

JEREMIAH 49.28-33; AN ORACLE  
AGAINST A PROUD DESERT POWER

By W. J. DUMBRELL

After the collapse of the Assyrian Empire the Syrian Desert power of Qedar continued that process of expansion which it had begun at the end of the 8th or the beginning of the 7th century.<sup>1</sup> Assyria had never succeeded in more than temporarily checking in several campaigns this rising desert power and we may suppose that the power vacuum until the firm establishment of Babylonian control after the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.) enabled Qedar to make firm its hegemony over those tribes which had comprised the confederacy which it led.<sup>2</sup>

After Carchemish Syria and Palestine fell under firm Babylonian control and there was thereafter an annual campaign to the west until 601 B.C.<sup>3</sup> In 601 B.C. the Babylonians were checked on the Egyptian border and most likely it was this rebuff which prompted Jehoiakim of Judah to rebel (2 Kings 24:1). In 598 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar, after necessary preliminaries which we shall describe in this paper, was once more ready to march west to Jerusalem and the city was captured in 597 B.C.

It is to be supposed, from the evidence to be presented, that Nebuchadrezzar found it first necessary to deal with the Qedarite led Arabs who probably at this time posed a real threat to the access routes from the Fertile Crescent to the west as a result of a period of free expansion, relatively unchecked owing to the disordered political conditions mentioned above. We may deduce as much from the British Museum Text 21946<sup>4</sup>, the relevant details of which are as follows:

Rev. 9. *šattu(MU) VI<sup>kam</sup> ituKislimi(GAN) šàr(LUGAL) Akkadi(URI)<sup>ki</sup> ummān(ERIM.ME)-šú id-ki-ma ana<sup>kur</sup> Hat-tú illik(DU) ultu(TA)<sup>kur</sup> Hat-tú ummāni (ERIM-ni-ME)-šú iš-pur-ma*

1. The evidence for the rise of Qedar as a desert power is marshalled in Chapter V of my unpublished Harvard Th.D. dissertation, "The Midianites and Their Transjordanian Successors" (June, 1970), pp. 184-246.
2. Qedar in the late Assyrian period led a desert confederacy, styled in the Assyrian Annals <sup>lu</sup>ji'-lu šá<sup>a</sup> A-tar-sa-ma-a-a-in. cf. op. cit. note 1 above p. 209ff.
3. Cf. the historical introduction in D. J. Wiseman, *British Museum, Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, Chronicles of Chaldean Kings 626-556 B.C. in the British Museum* (London, 1956).
4. Published in Wiseman, *Chronicles*, Text Plate XVI; Transliteration, p. 70.

10. *mad-ba-ri irtedu(US)-ma* <sup>kur</sup>*A-ra-bi ma-du-tu bušī(NIG)-šú-nu bu-li-šú-nu u ilāni(DINGIR.ME) -šú-nu ma-diš ih-tab-tu-nu ina. <sup>itu</sup>Addari(SE) šarru (LUGAL) ana māti(KUR)-šú itur(GUR).*

“In the sixth year in the month of Kislev the king of Akkad mustered his army and marched to the Hatti-land. From the Hatti-land he sent out his companies, (10) and scouring the desert they took much plunder from many Arabs, their possessions, animals and gods. In the month of Adar the king returned to his own land.”

The meaning of the extract seems clear enough as we put it in its historical context. From a north Syrian base<sup>5</sup> Nebuchadrezzar had sent detachments against Qedarite encampments, and it seems also evident from the brief account that the foray was the typical containment action which is familiar enough from the Assyrian Annals. The grazing context of these semi-nomads as they gradually press in upon the Palestinian fringes is made all the clearer by the use of the West-Semitic loan word *madbaru*, a word which is normal in biblical Hebrew in the sense of the semi-cultivated or grazing land bordering on the desert. The policy of removal of patron deities, depopulation of herds, etc., is again one with which the Assyrian Annals have made us familiar as they have previously dealt with action against the Qedarites.

On the basis of the course of events which we have sketched above we are now able to proceed with the consideration of the oracle in Jeremiah 49:28-33, which almost certainly refers to the same campaign, though there are some historical allusions within the poem which have no doubt found their way there when the Jeremianic collections were initially committed to canonical form. The reconstructed text is first presented, then textual and philological notes are appended:<sup>6</sup>

v. 28.	lqdr <sup>a</sup> lmmkwt <sup>b</sup> ḥṣr <sup>c</sup> kh 'mr YHWH			
	qwmw <sup>l</sup> w <sup>l</sup> <sup>d</sup> Qdr	7	a	b c
	wšddw <sup>e</sup> bny qdm	7		b C
			———1———	
v. 29.	'hlyhm wš'nm yqḥw	10	a	b c
	yry <sup>c</sup> wtyhm wkl klyhm	10	a	B
	wgmlyhm ys'w lhm	10		b c d
			———1———	

5. Wiseman (*Chronicles*, pp. 31ff) suggests Hamath, Riblah or Kadesh.

6. The syllable count indicated in the presentation is based upon what we may assume to have been the 6th century position; i.e. vocal shewas are taken to have been unreduced at that stage and the later 'segholate' nouns are taken to have been monosyllabic at that stage.

## AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

	†	qr'w °lyhm	5		
		mgwr msbyb	5		
v. 30		nsw ndw ° m'd	5		
		h°myqw ° h lšbt	5		
v. 30.		yšby ḥšr °	5		
		ky y°š °lykm °šh	8	a	b c
	‡	ḥšb °lykm °mhšbh	8	a	b c
				—	1—1—1—
Strophe II					
v. 31.		qwmw °lw	4	a	a
					1
		°l qwy šlyw °	4	b	c
		ywšb lbṭḥ	4	d	c
					1
		l' dltym	4		C
	m	l' bryḥ lw	4		C
					1
		bdd yšknw	5	c	d
				—	2—1—
v.32.		whyw gmlyhm lbz	9	a	b c
		wḥmw n mqnyhm lšll	9		B c
				—	—
					1—
	n	zrtym lkl-°rwḥ qšwšy-p'h	11	a	b c
		wmkl-°bryhm ° 'by' 'ydm	11	b	a d
				—	1—1—
v. 33.		whyth			
		ḥšr lm°wn tnym	7	a	B
		šmmh °d °wlm	6	b	C
				—	—
		l' yšb šm ° 'yš	6/5	a	b c
	r	l' ygrw bh bn 'dm	7	a	b c
				—	1—1—1—

## Translation:

- v. 28. To Qedar, to the kings of the encampments,  
 thus saith YHWH.  
 Rise up, advance against Qedar  
 Destroy the people of the east.
- v. 29. Their tents and their flocks  
 shall be taken  
 their (tent) curtains and all their  
 goods  
 and their camels shall be borne  
 away from them

- Proclaim against them  
Terror on every side!
- v. 30. Flee, wander far away,  
dwell in the depths,  
O inhabitants of the encampments.  
For he has made a plan against you  
he has formed a purpose against you.

Strophe II

- v. 31. Rise up, advance,  
against a nation at ease  
that dwells securely  
that has no gates  
that has no bars  
that dwells alone.
- v. 32. Their camels shall become a booty,  
their herds of cattle a spoil.  
I will scatter to every wind those  
who crop their hair,  
and I will bring their doom from  
every side of them.
- v. 33. The encampments will become a haunt of  
jackals  
an everlasting waste;  
no man shall dwell there  
no man shall sojourn there.

Notes: a. For exegetical reasons, we follow the LXX here in the omission of the *waw* before *lmmlkwt*.

b. On the basis of comparison with cognates, it is now admitted that the noun HSR in the Old Testament is the product of two different roots and that the original distinction is preserved by the Arabic roots *hadara* "to dwell" and *hazara* "to fence in", (Arabic *hašara* "confine", "restrict" has a more passive sense; the equivalent Ethiopic root is, however, used to translate Heb. HSR in the Ethiopic version). This same distinction is actually preserved in Hebrew by the differing plurals *h<sup>a</sup>šērîm*, which derives from Proto-Semitic \*HDR and *h<sup>a</sup>šērôt* which derives from Proto-Semitic \*HZR (this latter Hebrew word is used frequently for the Tabernacle or Temple courts; cf. Aramaic *Hûṭrā*, "enclosure" "fold" and the Ugaritic root HZR, "Gehöft", cf. Joseph Aisleitner, *Wörterbuch der Ugaritischen Sprache*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin (3rd edition) 1967, p. 106). By specific definition (Lev. 25:31) the *h<sup>a</sup>šērîm* are unwalled settlements; "But the houses of the villages (*h<sup>h</sup>šrym*) which have no wall around them shall be reckoned with

the fields of the country," and frequently in the Old Testament the *ḥṣrym* are unwalled villages dependent upon larger settlements (cf. Josh. 19:8; Is. 41:11; I Chron. 9:16; Neh. 12:28, etc.). In Is. 42:11 *ḥr* is used in parallelism with *ḥṣr(y)m*: "Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits," and some, contending that the *ḥṣrym* (there and elsewhere) are more substantial than we have argued, appeal to this parallel and reinforce their appeal by pointing to the *K<sup>e</sup>tib (h<sup>c</sup>yr) Q<sup>e</sup>re(ḥṣr)* distinction of II Kings 20:4. There, however, if HSR is read, it must, in view of the context, stem from Proto-Semitic \*HZR, while the reference at Is. 42:11 (by its plural form) is from Proto-Semitic \*HDR. No argument can be built upon the use of *ḥyr* in any of these contexts, since in its frequent Old Testament sense of a collection of people living in one place it is not uncommon in association with *ḥ<sup>a</sup>ṣērîm* (cf. Josh. 13:23, 21:12). It is to be noted that in the Mari corpus HSR occurs in three attestations, the text of one of which is doubtful. Of the other two, one refers to an assault upon an *ḥaṣārum (ana ḥaṣārîm ṣahâtîm)* in the vicinity of the city of Rasama, and in the other there is a description of the *ḥaṣarâtîm* of the nomadic tribes (for the references and their discussion cf. *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Chicago, Glückstadt, 1956- , H, Vol. 6, p. 130. (I. J. Gelb et al. eds.). The entry there has followed the Mari editors in suggesting that the meaning of the Akkadian word is "enclosure for sheep", but A. Malamat, "Mari and the Bible: Some Patterns of Tribal Organization and Institutions," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 82 (1962), 143-150, p. 147, more probably relates the Mari occurrences to Heb. *ḥ<sup>a</sup>ṣērîm*. For a fuller discussion of the point involved in this note cf. H. M. Orlinsky, "Hāṣēr' in the Old Testament," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 59 (1939) 22-37, and "The Kings-Isaiah Recensions of the Hezekiah Story," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 30 (1939-40), 33-49, esp. p. 35. Note that our assumption that the original MT reading was simply *ḥṣr* is supported by the LXX *a'ulēs* at v. 28a.

c. The phrase *'šr hkh Nbwkdr' ṣwr mlk Bbl* is obviously subsequent to the original delivery of the oracle. It is therefore an editorial insertion. We also note that the proper name *Nbwkdr'šr* of v. 30 is not in the LXX and it is possible that the whole phrase *Nbwkdr'šr mlk Bbl* is an explicative editorial note. We have omitted it in that place, *metri causa*. John Bright (*Jeremiah. Introduction, translation and notes*, 2nd ed. (Garden City, New York, Anchor Bible, 1965), p. 336 suggests that the prose heading to the poem and the further reference to Nebuchadrezzar

in v. 30 were editorial adaptations inserted at a time when the older poem was first applied to Nebuchadrezzar's later campaign. But we have pointed out that the content of the poem is perfectly consonant with Qedar's position at this period and thus the suggestion that an older poem was adapted to fit a later campaign seems hardly apposite here.

d. We replace MT 'l with 'l. Professor F. M. Cross, Jr., has suggested in a private communication that the interchange between 'l and 'l in Mss. revisions is common in the Old Testament and the LXX *e'pi* may suggest that 'l was original, particularly also in view of the assonance thus provided with the preceding 'lw.

e. The accusative particle 't is omitted as inappropriate in an old poetic context.

f. We omit the waw before *qr'w metri causa* to provide a balanced syllable count.

g. *Ndw* is omitted in the LXX at v. 30a but is retained in the Syriac and Vulgate. It is required for metrical purposes and we must thus ascribe its LXX omission to haplography. For the use of the double imperative in Old Testament poetry to add staccato effect to the passage cf. Is. 51:9, Judges 5:12, etc.

h. It is suggested by some commentators that the call to "dwell in the depths" of v. 30 is more appropriately applied to the Dedanites at Jer. 49:8 (from which context it is thought it may have been borrowed). Cf. F. Nötscher, *Das Buch Jeremias übersetzt und erklärt* (Die Heilige Schrift des alten Testaments VIII, 2; Bonn: Hanstein, 1934), p. 329. Hugo Winckler, *Altorient-alische Forschungen*, 6 vols. Leipzig, 1893-1906, Vol. II, p. 246, regarded the application of *he'miqû* to Bedouin as "unsinn". He preferred to read, by emendation, *h'ryqw lšbt*, "in die Wüste gehen zu wohnen" (cf. Syriac 'rq. But the injunction is addressed to the Qedarites in a crisis situation to secrete themselves temporarily and for the topographical possibilities at their disposal cf. Alois Musil, *Arabia Deserta, a topographical itinerary*. American Geographical Society Oriental Explorations and Studies No. 2, New York, 1927, p. 495, who mentions the numerous deep basins bounded on all sides by high cliffs in the *Hawrân* area in which Bedouin in such situations as the Qedarites addressed have sought refuge for thousands of years.

i. Heb. *n'm YHWH* is omitted by the LXX here and in v. 31. It is probably thus to be omitted. Cf. J. G. Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1966), pp. 153ff esp. p. 171 for his remarks on the textual position here (and at v. 28 supra). It is further likely that

the similar phrase which occurs at the end of v. 32 ought to end the poem as a whole. While there is no textual warranty for omitting it, we have in v. 32 left it out of consideration, considering it in any case a rubric and thus extra-metrical.

j. Omit the *waw* before *ḥsb metri causa*.

k. For reasons of symmetrical balance, it seems preferable to adopt the reading of the Q<sup>re</sup>, some LXX versions, the Targum and Vulgate and read here <sup>e</sup>*lykm* for the MT <sup>e</sup>*lyhm*.

l. The MT vocalization of <sup>s</sup>*lîw* may be an Aramaism as some commentators have noted. For the change from <sup>l</sup> *gwy* to <sup>e</sup>*l gwy* see note d. above.

m. Omit the *waw* before *l'-bryḥ metri causa*.

n. Omit the *waw* before *zrtym metri causa*.

o. *Kl* preceding *rwḥ* may be an expansion but there are no textual grounds for its omission.

p. MT <sup>e</sup>*bryw* is read <sup>e</sup>*bryhm* by all the versions and we adopt this reading. We have also omitted the accusative particle <sup>t</sup> before <sup>y</sup>*dm* in this colon; cf. note e. above.

q. Prof. F. M. Cross, Jr., has suggested (privately) that there was free traffic in different orthographical traditions between the forms *šmh* and *šm*. The longer form if adopted would provide a better syllable count here. It is also suggested by the assonance it would provide with the *šmmh* of the previous colon.

r. Omit the *waw* before *l' metri causa*.

This oracle is a fine example of a prophetic war poem and it has been very well textually preserved permitting of a neatly balanced metrical structure.<sup>7</sup> The syllable count between the cola is remarkably regular and the word boundary analysis which the poems permits is an obvious earmark of authenticity. There is a clear strophic division by the call to attack in vv. 28 and 31 and thus we have two strophes, each of three verses. There are certain exegetical difficulties associated with the oracle and these are now taken up.

The superscription of the poem has occasioned some difficulty and the usual translation of the Hebrew text as it stands is: "Concerning Qedar and the kingdoms of Hazor which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote." The Septuagint versions are solid in their

---

7. My thanks are due to Mr. Duane Christensen, Harvard graduate student, for his helpful comments regarding the metrical structure of this oracle.

omission of the copulative *waw* of *wlmmkwt* (though it is retained by the Syriac and Vulgate) and this textual witness of now very high authority<sup>8</sup> makes it possible to interpret *lmmlkwt* as epexegetic of Qedar, with the translation as indicated in our reconstruction. As to the meaning of the word *mmlkwt* opinions have oscillated, but since the word was not infrequent in Phoenician in the sense of "prince" or "ruler"<sup>9</sup> this is its probable meaning here. We may take the form, orthographically, as singular or plural but in view of the present context of a tribal hegemony in a confederate society, as the Qedarite society certainly was,<sup>10</sup> it is better to consider the form as plural.

The noun *ḥṣr* (*ḥṣwr*) is thrice mentioned in this context (i.e. in the superscription, in v. 30 and v. 33) in references which seem to make a place name inapplicable, and there has been, as a result, a disposition to see the term as a collective, referring here to desert settlements.<sup>11</sup> We are helped in reaching this conclusion by the prior reference of the term to the Ishmaelites at Gen. 25:16, among whom Qedar was numbered, where the genealogical list of twelve is given according "to their villages

- 
8. The Harvard Ph.D. dissertation of Dr. J. G. Janzen, referred to in note i to the metrical structure above, has put this question, in our opinion, beyond doubt.
  9. Cf. Charles F. Jean and J. Hoftijzer; *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest*. Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1965, p. 155. The LXX has *Basilisse*, i.e., a later form of, *Basileia*, "Queen". The orthography of the old text from which the LXX translation was made where *ō* (as opposed to *ō* from etymological *aw*) was not represented by a mater made this translation possible. Hugo Winckler (*AOF*, Vol II, pp. 245/6) advocates the translation "Queen of Hazor", having in mind the Arab queens encountered in the Assyrian Annals, and suggested that the translation "kingdoms of Hazor" was "zum mindesten sinnlos" (cf. Rudolph, *W. Jeremia* (HAT; HAT = Handbuch zum Alten Testament); Tubingen, 1958), p. 270 who takes *naml'ekōt* as the construct plural of *mamlākāh*). Most, however, have preferred to read the construct of the abstract noun *mamlākūt* here (cf. Paul Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia übersezt und erklärt* (Kommentar zum alten Testament; Leipzig, 1928<sup>2</sup>) p. 420, but this noun is a rare attestation in the Old Testament and like the later *malkūt* bears the note of sovereignty exercised (cf. Jer. 26:1) rather than that of "realm". Nötscher (*Jeremias*, p. 328) and others have advocated a reading of *mamleket* (i.e., the construct singular of *mamlākāh* but this does not take into account the orthography here, and thus the persistent Massoretic preservation.
  10. It is true that the Assyrian Annals consistently speak of a "king of Arabia" but the sense of *šarru* in such a context is difficult to discern and not only are the Annals too imprecise in this matter of internal Qedarite arrangements to be of much help, but they also know of competing and contemporary figures.
  11. Cf. Alois Musil, *Arabia Deserta*, p. 490; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, p. 271, who refers to this view as "die alte Auffassung.



(*b<sup>e</sup>ḥaṣ<sup>e</sup>rêhem*) and by their encampments (*b<sup>e</sup>ḥîrôtam*),<sup>12</sup> i.e., the tribal chieftains are listed by their desert holdings. We may safely take it that *ḥîsr* in the oracle now under review is a collective for "tent encampment(s)" or the like, and this is further supported by the references of v. 31 where the dwellings of Qedar (if our reconstruction of the whole is correct) are said to be without door, bolts or bars (i.e., unwalled, and thus, as tents, transient). This is again supported by the type of booty which Nebuchadrezzar is supposed to have carried off, i.e., flocks, tent covers<sup>13</sup> as he despoils these "Sons of the East".<sup>14</sup>

We may, then, regard this finely balanced old war poem, of two strophes each largely dealing with the same subject matter, as having been originally uttered by the prophet on the very eve of Nebuchadrezzar's campaign against the 'Arabs' in 599 B.C. If this poetic balance to which we have referred is borne in mind, then the frequent dilemma of the commenators as to who is speaking (and the problem of dating it) is removed. Rudolph had regarded the original oracle as having begun at v. 30 and as having ended at v. 32, yet v. 33 in which the mention of *ḥîswr* troubled Rudolph,<sup>15</sup> contains the concluding element which might

- 
12. G. Dalman (*Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina I-VI*, Vol. 6 (Gütersloh, 1928 1939), p. 41 suggested that *tîrâh* "bedeutet . . . den von einem rohen Steinwall eingeschlossenen Viehkral, in welchem auch der Hirte übernachtet", and he went on to associate this noun quite correctly with *HSR* (though his references which include Is. 42.11 show a confusion between the two roots mentioned above in the metrical notes). Musil (*Arabia Deserta*, p. 496) remarks that the "*Târ* or *tejran* . . . of the inner desert denotes a moderately high slope rising to a flat crest and likewise a small wall enclosing the place where herds sleep at night." The *ḥîrôtâm* of the Midianites (Nb. 31.10) were distinct from their *cârêhem*, yet *ḥîr* can also be used in poetic parallelism with such terms as *mîškân* (Ez. 25.4) and '*ôhel* at Ps. 69.26. There is obviously a close association of this term with sheep or cattle (etc.) stalls (probably the meaning at Nb 31.10—cf. Syr. *ḥeyârâ*) which may then in a transferred poetic sense be used of "dwelling(s)". Musil (*Arabia Deserta*, p. 496) suggests that the use at Ez. 46.23 is of a low wall enclosing a space or yard with the outer-court of the Temple, while the use at Canticles 8.9 appears to be metaphorical in the sense of "protection or battlement". We note that the word is used in connection with the Ishmaelites, the Midianites and the *B<sup>e</sup>nê Qedem*.
  13. For the metonymous use of *y<sup>e</sup>rîcâh*, "tent flap", as 'tent'. cf. Hab. 3.7, Cant. 1.5, Is. 54.2, in all of which the word is in direct or indirect parallelism with '*ôhel*.
  14. As so often in the Old Testament the *B<sup>e</sup>nê Qedem* seems used as a generic term for the people of Eastern Transjordan, and is used in the text in poetic parallelism with Qedar. Perhaps the prophet was alluding to the hegemony of Qedar over the confederacy of which he was aware.
  15. *Jeremia*, p. 272.

have been expected to round off the prophecy. R. Bach, more recently,<sup>16</sup> has rejected Rudolph's rather arbitrary division of material at v. 29ff and has agreed that Yahweh's speech is continued in v. 31. Whereas Rudolph had argued for a difference in speaker, Bach, much more plausibly argues for a distinction between *Gattungen*.<sup>17</sup> The older view of Cornill that the oracle as a whole was dependent upon similar Ezekiel material must be summarily rejected,<sup>18</sup> and in view of the metrical regularity of the piece when structured it is curious that he could have remarked; "Übrigens ist auch metrisch das Orakel arg verwahrlost und man muss schon zu starken Mitteln greifen, um einigermassen correcte Strophen zu bekommen."<sup>19</sup>

The stature of Qedar may be inferred at this period, not only from the significant fact that she is included among the foreign nations against whom Jeremiah inveighs but also from the relatively many references to this desert power at about this time. Thus at Jer. 2:10 Qedar appears to stand for a synonym for the east as do the *'iyyê kittiyyîm* (Cyprus) for the west. At Ezekiel 27:21 *w<sup>a</sup>kol-n<sup>e</sup>sî'ê Qēdār* are linked in the "traders catalogue" there with 'Arabia', no doubt as the most prominent member of that regional grouping, and a reference to Dedan precedes the verse, just as one to supplies from Sheba and Ra<sup>a</sup>mah follow it. These prophetic references may be added to by that from Isaiah 42:10ff where there is a directive to sing Yahweh's praises from the "end of the earth" and the "end(s)" are then further delimited by a reference to the *'iyyîm* in the west and to "the villages that Qedar inhabits" in the east, while the reputed flocks which have been referred to in Ez. 27:21 are again on view in parallelism with the "rams of Nebaioth" at Is. 60:7. To conclude this survey, the famed black tents of Qedar are mentioned at Canticles 1:5, while there is an allusion to the desert savagery of these people as "haters of peace" at Ps. 120:5ff.

In view of the cumulative weight of these references extending into the late Babylonian period, it is hardly conceivable that Nebuchadrezzar was able to do anything more than administer

- 
16. R. Bach, *Die Aufforderungen zur Flucht und zum Kampf im alttestamentlichen Prophetenspruch* (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum alten und neuen Testament; Neukirchener Verlag, 1962), pp. 17 and 53.
  17. I.e., the *Aufforderung zur Flucht* in 28b-29 and the *Aufforderung zum Kampf* in v. 31.
  18. C. H. Cornill *Das Buch Jeremias erklärt*. Leipzig, 1905. Hugo Winckler's observations (*A.F.*, Vol. II, p. 248) are still pertinent: "Es ist nämlich nicht recht abzusehen warum man ein Orakel über Nebukadrezzars Feldzug gegen die Kedarener in später Zeit angefertigt haben sollte".
  19. Cornill, *Jeremias*, p. 486.

a temporary check to this growing desert power and this supposition is confirmed by the advent of Qedar as a presence in the Delta region in the Persian period.<sup>20</sup> It is certain that the immediate post-exilic period was one of constant encroachment upon the Palestinian border kingdoms. This much seems clear enough from Ezekiel 25:1ff. There the demise of Ammon and Moab is threatened and in each case their former territories are about to become a domain for the *b<sup>e</sup>nê qedem*, who, as we have noted, have been used in close poetic parallelism with Qedar at Jer. 49:28 and are probably thus a synonym for them. Since we know from Josephus<sup>21</sup> that Nebuchadrezzar conducted a campaign against the Ammonites and the Moabites in his 23rd year (i.e. 582 B.C.), following directly upon an expedition to Cole-Syria, it is extremely probable that Ezek. 25:4 and 25:10 refer to Qedarite dominated Arab infiltrations into these subjected areas, an infiltration which would have been made all the easier by Nebuchadrezzar's probable policy of deportation.<sup>22</sup> From epigraphic evidence we are aware of the growing influence exercised upon the Ammonite kingdom by Arab elements from at least the beginning of the 6th century B.C.<sup>23</sup> and we adopt that view which holds that by the mid-sixth century B.C. these border states had ceased to be effective entities.<sup>24</sup>

In short, the somewhat enigmatic oracle of Jer. 49:28-33 draws our attention to a proud desert power, who having maintained her position established in the later Assyrian period was to go on to an even stronger position of influence in the Persian period. When we reflect upon her position and stature during the Babylonians period it is no wonder that she found a place in the oracles against the foreign nations in the Book of the prophet Jeremiah.

W. J. DUMBRELL,

Moore College,  
Newtown, N.S.W. 2042.

20. The course of subsequent Qedarite expansion is traced in William J. Dumbrell, "The Tell el Maskhuta Bowls and the 'Kingdom' of Qedar in the Persian Period". *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 203 (1971), 33-44.

21. Cf. *Antiquities* X 9 7.

22. On this point, cf. the unpublished Johns Hopkins University dissertation, *A History of the Ammonites*, by G. M. Landes (1956), p. 320, and A. van Zyl, *The Moabites*, Pretoria Oriental Series Vol. III, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960, p. 157.

23. Cf. W. F. Albright, "Notes on Ammonite History" in *Miscellanea Biblica*, B. Ubach (Montserrat, Spain, 1954), pp. 131-136, where it is shown that Thamudic type proper names are appearing on Ammonite royal seals from the beginning of the 6th century B.C. onwards.

24. So van Zyl, *Moabites*, p. 157, for Moab and Landes, *Ammonites*, p. 320 for Ammon.