵³ Not only does the king of Babylon want to be higher than the divine council but he also expresses the aspiration to become the supreme deity.⁵⁴

Nicolas Wyatt treats *Helel* as the morning aspect of the Venus star whose "twin" would be the evening aspect of the Venus star.⁵⁵ In Ugaritic mythology, these brothers would have enjoyed equality.⁵⁶ Thus, *Helel*, by ascending in Isa 14:13–14, could also be supplanting his brother and threatening cosmic order, which would warrant El to intervene to restore cosmic order.⁵⁷ Supplanting one's brother is a major motif in the Old Testament; the most infamous example being Jacob (Israel/Judah) and Esau (Edom) who were also twins.⁵⁸ Moreover, Edom's attempt to deify itself and the pride exhibited thereby should be seen, in part, as Edom (Esau) trying to (re)supplant his brother Israel (Jacob), like *Helel*.⁵⁹ Edom, working with Babylon, betrayed the covenantal relationship and victimised his brother.⁶⁰ Thus, Edom deserved a taunt similar to Babylon's as portrayed in the *Helel ben Sahar* figure. In each case, both Babylon and Edom express hubris like *Helel* and threaten the order of the universe by challenging Yahweh, oppressing his covenantal people and destroying his temple.

In Obadiah, Edom does not use as grandiose language as the Tyrant does in Isa 14:12–14 but the motif of self-deification is still prevalent. Hans Walter Wolff states that Edom in Obad 4 is following in the footsteps of the Babylonian king in Isa 14:12–14 who attempted to deify himself.⁶¹ Obadiah, like Isa 14, is

⁵³ Holladay, "Text, Structure, and Irony," 641. By boasting that he will ascend to heaven and be above *El Elyon*, God most high, the Tyrant demonstrates his aspirations to become divine. Moreover, attempting to achieve this goal the Tyrant shows a lack of knowledge and or concern of who controls the universe, that is, *El Elyon*. For *El Elyon* as a designation for Yahweh, see Thomas Renz, "Zion Tradition in the Book of Ezekiel," 77–103.

⁵⁴ Litwa, *Desiring Divinity*, 31. Shipp, *Of Dead Kings and Dirges*, 42.

⁵⁵ Nicolas Wyatt, "Atonement Theology in Ugarit and Israel," in *Ugarit-Forschungen* Band 8 (ed. Kurt Bergerhog, Manfred Dietrich and Oswald Loretz; Münster: Butzon & Bercker, 1976), 417.

⁵⁶ Wyatt, "Atonement Theology," 417.

⁵⁷ Lowell K. Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven: The Syro-Palestinian Pantheon as Bureaucracy* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 76–87.

⁵⁸ Wyatt, "Atonement Theology," 417.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 417, for the twin-ship of *Helel*.

⁶⁰ See John R. Bartlett, "The Brotherhood of Edom," *JSOT* 2/4 (1977):4–8, for brotherhood. Bartlett, notes that the Deuteronomists' included the Edomites into the worshipping community of Yahweh and had a positive attitude towards their brother (p. 6–8). This accentuates Edom's unbrotherly actions as seen in Obadiah and elsewhere in the Minor Prophets. See Michael Fishbane, "The Treaty Background of Amos 1:11 and Related Matters," *JBL* 89/3 (1970): 313–318. Fishbane notes the use of "brother" in covenantal language, thus, heightening the level of Edom's betrayal in their attempt to victimise and/or (re)supplant their brother.

⁶¹ Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 49.

set in 3+2 *qinah* meter and also has a satirical tone to it, allowing it to have *marshal* characteristics.⁶² Edom says in their heart, "Who will bring me down to earth?" (Obad 3b); thus, implying they must be above the earth in the heavenly sphere. The object of Edom's pride and the height of their dwelling in the text is, in part, geographical.⁶³ The land of Edom was known for its relatively isolated and nearly impenetrable cliff posts, as seen in Sela, Edom's capital, which fed their hubris in relating to neighboring nations.⁶⁴ Moreover, Edom is referred to in the preceding phrase, "You who live in the cleft of the rock" (Obad 3a); yet Edom goes beyond this, claiming to set his nest among the stars, thus, attempting to impose his influence in the heavenly sphere where Yahweh rules. It is from there, not from the clefts of the rocks, that Yahweh will bring them down (Obad 4). The parallel verse in Jer 49:16b reads, "Though you make your nest as high as an eagle's" and does not mention stars. Obadiah's mention of stars may be a subtle, yet forceful, and intentional variation of the shared material to further link Edom (Obadiah) and Babylon (Isaiah).⁶⁵

Additional parallels can be seen in the death and descension of Edom and Babylon in Obadiah and Isaiah. Babylon and Edom both get cast down to the netherworld on account of their pride (cf. Isa 14:15; Obad 4).⁶⁶ Moreover, being cast into *Sheol* by God indicates the condemned status of the antagonists.⁶⁷ The king of Babylon is clearly said to have been thrust down into *Sheol* (Isa 14:15) and he is still distinguishable as the former the king of Babylon (Isa 14:16), unlike most people who lose their prior distinctions in life in *Sheol*.⁶⁸ This is what we would expect of an ANE king in the realm of the dead because Egyptian and Sumerian kings were viewed as having divine status manifested either as stars in heaven and or as enthroned in the underworld.⁶⁹ However, the king of Babylon, as part of Yahweh's judgment for his self-deification, is not met with such

⁶² Ibid., 46–47.

⁶³ Ibid., 48.

⁶⁴ Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 147. Block, Obadiah, 60. Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 48–49.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 34. Wolff, in his notes on the text, sees the potential connection between Obad 4 and Isa 14:13.

⁶⁶ Erlandsson, *The Burden of Babylon*, 152.

⁶⁷ Janet K. Smith, *Dust or Dew: Immortality in the Ancient Near East and in Psalm 49* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2012), 142–143. Janet Smith notes that the redemption of dead souls is demonstrated by God raising them out of *Sheol* (cf. 1 Kgs 17:7–24; Smith 181–182) the resurrection of the widow's son demonstrates that God snatched him out of *Sheol*; Jonah 2:2, God hears Jonah from *Sheol* and delivers him from his circumstance Jonah 2:7 (cf. 1 Sam 2:6; Ps 49:15–16). In all of these circumstances, God is the one who saves by raising the person out of *Sheol*. Such a redemption for Babylon and Edom is not likely given the heated rhetoric concerning their banishment to *Sheol*.

⁶⁸ Leila Leah Bronner, *Journey to Heaven: Exploring Jewish Views of the Afterlife* (Brooklyn: Urim Publications, 2011), 20–21.

⁶⁹ Shipp, *Of Dead Kings and Dirges*, 85.

monarchical prowess in *Sheol*. Instead, the Tyrant is mocked by those who look on him⁷⁰ and he is rejected from his grave⁷¹ and does not receive a proper burial, which was a tremendous tragedy and embarrassment in the ANE.⁷² The Tyrant in *Sheol*, the realm of the dead, is now despised among the kings of the nations.⁷³

Yahweh, in Obad 2, says to Edom, "Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you are greatly despised." This is immediately followed by Edom's self-deification displaying a delusional estimation of his true standing, which is that he is despised and will be made small. Edom, in Obad 3, says in his heart "Who will bring me down to the ground?" After they attempt to deify themselves, Yahweh throws them down from heaven to the earth without mention of burial, proper or otherwise (Obad 4).⁷⁴ Additionally, Paul Raabe, sees a parallel between Obad 3–4 and Isa 14:12 concerning stars and being thrown down to earth/netherworld.⁷⁵ Thus, in a cosmological sense, earth (*eretz*) can mean the grave and netherworld⁷⁶ as such, it can have semantic overlap with *Sheol*.⁷⁷ In contrast, Jer 49:16 relates that Edom is thrown down from the cliffs without mentioning where he will land; thus, excluding the location of descent (ie. *Sheol*/netherworld). Obadiah, by having Edom thrown down from the heavens and landing on the earth, highlights the cosmological nature of Edom's aspirations and his corresponding judgment, which is further justification of interpreting *eretz* as *Sheol*. God confirms that Edom is a despised nation and that he will make them insignificant among the nations by throwing Edom down to the earth. By being cast into the earth and/or netherworld, both Edom and Babylon experience defeat and embarrassment in death. Unlike Egyptian and Sumerian kings who could ascend and descend, become deified as stars and rule in the netherworld, Edom and the Tyrant are denied all these privileges in Obadiah's and Isaiah's use of tragic irony.⁷⁸

⁷⁰ Holladay, "Text, Structure, and Irony," 642.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 642.

⁷² Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39*, 41. See also Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 287.

⁷³ Holladay, "Text, Structure, and Irony," 642.

⁷⁴ Raabe, *Obadiah*, 129. He recognises that *eretz* can mean underworld, especially in relation to Edom setting their nest among the stars up in heaven in Obad 4. However, Raabe argues that *eretz* most likely refers to the ground in relation to the mountainous heights of Edom, but still holds that there may be a *double entendre*.

⁷⁵ Raabe, *Obadiah*, 129–130.

⁷⁶ Shipp, *Of Dead Kings and Dirges*, 136. Daniel Block, *Ezekiel*, 117. See the following scriptures where *eretz* can mean the grave or netherworld: Pss 147:6, 148:7; Isa 14:9, 21:9, 26:19, 29:4; Ezek 26:19–20, 28:17, 31:16; Jonah 2:6.

⁷⁷ Frank M. Cross, Jr. and David Noel Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," *JNES* 14/4 (1955): 247–248. *Eretz*, like *Sheol*, is where the dead are received. See also Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 287.

⁷⁸ Shipp, *Of Dead Kings and Dirges*, 81–108.

D RE-ARRANGEMENT

Any study of Obadiah’s dependence on other prophetic traditions must include a discussion of its similarities with Jer 49:7–16. Due to the nature of this article, only broad observations will be made as they relate to Obadiah’s intention to model Isaiah. The composition of Jer 49 was prior to the destruction of Jerusalem because Jeremiah does not charge Edom with a specific sin and Edom’s destruction does not precede the restoration of Yahweh’s people to their land.⁷⁹ Obadiah’s composition, on the other hand, was shortly after the fall of Jerusalem, for it reflects an eyewitness perspective of those events and accuses Edom of doing violence to his brother Jacob (Obad 10–14).⁸⁰ What is of particular interest is the re-arrangement of similar phrases in the two passages. See Figure 3.⁸¹

Jeremiah 49: 9–10c, 14–16 (NASB)	Obadiah 1–4, 5–6 (NASB)
<p>v. 9–10c ⁹“If grape gatherers came to you, Would they not leave gleanings? If thieves <i>came</i> by night, They would destroy <i>only</i> until they had enough. ¹⁰“But I have stripped Esau bare, I have uncovered his hiding places So that he will not be able to conceal himself v. 14–16 ¹⁴I have heard a message from the Lord, And an envoy is sent among the nations, <i>saying</i>, “Gather yourselves together and come against her, And rise up for battle!” ¹⁵“For behold, I have made you small among the nations, Despised among men. ¹⁶“As for the terror of you, The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,</p>	<p>v. 5–6 ⁵“If thieves came to you, If robbers by night— O how you will be ruined!— Would they not steal <i>only</i> until they had enough? If grape gatherers came to you, Would they not leave <i>some</i> gleanings? ⁶“O how Esau will be ransacked, <i>And</i> his hidden treasures searched out! v. 1–4 ¹ The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom— We have heard a report from the Lord, And an envoy has been sent among the nations <i>saying</i>, “Arise and let us go against her for battle”— ²“Behold, I will make you small among the nations; You are greatly despised. ³“The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, You who live in the clefts of the rock,</p>

⁷⁹ Elie Assis, “Structure, Redaction and Significance in the Prophecy of Obadiah,” *JSOT* 39/2 (2014): 215. Assis, *Identity in Conflict*, 93–95.

⁸⁰ Hans Walter Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah: A Commentary* (trans. Margaret Khol; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 18. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 130. On the literary development of the brotherhood of Judah and Edom, see Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 177–180.

⁸¹ Adapted from Raabe, *Obadiah*, 22–31.

O you who live in the clefts of the rock, Who occupy the height of the hill. Though you make your nest as high as an eagle's, I will bring you down from there," declares the Lord.	In the loftiness of your dwelling place, Who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to earth?' 4 "Though you build high like the eagle, Though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down," declares the Lord.
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Figure 3

The texts share almost two-thirds of the same words; Obadiah, however, reverses the order of the content, indicating an intentional re-framing and re-purposing of the material.⁸² According to P.C. Beentjes, biblical authors used inverted quotations as a literary device to heighten the rhetorical effect in the process of recension.⁸³ Though Wolff concludes that it is not likely that direct literary dependence exists between the two due to the variations between the two texts,⁸⁴ it is safe to assume that Obadiah was influenced by and perhaps worked within a Jeremiad tradition and used the literary device of inverted quotations to achieve his desired effect, namely, the intensified condemnation of Edom.⁸⁵

Additionally, Obad 1–2 inverts Jer 49:14–15 to model the introduction of his oracle after Isa 13. One observes that Obadiah begins with a brief superscription immediately followed by Yahweh sending messengers to summon an army (Obad 1). Jeremiah shares this material but it comes at the second half of his oracle against Edom (Jer 49:14). We should note also the similarities in the introductions of Isa 13:1–3 and Obad 1–2, that is, thematically speaking. See Figure 4.

Isaiah 13:1–3 (NASB)	Obadiah 1–2 (NASB)
¹ The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. ² Lift up a standard on the bare hill, Raise your voice to them, Wave the hand that they may enter the doors of the nobles.	¹ The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom— We have heard a report from the Lord, And an envoy has been sent among the nations <i>saying</i> ,

⁸² Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 415–416. Stuart argues that Jeremiah and Obadiah used poetry that was already in circulation in Judea. Nevertheless, dependence and transmission aside, both sources share material and have their own literary purpose in using it.

⁸³ Pancratius C. Beentjes, "Discovering a New Path of Intertextuality: Inverted Quotations and Their Dynamics," in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. L.J. de Regt, J. de Waard and J.P. Fokkelman; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1996), 31–50.

⁸⁴ Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah*, 39. Instead, Wolff argues for a common oral tradition and transmission.

⁸⁵ Bert Dicou, *Edom, Israel's Brother and Antagonist* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 62, 66.

<p>³ I have commanded My consecrated ones, I have even called My mighty warriors, My proudly exulting ones, To <i>execute</i> My anger.</p>	<p>"Arise and let us go against her for battle"— ² "Behold, I will make you small among the nations; You are greatly despised.</p>
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Figure 4

In both passages, there is motif of a summons for battle from the start, as Yahweh is summoning an army for war and judgment.⁸⁶ Verbal similarities may be lacking but as regards rhetorical development and composition, the link between this specific example is evident. Isaiah 13, most likely written during the exile, thus, suggests a pre-539 b.c.e. date.⁸⁷ Deutero-Isaiah likely knew Obadiah as a contemporary early exilic text and potentially modelled Isa 13 after Obadiah. More likely, Obadiah, as part of the Twelve (which received its final "closing" circa 250–225 b.c.e.), attempts to reflect the great oracle against Babylon,⁸⁸ particularly, if one were to assume late redactions in Obadiah. In short, Obadiah and Isa 13–14:23, along with Jer 46:3–6,⁸⁹ are the only oracles against the nations that begin with a summons to war for a specific nation, demonstrating that Obadiah modelled his introduction after Isa 13 to emphasise the Babylon-Edom connection.

⁸⁶ Dicou, *Edom*, 61, notes that the specific phrase "for battle" does not occur in a summons to war outside of Obadiah and Jeremiah. However, the occasion in Isa 13:1–3 and in the whole chapter, is war. See Joseph Everson, "Serving Notice on Babylon: The Canonical Function of Isaiah 13–14," *W&W* 19/2 (1999): 134.

⁸⁷ Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 158. G.R. Hamborg. "Reasons for Judgment in the Oracles against the Nations of the Prophet of Isaiah," *VT* 31/2 (1981): 146.

⁸⁸ Barry Alan Jones, *The Formation of The Book of The Twelve: A Study in Text and Canon* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 62.

⁸⁹ The opening summons to war in Jer 46 does not have a proper summons to battle as in calling out to the armies for battle. Rather, Jer 46 is a "preparation" for battle, for in it the army is to harness the horses, mount the steeds, polish the spears, take their stand and approach near the battle lines. Whereas in Obad 1–2 and Isa 13:1–3, the armies have to be called and have to gather, having to (re)convene for battle; thus, truly summoned for a war. Since Edom and Babylon were seen as related archetypal enemies, it makes sense that Obadiah would model his introduction after the oracle against Babylon in Isa 13 instead of Jer 46. Additionally, the summons in Joel 4[3]:9–12 is for all nations, lacking the specificity of a summons for war against a specific nation. Additionally, as argued in footnote 9, Joel 3–4 is influenced by both Isaiah and Obadiah and would have alluded to their work in his summons for battle.

Both Isa 13 and Obadiah use this summons of war and its judgment in connection with the “day of the Lord.” Another major distinction in Obadiah’s attempt to re-purpose Jer 49 to match Isaianic themes, is his inclusion of the “day of the Lord” in Obad 15–16, which is not found in Jer 49:12. See Figure 5

Figure 5

Jeremiah 49:12 (NASB)	Obadiah 15:16 (NASB)
<p>¹² For thus says the Lord, “Behold, those who were not sentenced to drink the cup will certainly drink <i>it</i>, and are you the one who will be completely acquitted? You will not be acquitted, but you will certainly drink <i>it</i>.”</p>	<p>¹⁵“For the day of the Lord draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head. ¹⁶“Because just as you drank on My holy mountain, All the nations will drink continually. They will drink and swallow And become as if they had never existed.</p>

The above further demonstrates, that despite working within the Jeremiad tradition, Obadiah uses stylistic freedom to re-use the Jeremiad material to follow the rhetorical development and thematic effect of Isaiah.

E CONCLUSION

On a broader eschatological level, the judgments upon Edom and Babylon serve as the precursor to Israel’s restoration.⁹⁰ The judgment, against those who initiated Judah’s exile, will initiate the return of Yahweh’s people into the land (Isa 14:1–6; Obad 10, 18–19). Babylon and Edom, working together to bring about the destruction of Jerusalem, are characterised synonymously in the texts examined. The executor of their judgments is Yahweh, with the nations he has summoned (Isa 13:2–5; Obad 1). The immanent and comprehensive nature of their judgments is expressed by the construction of *ki qarob yom Yahweh*. Their judgments are rooted in the *lex talionis* principle and their effrontery towards God and his people is characterised by the motif of ascension and descension. Moreover, Obadiah, though following the Jeremiad tradition, also incorporates the Isaianic progression to further accentuate the Edom-Babylon characterisation. As such, both Isaiah and Obadiah, through rhetorical development, thematic similarities and semantic equivalents are developing the closely related and synonymous characterisation of Edom and Babylon in the Hebrew Bible.

If these conclusions are correct, then, there are three implications for the field of biblical studies. The first, using Obadiah as a test case, is to see that the

⁹⁰ Cresson, “The Condemnation of Edom in Post-exilic Judaism,” 138. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 431.

latter prophets could work within the major prophetic traditions. This runs contrary to the theory that the major prophetic traditions and their adherents were exclusive and antagonistic to the other traditions. Other comparative analyses are needed to demonstrate further how the minor prophets, in particular, worked within the various major prophetic schools. The second, in light of the attempts to make archetypal figures of the historical Edom and Babylon, is to give greater weight in viewing the nations, in the prophets, as emblematic proverbial figures in tandem with the original characterisation of the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the prophetic material. The third is how other nations and city-states are portrayed as synonymous entities in the minds of the biblical authors and their original audiences as well as how prophetic material concerning a nation applies to its corresponding nation. The texts of Obadiah and Isa 13:2–14:23 demonstrate all three of these implications concerning the Edom-Babylon historical and literary connection by making them a prophetically synonymous entity.

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