THE CALL OF JEREMIAH

by

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Abstract

The literary problems associated with the Book of Jeremiah are firstly discussed in order to demonstrate that the references to Jeremiah’s experience may be taken as historically reliable. Because direct reference to his experience is infrequent, the ministry that he had is considered in order to determine what could have initiated it. Its nature was such that it implies an initial experience of an appearance of God to him, commissioning him to be a prophet, even though direct reference to this theophany is limited because of the particular situation. Thus the fundamental aspect of being a prophet was not that of speaking for God, but of having entered into a particularly close relationship with him. This is also seen in the account in Jeremiah 1 which recorded his appointment as a prophet, and which thus rejected other possible direct causes of his prophesying.

Jeremiah was then sent as a messenger of God. However, his message was not simply due to his initial call experience, but was received in later experiences of revelation which did not involve theophany. The initial experience did however enable the revelation to be recognised as from God. For Jeremiah, both initial experience and later revelation were centred on the word of the Lord. The positive connotations of this term were very appropriate for Jeremiah, reflecting the creative and rational aspects of his ministry and also the dialogues with God which are a particular feature of the book. Other possible forms of revelation such as vision and dream are rare to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was not irresistibly constrained to become a prophet. Once he had accepted the call, he irresistibly received oracles from God, but was not irresistibly constrained to deliver them, although the pressure to do so from various sources was high. He was also free to put particular form to the message which he had received.

Mention of the spirit is rare in Jeremiah, although frequently associated with prophecy. The reasons for this, and the role of the spirit in Jeremiah are discussed.
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## CONTENTS

1. **INTRODUCTION**  
   1.1 The origin of this research  
   1.2 The importance of prophecy to the Old Testament  
   1.3 The centrality of calling to the Old Testament  
   1.4 The call and ministry of Jeremiah  
   1.5 Historical presuppositions  
   1.5.1 The distinction between poetry and prose  
   1.5.2 The text  
   1.5.3 A liturgical interpretation  
   1.5.3.1 The call as cultic liturgy  
   1.5.4 The division into sources  
   1.5.5 The redaction of Jeremiah  
   1.5.6 Texts of major importance  
   1.5.6.1 The call  
   1.5.6.2 The confessions  
   1.5.6.3 Jeremiah and false prophets  
   1.5.6.4 Jeremiah 14:1 - 15:4  
   1.5.6.5 The temple sermons  

2. **THE FEATURES OF JEREMIAH'S CALL**  
   2.1 An external act  
   2.2 An exclusive act  
   2.3 A disruptive act  
   2.3.1 Effects in body and mind  
   2.4 An historical act  
   2.4.1 Relation to Jeremiah's previous life  
   2.4.2 Influences upon Jeremiah  
   2.4.2.1 Jeremiah and Moses  
   2.4.2.2 Jeremiah and Deuteronomy 18  
   2.4.2.3 Other possible influences  
   2.4.3 The timing of Jeremiah's call  
   2.4.4 Additional note. Call narratives in form critical analysis  
   2.4.4.1 Problems with the approach  
   2.4.4.2 Advantages of the approach  
   2.5 Covenantal act  
   2.5.1 "Prophet to the nations"  
   2.5.2 Additional note. The validity of non covenantal prophecy  
   2.6 An act for service  
   2.6.1 Judgement  
   2.6.1.1 Judgement against the nations  
   2.6.1.2 Judgement against Jeremiah himself  
   2.6.2 Protection  
   2.6.3 Enabling  
   2.6.4 No promise of success  
   2.7 A call to exercise authority  
   2.8 A permanent call
3. THE CALL AND THEOPHANY

3.1 Did Jeremiah's call include a theophany?

3.1.1 Uniqueness of the call experience

3.2 Theophany in an imageless religion

3.3 The necessity for theophany in the call of Jeremiah

3.3.1 An external act requires theophany

3.3.2 An exclusive relationship requires theophany

3.3.3 A disruptive experience requires theophany

3.3.4 The historicity of theophany

3.3.5 Covenant involves theophany

3.3.6 Theophany and service

3.3.7 Authority and theophany

3.3.7.1 Council of the Lord

3.3.8 Permanence and theophany

3.4 The individual nature of Jeremiah's theophany

3.4.1 Deuteronomic usage

3.4.2 Prophetic usage

3.4.3 Usage elsewhere in the Old Testament

3.4.4 The personality of Jeremiah

3.4.5 The background of Jeremiah

3.4.6 The word as creative of the prophet

3.4.7 Angel of the Lord

3.5 Subsequent theophany

3.6 Recognition of a prophet

4. THE EFFECT OF THE CALL UPON JEREMIAH

4.1 nabi'

4.1.1 The meaning of nabi'

4.1.2 The rejection of alternative terms

4.1.2.1 hoze and ro'e

4.1.2.2 The distinction between hoze and nabi'

4.1.2.3 The distinction between ro'e and nabi'

4.1.2.4 The rejection of "man of God"

4.1.3 naba'

4.2 The action of God in the prophetic calling

4.2.1 Terms implying relationship

4.2.1.1 yada

4.2.1.2 bahar

4.2.1.3 qadas

4.2.1.4 qum

4.2.1.5 paqad

4.2.2 Terms implying sending

4.2.2.1 natan

4.2.2.2 salah

4.2.2.3 sawa
4.3 Other forms of prophecy
4.3.1 False prophets
4.3.2 Cult prophets
4.3.3 Sons of the prophets
4.3.4 Prophetesses

5. THE RECEIPT OF REVELATION
5.1 The need for particular revelation
5.2 The word of the Lord not a theophany
5.3 Jeremiah's use of "word"
5.3.1 The word as creative
5.3.1.1 Creation in Jeremiah
5.3.2 The word as rational
5.3.3 The word as command
5.3.4 The "word" simply a redaction
5.3.4.1 Inconsistency in terminology
5.4 The word and features of Jeremiah's prophecy
5.4.1 The word of the Lord as external phenomenon
5.4.2 Revelation not exclusive to prophets
5.4.3 The reception of the word not disruptive
5.4.4 The word as historical
5.4.5 The word and covenant
5.4.6 The word and service
5.4.7 The word and authority
5.4.8 The permanence of the word
5.5 The prophetic dialogue with God
5.6 The mouth
5.7 Further means of revelation
5.7.1 Visions
5.7.2 Dreams

6. THE FREEDOM OF THE PROPHET
6.1 The freedom in the call
6.2 The freedom of the prophet in his ministry
6.3 The sources of the prophetic urge
6.3.1 Fear
6.3.2 massa'
6.3.3 A knowledge of the divine mind
6.3.4 Covenant
6.3.5 Ecstasy
6.3.6 Hand of the Lord
6.4 The freedom of the prophet in his words
6.4.1 Communication with God
6.4.2 Communication with the people

7. THE CALL AND THE SPIRIT IN JEREMIAH
7.1 The spirit and the word
7.2 The action of the spirit in prophecy
7.2.1 Preparation of the prophet for reception of the word
263
7.2.2 Empowering of the prophet for delivery of the word                                     264
7.2.3 Why the omission of reference to the spirit?                                                266
7.2.4 Jeremiah's use of ruah                                                                  267
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The origin of this research

While I was serving as a missionary, it was noticeable that many people joined the society with a testimony of how they came to that point, and how they believed that God called them. It was also noticeable that many left the society after a comparatively short time. This left the questions "Did God really call to this situation?" and "How can a person really know the call of God?"

It is these questions which are central to the situation of Jeremiah. Faced with opposition, trying to give an unpopular message and confronted with those who claimed, like him, to be prophets but who gave a contrary message, he was tempted to give up, except for one thing. He was aware of the call of God, which involved both the initial experience and continued receipt of revelation. The question is, "What constituted his call?". This involved for Jeremiah, as for missionaries today, the questions of the call to a particular form of ministry and also of the assurance of the leading of God in a particular situation.

1.2 The importance of prophecy to the Old Testament
The ideal, which is not possible in the scope of a thesis is to consider various calls and various types of ministry and to establish an overall theology which will be of value today. A start can be made in the Old Testament in an attempt to establish God’s method of dealing with this problem, but appreciating that possibly it was totally different from now (cf Schmidt 1983:48f). Even a restriction to the Old Testament with its various ministries of judge, priest, king etc is too wide, so restriction must be made to a vital aspect of the Old Testament, to what arguably is a central feature of the Old Testament. Bennett cites A B Davidson in the midst of a number of similar quotations from elsewhere:

    The history of Israel is a history of prophecy  (Bennett 1966:7).

Similarly,

    Prophecy is the dominant and distinctive element in Hebrew religion. Without it Israel would only have been one of the innumerable nomad tribes of the semitic race, the very traces of which have disappeared  (Ottley 1897:264).

More recent but similar sentiments are found for example in Rowley (1942:47), and Von Rad (1975a:44). The latter divides his theology into two volumes because of his conviction that with the prophets a new phase is entered (Von Rad 1975a:128). Indeed, prophecy only
became significant with the monarchy which itself is a break with the old order. However the concept of calling does unite the prophetic position with that of Israel as a whole. More particularly in the case of Jeremiah, his apparent connection with, and view of, Moses is a strong link with the past. His preaching is really only explicable if the Mosaic Covenant is presupposed.

A further indication of at least the later view of the importance of prophecy ie by the time of the Chronicler, can be seen in Baba Bathra's ascription of the authorship of the Scriptures to the prophets (Blenkinsopp 1983:22), including the ascription of Kings, part of the "Deuteronomic History", to Jeremiah. This is not surprising in view of the developed conception of the word mediated only through the prophets coupled with a belief in the scriptures as of divine origin.

Also significant in respect of the priesthood, which is more important than prophecy elsewhere in the Ancient Near East, is the record that God revealed his will to David concerning the building of the temple by the prophet Nathan rather than by a priest (Vriezen 1967:87) (possibly a Deuteronomic comment). It is also noticeable that apart from the regular cultic function, intercession for the people appears not to be a priestly duty, which is what we might expect, but rather, in general, a function of the prophet.

Even the field of prophecy however shows variation in the period of
The importance of the prophets is not restricted to the fact of the bulk of their books in the Bible nor even to their influence over several centuries of history, but is due to their sharing in their lives what is arguably a central feature of the Old Testament.

Although it is usual to deny with Von Rad (1975b:17) a centre in the Old Testament, seeing rather a set of historical testimonies, Von Rad himself writes:

To-day it is not so easy to find the way back to an all-embracing basic concept, a "basic structure" or "basic tendency". At all events, it has to be sought anew, and in different circumstances (Von Rad 1975b:415).

He tends to see God Himself as the centre. He is of course referring to the many attempts since Eichrodt (1961 and 1967) to find a centre for the Old Testament. Eichrodt's idea of covenant goes back to Vatke, and has found more recent support from G E Wright (Reventlow 1979:17). The basic concept is seen also in the proposals of Wildberger (election), Smend (the covenant formula), and Vriezen (communion)(Reventlow 1979:6). Perhaps a second group can be seen in the various proposals relating to the rule of God (eg Kohler,

The ministry of the prophets is itself a reflection of these proposals. The covenant and related ideas may not be a "centre", but are of great importance to the Old Testament, and these are reflected at the personal level in the prophets, whose ministry is on the basis of that covenant (cf section 2.5). Moreover the relationship of covenant presupposes the rule of God who called Israel, and on the personal level called the prophets for the sake of Israel, and through them, the nations. The furthering of this relationship involves the revelation of God's will (cf Hasel's proposal) which is the function of the prophet.

Consequently it is possible to see the calling of the prophet and subsequent receipt of revelation, a feature of the relationship with God, as a microcosm of the call and relationship of Israel, and as furthering that relationship in their own ministry. Hence as it is undeniable that God's relationship with Israel is at the centre of the Old Testament in some way, so calling, and in particular the calling of the prophets, occupies a prominent position, perhaps not as a centre in the technical sense to which everything else must be related, but as one of the core concepts of the Old Testament.
1.4 The call and ministry of Jeremiah

As prophets form a vital part of the Old Testament, and if the Old Testament is to be treated as giving in any sense an authentic picture, an investigation must be made into the nature of the prophetic experience.

If we would understand the prophets and prophetic religion we must first understand their own conception of their mission (Hyatt 1947:31).

Jeremiah is chosen for particular investigation because he is at the zenith of "classical prophecy", making, with the figures of Isaiah and Ezekiel, the major prophets. Also, although this is disputed, he more than any other reveals his inner experiences (Whitley 1963:20). Something of the anguish he suffered both in his ministry and in his sharing with the covenant people is often visible, particularly in the "confessions". Nevertheless Jeremiah is one of a type, and putting him against the background of other is essential to understand his experiences.

1.5 Historical presuppositions
If an investigation of the calling and receipt of revelation of Jeremiah is to have any value, it presupposes that the data to be found in the book is an accurate reflection of the prophet's experiences. Carroll (1981) believes that it reflects a later interpretation of Jeremiah (p2), and that it is impossible to reconstruct an "historical Jeremiah" (p25). In this he is primarily reacting against Skinner (1961) whose assessment of basic historicity is followed by most (e.g., Rowley 1962:199, Blank 1961:3), as Carroll (1981:6) himself admits.

The claim of the book itself is that a large portion is from Jeremiah, some in poetic form and some in prose, and if this is indeed from the prophet himself, must be of great value. The book also refers to Jeremiah in the third person in the biographical portions, which has again been assessed as an objective unbiased account (Blank 1961:62) although some have seen in the biography conflicting assessments. Wanke, for example, sees a conflict between a rejected Jeremiah of Jeremiah 38-44 and a victorious hero of Jeremiah 14-20:6, 26-29, 36 (Wanke 1971:144f, Jobling 1978:5).

The reliability of the account of Jeremiah to be found in the book has been queried from various viewpoints.

1.5.1 **The distinction between poetry and prose.** Leaving aside the narrative material which will naturally be in prose of the style current at the time, the material which claims to be from Jeremiah occurs both in
poetic and prose forms. Nicholson (1970:26) believes that these differ significantly both in vocabulary and expression, and treats the poetry only as original to Jeremiah, the prose coming from a later circle of Deuteronomists in the exile. In support of this, some topics are dealt with in prose which it is felt are only applicable in the later situation (such as the Sabbath, Jr 17:19f, although the Sabbath does occur in pre-exilic material). So also sometimes a late date would seem apparent from the present text (cf reference to Egypt in Jr 24:8, but this may by no means need refer to an exilic situation).

As regards style, the similarity to the Deuteronomic writing need indicate no more than that the writer used what was current at the time. It is also very natural that a different medium of expression led to a different vocabulary. However some (eg Harrison 1973:23, Holladay 1960:351f) have pointed out consistencies in language, such that essential unity is arguable. Certainly the prose style differs from the Deuteronomic in the direction of the poetic Jeremiah. Hence even those who consider the prose to be of a date after Jeremiah consider its origin to be from a group of Jeremiah's disciples (eg Bright 1951:27, Sturdy 1980:149), or to have a Jeremianic core (eg Nicholson 1970:30), so that its composition was very soon after Jeremiah.

The difference between poetry and prose may well be explained by recognizing that the poetry was deliberately recast for the sake of repetition and memory. In contrast, the prose was spoken once only
Because the poetry is in general unquestionably attributed to Jeremiah, attempts are often made to see a poetic base to some of the prose sermons, particularly where there are textual questions. This is done frequently by Thompson (1980) for example in the passage concerning the burden (Jer 23:32f), in an attempt to demonstrate authenticity. However, it is surely questionable to pronounce on genuineness simply on such criteria, which are not applicable to other prophets (e.g., Ezekiel's natural medium is prose (Stalker 1968:27) (cf. Crenshaw 1983:118).

1.5.2 The text. The Masoretic text (MT) and Septuagint (LXX) vary in the book of Jeremiah, the latter being considerably shorter (Harrison 1973:43). LXX often preserves a poetic form lost in MT, so perhaps may be considered as more reliable. At Qumran, both the longer text, and a fragmentary Hebrew manuscript which follows LXX, have been found. The changes can be seen as either a condensation of the Hebrew, and an elision of doublets (as Jer 46:27-28, 30:10-11) or as an expansion to explain (Overholt 1970:25), as LXX adds nothing to MT (Auld 1984:69). The major difference is in the arrangement of oracles against the nations (Jer 46-51) which appears in LXX after Jeremiah 25:13. For this investigation the difference is usually irrelevant. Jeremiah 27-9 which deals with false prophecy is considerably longer in MT when compared to LXX, but even here the differences do not
affect the meaning but are rather explanatory.

1.5.3 **A liturgical interpretation.** The "confessions" of Jeremiah claim to give an insight into the thoughts and battles of Jeremiah in regard to his ministry, and as such are of great value for this investigation (Rowley 1956c:148). However Reventlow (1963) and to a lesser extent Gerstenberger (1963) have seen these as liturgical, as other prophetic books (cf eg Reventlow 1962).

....the use of the first person singular in the book directs us not to the prophet's "personality" but to cultic situations in the Temple such as we know primarily from the Book of Psalms, in which the "I" was formally required (Jobling 1978:3, of Reventlow).

Das Ich, das dort in Erscheinung tritt, ist ganz in das Wir hineingenommen, es ist nicht anders als Repräsentanz und Verkörperung der Gemeinschaft (Reventlow 1963:259).

Gerstenberger does not go so far. Speaking of Jeremiah 15: 10-21 as typical, he believes that the personal lament has been included as an "analogy to the agony of the people" (Gerstenberger 1963:408), so admits an historical core.

This assessment has been heavily criticised. Von Rad believes that
the language goes far beyond that of liturgical lament (Von Rad 1975b:202). He feels that each confession of Jeremiah relates to a particular experience (p204).

In this Von Rad is reiterating the earlier assessment, based upon the denial that the canonical prophets were cultic. Rowley, although he sees some oracles based on liturgy (eg Is 40f or Joel), believes it is doubtful if cultic liturgies form any large part of the canon (cf also Crenshaw 1968:213). In particular, it is:

....even more difficult to think of Jeremiah fitting into the service as an official ministrant (Rowley 1956a:357).

E W Nicholson notes the relationship to lament psalms. Whereas elsewhere in the book he frequently rejects Jeremianic authorship, here he remarks:

....the intensely personal note...the knowledge we have of Jeremiah's sufferings...the fact that (they) embody responses of God so obviously addressed to Jeremiah as an individual, all render such a cultic interpretation of them untenable (Nicholson 1973:112).

Bright (1970) examines Reventlow's ideas in detail and rejects his picture of Jeremiah as a cultic functionary, bringing the word and interceding (p192). In particular, he notes that the intercession of Jeremiah is not in a cultic setting, prayer in such a setting usually
being by non-prophets (p193). To the question of why the confessions were included if not public, Bright (p196) points out their general absence from the other prophets, but admits some parallels do exist eg Jonah, Elijah (1 Ki 17:20, 1 Ki 19) and Samuel (1 Sm 15:10f).

Bright also notes the difference in the treatment of God's hand, in the confessions as compulsive, but in the lament psalms as chastisement (p204). He believes that the accusations against God present in the confessions, although possible personally would be unthinkable publicly (p205). Koch (1984:45) believes no later hand would put such blasphemy into Jeremiah's mouth, so the confessions must be autobiographical. The weight of Bright's argument however, as is Reventlow's, falls on a detailed exegesis of the relevant texts.

Jeremiah's repeated need for authentication of his oracles provides a valid reason for inclusion of such personal material and makes a liturgical explanation unnecessary as a source of the confessions. It is by no means impossible that Jeremiah himself reacted in the style of the Psalms, finding appropriate expression for his complaints, or even that later worshippers found in Jeremiah appropriate language (cf Gerstenberger 1963). A liturgy does not in itself imply a lack of historicity, but the opposite, as the frequent reference elsewhere in the Old Testament to the Exodus surely implies a belief in the historicity of the event.
1.5.3.1 The call as cultic liturgy. Reventlow also presents the call narrative as a liturgy in which the prophet is ordained to his ministry by a cultic official. The evidence he presents is the supposed existence of examples of a similar Heilsorakel elsewhere in the Old Testament, although Kilian (1967:367) notes that it does not occur with certainty elsewhere in the historical books or Psalms. (Reventlow (1963:51) also notes its rarity in the Psalms, which is perhaps where such would be expected.) Otherwise he notes the appearance of the "word" in Jeremiah 1 (p26) which suggests for him a liturgy rather than an actual theophany, and such motifs as the womb (p36), but these have alternative explanations, particularly in the connection with creation, which Reventlow notes (p38).

From consideration of Jeremiah 1 and other calls, Reventlow suggests a nine-point liturgy (p70f), although Berridge (1970:29) doubts that Jeremiah fits it. An important feature of this is the objection, which Reventlow identifies as a cultic response to the ordainer. Now it is true that an objection is a common feature of the call, but the variety of forms of the various objections must weigh against their being just a point in a liturgy, but rather reflect a genuine expression of distress at God's call. Similarly the very variation in the call narratives would be unlikely in a stylized liturgy. (It is worth noting at this point that Reventlow includes an epiphany as a point in the liturgy. This is of course no problem to him from a liturgical point of view, but is significant in view of the fact that the theophany in Jeremiah is
If Jeremiah had been ordained by means of a liturgy, however, we would expect reference to it in the book, particularly when his authority is questioned, and such reference is absent (Fohrer 1971:25). He always refers to God's call in a personal way, with no suggestion of God acting via a cultic servant. Von Rad (1975a:99) notes that the prophets appealed to personal charismatic commission, not an office, hence division between prophets was possible. If all prophets, "true" and "false" were ordained in a liturgy, it would be difficult for Jeremiah to say so categorically that they were wrong, but he can do this on the ground of his own personal call and revelation. A further feature we would expect to find if Reventlow's suggestion was true is some form of cultic acceptance of the prophet by the people, who would presumably take part in such a suggested liturgy. Again this is not to be found.

Reventlow's suggestion does have value in drawing attention away from an ecstatic authentication and points to the need the prophet did have for acceptance by the people. However, Jeremiah's assessment of his call is not that initiative was taken by the people, the cult, or by him, but by God (Kilian 1967:372), and it is on that call that Jeremiah's position rests.

1.5.4 The division into sources. Since the work of Mowinckel, following Duhm, Jeremiah has been divided into three sources, A the
poetic oracles and confessions, B the biographical material and C the prose sermons, with D taken as the oracles against the nations (Jr 46-51) (Carroll 1981:18, Bright 1951:15). Generally A has been taken as original to Jeremiah and often equated with the scroll of Jeremiah 36, an equation which Mowinckel did not make (Holladay 1975:394).

The prestige of the prophet's office is obscured for us in the ipsissima verba of Ch 1-25 (Muilenberg 1970:222).

Although there has been some denial of the value of A for a genuine picture of Jeremiah (eg Carroll 1981:25), most see it as authentic. The possibility of a theological imposition by means of an arrangement and intervening prose insertions from C must however be admitted (Jobling 1978:4).

Source B has been generally attributed to Baruch, although Mowinckel did not assume this (Holladay 1975:394). The narrative of B is intimate, highly circumstantial, and must be:

....from one of the circle of the prophet's most intimate friends (Bright 1951:24).

He remarks that no falsification would have been possible so soon after Jeremiah's death (p28). Nicholson (1973:12) believes that Baruch would be unlikely to have composed the narratives, as they contain "pressing theological issues which can be shown to be of
importance in the Deuteronomic literature as well”. However it is just such a person, from the environment of Jeremiah, subject, like him, to the Deuteronomic theology and also to Jeremiah’s reaction to it, who would write like that. Elsewhere, Nicholson (1970:113) suggests a connection between Baruch and the Deuteronomic circle in that Baruch was a scribe, and there are connections between Wisdom and the Deuteronomic literature. Although he believes that the narrative was written from theological not biographical motives, nevertheless the theological value must rest on historical accuracy (also Leslie 1954:19), particularly if, as he asserts, it was early. Thus: This is not to deny that they provide us with valuable information about incidents in the prophet's life (Nicholson 1970:56).

...the view is increasingly held that sermonic passages reflect actual sayings and were written out with the situation of later audiences in mind (Wilcoxen 1977:166).

Wanke has further divided the B material, seeing two different portrayals (Wanke 1971:144f). The portion found in Jeremiah 19-36 is disjointed, and although may have originally been a unity, this must be very uncertain. The main point here is the authenticity. Holladay (1975:402) suggests:

Might not these units, now separated, always have been so and have been found and inserted into a previous Jeremianic corpus by an author-editor who was party to
the events or had first hand knowledge of them?

Any apparent incompatibility with the latter portion is surely explicable on the ground of differing circumstance, and in any case indicates by its very diversity that redactive action which would tend to uniformity is minimal. The latter portion (Jr 37:11-43:7) Wanke assesses as a conscious literary work, originating at Mizpah, although the evidence is based on the details of Gedaliah's administration and can only be circumstantial. More importantly:

The cycle has one overriding purpose: to highlight the reality of what it is for Jeremiah to be a prophet... the details are told with an astonishing sobriety, and there is no attempt to claim a black-white dichotomy between Jeremiah's opponents and the prophet himself (Holladay 1975:398).

If this is true it heightens the value of B for this investigation.

It is source C which has usually been questioned, regarded as a later Deuteronomic composition. Mowinckel himself latterly did not treat it as a "source", but as a circle of tradition in the Deuteronomic style (Bright 1951:398n). So although many may believe that C material is a record of the words of Jeremiah, but probably written down after a period of oral transmission (as Bright 1965:lxxii), but essentially with the intention of recalling the original words, Nicholson (1970) sees the C
sermons as composed by the Deuteronomists for that particular situation in exile. He notes how in the Deuteronomic history, one prophetic oracle can fit 3 situations (1@Ki 14:11, 16:4, 21:24), each time at the end of a sermon, and believes the oracles of Jeremiah were treated in the same way. Now the book of Jeremiah indeed treats oracles as applicable to a later date, as the story in Jeremiah 36 indicates, and it is possible that the poetic form of the book is simply due to their having been reworked for frequent repetition and easy memory. Thus it is quite reasonable that the exiles found Jeremiah's message still applicable and sought to preserve it, but this is not the same as to attribute essential composition to the exiles.

This notion has been further questioned in two ways. Firstly Nicholson himself believes that the sermons of C are based on genuine Jeremianic material (Nicholson 1970:137). In this way he accounts for the differences in language from the usual Deuteronomic style (Nicholson 1970:14). He also believes that B and C cannot be readily separated, as B often simply forms a narrative framework for the sermon (Nicholson 1970:36). On this basis he attributes B also to the Deuteronomists, but this need do no more than distinguish between redactive B and discourse B, or indeed it may make C earlier (cf Wilson 1980:232). In this regard Overholt has noticed thematic unity in the whole book, such as the use of seqer (falsehood) which cuts right across the sources (Overholt 1972:461). In a way this brings us back to the belief of Robinson (1924) who even partly equated C with the
scroll of Jeremiah 36. Secondly Weippert has questioned the Deuteronomic nature of C. By looking at the "Deuteronomic" phrases in context, she concludes they are actually closer to A than B and so can be seen as a Jeremianic tradition, the Deuteronomists even being dependent on Jeremiah rather than vice versa (Weippert 1973:228 cf Holladay 1975:408). She feels C is paranetic material, central to the prophetic task, and so in some sense attributable to Jeremiah (cf also section 5.4.4).

The origin of it must be sought among Jeremiah's intimates (but that term and "Deuteronomist" are not mutually exclusive!) (Bright 1951:27).

Bright bases this remark on questions of style, seeing great similarity to Deuteronomic prose, but also marked differences. He sees also minimal contact with Deutero Isaiah and Ezekiel, and no evidence of post Restoration historical allusion (p17, 22). Thus C would be within a few decades of Jeremiah's death (Bright 1965:lxxi). We have no mention of a group of disciples similar to that of Isaiah, which would have been concerned to preserve Jeremiah's words. Nevertheless various people close to Jeremiah were in such a position, even if they did not form a group as such. A similar statement could be made of Micah, but at the time of Jeremiah his words were clearly wellknown (Jr 26:18).
Hence although the question of Jeremiah's sources is still open and debated, the closeness to Jeremiah is certainly arguable, such that the picture of Jeremiah may be taken as reliable.

1.5.5 The redaction of Jeremiah. Clearly the book as we have it is the work of an editor, who may have affected the work in various ways. Such a person or group would not be just a collector, or even one who supplied introductory comments to the passages, but would compose sections from material given to him.

Firstly he may have been Deuteronomic, although as indicated above this could be questioned.

It is far better to regard both the style of Dtr and of the Jeremiah prose (while not denying cross influence) as but examples of rhetorical prose of the late 7th and early 6th Centuries in Judah (Bright 1951:27).

Moreover it is possible to see not so much influence but rather antagonism between the Deuteronomy texts concerning the recognition of a prophet and Jeremiah. Deuteronomy 13 can be used to condemn Jeremiah as false (Davidson 1964:412). A further factor of note is the omission of any reference to the literary prophets except Isaiah from the Deuteromistic History, a surprising thing if the Deuteronomists are so interested in the prophetic message as a basis for their theodicy (Koch 1983:24). The relationship of Jeremiah to a
"Deuteronomistic School" remains an open question.

Secondly a redactor may well have conformed his picture of Jeremiah to a preconceived picture of a prophet, resulting in an assimilation to a "normative" prophet, in which case the book would deal with an ideal type, a kerygmatic rather than an historical figure (cf Von Rad 1975a). This in itself is not serious for an investigation of prophetic experience as a phenomenon.

It is unlikely that collection has resulted in essential change of the record of the prophets experience. Just as the collection has not resulted in a change of the message (Overholt 1972:459, Bright 1951:28), it is unlikely to have altered what will be of secondary concern to the message, that is the prophet's experience, although this is important to Jeremiah as authenticating his message. Moreover the very disorderliness of the book indicates that it is a collection rather than a reworking of material (Tucker 1978:31 commenting on Gunkel's approach to the prophetic literature in general), and the early date of writing leaves little time for such reworking. This of course accounts for the relative consistency of style despite various literary types and forms (Harrison 1973:27f). A further point is that the picture of the prophet is self consistent, and moreover consistent with the prophetic picture elsewhere in the Old Testament, if allowance is made for difference in setting and situation.
1.5.6 Texts of major importance. Although reference must be made to the whole of the book to determine the experience of Jeremiah, information concerning this is concentrated in a limited number of passages. These are the records of the call, the "confessions", and passages concerning his authority compared to that of the "false" prophets.

1.5.6.1 The call. The record of the call of Jeremiah is placed at the opening of the book, unlike the records of some other prophetic calls (eg Amos, Isaiah). This was because Jeremiah was particularly attacked concerning his authority, and this rested on the validity of the call, which thus occupies a prominent place.

After an editorial introduction to the book (Jr 1:1-3), the call is recorded, taking the form of a theophany and dialogue (Jr 1:4-10), two visions (Jr 1:11-16), and a charge to Jeremiah (Jr 1:17-19). Most however see the call narrative as a collection, with the visions in particular from a subsequent occasion (cf Nicholson 1973:23). Such collection would be due to a redactor, who it is believed implanted his Deuteronomic influence on Jeremiah 1:9. Although this verse does reflect Deuteronomy 18:18 almost exactly, it is rather due to Jeremiah's experience and his own acquaintance with the passage, particularly as the context of the hand, which although strongly Deuteronomic, is never so personal as the theophany of Jeremiah 1:9, but is rather simply there a synonym for power. A Deuteronomic
redaction would thus be unlikely, of itself, to add a reference to the touch. Moreover other reference to the hand of the Lord is rare in Jeremiah, only occurring in Jeremiah 15:17 which reflects the call, and in Jeremiah 25:17 where its meaning is metaphorical (section 5.2). Such rarity contrasts strongly with Ezekiel, and indicates the genuineness of the reference in Jeremiah 1 as experience rather than just as a literary figure.

Jeremiah 1:10 is also interesting. Although poetry, the language only re-occurs in prose sections of the book (Jr 12:14-17, 18:7-10, 24:5-7, 31:27-8, 32:10, 45:4), giving the book a "key theme" (Brueggeman 1983:136). It is unquestioningly a part of the call (Nicholson 1970:115), and has clearly influenced the later portions, giving one definite link between poetry and prose. Such a frequent allusion would more naturally come from Jeremiah himself, for whom the call was a real, disruptive event, setting the tone for the entire ministry, than from a later author for whom the call was a useful story to authenticate his writings, particularly as the allusions do not occur in passages dealing with Jeremiah's conflict with false prophets.

The location of the visions within the call indicates that they are in fact integral with it. The first words do not necessarily mean a separate pericope (Seidl 1979:27). Their nature as dialogue also supports this, as dialogue is elsewhere rare in an oracle in Jeremiah. Moreover the very nature of the visions themselves is relevant to the call, as they set
the scene for the whole ministry (cf Bishop 1962:122). These visions moreover occur after the command "see" (Jr 1:10), which would indicate that at that point in the call Jeremiah's eyes were opened, and the visions were the first time this ability was used (cf Nm 24:3). (These visions are the only definite visionary experience of Jeremiah (cf sections 5.2, 5.7.1), which could also indicate a correct location in a unique experience. "See" may, of course, also bear the sense of "understand".) However they have little importance for the experience of Jeremiah, and whether they are in their correct location or displaced is immaterial.

The commission (Jr 1:17-19) naturally belongs to the call, in which case the essential repetition at a time when Jeremiah was apparently questioning his vocation (Jr 15:19-21) is very meaningful.

In particular, the reference to "everything" (Jr 1:17) concerns a general commission rather than a specific oracle, and "this day" (Jr 1:18, cf Jr 1:10, although the words are not identical) would also indicate the call is referred to. Promises of protection likewise are concerned with the whole ministry. Such would indicate that this passage does belong to the call experience.

Although form critical investigation of the call usually extends to just the first section (Jr 1:4-10 eg Habel 1965:305f), North (1964:71) sees the call extending over the whole chapter due to a parallel with Isaiah
40:1-8. This is exceptional but certainly from this viewpoint there is no question of the unity of Jeremiah 1:4-10. This does not however support the originality of the entire experience as the essence of the form-critical approach is usually that the passages in question are composed from a similar literary pattern rather than a similar experience.

Whether the call concluded at Jeremiah 1:10, 12, 16 (cf "a second time" (Jr 1:13)) or 19 is not vitally important to this investigation. There is little question raised about its authenticity (cf section 1.5.3.1). Similarly there is little textual difficulty, what there is being minor (cf the omission of "iron pillar" (Jr 1:18) from LXX).

1.5.6.2 The confessions. A number of passages in the book are traditionally given this name, although perhaps "laments" and "dialogues" would be a more apt description. These are usually delineated as Jeremiah 11:18-23, 12:1-6, 15:10-12, 15-21 (Jr 15:13-14 is probably inserted from Jr 17:3-4; it does not fit the context here), 17:14-18, 18:18-23, 20:7-18 with some slight variation among commentators. These take the form of complaints to God, sometimes with a divine response. Of similar form may be included Jeremiah 4:19-22, 5:3-5, 8:18-9:1. The adjacent text sometimes suggests an occasion for the complaint, thus Jeremiah 11:18-12:6 may be taken as one dialogue associated with the prophet's rejection by his kindred at Anathoth, Jeremiah 18:18f in response to the plot on his life, and
Jeremiah 20:7f in response to his treatment at the hands of Pashhur (Janzen 1983:180). Perhaps too the outburst of Jeremiah 15, starting with reference to his mother, is related to his loss of a normal family life. However there is no definite reason clearly to be seen why the editor placed any of the texts where he did, the book is notoriously disorderly (Bright 1965:lvi), as other prophetic books (cf eg Hammerschaimb 1970:14).

A distinction may be made between dialogue (Jr 11:18-12:6, 15:10-21 and possibly 4:19-22) and lament or prayer. The similarity of these latter to lament elsewhere is clear (eg Jr 17:14f with Ps 17:13). Despite this, little question has been raised concerning originality of the confessions to Jeremiah.

All the "confessions" and the overwhelming majority of the oracles may confidently be held to have come from Jeremiah himself and to represent as close an approximation as is possible of the prophet's ipsissima verba (Bright 1965:lxix).

One reason for this is the poetic nature of the texts. (RSV prints Jr 15:10, 11, as prose, but its poetic nature is clear. Jr 11:21-23 is also prose, functioning as a section explaining the circumstance of the confession. As such its prose nature is clear as not part of the actual "confession" as such.) This mitigates against verbal originality to some
extent, as poetic form requires reworking, unless, as is possible, Jeremiah was a natural poet. (Such reworking may well be seen, for example, in the similarity of Jr 11:20 to 20:12.) It is hard to conceive that dialogue, in particular, was originally in poetry. (The only trace of dialogue in prose is Jr 11:5.) Of course the nature of the confessions, whether dialogue or lament, was private, so that the only reason that we have them is Jeremiah's choice, and he chose to release them, because of their value to him, probably as concerning his authenticity as a prophet, in poetic form (cf Hempel 1935:6). Such reworking does not necessarily mean a loss of meaning, but does have obvious implication for the freedom in exact wording, both of Jeremiah and later arrangers or editors (cf also sections 5.4.4 and 6.4).

1.5.6.3 Jeremiah and false prophets. Brief comments on this matter are made in a poetic oracle (Jr 5:12-14, 30-31), where although authenticity is not questioned, their true belonging in this location has been (Thompson 1980:243). Comments are also made in the course of other oracles (eg Jr 2:8, 4:9 etc). Major discussion occurs in Jeremiah 23 and 27-8 with some comments in the letters of Jeremiah 29.

Jeremiah 23 consists of five units brought together due to similar subject matter (Thompson 1980:493). Again there has been no question concerning the authenticity of the poetic parts, but RSV prints some parts in prose. Thompson (1980) believes the entire section is
poetic, thus attempts to establish the entire chapter as original to Jeremiah. He notes the words of MT extra to LXX which disturb the metre, and the numerous textual problems in the latter part of the chapter (Jr 23:23f) which have resulted in the prose reading despite frequent poetic features such as parallelism, repetition of n'um Yahweh and "behold, I am against" (Jr 23:30, 31, 32). Such textual problems are however all of a minor nature and do not affect the essential meaning.

What is affected is authorship, as it is usually believed that non-poetic sections are not from Jeremiah himself. In the case of Jeremiah 23, this is the significant portion of the chapter for his experience (except the section on the council of the Lord (Jr 23:18-22) which is clearly poetry). It is however unlikely that the sections loose their value for this investigation (cf section 1.5.4). Nicholson (1973:192) believes that the latter part of the chapter (Jr 23:23-40) comes from a Deuteronomic author and deals with the question of false prophecy in the period after Jeremiah. If this were indeed the case, the experience of Jeremiah must be normative for such a question.

....this passage (Jr 23:23-32) is composed in prose and though presupposing if not based on, a saying of Jeremiah condemning false prophecy... (Nicholson 1973:199).
This is particularly the case as the events had vindicated Jeremiah and shown the falsity of others (cf Lm 2:14).

Similar considerations apply to Jeremiah 27-8 which is totally in prose, belonging mainly to Mowinckel's B source and partially to C. Again Nicholson (1975:28), despite attribution to Deuteronomic authors, claims unquestioned historicity. He considers Jeremiah 27-9 as a separate unit (Nicholson 1970:93). Lack of redactional activity and the early date suggested by this means that the section is of particular value. There is no difference in ideas from other passages whether prose or poetry. The whole discussion in Jeremiah is then from a time close to him. The passage is considerably shorter in LXX due to the omission of odd words which do not however affect the meaning. A prose passage is of course more subject to textual loss than a poetic one, but perhaps more likely has been addition by MT as elsewhere (cf Jr 23:16). (Cf also section 1.5.2.) One notable omission from LXX is Jeremiah 29:16-20 which includes a reference to God sending prophets (Jr 29:19), but as the idea is repeated elsewhere, this not significant.

False prophecy was clearly a problem to Jeremiah due to references in undoubtedly authentic oracles (eg Jr 2:8 etc), but the bulk of the material is prose so regarded as later.

False prophecy appears to have been a major problem
of the time, and remained so during the period of the exile, as the intense concern with it in a number of prose passages in the book testify (Nicholson 1973:132).

It must however be questioned how much concern there could be in the exile, as after the destruction of Jerusalem the false prophets lost both a location for their work (as they are associated with the temple) and any remaining credibility, as events had proved them wrong. Thus by the time of Zechariah 13 (admittedly usually considered late) it was discredited. The comparative scarcity of reference to false prophecy (Jr 29, Ezk 13) after the first capture of Jerusalem and before its fall, compared to before its capture, would indicate that it was already becoming a spent force.

The passage shows considerable contact with Deuteronomy both in the language and in the criteria for condemnation of false prophets (Nicholson 1970:97) which come from Deuteronomy 13 and 18. This does not mean a simple attribution to Deuteronomists, as Jeremiah himself would have needed more than a simple assertion on his own authority to condemn the others, and would have found his evidence very naturally in Deuteronomy.

1.5.6.4 Jeremiah 14:1-15:4. This is a particularly interesting passage, not from the view of material, as the ideas relevant to Jeremiah's experience are repeated elsewhere, but from the view of form. The
whole passage reads as a single dialogue between God and Jeremiah, sparked off by the question of the drought (Holladay 1983:152) and involving the question of false prophecy. This dialogue with its repeated interchanges also includes what could well be classed as a "confession" (Jr 14:19-22) in its usual form of poetry. The unity of the passage is also seen in its theme of punishment for Judah's sins, in the references to true, thus effective, prophecy and false prophecy (Jr 14:11, 13f, 18, 15:1 etc) and in references to intercession (Jr 14:11, 20f, 15:1) which run through the entire passage.

However, because of its nature of partial prose and poetry, it has usually been split, treating the poetry as authentic to Jeremiah and the prose to an exilic situation. Further support for this is claimed in the reference to Manasseh (Jr 15:4) which is believed to be Deuteronomic (cf 2@Ki 21:11f). However, as Thompson (1980:378) remarks, Jeremiah would surely have had a full knowledge of Manasseh. Although he sees a literary arrangement, he also (1980:377) sees a basic unity in the passage. Nicholson (1970:101) also sees some unity, so treats Jeremiah 15:1-4 as arising from 14:17-22 and 14:11-16 as dependent upon 14:1-10, thus treating the prose as later. However, Jeremiah 14:17f follows very naturally as a response to 14:13f, and 15:2f returns to the original theme of natural disaster of 14:1, giving an overall unity. Bright also (1965:103) sees a unity, ascribing essentially the whole passage to Jeremiah, although perhaps on different
occasions.

This unity again indicates that it is not necessary to simply deny all prose to Jeremiah. In this passage the pieces which are poetry are oracular and would have been recast as poetry for future use. The other portions, being in the context of the dialogue to Jeremiah, and not, as the confessions, having value in retelling, remained as prose.

1.5.6.5 The temple sermons. These are of lesser importance for the experience of Jeremiah apart from the record of Jeremiah's defense of his message (Jr 26:7f). They are recorded in Jeremiah 7 and 26, in prose, so are considered as of Deuteronomic authorship, although here again Nicholson (1973:75) claims historicity, noting especially the graphic detail of Jeremiah 7. Often Jeremiah 26 is considered a literary summary of the sermon (eg Reid 1980:14), so not a separate occasion, however it would be surprising if such a fundamental aspect of Jeremiah's message were not repeated. The attack in Jeremiah 26 reflects this, as an incident often repeated soon becomes intolerable. It is noticeable that both passages specifically claim inspiration. For such a provocative message, Jeremiah needed particular inspiration, and he would have delivered it quickly while still highly motivated by his experience. This would account for the prose nature of the sermons.

The style is Deuteronomic, which is often taken as evidence for later
composition, however Jeremiah would have used such a style current in his day (Thompson 1980:273) and in any case was reflecting a Deuteronomic assessment. The pattern of the sermons, comprising the proclamation of God's word, the description of the people's sin, and the announcement of judgement, is repeated elsewhere in the book (eg Jr 11:1-17, 17:19f, 34:8f).

Jeremiah's defense (Jr 26:12-15) is also in Deuteronomic prose, and is usually attributed to the biographical B source. It is closely dated (Jr 26:1), reflecting a time soon after the death of Josiah and the subsequent panic, when the people needed an external symbol on which to rely. Jeremiah has to point out that such trust in the temple is impotent without real repentance. The consternation produced on the panicking people by his word then led naturally to the attack on him and the necessity of his defense. Such a close agreement with the historical situation, which would tend to blur on later composition, tends to support an early recording of the events. That the people rejected Jeremiah's words is seen in subsequent events, but also in the prohibition of prayer which followed the first sermon (Jr 7:16).

Despite being in such danger, Jeremiah's life was spared (Jr 26:16), a significant comment on the authenticity of the promise of protection in the call narrative, particularly in view of the death of the other prophet, Uriah. Harrison (1973:128) suggests that his death was due to his flight to Egypt being treated as sedition. However, Jeremiah could
equally be accused of sedition, indeed he was (Jr 37:13) but did not
die for it.
2. THE FEATURES OF JEREMIAH'S CALL

The book of Jeremiah is primarily concerned with his message and his personal history as it affects that message. Apart from the call narrative which is in fact very short, there is little direct indication in the book which deals with the questions of how Jeremiah became a prophet, and how he continued his ministry, that is, how he received his revelations (Clements 1975:30). As Bright (1965:lxvii) remarks, it is impossible to write a biography of Jeremiah, so we must rely on inferences. However, by considering the features of Jeremiah's ministry as recorded in the book, deduction can be made about these questions, and thus why he prophesied. It is seen that the primary nature of prophecy is the relationship of the prophet to God.

2.1 An external act

The prophets record their experience as initiated from outside themselves, as the very word "calling" or "vocation" implies. This means their activity is not due to a subjective feeling or to a product of their imagination (Gehman 1940:109). It is not the result of a psychological phenomenon (cf Porteous 1938:227).

Prophecy cannot be forced. The prophet does not assume that abandonment of consciousness brings
about inspiration, as though one had only to leave "the self" in order to be able to receive the Word. Prophecy comes about by the grace of God (Heschel 1962:5).

It cannot be initiated by the prophet's free choice (cf Jr 42:7), nor is it a taught art, as were the offices of the Mesopotamian baru and mahhu (Young 1952:106, Orlinsky 1965:155). This is a far cry from the suggestion of eg Eichhorn (1752-1827) that the call is simply a poetic portrayal of a spiritual state (Kilian 1967:356).

All the call narratives assert externality. The Gideon narrative stresses God's grace and the pattern for Moses' call is set by the introductory word "Moses" (Habel 1965:300f) which despite being a dialogue shows the initiative of God. Amos 7:15 emphasizes the word "took" (Watts 1958:10) and Jeremiah frequently employs the term "sent". The call of David above his brothers suggests externality. In particular:

Any idea that calling is by one's own heart is ruled out by Jeremiah's experience (Rowley 1945a:102).

Externality is the consistent claim of Jeremiah, from the call narrative:

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you (Jr 1:5), throughout the life and work of the prophet. After a sermon against
trust in the temple of Jeremiah 26, Jeremiah defended his action (v 12-15) starting with an emphatic "the LORD" and concluding with an emphatic "in truth", simply asserting an external cause for his actions (Blank 1961:19). It is Jeremiah's appreciation of the validity of his message as from outside of himself which causes such an outburst against the "false prophets" (eg Jr 5:12). If Wanke's assessment of Jeremiah 37-43 is correct (cf section 1.5.3), the reason for the composition of the cycle is basically the effect of the external imposition of his office upon Jeremiah.

Heschel (1962:11) refers to calling as "anthropotropism", a turning to men, an event which occurs to a man, happening to him and also beyond him. Similarly Mowvley (1979:20) says there is no evidence that men set out to be prophets, and that moreover they rarely sought the word of God. The prophet is a partner in the establishment of a special relationship, perhaps best summed up in the word "know" (Jr 1:5), involving more than just a factual knowledge.

But thou O Lord knowest me, thou seest me, and triest my mind towards thee (Jr 12:3 cf Jr 11:18).

However, any idea of the merging of the prophet with God is excluded (Robinson 1946:167).

The establishment of this relationship at a specific time does not
preclude the previous working of God. Jeremiah was known from birth but called latterly. (This is the usual interpretation of Jeremiah 1:2. Some, eg Holladay (cf 1975:409), equate the date with Jeremiah's birth.) Pedersen (1926:50) can refer to acts as the bringing out of a man what God planted there in the beginning, although his remark has wider reference than simply to the prophets.

It is the external choice of Israel that made it distinctive. In the same way it was their calling that made its prophets distinctive. The two concepts are in fact frequently connected, for example:

> From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them... (Jr 7:25).

### 2.2 An exclusive act

The call is not a general announcement to men but to a specific person (Heschel 1971:220). No one except Jeremiah was known from birth and called to that particular ministry of loneliness (cf Jr 15:17). The prophetic ministry, the announcing of God's message, implies in its very necessity that its message is otherwise unknown.

The normal Israelite is incapable of meeting with what
the prophet undergoes as private experience... (Koch 1983:6).

Jeremiah in his confessions indicates how he would love the burden to be gone, or even altered (Blank 1969:13), but it cannot even be shared, much less, as in the later office of the "shaliach", was it transferable.

O that I had in the desert a wayfarers' lodging place, that I might leave my people and go away... (Jr 9:2).

The exclusivity portrayed in the comparison of the covenant with Israel to marriage (cf esp Hosea, who has many similarities to Jeremiah (Snaith 1953:25)) also reflects in the prophet's many references to marriage (Carroll 1981:132) and in their own matrimonial experiences. (This covenant is of course not between equals, as marriage (Knight 1960:22).) Jeremiah could not marry (Jr 16:2), not just out of God's compassion in that situation, but probably also because the intensity of the relationship with God (Robinson 1937:77) tended to preclude it.

....for I am called by thy name, O Lord (Jr 15:16).

That prophecy is primarily a relationship is portrayed vividly in the dumbness of Ezekiel. He could be a prophet without verbal communication. This relationship implies belonging (Bright 1970:200).
As in marriage, exclusivity was in both directions, the close relationship led to strong denunciation of idolatry (eg Jr 16:20), a protection, in a sense, of Yahweh, and likewise a promise of protection of the prophet (Jr 1:19).

Exclusivity led furthermore to an exclusive authority (section 2.7). The prophet as alone the mediator of the revelation of God is therefore superior to other offices and individuals.

It means as well that it is not really accurate to speak of the office of the prophet (cf Gross 1964). Each prophet is in individual relationship to God with an individual message (cf Jr 23:30), a relationship which cannot be initiated from man's side but from God's, as seen in the initial theophanic experience. The clash of Amos with Amaziah was not of office, but the intrusion of God's word (Crenshaw 1971:10). The prophet has no obligations except to God who sent him and despite consistency between prophets due to the task being basically the same, may thus act in an unpredictable manner.

Therefore in the Hebrew Scriptures as a whole the prophet almost by definition seems not to have been a cultic official (Williams 1969:159).

It has however been a commonly held opinion that in Israel and Judah there were cultic prophets (cf Johnson 1962) after the manner of
other countries in the Ancient Near East. It is unlikely that such experienced a call, rather entering their profession owing to a tendency to ecstasy or second sight, or by learning their art, or by the hereditary process (Lindblom 1962:64). For such it would be practicable to speak of an office.

2.3 A disruptive act

Because the prophetic call involves establishing a personal relationship with God, the effect on the prophet will be traumatic. It must be beyond human comprehension because of its source (Robinson 1946:173). No other group in Israel appears to have experienced such trauma as their relationship with God was not so close. In Jeremiah, this is particularly in evidence in the “confessions” (cf especially Jr 15:10, 18) (Vanden Busch 1980:18).

Now although it is true that a prophet’s outward circumstances are unchanged by a call (Gouders 1971b:80) and that the previous environment of a man may subsequently be of help, such as the priestly background of Jeremiah, or the presence in the area of related phenomena such as divination and ecstasy, Von Rad (1968:37) can aptly say:

Neither previous faith nor any other personal endowment had the slightest part to play in preparing a
man who was called to stand before Yahweh for his vocation.

There is no transitional phase, nor just an intensification of what is already there (Habel 1965:298). The same thing is of course true of the covenant choice of Israel (Dt 7:7).

Equally of course there is no disruption on the side of God, the call is no "snap decision from heaven" (Habel 1965:307). God had known Jeremiah from the womb. It is however an urgent matter, it is unlikely that the prophets would have contended so ardently and with so little encouragement if they did not share God's urgency in the situation (Stuart 1980:13). Human conviction alone was inadequate, as it led most in Jerusalem to contrary conclusions, neither would Jeremiah's own choice of his activity be able to sustain him in such a situation (Young 1968:9).

Further aspects add to the disruptive nature of the call:

(a) Calling is not a process but an event (Heschel 1962:4). Although in the case of Jeremiah and others the call takes the place of a dialogue, the whole matter is brief.

(b) Becoming in a deep sense the property of God (Jr 15:16) and constrained to do His will must cause profound psychological effects

c) The prophet did not just change to a new profession but to total insecurity. He generally experienced opposition (Vuilleumier-Bessard 1960:60, Crenshaw 1971:37). There was:

....consistent and savage certainty of the opposition to Jeremiah from the religious establishment (Davidson 1964:412).

Davidson cites also Jeremiah’s failure to fulfil expected roles such as advisor to the monarch, and the belief that Deuteronomy in fact branded him as a false prophet (p 411).

d) The relationship to God led to an increased sense of sin and unworthiness (Brockington 1942:34) not only personally but also of the people.

For they are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men (Jr 9:2).

In all this the Deuteronomist sees the prophetic commissioner involved in the controversy between Yahweh and the people (cf 14:11ff) but on Yahweh’s side (Gerstenberger 1963:406).
(e) Prophets were outside of human institutions and hence lonely (Wolff 1978:21, Paterson 1948:152). This is not to say they are not members of a guild or that they never participate in another occupation, but as prophets with the individual relation to God they would relate to very few others (Jr 15:17).

(f) The call is marked by some form of ecstatic experience of great depth which is not repeated (Scott 1968:96).

What is decisive is...the individual experience of the terrifying and merciful presence of God in those moments of secret experiences... (Fohrer 1961:316).

It involved especially for Jeremiah a struggle between God and an unwilling man (Neher 1968:317).

(g) For Jeremiah, the knowledge of the fate of his people coming upon them so inevitably yet also removable if they did but listen was extremely disturbing.

For the wound of the daughter of my people is my heart wounded,

I mourn, and dismay has taken hold on me (Jr 8:21).
It is for this reason that inspiration is referred to as "fire" (Jr 5:14). It is perhaps because of the disruption that the called prophets are so few, and that God works through them rather than in a more general way.

2.3.1 Effects in body and mind.

The excessive disruption of the call experience leads to effects such as anguish (Jr 4:19) or trembling (Hab 3:16). Calling is described in the physical sense of eating the word:

Thy words were found and I ate them (Jr 15:16).

Although this reference disappears in LXX, the similarity to Ezekiel 3:3 indicates that MT is more likely. Job 4:15f although probably not a call, but in the prophetic tradition (Von Rad 1968:47) speaks of the successive stimulation of the various senses of touch, sight, hearing.

Hines (1923:52) refers to physical effects on what he terms mystical experience:

....vision has often resulted in a weakening of the physical powers.... his body could not support it.... as a result of his initial vision "His body suffered much...."

One recalls St Teresa’s favourite phrases: “Sweet pain” and “Delicious suffering”.
The Hebrew view of man is of a unity, giving no well defined border between physical and spiritual (Brockington 1942:33), although they are contrasted as in Isaiah 31:3. In the same way a natural object such as the almond (Jr 1:11), if indeed seen with the physical eye, has a spiritual connotation.

The effects have various immediate causes;

(a) Some may be simply explained as the reaction of a sensitive person to the rejection of an audience, leading to depression and perhaps even to Ezekiel's dumbness (Ewald 1880:2), but this is vastly accentuated when the prophet knows the result of the people's rejection.

Thus says the Lord, Behold a people is coming from the north country,...

We have heard the report of it,
our hands fall helpless;
anguish has taken hold of us,
pain as of a woman in travail (Jr 6:22, 24 cf 8:18).

Because of the message that they must bring, suffering is implicit in the ministry of the prophets from the beginning.

(b) Prophecy is described as a "burden" or "the hand of the Lord", both
having physical overtones. If the prophet is disobedient, perhaps due to fear, the effects upon him become overwhelming, likened to a raging fire (Jr 20:9).

(c) Inspiration is described in physical terms such as eating (Jr 15:16), or at the call, the touch of the lips, the medium of the prophet's word. These show the intimate connection between the prophet and his message, so immediately (Jr 15:18) leads to a sense of sin, and of pain and weeping.

(d) Closely related is the sense of horror at the false prophets. The relation to God is so precious that any false claim is traumatic.

Concerning the prophets:

My heart is broken within me,
all my bones shake;
I am like a drunken man,
like a man overcome by wine,
because of the Lord
and because of his holy words (Jr 23:9).

(e) Not inherent in inspiration as such, but possibly caused by the Ancient Near East environment, could be ecstatic experience, with its associated effects such as falling down due to exhaustion (Vos 1948:242). It is recorded of Mohammed that his face grew dark, he fell
to the ground and roared like a camel (Lindblom 1962:12), or the experience of Birgitta of Sweden (Lindblom 1962:23) who felt as it were a hand grasping within her breast:

"When it (the vision) was all written down, I felt my heart and body slowly return to their natural state."

(f) The word of God is given only to effect change in the hearers and as such often the first change is in the prophet himself, leading to repentance and horror at sin (cf Is 6:5).

2.4 An historical act

Prophecy has been interpreted as arising without a specific call experience (initial or receipt of revelation) either from internal psychological factors or from external factors or a combination of both. External factors could include the interaction of culture with religious belief (George & Driskill 1979:68). In this case the Biblical accounts of calling would relate primarily to a problem of authority. The prophet himself, having no other means of self-authentication, invents a call, or later editors desiring to transmit an authoritative body of writing to later generations add a call narrative in the normal genre (Wifall 1980:169).

The cultural milieu, which includes the possible existence of a call
narrative genre, provides a setting which is favourable for the emergence of prophecy. It is not as unthinkable as it would be today. (Such phenomena of the time as divination and ecstasy exhibit no call as such but rather conventionally fixed signs or a psychological predisposition (Lindblom 1962:64).)

Nevertheless the disruptive nature of Hebrew prophecy, particularly in its message, coupled with the very human desire to conform, does demand a real motivation for prophecy. Jeremiah complains frequently:

Why did I come forth from the womb
to see toil and sorrow,
and spend my days in shame? (Jr 20:18).

Stubbornness may be a reason for some, but the personality apparent in Jeremiah hardly shows that trait. Rather a man such as Jeremiah must look back upon a distinct event to overcome human feelings of despair and perhaps questioning as to whether his message after all has simply a subjective origin. (A similar situation, often remarked upon is the change in the disciples to an attitude of courage after the Resurrection and Pentecost.) The sufferings of Jeremiah, not only on the mental level but real physical pain, and the risk of death in the cistern would otherwise probably have been enough to cause him to recant.
It would naturally have been even better if the call had not been private, which all were. Then the prophet would have had human support, but then, that too may have been pliable. The nature of the call in any case must be private; the establishment and continuance of a deep relationship between Jeremiah and God cannot be otherwise. The essentially private nature of the call of course renders institutionalization impossible (Scott 1968:93).

That the prophet's ministry is based on an historical event is also supported by the fact that the time and place are specified clearly (not the place for Jeremiah but it is specified for Isaiah and Ezekiel, probably because of their significances for them). Despite some uncertainty about the date of Jeremiah's call due to uncertainty about the historical data (cf Rowley 1963:135, Overholt 1970:96 etc), the details given are clearly intended to pinpoint the call to a specific historical time.

2.4.1. Relation to Jeremiah's previous life. Although the nature of the call and subsequent prophetic office is such that nothing can prepare a man for it, as it is so foreign to the normal human situation, some factors are at least relevant in the trauma. Scott (1968:151) can say:

....before they were prophets they were of the stuff from which prophets were made.
This is true as the prophet has freedom in his choice of oracular form (cf section 6.4), so simply needs ability to speak (cf Ezekiel!). Jeremiah has considerable poetic ability, whether indeed from his background, or as part of God's equipping.

Lindblom asserts (1962:298):

The personal religion of the prophets was of course an indispensable condition of their prophetic calling.

This is true in so far as it included the Mosaic revelation and knowledge of the Ancient Near Eastern culture, but nothing could prevent the reaction of, for example, Ezekiel, to experience of God:

I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days (Ezk 3:15).

In Jeremiah's case we only know two things about him before his call, both of which have some relevance.

(a) The call narrative states that the working of God was upon him even before birth. There is perhaps significance in some similarity to Moses here. This infers that although the actual call was later, yet the dealings of God with Jeremiah went back before he was conscious of
it, possibly in giving him relevant experiences. Duhm remarks that Jeremiah was a thought of God before his birth (Robinson 1946:28).

Practically, for Jeremiah, this meant that at his call he had a sense of inevitability (Habel 1965:307), but that freedom of choice was present is clear in the case of Isaiah (Is 6). Moreover, Jeremiah 15:15-21 appears as a reaffirmation of calling after some form of resistance to his ministry. The freedom expressed here then applies also in the similar language of the call.

(b) Jeremiah was of the priestly line (Jr 1:1) (Michaud 1960:159, Holladay 1974:16), probably of the deposed line of Abiathar, although this is not certain (Rowley 1962:203). Less likely is the suggestion that his father was the Hilkiah who found the scroll in the Temple (Rowley 1962:204). This means that he would have had more contact with Israelite religion and the cult than others, although this may not be significant. It probably means also that Jeremiah would not have been a cultic prophet before his call, if indeed such existed in Judah at the time. Interestingly initiates to Mesopotamian divination were of the priestly line (Wilson 1980:97) but there is no evidence that Israelite prophets were all priestly, cf Samuel (1 Sm 1:1), although his lineage is disputed (cf 1 Chr 6:33).

2.4.2 Influences upon Jeremiah. Jeremiah's call came to a man with a particular personal background, and also a particular historical
background (cf McKeating 1971:5). It is possible that the way the call came was affected by that background (Jenni 1959:325). In the same way Ezekiel's call shows Babylonian imagery, the beasts are probably the gods of Babylon, shown as subject to Yahweh (Ellison 1966:100). Hosea's call came in the midst of a marital experience (McGuire 1980:888), whether real or parable.

This in no way detracts from the authenticity of the call experience. Just as the prophet is free to use currently available literary motifs in his oracles, so the call could be recorded in terms already familiar. Moreover it is likely that the call itself came in terms already present in the mind of the prophet. Indeed there is no reason to suppose that the call and the record of it show any fundamental difference.

A similar situation exists in the relation of prophecy to ecstasy and divination. Because they are present in the environment, prophecy may well come to the prophet in similar ways and be delivered in similar ways without actually deriving from them at all.

In the case of Jeremiah this primarily means a relationship to Moses and to Deuteronomy (cf Rowley 1946b, Wright 1962:37), especially Ch 18. This should not be surprising, particularly if the dating of Jeremiah allows for him to know Deuteronomy. (It has been argued that Jeremiah 1:3 refers to the date of his birth (eg Holladay 1964:161), and there have been various other suggestions (cf Rowley 1962:199f).
The traditional dating is probably to be preferred.) If Deuteronomy was found shortly before his ministry, particularly as a priest it would have had particular influence upon him, and it is likely he was thoroughly acquainted with its language and thought patterns (cf Gerstenberger 1963:398). Also as a priest and concerned with the Law, Jeremiah would have felt especial affinity to Moses (Wilson 1980:198). Blank (1961:14) notes the affinity to the Decalogue in Jeremiah 7:8-9, but starting from the second table (cf also Hyatt 1941). He also, interestingly, sees a parallel between Jeremiah's rewriting of the scroll and Moses' second set of tablets (Blank 1961:30). Davidson (1964:408) remarks:

> Jewish tradition has correctly envisaged the prophetic books as commentary on Torah.

The prophets wished to "revitalize the vigorous faith of the Mosaic Age" (Fohrer 1961:313), but as he aptly remarks (Fohrer 1961:314):

> (The prophets) lay claim to preaching the living word of God as they received it and not to proclaiming a tradition.

This means that any deliberate identification with Moses or other aspects of the past is excluded, but that similarities due to similarity of task will naturally occur.
2.4.2.1 Jeremiah and Moses. As Habel (1965:306) points out, there are similarities in the form of the initial calls. There are also some verbal parallels (Holladay 1964:155) but these are not close. In dealing with a similar subject, it is really not surprising that some parallels are perceived. A similar remark can be made to the suggestion of a parallel with 1 Kings 3:7 based on the youth of the called (Schmidt 1975:206), but this cannot be taken to indicate Jeremiah was like Solomon! This passage is of course part of the "Deuteronomic History".

Wilson (1980:199) has suggested that the theophany of Jeremiah 1 is included to increase Jeremiah's authority, by showing a similarity to Moses' call. Now it is true that part of the purpose of theophany was for authority, but surely if a reference to Moses is intended by a redactor, more explicit parallels would be introduced.

In the ministries themselves there is little to indicate a deliberate conforming to the figure of Moses (cf Nicholson 1970:113-5). Jeremiah 15:1-4 is believed to indicate correspondence (Nicholson 1973:25) but the reference is just to great men of the past, connected, significantly, with the covenant and the start of the monarchy. Another interesting suggestion is that of Holladay (1964:163) that Jeremiah's freedom as seen in the confessions, of answering back to God is derived from Moses' similar freedom, but again this is rather an indication of the
freedom of the prophet in his ministry.

Moses is frequently referred to in the Old Testament as the ebed servant of God. The word implies rather personal relation than service (Zimmerli & Jeremias 1957:11). It is not however used of Jeremiah alone (cf Jr 7:25), which is significant, if a direct parallel is intended, but is used of Nebuchadnezzar (Jr 25:9, 27:6, 43:10), a usage clarified by its also being a diplomatic term, that is, vassal (Zevit 1969:75). (These references, being prose, are usually considered post Jeremiah, so would be expected to enhance the status of Jeremiah for the sake of his authority, and thus to restrict the use of ebed to Jeremiah alone. Thus LXX omits this reference in Jr 25 and 43 and emends in Jr 27. It would be unlikely that LXX would here be emended in favour of MT, which is thus the more likely original. This reflects also on the originality of Jeremiah's prose sections.) It has been argued however that Jeremiah forms part of the background to the Servant in Deutero-Isaiah (Jobling 1978:6, Blank 1958:101) because of his experience. In support of this, the verb paga (intercede) which occurs most frequently in Jeremiah also occurs in Deutero-Isaiah especially in Isaiah 53 (Blank 1961:235).

It would seem that the book shows some similarity between Moses and Jeremiah but not so much as to indicate a deliberate merging of the figures. Apart from the function of giving the word of God it is unlikely that further similarity is to be seen, as the two ministries, that
of lawgiver, and that of proclaimer of the necessity of repentance are not close, although one rests on the other (eg Jr 7, 26). Apart from being a prophet, with the close relation to God that involved, and so following Moses, there is no indication that Jeremiah saw himself as a "Moses-figure". His prophecy rests only on his relation to God not to Moses.

2.4.2.2 Jeremiah and Deuteronomy 18. Many scholars perceive verbal links between Jeremiah and Deuteronomy 18 eg Thompson (1980:148), Nicholson (1973:25), especially in the reference to the mouth (Woudstra 1972:10). The basic difference is that Deuteronomy 18 is in the third person, while Jeremiah 1:9 is in the second. Buber (1960:179) stresses also the theological parallels of conquest by God, intensive dialogue, intercession and suffering. This had led to a belief that Jeremiah saw himself particularly as the fulfilment of the prophecy, and so as the new Moses. This necessitates interpreting Deuteronomy 18 as referring to one figure eg Von Rad (1975b:261n44). Interestingly Von Rad (1968:228n) sees a similar prophecy with regard to a king in Jeremiah 33:17, but there is naturally no suggestion that this is fulfilled in the person of Jeremiah.

However most scholars see Deuteronomy 18 as referring to a promise of a line (eg Scott (1968:60), Teeple (1957:47) although he notes the Rabbis had an individual interpretation cf John 1:21, Thompson (1974:213) etc). (Dyrness (1979:213) sees a double prediction, of line
and individual.) This line does not have to be unbroken (Muilenberg 1965:87). If it were, prophets would probably derive from their predecessors but this is not usually the case (cf Elisha) (Alexander 1953:4).

A line of prophets ensures the permanence of the word (Jacob 1958:131), and of course is simply a sign of God's continual reaction to continual apostasy (Lindblom 1962:320), which may be one reason for the decline in prophecy after the exile. Kaufmann (1961:212) believes that it was the succession of prophets which made Israel unique. The imperfects, implying repetition, in Deuteronomy 18 (Wilson 1980:162) and the fact that both preceding and succeeding portions of Deuteronomy 18 refer to groups would also indicate a line. Nicholson (1973:13) sees this line as a fundamental feature of the Deuteronomic literature. Jeremiah must relate to this as he was in the Deuteronomic environment.

In this case Jeremiah is seen as the latest fulfiller of the prophetic line.

From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day (Jr 7:25).

The concept of the line must however be subordinate to the individual fulfiller of the line. Deuteronomy 18:21 is singular (Young 1952:31).
Davidson (1964:410) suggests that Deuteronomy 13 and 18 were in fact used to condemn Jeremiah as they deal with the distinguishing of false prophets. If this is correct, it is possible that Jeremiah 1 is partly intended to gain the authority of Deuteronomy 18, to deny such charges. Verbal parallels would thus be emphasized.

2.4.2.3 Other possible influences. Holladay (1964) also argues for some parallel with Samuel on the basis of Jeremiah 15:1 which also mentions Moses, and with Psalm 22. He connects them not only in the ministry of intercession but also in the birth narratives of Moses and Samuel. Jeremiah makes reference to his birth in the call narrative but also to his mother in the "confessions", which question the validity of his call (Jr 15:10, 20:14,17); cf also Psalm 22:9-11. Jeremiah may well have seen similarity to Samuel, but if so it is surprising the references are not clearer. Both were set apart from birth, which may well have helped Jeremiah's assurance, and both intercede as prophets, and both denounce the king, but there are no more direct parallels.

A parallel with Psalm 22 again may have given Jeremiah assurance of his call, but perhaps the aspect that related to Jeremiah was the suffering implicit in the Psalm.

Just as the stories of the births of Moses and Samuel only became significant in the light of the later ministry, so references to the birth and maternity of Jeremiah are only relevant once he is established as
a prophet. His call is never depicted as being dependent on his birth or ancestry. However, parallels to previous prophets are natural and may well be noticed and then implied in the recording of the book of Jeremiah. Johnstone (1967:50) refers to Wurthwein on the existence of a prophetic "stock-in-trade".

Wilson (1980:135) sees an Ephraimite tradition of prophecy (cf Samuel in 1 Sm 1:1) which includes Hosea, Jeremiah and the Deuteronomic History. Certainly there are echoes of Hosea in Jeremiah (Koch 1984:22), for example the reference to the watchman (Hs 9:8 cf Jr 6:17), the compassion of God (Hs 11:8 cf Jr 31:20) (Blank 1961:148). These are in relation to the message which is basically the same in the prophets (Blank (1961:13) sees in this the prophetic succession), rather than to the prophetic experience of which we know very little in the case of Hosea apart from the events of his marriage. Holladay (1960:364) also sees some verbal derivation from Amos.

Again it would seem that there is no conscious identification of Jeremiah with previous figures, such similarities as exist being due to a similarity of role and continuity of cultural and linguistic milieu. It is a natural thing to be similar to a predecessor, but more than this is condemned by the prophet himself.

Therefore, behold. I am against the prophets, says the Lord, who steal my words from one another (Jr 23:30).
2.4.3 The timing of Jeremiah’s call. The call of God to an individual is a response to a human situation, usually of crisis.

Prophetism itself arises in times of stress (Hines 1923:59).

Classic examples are Moses, Samuel, the Judges and Isaiah in the year of the death of Uzziah (Love 1957:282f). Malamat (1976:161) claims that a prerequisite for charismatic leadership is crisis. The crisis situation at the time of Jeremiah is obvious. Carroll (1969:8) sees a reason for the decline in prophecy in the relative stability of the Persian period.

Some, eg Bright (1960:166), have seen a strand of the Old Testament in essential opposition to the idea of kingship as such (cf 1 Sm 8:4f, Dt 17:14f, Hs 8:4), which could indicate that the monarchy itself is a continual crisis, not being the intention of God. Hence prophecy and the monarchy are basically contemporaneous. This is of course highly debatable but it must be noted that the assessment of most kings as individuals is negative, and that the Davidic dynasty and individual Israelite kings are viewed as appointed by God by means of prophets. This latter point, as indeed the Samuel story, does indicate that God allowed and directed kingship, but not necessarily that the concept as such was approved.
On a personal level it could well be that the prophet before his call had already reacted to the crisis situation. Moses had already killed the Egyptian, although his avoidance of the situation at his call is striking.

It is possible that a heightened emotional level is conducive to the receipt of inspiration, whether this is caused by stress as Hines (1923:60) believes, or by music (eg 2 Ki 3:15). Certainly the ecstacies and probably the diviners sought inspiration by preparing themselves in various ways. However, there is little indication that the prophets themselves could do anything to induce it; the word comes in various circumstances. In particular, frequently if not always, the word comes outside of a cultic situation.

2.4.4 Additional note: call narratives in form critical analysis. The question is whether the call narratives can be taken as accurate historical records of real events, or whether they are conforming in any degree to a preexistent literary form and in so doing either include or exclude material in order to fit that form. For example Ishida (1977:44) feels that 1 Samuel 9:21 is not literal but is inserted to supply an element, ie the objection, in the form. It is emphasized, eg by Habel (1965:305), that conforming to a form does not nullify the actual experience, but does modify the record to later generations.

2.4.4.1 Problems with the approach.
(a) The data is very limited. There are some ten narratives only which are generally referred to. Some of these, in any case, may only doubtfully be referred to as calls, such as 1 Kings 22, as Micaiah was already a prophet and recognised as such. It rather records a subsequent revelation. For valid scientific conclusions the amount of data should be much wider.

(b) The variety of ministries is wide. Habel (1965) uses Gideon as his prime example, and shows the similarity to others eg Moses, Isaiah 40 and Abraham's servant (cf also Birch 1971). There may well be similarity between the accounts, but a question must be raised if a prophetic calling is simply equated with other works (cf Knierim 1973:454, Van Seters 1975:261).

(c) The possibility also exists of later redaction of the narratives (Carroll 1981:33) which may introduce or remove form.

(d) There is little agreement as to result (cf the remarks of Wilson 1973:121). Habel (1965) has a sixfold plan which has found wide approval, but it has encountered criticism, for example in the vagueness of his "introductory word" (Berridge 1970:27). Various other attempts have been made with different emphases eg Kutsch (1956) Lindblom (1962) and Richter (1970). Perhaps most notable is that if Zimmerli (1979) who sees two essential types, that of personal encounter, not a theophany, involving hesitation and reassurance
(Jeremiah would fall into this type), and a visionary experience eg Isaiah 6, 1 Kings 22. This has raised objections primarily involving the classification of a particular call to a particular group. Jeremiah is put in the first group, but the record includes a theophany which Zimmerli excludes for little good reason.

This simple detail alone has been taken over from the realms of the spectacular and oddly crowded at the end (Zimmerli 1979:97).

Isaiah 6 is placed by Zimmerli in the second group, whereas Gorg (1976:165) sees an implicit objection. In the case of Ezekiel, Zimmerli (1979:98) splits up the call, fitting Ezekiel 1 into the visionary group and the real call, Ezekiel 2, being likened to that of Jeremiah. However, as he later says (1979:109):

Any separation of throne and the scroll would be wrong.

(e) There must be agreement, simply because the various cases deal with the same type of incident. With the constraints of personal freedom, it is hard to see how else the call could occur. It is noticeable that we are not usually dealing with verbal agreement. Gouders (1971a:188) must say that the form of the call is not rigid. For this reason Long (1972:500) can point to similarity with the call narrative in Egyptian and Hittite literature. One case of verbal agreement is however between Deuteronomy 18 and Jeremiah 1 where Nicholson
(1970:113-5) believes Jeremiah has been conformed to the prophet like Moses, but if real similarity with Moses was being introduced rather than the use of similar language, one would expect the use of the motifs from the call of Moses to be introduced, which is not the case. It is probable that Jeremiah 1 was written with reference to Deuteronomy 18 but not that the experience was consciously changed.

These points do cause hesitation in seeing a consistent narrative pattern to the records of the calls, and in treating the call narrative as a literary device. Similarity is adequately explained with reference to the consistent working of God in a similar human situation (Wolff 1978:17).

2.4.4.2 Advantages of the approach. It is indisputable that there is some overall similarity in narrative pattern in which case similarities and divergences may be significant.

(a) A similarity to the call of Moses does exist (Noth, quoted in Gouders 1971a:190). This may be due to the theological reasoning that the prophets follow Moses (cf Deuteronomy 18:18 and Holladay 1964 and 1966). Habel (1965:306) sees a claim of Jeremiah to be in succession to Moses.

(b) A similarity among the prophets themselves means that the people
can recognise an authentic prophet (Habel 1965:317). This is always a problem for the prophets, who have to deal with the counter claims of other voices. If this is the case, it must be questioned why there are not call narratives for other prophets, otherwise condemned as false, and why equation is made with non-prophets in the form of the call. Similarities may aid in the interpretation of the narratives, for example North (1964:71) sees a parallel of Jeremiah 1 (4-10, 11-12, 13-19) with Isaiah 40 (1-2, 3-5, 6-8) which may help to identify the extent of the actual narratives which are often disputed, eg Blank (1961:71) sees the call of Jeremiah as Jeremiah 1:4-10, 17-19.

(c) Similarity to other appointments. Baltzer (1968:569), who sees a different form in the prophetic call from eg Habel, sees it as related to the Egyptian vizier. Again with reservations this may be so, in which case the similarity of offices, that of the prophet as vizier of God may be emphasized. It is very easy to see parallels. Gilula (1967:114) refers to the stele of king Pianchi, 25th Dynasty, c751-730, Pianchi 11:1-6, the speech of Amon:

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

Gilula notes the similar syntactical structure to Jeremiah 1 but makes
no further comment. The conclusion could be drawn that Jeremiah is to rule, which goes further than a promise of authority (Jr 1:10).

Meagher (1972:165), who follows Habel's form, notes the similarity to the presentation of an envoy. Again this may be significant in the ministry of the prophet as intercessor for the people to God their king.

(d) Divergences exist in the call of Jeremiah from others, seen especially in the "subordination of all its features to the Word of Yahweh" (Zimmerli 1979:97). This need not mean that the "word" is absent elsewhere, but the emphasis is clear that the call of Jeremiah involves relation to the word, and all that means (cf section 5:3).

The need of the people is also absent from Jeremiah 1 when compared especially with the calls of the Judges (although Schmidt (1975:191) sees it as implicit). Part of the hardship of Jeremiah was just this, that the people did not appreciate the gravity of the situation, unlike the situations in the time of the Judges. Moreover Jeremiah acts due to the call of God, not human need.

2.5 Covenantal act

If Jeremiah did see himself as standing in a line of prophets going back to Moses, it is not surprising that Jeremiah is associated closely with the covenant and with the Law. The book contains frequent
references to the covenant, to its symbols eg Jeremiah 3:16f of the Ark, and to the Law eg Jeremiah 16:11f. One of the highlights of the book is the prophecy of a new covenant and the associated Law "within your hearts" (Jr 31:31f), although this passage has been both denied to Jeremiah (eg by Blank 1961:212 as too deterministic, or by Nicholson (1970:84) as Deuteronomic (cf also Bentzen 1970:59)), and considered overrated in importance (eg by Carroll 1981). Thompson (1980:580) remarks:

We accept the view that apart from some editorial reworking the passage goes back to Jeremiah. It may not preserve his ipsissima verba, but it would seem strange indeed if Jeremiah's remarkable theological insights did not lead him through to this point, especially in view of the fact that he was on the verge of stating the doctrine on a number of occasions.

Nevertheless Fohrer (1961:313) is probably overemphasizing when he says;

Jeremiah did not speak about the adaption of the old covenant to his age but about a wholly new covenant.

It is necessary to distinguish between the Mosaic covenant and the later Davidic covenant with its emphasis on Jerusalem and particularly
the temple (Van der Woude 1969:244f), although the latter covenant does rest on the former. Jeremiah may be seen as repudiating the latter (Williams 1969:159, Bright 1960:314), although his message is rather that of denying a blind trust in the symbol, the temple, without reference to the necessary obedience to God as contained in the Law. Thus the "Temple Sermon" of Jeremiah commences:

Amend your ways and your doings, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words. "This is the temple of the Lord...." For if you truly amend your ways... (Jr 7:3-5).

The sermon continues with clear affinity to the Decalogue, but with the emphasis on the second table (Blank 1961:14).

Indeed Jeremiah sees the reason for his prophecies in the apostacy of Judah from the law and covenant. Jeremiah 3 uses the symbol of divorce (cf Hosea). Despite controversy over the relationship between the two, there is clearly an intimate connection between law and prophet (eg Stuart 1980:11). It is the prophets, not the king or priest, who are the guarantors of the covenant. Crotty 1971:13 also refers to Hosea 12:14 in this context:

By a prophet the Lord brought Israel up from Egypt.
Jeremiah can be seen as:

Yahweh's covenant mediator, the royal emissary from the heavenly court, the divinely accredited spokesman to an age in radical torment (Muilenberg 1970:222).

Although this does not imply that the continuity of the covenant depends upon a continuous prophetic office (Wilson 1980:150), neither does it mean that the prophets simply reiterate the law, a "covenant law speaker", due to their often radical reinterpretation of the law (Clements 1965:81). Nevertheless Jeremiah has the ministry of proclaiming the requirements of the covenant, the penalties and the blessings attached to it (e.g., Jr 11:3f). He is called to restore the people to the covenant (Stuart 1980:11), to announce judgment due to apostacy, and even to enable God to keep his side of the covenant.

Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you... that I may perform the oath which I swore to your fathers... (Jr 11:4-5).

In this regard the exact relation of Jeremiah's ministry to Deuteronomy, which is in essence a lawbook (Watts 1977:327), and the reform of Josiah, which was probably prompted by its discoverers is still a matter for debate. Nicholson (1970:33) notes that a number of the prose sermons in Jeremiah are based on the covenant form used by
Deuteronomy. It is arguable that Deuteronomy in fact caused the emphasis on covenant, as the idea is not prominent earlier (cf Carroll 1969:75), although as Moriarty (1965:823) notes, it is implicit then.

Furthermore prophecy and the covenants run parallel in that both are seen as a result of God's choice leading to a close relationship. Holladay (1963:283f) draws out an interesting possibility from this parallelism in that Jeremiah 2:4-13 presents Yahweh as suing Israel for breach of contract, and so Jeremiah can also sue Yahweh for lack of support to their contract. This latter contract, seen in Jeremiah 1:7-8, is a promise of God's support to Jeremiah if Jeremiah speaks his word. This is reiterated in Jeremiah 15:19-20. Jeremiah then complains to God that he is in fact suffering. Holladay then (1963:286) draws out the thought that suffering is in fact part of the vocation of the prophet, so part of the contract. This idea then leads to that of the suffering servant in Deutero-Isaiah. God's answer to Jeremiah's complaint is just that worse suffering will come (Jr 12:5-6). Perhaps it should also be added to Holladay's theory that in fact just as Israel suffered due to non compliance with the contract, so Jeremiah 15:19-20 could indicate that Jeremiah himself was disobedient and experienced a "return from exile" in his person.

Then just as the prophets saw themselves as chosen, so Israel uniquely among the Ancient Near Eastern peoples did not regard themselves as physically descended from the gods but chosen (Welch
1952:55). Complementary to this however is that Jeremiah was chosen from the womb (Jr 1:5) which could well be seen as a link with the Davidic covenant (Schmidt 1975:194) and then also again with the figure of the Servant in Isaiah 49:1 who is probably, despite the textual problem attached to the word "Israel" in Isaiah 49:3, to be identified with that nation.

A further connection, admittedly tenuous in the case of Jeremiah, is the observation of Westall (1977:39) that the spirit only operates in the context of the covenant. The only case outside is that of Balaam, and for him, the spirit had the effect of turning a curse into a blessing.

With such close connection between the prophet and covenant to be seen. Quell (1969:153) can however remark:

> It is perhaps surprising that the closely related concept of prophetic calling, the distinctive self awareness of the prophet which is rooted in personal encounter with God, is nowhere with complete certainty construed as election.

He explains this by remarking that the prophets are not chosen but sent (1969:154), but this could equally be said of Israel in the light of Deuteronomy 7:7. Rather the point is that neither Israel nor the prophet is elected from a number as the usage of bahar indicates, but
both are simply the recipients of God's grace for his purposes.

2.5.1 "Prophet to the Nations". A striking feature of the call of Jeremiah is his appointment to the nations (Jr 1:5, 10), a motif repeated elsewhere in the book eg Jeremiah 3:17, 25:17f, and implicitly in the disputed (Hayes 1964:229f) prophecies at the end of the book (after Jr 25:13 in LXX). This is a point of difference from Deuteronomy which emphasizes rather the particularism of Judah, separate from the nations eg Deuteronomy 7:6, 14:2 etc, and also from the "Davidic" covenant. Broughton however (1958:45) notes that Deuteronomy in fact clarifies the reference. As Judah was disobedient to the covenant, they became the same as the nations. In this regard Jeremiah is perhaps closer to the ideas in the Abrahamic covenant ("all nations shall be blessed" Genesis 12:3) and the Sinai covenant ("a nation of priests" Exodus 19:6), an idea taken up in the later Judaism eg in Philo "de Abrahamo" 98 where Israel has the office of priest and prophet for all mankind (cf also Is 14:1, Zch 2:11). This means that Judah is the first of all the nations to drink the cup of God's wrath (Jr 25:15). God's judgement extends from his own house to the nations (Jr 25:29) and in some of it, Israel itself takes an active role (Jr 49:2).

It is only fair that the fire of God's wrath should begin where the gravest guilt is found. And which guilt is greater than among a people who like Israel, sin against

The prophecies to Israel and to the nations would thus be complimentary rather than exclusive. There is no contradiction (Vischer 1955:317). Obviously however the prophet to the nations had his prime ministry in his own nation, as it is through that nation that the wider ministry is enacted. Vischer (1955:312) remarks that consecration to the nations occurred before birth located Jeremiah in one nation.

The existence of oracles to the nations in other books eg Amos 1:3f would suggest that a wider ministry is not unique to Jeremiah (Johnston 1962:44), who indeed notes it is a feature of previous prophecy (Jr 28:8), but international events were more pressing at his time.

....the cultural milieu of Jeremiah's ministry is international (Muilenberg 1970:222).

....Judah's political position at this time was such that other nations almost automatically became involved in what was spoken to Judah, cf. also [Jeremiah] 27:1ff. (Woudstra 1972:6).

It is then not surprising that the closest echo to Jeremiah is found in
Deutero-Isaiah, of the Servant:

And now the Lord says,
who formed me from the womb to be his servant....
to restore the preserved of Israel:
I will give for a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth
(Is 49:5,6).

The wider view of the prophet's ministry would have been particularly important to the exiles, and it is possible that the situation of the exiles did provide an additional impetus for the book's compilation, but it is unnecessary to suppose references to the nations simply come from redaction for that purpose (as Carroll 1981:54) (cf Michaud 1960:161).

Equally it is unnecessary to amend the text, with some LXX manuscripts, to restrict the ministry of Jeremiah to Judah by rewriting the plural "nations" as singular.

2.5.2 Additional note. The validity of non covenantal prophecy. Scholars are generally of the opinion that prophecy as it occurred among the called prophets was a unique phenomenon, not occurring outside of Israel, the covenant people. Baltzer (1968:567) says it has not been possible to find extra-Biblical material which would undercut
Duhm’s assumption of the uniqueness of prophecy in Israel (cf also Fohrer (1961:309) speaking against a "panoriental" interpretation, eg of Haldar (Porteous 1946:144), which put Israel’s prophets at the same level as the cult prophets of Mesopotamia and Canaan). Likewise Kaufmann (1961:94) speaks of the uniqueness of the "Apostle Prophet". Noth (1965:256) sees this in a way surprising because the events at the time did not affect just Israel but the whole area. Nevertheless he acknowledges uniqueness. In a sense complimentary to this, the ministry of the called prophets is not just to Israel (Cox 1975:98). Jeremiah was appointed "prophet to the nations". There is however a tradition of the Rabbis that God had in fact given prophets to other nations (Davies 1955:65, Heschel 1971:231).

This uniqueness can be related to:

(a) A belief in monotheism. This logically infers that non-Israelite prophets must be false (Thompson 1974:213). It is noteworthy that Jeremiah with his close relationship to God denounced idols in strong terms, as does Deutero-Isaiah who likewise particularly exhibits a close relationship. Other nations can however know related phenomena such as divination (Orlinsky 1965:170).

(b) A belief in the spirit. The spirit is only recorded as acting on Israelites, except for Balaam who then blesses Israel (Westall
Davidson (1904:144) makes a distinction on this point between Israelite prophecy which he believed to be spirit motivated, and the methods of non-Israelite phenomena. There is however a lack of emphasis on the spirit in Jeremiah.

(c) The Israelite view of election. Other nations may be used of God, such as Cyrus and the Persians, but only Israel is elected to service (Rowley 1950:121). Likewise only Israel knew religious conversion (Albright 1953:24). Moses (and also Abraham) as the instrument of election is looked back to as the original prophet. The election of the prophets is primarily for the benefit of the elect Israel. Thus Wright (1964:362):

Hebrew prophecy was an institution peculiar to Israel
and a vital part of the Israelite conception of divine
government.

Nevertheless it is clear that at least similar phenomena existed elsewhere, varying from wisdom in China (Rowley 1956b:4) or in Egypt (Vriezen 1967:200, Ringgren 1982:1), to the cases at Mari which exhibit a close resemblance to Israel, maybe because of the origins of Israel there (Malamat 1966:207f, Schmitt 1977:262). Wilson (1980:300) notes that the earliest Mesopotamian prophets are attested in the same area and time as the patriarchs. Lindblom (1962:Ch1) has an impressive survey of prophetic phenomena in various parts of the
world while Robinson, W H (1923:8) cites the cases of the Quaker visionary Woolman and of Sadhu Sundar Singh. Indeed Kuhl (1960:3) can generalize:

Always and in all faiths prophets have existed.

The greatest measure of similarity to Israelite prophecy existed at Mari, with claims to being sent by the gods (Bennett 1966:11), that is, a form of calling (Neher 1968:35), and with verbal parallels such as the "messenger formula" (Weinfeld 1977:178) and other phrases. For example "The Lord of El the king will seize you" is attested at Ras Shamra where related phenomena occurred (Neher 1968:38). These similarities are such that some, eg Scott (1968:1), prefer to refer to Israelite prophecy as "incomparable" rather than unique. It has even been suggested that there has been overlap, Bentzen even believing that Nathan was in fact a Jebusite prophet who wrote Psalm 110 (cited in Rowley 1939:130 who however believed it to be unlikely).

There are however fundamental differences between Israelite prophecy and prophecy elsewhere:

(a) Prophecy in Israel is not self-induced as it appears to be elsewhere. Huffmon (1968) deals with the prophets at Mari whom he divides into four groups. These are the ecstastics (Huffmon's second and third types) for whom the ecstatic experience is in some way
brought about by external action such as dancing (cf Lindblom 1962:8f), and the apilu (Huffmon's first type). They, as the baru priests, sometimes called "sha'ulu" (askers) (Guillaume 1938:40), were probably diviners. Such offices are usually considered hereditary and a learnt art (Guillaume 1938:40, Young 1952:106). Similarly the guidance given by Chemosh is by priests and not by prophets (Jr 48:7) (Robinson 1946:148). Such are not treated in the Old Testament simply as spurious, as demonstrated by the cases of the Philistine diviners (1 Sm 6:2) or of Balaam, although these cases did affect Israel and thus may be treated as exceptional.

Huffmon's fourth group consists of revelation to individual private persons. This came in the form of dreams, which are denigrated by Jeremiah and others as an inferior form of revelation, probably because they know a more intimate communication. Dreams are notoriously subject to psychological influence.

Ecstasy and divination have however influenced the modes of prophecy in Israel, particularly in the early manifestations, and also perhaps in the case of Ezekiel who appeared to show a disposition towards ecstasy. In his case this could be due to his environment of Babylon, where in order to authenticate his words it was necessary to show external phenomena. It is quite likely that the early groups of prophets were like the prophets outside Israel, but as Rowley (1956a:341) remarks, if Israelite prophecy grew out of that
environment, it did grow.

Israelite prophecy was not induced, as even Lindblom's concentration form of ecstasy presupposes (Lindblom 1962:4). The simple fact that Jeremiah, despite being under pressure for an answer had to wait ten days for it, shows this clearly (Jr 42:7). However the case of Elisha (2 Ki 3:15) indicates that a suitable state for revelation may be encouraged by outside aids. Vision and theophany also have this function of preparing the prophet for the further revelation to come.

(b) Prophecy in Israel has a distinctive content. This is the aspect which impresses most scholars. Prophecy in Mesopotamia is a state institution (Neher 1968:35), and so at Mari there is a prime concern with offerings and cultic matters (Moran 1969:18) rather than the moral teaching associated with Israel's prophets (Newman 1962:92, Huffmon 1968:105, Kaufmann 1961:215). There are some cases referring to social justice, reminiscent of Israel, and some prophecy of disaster such as the prophet Ipu-wer of Egypt (Young 1952:198), although this latter case bears no relationship to any moral cause, and is probably post-eventu (cf also Herrmann 1962:64). Such cases are scarce in comparison with the richness of Israel. It is significant that Huffmon (1968:124) after his study of the phenomena at Mari can declare the Israelite prophecy to be unique.
2.6 An act for service

North (1970:42) remarks that a prophetic call involved two commands, to go and to speak (cf Jr 1:7). Whereas ecstasy and divination basically involve the latter, other Israelite offices involve the former. Kaufmann (1961:228) is saying the same thing by referring to the distinctive Israelite figure as the "Apostle-Prophet". The centre of the call is sending to speak. Similarly Rowley (1950:45f) argues that election is always to service, covenant to responsibility. Israel may repudiate the covenant not by disbelief but by a failure to serve. Without the idea of a task, the promise of God's presence, expressed in the call narratives "I will be with you" becomes meaningless (Habel 1965:301). Likewise "I gave you" (Jr 1:5) implies service. (Cf also Wingren 1958:6, although this has a wider view on vocation than that of the prophets.)

The task of the prophets is primarily revelation. The prophet is frequently likened to the messenger of the Great King to his vassal (Muilenberg 1970:222, Holladay 1970:31f), and many others have remarked on the messenger style in the oracles "Thus says Yahweh" and "n'um Yahweh" (Clements 1965:24, Ross 1962:98). n'um is only once used outside of the prophets, and that in Genesis 22:16, but here the similarity to a prophetic oracle is striking. Abraham, the recipient of the oracle, is himself referred to as a prophet in relation to an intercessory role (Gn 20:7). In later prophets the message and the
messenger tend to become integral, seen in Jeremiah and epitomized in the figure of the Servant, especially if an individual (Von Rad 1975b:76). This unites the ideas of relation, which is fundamental to prophecy, with that of service.

Prophecy however is not an aimless revelation (cf Simon 1976). Jeremiah's task was expressed as to "pluck up, break down" etc (Jr 1:10): the word was the means to that end. In that same verse Jeremiah is put "for" not "over" the nations (Schmidt 1975:204). There is perhaps an echo here of the first call recorded, that of Abraham (discounting Noah), which was for the blessing of the nations (Gn 12:3). As prophecy is for service, it is related to a crisis situation. Whitley (1959:38) speaking of Isaiah's call in the context of the death of Isaiah, says:

> A national crisis of this magnitude would naturally lead to the call....

However the purpose of prophecy is not primarily political, or even the establishment of justice and truth, one of the functions of the vizier, often likened to the prophet (Baltzer 1968:574), but aims at a religious goal, the sustaining of a relationship to God. The prophets are not just the medium of God's word but foreshadow what ought to be, the close communion with God (Koehler 1957:163). The prophet shares the divine patterns and communicates it to the people (Rust 1977:345).
Zimmerli & Jeremias (1957:11) remark pertinently that the word *ebed* frequently applied to the prophets means not merely work but a personal relationship, which is why the Septuagint translated it as *pais*. That work is implied however is seen both in the root *abed* but also in its use as a diplomatic term. The *ebed*, vassal, was obligated to place his army in the service of the Lord (cf Jr 25:9, 43:10, of Nebuchadnezzar "my *ebed" ) (Zevit 1969:77) (cf also section 2.4.2.1). The relationship seen in the prophets is God's desire for his people, hence the identification of the Servant with Israel, foreshadowing the wider relationship with "all flesh" (Jl 2:28).

2.6.1 **Judgment.** Service implies the need of change and therefore has an aspect of judgment. Stuart (1980:12) says of the prophets: They considered themselves as occupying a divinely appointed societal office, correcting by divine word illegal beliefs and practices.

Judgment is implicit in the call narratives. Jeremiah is told:

...to pluck up and break down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant (Jr 1:10).

Doubts have been expressed on the middle line, as it destroys the chiasm, and from comparison of the parallels (Jr 24:6, 42:10, 45:4), although these do contain "overthrow" which may have been originally in second position (cf Holladay 1960:363). Nevertheless the point of judgment remains. This is further expressed in the second vision, of the boiling pot, which may or may not be part of the call itself, but in any case sets the tone for the entire book.

Kessler sees the book itself organised around this theme. Jeremiah 1-25 is thus doom oracles against Judah, Jeremiah 25, 46-51 doom oracles against the nations (accepting the Septuagint order). Then Jeremiah 26-36 concern the dialogue with the word and rejection of it, and 37-45 a vindication of the word (Kessler 1968:82).

It has even been suggested (cf Kuhl 1960:22) that the aspect of judgment is a criterion for distinguishing true and false prophets, the former being consistently prophets of doom. If prophecy is a corrective to society it presupposes that society is in error and thus under judgment. However prophecy is not always of doom (Carroll 1979:136), Isaiah 40 being perhaps the obvious example, and within the book of Jeremiah this is explicitly denied:
The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the Lord has truly sent the prophet (Jr 28:8-9).

This passage being prose and therefore thought of as subject to Deuteronomic redaction (cf its criterion of fulfilment (Dt 18:21) (Nicholson 1975:38)), nevertheless goes against the Deuteronomic theodicy which explains the troubles of Judah as caused by ignoring the prophets. A true Deuteronomic prophet by definition is a prophet of doom. Interestingly Jerusalem Bible, in its translation of Jeremiah 28:9 assumes that prophets are usually of doom:

The prophet who prophesies peace can only be recognized as one truly sent by Yahweh when his word comes true.

However, this force goes beyond the Hebrew. Oracles of salvation are rare in Jeremiah, and often disputed (eg Jr 23:5f, or Jr 31:7f which Nicholson (1975:63) puts in the exile under the influence of Deutero Isaiah).

Jeremiah does emphasize that judgment does not come from him. It is
God who is the judge, Jeremiah merely has the invidious task of announcing that judgment. Hence the vision of the boiling pot:

I will utter my judgment against them (Jr 1:16).

Specifically although Jeremiah frequently expresses horror at the sin of Judah, he says in the "confessions",

I have not pressed thee to send evil,
nor have I denied the day of disaster,
thou knowest:
that which came out of my lips was before thy face
(Jr 17:16).

His problem was in the conception of the time, the spoken word itself was seen as having power, and thus was probably the reason for the urgency with which Jehoiakim burnt the scroll, believing that thereby he would negate the power of the prophecy. However it is rather the lies of the false prophets which were destructive (cf Jr 5:30), as their preaching of peace and security did not lead to a change in the hearer's behaviour, the real cause of the coming judgment (Cuncliffe-Jones 1960:33).

Rather Jeremiah, like Ezekiel after him, saw his function not as a judge (Jesus likewise claimed not to come for judgment (John 12:47))
but as a watchman.

I have made you an assayer and tester (Jr 6:27).

By their reaction to the word given, the people bring judgment upon themselves (as Jesus likewise brought judgment simply in the reaction to Himself).

...the word of the Lord is to them an object of scorn....

Therefore I am full of the wrath of the Lord

(Jr 6:10, 11).

Similarly the people are judged in the rejection of Jeremiah himself (Jr 5:14 in the context of Jr 5:12, a very Deuteronomic assessment, but never denied to Jeremiah). In the life of Jeremiah his faithfulness contrasts with the faithlessness of the people (eg Jr 1:16 and Jr 1:17). It is in the placing of the words of God in Jeremiah's mouth (Jr 1:9) that this aspect of judgment is possible.

Jeremiah 6:19 adds the related idea of judgment from rejection of the Law. This implies the existence at this stage of a known and accepted body of Torah. This judgment is however subsidiary to that caused by the rejection of Jeremiah's words, and so false prophecy, which leads the people astray, is particularly condemned by the prophet as it completely cuts away the basis of God's judgment. Hananiaiah is
accused of rebellion in his prophecy (Jr 28:16), likewise Shemaiah of Nehelam (Jr 29:24f). The sentence on each of them, through Jeremiah, is death.

Unlike the earlier prophets, Jeremiah rarely specifies particular sins (but cf eg Jr 5:27-9, 9:3-6, and especially Jr 7:26), but rather assumes the message of his predecessors, especially Hosea, and disobedience to it. Carroll (1969:15) notes the absence of the concept of the covenant from the eighth century prophets, which he ascribes to the later finding of Deuteronomy. This would indicate that Jeremiah can assume the knowledge of God's will, whereas earlier prophets needed to specify it.

2.6.1.1 Judgment against the nations. The oracles against the nations have a particular problem in Jeremiah in the dislocation of the text, and hence questions arise concerning authenticity (Thompson 1980:117). They are however a common feature of other prophets, and the book itself assumes oracles of judgement against the nations (eg Jr 28:8 and in the call narrative Jr 1:5 and Jr 1:10). Indeed Kessler (1968) sees them as basic to the book's structure.

The justifications for judgment in these cases are naturally different, being without the words of the prophets, for example:

...because you trusted in your strongholds and your
...treasures (Jr 48:7).

...because he magnified himself against the Lord (Jr 48:26).

...for she has proudly defied the Lord, the Holy One of Israel (Jr 51:29).

The implication is that the sovereignty of the Lord over the nations should have been recognized: because it was not, judgment follows. In general however, judgments against the nations are simply announced rather than justified.

The oracle in Jeremiah 27:1-11 is probably to be seen primarily in the light of Judah. Surrounding nations will fall and therefore Zedekiah was advised not to rely upon them.

2.6.1.2 Judgment against Jeremiah himself. The message of judgment that Jeremiah brought affected not only his hearers but also the prophet himself, giving one cause of his anguish.

Jeremiah was not primarily preaching to a foreign people, as Jonah, but to his own, so that judgment was on him, as he was bound to them by blood (Baker 1980:54). The Hebrew notion of corporate personality (cf Robinson 1936) which expresses this, then finds a reaction in the preaching of Jeremiah on individual responsibility (Jr 31:30) and then in Ezekiel, perhaps because they realized that personally they were
not guilty of the sin of Judah. This is then a move away from the Deuteronomic theodicy which presupposes corporate personality. However the knowledge of individual responsibility would not totally remove the burden from Jeremiah as he would appreciate that the suffering that God is going to bring on the people must also affect him.

Jeremiah is also judged by simply being a prophet. The close relationship that the call produced involved an awareness that God knew him (yada) (Jr 12:3), and consequently an awareness of personal sin. This is not portrayed as graphically as in the calls of Isaiah (Is 6:7) or of Ezekiel (Ezk 2:8), but is an integral part of the call experience.

2.6.2 Protection. Because the message of Jeremiah was not popular, even unacceptable to its hearers, and because of the concurrent assumption that the spoken word by means of its very existence had some sort of power to cause an effect, Jeremiah himself became unpopular and had to hide for a while. But because the message was not his, with the call came the promise of protection, as a word to himself:

....for I am with you says the Lord, to deliver you (Jr 1:19).

The Deuteronomic theodicy, of obedience leading to blessing and
protection, and disobedience leading to punishment (cf also the promise to Zedekiah (Jr 38:20) or to the Rechabites (Jr 35:18f), also applies to Jeremiah. If he is disobedient and fails to give his prophecy out of fear, judgment would likewise fall on him.

Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them (Jr 1:17).

The promise of protection is stylized into the promise of God's presence in the call (Jr 1:8, 19), but more specifically the Lord's protection is not simply the comfort of a companion, but that of a warrior (Jr 20:11). For this reason Jeremiah can promise trouble if he is killed, not just due to disobedience in the Deuteronomic sense, but because God is specifically protecting his prophet.

Jeremiah is in fact promised no protection from the psychological strain of his ministry, which was clearly a burden to him, but only external protection against physical enemies. More dramatically, God promises:

I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar and bronze walls against the whole land (Jr 1:18).

The reference to the city and walls is perhaps obvious, but it is hard to see why a pillar implies protection, unless it is an oblique reference to
the impotence of the 'sera or the pillars of the Temple which also were destroyed, but the significance of these is uncertain. Possibly the meaning is that Jeremiah would be remembered, i.e. that his message would be protected, as pillars often were erected as memorials (Millard 1962:999). The "pillar" is in fact missing from LXX.

This promise is repeated in Jeremiah 15:20 with the addition of promises of deliverance expressed in the verbs "save", "deliver" and "rescue" with their rich connotations (Thompson 1980:398). What is significant is that the promise is not to be put within a wall, city, etc, which is probably what Jeremiah would prefer, but to be the wall, pillar and city. So although there is a promise of impregnability, there is no prevention of attack. This is stated explicitly in Jeremiah 1:19:

They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail.

That this promise was effective is seen in the biographical account of Jeremiah's life. Although close to death, for example in the cistern, he was preserved and apparently died peaceably in Egypt. This repetition (Jr 15:20) indicates that protection was in fact dependent upon his continued obedience.

His experience was not universal. Jeremiah records the death of the prophet Uriah (Jr 26:20f), but in general prophets did enjoy a measure of immunity. Although they themselves were not anointed and enjoyed
protection by virtue of that (many kings did of course die violently), yet it was recognised that God would protect his own (cf 1 Chr 16:22 = Ps 105:15).

2.6.3 **Enabling.** A striking feature of the call of Jeremiah is that it came when he was still young and inexperienced (Jr 1:6). Although the word *na’ar* (youth) has a range of meaning from infancy (Ex 2:6), to advanced adolescence (1 Sm 30:17), the implication is of immaturity and thus of inability (Thomson 1962:606). Hence Jeremiah claimed inability to speak which is of course the key function of the prophet. There is an obvious similarity here to the call of Moses, who although hardly young yet claimed inability to speak. Habel (1965) sees this objection as a formalized part of the call narratives. From a purely human view however, particularly if Jeremiah was indeed young, an objection is a very natural reaction to the task.

God then overcame the objections. In the case of Moses, Aaron was appointed, interestingly as his "prophet" (Ex 7:1); in the case of Jeremiah God dealt directly with the problem and touched his mouth (Jr 1:9). If this is indeed a formal pattern, it is hard to see why there should be a difference, otherwise age and circumstance is a sufficient explanation.

In both cases the point is the same. God provided for the prophet’s lack (Hempel 1947:97f). This enabling is carried through the ministry
of the prophet. God does not simply use a man, nor simply take over already present abilities, but for what God calls to do, he also provides for. Indeed human ability, almost by definition, is inadequate for the task (cf Jr 9:12).

....for the called, it necessarily carries with it a supremely personal endowment and equipment (Barth 1958:649).

Initially this is seen in the motif of the touching of the lips. This probably has an implication of purification as in Isaiah 6:7 (Kaiser 1972:81), although Jeremiah does not object for the reason of impurity as Isaiah did. More than this, the touching symbolizes the giving of power to his words. Immediately after the touching comes the graphic description of the results of his ministry:

I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and break down...(Jr 1:10).

Further to the touch of the lips at the call, the continuing ministry is also enabled by God. The promise of God's presence has prime reference to protection but it is possible to see in the choice of the word "deliver" (Jr 1:8,19), a promise that Jeremiah would be helped in the delivery of his message even in difficult circumstances. The means of this enabling is the spirit of the Lord, again with obvious reference to the mouth as the organ of breath. The spirit prepares for service and
Hallevy discusses the fact that earlier prophets are termed "men of God". He seeks to deny a connotation of possession in the genitive of the phrase, rather seeking its meaning in dedication (Hallevy 1958:237). Some sense of identity must however be implied in the phrase as in the normal Hebrew usage eg "tables of stone". So the implication is of a bestowal of God-like abilities to the prophet, as well as dedication, so for example Elisha can see far into the distance. The use of "God" rather than "Lord" also probably implies that empowering rather than relation is the main meaning of the phrase, which may be why it is not used of the later "called" prophets.

The very act of call itself must not be minimized as an enabling factor. Its disruptive incursion, the message given, and the signs, all contribute to overcome Jeremiah's inability (MacKay 1929:113).

2.6.4 No promise of success. The task of the prophet is that of a messenger with the object of achieving a desired result. Because the effectiveness of the ministry depends not only on the message, with the power inherent in the very words, and on the messenger empowered and strengthened by God, but also upon the hearers, no success is promised. (The translation of Jr 23:22 by RSV is too strong: cf Thompson 1980.)
Lack of success is not as explicit as in Isaiah’s call narrative (Is 6:9f), or that of Ezekiel (eg Ezk 3:7), but is implied in the promises of divine protection and in the definiteness of the prophecy of the boiling pot:

Then the Lord said to me, “Out of the north evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land” (Jr 1:14).

It is further seen throughout the life of Jeremiah which was a continual struggle against failure (Baltzer 1968:569). This struggle, leading to discouragement and depression, portrayed graphically in the “confessions”, is one aspect of the reason for the prophetic ministry being termed a “burden” (cf Naude 1969). Jeremiah’s case is perhaps extreme, but lack of success is common to all prophets, from Moses’ dealings with an unresponsive and disobedient people, onwards. Even Jonah, in one sense very successful, is found at last in a state of profound discouragement (cf Havazalet 1969:30).

The reason for lack of success is the fact of human freedom, without which the very act of prophecy would fall away. Prophecy implies that God’s will needs to be known and there is some freedom of response. Nevertheless the freedom goes along with a bias against the prophet (cf Ezk 2:7).

But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart: they have turned aside and gone away.
They do not say in their hearts,

"Let us fear the Lord our God" (Jr 5:23-4).

With this attitude success was not likely.

2.7 A call to exercise authority

If God chooses a prophet to communicate his will through him exclusively, it follows that the prophet is endowed with a unique authority over others, including other offices. This authority is not located in the prophetic office but only in the prophetic word as inspired, as there is no prophetic office as such (cf Von Rad 1975b:50, although Von Rad means here that the obligations and functions of the prophet have been well defined by tradition, not that there is an official position). (Cf also Reventlow 1961.) Buber (1960:50) sees the authority of the prophet in his direct relation to God whereas kings and priests are subject to their office.

Prophetic authority is perhaps more clearly seen in the early monarchy but nevertheless is present in Jeremiah’s call:

I have set you over nations and over kingdoms,

to pluck up and break down... (Jr 1:10).
His authority is over the offices of Judah:

...against the kings of Judah, its princes,
its priests, and the people of the land (Jr 1:18).

It is implicit in the command to hear (eg Jr 2:4), and in the messenger formula "Thus says the Lord", which includes the oracles to the nations.

The prophet has authority over kingship. In earlier years:

A leading idea in Israel was that only a man who had been singled out by the utterance of the prophet as one called by God could be elected to be king (Noth 1966:167).

Cf also Hanson (1979:297) Baltzer (1968:578) etc. By the time of Jeremiah with an established dynasty (also of course viewed as designated), this is not so obvious, but is certainly implicit in the berating of the kings, eg:

If you will indeed obey this word then there shall enter the gates of this house kings... (Jr 22:4).

Because of the inherent authority of the prophet it has been argued
that the king then tried to usurp prophetic authority by appointing court prophets (Heschel 1971:260). If so this caused a great deal of trouble for Jeremiah.

Prophets however were not primarily interested in political structures but in justice and, especially in Jeremiah, obedience, irrespective of who ruled (Pfeiffer 1961:151).

Similarly the prophet has authority over priesthood. This may be traced back to a belief in a Mosaic inauguration, particularly relevant if indeed Jeremiah saw himself as a new Moses. Authority over priests may be present in Jeremiah 5:31, a verse however notoriously difficult to interpret. Johnson (1962:63) observing the superiority of the prophet over the priest in other contexts, interprets this verse as distinct authority, noting the equivalent phrase in Jeremiah 33:13. Authority is seen more clearly in the incident where Pashhur the priest put Jeremiah in the stocks (Jr 20:1-6). The subsequent oracle indicates where the authority really lies. A similar passage is Jeremiah 29:24-28, where Shemaiah again claims authority of the priest over the prophets. This is again rejected in no uncertain terms (cf Johnson 1962:63). In these passages it must not be forgotten that Jeremiah could have known subjection as a priest. Again indicating superiority, although not relevant to Jeremiah, is the fact that prophets and never priests, anoint (Schoors 1977:94).
The locus of this authority is of course in the relationship of the prophet to God. Only prophets were sent by God himself (Jr 7:25 cf Heinisch 1955:10). It is for this reason that prophets were not anointed, unlike kings and priests (possibly at this stage only the chief priest). Also it is the prophet, not any other, who is the watchman, accountable to God. This accountability naturally led to distress and punishment on disobedience (Schultz 1968:30). It is the prophet only who received the title "man of God" (Jacob 1958:239, Widengren 1948:114n of Jr 35:4). In the battle between deities at Carmel, the combatants are prophets, not priests (Rowley 1963:47).

The means of the authority is the word of God. This cannot be defeated, as the inclusion of the story of the scroll demonstrates (Carroll 1981:152). The word is revelatory, revelation being by no other office (George & Driskill 1979:77, cf Neher 1968:7). More significantly it is creative (Gn 1, Ps 33:6), but in this context, of social action (Robertson 1960:426). The words of God through the prophet have authority, as for example causing the death of Hananiah (Jr 28:17). Elsewhere even the action of God is portrayed as being through the prophet, as God responds to Moses' actions. The setting down of the written word as law (seen coming through the prophet) eventually makes the prophet unnecessary. The prophet as living custodian of the word will have authority over an interpretation of the written word, but cf the case of Deuteronomy 13 which may have been used in an
attempt to show Jeremiah was false (Davidson 1964:411f).

Some have seen as similar the authority of the ambassador of the Great King over his vassal (Holladay 1970:34, Wright 1964:362), or the later figure of the "shaliach" who stands for the one who sent him (Morris 1964:117). Perhaps most fitting is the vizier, who under the king has authority over all other rulers, priests etc (Wifall 1980:172), and is the head of administration (Baltzer 1968:575). 2 Kings 18-20 then portrays a clash between the vizier of Assyria and Isaiah, vizier of God (Wifall 1980:173). Significantly the main function of the vizier is the maintenance of justice, a recurring theme in the prophets (Baltzer 1968:574).

2.8 A permanent call

A difference between the records of the so-called major and minor prophets is that the latter give an oracle, maybe even several, and then nothing further is heard of them, whereas the major prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel have a more permanent ministry. On the basis of their introductions, Hosea and Micah should be included.

It is possible that major prophets are "re-called" for each oracle, as Von Rad believed to be the case with Isaiah (Von Rad 1975b:69). He was then released after each oracle. Von Rad understood prophecy to be a gradual integration of the message with the messenger,
becoming more complete in the case of Jeremiah, Second Isaiah and particularly the Servant. In this case Ezekiel 33 may be viewed as a re-commissioning (Ellison 1966:110), cf also possibly the repeated introductions in Haggai. Jeremiah 15:10f could then be a re-call but as Rowley (1962:221) remarks, it is so similar to the initial call, it is rather a renewal. It could equally be viewed as a reminder of the initial call. There is no evidence positively leading to the idea of second calls in any of the prophets. What is clear is that other non-prophetic ministries may come to an end (Shafer 1977:20, Malchow 1976:71), as well as associated possession of the spirit (Koehler 1957:113).

Various factors imply that the prophetic vocation is permanent:

(a) Habel (1965:309) believes that the use of the verb *paqad* as in Jeremiah 1:10 implies irrevocability. He cites other uses (Nm 1:50, 2 Ki 7:17, 25:22) which refer to the use of appointment to an office (also Schottroff 1976:473) but here the remark of Buss (1980:5) is appropriate:

The prophetic role should therefore be described in terms of a certain kind of activity, not in terms of a full-time or exclusive profession.

Any irrevocability is to be seen in the nature of the call itself, not in any office, which for the called prophets did not exist (cf section 4.3.1.5).
(b) The associated choice of Israel is permanent (cf Rm 11:1f). The issue that Jeremiah faced is not that the apostacy of Judah would cause their rejection from the covenant but that the blessings attached to the covenant are being prevented.

> Listen to my voice and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people and I will be your God that I may perform the oath which I swore to your fathers... (Jr 11:4-5).

Their sufferings were rather due to the covenant, not in separation from it (Jr 11:8). It is perhaps possible to view the situation of Jeremiah leading to his sufferings, confessions and re-affirmation of call in the same way.

Both the call of Isaiah and the prophets are to be viewed not as choice from a number, which could imply later rejection if a better choice emerged, but rather as sending which has no connotation in itself of bringing back (cf Quell 1969:154).

(c) The disruptive nature of the initial call is such that a prophet is permanently changed. He cannot go back to before such an event. Probably despite Jeremiah's reluctance to prophesy, any removal of his prophetic function would be even more disruptive.
The man who has seen God necessarily has a message
(Skinner 1895:42).

This message is not however the same as that of a subsequent oracle but is a general understanding of the nature and purposes of God.

(d) Jeremiah's confessions indicate that he would dearly love the burden to be lifted, but it was not. Similarity can be seen here to the later office of the "shaliach" which also was not removable or transferable (Morris 1964:114f).

(e) Calling establishes a relationship with God which by its very nature is permanent (Rowley 1945a:103). Prophecy is the turning of God to a man (Heschel 1971:220). For this reason an aspect at least of the prophet's experience must be permanent (Knight 1947:32), so a prophet, even if he never received another oracle would be an effective advisor or intercessor:

There can be no true prophet of Yahweh who has not first viewed the full majesty and holiness of Yahweh himself and who has thereby become so completely filled with the true eternal life that it now lives on as a new life firmly established in him (Ewald, cited in Hayes 1979:253)
(f) There is no record of any prophet who was de-commissioned except by death, although we know nothing of the subsequent career of anyone who once prophesied. Jeremiah 1:1-3 could be taken as giving a final date to Jeremiah’s ministry, but this is unlikely. Jeremiah 40:44 deals with events and oracles in Egypt after the fall of Jerusalem: this of course could be a subsequent addition to the book. Rather the date in Jeremiah 1:3 indicates the climax of Jeremiah’s ministry, after which the Deuteronomic theodicy may be viewed as vindicated (Keil 1950:37). Possibly also the events in Egypt were thought of as not relevant to Israel as an entity (cf Thompson 1980:141).

It is thus more probable that the prophetic commissioning is permanent, as Von Rad (1975b:69) admits in the case of Jeremiah.

For twenty three years, from the thirteenth day of Josiah to this day, the word of the Lord has come to me (Jr 25:3). (This also indicates that it is the call, not the birth of Jeremiah which is dated here.)

A distinction must be made between the call and a particular oracle, although the call always comes with an oracle (Scott 1968:90). A prophet holds a general commission to speak on behalf of God, in order to deliver particular revelations. (Robinson 1946:169 sees this
arising from corporate personality with the Council of Yahweh.) A revelation subsequent to the initial call came because of that call, and did not need a separate authenticating theophany.
3. THE CALL AND THEOPHANY

Without a call experience Jeremiah could not have been a prophet, or would have been a false prophet. A call experience included a theophany, an appearance of God in some sort of bodily form, in which God spoke to him. Later experiences of divine communication rarely included a theophany, but were recognized as genuine from the experience of the call.

3.1 Did Jeremiah's call include a theophany?

A theophany is a rare occurrence in Scripture, although theophanic language is quite common in its poetry. Theophanies occur in the Patriarchial narratives, in the stories of Moses and in the calls of the three major prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, possibly the visions of Amos, which some interpret as a call narrative, and in the experience of Micaiah ben Imlah, although this latter has perhaps more the characteristics of pure vision rather than of theophany, lacking any dialogue. (Young (1972:237), speaking of Isaiah, makes a distinction between the two. The experiences of Jeremiah 1:11-16 include both.) Further possible examples include Elisha's vision of the chariot, and Isaiah 40, which Cross (1953:276) believes has remarkable parallels to Isaiah 6. Zechariah 2:8 "after his glory sent me
to the nations” is probably also a record of a call.

The majority of these are call theophanies. Indeed Wheeler Robinson, in a frequently quoted passage, writes that it is unlikely:

....that a prophet of the classical period would have dared to prophesy without an inaugural vision such as Isaiah’s in the Temple, an audition such as Jeremiah’s or such a characteristically peculiar experience as that of Ezekiel (Robinson, W H 1923:5).

Similar sentiment is common, eg Kuhl (1960:105), Kayyalaparampil (1979:25). Thus Fohrer (1960:5) rearranges the text to put Isaiah 6 first. Heschel (1969:131f) holds that it is theophany and inspiration, not ecstasy which is characteristic of prophetic experience, and Lindblom (1962:64) believes that:

The prophetic life is based on a prophetic call.... The call itself generally takes the form of a vision of a fundamental nature.

Despite the common connection of theophany with the call, it is not prominent in Jeremiah. Although Richter omits the epiphany from his call scheme, the elements that he does include presuppose such direct communication that theophany is certainly not excluded, and
rather implied. These are "Andeutung der Not, Auftrag, Einward, Zusicherung des Beistandes, Zeichen" (Richter 1970:137). In this he is however treating theophany as absent from Jeremiah, where it is certainly not described in the same way as Isaiah 6 or Ezekiel. Zimmerli also takes this up but his solution is not a reduction to the minimum common features, but a division of call narratives into two groups. The first group involves a theophany, so includes Isaiah and the Yahwistic account of Moses and possibly Ezekiel, although this latter is a mixed type. The second group emphasizes the word, so includes Jeremiah and the Elohistic and Priestly accounts of Moses (Gorg 1976:162), although Zimmerli puts all the Mosaic narratives in his first type (Zimmerli 1979:97f). Gouders (1971c) tends to follow Zimmerli.

As mentioned above (section 2.4.4), data is too limited to draw valid conclusions, but, if this approach has value, it is in seeing in different accounts an underlying pattern, and hence even if it were not explicitly mentioned, one would presume that, as other calls, Jeremiah's included a theophany.

In any case, the mention of the hand of the Lord touching Jeremiah's mouth (Jr 1:9) does presuppose some kind of theophany (Robertson 1960:422, Fohrer 1974:54). As even Zimmerli says (1982:96), Jeremiah was aware of the way in which his lips were touched. It was not just sensation but vision. Similarly Blank (1961:68).
Jeremie voit Yahweh dans une vision. La vision est si vraie que Jeremie sent Yahweh toucher sa bouche pour y placer les paroles qu'il aura a prononcer (Michaud 1960:160).

Perhaps a parallel may be seen in 1 Samuel 3 where the emphasis also falls on audition, but here incidental comments again indicate Samuel's experience was visionary. 1 Samuel 3:15 refers to an appearance (mar'a). (1 Sm 3 uses a different word hazon as the reference there is to revelationary experience not a call theophany. Cf also 1 Sm 3:21.) A connection between Samuel and Jeremiah is implied in Jeremiah 15:1.

Bronner (1967:35) also sees theophany, but feels "fire" is the important element in the call. Following Van Selms, she notes the equivalence of Jeremiah 1:7 to the phrase in Isaiah 6. However burning is by no means mentioned in Jeremiah, and in other occurrences "fire" means judgment rather than compulsion (cf section 6.2). It is this feature which makes it frequent in the prophets as the prophets preach judgment. Thus it is not a feature of Deutero-Isaiah.

Apart from the touch, "The Lord said to me" (Jr 1:7) Possibly also implies theophany in this case, although the language is similar for later receipt of revelation where no theophany is implied (eg Jr 15:1).
Nevertheless the fact of appearance is clearly secondary to the writer, who desires the focus of attention to be on the word. Muilenberg (1964:37f) sees a similar shortening of the description of vision in the Genesis accounts to emphasize the communication, but with no denial of the real vision either there or in Jeremiah.

Denial of theophany in Jeremiah is also made by Reventlow (1963:24f), but this time believing that the account is liturgical, that another clergyman acted the part of Yahweh and symbolically touched the prophet's lips in his appointment (cf also Jobling 1978:4). The epiphany, which is an integral part of his scheme, is then not supernatural. If this were so, we would rather expect a full description rather than what accounts to an oblique reference. Jeremiah moreover never refers to any cultic act, but to the distinct call of God. (Cf also the remarks of section 1.5.2 in respect of the confessions.)

3.1.1 Uniqueness of the call experience. The call experience is different from Jeremiah's later experiences of receipt of revelation. Without it the later experiences lose their authority for Jeremiah and he would not certainly know whether they were genuine words from the Lord to him. The prophetic life has, as an essential feature, an initial experience of a theophanic nature on which depends all other later experiences.

However there are similarities. The introductory formula in the call:
Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying... (Jr 1:4),

is not unique, repeated verbatim elsewhere (eg Jr 1:11, 2:1, 13:8, 24:4) and elsewhere with close similarity (eg Jr 1:13, 13:3 etc). Part of the function of the initial theophany is that later revelation is recognised as genuine.

The uniqueness of the call rests upon the theophany, which is not repeated anywhere else. There is no hint anywhere else in the book of any vision of the Lord except Jeremiah 25:15, which is however to be taken as metaphor (section 5.2). It also rests upon the nature of the dialogue which in Jeremiah 1 comprises the objection (Jr 1:6) and the replies to God’s questions concerning the vision (Jr 1:11, 13). Even in the incidents of the waistcloth (Jr 13) and the potter (Jr 18) the conversation is really a monologue, Jeremiah is passive. This indicates that the visions of Jeremiah 1 are really part of the call experience. In Jeremiah 24:3 (the figs) a dialogue similar to Jeremiah 1 occurs. Here it is noticeable that the introductory formula occurs after the vision rather than before as in Jeremiah 1. More particularly, the nature of the message in Jeremiah 24 was such that Jeremiah may have naturally doubted its authenticity, so that it was substantiated by a vision. Nevertheless, Jeremiah 24 does not hint at a theophany. The vision was of the figs and not of God. So the association of theophany with dialogue was unique to the call,
whereas Jeremiah did experience revelation by dialogue subsequently. These dialogues are different from those commonly referred to as "confessions" which do not occur in the context of oracular revelation, and thus neither do they always involve an immediate reply of God as do the others. They are more the nature of prayer, or lament, than of revelatory dialogue.

Although Jeremiah did not experience a second theophany (except perhaps in Jr 15 where the language is similar to Jr 1), there is no fundamental reason why it could not occur later in a prophet's career, where a particular need of authentication occurred. Prophecy is in essence a relationship which needs communication. The rarity of theophany was however due to its disruptiveness to the prophet and to the imageless nature of Hebrew religion.

3.2 Theophany in an imageless religion

A unique feature of Israel with regard to the surrounding nations was the absence of images. It was the setting up of images which was repeatedly castigated in the Deuteronomic History as that which led Israel into sin under Jeroboam, who although he may not have intended his calves to be idols, yet provoked idolatry.

Imageless worship is of course enshrined in the second
commandment. It was the battle against images, however it was interpreted by the people, which formed a significant part of the struggle of at least the earlier prophets.

It is with this background that the call of Jeremiah must be interpreted. He saw a strong reason for the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem simply in the idolatry of Judah and it would be, even on the human level, folly and counterproductive to his message, to include any description of deity.

It is perhaps significant that Deutero-Isaiah contains some of the strongest denunciation and ridicule of idolatry, and Elijah is perhaps of all the prophets most intimately connected with the struggle by his battle on Carmel, because in neither case do we definitely have a call narrative. Newman (1962:96) sees the incident of the still small voice as comprising the call of Elijah, but this would require considerable reorganization of the text and its portrayal of the causal sequence of events. It is more likely that the theophany, if it contained a vision, is connected rather with reassurance, in light of the difficulty of his task, and possibly with the call of Elisha (cf section 3.6.2). Von Rad (1975b:66) sees Isaiah 40 (and Is 61) as a call narrative (also Hyatt 1947:43) but if so it is significant that it contains no description of deity.

Furthermore in Isaiah 6, although a theophany is claimed (Love 1957:291), there is again no description of deity. Again probably this is
to avoid any temptation to idolatry, but also the emphasis shifts immediately to the message. That the theophany was however vital for Isaiah is seen in the frequent reference to it, as in the name "Holy One of Israel".

Ezekiel, however, provides us with a detailed description, but again, not of deity. As in other theophanies, description centres upon surrounding phenomena (Barr 1959:36). The closest to which he will come is:

....above the likeness of a throne was the likeness as it were of a human form (Ezk 1:26).

The circumlocution is striking.

Jeremiah, whatever his experience was, permitted himself no description whatsoever (cf Baumann 1955:62). Even theophanic language, as frequent in the Psalms, is rare in Jeremiah (cf Schnutenhaus 1964 for a summary of theophanic language).

The rarity of the theophany (not theophanic language in general) (Barr 1959:31) can only add to Jeremiah's feeling of disruption and the compulsion that he experienced. An exceptional event could only lead to an exceptional ministry.
Nothing is indeed more significant about the anthropomorphic theophanies than that they have occurred to special and isolated persons in the past: in historical Israel it is the prophets pretty well alone who experience them (Barr 1959:34).

3.3 The necessity for theophany in the call of Jeremiah

It is striking how sure the prophets are of their commission. Even the confessions of Jeremiah are not a doubt of his call but a complaint about associated matters. His assurance cannot rest on mere opinion.

Prophetic assurance, like all assurance of faith, cannot be proved from outside but carries its authentication within itself (Eichrodt 1970:157).

Ultimately a prophet depended on his own sense of call (Carroll 1969:196).

The features of Jeremiah's ministry were such that this authentication needed to rest on an immovable foundation, which could only be supplied by a theophany.

3.3.1 An external act requires theophany. The claim of the book is
that Jeremiah was sent by God, that his ministry was not caused by human agency or circumstances only. The depth of his conviction required a theophanic experience, otherwise in the course of his ministry he would doubt the truth of what he is doing (cf Deutsch 1978:30). His doubts are not however of its truth, but came from a desire to see God more at work.

An objective criterion is necessarily demanded both by the speaker and the hearers, both by the prophet and by his audience. Failure to recognise this essential feature of prophecy is to misunderstand the mind of ancient Israel (Rowley 1945b:11, citing T H Robinson).

The theophany had three results for Jeremiah:

a) Commissioning. Jeremiah knew that he was appointed and sent, and thus stood in particular relationship to God. In the depths of his need it would seem he desired a similar experience to remind him of this:

O Lord, thou knowest;
remember me and visit (paqad) me,
and take vengeance for me on my persecutors (Jr 15:15).

The reference is to the call (Jr 1:10), as the language is very similar
(Jr 15:20 with Jr 1:18). There is no indication that a second theophany actually occurred.

b) Authentication. As his message was so different from the hopes and desires of his hearers, Jeremiah had to be particularly sure that he was right. His assurance could not be from another man, or the question of that man's authenticity would also have to be raised. In particular Jeremiah needed to be absolutely convinced that he was right in distinction from other prophets who gave a contrary message. This was not simply a matter of "court prophets", but went back to his predecessor Isaiah who proclaimed the inviolability of Jerusalem.

For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David (Is 37:35).

This passage must have been current before Jeremiah and Jerusalem's fall. Moreover Isaiah's word was authenticated by events, so to go against it demanded utter conviction. It must have been a considerable comfort to Jeremiah when reference was made to a prophecy of Micah:

Zion shall be ploughed as a field:
Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,
(Mi 3:12 = Jr 26:18).
This being a prose passage, doubts are expressed as to its originality to Jeremiah, so indicating that it could be a later Deuteronomistic redaction (possibly also in Micah?). If so it makes the need for external authentication for Jeremiah more pressing.

It has been suggested that the call narrative has been so constructed as to claim Mosaic authority (cf Dt 18:18). It is however the authority of God and not of Moses that is claimed, and the correspondences are not compelling (cf section 2.4.2.1).

c) Recognition. The theophanic experience always led to revelation (cf Is 6:9f, Ezk 2, Jr 1:14f, Gouders 1971a:215). This revelation was always general and set the tone for the whole ministry, but also presented no problem to the prophet in terms of authenticity. Later prophecy which came without theophany is then recognized as having the same source (Robinson 1957:117), and thus being genuine, even though its receipt would appear to be a much more subjective experience. For example:

....and as they sat at the table, the word of the Lord came to the prophet (1 Ki 13:20).

Without an initial experience such could be readily disregarded. Similarly Jeremiah appeared to doubt a particular revelation to him until he saw it fulfilled (Jr 32:8). It is as if the theophany had the
function of opening the inner ear or eye to recognize the message of God for what it is. An example from a very ancient source is the claim of Balaam:

the oracle (n’um) of the man whose eye is opened,
the oracle of him who hears the words of God,
and knows the knowledge of the Most High,
who sees the vision of the Almighty,
falling down, but having his eyes uncovered:
I see him, but not now... (Nm 24:15-17).

The implication of the qal passive of the first line is of an achieved state, whereas the imperfects following suggest a repeated occurrence. What is significant is the connection with a vision of God. Balaam went against the wishes of Balak, for which he needed absolute certainty.

3.3.2 An exclusive relationship requires theophany. Despite the fact that there were sometimes more than one prophet active at any one time, for example, Jeremiah 26:20f mentions one Uriah with no hint that he is false, although he did die for his prophecy, yet the call theophany is an individual private affair. Even Paul's companions did not experience it fully (Ac 9:7).

Theophany is always rare:
The fact that there is a theophany at all shows the supreme importance of the task as well as its danger. Obviously God does not manifest himself to men in theophany except for very special reasons (Robertson 1960:420).

As in marriage, the relationship entailed in prophecy is deep and so essentially private and exclusive.

....the fundamental experience of the prophet is a fellowship with the feelings of God, a sympathy with the divine pathos, a communion with the divine consciousness... (Heschel 1969:26).

This involves not just ideas but personal knowledge in the full sense (Heschel 1971:2), which requires theophany (Neher 1968:104). (Mysticism is however excluded by the nature of the prophet as one who is sent to serve (Kaufmann 1961:213).) This knowledge involves rationality, hence the emphasis on word (Mowinckel 1934:218), but the personal relationship is deeper than any simple command can give (Robinson 1944:156, speaking of the council of Yahweh). It is so close that the prophets are able to speak as from God in the first person (Rowley 1956b:133).
Muilenberg (1964:35) suggests that the mouth and lips are central to Israel's anthropology (referring to Johnson 1949:47f), so the lips were touched in the call (Jr 1:9). The implication of this thought is that the deep relationship with the prophet is particularly demonstrated by the touch of the lips. This can only be done in theophany.

3.3.3 A disruptive experience requires theophany. The nature of the prophetic office is such that it requires a dramatic event to initiate it. Clearly a theophany by its nature is extremely disruptive. After his theophany, Ezekiel:

....sat there overwhelmed among them seven days (Ezk 3:15).

For various reasons, such as respect for the second commandment, there has been a reluctance to see real theophany. For example Heschel (1962:7), surprisingly considering his deep appreciation of the relationship of the prophet to God, can say,

God never reveals His self. He is above and beyond all revelation. He only discloses a word.

Nevertheless others feel that the prophetic nature demands a theophany.
All the great prophets had such a vision of the God of Israel (as Isaiah) they came forth with a conviction which never deserted them (Davidson 1903:188).

He is a true prophet to the extent that he has experienced God (Robert 1968:261, cf also Kayyalaparampil 1979:25).

The threat of dismay for the prophet on disobedience (Jr 1:17) then becomes very telling. It is perhaps seen to some extent in the "confessions".

Barr (1959:34) notes that theophany is deadly (cf Jdg 13:22) but also that it is superfluous if it simply resulted in the death of the observer. In a sense Jeremiah's experience did result in his death in that after his call he was bound in the service of God, and not free to live as he wanted.

3.3.4 The historicity of theophany. It is impossible to prove the facticity of any historical event, but particularly so the theophany as it had a single witness, the prophet, and was unrepeated. Moreover each prophetic call theophany had different features. It is thus impossible to demonstrate that Jeremiah had an objective experience rather than that he thought he had that experience.
However the diversity of the prophetic theophanies itself does point to facticity, as invention or even a mental experience alone would otherwise follow a precedent. A desire, even subliminal, to have Moses' authority would result in an experience like that of Moses. A desire to declare the Isaianic trust in Zion now invalid would result in an experience similar to Isaiah's. Neither occurred, rather the Jeremiah account concentrates on the message, almost neglecting the account of theophany. Rather the differences in theophany are explained by differences in circumstance and emphasis. God is not tied to any form or means. Thus Zechariah, after the exile, looked back to former great things, and was impressed by God's glory (Zch 2:8, Baldwin 1972:109). Ezekiel, in captivity, saw the power of God over Babylonian gods. Amos, in a time of apostacy, saw God in judgement (Am 8, 9). As Pannenberg notes, the deity is not identical to the appearance in theophany (Tupper 1973:263).

With caution, the same thing is true in non-Biblical accounts. The Catholic Bridget saw the Virgin, Bedouin seers saw the mal'ak of Allah on a white horse, and the Finnish preachers an image of a book on which was written what they had to announce (Lindblom 1962:Ch1).

3.3.5 **Covenant involves theophany.** In so far as the Old Testament is the record of God's dealings with the covenant people, it is not surprising that we have no record of any theophany outside the covenant. It would seem however that theophany and covenant are
intimately connected, such that the Patriarchal theophanies are depicted as at the original setting apart of the chosen people, the theophanies to Moses at the Bush and later at Sinai are connected with the giving of the Law (cf Windsor 1972:414).

There is no theophany associated with the Davidic covenant except the experience of Solomon (1 Ki 3:5f), which was rather of a personal nature and in dream. Although most prophets are connected with monarchy and thus with that covenant, the prophets have their main connection rather with the Mosaic covenant (cf Jr 7:5f).

Isaiah's experience led to a fuller appreciation of a covenant God (cf his use of "Holy One of Israel"), and as such, theophany will lead to theocratic thinking (Vriezen 1970:184). Jeremiah however emphasizes the message not the nature and being of God (Von Rad 1975b:56) perhaps to avoid idolatry (cf Barr 1959:32).

Theophany may also be viewed as a guarantee of God's presence with his people (Crotty 1971:13). This was stressed by Isaiah (Is 7:14, Emmanuel), but Jeremiah's message was rather that the people had broken the covenant. They cannot trust the visible signs of covenant without the response necessary.

Jeremiah's message is rather the need of internalization of the covenant. Although he has affinity with Moses, the fire of the Bush
becomes for him the fire in his bones (Jr 20:9). (There is a frequent connection between theophany and fire (Jeremias 1965:39).) Just as Jeremiah emphasized the message of the call rather than the outward sign of theophany, obedience rather than outward signs of the covenant, so the covenant itself becomes internal (in their hearts Jr 31:33). The authenticating theophany itself becomes redundant,

....for they shall all know me (Jr 31:34).

3.3.6 **Theophany and service.** Covenant is always connected with service. The theophany and covenant with Abraham led to:

....by you all the families of the earth shall be blessed

(Gn 12:3).

The Mosaic covenant implied the service of the Israelites to God both in the cultic and ethical senses.

In a way the majesty and power of theophany tends to negate the need for human service. Jeremiah complains:

...thou art stronger than I,

and thou hast prevailed.

I have become a laughingstock (Jr 20:7),
but sending is implicit in the call by theophany to the prophet (Kaufmann 1961:213). The only feature of his theophany upon which Jeremiah comments is the touching of his mouth, the organ of his service. The theophany prepares for words (Schmidt 1975:195).

3.3.7 Authority and theophany. Jeremiah in himself has no authority, all he has coming from the position to which he was appointed. It is inconceivable that in the cultural milieu of the time appointments such as vizier or court messenger would be made except in a personal capacity, likewise the authority of Jeremiah or other prophets stems from their meeting with God.

It was at times when authority was particularly needed that theophany was experienced, eg Balaam before confronting Balak (Nm 22:20), Elijah before anointing Kings (1@Ki 19:11f), Micaiah faced with 400 prophets, although probably none of these are call theophanies. Similarly Jeremiah and other prophets needed assurance of a mandate for their ministry, unlike "professional" prophets (MacKenzie 1968:95), to withstand the mocking and derision to which they were subjected (Crenshaw 1971:13). Unlike the "professionals" they had no self confidence (Heaton 1977:213).

Baltzer (1968:575) notes that Isaiah withholds the title "king" from the Davidic ruler but gives it for the first time to God. Jeremiah generally follows this. He frequently refers to God as king, but his use of "king"
for the Davidic ruler is in the context of humility and impotence.

3.3.7.1 Council of the Lord. Jeremiah contrasts his authority with the other prophets in various ways. One of these is the claim that unlike them, he has experienced the divine council:

....for who among you has stood in the council of the Lord to perceive and to hear his word... (Jr 23:18).

But if they had stood in my council,
then they would have proclaimed my words to my people... (Jr 23:22).

Jeremiah is then a messenger of the divine council (Vriezen 1970:233). The concept is not definitely used elsewhere in Jeremiah although the word (sod) is (eg Jr 6:11). It is possible that the council may be implied in Jeremiah 15:17 in contrast to the company (sod) of merrymakers. Elsewhere the council is seen in Isaiah 6 (and possibly Is 40 (MacKenzie 1968:17, possibly a call), 1 Kings 22, in the Psalms and possibly in the plurals in Genesis 1:26, 3:22 etc). It is thus likely to be more than just a poetic figure (Robinson 1944:151), or simply a Deuteronomic metaphor (as Carroll 1981:173).

However it is only found in the monarchic period, so it may be connected with the personal background of the prophet (cf Mason
129

1982:139), and with the conception of God as King (cf its appearance in "enthronement Psalms") (cf Kingsbury 1964). There is no conception of polytheism present (Whybray 1971:46), others present are servants.

The connection of the prophet with the council implies:

a) An intimate knowledge of God. The term (sod) implies intimacy (Vriezen 1970:176), more than would be meant by a simple command to the prophet (Robinson 1944:156). Although Heschel's idea of inspiration is participation (Heschel 1962:6), it is noticeable that in no instance does the prophet participate, and in 1 Kings 22 the medium is even by another messenger. The prophet is an observer, but by being in the council (sod) knows clearly God's counsel (sod) (Rust 1972:105 cf Am 3:7). Even in Isaiah 6 the decision has already been taken (Knierim 1968:59). Hence the council is not to be equated with the dialogue of the "confessions". Even in the cases where the council may be referred to and dialogue takes place (as in Is 40), the prophet does not talk in the council, but to it.

b) It is connected with the original call, not receipt of revelation. The case of 1 Kings 22 is unique and due to the particular need of authentication that Micaiah had. This incident in any case is of the nature of vision. No dialogue between council and prophet took place.
Jeremiah is stating his authority as a prophet, which he implicitly connects with theophany (cf the use of ra’a in Jr 23:18), his admittance to the council. It is probable that Jeremiah 1, as Isaiah 6, was in the context of the council (cf the motif of the touching of the lips). The idea of the council excludes any idea of mysticism (the members are distinct (Robinson 1944:156)), of ecstasy (Rowley 1945b:30), and probably of divination, as the prophet becomes a messenger of the council.

Jeremiah’s role is of the messenger, who can give an accurate message as he has viewed the proceedings (North 1970:44). Baltzer (1968:569) notes also that the appointment of the vizier is only done in the presence of the whole court. Jeremiah is thus "an officer of the heavenly court" (Holladay 1970:30), having its authority. The prophet by means of "corporate personality" may even be identified with it to some extent (Robinson 1946:169, Johnson 1942:36), but not as a member of it.

Having been present in the divine council is no guarantee of success as the Revised Standard version of Jeremiah 23:22 might imply. Thompson (1980:496) translates:

If they had stood in my council
They would proclaim my words to the people,
And they would turn them from their wicked way
And from their evil-doings.

This perhaps brings out the force of the hiphils better. Having been present in the council enables Jeremiah to motivate them to turn, but does not enable his success.

3.3.8 Permanence and theophany. The connection with theophany renders the prophetic ministry permanent. It is not possible to "un-see" God, so the experience lasts.

As the other prophets, Jeremiah's continuing ministry was dependent upon continued reception of revelation. This was apparently the case for Jeremiah, although for others (eg Amos?) it may well not have been, and although the prophet would have value as intercessor or giver of opinion, his full function of prophet would fall away. He could however, never loose that deep relation to God caused by his initial experience.

3.4 The individual nature of Jeremiah's theophany: the "word"

Although theophany is the common element in prophetic calling, each theophany has individual features. This is because the function of a call is the establishing of a relationship with the individual prophet, which is an individual matter. Thus Isaiah's call emphasized the
holiness of God, Ezekiel's, God's power and glory, while for Jeremiah:

The particular significance of the account of Jeremiah's call is to be seen in the firm subordination of all its features to the word of Yahweh (Zimmerli 1979:97).

In perhaps a similar way to the alternation of the figure of Yahweh with the Angel in the call of Moses (cf section 3.4.6), in the call of Jeremiah there is an alternation between the figures of Yahweh and the word. For Jeremiah the primary ministry was that of communicating the message of God, oracles being termed "words" (eg Jr 11:1), so the appearance of the word in the call is appropriate.

Whatever else it entails, "to prophesy" means to speak. Furthermore even if there were no such reports or allusions but only the prophet's words themselves, it would be clear from the form, style and content of those words that the prophets were fundamentally speakers (Tucker 1978:31).

Theophany is always linked with the communication of God. In the Psalms, a description of God appearing is followed by a word cf Ps 50 (Wurthwein 1970:158). God only appears for the purpose of communication, not simply for display. In the same way the theophany to Elijah on Horeb climaxxes in the voice.
Thus the motif of the "word" in the call narrative depends on its significance in Jeremiah's ministry (cf also section 5.3), but also upon previous usage of the term, and its significance for Jeremiah's own personality.

3.4.1 Deuteronomic usage. The use of "word" in the sense of a divine communication is characteristic of Deuteronomy, and although not common is considerably more present there than in the rest of the Old Testament apart from the prophets. Examples are:

You shall not add to the word which I command you nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments...
(Dt 4:2).

The word is very near you: it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it (Dt 30:14).

As the book of Deuteronomy certainly formed part of the immediate background to Jeremiah, and there was probably even a Deuteronomic "school", it is not surprising to find this echo in his language. Perhaps the two references would be particularly significant for Jeremiah as he sought to show the stubborn Jews the only way that would lead to salvation from their immediate problems.
3.4.2 Prophetic usage. Jeremiah did not prophesy in a vacuum but in a line of prophets. Indeed it has been frequently suggested that Deuteronomy itself was the product of a group of Northern prophets (cf Thompson 1974:59). In conjunction with this, there is a possible connection with Hosea in the prophecy of Jeremiah. Hosea’s prophecy is ascribed to the word:

The word of the Lord that came to Hosea (Hs 1:1).

The exact wording is not duplicated in Jeremiah, but is present with change of word order, while similar phraseology is common. Similarly:

Hear the word of the Lord (Hs 4:1),

is present exactly in Jeremiah 2:4.

This terminology also occurs in other prophets, for example:

Hear this word which the hand of the Lord has spoken against you (Am 3:1).

The word of the Lord which came to Micah (Mi 1:1).

Jeremiah thus found a ready vocabulary available to him from his predecessors.
Words are of course fundamental to prophets. Stuhlmueller (1964:155) remarks that their authority does not rest on that they have seen a vision from God but that they have a message. (The reference is not to the call theophany.) Jeremiah's response to his covenant with God is to speak (Jr 1:17), whereas the response of Israel to its covenant is to act in obedience.

3.4.3 Usage elsewhere in the Old Testament. Apart from Deuteronomy there is some use of "word" to indicate the command of God, for example:

....by the word of thy lips, I have avoided the ways of the violent (Ps 17:4).

....because you rebelled against my word (Nm 20:24).

This latter, as is probably the case in Numbers 9:20, could rather be attributable to a post exilic P source. By the post exilic period the usage is common eg Psalm 119.

3.4.4 The personality of Jeremiah. The picture of Jeremiah presented in the book is of a man who was introverted, lacking confidence in his own ability and easily discouraged (Rowley 1962:222). That he was such a man is evidenced by the lack of an intimate circle of disciples.
This is in contrast to the authority of Isaiah, or exuberance of Ezekiel who probably found it much easier to speak. Jeremiah found it hard to speak, as implied in the call narrative, in the objection:

    Behold I do not know how to speak (Jr 1:6),

in the direct command:

    Whatever I command you you shall speak (Jr 1:7),

(use of "word" itself also denotes a command (cf section 5.3.3)), in the sign:

    The Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth (Jr 1:9),

and in the promise contained in the first vision:

    I am watching over my word to perform it (Jr 1:12).

Such a person usually finds it easier to write, while the pressure is lighter, which may partially account for the early writing down of the message. Such a man also needs to know the message exactly before he speaks. It would also account for the poetic nature of his oracles, which reflect time spent in casting their poetic form. For such the revelation is primarily verbal. It is significant that the visions of
Jeremiah 1 and 24 are both followed by detailed verbal explanation, as are the acted parables eg Jeremiah 13 (the waistcloth).

The emphasis therefore in the theophany, which sets the tone for subsequent ministry, is on the rational word.

3.4.5 The background of Jeremiah. As a priest Jeremiah could well have felt particularly a custodian of the word of God both written and ceremonial (Bright 1965:lxxxviii), and perhaps mainly the former, as prevented by ancestry from ceremonial participation (Thompson 1980:140). It is noticeable that Jeremiah associates the law rather than cultic operations with the priesthood:

...for the law shall not perish from the priest,
 nor counsel from the wise
 nor the word from the prophet (Jr 18:18).

This verse of course also directly connects the word to the prophet, rather than any ecstatic or divinatory phenomena.

3.4.6 The word as creative of the prophet. Jeremiah was conscious that he, of himself, did not have the ability to be a prophet. He then needed to be acted upon to be made a prophet (Stewart 1936:56). One aspect of this is the touching of the lips (Jr 1:9), but more significant is the creative aspect of the word (Kapelrud 1977:42). It is
the word that says:

Before I formed you in the womb... (Jr 1:5),

and the word was also able to form Jeremiah into a prophet. Integral with the message came the ability to deliver it.


(Cf also section 5.3.1.)

3.4.7 Angel of the Lord.

In the call narrative of Jeremiah there is an oscillation between the word and the Lord himself, whereas in the call of Moses (Ex 3) the oscillation is between the Lord and the angel. Angel (mal'ak) is rare in the prophets. In Jeremiah it occurs only in Jeremiah 27:3 where it has an ordinary secular sense of messenger (cf Baumgartner 1944:98), and in Jeremiah 49:14.
In relation to prophets, it occurs in the Balaam cycle where perhaps too much weight should not be placed upon it, and in Zechariah where Persian influence may be suspected. However it also occurs in the Deuteronomic History, which may be significant to Jeremiah, in 2 Kings 1:3 of Elijah where we may expect the word, and 1 Kings 13:18, with the word, but here, as it was an attempt to deceive, no reliance should be placed upon it. The spread of occurrences makes it likely that the suggestion of North (1970:33) of a change with time is not correct.

The angel of the Lord is usually equated with God himself (Lindblom 1961:102, Young 1968:3, Eichrodt 1967:23 etc). Von Rad (1975a:45) notes that the legitimation of the first altar in Jerusalem was by the angel. The sight of the angel, as God Himself, was worthy of death (Jdg 6:22).

The "angel" is an example of oscillation between the One and the Many in the conception of God. The "angel" illustrates the "extension of the personality", which according to Johnson, played so great a part in Hebrew thinking (Lindblom 1962:56).

The angel of Yahweh denotes a temporary manifestation of Yahweh to be regarded as his presence in human form, not an angel in the ordinary sense of an
independent heavenly being (Robinson 1946:39).

Where the angel is to be identified with God, and is not just any angel, there is a clear semantic difference in the text (Lindblom 1961:101). The reference to angel possibly was to safeguard the full majesty of God (Pfeiffer 1961:73), and may sometimes be due to redaction for this purpose (Albright 1957:298).

With this background it might have been expected that angel would be referred to more in the prophets. However,

(a) Angel may imply an intermediary between God and the prophet, whereas the prophet's relationship is direct. The angel is however present in Exodus 3 where communication is direct (cf Nm 12:8).

(b) The angel gives a message of hope whereas the prophet usually has to give one of doom (Rust 1972:31).

(c) In respect of Moses, Elijah (2 Ki 1:3), and possibly Zechariah, the angel communicates for themselves. However the coming of the word to the prophet is for re-transmission.

(d) The angel implies activity (as in Zechariah) whereas the emphasis in the prophets is on communication. Moses was to act and lead, not primarily to communicate.
(e) The prophet himself is the (mal'ak) messenger. This is seen in later prophets (Hg 1:13 and possibly in the name Malachi), but is not used because the angel of the Lord is more than just a charismatic messenger (cf Habel 1965:299).

3.5 Subsequent theophany

Theophany is part of the initial call experience of the prophet, and is decisive for the validity of that call. Because calling is permanent, it is unrepeateable, and therefore this would imply that theophany likewise only occurs at the initial call. In the case of Jeremiah there is no theophany after the call: the only possibility is the use of pagad in Jeremiah 15:15 but this does not necessarily demand a theophany (cf also section 5.2 in respect of Jr 25:15).

The statement that theophany only occurs in an initial call is however questioned by the experiences of Ezekiel (Ezk 8-11), and of Micaiah ben Imlah (1 Ki 22), of a theophany or vision of the heavenly council.

This latter occurrence must be particularly considered, even though it is vision and not really theophany, as 1 Kings 22 shows great similarity to Isaiah 6 even in language (Zimmerli 1979:99), although the similarity is not so compelling as to require dependence. It is
possible that Isaiah's call was affected by what he knew of Micaiah, as a background does influence the details of a call.

It would appear that 1 Kings 22 is an experience subsequent to the initial call. Micaiah was clearly held in respect as a prophet, his opinion being valued even with other opinions being available. It is however unlikely that Isaiah 6 is a subsequent experience due to the motifs of the touch of the lips, of sending, and of dialogue, all of which are relevant to an initial call, and absent from 1 Kings 22.

Micaiah’s subsequent experience may be due to a particular need of authentication, one of the functions of a theophany, in view of the obvious opposition he received. The same could well be true of the experience of Elijah at Horeb (1 Ki 19). It is also possible that the same may be true of Isaiah 6 in view of the hardness of the message and the position of Isaiah 1-5, but this is unlikely. (This would help to rationalize Zimmerli's two groups of calls into one, although the case of Ezekiel would still give a problem.)

The possibility of a second theophany is due to the receipt of revelation, after the initial call, being a fairly subjective phenomenon. It is unspectacular (as the receipt of the word even at table (1 Ki 13:20)), and thus open to possible doubt when faced with particular opposition. In such a situation, the normal authentication from the call theophany may well be inadequate.
The case of Ezekiel gives a second reason for a subsequent vision of God (or theophany, dialogue taking place in Ezk 9:8f, but this may not be with the theophany as such). In this case, the appearance of God is fundamentally connected to the message of the departure of God from the temple and the collapse of the Zion theology. It is quite clear that the one who had called Ezekiel was the one who was departing from Jerusalem. It thus has the illustrative value of a vision. (It is still disputed whether Ezekiel was present in Jerusalem in person or in vision in any case.) The nature of the message was also such that Ezekiel needed extra authentication for it.

So although a subsequent theophany was rare, its possibility cannot be denied completely. However, the only possible cases have more the nature of vision than of the call theophany.

3.6 Recognition of a prophet

The establishment of a prophet is a deeply personal and individual experience, the making of a relationship with God. Because of its intimate, private nature, it cannot be used to authenticate the message of the prophet to anyone but himself. Thus the prophets rarely claim their experience to give authority to their words: the call narratives give authentication in the written document (Tucker 1978:37), where
otherwise they would not be known. Their claim is rather for individual prophecies:

Thus says the Lord... n’um Yahweh.

When questioned about his authority, however, for example by Jerusalem’s highest court (Jr 26, Kessler 1968:83), Jeremiah implicitly refers to his call experience (cf also Jeremiah 23:18f (the council of the Lord) in respect of his authority compared to that of false prophets).

If a prophet is to be effective, he must be recognised as such. He must have a dual function, almost a split personality, communicating with God and with men (Lindblom 1962:40). Wilson (1980:46f) suggests that intermediaries usually came from peripheral social groups (Anathoth?) and as such needed public recognition to survive.

The authority that a prophet exercised in his public activity stemmed from two sources, revelation from Yahweh and acknowledgement by some section of his audience (Overholt 1979b:518).

Overholt sees this aspect of popular recognition and hence authority by the people over the prophets in Amos 2:12:

You commanded the prophets, "Do not prophesy", 
but this need not express authority but only desire.

Lindblom (1962:64) sees dual authentication of a prophet in the case of Elisha, who receives his authority firstly from God, the transfer of the mantle. (The theophany of the chariot (2 Ki 2:10) or of Elijah himself could have the same function.) Then he believes that the meal, the eating of oxen, was a cultic meal of acceptance. If this were indeed the case, and there is no further evidence (Williams 1969:63), it would account for the establishing of cultic prophets by such an act. Considerable care has to be given in the case of Elisha as he alone received his ministry from another. Jeremiah (and other prophets) makes no claim to any cultic act, or any ancestry, spiritual or physical (Stuhlmueller 1964:153).

Nevertheless without any recorded public act, Jeremiah was recognised as a prophet, his words were seen as having authority and effect, so Pashhur shut him in the stocks (Jr 20:1) maybe just to silence him. On another occasion,

Then the princes and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve the sentence of death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God" (Jr 26:16).
These words indicate that although Jeremiah's words were recognised as in God's name, they would not look back on any act which, as such, designated him as a prophet. His words had to be accepted by faith, any further human authentication being by the life of the prophet (Arendzen 1947:21), or his adherence to Yahwism (Dt 13:1f), but particularly in its fulfilment (Jr 28:9) (Crotty 1971:7), although this was hardly any help at the time.

Similarly Jeremiah, as other prophets, did not authenticate himself, perhaps surprisingly, by miracle (Hamilton 1936:198). The case of the healing of Hezekiah (Is 38) is often looked on as a later addition (cf also Carroll 1969:41).

Habel (1965:317) argues from the similarity of forms of call narratives to suggest that a prophet would be recognised as such by the use of constant form. If this were so, one would expect more reference to this in the prophetic oracles themselves. Moreover, Habel proves too much as he believes that the same form is also seen in non-prophetic ministries, so it could not be used for prophetic recognition.

3.6.1 Intercession. Despite the lack of proof available to the people of genuine prophetic calling, the very claim was sufficient to cause a desire by others for intercession. There has always been a desire to use the services of a man believed to be in special contact with God even if a doubt that he may be genuine, or even plain rebellion, results in noncompliance with the prophet's demands in the name of that
same God. Hence:

....prayer and intercession were among the functions of
the early prophets (Lindblom 1962:204).

The prophet's office had an intercessory function linked
with it from the very beginning (Von Rad 1975b:403, cf
Wurthwein 1952:2).

The first use of nabi' (Gn 20:7), of Abraham, refers to intercession
"because he is a prophet" (Van Zyl, et al 1979:158). Similarly Holladay
(1964:163), tracing the antecedents of Jeremiah in Moses and
Samuel, sees one of the connecting links in a common ministry of
intercession. The book of Jeremiah has frequent references to, and
examples of, intercession (cf Rhodes 1977:120), such that this aspect
of Jeremiah cannot be simply attributed to the redactor (Jobling
1978:6), but rather seen as an integral part of the prophetic role (Rust
regards prophets in general, noting few references to prophetic
intercession, but admits it is an integral part of Jeremiah's ministry.
However the instances that he notes are sufficient to explain why most
feel it is a usual feature of prophecy. Perhaps particularly in the case
of Jeremiah, it is clear that the call to be a prophet is not simply a call
to act for God to the people but to intercede for the people to God.
(Blank 1961:235f notes the frequent use of pega in Jeremiah
Blenkinsopp (1983:166) even attributes the increasing alienation that Jeremiah experienced to his refusal to intercede. Incidentally his refusal is further indication of divine activity, for if it is expected of a prophet that he intercedes, it takes particular courage to go against it (Thompson 1980:284 notes that the form of the prohibition to pray in Jr 7:16 is very strong.) Jeremiah, in obedience to the divine forbidding, yet accepting the prophetic role of intercession, says rather:

If they are prophets, and if the word of the Lord is with them, let them intercede with the Lord of Hosts (Jr 27:18).

Carroll (1981:115) interprets this refusal to pray (Jr 7:16, 11:14, 14:11) as a Deuteronomic redaction from the belief that a prophet's prayer must be effective, yet justifying the fall of Jerusalem. Jeremiah 15:1f then gives the reason for this refusal in the sin of the people being too great. The passages are indeed prose as they stand, although Thompson (1980:340) argues for the poetic nature of Jeremiah 11:14, providing a probable metrical arrangement and also noting the poetic nature of the following verses. He also suggests (1980:382) that the three-fold prohibition was due to Jeremiah's disobedience. Jeremiah was however regarded as a potent intercessor, in fact portrayed as
praying, effectively, for their doom.

Let me see thy vengeance upon them

for to thee I have committed my cause (Jr 11:20).

Even when he accepted the ministry of intercession (Jr 37:3, 42:2) the results were contrary to those hoped for. These should be seen in the light of the earlier prohibitions, but also as a reflection of the prophetic freedom in his words.

Even Jeremiah's prophetic role itself, the receipt of revelation, was in a way dependent upon his intercession:

Call unto me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things which you have not known (Jr 33:3).

It is significant that intercession was not the perogative of the King, despite a supposed cultic role. Engnell (1949:45) writes:

It should be remembered that intermediary prayer was especially incumbent in the king.

He cites 2 Samuel 24:17 of David, which was not a cultic act, and 1 Kings 8:22 of Solomon, a particularly significant occasion, the consecration of the temple. Apart from these, however, cases are
minimal (eg 2 Chr 20:5), and there are grounds for supposing both David and Solomon were regarded as prophets (2 Sm 23:1f, 1 Ki 3:5f).

Perhaps more significantly, intercession was not the role of the priests or of the cultus as was the case elsewhere in the area. Against Reventlow (1963), Bright (1970:193) notes that the intercession of Jeremiah was never in a cultic form, that it was individual and personal, that if the confessions were in fact cultic it is surprising they are not found in the writings of other prophets. Although not in a cultic situation, Jeremiah's intercession is vicarious (Rhodes 1977:119 of Jr 10:24 following the plurals of the Septuagint).

The role of intercessor is then a particular aspect of the role of the prophet, and recognised by the people as such. This is because:

(a) The prophet's especial openness to God and thus to the people as reflecting God's turning to men (Heschel 1962:11). This is an aspect of corporate unity, the prophet stands for the people (Robinson 1936:56).
(b) Communion between God and the prophet led on the one hand to inspiration, but on the other to intercession (Rhodes 1977:125).
(c) The prophet's own realization of the implication of what was revealed, led naturally to intercession (Stuart 1980:13 of Amos 7:1f). The forbidding of Jeremiah's intercession was probably because the future was not conditional, as was often the case in prophecy, but
definite.

(d) Prophetic relationship to the word as powerful infers that their words were powerful. The promise of Jeremiah's power followed immediately after the touch of his lips (Jr 1:9,10).

3.6.2 Anointing. In view of the cases of Elisha and the figure of Isaiah 61:1f (preceding and following Jeremiah), it could be suggested that prophets were recognised by the people in a form of anointing, although both these references could be considered as figurative (De Vaux 1961:105, Zimmerli 1978:100), particularly the latter (Lindblom 1962:192). Psalm 105:15 may refer to the anointing of prophets:

    Touch not my anointed ones,
    do my prophets no harm.

However, the parallelism is more likely contrastive than equative.

There is no textual evidence either to support or reject the idea of anointing Jeremiah as a prophet. That he is not anointed is however more likely from the implications of the rite.

(a) Prophets were rather anointers than anointed (cf Schoors 1977 who argues that Isaiah 6 is actually the purification of the prophet before anointing the new king). Newman (1962:90) also relates
Deuteronomy 18:15-22 to the covenant mediator who anointed the king.

(b) Anointing was an Egyptian and Hittite custom (Ishida 1977:75), so is likely to have been rejected if prophecy was regarded as uniquely Israelite. It was specially used for vassals (Weisman 1976:384, Clements 1967:49), so would be appropriate for Israel's king as vassal of God, but perhaps not for God's messenger. (In this sense it is appropriate for Elisha who wears the mantle of Elijah and presumably acts therefore in respect to Elijah, as his vassal.) It is also implied circumscription of the anointed's actions by the anointer, whereas the prophet is free. Isaiah 61 speaks of the anointing by God, not by human agency. This would be a symbol of the prophet's service to God but perhaps is a physical side effect of calling, the prophet feeling anointed.

(c) Anointing implies a successive office (Rosenthal 1958:6), whereas each prophet was independently appointed. It was a means of the people accepting the role (Noth 1966:240), whereas the prophets would seem in general not to have been wanted. It would also indicate an accepted office of a prophet, which did not exist.

(d) Anointing was a means of consecration, hence objects were anointed to render them sacred and untouchable (Vriezen 1967:89), the thing sharing the authority of the anointer. The power did not come
from the oil, so anointing could be done in secret (Hertzberg 1964:84). It would be inappropriate for anyone but God himself to anoint a prophet.

(e) Anointing is in essence reversible (Eppstein 1969:302 of the relationship between Saul and Samuel). In this regard it is likely that pre-exilic priests at least were not anointed (Greenberg 1950:41), as they held their office by birth. It would thus be inappropriate for a prophet.

(f) Anointing is particularly connected with the spirit (cf Is 61:1, 1 Sm 16:13, Johnson 1955:15, Malchow 1976:70) whereas the prime relationship of the prophet to God is by means of the word.

It would seem that anointing would be inappropriate for a prophet, even as a form of popular recognition. The case of Elisha is unique, as he was the only prophet to be appointed by another. (It is possible that the theophany of 1 Kings 19 was actually for Elisha, the implication being transferred by anointing. Elisha was only connected with Elijah after the event so was not present at the theophany as 1 Kings 19:10 indicates. It is unlikely that 1 Kings 19:19f has been displaced.)
4. THE EFFECT OF THE CALL UPON JEREMIAH

An important aspect of the ministry of Jeremiah was that he was confronted with "false prophets" giving a message contrary to his. This resulted in his need to establish his right to be believed. The book claims that something had happened to him that presumably had not happened to his rivals. The call narrative of Jeremiah is a description of what this was.

The action on Jeremiah can be seen from the terms used in Jeremiah 1 and also from the rejection of what might have been alternative terms. Here the prophet is called nabi' and accepted as such, but his distinctive is not seen in this term as it is also applied to false prophets, but is rather to be seen in other terms.

These refer us to his relation to God and consequent sending, rather than to the receipt of revelation and oracles, leading to the conclusion that this aspect was normative for a prophet. Thus the translation of nabi' by "prophet" in LXX might not be appropriate for Jeremiah as its emphasis falls on speaking (Michaud 1960:110), but it would perhaps be appropriate for his rivals.

The belief that Jeremiah derived his authority from his call is
contrasted with other possible sources of prophetic authority, which unlike the call, cannot result in an authoritative message from the prophet.

4.1 nabi’

This is the only term used to describe the particular activity of Jeremiah as a prophet, and is the most common for "prophet" in the Old Testament, although it is rare in the titles of the prophetic books. Perhaps in this can be seen a slight hesitation to simply equate the canonical prophets with nabiism as such. The term is ambiguous, being used of Israelites and of non-Israelites, of canonical prophets and of ecstacies (e.g. the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18). Its use was refused by Amos. (Although what he meant by the remark recorded in Amos 7:14 is still much debated (e.g. Cohen 1961). The only other two references to nabi’ in Amos are favourable (Mayes 1969a:137).) It was used of Moses and other servants of God (Vischer 1955:311) but also of false prophets, where it is however qualified to express the falsity (cf. Holladay 1975:407). The interpretation of Jepsen (cited in Knight 1947:73) is usually discounted today (Wilson 1978:5, but cf. Marsh 1959:11). This denies any connection between the writing prophets and the nabi’im. (The former would only be called nabi’ in the sense of God’s spokesman or by later revision in favour of the nabi’im.) In this case Jeremiah 1:5 would use nabi’ only as a carry-over from the
ecstatics (Gouders 1971a:214). More likely the appellation of nabi' to earlier ecstatics is anachronous, the word really referring to later prophets (Eichrodt 1961:299, Newman 1962:91). However Porteous remarks:

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It seems likely that they (ie the great prophets) had something in common with the n bi'im which made it natural for men to group them together with the latter (cited in Rowley 1956a:348). (Cf also Freeman 1968:58.)
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Despite there being perhaps some hesitation due to associations present with the word, probably because it is used of others with no call, it is the standard word in Jeremiah.

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The law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise nor the word from the prophet (nabi') (Jr 18:18).
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Other possibilities were present in the early monarchy but were obsolete by the time of Jeremiah. Wilson (1980:135) suggests the word belonged to an Ephraimite strand of prophecy. He notes that of 200 instances, only 30 are outside the strand, of which 17 are in Ezekiel which has Ephraimite influence.

Clearly a central idea of Jeremiah 1 is that Jeremiah was appointed as
a nabi', yet because of unwanted associations, and particularly because the word was also used unquestionably of false prophets, even by Jeremiah (albeit with qualification, as in Jr 23:16), it is not what is distinctive to him (Harrison 1970:744). Likewise there was not a usage of naba' distinctive to true prophecy.

Auld (1984) believes that nabi' was in fact only applied to Jeremiah after him, being previously used only of false prophets. If this is indeed the case, it further indicates that the distinctiveness of Jeremiah is not in the use of the term.

4.1.1 The meaning of nabi'. The noun is probably prior to the verb naba' to prophesy (Rowley 1945b:6, Rendtorff 1968:796) which then means "to act as a nabi". Discussion of the origin of the word nabi' itself has been prolonged (cf the extensive bibliography in Johnson 1962:24), and has mainly concerned whether the word is to be taken in an active or passive sense, reflecting the nature as called, or the function as announcer. Other derivations have also been suggested (eg Curtis 1979), but etymology has proved inconclusive (Rowley 1945b:7). As Barr (1961:107) notes, derivations are unreliable in determining actual meaning. Perhaps sheer familiarity with the figure and his existence for a long time made explanation of the term appear unnecessary at the time (Ellison 1966:13). The term would appear to describe the role of Jeremiah adequately, such that alternatives were rendered obsolete. Nevertheless it failed to do so exclusively, so that
others, without a call, could also be called nabi’.

4.1.2 The rejection of alternative terms. By the time of Jeremiah, nabi’ was the only term in use for prophet, having superceded, and perhaps absorbed, the meanings of alternatives. The alternatives were ro’e and hoze (both usually translated "seer"), and "man of God", although Ross (1970:8) suggests a further alternative reflected in the names Iddo or Oded from a root meaning "send and speak". This latter must remain conjecture. The use of nabi’ indicates that it is a more appropriate term than the other possibilities in that it reflects the prophetic nature more accurately.

4.1.2.1 hoze and ro’e. Most scholars treat these as synonyms (eg Lindblom 1962:2, Jepsen 1980:289), or believe that a difference has disappeared by the time of Biblical record (as 2 Chr 16:7 and 2 Chr 19:2, unless the latter reference is to his son Jehu, also called nabi’ (1 Ki 16:7)). The verbal forms appear synonymous (cf Ps 27:4 with Is 6:5, Ps 46:8 with Is 5:12). Various suggestions have been made to explain the existence of two terms:

(a) ro’e is the vulgar term, hoze the cultural (Lindblom, cited in Johnson 1962:11).

(b) hoze has an Aramaic origin, ro’e an Arabic (Rowley 1945b:9). Orlinsky (1965:158) believes this possibility is no longer tenable owing
to the use of *hoze* in Ugaritic.

(c) Jastrow believes that *ro’e* is an inspector of omens but *hoze* the one to whom an omen appeared (Orlinsky 1965:171). This and similar distinctions in the Ancient Near Eastern milieu are of limited value in the Israelite context.

(d) A difference in regional usage. Wilson 1980:139, 254) believes *ro’e* is of Ephraimitic usage, *hoze* of Judean. Jeremiah would then have more affinity with *ro’e*.

(e) A difference between visual and auditory phenomena (Snaith 1946:6). Amos is however called a *hoze* and Samuel a *ro’e*.

(f) From Isaiah 30:10 which parallels the two, the emphasis of *ro’e* is on the experience while that of *hoze* is on the delivery. If this is correct it would explain the use in the introductions to the prophets (Is 1:1, Mi 1:1) as something to be proclaimed.

This variety indicates that no definite meaning can be attached to them. However, both terms probably derive from divination (Vriezen 1967:207, Johnson (1962:3, who equates *hoze* with *qosem* (divine)), so perhaps both have acquired a derogatory connotation (cf Amos 7:14) (Ward 1969:32). Thus they reflect a common phenomenon in the Ancient Near East (Orlinsky 1965:154) whereas *nabi’* is unique to
Israel (Neher 1968:49). This alone would be sufficient to cause nabi' to become exclusively used.

4.1.2.2 The distinction between hoze and nabi'. A difference is discernable in usage, hoze being qualified by a person such as a king (as also the priests (Cody 1969:102)), but nabi' only by God. The Old Testament prophet differs from the diviner in that he makes his appeal direct to God (Davies 1969:6). It is possible therefore that hoze is a royal appointment (Huffmon 1976:180, Zevit 1975:789, but cf Hoffmann 1977:209f). Hoffmann feels the role of the prophet was split into the advisor hoze (cf (f) above) and the oracle giver nabi', hence the accusation of Amos 7:14 which is then interpreted as a question of authority, not of profession. A royal appointment could indicate that a hoze had his powers under his control, that is that he was a diviner, but only in later writing called nabi' after hoze fell out of use (Eichrodt 1961:299). (2 Chr 16:10 uses hoze of Hanani but this may only indicate that the term was used at that time.) It is also possible that a king could choose his advisor from the n bi'im, giving him an official title of hoze, so both terms are used of Gad and Iddo. Hence Isaiah 29:10, which parallels the two terms, refers to the covering of the head of the hoze (head referring to the position of honour), but the covering of the eyes of the nabi'. The two are also paralleled in 2 Kings 17:13 indicating at least a distinction.

Jeremiah uses neither the term hoze or the verbal form, neither of
himself nor of false prophets. For himself he would certainly want to exclude any idea of divination or that his activity is in any sense an official appointment.

4.1.2.3 The distinction between ro'e and nabi'. 1 Samuel 9:9, an oft quoted verse, often considered a gloss, indicates that the difference was one of terminology:

....for he that is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer,

or as translated by the Septuagint,

....the people used to call a prophet a seer.

Jeremiah, although he never uses ro'e, frequently uses ra'a in the sense of "understand", "perceive" (eg Jr 2:31), and also of his visionary experience (Jr 1:11, 13, Jr 24:3) (but cf section 5.7.1).

In the Ancient Near East there existed various functionaries, one of whom was the seer, who saw visions and interpreted omens, the latter aspect being a learnt art (Albright 1969:53). When the prophet arose in Israel, it was natural for him to be referred to as a "seer", and only later was the difference expressed in a different term. Samuel was then technically a nabi' and not a seer. Both seers and prophets were
involved in intercession (Wilson 1980:301). Both were revealers of the meaning of vision although Jeremiah makes it clear that God is the one who revealed the meanings to him. The similarity would appear close enough for some of the terminology to be utilized by the prophet. ro'e is used only of Samuel in the Ephraimite literature (Wilson 1980:139), and rarely elsewhere, but Jeremiah would appear to have equated his function to Samuel's at least to some extent (cf Jr 15:1). (It is also probable from this that the nabi' was not ecstatic, as there is no evidence that Samuel or other seers were.) There is moreover a connection between ra'a and yada', the latter expressing the prophetic experience in terms of a relationship to God cf Ex 33:12-13, and the frequent use together as hendiadys (Muilenberg 1968:179) eg Jeremiah 5:1. However nabi' was adopted, because the term more clearly reflected the ministry, and because there was a real difference between the two figures. Jeremiah was not a reader of omens and visions by his own ability, but revealed what God had shown and explained to him.

Further possible reasons for nabi' to be preferred to ro'e are:

(a) ro'e as a term is inappropriate to aural revelation, and it is possible that by the time of Jeremiah this was more common, as perhaps shown in the term "word".

Prophecy was in the process of becoming more
consciously psychical in medium, hearing the articulate word in place of seeing the physical event (Robinson 1946:44 of Elijah on Horeb).

(b) Koch (1983:19) suggests that a nabi’ is distinct from a seer in the way in which he gave oracles. Whereas the seer gave immediate advice, the nabi’ took time to cast the oracle into a distinct form.

(c) Young (1952:65) suggests that role emphasized a relation to God, nabi’ to men. Both however, were intermediaries, but the nabi’ proclaimed the message of God as his prime function (Robinson 1960:425). Possibly, however, the real distinction is the reverse of this. The seer had a social function, or he would not exist, whereas the nabi’ only proclaimed because of his relation to God.

(d) Orlinsky (1965:158) believes a further distinction was that the seer was a man of action, the prophet of words. He notes the equation of the seer and the priest in the Ancient Near East. The prophet however speaks, not manipulates, although Samuel did officiate as a priest. The prophets opposed any form of manipulatory divination, and any cultic observation without inner obedience to God. There would be a desire to avoid such connection, even in name.

4.1.2.4 The rejection of "man of God". This term is never applied to Jeremiah, surprisingly, as his ministry is essentially a relationship to
(a) In the earlier literature the term is associated with leadership of a group of prophets or sons of the prophets (Koch 1983:18). Later prophets including Jeremiah may have had disciples (eg Is 8:16), but this is very different from the groups in the books of Samuel and Kings. This usage may well be applicable to Jeremiah 35:4.

(b) The term is general and would refer to any religious figure, such as a priest or nazirite and is in itself inappropriate to the unique nature of prophecy. Hallevy (1958:243) believes its later use is only of "special nearness to the Godhead" (also Hayes 1979:261). There is however no evidence for Old Testament use for any except prophets. Although David is referred to as a "man of God" (Neh 12:24, 36, 2 Chr 8:14), there is evidence that he was regarded as a prophet as well as a king (2 Sm 23:1f) (cf Deist et al 1982:123).

(c) The qualification "of God" is general. The personal nature of the relationship would indicate, rather, use of the personal name of God. Thus nabi laYHWH is attested (eg 1 Ki 18:22, 2 Chr 28:9) while nabi le'lohim never is. However, Moses is referred to as "man of God" (Dt 33:1, Jsh 14:6, 1 Chr 23:14 etc), while he had a very intimate relationship.

(d) The majority of the uses of "man of God" refer to Elijah, Elisha and
earlier. Probably it was discontinued with the introduction of the more appropriate term nabi', and reference to Moses reflects earlier tradition. (Moses also had a wider ministry than that of a prophet.)

4.1.3  naba'. The verb, which is usually considered to be derived from the noun nabi', occurs only in the Niphal and Hithpael forms, both usually translated "prophesy" in the English. Only the Niphal is used of Jeremiah, but the Hithpael, although used of false prophets (Jr 14:14), and of prophets of Samaria (Jr 23:13), is also used of Uriah (Jr 26:20). This last case, and the use of Niphal of false prophets, indicates that there is no distinction between true and false in the usage of Niphal and Hithpael. Although Porter (1982:23) suggests that the two forms reflect two separate groups, this is unlikely as both forms occur together, but it is possible that the very fact of two forms indicates that there is a distinction in meaning.

Hithpael is often taken as meaning ecstasy (De Vaux 1971:243). Perhaps better, it indicates the reflexive "causing oneself to act as a prophet" (Wilson 1979:330) but not simply uncontrolled ecstasy (Heschel 1971:186), as its use of Uriah suggests. However it is possible that the Hithpael indicates here that Uriah prophesied accompanied by ecstasy. In any case, it has acquired a derogatory connotation (Ellison 1969:28), such that its use in 1 Samuel 18:10 appears to have nothing to do with actual prophesying (Parker 1978:280). He believes the use in 1 Kings 18 suggests prophesying to
Baal and not for Baal, so there would be no idea of giving a message (Parker 1978:284). Some uses at the time of Jeremiah are clearly derogatory (eg Jr 23:13, Ezk 13:17), and probably all are.

Niphal is used where conscious utterance is implied and is the usual word applied to canonical prophets. Often this has a passive sense, which would indicate that the prophet is used by God in the delivery of the message, not however that the prophet is simply a passive instrument. Niphal also has a reflexive implication but here the subject allows himself (better, causes himself) to be the object of the reaction of others (Eaton 1974:331), as the theophanic use of yada where God "causes himself to be known". As such it is appropriate for the idea of service, but also could indicate the sense implied by the Hithpael, of acting simply for the sake of others. Niphal is also used of false prophets, who were giving rational messages, just as Jeremiah (eg Jr 23:25). There was no distinction from Jeremiah in outward form.

In general therefore, Niphal probably indicates the action of conscious transmission of a prophetic message, its double implication being very appropriate for reflecting both the passive reception of the message and also the freedom of the prophet in his delivery, whereas Hithpael rather emphasizes the effect on the prophet himself (Guillaume 1938:115). Nevertheless this distinction is only valid between about 800 BC and 550 BC (Jepsen, cited by Robinson (1946:175), also Wilson (1979:329), Rendtorff (1968:799)). Possibly these dates should
4.2 The action of God in the prophetic calling

The theophany of Jeremiah 1 was accompanied by his appointment as a prophet and provided his authority. These constituted his call. Although not used of the prophetic call, the word qara' (call) is used in the Old Testament in two senses, that of describing or identifying a relationship and that of an appointment to serve (Farrer 1962:180). These categorize the action of God in Jeremiah 1. The sending of a prophet to serve presupposes an already existing relationship, as the receipt of revelation follows the call theophany. Thus the terms used of God's action upon Jeremiah can be divided into these two categories, because even the terms which deal more specifically with the work of the prophet require his previous standing. The emphasis of prophecy falls upon the relationship of the prophet to God, and not on the task as such. The distinctiveness of Jeremiah's ministry can be seen in these terms as none of them are used of the false prophets at all, except salah and sawa which are expressly denied to them:

....I did not send them or charge them; so they do not profit this people at all, says the Lord (Jr 23:32).

4.2.1 Terms implying relationship. The relationship of Jeremiah to
God is seen in three terms in Jeremiah 1, *yada* (know), *qadas* (consecrate) and *paqad* (appoint). To these could be added *natan*, due to its occurrence in Jeremiah 1:5, but this has rather to do with subsequent ministry. (Because of this it is arguable that *paqad* is also of subsequent ministry, but the emphasis in its use is on the single occurrence (“this day”, Jr 1:10).) Moreover the actual appointment does not occur in Jeremiah 1:5 but only later (cf section 6.1). The word *qum* (rise) is also included here due to its occurrence in Jeremiah 1:17. Although rather idiomatic here, the verb does have a frequent connection with appointment (as in Jr 29:15). An omission from any of the call narratives is any idea of choice, so *bahar* does not occur. The call of the prophets is not a choice from a number, but an appointment.

4.2.1.1 *yada* (know). The term does not imply simply intellectual knowledge or even understanding, but a personal relationship between knower and known (Vischer 1955:310), as in Jeremiah 1:5. In this sense it is used appropriately of the sexual relationship and reflects the exclusivity of a relationship as in marriage. Similarly it is used of the relation between a vassal and his overlord and the mutual recognition of the implications of the relationship (Huffmon 1966:31). This use is reflected in Deuteronomy eg 9:24 and Jeremiah 24:7. On the contrary, prophets and priests “have not knowledge” (Jr 14:18) in this sense (cf also Jr 29:23). *yada* implies a recognition of the treaty obligations as binding, hence Israel, as known, has to keep the law (Jr
22:15-16, cf Am 3:2), and in the new covenant, knowledge of God involves the internalization of the law (Jr 31:33-4). On the contrary, apostacy is characterized by lack of knowledge (Jr 10:14). So also in Jeremiah 29:23 the word bears a double sense in that God knows the sin of the false prophets, and does not know them as true prophets, in relation to himself. Similarly Jeremiah, although he is the agent of God to seek to restore the people to their obligations, is known himself (Jr 1:5), and thus also under obligation (Jr 12:3 where *yada* is coupled with *ra’a*). His effectiveness as prophet depends on his knowledge of God (Jr 11:18).

Knowledge also involves creativity. A relationship cannot be inactive or it will deteriorate, so is always creative of new aspects. God makes what he wants in Israel and Jeremiah by means of their knowledge of God, mediated, for example, by the words of the prophet (cf Vischer 1955:310). Possibly there is a connection of ideas seen in the coupling of the call with birth (Jr 1:5, 20:14), more than a simple complaint of Jeremiah about his very existence. Just as the creative acts of knowing in marriage led to his physical being, so the creative act of knowing in his call led to his prophethood.

4.2.1.2 *bahar* (choose). The aspect of creativity partially explains the rare use of this word of the prophets compared to the king and people (Jacob 1958:241), even in call narratives where it might be expected to be found, despite its common use in Deuteronomy and passages
concerning the Servant in Isaiah (Lindblom 1962:327). (This observation has implications concerning the identity of the Servant.) God creates in the prophet what he desires rather than seeks in a man the desired qualities, whereas bahar rather implies a considered choice based on existing standards (Shafer 1977:20,32, Seebass 1975:74). It is used in this sense in Jeremiah 49:19, 50:44 where the use of paqad indicates the choice is permanent. Normally however the use of bahar would also involve the possibility of rejection (as Jr 8:3 and especially Jr 33:24), so its non-use as regards the prophets implies permanence. The creativity of God in the prophet does not however suppress individuality.

Its appearance in Deuteronomy for the first time (Moriarty 1965:825) may well be coupled with the appearance in common use of the term "word". Choice from a number becomes equivalent to simple appointment when coupled with the creative action of God through the word.

It has been suggested on the basis of Amos 3:2 that bahar and yada are parallel terms: however the emphasis in the verse falls upon the relationship implied by yada (Langdon 1980:126). The verse has no nuance of choice, and moreover yada here is coupled with paqad, again emphasizing the appointment rather than choice.

4.2.1.3 qadas (sanctify). In Jeremiah 1:5 this is paralleled to yada and
compliments its meaning. Jeremiah is set apart to God by his call, but also by the same act, set apart from his people. This is naturally a disruptive act. *qadas* implies the sole use by God of the prophet, just as its use of Israel (Jr 2:3) implies Israel's belonging to the Lord as a bride to her husband (cf the marriage metaphor). Jeremiah would no doubt have in mind also the cultic use of consecration to the Lord of priests, offerings, and perhaps of particular significance for Jeremiah, the temple and associated articles. The only other use of the Hiphil is in Jeremiah 12:3, also in close proximity to *yada* (and *ra'a*) but here the context is of judgement.

Pull them out as sheep for the slaughter,

Set them apart for the day of slaughter.

It is possible that Jeremiah saw his own setting apart in a similar way, that his call doomed him personally (cf the nuance of *paqad*. Of the occurrences in Piel all, except 3 related cases referring to the Sabbath (Jr 17:22, 24, 27), refer to the preparation for war and destruction (Jr 6:4, 22:7, 51:27, 51:28). This also is similar to the ministry of Jeremiah himself, as he announced the coming disaster.

4.2.1.4 *qum* (rise). The verb is frequently used in an idiomatic sense of making a decision to do something:

...arise, and say to them everything that I command you
(Jr 1:17). Arise, and let us go up to Zion (Jr 31:6).

As such it is appropriate to the appointment of a prophet, as it is in fact used (Jr 29:15, cf also Jr 6:17, 23:4, and also Dt 13:1, 34:10, Am 2:11).

It is also used in the technical sense of establishing a covenant (McCarthy 1972:3), and also in the context of intercession (as in Ps 3:8, 44:27, 74:1 etc), a usage reflected mockingly in Jeremiah 2:28 of idols:

> Let them arise, if they can save you,
> in your time of trouble;
> for as many as your cities
> are your gods, O Judah.

Both of these uses are naturally appropriate to the establishing of a prophet, as also is the frequent use of raising up a deliverer (as in Jdg 3:15). The phrase "God raised up a deliverer" was a technical expression for the sending of a commander to relieve a vassal (Holladay 1970:33).

*qum* is also used in the technical sense of the fixing of the eyes in blindness (1 Sm 4:15, 1 Ki 14:4) and as such implies an irreversible
Apart from qum, the idea of raising is frequently connected with prophecy, as in the idiom involving sakam literally "rise up early" but translated "persistently" as in Jeremiah 7:25, 25:4 etc. The idea of raising is also present in the prophetic burden massa' from nasa' (raise) with a further connection with the appointment of the prince nasi' (Speiser 1963:113). This would indicate that massa' has relevance to the overall appointment and not to specific oracles. The idea of raising is also present in Jeremiah 1:10 "over nations and over kingdoms".

qum is not used for subsequent inspiration of a prophet, who is already established. Thus in Jeremiah 1:17, in the context of the initial call, God says:

...arise (qum), and say (dabar) to them....

For these later dealings with one already appointed, other terms are used such as ur (Jr 50:9, Jr 51:11). In Jeremiah 51:1 this is coupled with the only occurrence of ruah in the book. It is however used, especially in the Deuteronomic literature (Nicholson 1970:96), in the sense of effecting the word of the prophet (as in Jr 28:6), but here again it is God in his activity, not inspiration, which is referred to.
4.2.1.5 paqad (appoint). Apart from Jeremiah 1:10 the verb is used in the Hiphil concerning the appointment of Gedaliah (eg Jr 40:5), the committing of the people to him, the placing of the scroll of Jeremiah in the chamber of Elishama (Jr 36:20) and placing of Jeremiah in prison (Jr 37:21). Habel (1965:309) believes its use implies irrevocability, and indeed the ancient world knew little of the appointment of a temporary nature, which is one reason why Gedaliah was assassinated, and also uses of the verb in Qal usually are of punishment of a total, thus permanent nature (eg Jr 11:22, 25:12). In Jeremiah 15:15, although translated "visit" the association with yada and the context of Jeremiah's complaining about his sufferings indicate that Jeremiah is seeking reassurance about his ministry which is in fact given in Jeremiah 15:19f. He is urged to be faithful to his commission, not reappointed, when God will also be faithful to him (cf also Jr 29:10).

The use of paqad in Jeremiah 36:20 is unusual. It was probably chosen as that placement led to irrevocable destruction of that scroll. It may also reflect the aspect of punishment so often implicit in the use of the word (as in Jr 23:2). This aspect of punishment although not always present when paqad is used of appointment is often an associated idea (cf the appointment of Aaron (Nm 3:10) with the associated death of anyone else who came near, or the appointment of the captain (2 Ki 7:17) who died immediately afterwards). Then a false prophecy, ie without appointment, is followed by the appointment (paqad) of punishment to the prophet (Jr 23:34). Thus its use of the
appointment of Jeremiah as a prophet carries the implication that, as the other prophets, he was an announcer of doom. This is then reflected in the emphasis of the rest of the verse:

See, I have set you (paqad) this day 
over nations and over kingdoms, 
to pluck up and break down, 
to destroy and to overthrow, 
to build and to plant (Jr 1:10).

4.2.2 Terms implying sending. Although the call of a prophet inherently contains the idea of a task, the specific duty, as a specific oracle, is received subsequently. The call only gave a general message (Mowvley 1979:20).

4.2.2.1 natan (give). The verb has the common sense of "giving" but has relevance to the particular task of the prophet. Its use presupposes an already existing relationship, as something cannot be given until it is already possessed. An example of this use is:

I have made you (natan) an assayer and tester...  
(Jr 6:27).

Cf also Jeremiah 3:15. In this sense it is used in the call narrative:
I appointed you (natan) a prophet to the nations (Jr 1:5).

Its use here reflects the setting apart from birth, already mentioned in the verse, which preceded the call itself, so that before his call he was already the possession of God to do with as he liked.

A second use of the word reflects giving to Jeremiah both in the sense of enabling and protection for the task that he is called to do. An example of this use of natan is:

...they shout (give their voice) against the cities of Judah (Jr 4:16).

Jeremiah likewise "gives his voice" in his ministry, giving what has been given to him, as in the call narrative:

Behold, I have put (natan) my words in your mouth (Jr 1:9).

Then Jeremiah's message is empowered:

....behold, I am making (natan) my words in your mouth a fire (Jr 5:14).
He is also protecting his ministry:

And I, behold, I make you (natan) this day a fortified city... (Jr 1:18 = Jr 15:20).

The implication of the use of the verb so frequently is that Jeremiah’s message is entirely a gift from God in all its aspects (cf Preuss 1975:27). This has obvious implications for the freedom of the prophet.

4.2.2.2 salah (send). This is also a very common verb, but of particular importance to Jeremiah especially in the controversies over the false prophets, where the Lord frequently speaks through Jeremiah denying that he sent them, for example:

The prophets are prophesying lies in my name, I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them (Jr 14:14).

....it is a lie which they are prophesying to you in my name, I did not send them, says the Lord (Jr 29:9).

In contrast the claim of the call narrative is of God’s sending:

...for to all to whom I send you you shall go,
and whatever I command you you shall speak (Jr 1:7).

This claim is repeated by Jeremiah when accused (eg Jr 26:15).

\textit{salah} is particularly appropriate to the prophets as messengers, speaking in the messenger style which they share with the Mari prophets who also claim to be sent (Bennett 1966:11), although Kaufmann (1961:94) believes that the Israelite "Apostle prophet" is distinctive. Both Mari and Israel portray the messenger as the agent of the sender, and standing in his place, hence the alternation between God and the angel in Judges (Turon 1948:168) (and possibly God and the word in Jeremiah). This concept is the foundation of the later office of the "shaliach".

As \textit{natan} with which it is coupled with reference to divorce in Jeremiah 3:8, \textit{salah} only has reference to sending of an already commissioned person (eg 2 Sm 12:1, Is 6:8). Clearly what is not possessed cannot be sent.

Jeremiah 23:38 uses the word of a prophet who was then disobedient to the sending of God. Although this is a unique case, it is possible due to the freedom of prophets, but for such followed inevitable punishment. In the case of Hananiah, the punishment for speaking when not sent (Jr 28:15) was that he would be sent "from the face of the earth" (Jr 28:16). Although possibly just a pun, this may indicate
that Hananiah was in fact a disobedient true prophet.

4.2.2.3 sawa (command). The verb is frequent in Jeremiah compared to the other prophets (cf also its frequency in Deuteronomy). Before Jeremiah 35 it always has God as subject, but after that only has God as subject once (Jr 50:21), having various human subjects (this could be coincidental, but may reflect Jeremiah's sense of the sole authority of God). When God is subject, the object is a prophet (taking the giving of the law to the people as by a prophet, Moses), or a false prophet (in the negative, that is a denial of God's command). In a single case (Jr 34:22) the object is the king of Babylon, raising the question of how he would know what the command of God was. The verb is often coupled with salah (as in Jr 1:7, 1:17), and in one case (Jr 14:14), also with dabar.

It is thus an appropriate word for the prophetic experience. Whereas salah refers to the sending to a specific audience at a specific occasion, sawa rather has reference to the words and the message, except in Jeremiah 13 which is really similar as it deals with an acted oracle, the incident of the waistcloth. The prophet's freedom is respected:

....speak... all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word (Jr 26:2).
The verb has a strong connection with the covenant, dealing frequently with the provisions of the covenant, as in the Temple Sermon (Jr 7:22). There is no difference in the use of sawa between God's commanding the people by the law and God's commanding the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah has to speak as commanded in terms of his covenant with God as the people have to act as commanded in terms of their covenant.

4.3 Other forms of prophecy

Apart from Uriah (Jr 26:20), no mention is made with approval of any other prophet contemporary with Jeremiah in the book. There were in existence other prophets, which thus form part of the cultural background. For Jeremiah this meant that his role was to some extent accepted, and that he could put his message into already accepted forms. The danger was that he was identified with them. By distinguishing himself from them, Jeremiah had to make clear what his authority was for what he did, because his message could not be authenticated simply by his role. He was not to be believed because of his action (as false prophets), because of connection with the cult, or because of ancestry, but by his own call.

4.3.1 False prophets. Jeremiah frequently condemns other prophets, not for being prophets as such, but for speaking what comes from their
own minds rather than from God (Lindblom 1962:211).

Do not let your prophets and diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream (the participle is Hiphil, implying that they caused the dream) (Jr 29:8).

The quoted text is RSV which is interpretive, as "they" is "you" in MT, so New English Bible translates, "do not listen to the wise women whom you set to dream dreams". Whether Jeremiah's listeners or the dreamers are causing the dreams is however irrelevant to the idea of causation. This is however absent from LXX, but Greek does not so easily lend itself to this nuance as does Hebrew.

There is no hint of any truth in the words of the false prophets in any of the references in Jeremiah. Their message is from their own minds (Jr 14:14). The word seqer (false) is common. There is a possibility of a source of their message outside of themselves in the dream, but here a comparison of Jeremiah 23:26 with 23:27 also indicates that this too is from within. Their dreams are rather "wishful thinking". There is also some reference to diviners (Jr 14:14, 27:9, 29:8), but these are not so much a problem for Jeremiah's authority, as the source of their message is obviously different. Thus they are termed qosem, and not nabi'. It is clear that Jeremiah did not derive his authority from any form of divination.
Alternatively false prophets may be spiritually deceived (1 Ki 22:21), but the question then remains whether the falsity or the deception was prior (Young 1952:144).

The appellation “false” of the Septuagint is an interpretation, as Jeremiah identifies them as "prophets who prophesy" (Holladay 1975:407), but he clearly condemns them. The problem apparent from the major discussions of Jeremiah 23 and 28 (cf Dt 13, 18, Ezk 13 etc), is that it was hard for the people to distinguish true from false, that is that there was identity of form but not of content (Knight 1947:85, Whitley 1963:19). Thus Jeremiah did not receive his authority from acting in the right way, but from his own experience of a call.

Criteria have been suggested for distinguishing the false prophets, but are unreliable (Carroll 1976:51). Hosea 9:7 suggests impiety (cf the criterion of preaching Yahweh of Dt 13:1), but most prophets of Jeremiah’s day could not be accused of this, as they prophesied in God's name, not by Baal as their predecessors (Jr 23:25-27, but cf Jr 2:8, 23:13). As regards immorality, even Jeremiah lied on occasion (Jr 38:27). A monetary motive has also been suggested (cf Mi 3:11, Edelkoort 1948:179f), nevertheless Samuel accepted gifts, and it is unknown how Jeremiah was supported. It is more likely that "false" prophets were in fact practising from the best of motives, believing that
their message was best for all (Klein 1963:801). No indication is present of any difference in method (cf 2 Ki 3:15) or of any signs. Only a prophet can definitely say that another is false, and then only on the basis of his own revelation (Overholt 1967:241). When faced with Hananiah, Jeremiah could not initially judge (Jr 28:5f) (cf also Schmidt 1968:166). Paradoxically, this is a sign of his genuineness (cf Mottu 1975:66).

The only relevant factor, which could be perceived and for which Jeremiah was accused, and for which he accused other prophets, was a difference in message. Even this is not simply applied. Although a true prophet was usually of doom, this was not always so (cf Jr 28:9), as a comparison of Isaiah with Jeremiah shows.

The absence of any satisfactory criteria for distinguishing Jeremiah from false prophets means either that he was conforming to them which is inherently unlikely, or that they were conforming to Jeremiah which is also unlikely due to the animosity in which Jeremiah was held. Alternatively they were both conforming to an earlier type of prophet whether true or false. This is satisfactory in the case of false prophets who sought acceptance. Jeremiah’s accusation is that they were conforming to what a prophet behaved like, but without the reality of the experience and message which he had. In the case of Jeremiah his plea for acceptance was not conformity, although some hint of this may be seen in the reflection of Deuteronomy 18:18 in the call
narrative, but in a claim to divine inspiration. Nevertheless the fact that he too apparently conformed is a reflection of his freedom, that he could only operate in a way which related to his culture, but also that there was a basic identity between Jeremiah and his predecessors because the prophetic phenomenon was essentially the same.

As Jeremiah was free to conform to his culture, the question remains as to whether this meant his message could also be false (cf Crenshaw 1971:17). This must be considered a possibility, although Jeremiah regards false prophecy as rebellion (Jr 29:32) to the divine command (Jr 1:17) carrying appropriate penalties (as Jr 8:1f). If the prophet gave the wrong burden (massa') he would be lifted up (nasa') and cast away. The only guarantee of Jeremiah's truth lay in his relationship to God from his call, and obedience to subsequent revelation. It is this to which he consistently refers (as Jr 23:22 of the council). Obedience of course did not guarantee the success of his ministry (cf Jr 23:22).

4.3.2 Cult prophets. Prior to S Mowinckel's work, the opposition of prophets to the cult and priests was emphasized, but since that and the work of Johnson (1962) it has been believed that at least some prophets had a real place in the cult, contributing to worship and poetry (eg Porteous (1951:6), Rowley (1956a:346) who notes the frequent coupling of priest and prophet in Jeremiah, cf also Pedersen (1946:139)). It is also possible that the hoze at least originally was a
cultic official. (hoze is not cited in Jeremiah, although hazon is (Jr 14:14, 23:16), but with no cultic connection.) Others (eg Eissfeldt 1961:115f, Rendtorff 1962:147) note the lack of definite proof for their existence. Jeremiah is never contrasted with false prophets on the grounds of position, but as regards being sent (Vawter 1961:20). There is no evidence that his "false prophets" were cultic.

If they existed, such prophets were likely part of the ancient near eastern cultural scene, with a function similar to those at Mari. Hence they could have arisen due to social similarity and become institutionalized (Berger 1963:945, cf however Williams 1969:153f). Possibly the monarchy even tried to supplant prophetic authority by appointing them (Heschel 1971:260).

It has been suggested that various of the canonical prophets were cultic, such as Habakkuk, Nahum and Haggai (Kuhl 1960:98 etc). Jeremiah, especially in his confessions has been felt to come in this category (eg Reventlow (1963)). It is however unlikely that this was so: particularly as regards his authority, Jeremiah never cites any cultic act (Long 1977:7) (whereas the priests take their authority from the cult cf Wilson (1980:27)), thus also it is unlikely the call narrative was in any sense a ritual (Berridge 1970:29). Likewise his interest centred not on cultic matters but upon questions of policy and conduct and the results of them. Cultic prophets would by their very nature be preachers of salvation (Carroll 1969:195), which of course the false prophets were,
whereas Jeremiah preached the folly of reliance on any external object as assurance of salvation, and was not linked to any office (Von Rad 1975a:99). Interestingly, Wurthwein (1950) suggests that Amos was originally a cult prophet, but his call turned him into a prophet of doom.

4.3.3 Sons of the prophets. These groups existed in the early days of the monarchy, at least until the time of Amos (Am 7:14). There is no evidence for them thereafter, and no mention in the book of Jeremiah, but the possibility must remain that Jeremiah and other prophets were such because of their relation to another prophet.

One form of relationship is an hereditary one. Jeremiah cursed his birth (Jr 20:14), but this is a natural expression of distress. There is no indication that any of the prophets were descended from another.

Alternatively, the sons of the prophets were in the course of learning the prophetic art, such that every prophet was originally a son (or disciple) of the master who would be called the "father" (cf Williams 1966, Phillips 1968). This is unlikely (Alexander 1953:6) due to the lack of any evidence (except perhaps Elisha), and because the prophets refer to a divine call, not the relationship to a master (as the priests refer to their ancestry). There is no evidence that Jeremiah was taught, rather he considered himself incapable (Jr 1:6).

Sons of the prophets could also simply have been followers of a
prophet without learning a technique. Isaiah apparently had disciples (Is 8:16), which are possibly referred to as children (Is 8:18), but there is no evidence for any group of disciples attached to Jeremiah, except perhaps Baruch. The usual belief is however that the book was compiled by later disciples (cf Mowvley 1979:61). The absence of a group around Jeremiah indicates however that he himself did not come from such a group, or derive authority from one (cf Pedersen 1940:108).

The sons of the prophets are usually considered to have had a cultic background, being attached to a place, and were similar to groups outside Israel (Guillaume 1938:109). They had probably died out by the time of Jeremiah (Porter 1982:19), or absorbed into the cult as musicians (Johnson 1962:72f).

4.3.4 Prophetesses. Also from reference to his birth in Jeremiah 20:14, and in the call (Jr 1:5), is the suggestion that prophethood was derived from the mother. It is noteworthy how important the name of the mother of the king is in the Deuteronomic History.

Again Jeremiah never refers his position to his ancestry but to a call. Also references to prophetesses are few (5 in the Old Testament (cf Hempel 1949:84), 7 in the Talmud (Megillah 14a), as well as false prophetesses (Ezk 13:17f)), and even these are sometimes believed to be just the wife of a prophet (Kaiser 1972:75).
The existence of some prophetesses is further evidence for a divine call (cf Lindblom 1962:169), as it was contrary to the current culture. (For a modern application cf Mehl 1981.) God was portrayed as male, and his priests were male. (Ishtar, a female deity, did have prophetesses (Huffmon 1968:104).) Particularly there was a problem of the connection with the fertility cults and associated cultic prostitution. On the other hand, the rarity of prophetesses points to the close connection of the culture with prophecy. God called those with a suitable prehistory, who could be effective.
5 THE RECEIPT OF REVELATION

God's dealings with Jeremiah did not end with the theophanic call experience which commissioned him as a prophet. He was dependent upon later experiences of revelation which gave him the message that he was to proclaim.

5.1 The need for particular revelation

Jeremiah's ministry as a prophet continued over most of his life with possibly periods of silence of which nothing, at least, is recorded. In this Jeremiah is different from some of the other prophets who appeared to prophesy only once or twice, Haggai perhaps being the best example, as his oracles are closely dated.

The call to prophesy, although it might mean a long term ministry, and does imply change in the prophet himself, does not necessarily mean that he will continue to prophesy, as Robinson (1946:169) believes, feeling that the call is a general commission to speak. The act of prophecy depends entirely on receiving something to prophesy. The introduction to the book (Jr 1:1-3) specifically implies revelation over a long period of time rather than an initial call revelation, all else being dependent upon that, although the revelation at the call did give the
basic message, "pluck up" etc (Jr 1:10) (Mowvley 1979:21).

Speaking of the prophets who were predicting an early return from exile, Jeremiah is recorded as saying,

If they are prophets, and if the word of the Lord is with them, then let them intercede with the Lord of Hosts...

(Jr 27:18).

The implication was that if their prediction was indeed a genuine prophecy, then their intercession was more likely to be effective than Jeremiah's who was predicting otherwise. He believed, on the basis of his own revelation, that such intercession must be ineffective. The significant word in the text, however, is "and", which implies that their intercession could only be effective if both conditions, being a prophet and receiving the word, which in this case indicates the will of God, were met. Thus Jeremiah could condemn prophetic words without necessarily condemning the prophet or his call as false (Ploger 1951:159). Simply being a prophet does not give reliability (Minear 1948:135). (The two parts of the condition are not simply parallelism, the definition of a prophet then being one who receives the word, as other poetic features are not present here. This passage is also considerably shorter in LXX, but both phrases, as well as the "and", are present there.) This would be in keeping with the Deuteronomic method of recognition of a prophecy as true, that of fulfilment:
....when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word which the Lord has not spoken: the prophet has spoken it presumptuously, you need not be afraid of him (Dt 18:22 cf Jr 28:9).

Nonfulfilment need not indicate that a prophet is false in himself, but that he gave the wrong message, that is, there is a distinction between being a prophet and having the word (cf also Jr 5:13). The same may equally be implied earlier in the chapter,

I will raise up a prophet...and I will put my words in his mouth (Dt 18:18).

This verse in particular is echoed in the call narrative of Jeremiah, which also makes a distinction between the appointment and receipt of oracles,

....before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations (Jr 1:5).

Behold, I have put my words in your mouth (Jr 1:9).

More particularly, a distinction is maintained throughout the whole
book in the frequent repetition of the claim,

The word of the Lord came to me, saying... (eg Jr 2:1).

It was not enough simply to be appointed a prophet, each oracle had to be received individually. This is similar to the messenger formula ("thus says X" cf Jr 2:2 (Wilson 1973:103)), where the message of the envoy is not only recognised by his appointment, but by the form of the particular message. It is noticeable how rare in the book are words recorded of Jeremiah which are not attributed to divine revelation, or addressed to God. Examples are Jeremiah 26:12f which refers to his authority, and Jeremiah 28:5f which is quickly supplemented by an oracle.

Perhaps the clearest indication that Jeremiah's activity was not simply dependent on his person but on particular receipt of revelation is when as a prophet he is approached for advice which he does not give immediately. Only later,

At the end of ten days the word of the Lord came to
Jeremiah (Jr 42:7).

This remark, although prose, and thus often attributed to later Deuteronomic authors, must reflect an historical incident (cf Nicholson 1975:144). If an invention to augment the authority of Jeremiah in the
eyes of the exiles, it would hardly have been put in a passage dealing with Egypt. Moreover the idea would surely also have been reflected elsewhere in the book as well.

A further indication is the incident in Jeremiah 28:5f. Although suspicious, Jeremiah can only say that Hananiah is false on the basis of a further revelation to him.

Jeremiah's activity as a prophet thus depended on receipt of revelation. For him this primarily meant the word of the Lord.

5.2 The word of the Lord not a theophany

In later theology the "word" became hypostatized as virtually equivalent to God himself. Some see an early example in Jeremiah 23:29 (Bergman, et al 1978:124). There is a possible indication of hypostatized revelation even in earlier accounts, for example,

The angel of the Lord said to Elijah (2 Ki 1:3),

where we might expect the word, particularly as this is part of the Deuteronomic History (cf section 5.3.4). Probably in view of the following incident this is an authenticating theophany and is exceptional. In any case, "angel" is used as the message was for
Elijah himself (cf section 3.4.7). In an earlier case, the prophet of Bethel claims,

....an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord,

saying... (1 Ki 13:18).

As this was an attempt to deceive, the prophet may well have sought to enhance his claim. The genuine revelation to the prophet later at table seems entirely devoid of any appearance but is rather an inner experience (1 Ki 13:20).

The appearance of angels in revelation is common in Daniel and in Zechariah (where the word and angel may possibly be identified cf Zch 1:7 & 1:9, but perhaps angel is used as the revelation here is more than verbal). These revelations, and the use made of them, are of a very different kind from the receipt and delivery of oracles in earlier prophets.

A possible and occasional identification with the angel does not mean that the word is always hypostatized in physical and visible form, as a form of theophany (cf section 3.4.7). Although it is clear that the word is of divine origin and therefore "an extension of Yahweh's personality" (Johnson 1942:20), in that it has the authority of God, references to the word in general carry no implication of a visible appearance, and are rather of such a subjective nature that doubt could be possible (as
In the Book of Jeremiah itself there is no fixed formulation, for example,

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord (Jr 11:1).
Thus said the Lord to me (Jr 13:1).

Then the Lord said to me (Jr 15:1).

The word of the Lord came to me (Jr 16:1).

These are equivalent, so that Jeremiah is simply indicating a divine communication. Although Jeremiah prefers to refer to the "word", there is nothing exceptional in the content to cause such preference.

Jeremiah's normal experience was not of vision, let alone of theophany. The equivalence of the use of "word" with the speaking of the Lord indicates that both are aural. The mention of vision (Jr 24:1) would indicate that it was exceptional. Moreover, in this and in the visions associated with the call (Jr 1:11-16), there is nothing to indicate that the Lord himself appeared. (Cf the visions of Amos, for example,

He showed me: behold the Lord was standing beside a wall (Am 7:7),
which are however usually equated with his call (eg Cripps 1960:93).)
If indeed Jeremiah 24 is to be treated as later (cf Nicholson 1970:26, referring to Jr 24:8), all vision in Jeremiah is associated with the call. So also, although the call of Samuel is referred to as vision (1 Sm 3:15), it is not an ordinary revelatory vision (cf 1 Sm 3:1, where the terminology is different).

An apparent theophany after the call is found in Jeremiah 25,

   Thus the Lord said to me, "Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it...." So I took the cup from the Lord's hand (Jr 25:15,17).

The use of "cup" is however a common metaphor (Jr 16:7, 49:12, 51:7), and the fact that the nations drink it (cf Jr 25:17f) would indicate that metaphor rather than vision is recorded here. If it were vision, it would be much more bizarre than anything else in the book, where vision, where it occurs at all, is of ordinary things. Metaphor may also be the reason for the omission of "to me" in the introduction to the passage in LXX. This also connects it with the oracles to the nations, in that they are inserted immediately before this oracle. This means that the question of authenticity attached to the oracles to the nations would also extend to this passage (eg Nicholson 1973:213, but cf
Otherwise apart from the oracle received in the court of the guard (Jr 33:1) which may or may not have been observed, there is no indication of what Jeremiah was doing when he received the oracles, and no indication that he appeared to see anything (as in 1 Ki 13:20). Although Jeremiah is restrained in his description of what he saw, always concentrating on the message, there is usually a total absence of any description of vision. This, together with the fact that he preferred the term "word", would indicate that usually his experience was auditory, without visible effects. Whether or not the mechanism involved his physical ear is impossible to say.

5.3 Jeremiah's use of "word"

Jeremiah's use of "word" indicates more than just a communication of God, but rather reflects the active presence of God (Stuhlmueller 1964:141). This is also seen in the fact that "word" is always singular. It was this that made Jeremiah into a prophet. However, just as Jeremiah had to respond in the call for creation of a prophet to occur, so response is necessary to receipt of revelation, both in Jeremiah, as he must accurately retransmit, and in the hearers who need to respond.
5.3.1 The word as creative. Just as the word made Jeremiah into a prophet, so the word continues to be creative, but now of new situations. The ministry of the prophet is to change society.

....the Deuteronomic history...[is] a history of Jahweh's effective word...(Von Rad 1975b:94).

One reason for the demise of prophecy is in the loss of political independence. Once control of their own affairs was gone, so was much of the direct creative action of the word by the prophets (cf North 1970:38). Also by the time of Jeremiah, the other creative function of prophecy, that of appointing kings (eg 1 Sm 16:13, 1 Ki 11:29, 19:16), was also no longer operative, as the institution had become secularized ie non-charismatic.

The words of Jeremiah are not to be viewed as creative in themselves as in pagan magic. In Mesopotamia the utterances of the gods create positive and negative reality (Bergman, et al 1978:92), and Egyptian documents proclaim the creative power of the sacred word (Stuhlmueller 1964:139). Balaam was called upon to curse Israel, and whereas it was apparently necessary for him to see all Israel, clearly he could not be heard by them (Knight 1947:36). This idea of power inherent in the word itself is common,

The utterance of prophetic words is for the purpose of
getting them into the world so that they can act upon that
world, as such they are conceived as transcending the
limits of communication and do not necessarily require
an audience (Rabbinowitz 1966:324).

Some support for this is that the Hebrew *dabar* is the act of speaking
rather than the content of the speech *'amar* (Bergman, et al 1978:99).
In this sense the words to Hananiah are looked upon as a curse
effective by its very utterance.

This very year you shall die, because you have uttered
rebellion against the Lord (Jr 28:16).

The very word to Hananiah, however, indicates that it is God himself
who is acting,

Therefore thus says the Lord, "Behold I will remove you
far from the face of the earth. This very year... (Jr 28:16).

It is likely that the common view at the time was power inherent in the
word, hence Jehoiakim's eagerness to destroy it, a story which is
intended to show that the word cannot be defeated (Carroll 1981:117).
Jeremiah was condemned as causing the troubles of Jerusalem by his
very words (Jr 26:11), but he was concerned for Jerusalem. It was
rather the lies of the false prophets which were destructive by causing
a false sense of security (cf Overholt 1970:73).

An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land
the prophets prophesy falsely...
my people love to have it so,
but what will they do when the end comes?
(Jr 5:30-1).

So even any loss of morale would be profitable in removing what was
false and causing a return to correct security.

There is no independent power in the word, no hypostatization,
although Bergman, et al (1978:124) sees a hint of it,

Is not my word like a fire, says the Lord, and like a
hammer which breaks the rock in pieces? (Jr 23:29, cf
also Is 55:11).

Rather the effectiveness is in God himself, not in the prophet’s words
as such.

When Yahweh allows a prophecy to be heard he
becomes creatively active (Koch 1984:133).

This is indicated in the call narrative itself:
Behold, I am watching over my word to perform it (Jr 1:12).

This is because the prophet has freedom in his words. They only have power in so far as they reflect God's word to the prophet. It is also because God alone is sovereign. Langdon (1980:148) notes that Jeremiah is the first prophet to link God's sovereignty with creation (Jr 27:5).

The whole message of the book of Jeremiah, reflecting the Deuteronomic teaching, is that punishment came upon Judah because they did not obey the word spoken to them. It was not effective by its utterance alone but had to be heard and obeyed (Jr 25:1-14).

The prophet of God is not a magician uttering potent words of blessing and cursing, but a messenger of God using the recognised messenger formula for the oracles which he delivers (Wolff 1977:93). The compulsion expressed in the suggested etymology of the word dabar (McGuire 1980:887), is not on the hearers but on the prophet.

Jeremiah no doubt wished that his words would in themselves create a new situation. For that reason he (not a Deuteronomic author (cf section 2.5) but cf similar ideas in Dt 6:6, 30:6, 14) looked forward to a
creative act of God involving the word,

I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts (Jr 31:33).

5.3.1.1 Creation in Jeremiah. There is no definite linking of word and creation prior to Jeremiah (cf. Von Rad 1975a:142f, 1975b:86). Nevertheless, the idea is implicit there. For example, Jeremiah 1:12 is echoed in Isaiah 55:11 which speaks of the effectiveness of the word, and interestingly, Isaiah 41:20 links creation with the hand of the Lord which is associated with the "word" in Jeremiah (section 6.3.6). A more definite reference is:

Ah Lord God! It is thou who hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power and outstretched arm!
Nothing (dabar) is too hard for thee (Jr 32:17).

Although the reference to dabar is rather idiomatic here, particularly as LXX does not reflect a translation as "word" here, nevertheless in the repetition in Jeremiah 32:27, the affirmation is coupled with an oracle, indicating that as creation is in the power of God by the word, so also was the fulfilling of the word of the oracle.

A further reference to creation refers obliquely to the method:
It is he who made the earth by his power, 
who established the world by his wisdom, 
and by his understanding stretched out the heavens 
(Jr 10:12).

Most significantly, there follows a reference to God's active voice (omitted in LXX), and then to the absence of breath (implying speech?) in the idols. (Cf the connection between word, spirit and creation in Psalm 33:6.)

It is thus at least a possibility that the connection between word and creation was made in Jeremiah's time, although not by Jeremiah as it is not found explicitly in his book. His emphasis, apart from power, which is obviously necessary in creation, falls, especially in Jeremiah 10:12, on rationality and wisdom, which is the means by which Jeremiah hopes re-creation will occur in his hearers (cf also Crenshaw 1967:50).

5.3.2 The word as rational. The effectiveness of the word lies in its being understood, and in this lies its creative power. Bruce (1983:45f), speaking of Robertson Smith on Numbers 12:6-8, states that for Moses, the emphasis falls upon rationality and intelligibility. This would be so for Jeremiah also, the follower of Moses. Jepsen (1980:283) believes that an audition rather than a visual image was received. This would increase rationality, as a vision can never be communicated as
accurately as a direct word, because it involves a change in medium. In any case,

The Hebrew tradition emphasized the word and hearing rather than vision and seeing (George & Driskill 1979:73).

Similarly, although Jeremiah did use action in his ministry (Jr 7:29, 19:10, 27:2, 43:8), these are to be seen as aids rather than communication in themselves. Unlike the seer, the prophet is not a man of deeds, but of argument, reason, exhortation,

....in short, words (Orlinsky 1965:159).

Because of this personal communication of God rather than any idea of magic, mechanical oracles such as Urim and Thummim, ephod, and even psychic forms of inspiration such as dream are subordinated to the word (Eichrodt 1967:72 cf Mowinckel 1935:277f). Likewise, ecstasy is probably excluded as there is no loss of rationality in the receipt of the word (Wood 1979:96). The ministry of Jeremiah and of other prophets was to make God known, but this can only be as far as God chooses:

The prophets experience what he utters not what he is (Heschel 1971:264).
Although the word is:

....an extension of Yahweh's personality (Johnson 1942:20),

this is, after the initial experience, not mystical, but limited by words. This does mean, however, that prophecy can be exact rather than just vague ideas about God (Jacob 1957:480). The word has a true correspondence to what is behind it (Roehrs 1961:265).

Nevertheless, the word is more than just rationality, which Jeremiah associates rather with the wise than with the prophets, but includes Jeremiah's feeling of constraint (Dunn 1973:5).

5.3.3 The word as command. The word of God is creative as a command (as in Genesis 1). "Hear the word of the Lord" is a legal summons or judgement (Lindblom 1962:283). Also in the Psalms, "word" is a command (Carroll 1981:117). A clear example of this use of "word" is the ten "words", the ten commandments of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

Jeremiah is speaking as a messenger of God, with his authority, transmitting the commands of God to his people. dabar is not simply an expression of mind, but also of will (Stuhlmueller 1964:136), one
The word was not given to be simply informative, but as an expression of God's will, which should be obeyed.

5.3.4 The "word" simply a redaction. Some believe that the characteristic "word" of Jeremiah is not original to him, but redactive (eg Bergman, et al 1978:111f), it being a result of Deuteronomistic theology, so used in order to authenticate an oracle or action (cf Joshua 8:1,2 with 8:27), or as an introductory word or phrase to an oracle or pericope. Wilson (1980:283) takes "the word of the Lord came to me" as a characteristic Deuteronomistic phrase (cf Neumann 1973:174f). Its use, however, predates Deuteronomy:

Deuteronomy did not invent the term but seems largely responsible for its popularity in prophetic literature and preaching (Stuhlmueller cited in Bergman, et al 1978:111).

In the term "word", Jeremiah and the Deuteronomists used a term which adequately fitted the experience of the prophet. The prophet's experience of calling is by the word, the medium of ministry was by words, and the message was of obedience to the word (George & Driskill 1979:73f). Which way the dependence lay is impossible to say. In the book of Jeremiah itself, references to the "word" have been suggested as redactional (Bergman, et al 1978:113), as in the
introductions to the oracles, for example:

The word of the Lord came to me, saying, (Jr 2:1).

However, the concept is integral to the oracles themselves in a number of places, for example:

Behold they say to me,
"Where is the word of the Lord?
Let it come...    (Jr 17:15).
For the word of the Lord has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long (Jr 20:8).

In cases such as these it is hard to see how a redaction could have resulted in the present text without denying the originality of the whole section (both quoted portions are from the "A" source). So even if "word" were redactional in the introductions to the oracles, it is not a concept introduced to the thought of Jeremiah.

5.3.4.1 Inconsistency in terminology. If later redaction, reducing all inspiration to the medium of the "word" was the case, it is surprising that other modes are also found, such as the angel (eg 2 Ki 1:3). Some prophecies in Chronicles use the term "spirit" rather than "word" (1 Chr 12:18f, 2 Chr 15:1f, 20:14f, 24:20f). This is particularly surprising in view of the prophetic avoidance of the concept owing to
its connection with the ecstasies. It is also unlikely that it is just a matter of style, as the Chronicler uses "word" elsewhere (eg 2 Chr 30:12, 35:6 etc). In view of the nature of the occurrences of "spirit", it is possible that these are ecstatic utterances, for which the term would be appropriate.

Moses, who in later literature is recorded as inspired by the word (eg 2 Chr 35:6 cf Dt 5:5), is nevertheless treated as inspired in a more direct sense in the earlier writings:

With him I speak mouth to mouth clearly, not in dark speech, and he beholds the face of the Lord (Nm 12:8).

Prophets, however have visions and dreams (Nm 12:6). The record seems to imply a more repeated theophanic revelation for Moses. The similarity of the experience of Moses to that of Jeremiah is suggested by the very similar expression:

....according to the word of the Lord (Nm 3:51).

Here, however, the term קָעָה (mouth) is used, as in Numbers 12:8, which refers to very intimate communication, rather than just the receipt of a message. It is noteworthy that redaction has not taken place to conform this expression to later usage, which indicates not only an unwillingness to change, for the sake of conformity, reference to the
revered figure of Moses, but also a difference in experience.

These differences indicate variation in experience, but also an unwillingness to simply render all accounts consistent. The references in Jeremiah are to be distinguished from alternatives such as "angel" or "spirit" (for "mouth" cf section 5.6), which bear particular meaning. The references to "word" in Jeremiah are likewise meaningful and not just a literary convention.

5.4 The word and features of Jeremiah's prophecy

Although the features of Jeremiah's prophecy demanded a theophanic call experience, the reception of the word, although it shows some of the features, does not share all of them. What made a prophet was not the reception of revelation but the initial experience which prepared the prophet for later revelations.

Unfortunately the reception of the word was seldom the object of prophetic reflection, as their relationship to it is so personal and direct (Von Rad 1975b:80), even to the figure of eating the word (Jr 15:16), as a result of the deep relationship initiated at the call. It is for similar reasons that Jeremiah rarely uses the general term for God but prefers the personal name.
5.4.1 The word of the Lord an external phenomenon. The consistent claim of the prophets is that they were inspired from without.

A true prophet would never give an answer on the spur of the moment as some less worthy prophets were inclined to do, but would await a word from God through a visionary experience or after a period of prolonged spiritual gestation. When eventually the message did come or the vision was given (of course there was no guarantee that it would) there was never any doubt in the mind of the spokesman or of the hearers that it had come from God (Taylor 1969:96).

A common way of referring to this is the frequent phrase "the word of the Lord came to me", more common than seeing or hearing (Mowinckel 1934:215). What this meant is impossible to say. Motyer's translation:

The word of the Lord became actively present to...

(Motyer 1962:1039),

is an attempt to bring out the force of the verb (haya). The use of this rather than alternative verbs indicates an instantaneous (implied by the perfect), therefore non propositional, "flash" of illumination. Heschel's opinion is similar:
Prophecy consists in the inspired communication of divine attitudes to prophetic consciousness (Heschel 1971:3).

The cognitive faculties were involved in inspiration (Stuart 1980:10), as the prophets understood what they preached. Whether the prophets received in a "flash" or by means of rational propositions is not relevant, as it must be perceived in language to be retransmitted, so that referring to what is received as "word" is appropriate.

The phrase n 'um Yahweh may be more significant than just an addition due to form (cf Rendtorff 1954), whether translated as "whispering of Yahweh" (Lindblom 1962:109) which reminds forcibly of the "still small voice" (1 Ki 19:12), or "rumble of Yahweh" (Vos 1948:237) (cf Baumgartel 1961). That this means more than a "flash" is also seen in the contrast and pun of Jeremiah 23:31, where the n 'um Yahweh is contrasted with the prophets, who yin' mu n 'um, "oracle an oracle". Lindblom (1962:36) also refers to the experience of Julian of Norwich in the fourteenth century who received in three ways, by bodily sight, spiritual sight or by words formed in her understanding.

This testimony, and the difference in terminology employed in the prophetic narratives would indicate the impossibility of restricting the
reception of the word to one method. Communication based on relationship is more likely to be diverse in form than to follow a consistent pattern (cf the marriage relationship beloved by the prophets eg Jr 20:7 of seduction and the use of *yada*).

The difference from the call theophany lay in the subjectivity of the receipt of revelation which could lead to occasional doubt (eg Jr 32:8). Subjectivity, however by no means implies an origin of the message from within. The use of the messenger formula (Wilson 1973:103) indicates a claim that a message was received from without, that they did not initiate it. Indeed just as the prophets never set out to be prophets, rarely did they seek the word (Mowvley 1979:20). Although Isaiah’s confidence in promising a sign would indicate he had confidence in communicating with God (Hines 1923:47), this is rather an indication of an existing relationship. Despite the attempt of Overholt (1977:129f), there is no evidence that the message was affected by anything other than God’s own desires (cf section 6:4).

5.4.2 Revelation not exclusive to prophets. The word is typical of the prophets:

...the law shall not perish from the priest,

nor counsel from the wise,

nor the word from the prophet (Jr 18:18).
But there is no indication that it is exclusively so. Deuteronomy itself implies the distinction of dreamers from prophets and that the revelation of each could be valid (Dt 13:1). The Chronicler also regards the Egyptian Pharoah Neco as having received some form of valid revelation (2 Chr 35:22). Likewise, Nebuchadnezzar is referred to as "my servant" (Jr 43:10 etc), a phrase which Zevit (1969:74f) interprets as his vassal status (cf remarks in section 2.4.2.1). This must presuppose some form of communication.

Prophetic experience outside Israel (cf Lindblom 1962:Ch 1) and even similarity of terminology, as for example of Marduk, whose word is regarded as active and personal (Jacobs 1958:128), cannot be simply disregarded as spurious. The distinctiveness of Jeremiah and other Hebrew prophets lies rather in their relationship to the God who called them, and in the message they brought (cf section 2.5.2).

A particular revelation is however exclusive to a particular prophet at a particular time and situation (Mottu 1975:61). Thus oracles cannot be stolen by one prophet from another (Gurewicz 1952:34) (Jr 23:30), and also the words of one prophet do not necessarily have permanent validity. Jeremiah, on the basis of his revelation, implicitly denied that the promises to Isaiah were still valid in a changed situation (Jr 4:10) (Bright 1960:311).

Lack of exclusivity is also seen in the freedom of the prophet. He does
not transmit exclusively what is received, but his background and literary ability also affects the final oracle, though not to the extent of substantial change in the message (cf Overholt 1977:129f).

5.4.3 The reception of the word not disruptive. Unlike the theophanic call experience which by its very nature is disruptive, the coming of the word to the prophet is quiet (cf 1 Ki 13:20, 19:12, 2 Ki 20:4 etc), despite the intimacy of reception, likened to touch and taste (Roehrs 1961:263). There is no record of experiences similar to those of the calls associated with later receipt of revelation.

Disruptiveness is rather experienced by the hearers of Jeremiah who received a message contrary to their own desire (Mowinckel 1934:213), particularly if they were trusting in previous prophecy (cf Stuhlmueller 1964:134).

For the word of the Lord has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long (Jr 20:8).

Consequently Jeremiah, as one of the people, himself suffered distress and was unwilling to proclaim the word (Williams 1977:65). He was not a detached messenger (Scott 1961:9).

If I say. "I will not mention him
or speak any more in his name,"
there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
shut up in my bones,
and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot
(Jr 20:9).

Jeremiah lived in tension. His life could be likened to an incarnation of
the word (Mayes 1969b:3 of Hosea), and a joy because of the relation
with God, but at the same time sorrow because of what it entailed (cf
Jr 15:15f, a passage probably reflecting Jeremiah's rebellion against
his ministry and a re-affirmation of his call). McKane (1979:173) notes
the particular disruptiveness of the prohibition to intercede.

5.4.4 The word as historical. In the portion of the book of Jeremiah
often referred to as Source A, there are no oracles clearly dated, as
the material is of a general nature, unrelated to specific historical
events (except the drought (Jr 14:1), about which nothing else is
known). Source C, oracles attributed to Jeremiah but in a prose form,
of which the authorship is frequently disputed, contains many datings
(eg Jr 27:1, 32:1 etc). This is a significant difference. Oracles given in
a particular situation at a specific time were given immediately, so in a
prose form. On the other hand, composition of poetry of the standard
of "A" requires time, so that oracles which were general, repeated
many times in differing circumstances, and enjoying time for reflection
were deliberately recast in poetic form for the sake of memory. (In
contrast to this, Weippert (1973:78) considers the prose structure,
which has some poetic features, as demetrification, i.e., a loss of poetic form (cf. Holladay 1975:406). It is however hard to imagine a good reason for a change from poetic form whilst retaining poetic elements. Her appeal to paranesis, which would account for dating, rather points to a preference for a poetic form, especially in a non-literate society.

Being dated, the prose oracles are related to specific occasions and are given, and received, in response to them. That is, the messages given are not portrayed as a manifestation of Jeremiah's existing thought but as God's response, given at that time for that purpose. The clearest indication of this is the delay Jeremiah experienced waiting for the oracle:

At the end of ten days the word of the Lord came to
Jeremiah (Jr 42:7).

A similar case is recorded in the affair of the prophet Hananiah:
Sometime after the prophet Hananiah had broken the
yoke bars from off the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, the
word of the Lord came to Jeremiah (Jr 28:12).

5.4.5 **The word and covenant.** The connection between word and covenant is clear because of the setting down in words (often held as revealed in the ancient near east) of the treaty obligations and benefits. In addition, due to the association with creation, it is probable
that the word is also related to the creation of Israel's covenant. Thus the covenant people are dependent upon it for very existence (Am 8:11f). It is however the cognitive and rational element of revelation, and obedience to it which are more important than the outward signs of the covenant.

....I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge... and when you have multiplied... they shall no more say, "The ark of the covenant of the Lord" (Jr 3:15f).

In the sermon against trust in the temple, Jeremiah emphasizes the need of obedience and therefore on a true word:

Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail (Jr 7:8).

In this sermon, the criterion of the covenant is obedience to the commands of Yahwism (Jr 7:23), an assessment echoed in the recognition of a prophet in Deuteronomy 13. Such agreement should be present, as the prophet's word is the word of Yahweh (Mowinckel 1934:215). As with the people, so the requirement laid upon the prophet was obedience to God's command (Jr 1:1,17).

If the important aspect of the covenant is knowledge of and obedience to the word, rather than the outward symbols, it follows that the word
may also be proclaimed outside the covenant, even if that word is in general a word of doom (Jr 46-51). It follows also that some validity is attributed to rational elements outside of the covenant:

Is wisdom no more in Teman?
Has counsel perished from the prophet?
Has their wisdom vanished? (Jr 49:7).

Revelation, the knowledge of God, and the word of God, are not confined to the covenant. What is significant is the theophanic experience which initiated the nation and validated the words of the covenant (implied in Jr 7:22), and the theophany to the prophet which authenticated his words. Without these, revelation may still be valid and true, but not guaranteed so.

Likewise, Jeremiah's covenant with God was not dependent upon continued revelation but only upon his initial call. He remained a prophet under obligation to God even if God did not choose to use him at all.

5.4.6 The word and service. The establishment of Jeremiah as a prophet was for service as a messenger of God. Subsequent receipt of revelation is in general aimed at that goal. Out of 241 occurrences of the phrase "the word of the Lord" in the Old Testament, 221 relate to a prophetic oracle (Von Rad 1975b:87). These oracles were usually
delivered orally but also in writing, as Jeremiah's scroll, or as the oracles against the nations (Haran 1977:392).

However not all oracles were received simply for retransmission. Some were for the benefit of the messenger himself.

Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words (Jr 18:2).

Further examples of oracles specifically to Jeremiah are found in Jeremiah 5 and the "confessions". Jeremiah's being a prophet and consequent reception of the word can thus be distinguished from his service. In the call narrative the former is portrayed in Jeremiah 1:4-10 whereas the sending occurs in Jeremiah 1:17-19 (cf the headings in Westermann 1967a).

Equally, the service of the prophet, for example in his intercession or his giving of advice, did not depend upon a received word, but upon his relationship to God (Herbert 1973:14). It was his call by theophany which led to his service, not anything subsequent, except, of course, his giving of oracles.

5.4.7 The word and authority. The word of the Lord has authority. Elijah had power over the rain, and it is implied that the word was responsible for the deaths of Pashhur (Jr 20:6) and of Hananiah (Jr
28:7). Power was conceived of as lying in the very words therefore:

....the mantic prophet sought a word as the word had power (Guillaume 1938:37).

However, the power of Jeremiah does not lie in his words but in the God who will act in accordance with them (Jr 1:12). Jeremiah never cries "hear me" which is understandable (cf Stuhlmueller 1964:154), but neither does he say "hear this word", but always identifies the source of the words as from God. If Jeremiah spoke without having received the message, his words were impotent, mere wind with no substance, like the prophets he derides (Jr 5:13). So also he derides the idols as unable to give a message:

Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak (Jr 10:5).

A close connection exists between what is done and what is said (Robinson 1946:171, 185), but just as prophetic actions such as Jeremiah 13:1f are not to be viewed as sympathetic magic but as signs (Taylor 1969:77, 96), so Jeremiah's words do not have power just in their being spoken. Their power comes when they are acted upon as correct, and their correctness, the source of their authority, comes because God is their origin.
Because their power is in content not in the words themselves, a freedom exists as regards the actual formulation. (Cf 1 Kings 21:19 with its delivery (1 Ki 21:20f) where the change in form indicates the recorder did not consider the actual words important.) This is not to say that words were just put into God's mouth which were considered worthy of Him, as Cripps infers (Cripps 1960:81), but that their form may change.

Thus the authority of Jeremiah did not so much lie in the words which he uttered, as in the relationship which he had with God. Because he knew God, then he could utter God's words. This is not to say that he just invented the message, but that he knew God well enough to give form to the message without essentially changing it.

As coming from God, the words will have the authority of a command (cf Bergman, et al 1978:84). This is implied in the usage of the messenger formulae:

Thus says the Lord.

Hear the word of the Lord.

But as the effectiveness lies not in the words themselves but in their being obeyed (ie the rational rather than the creative aspect), the possibility always exists that they will be resisted.
You have neither listened nor inclined your ears to hear (Jr 25:4).

Similarly, the condemnation of Jeremiah for prophesying against Jerusalem (Jr 26:11) is rescinded (Jr 26:16), even though the words are recognized as having the authority of God, because they do not have power just in their being said but are dependent on the hearers.

But we are about to bring great evil upon ourselves (Jr 26:19).

5.4.8 The permanence of the word. Although Jeremiah was permanently a prophet by virtue of his call, he was not in permanent possession of the word but even had to wait for its reception (Jr 42:7). Thus although his opinion was no doubt of value due to his experience of God, he could only speak oracles which he had received, and in fact few of his words are recorded apart from oracle and address to God (cf eg Jr 28:6f). This is because the word, unlike the Greek conception, often had only immediate validity (Stuhlmüller 1964:138). Jeremiah thus frequently repeated the authenticating formulae for his oracles. A distinction has however to be made between the poetic oracles which have relevance to the overall situation of the time, and are repeatable, and the prose oracles, relevant to the immediate situation. The introductory formulae frequently refer to specific circumstance (eg Jr 14:1), but always mean that a message is
received (Robinson, T H 1923:43).

An aspect of permanence is the fact that Jeremiah could simply reproduce the scroll after its destruction (Jr 36). This may mean no more than a good oriental memory, particularly if indeed the material of the oracles had been extensively worked upon to give them poetic form.

5.5 The prophetic dialogue with God

The theophanic call narrative had the function of initiating a close relationship with God such that the word is recognized and authenticated. As such it includes dialogue as a part of this relationship (cf Eaton 1981:58f). (Thus it is wrong to separate the theophany from dialogue in the call. Ezekiel 1-3 is a unity (cf Zimmerli 1979:98).) This relationship had to continue in order to be effective: one aspect of this was the continuing dialogue between God and his prophet. This was distinct from the reception and transmission of oracles.

Thus, reacting to the decision of Westermann (1967b) to exclude from consideration prophetic speech to God,

We must therefore take seriously the possibility that human speeches directed to God are integrally involved
in some way in the basic nature of the prophetic task
(Wilson 1973:115).

The correctness of this can be seen in the frequency of dialogue. An early example of this is recorded in Genesis 18 concerning God's discussion of the fate of Sodom with Abraham who is identified as a prophet. Also, Stuhlmueller (1964:166) remarks on the I-thou exchange in Isaiah 41:8-10. The phenomenon is clear in Jeremiah especially in the confessions (cf especially Jr 12, 15:15f). This dialogue is not to be equated with the council of the Lord, as the prophet does not participate in that, and moreover dialogue, unlike the council, does not generally involve an appearance of God.

Prophetic dialogue rests upon the fact that prophetism is not primarily a tool for the transmission of oracles. There were, after all, other methods available for revelation. Prophetism is rather a relationship between God and the prophet (Ellison 1955:141), of which reception and transmission of oracles is a result. Dialogue is an aspect of the prophet's freedom. As he knows God better because of dialogue, his freedom in giving form to the oracles will not result in change of the essential message, which could well be the case when a messenger does not fully appreciate the mind and intentions of the sender.

5.6 The mouth
The only action recorded in the initial call of Jeremiah concerns his mouth.

Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth:

and the Lord said to me,

Behold, I have put my words in your mouth (Jr 1:9).

The mouth is also emphasized in the call of Isaiah, in relation to the purification of the organ of speech (Is 6:7), and in the call of Ezekiel, where he ate the scroll, which had become sweet as honey in his mouth (Ezk 3:3). The last sentence of Jeremiah 1:9 is of course virtually identical to Deuteronomy 18:18. In all cases the prominence of the mouth is due to the ministry of the prophet being by words, words being by the mouth. There is elsewhere a connection between the mouth and the spirit, in that the mouth is the organ of breath (eg Ezk 2:2 cf John 20:22), but this is absent from Jeremiah.

The use of the mouth implies a close relationship, just as eating is the closest of possible relationships (Jr 15:16, Ezk 3:3). Jeremiah by his call experience is totally identified with God and with his message. God speaks to his prophet by means of his mouth:

Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you... they speak visions of their own minds, not from
the mouth of the Lord (a frequent idiom concerning false prophets) (Jr 23:16).

To whom has the mouth of the Lord spoken, that he may declare it? (Jr 9:12).

Outside of the call and dialogues, in the receipt of revelation only the mouth of the Lord and not of Jeremiah is involved, they are not "mouth to mouth", an idiom used of the immediacy of communication in Jeremiah 32:4, 34:3. (In Exodus 33:11 and Deuteronomy 34:10 of Moses' communication with God, the equivalent expression is "face to face", but in Numbers 12:7 it is "mouth to mouth". The meaning is the same.) These expressions correspond to the prophetic dialogue, not the one-way receipt of revelation, which Moses frequently experienced. However, because there is always a closeness of relation, it is always the mouth of the Lord and not of God that is referred to (cf 2 Chr 35:22 with 36:12).

Also, Jeremiah can speak with real authority:

If you utter what is precious and not what is worthless...
you shall be as my mouth (Jr 15:19).

....behold I am making my words in your mouth a fire and this people wood, and the fire shall devour them (Jr
A common idiom in Jeremiah is in relation to the writing of the scroll "at the dictation (mouth) of Jeremiah" (Jr 45:1, 36:4 etc). The implication is that as Jeremiah called out the words (Jr 36:18), Baruch wrote them down, such that they were exact and not simply a mere reflection of the meaning. The words of Jeremiah are not to be understood as the words of God verbatim in this way, as he is not just a passive reproducer, but it does mean that the words of God are in Jeremiah exactly. He had no freedom to resist or change the message which came to him, but did have freedom in his speaking. Of course thereafter if his words were false or empty he would be condemned (Jr 9:8, 12:2).

5.7 Further means of revelation

Although it is clear that the primary means of revelation to Jeremiah was the subjective, probably aural, reception of the word, there are indications of other means, and particularly so in other prophets, although these are often regarded as inferior (Skinner 1961:4, Robertson 1960:416). Rust (1972:105) remarks that whereas the false prophets had only visions and dreams, Jeremiah had the word. However, this by no means denies the validity of these forms of revelation (cf Nm 12:6f, Hs 12:10, Overholt 1970:58), but perhaps
refers to a gradation from dream through vision to audition (Robinson, W H 1923:11).

5.7.1 Visions. Reference to visionary experience is rare in Jeremiah, occurring in Jeremiah 1:11,13, visions associated with the call, and in Jeremiah 24 (the figs). In each case, the vision is accompanied by verbal communication. Hence Vriezen (1970:227) suggests that visions are always supplemented by words (also Von Rad 1968:38), and Mowinckel (1935:268f) suggests that except for Zechariah, vision is inessential to the real essence of communication. Certainly, for Jeremiah the word is prior, but the vision would aid communication. Sometimes, however, the word is seen (eg Am 1:1, Is 2:1 etc which may refer to initial calling, and 2 Sm 7:17). The rarity of the expression indicates that it is probably not just a technical term (contra Jepsen 1980:285, Watts 1975:52). An interesting variation is seen in the case of the Finnish trance preachers who received the vision of a book on which was written what they had to announce (Lindblom 1962:18). Such more total communication than just words is necessarily more exhausting (Vos 1948:242), so may be part of the reason why the call, but not normal receipt of revelation is disruptive.

However, there is also possible reference to vision without verbal explanation (Jr 4:23, 46:5, 38:21). In this last case, the vision dabar is seen (ra’a). (Other cases use ra’a alone.) In each case, the vision is of an overall situation, such as after the fall of Jerusalem (Jr 4:23), where
the vision is almost apocalyptic in its imagery, but where the one vision can communicate an overall impression far more adequately than a multitude of words. Some form of words is then of course necessary for the vision to be permanent and to be communicated (Vriezen 1970:227). On the other hand, vision could even detract from the cognitive and rational aspects of the message.

Although vision was rare compared to the receipt of the word, it did occur, contra the opinion of Jepsen (cited in Knight 1947:76) that the writing prophets have no vision (so that "see" always just equals "perceive" or "understand", a usage similar to that of Aramaic divination (Jepsen 1980:289)(cf eg Jr 20:12). Gouders (1972:92) believes that ra'a in Isaiah 6 means externality. If however Nicholson (1970:26) is right in referring to Jeremiah 24 as late, the only vision in Jeremiah is in the call (cf also section 5.2), which means that the command "see" is better taken in this sense. Similarly it is not simply a product of the subconscious mind (Skinner 1961:10)(cf section 5.4.1), nor of redaction (Carroll 1981:46)(cf section 5.3.4), particularly as:

The call itself generally takes the form of a vision of a fundamental nature (Lindblom 1962:64).

Neither is the validity of the vision of false prophets questioned (Jr 14:14), but only their truth. The imageless nature of the Israelite religion would however lead to less frequent vision than elsewhere in
the area (McKenzie 1974:69).

A suggestion often made is that a real object was seen but then a spiritual lesson drawn from it (eg Lindblom 1962:42, Brockington 1942:36). This cannot always be applicable to the experience of Jeremiah (as in Jr 4:23 etc), and is questionable in the case of the figs, and thus even the visions of Jeremiah 1, although there is no inherent reason why they were only for the inner eye and not the physical, were probably not real things. They could however be symbolic (cf Kaiser 1975:211). It would appear that at least some prophets had a gift of seeing spiritual reality (eg Elisha at Dothan (2 Ki 6:17)), but perhaps not permanently (Nm 22:31). There is a connection with ecstasy, depending on its definition (Lindblom 1962:107, but cf Bruce 1983:45f). The rare records of the angel are often, but not always, associated with vision (Zch 1:9f, but cf 2 Ki 1:15) (Long 1972:499). How much Ezekiel’s visit to Jerusalem was in vision is also still a matter for debate.

5.7.2 Dreams. The only explicit reference to prophetic dreams in Jeremiah are derogatory (Jr 23:25, 28) (Jr 23:32 may not be to prophetic dreams, as LXX omits "prophets"), but again with no definite indication that the method is invalid. The condemnation is of the lack of truth. There is also a strange reference to the sleep of Jeremiah being pleasant (Jr 31:26), which indeed follows an oracle of blessing, so it is possible that he also knew this mode of revelation as valid.
Davidson (1964:413) however believes that Jeremiah, unlike other prophets of his day denied the validity of dreams (Jr 23:28, but the comparison of wheat with straw does not deny the validity of dreams, but questions their value compared to the word). Carroll (1981:174) notes that a rejection in Jeremiah is strange in view of acceptance elsewhere, at both an earlier (Nm 12:6) and later dates (Joel) (Overholt 1970:66). Particularly significant for Jeremiah would be the acceptance in Deuteronomy 13:1 although here the acceptance of the medium is only implicit, as only the case of the false dreamer is considered.

Kaufmann (1961:93) suggests the medium is only in a pagan environment, certainly it was common at Mari (Huffmon 1968:116), where it was the primary method of communication for non-specialists. This would of course deny Jeremiah 23:28 etc. It may well be more common there due to the lack of the word as experienced by the prophets, which would overshadow other media (cf Lindblom 1963:273f). Here the work of Oppenheim (1956:179f) adds a reason for its rarity in the prophets in that it is extremely rare to receive a message for a third party by means of dreams, and of course the prophets were retransmitters. (This observation may also suggest that generally dreams are non-revelatory, since a person is naturally more interested in himself than in others.) A connection with paganism also accounts for its prevalence in late apocalyptic (as Judah was a vassal to pagan power), and would certainly account for Jeremiah's negative
Although dreams are acknowledged throughout the Old Testament (Koch 1984:58), it is only ever as secondary (Heschel 1971:240). This is inherent in the nature of the dream itself. They usually need interpretation by an expert (eg Gn 41:8), whereas the word is clear as received. More importantly, dreams could occur to anyone, with no indication of whether their origin was supernatural or human, whereas the word is authenticated by the theophanic call (Robertson 1960:416). Jeremiah could identify dreams as spurious (Jr 23), but only on the basis of his own revelation. A human origin does not in itself indicate falsity (cf the theories of Oates 1973:170, Knight 1947:54), but an external origin for dreams cannot be authenticated. Even dreams to a prophet would have a question attached to them on the basis of the non-rationality of the prophet in sleep.
Consideration of Jeremiah's freedom must be made in two areas. Firstly, was he forced to become a prophet, or was he free in any degree to refuse the appointment? Secondly, once he had been appointed a prophet, was he irresistibly constrained in his action and his message, or did he have a measure of freedom both in what he said and did, and in the way he said or did them?

The underlying assumption of the prophetic view of man is that he is a free agent, that is, his actions and words are not predetermined from outside of himself. Without this real freedom, the entire concept of prophecy becomes a fiction, for it presupposes that the prophet's hearers have deviated from the will of God from their own choice, and that equally, on hearing the prophetic message that they can respond positively to it. Likewise the judgment that Jeremiah announces is coming upon them justly:

I set (qum) watchmen over you, saying,

"Give heed to the sound of the trumpet!"

But they said, "We will not give heed."

Therefore hear, O nations,

and know, O congregations, what will happen to them.

Hear, O earth, behold I am bringing evil upon this people,
the fruit of their devices,
because they have not given heed to my words (Jr 6:17-9).

At the same time, the action of God is irresistible, as God is sovereign. In the call vision, where Jeremiah saw the rod of almond:

You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it (Jr 1:12).

God can respect the freedom of men, and at the same time announce through his prophet the certainty of judgment (cf Jr 1:14), and also the certainty of restoration on repentance.

There is hope for your future, says the Lord,
and your children shall come back to their own country.
I have heard Ephraim bemoaning...
bring me back that I may be restored...
For after I had turned away I repented (Jr 31:17-9).

(This passage concerns Northern Israel and is usually considered to be from early in Jeremiah's career. It is clearly applicable to the later situation in Babylon, particularly with the introductory comment (Jr 31:1), but only if the readers saw it as definite, even without detailed fulfilment at the time of reading.) The certainty of these predictions is
in the predictability of men in a group, despite their freedom as individuals. God is faithful to the covenant and acts on the covenant people in accordance with it. The overall predictability of the nation led to the predictability of the curses and blessings of that covenant. (Predictions of salvation are of course often viewed as being from a date after the restoration.)

However as an individual, Jeremiah is free, and is not constrained at all. The question is whether as an individual being called to be a prophet, and then as a prophet, he was constrained. Here the presence of the theophany implies freedom, both in the call, for otherwise such an experience is unnecessary if he was already constrained, and subsequently, as a forced individual did not need the sense of authority that the call gave.

Possibly out of his experiences of God's dealings with him as an individual, came also the realization, seen also especially in Ezekiel, of judgment and salvation on an individual (who is free) rather than on a collective basis (Jr 31:30, cf Ezk 18).

6.1 The freedom in the call

Although as Pannenberg (1968:194) remarks, the idea of "free choice" is usually connected with vocation, many (eg Holladay 1974:18, Hyatt
read the call narrative as indicating that Jeremiah was appointed as prophet before God started to speak to him. The appointment appeared to be even before Jeremiah's birth, so that when God spoke, it was of something done in the past (Balla 1958:171), of which Jeremiah 1 is a notification, equipping, and initial sending, but not a call as such:

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, 
and before you were born I consecrated you: 
I appointed you as prophet to the nations (Jr 1:5).

Habel (1962:307) sees irresistibility in this "introductory word" and notes the case of Gideon where the introductory word:

The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valour (Jdg 6:12),

would also appear to presuppose an existing appointment. However this text may equally be read as a plain greeting, a statement of fact, without any assumption of the result of the following.

Form critical comparison of the call narratives rather indicates a valid objection, as Habel (1962:300) notes, seen clearly in the case of Jeremiah:
Then I said "Ah Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to
speak, for I am only a youth (Jr 1:6).

Unless this is indeed an addition due to form, the objection
presupposes that at that stage no commitment had been made. He
did not at that stage have the ability that he needed which he would
have had if the prophetic appointment was at birth. The commitment
follows. This is clearest in the case of Isaiah, where after the objection
came the commitment:

Here I am, send me (Is 6:8).

Engnell (1949:42) believes that this does not in fact show choice, but
paralleled by Akkadian court procedure is actually just a form of
address. If this was in fact normally the case it would however
probably have been found in more parallels in the Old Testament. It is
noteworthy that Isaiah offers, being apparently under no compulsion
so to do, but nevertheless the vision did appear to him, virtually
predicting a positive response.

This came after the touch on the mouth, which probably corresponds
to Jeremiah 1:9. The two should not however be simply equated (cf
Ball 1893:61), because in Isaiah the touch was not the hand of the
Lord which indicates empowering, but the coal, indicating rather
purification (Mauchline 1962:91). The purification of Jeremiah is rather
assumed in the use of qadas "consecrate" in Jeremiah 1:5 which is before his objection and the touch on the mouth. In Jeremiah 1:9, 10 the appointment is made whereas in Isaiah the prophet still offers to go after the touch. However the offer in Isaiah 6:8 uses salah so may simply express the willingness of the already appointed prophet to go on a specific mission. In this case the two touches could be essentially equated. It is however more natural to see both in Isaiah 6 and in Jeremiah 1 an initial commitment, and to see no significance in the different details concerning the touch on the mouth, which in both cases signifies God's overcoming of the prophet's inadequacy, whether of impurity or of impotence. Such a specific commitment as seen in Isaiah 6:8 is lacking in Jeremiah, as indeed in Ezekiel, but the commissioning itself is present, in Jeremiah 9:10, and:

But you, gird up your loins, arise and say to them
everything that I command you (Jr 1:17, cf Ezk 3:3).

That the commissioning took place at this time and not before the birth of Jeremiah is however not clear from Jeremiah 1 taken apart from the other call narratives. The objection of Jeremiah 1:6 could be an expression of horror at what has already been done. Elsewhere in the book there are indications that a real choice indeed took place at the call.

O Lord, thou hast deceived me,
and I was deceived;

thou art stronger than I,

and thou hast prevailed (Jr 20:7).

The verse indicates that Jeremiah likened himself to a maiden who has been seduced, that he entered the prophetic ministry under false pretences. This verse also indicates a real divine call rather than a liturgical act (cf section 1.5.2.1). The parallel with marriage also indicates a date later than birth for its commencement. The verse could also refer to Jeremiah's disenchantment with God who he feels has not given him the help that he needs. Thompson (1980:459) notes however that the verb "deceived" is "seduction" in Exodus 22:16 and the verb hazaq (overcome) is also used of rape, which continues the sexual metaphor (Dt 22:25 etc). Jeremiah is then himself culpable as he let himself be seduced (Bright 1965:129). In the Deuteronomy passage the cry of the maiden is important as removing responsibility from her. In this sense the objection found in Jeremiah 1:6 may be paralleled to the cry, in which case Jeremiah is denying culpability. It is unlikely that the parallel can be forced too far as the case of Deuteronomy 22:25f deals with a betrothed virgin and Jeremiah was not committed. The parallel is rather in Deuteronomy 22:28f and deals with compulsion after the call, and here no objection is relevant.

Contrary to the belief that Jeremiah 1 refers to his appointment as prophet is the curse that Jeremiah offered concerning the day of his
birth (Jr 20:14), where he decries his very existence, not his ministry specifically. A parallel to this case is seen however in Job 3 and this is because of his suffering, not just his very existence. Extreme suffering naturally desires very existence to cease, or not even to have started, even though that suffering is not completely identified with existence. Holladay (eg 1983:146f) argues for the identification of the date in Jeremiah 1:2 with his birth. He does this to make Jeremiah’s ministry later and so avoid some historical problems, but then has to introduce a later commitment to the ministry at an unspecified time, reflected in Jeremiah 1. Most commentators however retain the traditional date of 627 BC for the actual call. It is perhaps the presence of the theophany which is the strongest indication of a real call rather than just a commitment in Jeremiah 1, although theophany does have the function of authenticating and recognition of revelation as well as commissioning. Its presence of course also indicates that the choice was real and free.

It is not necessary to read “I appointed you” (natan) as qualified by "Before I formed you in the womb". Assuming for the moment that natan does mean appointment, if the times are to be separated, the time of appointment could well be at the conversation in Jeremiah 1. The perfect tense of natan may well not so much mean an accomplished act, but as frequent in the prophets, a future act taken as certain, because of God’s knowledge of Jeremiah and so how he would probably respond, not necessarily a compulsion. Alternatively,
the perfect could well be an expression of God's strong desire for Jeremiah. Perhaps, however, the obvious reading is to take the three verbs as concurrent in time.

In this case, if a "giving" of Jeremiah took place at birth but the call to be a prophet took place at a later time, thus retaining for Jeremiah a real freedom of choice, the idea implied in natan is of some previous relationship, but not that of being a prophetic messenger, as something cannot be given until it is in some sense already possessed (cf the similar use in Genesis 1:17, 17:5, particularly in Exodus 7:1, and also in Isaiah 49:6, where the motif of the nations is also present). The existing relationship, requiring a "gift", would explain why natan and not paqad (as in Jr 1:10) is used here. Various possibilities exist as to what this previous relationship was:

a) Thompson (1980:146) suggests that "to the nations" reflects God's sovereignty over them. In the same way God has sovereignty over Jeremiah so is free to give him that ministry. This need not imply compulsion, just as the nations were not compelled to obey.

b) Reference could be to Jeremiah's membership of the covenant people, as a contrast to the nations, or even simply his humanity (Welch 1955:41).

c) The word "consecrated" also refers to the appointment of a priest.
Now as Jeremiah was of priestly stock he would have been conscious of being a priest simply by being born, as priesthood was hereditary. Only the chief priest was further consecrated, the rest could serve by virtue of their birth (cf Dt 18:6f). Priests began work without any religious rite (De Vaux 1973:347). The verse is saying, in essence, you were born to be a priest but now I am making you a prophet, a very different ministry. The relationship, knowledge and consecration did in fact exist for Jeremiah at the point of birth, while the prophetic appointment came later as a contrast. "I appointed you" (natan) (Jr 1:5) then indicates that God is giving up what belongs to him (cf God's possession of the Levites in place of the firstborn (Nm 3:44f)) for a different ministry.

Jeremiah was made conscious of the fact that his prehistory had been under the overall control of God, and that there was a valid reason for God's choice of him rather than any other (cf section 2.4.1).

Prophets had to be people of outstanding character....
They had to be thus by nature, and being dedicated to God, became greater still (Wood 1979:16).

This suitability does not however mean that Jeremiah was irresistibly constrained to accept the call.

Alternatively, the word natan here does not refer to the appointment,
which does come later (Jr 1:10), but to the giving of ability to perform
the ministry. It is used in this sense in Jeremiah 1:18. This is then a
promise of ability which then Jeremiah disputes (Jr 1:6), as he sees no
evidence for the presence of that ability. God then responded with the
sign, indicating that Jeremiah's need was not so much the ability, but
the message, which was given to him. However, God's rebuke in
Jeremiah 1:7 would indicate that Jeremiah's objection was in fact
illfounded, that he did in fact have that ability, presumably from birth,
but that having no message, he had not used it.

Further, with particular reference to the disputes with the false
prophets, Jeremiah was continually conscious that his ministry was
given by God and not simply taken upon himself. He had external
motivation for what he later did.

There is no instance in the Old Testament of a call being refused. This
may simply be that none is recorded, rather than that God only called
those who he knew would respond positively, or forced response. The
only query is of Jonah, but in this case there would appear to be no
call recorded. The introduction:

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah... (Jnh 1:1),

is paralleled not by the call, but by later receipt of revelation. It would
appear that he was already a prophet when sent to Nineveh, and it
was that particular mission, not his vocation which was resisted.
Perhaps an echo of the original call is to be found in Jonah 2:9.

6.2 The freedom of the prophet in his ministry

Jeremiah frequently expresses a sense of urging to prophesy. For example:

My anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain!
Oh, the walls of my heart!
My heart is beating wildly;
I cannot keep silent...(Jr 4:19).

Therefore I am full of the wrath of the Lord;
I am weary of holding it in (Jr 6:11).

This sense is common to the Old Testament prophets. A further famous example is Amos 3:8:

The lion has roared; who will not fear?
The Lord has spoken; who can but prophesy?

This feature is common to prophecy in general:
As one compelled by the divine power, the prophet lives under a divine constraint. He has lost the power of the ordinary man and is forced to follow the orders of the deity. He must say what has been given to him to say, and go where he is commanded to go. Few things are so characteristic of the prophet wherever we meet them in the world of religion as the feeling of being under a superhuman and supernatural constraint (Lindblom 1962:2).

It is however questionable whether the sense of irresistibility expressed by Lindblom is actually the case for the Old Testament prophets, who rather experienced a large motivation. The prophet is not a mere automaton, his use of the prophetic "I" is genuine. Neither was his prophesying simply due to unwilling compliance, as he could have refused to obey. Holladay (1964:163) traces this freedom of Jeremiah back to Moses whose freedom is evident (eg Ex 32:11, Nm 11:11). Schultz (1968:30) sees a further connection with Moses in his accountability, which necessitates freedom. Although the force on him is considerable it is not irresistible.

If I say, "I will not mention him or speak anymore in his name,"
there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
shut up in my bones,
and I am weary with holding it in,

and I cannot (Jr 20:9).

The following verses indicate that he expressed a real choice in letting out the oracle, which was done because of outward circumstance.

For I hear many whispering...(Jr 20:10).

In addition, the words "and I cannot" complement the word "weary" (la'a) in the previous line (Jr 20:9) indicating that the idea is not "powerlessness" (as in fact Von Rad (1975b:70) translates the same word in Jeremiah 6:11, also stating that Jeremiah is quite unable to resist). Nevertheless the same word is predicated of God in Jeremiah 15:6 of whom powerlessness is quite inappropriate, but lack of will is fitting. Von Rad himself (1975b:71) notes that the proof of Jeremiah's freedom (and its consequent tensions) is to be found in the confessions, and that whereas he received revelation in a state of passivity, he did not remain in that state, but was free in his use of literary form. Jeremiah's experience, subsequent to his call, is of irresistible receipt from God, but then choice in delivering, extending to the form, and even whether to deliver the oracle, although the prophet was subject to very large pressure to prophesy. Although a part of him was unwilling, he still prophesied. God convinced him rather than forced him (Soggin 1980:222). An example of this prophetic freedom is seen in Jeremiah 23:38, where the prophet spoke, but gave a
contrary message to the one that God had sent (salah) him with.

Moreover in Jeremiah 20:9, "fire" does not necessarily imply compulsion, but destruction, a more reasonable nuance for the word. Seen in the context of the previous verse, his message was of coming destruction, which naturally he was unwilling to utter, as he loved his people, and did not like their reaction.

This is very different from the opinion of Cox (1975:92) speaking of Amos 3:

The prophet ceased effectively to be a person and become an instrument of activity not of his own.

On the contrary Jeremiah (and the other prophets) frequently express their personality. A related idea is that of Robinson (1946:181) who, speaking from a Hebrew notion of psychology, argues that the various organs have an independent existence, so for example, the mouth may be possessed without affecting the mind. This is however unlikely as the effect of prophecy on the mind gave rise to various other effects in the body, indicating the essential unity of the prophet.

6.3 The sources of the prophetic urge
The need of the prophet to act and prophesy is expressed overall in the frequent claim of being sent (salah) by God. This sending is manifested in various ways, which indicate the pressures that Jeremiah experienced. None of them, however, was of an irresistible nature.

6.3.1 Fear. The Bible records only one case of a disobedient prophet who paid the supreme penalty (1 Ki 13). Probably to this should be added the case of Hananiah who likewise died, but it is unknown whether he actually was called to be a real prophet. There are other instances of temporary refusal such as Jonah, and, apparently, Jeremiah (Jr 15:15f), and it is possible that he returned to his commission out of a fear of death.

Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed? (Jr 15:18).

Possibly death was not inevitable, but it would seem that if a prophet was disobedient he was severely punished (Lindblom 1962:63). The prophet is then in the unenviable position of either being punished by unsympathetic hearers if he spoke, or by God if he did not (cf Jr 20:7). Jeremiah would appear to have experienced both. It would seem that the urge to prophesy, coupled with the promise of protection was sufficient in general to overcome the fear of his hearers.
Particularly appropriate to Ezekiel is the discussion of the watchman (Ezk 4:16f, 33:1f, cf Jr 6:17), who is seen to have freedom of action but nevertheless is seen to act out of fear of the consequences of inaction. Here the penalty would appear to be death if because of a lack of warning the person dies.

6.3.2 massa'. The word has an ordinary sense of "load" or "burden", as in Exodus 23:5, possibly derived from the verb nasa' (lift up) (cf the pun in Jr 23:33f), so a massa' (burden) is something "lifted up". massa' has a second sense, usually translated "oracle" particularly found in Isaiah (eg Is 15:1, 17:1). The verb also is found in an oracular sense eg in the Balaam cycle (Nm 23:7) "taking up a discourse" or in Jeremiah 9:9 "lifting up a lamentation".

The use of massa' in prophecy indicates that the oracles are burdensome, that the prophets bear burdens. (Eybers (1974:3) suggests the root of the name Amos is "bearer of a burden" while Cripps (1960:10) adds a further suggestion "borne by God".) Although it has been suggested that the dual sense of burden and utterance are pure homonyms, no nuance of burden being applied to utterance (McKane 1980:41), or that massa' is simply a synonym for dabar or hazon (Johnson 1962:12), most see a sense of load or burden in them. Gehman (1940:117) remarks that its use in Isaiah always suggests calamity, and remarks:
The Rabbis say that prophecy goes by ten names but the severest of them all is massa' (Gehman 1940:121).

De Boer (1948:197f) sees no second sense indicating speaking without an associated sense of burden. An oracle is then a word of doom or judgment which is burdensome to the hearer. He not only receives the awareness of coming judgment which is why the massa' may be seen (in the sense of being understood) (eg Nah 1:1, Hab 1:1), but the responsibility of acting in accordance with the requirements of God now laid upon him.

In Jeremiah the word occurs only in two sections, Jeremiah 17:21f where it has the ordinary sense of something carried, having reference there to working on the Sabbath, and Jeremiah 23:33f where it bears the technical sense of prophecy. The sense is then rare in Jeremiah, which Wilson (1980:256) attributes to its being a word from the Judaean strand of prophecy (eg Isaiah), whereas Jeremiah is from the Ephraimite. However Jeremiah was obviously acquainted with the term, and was prophesying in Jerusalem. The passage, or the bulk of it, is often denied to Jeremiah, being prose. The other reference (Jr 17) is also often denied to him, as it is believed to be relevant only in a later situation (Nicholson 1970:13). This would mean that the other occurrence is even more questionable. However Nicholson admits (1970:66) that Jeremiah likely said something on the Sabbath (cf also
In Jeremiah 23, Carroll (1981:180) sees a simple pun, the people asking, "What is the burden of Yahweh", and receiving the reply from Jeremiah "You are, and he will cast you off (nasa')", the pun being heavily supplemented in redaction. (Here MT actually obscures the pun, containing "forget" (nasa) instead of "lift" (nasa'). Other authorities however retain it, notably LXX, in its use of lemma "burden" and lambano "lift up".) Thompson (1980:504) observes in the whole passage a poetic structure, so sees no reason for denying the whole passage to Jeremiah. He also says of this passage:

A number of textual problems make the translation and understanding of the passage difficult. In general the main thrust of the passage is that the prophetic office is to be undertaken with great seriousness. Only those to whom Yahweh entrusts his word are entitled to proclaim it (Thompson 1980:503).

Although generally massa' is equivalent to "oracle", there must be a further idea here that prophecy is a burden on the prophet that he bears. Thus in Numbers 11:17 (of Moses' burden of judgement), where there is also a connection with prophecy, the burden is on the judge. This is particularly clear where the verb nasa' is used (eg Nm 24:15 of Balaam "he took up (nasa') his discourse"). So Baldwin
(1972:162) says of massa':

It lays stress on the prophet's sense of constraint in giving the message which follows.

An interesting parallel of exegesis is in Zechariah 2:8:

For thus says the Lord of hosts, after (‘ahar) his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you....

Glory includes the nuance of weight and ‘ahar can mean "with", so the passage can indicate that Zechariah has a sense of weight or burden after a theophany of God's glory.

This passage has reference to the nations, and this is the usual meaning of massa’, a prophecy against a nation under judgment (Watts 1975:98). massa’ is also used of tribute on a nation imposed by a conquerer (2 Chr 17:11). (Sometimes, of course, this was not paid. It could not be compelled simply by its imposition.) Thus Overholt (1970:70) interprets the question of Jeremiah 23:33 as "is there an oracle against our enemies?". As Jeremiah was appointed prophet to the nations, his entire ministry, and not just occasional oracles, had this aspect of burden to him.

One further sense in which Jeremiah’s whole ministry was a burden to
him, so clearly seen in the book (eg Jr 8:18, 9:1, 10:19 etc), is the connection with intercession, where prayer is lifted up (nasa') (eg Jr 7:16, 11:14), perhaps symbolized by the lifting of the hands, although this rather symbolizes the contact with God and willingness to receive from Him.

The pun of Jeremiah 23 shows clearly that massa' was resistible in the mind of Jeremiah. The fact that the burden of the people could be cast off means that its carrying remained a matter of choice. Likewise the burden of prophecy was removable if Jeremiah insisted.

6.3.3 A knowledge of the divine mind. The prophet is participant in the counsels of God.

Surely the Lord God does nothing,
without revealing his secret
to his servants his prophets (Am 3:7).

So the prophet shares in God's concern for his people, what Heschel (1962:5f) refers to as the Pathos of God. Relating to an idea of dabar as pushing or driving forward (Stuhlmueller 1964:137f (cf here the remarks of Barr (1961:130) on the derivation of dabar)), McGuire (1980:887) says:

The prophet is one who is moved by or driven towards a
A prophet is given an understanding of God's will and hence feels the urge to share what has been revealed to him. A knowledge of truth as a certainty carries within itself the desire to make that known (cf. Robinson 1946:192). So Jeremiah lived in the tension of knowing what was best in the long run was unpleasant at the time. The comment of Mowinckel (1934:211) is appropriate, but probably goes too far:

This prophetic call is not merely felt to be a certainty, it is upon them and in them as a compelling force from which they cannot escape "When Yahweh has spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Am 3:9).

Jeremiah's knowledge of the divine mind involves the denial of two other ideas. Firstly, prophecy is not simply a product of the prophetic mind, neither is inspiration just a condition of mind (Davidson 1904:161, 299: this idea is very much a product of that time). This is specifically attributed to the false prophets (Jr 23:16), and thus implicitly denied to Jeremiah's own experience. Secondly, the idea that prophecy is a result of mysticism or union with the divine is also denied. Although prophecy bears some relationship to mysticism and as such a desire to share mystical experience (Hines 1923:46), an experience of union with God is ultimately inexpressible. Although the prophets' relationship to God is deep, expressed by the word ידוה, a
distinction is maintained, as in marriage. The prophet knows about the
divine mind, but this is not identification with it. It is the content of the
word, not just its inherent power (fire and hammer Jr 20:9), but also its
element of surprise and irrationality, which means it must be told
(Mowinckel 1934:215).

Knowledge of the divine mind is very different from an irresistible
compulsion, as the whole ministry of Jeremiah testifies. Although the
people were aware of God's will (Jr 7:23f), it did not lead to their
obedience. The only difference in Jeremiah's case was a fuller
conception of God due to his call experience, but this did not take
away his choice.

6.3.4 Covenant. The essence of a covenant or agreement is that it
would lead to appropriate action, but equally it does not lead by its
very nature to those actions. A covenant in the ancient world
contained details of the benefits of adherence but also of the penalties
for non-adherence. Thus Deuteronomy 28 is often interpreted in this
light as the blessings and the curses in a covenant between God and
Israel. The very freedom of Israel led to the need of the prophets as
messengers of God to proclaim its need of compliance.

However, the messenger also is free although Wolff (1977:93)
believes that the use of the "messenger formula" indicates compulsion
to act as a messenger. The formula rather indicates the status of the
message and messenger as authenticated by God, so reflects the relationship of Jeremiah to God, not his compulsion to speak. The prophet's relationship to God carries its own blessings and penalties, which he receives on obedience or disobedience, just as Israel's covenant relationship did. Thus Hananiah died as he spoke rebellion against the Lord (Jr 28:16, 17 cf also Shemaiah (Jr 31:15f)) and Jeremiah likewise was promised punishment:

Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them (Jr 1:17).

Jeremiah's reference to seduction (Jr 20:7) and the parallels between prophecy and marriage also indicate constraint as a wife (at those times) was obliged to obey her husband. Even in marriage however the wife was not irresistibly constrained to obey but obeyed freely, otherwise the possibility of divorce in Deuteronomy 24:1f becomes irrelevant.

6.3.5 Ecstasy. This may be relevant in two ways, that of receiving the word, and of delivering it. It is the latter only which is appropriate to compulsion, and this has rarely been predicated of the prophets, due to the very evident action of the prophetic mind upon the material, but also on the lack of evidence for any ecstasy in delivery. In fact any connection of prophecy with ecstasy is out of favour (Von Rad 1968:40). If a derivation of nabi' from naba (bubble) were true this
might imply ecstasy and/or irresistibility, but this derivation is unlikely. Equally there is little evidence (such as the use of Hithpael) that the later prophets raved. They were called madmen, but this could well be from association with prophecy outside Israel, and from the content of their message, rather than the mode of delivery (cf Maass 1953:299). They never appeal to ecstasy (North 1950:203).

There is also uncertainty about what ecstasy was (Ellison 1970:116). A definition of ecstasy as absorption by a single idea rather than a severance from normal sensibilities has been suggested as more appropriate to the prophets (Lindblom 1962:4), but in this case freedom of action is retained, there is no mindless utterance.

6.3.6 **Hand of the Lord**. The word "hand" is a frequent idiom for "power" as in Deuteronomy and in Jeremiah 20:4:

> And I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon (cf Jr 50:43).

The nuance is frequently of the impotence of that handled, as the clay under the hand of the potter (Jr 18:4f). So in Isaiah 41:20, the idea is coupled with that of creation. In prophecy, there is also a link with creation.

It is a common expression for the power of God coming upon the
prophet in Ezekiel (eg Ezk 8:1), where it is associated with all five visions (Hines 1923:51), and in non Israelite examples such as the Finnish trance preachers who felt a hand upon shoulder, head or breast, or Birgitta of Sweden who felt a hand grasp her within her breast (Lindblom 1962:58). In the ancient world, the use of "hand" of God in a prophetic context is restricted to Israel (Roberts 1971:249).

This sense of irresistible divine pressure is expressed in the phrase "yad YHWH" (Knight 1947:60).

Because it speaks of close contact with God, "hand" is always qualified by the personal name "Lord" not the general name "God". It may also indicate a form of ecstasy as when it enabled Elijah's running to Jezreel (1 Ki 18:46), an equation which Lindblom (1962:48) makes, but Mowvley (1979:23) denies that this is always the case, believing "hand" simply to be a synonym for "power".

Jeremiah prefers to use the term "word" when referring to his receipt of revelation, so "hand" is not used in this way. The only instance is in the call narrative (Jr 1:9), where the promise is made that Jeremiah's words would be powerful, in so far as they were God's words (Jr 1:12). Its use in this context may however mean that Jeremiah's receipt of revelation is essentially the same as Ezekiel's where the use of the term is explicit, but Jeremiah simply prefers to refer to the "word" only. (Cf also Is 8:11, which distinguishes between the restraining "hand"
and the actual inspiration.)

The term is thus a way of referring not to inspiration as such, but to contact with God, which is appropriate as the hand is the usual means of contact. So Wurzburger (1971:1152) connects it with the spirit (also Doohan 1983:40). A similar use may be in prayer where the lifting of the hands may well symbolize contact with God, rather than simply a desire to receive. In both cases actual communication is extra. Heschel (1971:224) remarks that the experience of God's hand is more appropriate than his face which would simply overwhelm.

In common with usage in Ezekiel and in the cases mentioned by Lindblom, Jeremiah never uses the term "hand" in the context of the delivery of an oracle to his hearers, indicating again the essential freedom of the prophet in the occasion and form of the oracles. The desire that Jeremiah has to utter his oracles is not a compelling hand of the Lord upon him. Mowinckel (1934:210), although he comes close to making delivery irresistible, in fact only associates reception with the "hand".

The only other reference to the hand of the Lord is in Jeremiah 15:17:

I sat alone, because thy hand was upon me,
for thou hadst filled me with indignation
The reference here could be to receipt of revelation, hence being alone, as it is an essentially private matter, and the indignation as a result of the message of the sin of the people (cf Jr 15:18). This is perhaps unlikely as "hand" is never used elsewhere in this way. Alternatively as the context is a possible rebellion against his ministry, Jeremiah is particularly aware of the divine punishment for disobedience (Jr 1:17), which would be inescapable due to God's power.

6.4 The freedom of the prophet in his words

Jeremiah, after his call experience, is compelled to receive from God, but retains his freedom thereafter. This freedom is expressed both in his ability to talk to God and in the way in which he uses the material that he has been given. The very fact that he is commanded (sawa) to speak indicates a freedom to obey. His freedom was only restricted in so far as he had yielded to the pressure to obey.

6.4.1 Communication with God. Because of the call experience and the established relationship with God, Jeremiah is able to speak with him. This is manifested in intercession where the prophet is recognised as specially able to approach God on behalf of king or people. Ability to intercede clearly shows that Jeremiah has freedom in respect of God, his actions and words are not simply controlled.
A feature of the book of Jeremiah is the "confessions", some of which include dialogue with God, although dialogue is also seen in other prophets e.g. Amos (Am 7:9), Abraham (Gn 18). Jeremiah is clearly free to complain about his situation and the ministry that has been given to him, where his complaints verge almost on blasphemy (Koch 1984:45). These confessions have been interpreted as meaning that Jeremiah's message was formed in meditation (Blank 1961:135), and indeed some portions do appear to be meditation.

But the Lord is with me as a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble,
they will not overcome me.
They will be greatly ashamed,
for they will not succeed...(Jr 20:11).

But this portion simply reflects a promise to Jeremiah recorded earlier (Jr 11:21f). More typically the confessions are presented as direct address to God.

More important is the question of whether the words of Jeremiah affected God. Overholt (1977:129f) believes that God produced further words to Jeremiah as a result of Jeremiah's feedback. An example that he gives is Jeremiah's complaint:
Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I complain to thee; yet
I would plead my case before thee (Jr 12:1).

This ends in verse 4, with a response from God:

If you have raced with men on foot, and they have
wearied you, how will you compete with horses? (Jr 12:5).

A further complaint of Jeremiah follows. Overholt thus sees inspiration
as a process of dialectic. However, the examples given are only
relevant to Jeremiah, and not to the people. There is no reason to
believe that Jeremiah was at all responsible for the message. This is
further emphasized in the use of the word natan (eg Jr 1:9). The
message was a gift, not a basis for negotiation.

Still less is there evidence of a dialectical interaction with the people,
that the people’s response to Jeremiah caused a modification of his
message. Overholt (1977:141) himself admits that the evidence is not
clear. He suggests the prophecies of hope in Jeremiah, and also
Jeremiah 28:13, the reply to Hananiah after he had broken the yoke.
This however is presented not as Jeremiah’s ideas, but its oracular
nature is emphasized in the repeated "Thus says the Lord". Moreover
the origin of the reply being from God is underlined by the death of
Hananiah (Jr 28:17). Jeremiah had no power to bring that about.
It is unlikely that Jeremiah's communication with God is to be equated with the council of the Lord, which had reference to the initial call (eg Jr 23:22), or perhaps a particular need of authentication (as 1 Ki 22), but where the prophet appeared to be a passive observer and messenger, not a participant.

6.4.2 Communication with the people. Jeremiah's freedom in respect of his utterances is clear from the fact that God commands (sawa) Jeremiah. Such a command would be superfluous were Jeremiah irresistibly constrained to speak exactly as it had been given to him, because the presence of a command indicates that otherwise the desired action would not take place.

You shall say to them.... Then I answered "So be it Lord"
(Jr 11:3, 5).

...speak all the words that I command you to speak to them:
do not hold back a word (Jr 26:2).

Whatever I command you, you shall speak (Jr 1:7).

This last reference implies choice. It is virtually repeated in Jeremiah 1:17 where it is followed by the threats of the consequences of
noncompliance. The use of sawa (command) does not compel obedience, even when it is God who commands. Although we have no definite case of Jeremiah’s disobedience to God’s command, disobedience was present in the people (Jr 7:23).

Jeremiah is also free as regards the exact formulation of his words to the people, which led to his initial objection:

   Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth (Jr 1:6).

If Jeremiah were simply a retransmitter, this objection becomes superfluous. There is also an example of Jeremiah lying under pressure from the authorities (Jr 38:27), although an oracle is not involved.

Although inspiration is more than:

   ....the coming together of creative imagination and divinely inspired insight (Rust 1977:337),

it has been increasingly recognised that in addition to the prophetic controversy and the use of the first person "I" by the prophet, there was considerable freedom in the putting of literary form to the oracles (Von Rad 1968:52, Obbink 1939:26) evidenced by the variety of forms
to be found in the book and the existence of an identifiable Jeremianic style as distinct from a "prophetic" style (cf eg Overholt 1979a) common to all prophets (cf Wilson 1973:101 on Westermann), very much related to the style of writing common at that time. Jeremiah was free to conform to his culture (Porteous 1938:246). If his appointment included a literary gift (which may be implied in Jr 1:5 or 1:9), it did not restrict the style. Thompson (1980:44) thus explains the similarities to the style of Deuteronomy by arguing that Jeremiah simply wrote as was currently the fashion, rather than by denying such passages to him. He also (1980:45) notes some differences in style which would indicate composition by Jeremiah not an anonymous member of a school. His freedom in form does not however extend to the message, which is, in a basic form, given to him (as expressed by the eating of the scroll (Jr 15:16 cf Ezk 3:1-3)), and any change of form that Jeremiah gives is not of material but of form, sufficient for the claim of Jeremiah to be valid:

Thus says the Lord.

The motif of eating in any case suggests an essential change of form in what is swallowed due to the process of digestion. It also suggests that the eaten word also has an effect on the prophet, one of the reasons for disruption. It is not a simple regurgitation of a prophetic message in its original form, but a delivery in a processed form.
This is different from the assumption that the messenger style involved a verbatim retransmission (e.g., Wilson 1973:105). Evidence is however lacking that a messenger had to transmit exactly (Wilson 1973:111) indeed the evidence appears to contradict this, as in the report of the oracle received by Elijah and its subsequent delivery to Ahab (1 Ki 21:17f, 20f) (cf. Wilson 1973:116 for other examples).
7. THE CALL AND THE SPIRIT IN JEREMIAH

It is noticeable that the book of Jeremiah contains little direct reference to the spirit in relation to his prophetic activity. In contrast, the spirit and prophecy are frequently connected earlier: of particular significance to Jeremiah is reference to Moses (Nm 11:17), and in Hosea (Hs 9:7). The spirit is also prominent in the later book of Ezekiel. As Jeremiah saw himself as part of a line of prophets (Jr 1:7,9, Dt 18:18), it would seem likely that Jeremiah was aware of the action of the spirit, but preferring to use other ways of speaking, chose to omit reference to the spirit. Lack of reference does not necessarily imply either lack of function or of knowledge.

The activity of the spirit is implied in the work of Jeremiah in various ways. His emphasis falls upon the judgemental and creative function of the word which works in a rational way. This emphasis on rationality tends to exclude reference to the spirit due to irrational overtones connected with the spirit and ecstasy. Both creation and judgement, on the other hand, have a connection with the spirit. The link with creation is seen, for example, in Genesis 1:2 and Psalm 33:6, although it is not explicit in Jeremiah, where the ideas of creation are not well developed. Judgement is a common theme in Jeremiah, and here the connection with ruah, usually translated “wind” is clearer.
The main ideas associated with the spirit are those of power and life. Here the translation of *ruah* as "wind" or "breath" is appropriate. So just as words need *ruah* (breath), for their utterance, so prophetic words need power behind them (cf the revival of the host by the word and the spirit in the valley of dry bones of Ezekiel 37). Again, although it is unlikely that Jeremiah was unaware of this, he preferred to refer his empowering directly to God himself (Jr 1:9,12).

7.1 *The spirit and the word*

Mowinckel (1934:199f) seeks to make a distinction between the spirit which inspired the earlier ecstatic prophets and the word which gave the reforming prophets their message. The word is grasped by the clear light of reason while the spirit is then irrational. He correctly notes the rarity of references to the spirit, further omitting Hosea 9:7 as not referring to the reforming prophets (Jr 5:13 and Mi 2:11 would be understood in this way), and Micah 3:8 as a gloss (also Neve 1972:35). Mowinckel further notes that Ezekiel reverts to earlier reference to the spirit but only once as the medium of inspiration (Ezk 11:5), more usually as a motive principle. Deutero-Isaiah follows the traditional lines, Trito-Isaiah once (Is 61:1f) treats the spirit as inspiring. Apart from these exceptions, Mowinckel argues correctly that the basic reality of the reforming prophets was the word.
He goes too far in omitting all activity of the spirit from Jeremiah and other reforming prophets, although he is correct in concluding that the spirit does not inspire. His exceptions are readily dealt with. Ezekiel 11:5 does not in fact relate inspiration to the spirit:

And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and he said to me, "Say, Thus says..." (Ezk 11:5).

Here, "And he said" is masculine whereas "fell on me" is feminine, referring to the spirit. For this reason Good News Bible translates "the Lord said" which must be interpretative, a more probable interpretation would be to the word. Is 61:1f on the other hand does not relate the spirit directly to the message, but only to enabling. This indicates that the spirit does not inspire, yet is active in prophecy: the connection of word and spirit is ancient (Guillaume 1938:24). The difference that Mowinckel notes is not due to the word only being active between Amos and Jeremiah, the spirit active at other times, but an emphasis on the word as the immediate giver of the message. Equally the difference between true and false prophets is not the difference between possession of the word and of the spirit (Rowley 1945b:20).

Les manifestations de l'esprit... n'étaient pas davantage un signe distinctif entre vrais et faux prophètes... (Jacob 1957:482).
7.2 The action of the spirit in prophecy

Although the emphasis in Jeremiah lay in the word, the action of the spirit is present, although he tended to use other metaphors, particularly the hand and fire.

7.2.1 Preparation of the prophet for reception of the word. This has already been seen in Ezekiel 11:5. Heschel (1971:133) notes that elsewhere (eg Ezk 2:2) the spirit set Ezekiel on his feet before the message (cf Dn 10:11). The difficulty in interpreting whether Ezekiel was really transported to Jerusalem or had a visionary experience is also due to the fact that both are caused by the power of the spirit (Widengren 1948:111). To use another image, the spirit provides the pathos (Heschel 1971:87, cf Job 32:18). The spirit is thus the subjective side of preparation for the objective giving of the word (Buber 1960:84), which gives the revelatory state of mind (Lindblom 1962:175 cf also Neher 1968:112), or is the bond of unity (cf the marriage metaphor) between God and the prophet (Helberg 1979:333). In a sense therefore the function of the spirit and the "hand" of the Lord are similar (Wurzburger 1971:1152).

It is noticeable that just as word and spirit are active in creation (Ps 33:6) so both are necessary in the creation of the oracle in the prophet. Eichrodt (1967:77) points out that the link with the spirit kept the word from being simply impersonal world order. The word is rather
for a specific situation.

7.2.2 Empowering of the prophet for delivery of the word. The reference in Jeremiah 5:13 indicates the connection between the prophets and the spirit, Thompson (1980:244n) seeing the point of the verse in the double meaning of ruah, that is, that the prophets should have been guided by the divine spirit but that they were just “windbags”. The verse is probably (“Therefore”) to be taken with the following verse, indicating that Jeremiah’s words are not simply uttered, but are empowered:

The prophets will become wind;
the word is not in them.
Thus it shall be done to them!
Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of hosts:
Because they (you? MT, LXX) have spoken this word,
behold, I am making my words (natan) in your mouth a fire (Jr 5:13-14).

Although the emphasis here is on the fact that Jeremiah, and not the other prophets, has the word, the implication of power behind it, in the emphatic “Behold, I...", is clear.

It is possible that there is a connection between the executive action of God which is often expressed as fire in the Old Testament (as in
theophany, cf also Ex 24:17, Dt 9:3, Is 33:14 etc), and the spirit as in
Matthew 3:11, Acts 2:3. Fire is associated with *ap* nose (anger) (Jr
15:14=17:4, Is 66:15 etc) and with *nisma*’ breath (of life?) in Isaiah
30:33. Dyrness (1979:202) remarks that spirit, when used of humans,
means the dominant impulse, so it is possible that the reference to fire
(Jr 20:9, 23:29) may well be understood as referring to the impulse of
God to prophesy, and more particularly to the enabling of the spirit.
However, the more likely meaning of these, in keeping with the idea of
anger, is to relate “fire” to destruction (cf section 6.2).

Elsewhere, the action of the spirit in the empowering of the prophet is
clearer (eg Is 61:1). Just as words need breath for their utterance, so
the word needs the spirit (Jacob 1958:121). The connection between
word, spirit and creation is again appropriate, but here the creation is
of changed circumstances in the nation. Vriezen (1970:212) sees the
spirit as giving contact between the prophet and God, such that the
prophet’s words are authorized. This may well be true, but Jeremiah’s
authority lay in being the mouthpiece of God, not in ecstasy or in a
spirit manifestation (Rust 1977:341). For Jeremiah particularly, the
emphasis is on the word and upon rationality.

The word of God is not the outcome of the spirit, but
rather the spirit is the outcome of the word of God
(Haran 1977: 396 quoting Kaufmann).
The upheaval in his personality is from the word, not the spirit (Knight 1947:64), but neither displaces his ego (Robinson, W H 1923:4).

Elsewhere, in nonprophetic contexts, the spirit also has an empowering capacity (eg Ex 35:31), a ministry wider than that of the word which is the distinctive of prophets (Kaufmann 1961:97).

7.2.3 Why the omission of reference to the spirit? The connection of prophecy with the spirit was wellknown (eg "man of the spirit" Hs 9:7), yet Jeremiah clearly did not feel it necessary to mention this aspect of inspiration, possibly to separate himself from other prophets. W H Robinson (1946:179) says that the lack of usage of the term "spirit" is because it:

.....had become somewhat discredited through long and close association with primitive types of prophecy and with abnormal phenomena in general.

Von Rad (1975b:55) notes that it was the manifestation of the spirit which authenticated the prophets whereas for Jeremiah it was his call. His theophany, not the spirit, gave him authority. He does not need to prove his words and can refer to other prophets as simply wind (ruah Jr 5:13), with no more substance or importance than that. Apart from this, he does not even connect the false prophets with the spirit, perhaps to deny any divine authority to them at all. Elsewhere (Jr
10:14, 51:17), with reference to idols, he mocks them as not even having breath, no power at all. His one use of ruah which is normally translated "spirit" (Jr 51:1,11) significantly again is used in a sense of preparation for action, in this case political and judgemental.

Possibly the developing appreciation of God is also significant, ruah being associated with wild worship (Scott 1968:91). The great prophets know the intimacy of personal relationship, the "tranquillity of sublime inspiration" (Lindblom 1962:178). For them the spirit gave the wrong connotations. Ellison (1956:29) suggests the phrase "the spirit lifted me" (nasa') in Ezekiel really means a trance state. Jeremiah's communication, as Moses' seems rather to be direct and personal. Possibly too, the omission of the spirit is to avoid any suggestion of an intermediary or to avoid any hint that prophecy is due to anything the prophet has in himself by nature.

A further possibility is that there is no mention of the spirit, as the prophets are continually empowered ("I am filled..." Mi 3:8) (Wood 1979:88), whereas ecstatics know the sudden rush of the spirit.

7.2.4 Jeremiah's use of ruah. Apart from the few instances already mentioned, and a couple of references which are connected with animal life (Jr 2:24, 14:6), the majority of cases, usually translated "wind" have a connotation of judgement by the power of God, for example:
I will scatter you like chaff
driven by wind from the desert (Jr 13:24).

Jeremiah’s ministry is for judgement, which is brought about not by his power but by the power of God. As he announces the coming judgement it is appropriate that it is empowered by the ruah of the Lord. Wind alone however is an undirected force, it takes the meaningfulness of the word to make it creative, so that a connection is made between the uttered word and the ruah of judgement:

A wind too full for this comes to me. Now it is I who speak dabar in judgement upon them (Jr 4:12).

I spoke to you in your prosperity...you have not obeyed my voice. The wind shall shepherd all your shepherds (Jr 22:21-22).

The various translations of ruah, and other ways of referring to it, thus seem to have obscured the fact that it has a definite place in the prophetic process. That this is not clearer is also due to the factors mentioned above, but primarily due to the overriding significance of the theophanic experience which formed Jeremiah’s initial call, and was determinative for his whole ministry.
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