colpa che più viene rimproverata ai re infedeli è il culto reso a divinità pagane..." This comment, however, does not go far enough. It refers to the criterion of exclusive worship of Yahweh but still does not make explicit the criterion of exclusive worship in Jerusalem.

Better yet, the introduction in TOB (*nouvelle édition revue* 1988) points to all three criteria by which kings are evaluated. Of importance for this article is the fact that TOB states very clearly the importance of centralized worship for the writer of 1-2 Kings.[1]

The introduction states,

> *Très imprégneés de la pensée deutéronomiste, les Livres des Rois attribuent une place considérable à Jérusalem et au culte célébré dans le Temple....Pour l'auteur, offrir des sacrifices ailleurs qu'à Jérusalem est une désobéissance si grave, qu'elle suffit à entraîner un jugement global de condamnation sur le règne d'un roi, même si celui-ci témoigne par ailleurs de sa fidélité au Seigneur en renversant les autels du Baal (voir 2 R 3.1-3).*

Translators who write introductions to biblical books will naturally want to highlight the theological teachings that have relevance for readers today, for example, that God requires obedience to his will and that disobedience will bring punishment. But we must not neglect to highlight those theological teachings that stand at the center of a writer's theology even if that teaching has no direct relevance today, such as the requirement that God be worshiped only in Jerusalem! Though the introduction to 1-2 Kings in TOB is longer than that provided in many translations, its statement concerning "*Jérusalem et le Temple*" is a good model—one which, in abbreviated form, may be recommended to translators in other languages.

C. JOHN COLLINS

"DEATH WILL BE THEIR SHEPHERD" OR "DEATH WILL FEED ON THEM"? *māwet yir'ēm* in Psalm 49.15 (EVV v 14)

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Introduction

Psalm 49.15a [ET v 14a] reads *kaṣṣō'n lišĕ'ôl šattû māwet yir'ēm.* The English versions generally agree in rendering the opening phrase "like sheep they [the careless rich] are appointed for Sheol" (RSV; see also NIV, NASB, NRSV, Jewish Publication Society of America (JPSA); the KJV and NKJV have "like sheep they are laid in the grave."

1 The introduction to 1-2 Kings in *Nueva Biblia Española* (1975) is also very clear on this point:

La fidelidad exclusiva toma al principio la forma de veneración y culto exclusivos al Señor... Muy pronto la fidelidad exclusiva se encuentra amenazada en los santuarios locales... En ese momento la fidelidad exclusiva al Señor toma la forma de culto en un solo templo. El autor toma el hecho final y lo erige en criterio de interpretación y valoración de la historia precedente. Es un juicio anacrónica, porque proyecta hacia atrés una ley reciente; es un juicio simplista, porque simplifica los hechos...

Agreement breaks down, however, on the meaning of *māwet yir'ēm*: on the one side KJV, NKJV, and NIV have "death will feed on them"; on the other side, RSV, GNB, NRSV, NASB, JPSA have "death will be their shepherd." The English versions are symptomatic of variation within the larger picture of the Western exegetical tradition.[1] The fact that a major commentary on the Hebrew text such as Craigie's sides with the KJV (without discussion!) shows that the issue is not purely one of the history of interpretation. Most commentators take one side or the other, but have little philological discussion (exceptions below).[2]

The immediate purpose of this paper is to evaluate these two different interpretations by offering a more nuanced analysis of the verb *rā'â* than has hitherto been presented, to see if that sheds light on the question. The larger purpose is to illustrate the advantages of a sound lexical method for studying Hebrew verbs—one that pays attention to syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships.

The argument for "death will feed on them"

A philological justification for the KJV of this verse appears in a footnote to the Calvin Translation Society's edition of Calvin's Commentary on the Psalms (ET 1846; J. Anderson, ed.). Since, it is argued, *rā'â* can mean "to feed upon and lay waste" (Mic 5.5 [ET v 6]; Ps 80.14 [ET v 13]), and "to feed upon" (Is 44.20; Hos 12.2), we may consider such a meaning here. It is argued further that the idea of Death as a hungry monster "is a personification which we frequently meet with in the Latin poets. Cerberus is often represented by them as feasting on the bodies of men in the grave."

The NIV follows substantially the same argument, as reflected in Stek's note in *The NIV Study Bible*: "For the imagery of death (or the grave) as an insatiable monster feeding on its victims see [Ps] 69.15; 141.7; Prov 1.12; 27.20; 30.15-16; Is 5.14; Jon 2.2; Hab 2.5. The imagery is borrowed from Canaanite mythology, which so depicts the god Mot (death). As one Canaanite document reads, 'Do not approach divine Mot, lest he put you like a lamb into his mouth.' "[3]

J.A. Alexander dissented from the KJV, declaring, "The common version, death shall feed on them, although not ungrammatical, is entirely at variance with the figure of a flock and a shepherd, which immediately precedes." C.A. and E.C. Briggs agreed: "AV, 'feed on them,' is a slight improvement on the Prayer Book

1 The "death will feed on them" interpretation appears in some ancient versions: Psalterium Gallicanum has *mors depascet eos* and the Greek version of Symmachus has *thanatos nemēsetai autous*, both meaning "death will consume them." Cassiodorus (485-580), in his Explanation of the Psalms, follows this text type (see *Ancient Christian Writers*, vol. 51, New York: Paulist 1990; his comments are on p. 476, and see p. 8 for discussion of his underlying Latin text); so too Peter Lombard (1095-1169) in his commentary (see Casetti, 128, n 212). Rashi (1040-1105) interpreted as *mal'āk māwet yō'kĕlēm* "the Angel of death will eat them." The French Segond version follows this line with "*La mort en fait sa pâture.*" Compare older editions of the German Luther Bible "*der Tod naget sie*" ("Death gnaws them") with the revised version (German Bible Society 1984), "*der Tod weidet sie*" (Death shepherds them").

2 Favoring "death will feed on them": Craigie (1983), Stek (1985), van Gemeren (1991). Favoring "death will be their shepherd": Calvin (1563), Alexander (1864), Delitzsch (1867), Briggs (1906), Leupold (1959), Dahood (1965), Anderson (1972), Kraus (1972), Kidner (1973), Hakham (1979), Casetti (1982), Bratcher and Reyburn (1991). BDB weigh in on this side, as do Koehler and Baumgartner (note that they print the text incorrectly, giving the simple imperfect *yir'ēh*, rather than the suffixed imperfect found in Ps 49.15, *yir'ēm*).

3 Kenneth L. Barker, a member of the NIV Committee on Bible Translation, informs me (in a very kind letter, dated September 14, 1990): "Some of the rationale for our handling of Ps 49.14 (15), however, is indubitably expressed in *The NIV Study Bible* (which I edited)." Bruce K. Waltke, another member of the Committee, agrees, and appeals to the syntax of Prov 15.14, Is 44.20 (letter dated June 10, 1990).

Version, 'gnaweth,' which, though possible, as justified by a rare usage of the verb [*rā'â*] ..., with the conception that death is a wild beast, is not suited to the context, and is improbable in itself." Pierre Casetti, in his study of Psalm 49, *Gibt es ein Leben vor dem Tod?*, discusses this phrase at length from the point of view of the "shepherd motif" in ancient Near Eastern literature. He finds the idea of death as a shepherd outside the Old Testament, and considers it quite appropriate here. He does not discuss the syntax of the verb *rā'â*.[1]

To assess these views we must first consider the syntax of *rā'â;* then the import of the biblical and Ugaritic parallels adduced by Stek.

Syntax of *rā'â*

The verb *rā'â* displays three basic syntactic patterns in biblical Hebrew:[2]

(i) Absolute: <*A*> *rā'â* "A grazed." For example, Job 1.14 *wĕhā'ătōnôt rō'ôt 'al yĕdêhem* "and the she-donkeys were grazing beside them;" Is 11.7 *ûpārâ wādōb tir'eynâ yaḥdāw* "and the cow and the bear will graze together." Note that adverbial modifiers can be added, such as locatives, for example in Gen 41.2, 18 *wattir'eynâ bā'āḥû* "and they grazed in the reeds;" Ex 34.3 *gam haṣṣo'n wĕhabbāqār 'al yir'û 'el mûl hāhār hahû'* "even the sheep and the cattle must not graze in front of that mountain."

(ii) With accusative: <*A*> *rā'â* <*B*> "A grazed on B." For example, Is 30.23 *yi'reh miqneykā...kar nirḥāb* "your livestock will graze on a roomy pasture;" Ezek 34.14 *ûmir'eh šāmēn tir'eynâ* "and they will graze on rich pasture."[3]

(iii) With accusative: <*C*> *rā'â (*'*et-)* <*A*> "C caused A to graze," that is, "C tended/shepherded A." For example, Gen 37.12 *lir'ôt 'et-ṣō'n 'ăbîhem* "to tend their father's sheep," Ex 3.1 *ûmōšeh hāyâ rō'eh 'et-ṣō'n yitrô* "and Moses was tending Jethro's sheep."[4]

In these constructions, the A-elements usually denote grazing animals or flocks (or people under the figure of sheep, as being ruled); the B-elements denote the pasture or the contents of the pasture; and the C-elements denote herdsmen (with figurative applications to God and to kings).

In no case does the B-element of syntax (ii) refer to meat or to other animals. Note that this holds for all the passages adduced above in favor of the KJV-NIV rendering: in Ps 80.14 [ET v 13] *wĕzîz śāday tir'ennâ* "and what moves on the field will feed on it," the B-element "it" is *gepen* "vine" (v 9 [ET v 8]; in Prov 15.14 *ûpî* [Qere] *kĕsîlîm yir'eh 'iwwelet* "and the mouth of fools feeds on folly," the B-element is "folly;" in Is 44.20 it is *'ēper* "ashes;" in Hos 12.2 [ET v 1] it is *rûaḥ*

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1 Casetti, 124-132.

2 In the syntactic formalism used here, < > represents a syntactic nominal slot; A, B, C are slot fillers; and ( ) indicates an optional element.

3 This seems better than BDB's parsing *kar* "pasture" as an adverbial accusative (locative). Note that this syntax can use a suffix for the B-element, Ps 80.14 *wĕzîz śāday yir'ennâ* "and what moves on the field feeds on it" [i.e. on the vine, *gepen*, v 9].

4 See Waltke and O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, 363 (§22.2.1b, n 5) for some other fientive verbs which have both intransitive and transitive uses (perhaps it would be better to say *intransitive* and *causative of the intransitive*?).

To combine the senses of syntaxes (ii) and (iii), "C caused A to graze on B," the B-element would appear in a locative phrase: Ezek 34.13 *ûrĕ'îtîm 'ē ḥārê yiśrā'ēl* "and I will cause them to graze on the mountains of Israel:" v 14 *bĕmir'e ṭôb'er'eh 'ōtām* "I will cause them to graze in a good pasture."

"wind."[1] Job 24.21 presents special problems and is handled in the Appendix. Thus we can ordinarily tell whether a given usage of *rā'â* is syntax (i), (ii), or (iii) by its syntactic relations.

The syntactic pattern into which Ps 49.15 [ET v 14] most naturally fits is syntax (iii), since these people (the referent of the third person plural suffix on *yir'ēm*) have just been likened to sheep in the opening of the verse. Are the biblical and Ugaritic parallels adduced by Stek strong enough to overthrow this?

Assessment of biblical parallels adduced

The biblical parallels to which Stek refers speak of the "mouth" (*peh*) of Sheol or of the "pit" (*bĕ'ēr*), Ps 69.16 [ET v 15]; 141.7; Is 5.14; to the large "appetite" (*nepeš*) of Sheol, Is 5.14; Hab 2.5; to Sheol and death never being "satisfied" (*śāba'*), Prov 27.20; 30.15-16; Hab 2.5; to the "belly" (*beṭen*) of Sheol, Jon 2.3 [ET v 2]; and to brigands "swallowing" (*bāla'*) their victims alive like Sheol, Prov 1.12.

These verses illustrate that there is a widespread imagery in the OT of "death (or the grave) as an insatiable monster," as Stek puts it: if not quite feeding on its victims, at least swallowing them. None of these verses, though, uses *rā'â* to describe this action.

A verse not mentioned in Stek's note but relevant to this discussion is Job 18.13b, where Bildad asserts of a wicked man, *yō'kal baddāyw bĕkôr māwet* "the firstborn of death devours his limbs."[2]

Therefore, though the imagery adduced by Stek certainly exists, it uses other vocabulary than the verb *rā'â*, and cannot be used to establish the alleged meaning of that verb in Ps 49.15.

Assessment of Ugaritic parallels adduced

The passage in the "Canaanite" (actually, Ugaritic[3]) document in Stek's note is *CTA* 4.viii.16-18:[4]

'al tqrb lbn 'ilm mt Do not come near to divine Mot ["Death"]

'al y'dbkm k'imr bph let him not make you like a lamb in his mouth.

One may easily find other passages about the hungry Mot, such as *CTA* 5.i.5-8, which speaks of *npš bn 'ilm mt* "the appetite of divine Mot" (see also lines 14ff for his ravenous appetite).

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1 Contrary to J. Anderson's note in Calvin, Mic 5.5 [ET v 6] *wĕrā'û 'et 'ereṣ 'aššûr baḥereb* is "and they will shepherd [i.e. rule] the land of Assyria with the sword" (so NIV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, contra NKJV). See D.R. Hillers, *Micah* (Philadelphia: Fortress 1984); D.J. Clark and N. Mundhenk, *A Translator's Handbook on the Books of Obadiah and Micah* (London: United Bible Societies 1982).

2 See Andersen (1976), Hakham (1984), and Clines (1989) for the view that *bĕkôr māwet* "the firstborn of death" denotes a supernatural being; Delitzsch (1866) and Hartley (1988) for the view that it denotes a wasting disease. A recent detailed study of this passage is N. Wyatt, "The expression *bĕkôr māwet* in Job xviii 13 and its mythological background," *Vetus Testamentum* 40 (1990), 207-216. He interprets the name as "Firstborn Mot [=Death]."

3 As A.R. Millard notes (article "The Canaanites," in D.J. Wiseman, ed., *Peoples of Old Testament Times*, Oxford 1973, 36), it is best to distinguish Ugaritic language and literature from Canaanite. Certainly they overlapped considerably, but it is better to use the specific name Ugaritic and not to prejudice the matter at any given point. Note A.F. Rainey, "A Canaanite at Ugarit," *Israel Exploration Journal* 13 (1963), 43-45, who cites evidence from Ugarit that shows that Canaanites were there regarded as foreigners: "Perhaps we should henceforth refrain from calling the people of Ugarit Canaanites since they did not consider themselves as such"(45).

4 In Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 67.

It goes beyond our present knowledge to insist with Stek that the imagery of a hungry grave is "*borrowed* from Canaanite mythology"; but there is a recognisable use of a common theme.[1] However, and this is the point, this Ugaritic imagery does not use a cognate to Hebrew *rā'â* and therefore has no effect on our understanding of that particular word (just like the biblical passages discussed in section 4 above).

Words for eating flesh: *'ākal, ṭārap, šādad*

Biblical Hebrew employs three words to refer to eating flesh: *'ākal*, the general word for "to eat"; *ṭārap* "to tear, eat [prey];" and *šādad* "to deal violently with." For example, Amos 6.4 *wĕ'ōkēlîm kārîm miṣṣō'n* "and eating he-lambs from the sheep;" Ps 7.3 [ET v 2] *pen-yiṭrōp kĕ'aryēh napšî* "lest he tear my soul like a lion;" Gen 37.33 *ḥayyâ rā'â 'ākālāthû ṭārōp ṭōrap yōsēp* "an evil beast has eaten him; Joseph has surely been eaten as prey!"; Jer 5.6 *zĕ'ēb 'ărābôt yĕšoddēm*[2] "a wolf of the desert will ravage them" *(NIV).*

Particularly instructive for this study is Ezekiel 34. The verb *rā'â* appears several times in syntaxes (ii) and (iii); for example, v 14 *ûmir'eh šāmēn tir'eynâ* "and they will graze on a rich pasture," compare vv 18, 19; v 2 *hôy rō'ê yiśrā'ēl 'ăšer hāyû rō'îm 'ōtām* "woe, shepherds of Israel who have been shepherding [feeding] themselves;" *hă 'haṣṣō'n yir'û hārō'îm* "should not the shepherds tend the sheep?" When Ezekiel wants to speak of the sheep being eaten he apparently must use other vocabulary: v 3 *'et-haḥēleb tō'kēlû ... habbĕrî'â tizbāḥû* "you eat the fat...you slaughter the healthy [sheep]"; v 5 *wattihyeynâ lĕ'oklâ lĕkol-ḥayyat haśśādeh* "and they [the sheep] become food for every beast of the fields" (see also vv 8, 10; vv 8, 22, 28 *hĕyôt lĕbaz* "to become prey"); v 28 *wĕḥayyat hā'āreṣ lō' tō'kĕlēm* "and the beast of the earth will not eat them." Notice that Ezekiel did not, and apparently could not, express "the evil shepherds eat my sheep" by saying *hārō'îm hārā'îm rō'îm 'et-ṣō'nî* (which would have been a clever word-play if it were linguistically possible), since *rĕ'ôt 'et-ṣō'nî* means "to tend my sheep."

Conclusion

It seems clear from this study that the correct translation of *māwet yir'ēm* in Ps 49.15 [ET v 14] is "death will be their shepherd" (RSV, GNB, NRSV, NASB, JPSA). This is most natural in view of the syntagmatic relations of *rā'â*, and this naturalness remains when the supposed biblical and Ugaritic parallels have been examined. The proper way to express "death will feed on them" (KJV, NKJV, NIV) is *māwet yō'kĕlēm* (or perhaps *māwet yiṭrĕpēm* if one wants to suggest the violent action of a predator).

In Ps 49.15 [ET v 14] *māwet* is a demythologised personification of death; and, in contrast to the godly, who have the Lord as their shepherd (Ps 23.1), the careless rich have only the cheerless prospect of being shepherded by Death.[3]

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1 Compare the similar image in Latin mythology, cited in Anderson's note in Calvin on Ps 49.15. Perhaps it would be better to say that the Bible writers made use of an imagery widespread in the ancient world.

2 See GKC §67cc for this form.

3 Theologically this conveys the idea of their continued existence after physical death. But in contrast to what the godly anticipate (Ps 49.16 [ET v.15]), this could hardly be called "life"! It is far more like the despair of eternal destruction and exclusion from the Lord's presence mentioned in 2 Thess 1.9.

Appendix: Job 24.21

Job 24.21 says of a bad man, *rō'eh 'ăqārâ lō' tēlēd wĕ'almānâ lō' yĕyēṭîb* "he *rō'eh* a barren woman—she who has not given birth—and he does not do good to a widow." Surely this is a case of *rā'â* meaning "to feed or prey upon," with a person as object (so NIV, RSV, NKJV, Delitzsch).

Our conclusions on Ps 49.15 are unaffected (see section 3 (iii) above). Moreover, *rō'eh here is probably not from raâ* "to graze," but instead is an unusual participial form of *rā'a'* "to harm" (so NASB, KJV; NRSV is based on textual emendation to the same effect, for which see Driver-Gray, philological note). A. Hakham on this passage notes the parallelism with *lō' yĕyēṭîb* "he does not do good," and supposes that the unusual form is used to avoid three successive *'ayin*'s: *rō'ēa' 'ăqārâ* would be harsh. In Prov 25.19 we find just such an unusual participial form of this verb, *šēn rō'â* "a bad tooth," in place of *šēn rō'ă'â* (see on this verse Delitzsch, Zar-Kabod and Kil, GKC §67s).

Therefore the NASB "he *wrongs* the barren woman" is the correct interpretation.

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PHILIP A. NOSS

THE HEBREW POST-VERBAL *LAMED* PREPOSITION PLUS PRONOUN

Discourse Features in the Light of Some African Languages

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Introduction[1]

The Hebrew *Lamed* preposition plus personal pronoun following a verb has been variously described in the literature.[2]

1 The system of transliteration used in this article is that used in the index of *The Bible Translator*. Literal translations of Hebrew text are mine, standard translations are from the RSV, unless otherwise noted. Unpublished manuscripts are cited by permission of the author.

2 The *Lamed* preposition with pronoun paradigm is the following:

lî	for me	*lânû*	for us
lékâ	for you (ms)	*lâkem*	for you (mpl)
lâk	for you (fs)	*lâken*	for you (fpl)
lô	for him	*lâhem*	for them (mpl)
lâh	for her	*lâhen*	for them (fpl)
		lâmô	for him/them