6) In Genesis xvii, according to McEvenue (pp. 158 f.) parallel panels and chiastic (palistrophic) writing are combined. McEvenue sees it as a feature of P's style that “... he does not build toward a climax, but constructs a palistrophe whose stress is in the centre, not at the end” (p. 114). This does not appear to be limited to P.

7) For further discussion see G. J. Wenham, The Book of Leviticus (Grand Rapids, 1979).


9) The most striking verbal connections with chapter xxii are in xxi 10-14. In the law of the captive slave woman there is a certain similarity of theme with the law in xxii 13 ff. A man becomes the husband of a woman, then spurns her, and finally has to give her her rights (in the one case, marriage, xxii 19b and in the other, freedom, xxi 14). In the description of the marriage and rejection the language is more compressed. Cf. xxi 13b-14a, “After that you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. Then, if you have no delight in her . . .”; and xxii 13, “If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and then spurns her . . .”. But the parallel is clear. Furthermore, the words “house” (v. 12), “father”, “mother”, “garb” (simlab) (v. 13), “humiliate” (innah) (v. 14) all recur in chapter xxii.

G. Seitz has pointed out (p. 119) that the word “Israel” occurs in casuistic laws only in xxi 8, 21 and xxi 19. The idea of purging evil from the people, and related vocabulary, is also common to both chapters, cf. xxi 8 f., xxi 21.

Two verbs which occur frequently in the chapters are mä!ä’ (xxi 1, 17, xxii 3, 14, 17, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28 (2x) and yâs (hôsî¸) (xxi 2, 10, 19, xxii 14, 15, 19, 21, 24). That the use of these verbs is not just adventitious appears from the apparently conscious alternation between discovery and public exhibition and judgement. There is also in xxii 14 f. a clear relationship between the “bringing out” of the “evil name” and the “bringing out” of the “tokens of virginity”, the latter being an ironic and confounding retort to the former.

Finally, the themes of elders (xxi 2-4, 6, 19, xxii 16-18) and judgement at the gate (xxi 19, xxii 15) are common to both chapters. Related to this is the similarity between the terms used for the executioners of the rebellious son, “all the men of his city” (xxi 21), and of the adulterous wife, “the men of her city” (xxii 21); cf. Seitz, p. 119.

**PIERCING THE DARKNESS AT BÔQƎR**

(AMOS VII 14)

The appearance of the unusual word bôqër in Amos vii 14 has called forth exegeses both numerous and novel. Thus, N. H. Tur-Sinai 1), basing himself on records from ancient Babylonia, identifies the bôqër as a kind of supervisory official, appointed by the owners of herds over the shepherds, whose function it was to inspect 2) the flocks and to collect the owner’s portion as a levy. Miloš Bieć, on the other hand, has argued 3) that bôqër denotes a hepatoscoper, i.e., one who practises divination by inspecting the livers of sacrificial animals. It has even been averred 4), albeit indirectly, that the proper translation of bôqër is “owner of a wine press”. None of these explana-
tions, it must be admitted, has gained much favor; and the standard authorities are almost unanimous in taking böqër as a denominative (derived from bàqär, “cattle”) meaning “herdsman” 5) or “cattle breeder” 6).

Against this, one has the fact that nowhere else is Amos called a herder of cattle; rather (i 1) he is a nõqëd, “a sheep-raiser”, a point made explicit in the very next verse (vii 15): “and the Lord took me from following the flock” (sõ’n, “flock, sheep and goats”) 7). Since the sense seems wrong and the word böqër occurs nowhere else in scripture 8), most moderns 9) have been led to emend böqër to nõqëd 10) a word which occurs also (as nõqëd) at 2 Kgs iii 4 and in records from Ugarit and Babylon and whose meaning is well attested in Arabic.

It seems to me preferable instead to connect böqër with the rest of vii 14, specifically to böšëš šiqmìm 11), translated by the KJV as “gatherer of sycomore fruit” and by the RSV as “dresser of sycamore trees”. It is now generally accepted that the hapax legomenon böšëš is a denominative from the Semitic bl.s, “fig” (attested in Arabic and Ethiopic), though the precise nuance has been lost to us. The translations of the LXX (κυδίων, “scratcher, gasher”) and Theodotion (χοράσσων [ = qôrës, “nipper” 12]), “scratcher”) make particularly good sense in the light of what we know concerning the cultivation of the sycamore fig 13). But the evidence for attaching any specific activity associated with the raising of figs to the word böšëš is very slim indeed 14).

I propose reading dōqër, “piercer”, for böqër. (Reading nõqërim, “borers, piercers”, for nõqëdim at i 1 would then yield an excellent sense parallel to vii 14 and would also account for the mysterious ἔνακαρμι given by the LXX at i 1 15). The verb dqr, “pierce” 16), is common enough in the OT, occurring in its various forms no fewer than twelve times 17). The passage from the dālet to bêt is not at all difficult in either the ancient or the square orthography 18), involving in either case not much more than the addition of the lower stroke of the bêt. The proposed reading seems particularly satisfactory if one translates böšëš šiqmìm in a non-specific fashion, say as “tender of sycamore figs” 19). The word dōqër would then specify Amos’ particular activity in this connection; and the wāw of šübölès would be the wāw explicitium 20), at once amplifying the meaning and restricting the context to which the verb dqr applies. Accordingly, we may translate the latter half of Amos vii 14 as “but I am a piercer and tender of syca-

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