

Davar or Word as Expression in the Book of Jeremiah

Introduction

Despite its shortness, this is an article I've been wanting to write for a long time. In a nutshell, it concerns the Hebrew verb *davar* often translated as to speak. According to the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, "thus far no etymology of *dbr* has met with general approval"¹. I guess that's the fate of such a common verb. As for common verbs, the most used one with regard to speaking is *'amar* or to utter in the sense of bringing to light. By way of contrast, *davar* (same spelling for the noun) is originally rendered as to set in order. Thus it has a more precise meaning and is not entirely unlike the Greek equivalent of *logos*. And so I prefer to dub it "word as expression" as in this essay's title.²

Another frequent use of the noun *davar* is "thing" as in Gn 15.1: "After these things...these *davar*...the *davar* of the Lord came to Abram in a vision." A thing is an object out there readily visible and tangible and as in the case at hand can refer to an event. Also we could say that such objects have come into existence by way of having been uttered.

For some years I've had the custom of reading about twenty to thirty minutes of biblical Hebrew five mornings a week. I consider that as not unlike piano practice in order to keep relatively fluent with the language in contrast to reading in the spirit of *lectio divina*. Even reading Hebrew from the practical point of view has a way of making you pause here and there to absorb the deeper meaning.

With regard to this practice of reading, recently I started the book of Jeremiah. For some reason—I can't pin down why—Jeremiah quickly became a favorite of mine. Perhaps it has something to do with coming off the lengthy Book of Isaiah, no easy read. Despite personal preferences, the main thrust of

¹ Volume III, p. 94 (Grand Rapids, MI, 1978).

² Some other renderings of *davar*: answer, appoint, bid, command, commune, declare, destroy, give, name, promise, pronounce, rehearse, say, speak, be spokesman, subdue, talk, teach, tell, think, use (entreaties), utter.

the project at hand is to continue with the process of reading Hebrew. Still after having advanced beyond Jeremiah, I felt him tugging at me to return. He had a way of presenting new insights to a given text even in a non-*lectio* approach.

Narrowing down my focus as to how I got this article under way stems directly from the very first word in the Book of Jeremiah which runs accordingly as “The words or *davar* of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiyah.” Not only that, vs. 2 continues with “to whom the *davar* of the Lord came in the days of Josiah.” This preeminence of *davar*, of course, is essential for getting the text underway. Because I discovered several other interesting uses in these opening verses, I figure making some notations is a good a place to start delving into *davar*.

Originally I had thought of beginning with the first biblical reference and advancing forward, but by reason of the richness with which *davar* is used in Jeremiah, sticking with the prophet was enough. Not all references are noted, otherwise the list would be way too long. Rather, the list presented here is essentially arbitrary and should be sufficient witness. It may be of interest to note that the first occasion of the verb *davar* is Gn 8.15 which is relatively late in the Bible: “Then God spoke to Noah, saying.”

Quickly the reader will notice that the *davar* comes to Jeremiah in a seemingly infinite array of circumstances. Such coming is put literally as that which became (*hayah*), for example, to Jeremiah. The same applies to other instances where the Lord tells him what to say or what to do. This communication comes across as two persons not so much speaking but of being present to each other.. Actually we don’t know how the Lord speaks with Jeremiah or anyone else. That’s something each reader will have to discover for him or herself. Both *davar* and the more common ‘*amar* are used, figuratively if you will. I don’t think anything like a trance is used. The point of contact would be Jeremiah being in a fairly constant state of readiness or awareness so as to remain unclouded by distractions.

Due to the frequent number of references, in some instances part of a given verse is presented. Also as noted in the first paragraph, the spelling of *davar* is

the same for both noun and verb.

It should be noted that twenty-nine of fifty-two chapters of the Book of Jeremiah begin with *davar*. They will be noted as such, the chapter and verse number being in the color blue so they'll stand out. As for the chapters, they are as follows: 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 24, 35, 36, 38, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 and 50. Often these chapters are in more or less the same format which sets the tone for what follows.

+

1.1: The word of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah.

1.2: to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah.

Note that both verses are included in the Introduction. The verb *hayah* (to be, to exist) is rendered literally as “became:” “to whom the *davar* of the Lord became.” Use of *hayah* as such occurs frequently in the excerpts at hand.

1.4: Now the word of the Lord came to me saying.

The text reads literally as “*davar* Lord.” This verse includes the common ‘*amar* rendered as “saying.” Nothing is said as to how the *davar* reaches Jeremiah, simply that it does, this being noted in the previous verse. However, frequent exposure to how *yehy* is presented does provide a clue that becomes clearer by reading the verses in the spirit of *lectio divina*.

1.9: 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.”

This verse has two parts. In the first we have two verbs, *shalach* and *nagah* or to send and to touch. In the second part the Lord addresses Jeremiah with *hineh* or “behold,” a way of grabbing his attention for having put his *davar* in his mouth. Apparently Jeremiah was unaware of how this putting (*natan*, to give) came about. Suddenly he found the *davar* present there and thus requiring them to be uttered.

2.1: The word of the Lord came to me, saying,

The same as 1.4 with *yehy* (became) along with ‘*amar*, saying.

2.4: Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.

Shamah or to hear often is bound up with *davar* as it is here. *Beyth* and *mishpachah* or the singular and more inclusive house along with the plural families or those entities comprising a clan will hear the Lord's *davar* differently.

2.31: And you, O generation, heed the word of the Lord.

Dor or generation also as a period and circuit of the years of life. Here it's more inclusive than *beyth* and *mishpachah* of 2.4. The verb *ra'ah* for "heed" fundamentally means to see. How can one see the *davar* of the Lord, something that requires being heard? Again, *lectio divina* provides the vehicle for how the two converge.

3.12: Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, "Return, faithless Israel, says the Lord."

Halak and *qara'* or go and proclaim, the latter also as to call aloud. Jeremiah is bidden not so much to travel to the north but to use these two verbs to enhance his utterance of the divine *davar*. The fundamental message is for Israel to return or *shuv*. Her faithlessness or *mishuvah* is from the same verbal root as *shuv*.

5.14:Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of hosts: "Because they have spoken this word, behold, I am making my words in your mouth a fire and this people wood, and the fire shall devour them."

Any verse beginning with *laken* and *koh* or "therefore" and "thus" has a certain magisterial quality about it. The *davar* at hand is spoken or *davar* in reference, for example, to Israel being unfaithful to the Lord. *Lakan koh* is followed by a similar magisterial word or *hineh*, "behold." The Lord is making (*natan*, to give) his *davar* in Jeremiah's mouth not as a fire but fire directly speaking. It will consume the people as wood, '*akal* being the common verb to eat.

5.28:They know no bounds in deeds of wickedness.

The verb *havar* or to pass over or by is with *davar* rendered here as deeds with respect to wickedness, *rah* also as evil. I.e., the invisible *davar* be-

comes visible.

6.10: To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears are closed, they cannot listen; behold, the word of the Lord is to them an object of scorn, they take no pleasure in it.

The first sentence is a rhetorical question by the Lord where *davar* is with *hud* or to warn, also call as a witness. Both are directed to *shamah* or hearing.

Ears are literally uncircumcised making the divine *davar* an object of scorn, *cherpah* also as reproach. Also the people do not delight in this *davar*, *chephats* also to take pleasure.

6.19: 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.

The Lord bids the earth or *'erets* to hear (*shamah*), this noun often as *ham* or people as in this verse but in a more comprehensive sense. The people failed to hear the Lord's *davar*, *qashav* also as to attend to. Hence the Lord is about to bring evil upon them, the fruit of their devices, *machasheveth*, also counsel, purpose.

7.1-2: The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Stand in the gate of the Lord's house and proclaim there this word and say, 'Hear the word of the Lord, all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship the Lord.'"

Another chapter beginning with customary introductory words, the *davar* having become to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah is to stand and proclaim or *hamad* and *qara'* the following *davar*. He begins with *shamah* or to hear the *davar* to all entering the gates to worship the Lord, *shachah* or to bow down.

7.27: So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you.

The verb *davar* followed by the noun *davar*, but the people won't listen, *shamah*.

10.1: Hear the word which the Lord speaks to you, O house of Israel.

Shamah with regard to *davar* which the Lord *davar*.

11.1-2:The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: “Hear the words of this covenant and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

The *davar* which became to Jeremiah with regard to hearing the *davar* of the covenant and *davar* them.

11.6: And the Lord said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: ‘Hear the words of this covenant and do them.’”

Qara’ or call aloud the *davar*, that is, not just to hear or *shamah* the *davar* of the covenant but to do (*hasah*) them.

11.8: Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but every one walked in the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant which I commanded them to do, but they did not.

The first sentence includes two examples of the collective nature of the people, ear and heart. With regard to the first, they failed to obey as well as to incline, *shamah* and *natah*. This caused the people to walk in the combination of *sharyroth* and *rah* or stubbornness of not just the heart (*lev*) but one which is evil.

In an attempt to counter this, the Lord brought upon his people the *davar* of the covenant he had commanded them to do. However, they failed to obey.

14.1:The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah *concerning* the drought.

Another chapter beginning with these customary introductory words where the divine *davar* became to the prophet. *Davar* is also used for “concerning” or literally as “on the words of the drought.”

15.16: “Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I am called by your name.”

Note the passive of the verb *matsa’* or were found with respect to *davar* after which Jeremiah consumed them. Only then did the divine *davar* become a joy and delight, *sason* and *simchah*. Jeremiah is called (*qara’*) by the Lord’s name which literally is “upon me.”

16.1: The word of the Lord came to me.

Another instance of *davar* which became to the prophet.

16.10: And when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, “Why has the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against the Lord our God?”

The *davar* at hand pertain to what the Lord had said several verses beforehand involving evil, iniquity and sin. The people respond in disbelief by posing three rhetorical questions they know are true but can't admit their responsibility. In fact, they are hiding behind a feigned ignorance which hopefully will allow them escape responsibility.

17.15: Behold, they say to me, “Where is the word of the Lord? Let it come!”

The people ask a question of Jeremiah considering him to be a false prophet, that is, as to where might be the *davar* of the Lord. They ask for it to come not knowing the consequences of their words.

17.20: Hear the word of the Lord, you kings of Judah and all Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter by these gates.

Jeremiah addresses the kings of Judah, all those of that nation and those dwelling in Jerusalem. Implied is both the current monarch and subsequent rulers. The *davar* pertains to proper observance of the Sabbath.

18.1: The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord.

Another instance of *davar* which became to Jeremiah from the Lord.

18.2: Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.

Arise or *qum* suggests getting ready. At the mention of a potter's house Jeremiah knew at once what the Lord would tell him, that it would be within the context of fashioning a pot or vase. We can assume that as Jeremiah watched the potter re-fashioning a vessel with spoiled clay he was moved to hear the Lord's *davar*.

18.18: Then they said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law

shall not perish from the priest nor counsel from the wise nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not heed any of his words.

Two uses of *davar*. The first is with regard to the people of Israel making plots against Jeremiah, *chashav* also as to devise. They don't want to hear any more of his *davar*, *chashav* more along the lines of attending to with the negative. In conjunction with the lack of *chashav*, the people wish to smite Jeremiah with their tongues, *nakah* implying slander and the like.

19.2: and go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom at the entry of the Potters' Gate and proclaim there the words that I tell you.

Jeremiah is to go to the valley at hand with some elders and senior priests after having bought an earthen flask. He's to proclaim or *qara'* (also to call out) the *davar* which the Lord will tell him, that is, *davar*. Thus we have two instances: *davar* as noun and *davar* as verb.

19.3: You shall say, "Hear the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am bringing such evil upon this place that the ears of every one who hears of it will tingle.'"

The *davar* of the Lord applies to kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. It consists of evil the Lord will bring upon Jerusalem designated as "this place." The ears of all hearing Jeremiah speak the *davar* will tingle, *tsalal*. This verb implies a low grade ringing sound that persists as long as Jeremiah utters the divine *davar*.

19.15: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, "Behold, I am bringing upon this city and upon all its towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their neck, refusing to hear my words."

A distinction between *davar* (verb and noun) and *'amar* where the latter is associated with the Lord speaking. He then proceeds to bring evil upon the city that he has *davar* against it since the inhabitants refused to hear his *davar*.

20.1: Now Pashhur the priest, the son of Immer, who was chief officer in the

house of the Lord, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things.

As for Jeremiah prophesying, refer to 19.14. Apparent Pashhur is the only person who had heard Jeremiah prophesying these things or these *davar*.

20.8: For whenever I speak I cry out, I shout, "Violence and destruction!" For the word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long.

Here the *davar* by Jeremiah is equated with *zahaq* and *qara'* or to cry out and to shout. For the prophet the divine *davar* has become a reproach and derision, *cherpah* and *qalas* or contempt and scorn.

22.2: Hear the word of the Lord, O King of Judah, who sit on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter these gates.

The common association of *shamah* or to hear with *davar* of the Lord. Though Jeremiah speaks thus with authority, most of the time he isn't obeyed.

22.1: Thus says the Lord: "Go down to the house of the king of Judah and speak there this word."

Here the Lord '*amar* whereas Jeremiah is bidden to *davar* a *davar* to the house of the king of Judah, house implying his court which is a large audience.

22.5: "But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself," says the Lord, "that this house shall become a desolation."

This verse shows the result of not *shamah* the Lord's *davar*. Through Jeremiah he will swear by himself (*shavah*) that this house will become a desolation, *charbah* as waste or ruin.

22.29: O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord!

'*Erets* as land or country and mentioned three times to *shamah* the *davar* of the Lord. Implied is that '*erets* is a kind of living being on which Israel lives.

23.9: 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.

This verse is rather dramatic where Jeremiah likens himself as a

drunken person. I.e., Jeremiah is utterly dismayed because of the Lord and his *davar* which are holy, the adjective *qadesh* which apply to the Lord.

23.18: For who among them has stood in the council of the Lord to perceive and to hear his word or who has given heed to his word and listened?

A rhetorical question with regard to the Lord's people, asking who among them has been a member of the Lord's council or *sod*. If so, one would both perceive and hear (*yare'* or to reverence and *shamah*) the divine *davar*.

Also this rhetorical question asks who has paid attention (*qashav*, to attend to) to the Lord's *davar* and listened, a second use of *shamah*. I.e., the two verbs work together as one.

23.29: "Is not my word like fire," says the Lord, "and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces?"

Here *davar* is likened to two instruments of force: fire and a hammer. Om involves burning and the other, being broken up.

23.36: But "the burden of the Lord" you shall mention no more, for the burden is every man's own word, and you pervert the words of the living God, the Lord of hosts, our God.

Masa' or burden of the Lord can also apply to something uttered. The people are not to mention it again, *zakar* fundamentally as to remember. The *masa'* is the *davar* of each person, and because of this the Lord tells the people that they are perverting the divine words or *davar*. Use of such language as living God, Lord of hosts and our God make the situation that much more serious.

25.1: The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon).

"The *davar* that became (literally) upon Jeremiah." This is followed by a more specific time frame, Jehoiakim, king of Judah and Nebuchadrezzar who had invaded Judah.

25.3: For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, to this day, the word of the Lord has come to me, and I

have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened (davar in the Hebrew text).

Jeremiah himself gives a specific time frame, that is, right up “to this day.” At issue is the *davar* of the Lord which literally has become to him. It compelled Jeremiah to *davar* persistently or ‘*ashkym* or to rise early, but the people did not listen (*shamah*) to the *davar*.

25.13: I will bring upon that land all the words which I have uttered against it, everything written in this book which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations.

The land or ‘*erets* which is synonymous with Israel as receiving all the *davar* which the Lord has *davar* against it. Such *davar* Jeremiah has done in accord with his gift of prophecy, *nava*’.

26.1: In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the Lord.

Here *davar* which became from the Lord is given a specific time and character with regard to Jeremiah’s prophecy, that is, Jehoiakim.

26.2: Thus says the Lord: “Stand in the court of the Lord's house and speak to all the cities of Judah which come to worship in the house of the Lord all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word.”

‘*Amar* or the more common verb to speak opens this verse which is directed to Jeremiah. He’s to take up a position in the house of the Lord or the Jerusalem temple. There follow four instances of *davar*: to the cities of Judah, the *davar* addressed to them which the Lord specifies as commanding Jeremiah to *davar*. He is not to hold back any *davar*, *garah* also as to take away.

26.12: Then Jeremiah spoke to all the princes and all the people saying, “The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard.”

‘*Amar* opens this verse where Jeremiah spoke to the princes and people. He had been sent to prophesy (*nava*’) against this house and city or the inferred temple and Jerusalem. It involved all the *davar* which the people have heard or *shamah*. That is to say, already the princes and people knew the con-

tents of Jeremiah's prophesy.

27.1: In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord.

The divine *davar* is specified as having become to Jeremiah at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign.

27.18: If they are prophets, and if the word of the Lord is with them, then let them intercede with the Lord of hosts that the vessels which are left in the house of the Lord, in the house of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem may not go to Babylon.

The two conditional sentences presented as one unit pertain to doubt with regard to those engaged in prophesying. If the *davar* of the Lord is with such prophets, they are to intercede with the Lord, *pagah* fundamentally to strike. Such a warning hopefully gives these people second thoughts as to their prophesying.

28.6: and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the Lord do so; may the Lord make the words which you have prophesied come true and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the Lord and all the exiles."

Jeremiah responds to the false prophet Hananiah. That is to say, he wishes that his *davar* as having been prophesied come true with regard to the temple's vessels and exiles returning home.

28.7: Yet hear now this word which I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people.

Jeremiah continues speaking to Hananiah. That is to say, he now is to hear or *shamah* the *davar* spoken literally in his ears as well as the people. Such a way of speaking infers something very important.

29.1: These are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the elders of the exiles and to the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Though the *davar* at hand are in a letter, they are of special significance

by reason of coming from the prophet Jeremiah.

29.10: For thus says the Lord: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.”

When a verse begins as such, more often than not the verb to speak is the common ‘*amar*. The verb *qum* as to fulfill fundamentally means to rise and is with regard to the noun *davar* as promise. Once the *davar* has arisen (if you will), the Lord will return his people home.

29.19: “because they did not heed my words,” says the Lord, “which I persistently sent to you by my servants the prophets, but you would not listen, says the Lord.”

The verb *shamah* or to hear occurs twice, both in the negative sense. The first is with regard to the Lord’s *davar* and the second with regard to the *davar* although that word is not included but certainly implied.

30.1: The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord.

Another instance of the divine *davar* having become (*hayah*) to Jeremiah.

30.2: Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: “Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you.”

Another instance of the verb ‘*amar* or to speak when a verse begins as such. It occurs a second time in the Hebrew prefaced with the preposition *l-*, to and may be rendered as “saying.” Jeremiah is to write the *davar* which the Lord has *davar*. I.e., both instances occur almost simultaneously.

31.10: Hear the word of the Lord, O nations and declare it in the coastlands afar off; say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.”

Goy or nations, not Israel, *shamah* the *davar* of the Lord. Once they do, they are to speak it, *nagad* which connotes putting it before. *Goy* are to play a reverse role. That is, they are act as heralds to Israel and to act as a shepherd.

32.1: The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of

Zedekiah king of Judah which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.

Here the divine *davar* became once again to Jeremiah.

31.23: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its cities when I restore their fortunes: 'The Lord bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill!'"

The common verb '*amar* or to speak used with these familiar introductory words. The *davar* as a blessing will, as it were, be inserted in the '*erets* or land of Judah. This will happen when the Lord restores their fortunes, *shavah* fundamentally to carry off. In the case at hand this involved a desire for the Lord to impart a blessing, *barak*.

33.1: The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah a second time while he was still shut up in the court of the guard.

The second time the divine *davar* became to Jeremiah while in prison.

33.14: "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah."

See 29.10 where *davar* is promise to be fulfilled, *qum* fundamentally to arise. That is to say, *qum* infers that the *davar* is latent, not manifest, but will become so.

34.1: The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army and all the kingdoms of the earth under his dominion and all the peoples were fighting against Jerusalem and all of its cities.

Another instance where the divine *davar* became to Jeremiah. It stands in sharp contrast to the display of Babylon's military might arrayed against Jerusalem.

34.18: And the men who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the covenant which they made before me, I will make like the calf which they cut in two and passed between its parts.

Another instance of *davar* and *qum*, to keep and terms. The Lord threatens those who transgressed (*havar*, to pass over) his covenant with the same fate described in Gn 15.7-17.

35.1: The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

Another instance where the divine *davar* became to Jeremiah in the days of Jehoiakim, king of Judah.

36.1: In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord.

Davar is specified as *hazeh* or “this” and with ‘*amar* as saying. *Davar* became to Jeremiah from the Lord.

36.2: Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations from the day I spoke to you from the days of Josiah until today.

Jeremiah is to write the *davar* the Lord had spoken had *davar* to him as well as from the day he had *davar* to him during Josiah’s reign to the present. Such *davar* are to be in the compact form of a scroll which can be rolled up and rolled out.

36.6: so you are to go, and on a fast day in the hearing of all the people in the Lord's house you shall read the words of the Lord from the scroll which you have written at my dictation. You shall read them also in the hearing of all the men of Judah who come out of their cities.

Jeremiah is to read (*qara*’ fundamentally as to call out) the *davar* of the Lord from the scroll just mentioned. This to be done literally in the ears of the inhabitants of Judah.

36.27: Now after the king had burned the scroll with the words which Baruch wrote at Jeremiah's dictation, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah.

The *davar* which became to Jeremiah is a substitute for the *davar* on the scroll burned by Jeohoiakim. No matter how poorly the divine *davar* are treated, they cannot be destroyed.

36.32: Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the scroll which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and

many similar words were added to them.

A second instance of writing the *davar* of the Lord on a scroll after King Jehoiakim had burned the first one. Because the *davar* are divine, Jeremiah can dictate them word-for-word without missing a single iota.

38.1: Now Shephatiah the son of Mattan, Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, Jucal the son of Shelemiah and Pashhur the son of Malchiah heard the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the people.

The four men mentioned were instrumental in having Jeremiah cast into a cistern because of the *davar* he was *davar* to the people. The context is when the Chaldeans took Jerusalem.

38.21: But if you refuse to surrender, this is the vision which the Lord has shown to me.

Here *davar* is rendered as something that is seen, a vision which the Lord revealed to Jeremiah. The verb is *ra'ah*, to see. Thus we have *davar* as something to see.

39.15: The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the guard.

The *davar* of the Lord became to Jeremiah while imprisoned.

40.1: The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he took him bound in chains along with all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah who were being exiled to Babylon.

In a very real way, the *davar* of the Lord was set free along with Jeremiah at the command of Nebuzaradan.

42.15: then hear the word of the Lord, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "If you set your faces to enter Egypt and go to live there."

Jeremiah bids the remnant of Judah to *shamah* the *davar* of the Lord. When such words as the familiar "Thus says ('*amar*) the Lord" are used, something ominous is to follow as in the situation at hand.

43.1: When Jeremiah finished speaking to all the people all these words of the Lord their God with which the Lord their God had sent him to them.

An instance where *davar* is a noun as well as a verb. Jeremiah did this as having been sent to all the people.

44.1: The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews that dwelt in the land of Egypt, at Migdol, at Tahpanhes, at Memphis and in the land of Pathros.

The *davar* of the Lord became to Jeremiah with regard to the Jews dwelling in five foreign lands.

44.16: As for the word which you have spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not listen to you.

The people make a firm rejection of the *davar* spoken or *davar* by Jeremiah in their desire to engage in idolatrous worship.

44.24: Jeremiah said to all the people and all the women, "Hear the word of the Lord, all you of Judah who are in the land of Egypt."

Jeremiah bids the people living in Egypt to *shamar* the *davar* of the Lord.

44.29: "This shall be the sign to you," says the Lord, "that I will punish you in this place in order that you may know that my words will surely stand against you for evil."

The verb *qum* or to stand (fundamentally to arise) is used twice for emphasis concerning the *davar* of the Lord. I.e., the *davar* form a kind of wall firmly set as evil against the people.

45.1: The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah when he wrote these words in a book at the dictation of Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

Davar as both verb and noun spoken to Baruch with regard to the *davar* he had written at Jeremiah's dictation. As noted earlier, such *davar* are inscribed word-for-word.

46.1: The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning

the nations.

Here the *davar* of the Lord became to Jeremiah with regard to nations or *goy*, a word applicable to peoples other than Israel.

47.1: The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines before Pharaoh smote Gaza.

As with the preceding entry, another instance of the divine *davar* which became to Jeremiah with regard to the Philistines, traditional enemy of Israel.

50.1: The word which the Lord spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet.

The *davar* is with regard to Babylon as well as the land of the Chaldeans.

51.60: Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, all these words that are written concerning Babylon.

Here *davar* is used as both verb and noun with regard to Babylon. This time it's phrased a bit differently, "by Jeremiah the prophet."

+