A PRIEST COPING WITH A NEW PLACE: A VOCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND TRAUMA READING OF EZEKIEL'S PRIESTLY IDENTITY

by

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DECLARATION

I, Ralph Andrew Compton, declare that this thesis, "A Priest Coping with a New Place: A Vocational Psychology and Trauma Reading of Ezekiel's Priestly Identity," which I hereby submit for the degree of Ph.D. in Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

ETHICS STATEMENT

I, Ralph Andrew Compton, have obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval (see p. vi). I declare that I have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for Researchers and the Policy Guidelines for Responsible Research.

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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This letter serves as confirmation that the research proposal of this student was evaluated by:

1) **The Research committee**: This applies to all research proposals
2) **The Research Ethics committee**: This applies only to research that includes people as sources of information

You are hereby notified that your research proposal (including ethical clearance where it is applicable) is approved.

Mrs. AM Kotze *on behalf of*
Prof D Human: Chairperson: Research committee: Faculty of Theology and Religion

Dr T van Wyk
Chairperson: Research Ethics committee: Faculty of Theology and Religion

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הללו־יה הללי נפשי את־יהוה

אהללה יהוה בחיי אזמרה לאלהי בעודי

Psalm 146:1-2

SUMMARY

Interpreters have long noted that the book of Ezekiel has a priestly shape. From its explicit description of Ezekiel in 1:3 as יחזקאל בן־בוזי הכהן ("Ezekiel, son of Buzi, the priest") to its widely accepted "priestly content," scholarship has associated the book with P (priestly) and HC (holiness code) ascribed passages of the Pentateuch. It is also no surprise that historians of the Israelite and Judean priesthood inevitably turn to Ezekiel in due course of their research; it is widely recognized as a primary source for studying developing priestly traditions.

A more recent set of questions have focused on the relationship between Ezekiel's priestly and prophetic identities insofar as those can be accessed from the prophetic book bearing his name. A flurry of publications grappled with this from 1998-2005 yet came to no agreed-upon solution. This research project is an effort to take up the discussion from where it has lain dormant and moved the discussion forward using the hitherto unutilized (or at least *under*utilized) tools of vocational psychology.

As occupational identity is observable in a variety of contexts—ancient and modern, rural and urban—and recoverable from ancient Levantine inscriptions, epigraphic finds, and the text of the Old Testament, carefully applying analytical tools designed to understand the importance and salience of vocational identity appears to be a warranted move. This research surveys occupational identity in general and *priestly* occupational identity in particular before turning to key themes and passages in Ezekiel which evidence a priestly vocational identity that remaining active for Ezekiel.

Recent study of the psychological effects of trauma, and readings of biblical texts attuned to this trauma, have also dovetailed with vocational psychology which has increasingly attended to migrants of the present-day who are forced to make occupational modifications to cope with their own traumatic, exilic experience. Studying the observed techniques of job-crafting, this research proposes similar techniques in Ezekiel that enable the priest-prophet to retain his priestly, occupational identity, albeit modified in accordance with his locale far from the traditional place of priestly activity (the Jerusalem temple) and in accordance with his prophetic call.

Four main subjects have been selected as testing grounds for Ezekiel's crafted priestly identity. First, Ezekiel's sign-acts (Ezek 3-5) are read as rituals of priestly inauguration rather

than chiefly as illustrative and/or non-verbal communication. Second, Ezekiel’s presentation of purity and impurity (specifically in Ezek 20 and 22) is compared and contrasted with traditional priestly and Deuteronomic emphases regarding sin and impurity, suggesting that this presentation can also be read as a job-crafting technique. Cross-cultural comparisons are made with modern-day Mandean and Hutu refugees. Third, the unique portrayal of the כבוד־יהוה in Ezek 1-3 and 8-11 is read as a job-crafting technique in conversation with other OT כבוד passages and Latin American border theology. Fourth, Ezekiel’s temple in Ezek 40-48 is read in light of developments in textuality and spatiality, suggesting that this section of the prophetic book serves as a “spatialized temple-text” enabling Ezekiel’s priestly vocational identity.

KEY TERMS

Ezekiel, Priesthood, Vocational Psychology, Job-Crafting, Sign-Acts, Ritual, Purity, Glory/*Kābôd*, Spatiality.

ABBREVIATIONS

AARTR American Academy of Religion The Religions Series
AB Anchor Bible
ABD *Anchor Bible Dictionary.* Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992
ABRL Anchor Bible Reference Library
AcBib Academia Biblica
AIL Ancient Israel and Its Literature
AnBib Anlecta Biblica
ANEM Ancient Near East Monographs / Monografías sobre el Antiguo Cercano Oriente
AOAT Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOTC Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
ArBib The Aramaic Bible
ATD Das Alte Testament Deutsch
AYBRL Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library
BAR *Biblical Archaeology Review*
BASOR *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BBB Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBRSup *Bulletin for Biblical Research, Supplements*
BETL Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BHS *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*
Bib *Biblica*
BibInt *Biblical Interpretation*
BibSem The Biblical Seminar
BJSUCSD Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego
BMI The Bible and Its Modern Interpreters
BN *Biblische Notizen*
BO *Bibliotheca Orientalis*
BTB *Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BZAW Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAD *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.* Edited by Martha T. Roth. 21 vols. Chicago, IL: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956-2006
CahRB Cahiers de la Revue biblique
CBET Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CHANE Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
CIS *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum.* Paris, 1881-
ConBOT Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series
COS *The Context of Scripture.* Edited by William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997-2016
CSB Christian Standard Bible
CSHJ Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism
CTR *Criswell Theological Review*

CurBR — *Currents in Biblical Research*
CurBS — *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*
DBI — *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation.* Edited by John Hayes. 2 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1999
DCH — *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew.* Edited by David J.A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993-2014
DDD — *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. 2nd rev. ed. Leiden: Brill; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999
Di — *Dialog*
EJL — Early Judaism and Its Literature
EncJud — *Encyclopedia Judaica.* Edited by Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum. 2nd ed. 22 vols. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007
ER — *Encyclopedia of Religion.* Edited by Lindsay Jones. 2nd ed. 15 vols. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005
ERE — *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.* Edited by James Hastings. 13 vols. New York, NY: Scribner's Sons, 1908-1927.
ESV — English Standard Version
ETL — *Ephemerides Teologicae Lovanienses*
FAT — Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL — Forms of the Old Testament Literature
GBS — Guides to Biblical Scholarship
GKC — *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar.* Edited by Emil Kautzsch. Translated by Arther E. Cowley. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910
HALOT — *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of M.E.J. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001
HBAI — *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*
HdO — Handbuch der Orientalistik
HSM — Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR — *Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA — *Hebrew Union College Annual*
IB — *Interpreter's Bible.* Edited by George A. Buttrick et al. 12 vols. New York, NY: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951-1957
IBHS — *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990
IDB — *The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible.* Edited by George A. Buttrick. 4 vols. New York, NY: Abingdon, 1962
IEJ — *Israel Exploration Journal*
Int — *Interpretation*
ISBE — *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.* Edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Revised ed. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979-88.
ISBL — Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature
JAAR — *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JANER — *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*
JAOS — *Journal of the American Oriental Society*

JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBQ	*Jewish Biblical Quarterly*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JHebS	*Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JNSL	*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*
Joüon	Joüon, Paul. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew.* Translated and revised by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
KAI	*Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften.* Herbert Donner and Wolfgang Röllig. 2nd ed. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1966-1969
KJV	King James Version
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Version
NEA	*Near Eastern Archaeology*
NIB	*The New Interpreter's Bible.* Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1994-2004
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIDB	*New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.* Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2006-2009
NIDOTTE	*New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis.* Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997
NIV	New International Version
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OIS	Oriental Institute Seminars
OTE	*Old Testament Essays*
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studiën*
PHSC	Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and Its Contexts
RA	*Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*
RB	*Revue biblique*
RevExp	*Review and Expositor*
RPP	*Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion.* Edited by Hans Dieter Betz et al. 14 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2007-2013
SAC	Studies in Antiquity and Christianity
SBLABS	Society of Biblical Literature Archaeology and Biblical Studies
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers

SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SEÅ	*Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok*
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions (supplements to *Numen*)
SJOT	*Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature (Lang)
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SWBA	Social World of Biblical Antiquity
TA	*Tel Aviv*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-1976
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament.* Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 17 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974-2021
TLOT	*Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Edited by Ernst Jenni, with assistance from Claus Westermann. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997
TSK	*Theologische Studien und Kritiken*
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

CHAPTER 1: STATE OF THE QUESTION AND RESEARCH PROGRAM

This thesis is an interdisciplinary exercise in Old Testament interpretation. Its title, "A Priest Coping with a New Place: A Vocational Psychology and Trauma Reading of Ezekiel's Priestly Identity," highlights two main emphases of the overall project. First, the language of "priest" and "place" in the title connects this project to a series of writings from 1998–2005 grappling with the nature of Ezekiel's priestly identity. Two main contributions exhibited titles that showed their alternative understandings of Ezekiel's priestly identity. Iain M. Duguid's "Putting Priests in Their Place: Ezekiel's Contribution to the History of the Old Testament Priesthood" is a maximalist historical study that discusses Ezekiel's priestly identity as providing an exemplar of the model priest in exile, which would therefore enable historians to understand the role of priests in the diaspora.[1] Conversely, Baruch J. Schwartz's "A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel's Role in the History of the Israelite Priesthood" disputes the features mustered by Duguid and argues that Ezekiel is depicted as one who has left priestly-vocational concerns behind in taking up his prophetic work.[2] This title thereby highlights that this project enters this discussion, affirming Duguid's concern for seeing Ezekiel's priestly identity as significant for understanding the role of priests in the exile and navigating Schwartz's findings that seem to downplay Ezekiel's ongoing priestly vocation.

Second, the subtitle highlights a triad of overlapping approaches within the methodological category of "psychological biblical criticism" that will be employed in this study. The word "identity" connects this research to a broader discussion of identity theory, a subject that has been established and utilized in biblical studies.[3] There are a range of sub-

[1] Iain M. Duguid, "Putting Priests in Their Place: Ezekiel's Contribution to the History of the Old Testament Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 43–59.

[2] Baruch J. Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel's Role in the History of the Israelite Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 61–71.

[3] The literature on this subject is vast, though the following are recent examples of note: Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman, eds., *Imagining the Other and Constructing Israelite Identity,* LHBOTS 591 (London: T&T Clark, 2014); Gary N. Knoppers and Kenneth A. Ristau, eds., *Community and Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009); Kenton L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel: Prolegomena to the Study of Ethnic Sentiments and Their Expression in the Hebrew Bible* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1998); Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming, eds., *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011); Hannah Liss and Manfred Oeming, eds., *Literary Construction of Identity in the Ancient World* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010).

domains within identity research, though one that bridges to the second methodological category is "occupational identity."[4] The major methodology of this project is reflected in the term "vocational psychology."[5] Researchers and practitioners in this field study a wide range of worker identities, but noteworthy for this research are those that focus on forcibly displaced refugee workers who are compelled to cope with the traumatic loss of their former life and adapt to a new place using adaptation strategies such as job crafting.[6] This bridges to the final category: trauma. Like identity theory, trauma studies have entered, albeit more recently, into the exegetical toolkit and have been applied generally to biblical texts and specifically to the book of Ezekiel.[7]

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[4] Vladimir B. Skorikov and Fred W. Vondracek, "Occupational Identity," in *Domains and Categories*, vol. 2 of *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research,* ed. Seth J. Schwartz, Koen Luyckx, and Vivian L. Vignoles (New York, NY: Springer, 2012), 693–714. The 150+ entries in this chapter's bibliography demonstrate the magnitude of this research field. See too Alan Brown, Simone Kirpal, and Felix Rauner, eds. *Identities at Work,* Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Issues, Concerns and Prospects 5 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007).

[5] David L. Blustein, *The Psychology of Working: A New Perspective for Career Development, Counseling, and Public Policy,* Counseling and Psychotherapy: Investigating Practice from Scientific, Historical, and Cultural Perspectives (Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006); David L. Blustein, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of the Psychology of Working,* Oxford Library of Psychology (Oxford/New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014); W. Bruce Walsh and Mark L. Savickas, eds. *Handbook of Vocational Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice,* 3rd ed., Contemporary Topics in Vocational Psychology (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005).

[6] Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson, "When Callings are Calling: Crafting Work and Leisure in Pursuit of Unanswered Occupational Callings," *Organization Science* 21, no. 5 (2010): 973–994; Christine R. Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation of Refugees," *International Migration Review* 15, no. 1/2 (1981): 292–309; Geri Smyth and Henry Kum, "'When They Don't Use it They Will Lose It': Professionals, Deprofessionalization and Reprofessionalization: The Case of Refugee Teachers in Scotland," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23, no. 4 (2010): 503–22; Katja Wehrle et al, "Can I Come as I Am?: Refugees' Vocational Identity Threats, Coping, and Growth," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 105 (2018): 83–101.

[7] For general treatments, see David M. Carr, *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Elizabeth Boase and Christopher G. Frechette, eds., *Bible Through the Lens of Trauma,* SemeiaSt 86 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016); Eve-Marie Becker, Jan Dochhorn, and Else K. Holt, eds., *Trauma and Traumatization in Individual and Collective Dimensions: Insights from Biblical Studies and Beyond,* Studia Aarhusiana Neotestamentica 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014). The latter two volumes contain chapters devoted to Ezekiel through the lens of trauma studies, and to this can be added Ruth Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* VTSup 154 (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Ezekiel on Fanon's Couch: A Postcolonialist Dialogue with David Halperin's *Seeking Ezekiel,*" in *Peace and Justice Shall Embrace: Power and Theopolitics in the Bible: Essays in Honor of Millard Lind,* ed. Ted Grimsrud and Loren L. Johns (Telford, PA: Pandora Press, 1999), 108–144; David G. Garber, "Traumatizing Ezekiel, the Exilic Prophet," in *From Genesis to Apocalyptic Vision,* vol. 2 of *Psychology and the Bible: A New Way to Read the Scriptures,* ed. J. Harold Ellens and Wayne G. Rollins, Praeger Perspectives: Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 215–35; idem, "'I went in bitterness': Theological implications of a trauma theory of reading Ezekiel," *Review and Expositor* 111, no. 4 (2014): 346–57; Nancy R. Bowen, *Ezekiel,* AOTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010).

The State of the Question

Though it has been universally agreed that Ezekiel has a priestly "background," there has been considerable disagreement about the importance of his being labeled a "priest" (1) for understanding the contents of the book and (2) for historical work seeking to determine whether there was a priesthood operating in exile. A flurry of studies appeared from 1998–2005 on the specific question of Ezekiel's identity as priest. It began with an article in 1998 by Margaret Odell, who analyzed Ezekiel 1–5 form critically, arguing that "the genres of call narrative and report of symbolic action have been combined into an extended, coherent composition that focuses on Ezekiel's inaugural experience."[8] Not only did she analyze connections to several Pentateuchal texts that depict priestly initiation, she argued that this initiation account demonstrated how "Ezekiel relinquishes certain elements of his identity as a priest to take on the role of prophet."[9]

Following this seminal article, the "Theological Perspectives on the Book of Ezekiel Seminar" at the 2000 Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Nashville, TN, produced several papers on the topic.[10] The papers of Friedrich Fechter, Iain M. Duguid, and Corrine L. Patton were later published in 2004 as part of a volume in the SBL Symposium Series,[11] and Marvin A. Sweeney's contribution was modified and later published in an anthology in 2005.[12] These studies discussed explicitly the question of Ezekiel's priestly identity with Duguid and Sweeney drawing heavily upon, yet also modifying, Odell by viewing Ezekiel not as one who relinquishes a priestly identity for a prophetic role but as one who performs his prophetic duties, in the words of Sweeney, as "an extension of his priestly identity under the influence of the very radically

[8] Margaret S. Odell, "You Are What You Eat: Ezekiel and the Scroll," *JBL* 117, no.2 (1998): 230.

[9] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 229.

[10] See *Society of Biblical Literature 2000 Seminar Papers,* SBLSP 39 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 673–751.

[11] Fridrich Fechter, "Priesthood in Exile According to the Book of Ezekiel," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 27–41; Iain M. Duguid, "Putting Priests in Their Place," 43–59; Corrine L. Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile: Ezekiel as a Literary Construct," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 73–89.

[12] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 125–43.

changed circumstances of Ezekiel's life in the Babylonian exile."[13] Duguid, much in line with Sweeney, sees the character of Ezekiel as reflecting "the figure of a faithful priest in exile."[14]

Not all the works of this period reflect the same maximalism of Duguid and Sweeney. On the opposite side of the spectrum lies a response paper by Baruch J. Schwartz.[15] According to its title and location in the 2004 Symposium Series Volume, Schwartz's chapter is positioned as a direct response to Duguid. (Although Schwartz's work also applies to the mediating positions we will survey below.) Therein he argues that though Ezekiel's "priestly pedigree" determines everything he says in the book, the question is—at least historically speaking—what significance does this have? He concludes: "Is stating the fact that Ezekiel was a *priest* in exile the same as asserting that there was an exilic priest*hood*? My view is that it is not, and that the priestly influences on Ezekiel have nothing at all to do with any exilic priestly activity."[16] Schwartz, like Odell, highlights Ezekiel's prophetic (visionary) role at the expense of a priestly role, arguing that it is significant that Ezekiel never calls himself a priest in first-person reported speech (only an "interpolator" tells us this fact in Ezek 1:1).[17] He grounds this exchange of role in the necessary dissolution of the role of priest following the destruction of the Jerusalem temple: "It goes without saying that the chief role of the priests, that of performing the altar and sanctuary rituals associated with the worship of YHWH, rituals which were their responsibility alone, ceased to exist when the temple was destroyed."[18] He then considers the suggestion that Ezekiel's actions are centered on תורה in any distinctively priestly sense, i.e., "that of divining YHWH's will, and that of imparting the laws, texts, and traditions of Israel to the people."[19] He argues that they are not. Throughout the balance of his relatively short study, Schwartz musters a range of exegetical and inner-biblical data to aver that when the temple was destroyed, "for all intents and purposes, the priests themselves were no longer priests. They were simply former priests and their descendants were merely people of priestly lineage."[20]

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[13] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 127.
[14] Duguid, "Putting Priests in Their Place," 43.
[15] Schwartz, "Priest Out of Place," 61–71.
[16] Schwartz, "Priest Out of Place," 62.
[17] Schwartz, "Priest Out of Place," 71, 63.
[18] Schwartz, "Priest Out of Place," 64.
[19] Schwartz, "Priest Out of Place," 65.
[20] Schwartz, "Priest Out of Place," 64. Although note that in an unpublished lecture provided by the author, Schwartz has discussed Ezekiel's priestly identity in more nuanced and integrated ways (Baruch J. Schwartz, "When Priest Becomes Prophet," [Lecture, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, April 2004]; this paper is mentioned in Schwartz, "Priest Out of Place," 69 n.32).

Between these extremities, though admittedly closer to Duguid and Sweeney than to Schwartz, lie several other works that mediate, to some degree, the two positions just described. In 2001, Andrew Mein published a chapter that though independently researched, falls more along the maximalist side of the spectrum alongside Duguid and Sweeney.[21] While admitting the historiographical difficulty (i.e., the need to distinguish the difference between Ezekiel as a literary figure and Ezekiel as an historical figure, at least initially), Mein concludes that Ezekiel was, in fact, a priest in exile and that this identity leads him to promote his prophetic message using the concepts and categories which belong to the temple and its sacrificial and ritual system.[22] Adherence to and promulgation of תורה, though also argued by Duguid, is more narrowly defined by Mein as referring to the system of ritual distinctions. This act of teaching ritual distinctions was the chief task of priests in exile, demonstrating a transformation of the priesthood on account of its locale removed from the Jerusalem temple and its altar. Along these same lines, Fechter sees the book of Ezekiel as concerned with delineating the membership and rank of the priesthood in exile, albeit as written using models from the pre-exilic priesthood that were modified by an Ezekielian circle of *Gola* priests, which posited a utopian ideal, centered on Zadokite priests serving at the altar, and demoting other *Gola* priests to the role of Levite.[23] Thus Ezekiel, the literary figure, does have a priestly identity, though one that is shaped by later (post-Ezekielian, though still exilic) group-identity concerns driven particularly by a theological conception of God as "both totally separate from the world yet who also cannot leave it alone."[24]

In several ways, Patton's contribution matches Fechter's, though she is more explicit in minimizing any access the Book of Ezekiel gives to the historical character of Ezekiel. Though written in a way that "it draws the reader into assuming that what is says about Ezekiel reflects a historical person's real experience," the book is more a projection of "an idealization of priesthood, not only in its vision of the restored priesthood in Ezek 44, but also in its condemnation of Jerusalemite priests, and in its portrayal of the character of Ezekiel."[25] This characterization of Ezekiel as a priest not only defines the membership of the priestly group

[21] Andrew Mein "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary, Character, and Anonymous Artist,* ed. J.C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 199–213. Mein laments the fact that the SBL papers from the 2000 Nashville meeting were not available to him when he wrote his chapter (see pp. 199–200, n. 3).

[22] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 200, 213.

[23] Fechter, "Priesthood in Exile," 37–40.

[24] Fechter, "Priesthood in Exile," 41.

[25] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 74.

proper vis-à-vis other priestly groups (so Fechter) but rewrites the entire leadership hierarchy of the community: "By the book's end, [Ezekiel, the literary character] has usurped the function and status of every leadership position," thereby elevating "his political status over all other leaders."[26] This is primarily an assertion of "the importance of the Zadokite priesthood over any other social group," particularly over the prophets.[27] Thus, while Patton has posited a meaningful priestly identity to Ezekiel and affirmed the existence of an exilic priesthood, she reads this in terms of a bifurcation between priesthood and prophecy (contra Sweeney). This divide has been challenged widely.

A final study, the published dissertation of T. J. Betts, doubles down on the historical claims of Duguid.[28] Not only does he assert that Ezekiel is a priest in exile whose priestly work was adjusted to a locale away from the Jerusalem temple and its altar, but he also asserts the primary activities of the exilic priests as teaching תורה. However, his description of תורה lacks sufficient attention to ritual and cultic specificity, even minimizing these by depicting the contents of Ezekiel's teaching as primarily "doctrinal" and focused on "general theological principles."[29] Thus while Betts has admirably summarized the case for Ezekiel's priestly identity, his study borders on pitting priestly ritual activity against teaching activity: "The Israelite priests had several responsibilities: sanctuary overseers, officiants over sacrifices and ceremonies, custodians of the silver trumpets, assistants to Israel's leaders, Yahweh's spokesmen, and judges. *However, none of these priestly responsibilities were any more important that [sic] their mandate to teach tôrâ*" (emphasis added).[30]

Though this collection of studies began to clarify the question(s) in play, they appear to have arrived at a stalemate. While most contributors identify a priestly identity for Ezekiel, such that he represents a *priest* in exile as part of an exilic priest*hood*, fundamental problems remain. First, some writers fall prey to positing an incompatibility between a priestly identity and a prophetic one: Betts with his demoting of ritual concerns, Odell with her language of priestly-official "relinquishment," and Patton with her demotion of the prophets by subordinating them to the priests (if not erasing them from the hierarchical structure altogether). Second, some writers

[26] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 80–81.
[27] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 89.
[28] T. J. Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest: A Custodian of Tôrâ,* StBibLit 74 (New York: Peter Lang, 2005).
[29] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 107.
[30] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 141.

capitalize on Ezekiel's literary/fictive characterization, using his priestly identity to delineate group identity among the exiles (Fechter and Patton). Third, Schwartz's objections have been left unanswered.[31] Indeed, since then, apart from a semi-popular study in 2012 that was more summative than original,[32] no work has been produced seeking to move the discussion forward.

Simply exegeting passages or identifying inner-biblical allusions in or with Ezekiel, as was primarily practiced in the 1998–2005 studies, will not resolve the problem. Nor will models that retroject group identity concerns of a later period onto Ezekiel. In order to consider the possibility that Ezekiel (either as a character or as an historical individual) is accurately depicted as engaged in distinctively priestly work that could have been practiced in exile (even as he performs his prophetic role as argued by Duguid, Sweeney, and Mein), what is needed is a new set of interpretive lenses through which to consider the data.

Vocational psychology as a modern discipline (and the related field of occupational identity) has been underexplored (if not wholly unexplored) in biblical studies, yet provides a methodology that makes sense of the book as a description of a priest adapting to a social location removed from the traditional locus of priestly activity, the Jerusalem temple, and its altar, without truncating the breadth of priestly activities artificially or unnecessarily. Furthermore, vocational psychology has considered the occupational identity concerns of refugees, which, when considered in tandem with trauma studies, provides an even sharper focus for considering Ezekiel's priestly identity. This methodology has been introduced above and will receive additional attention below.

Aims and Objectives for This Study

This project seeks to defend the following thesis:

> A reading of the prophetic book of Ezekiel, informed by categories and features of vocational psychology and migrant trauma studies, enables readers to view key themes, theological emphases, and textual features in the book as consonant with vocational and traumatological job-crafting and coping strategies. This enables Ezekiel's vocational

[31] Daniel Block and Steven Tuell offer responses to the essays in the 2004 SBL Symposium Series volume, yet only Block attempts any response to Schwartz's proposal. As his chapter was a response to the entire volume his engagement is necessarily brief and unable to provide anything like a fulsome answer to Schwartz's questions. See Daniel I. Block, "In Search of Theological Meaning: Ezekiel Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 232–34.

[32] Hayyim Angel, "Ezekiel: Priest – Prophet," *JBQ* 39, no. 1 (2011): 35–45.

> identity to be understood naturally as that of a priest, coping with trauma and adjusting and expressing his priestly vocation (including its ritual, cultic, and sacred-spatial concerns) in the new social context of exile.

In defending this thesis, the project has several objectives. First, it will take up a scholarly discussion that has lain dormant for over a decade and advance it beyond the impasse where it was left. It will survey the literature and identify the key tenets of the different positions, demonstrating what textual data has been mustered in support of the positions and what assumptions and plausibility structures have been utilized by various writers in arriving at their conclusions. The so-called "flurry" of research on Ezekiel's priestly identity will be surveyed in each chapter to note if or how these studies invoke the topic of the chapter in their discussion of priestly identity.

Chapter 2, "Vocational Psychology as an Exegetical Tool," will highlight the utility of vocational psychology as a framework for use in arbitrating the discussion of Ezekiel's priestly identity. Not only will this involve a survey of the developing role of psychological biblical criticism as practiced generally in biblical studies, but it will also trace the application of this discipline to Ezekiel. It will note the way vocational psychology, migrant, and trauma studies shed light on current concerns in work identity, especially among those who have been forcibly displaced and required to adapt professional identities to new social locations.[33] This will also be seen to have value for identifying and interpreting the import of professional identity in ancient texts in general[34] and in the book of Ezekiel in particular. This work will provide a psychologically and historically grounded model for interpreting the book of Ezekiel with an eye to Ezekiel's priestly (occupational) identity.

Chapter 3, "Ezekiel's Sign Acts as Formative Rituals of a Priestly, Vocational Identity," will show the distinctive character of Ezekiel's sign acts as they relate to his priestly identity, enabling interpreters to read them as having a ritual-formation role in Ezekiel's priestly identity,

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[33] Unfortunately the nature of this project does not allow for as sustained of an engagement with migrant and trauma studies as it does with vocational psychology. These disciplines play an important role in my analysis but are invoked in a secondary and far-from-exhaustive fashion.

[34] A precedent to my approach (though not identical with it) can be found in Sandra R. Joshel, *Work, Identity, and Legal Status at Rome: A Study of the Occupational Inscriptions,* Oklahoma Series in Classical Culture 11 (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992). A bridge inviting comparison between the ancient Near East and the Greco-Roman historical milieu studied by Joshel, particularly with reference to occupation, is provided by Walter Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age,* trans. Margaret E. Pinder and Walter Burkert, Revealing Antiquity 5 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

and demonstrate the value of ritual action in general for Ezekiel. It will aid in seeing a breadth to sign acts as they function in Ezekiel (i.e., beyond traditional communicative categories[35]) and how תורה adherence and teaching can be given a more focused and concrete ritual referentiality in Ezekiel.

Chapter 4, "Purity and Impurity as Pressing Concerns for a Priest in Exile," considers the distinctive relationship of Ezekiel's concerns about purity/impurity to those of priestly literature in general. Not only will this engage the swath of literature that has been devoted to purity and impurity in priestly literature, but it will also clarify how the book of Ezekiel relates to these priestly themes and emphases, particularly vis-à-vis references to purity and impurity found in prophetical books with less overt dependence upon priestly themes and emphases.[36] As תורה adherence and teaching took a ritual focus in the previous aim, here the relationship of תורה to purity and impurity will be highlighted.

Chapter 5, "An Exilic-Priestly Vision of the *Kabod-YHWH* (כבוד־יהוה)," clarifies the theological significance of the כבוד־יהוה in Ezekiel. Scholars have long noted the centrality of the כבוד־יהוה to priestly theology, in particular its relationship to the wilderness tabernacle and the tent of meeting.[37] That Ezekiel contains significant overlap with the priestly view of the כבוד־יהוה while uniquely developing this theological tradition is widely recognized.[38] The presence of the כבוד־יהוה has been referenced in the scholarly discussion about Ezekiel's priestly identity, although it has not been integrated into a vocational psychological conception of this identity.[39] This chapter concludes with a comparative analysis of Latin American "border theology," noting

[35] As proposed by Kelvin G. Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts: Rhetorical Nonverbal Communication,* JSOTSup 408 (London: T&T Clark, 2004).

[36] In particular, it will important to differentiate how deuteronomistic literature and the prophetical books closely related to it (e.g., Jeremiah) appropriate concerns for purity and impurity in ways divergent from Ezekiel. Jeremiah is an especially important literary figure due to his own priestly pedigree—from the priests who were in Anathoth (מן־הכהנים אשר בענתות)—yet the book bearing his name has a different character than Ezekiel, showing that Ezekiel retains a priestly vocational identity in ways not shared by other priestly prophetic figures. The Book of Zechariah provides a similar comparison: Zechariah's lineage from Iddo connects him to a priestly family (Zech 1:1; cf. Ezra 5:1, 6:14; Neh 12:4, 16). Marvin Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets,* 2 vols., Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 2.562–63, views several features of the book as directly related to this priestly background, suggesting that Zechariah has a more operative priestly identity than Jeremiah.

[37] E.g., T. N. D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies,* trans. Frederick H. Cryer, ConBOT 18 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982).

[38] John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel,* BJSUCSD 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 80; P. de Vries, *The Kābôd of YHWH in the Old Testament: With Particular Reference to the Book of Ezekiel,* SSN 65 (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

[39] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 131; Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 66–78.

how Latino/a migrants' doctrine of God serves as a significant coping resource for their collective trauma.[40]

Chapter 6, "A Visionary/Textual Temple for a Priest in Exile (Ezek 40–48)," explores what many see as an eschatological hope or utopian presentation of the Zadokite priesthood as it is found in chs. 40–48 and relate it to Ezekiel's own priestly vocational identity.[41] These chapters are cosmic in scope, particularly in chapters 47–48, and are read as placing the temple at the center of the new world, definitely significant for Ezekiel's priestly identity. Yet chapter 6 approaches these chapters differently by invoking recent developments in textuality and critical spatiality, thereby offering a reading of the visionary temple that allows it to function as *the* temple that supports Ezekiel's priestly, vocational identity. Ezekiel's description of the priesthood functioning therein (Ezek 44)[42] and what appears to be Ezekiel's own central role at the alter (Ezek 43:18–27 utilizes second-person singular deixis in YHWH's address to Ezekiel; cf. 45:18–20) further highlight the centrality of priestly, vocational concerns.[43] Indeed, the entirety of the restored city is a priestly vehicle for mediating the presence of YHWH, in the end, receiving the name יהוה שמה, "YHWH is there."[44] Viewing the textual temple as a "spatialized text" further bolsters the priestly character of the conclusion of the prophetic book.

Methodologies Employed

This research will employ four primary methods, although these methods cannot be hermetically sealed off from one another and will enjoy a degree of interdependence. While there are four methodologies introduced below, it should be noted that psychological/sociological criticism, particularly utilizing vocational psychology, is the primary methodological

[40] The term "border theology" is from Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Doctrine of God: A Global Introduction,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 140.

[41] Hanna Liss, "'Describe the Temple to the House of Israel': Preliminary Remarks on the Temple Vision in the Book of Ezekiel and the Question of Fictionality in Priestly Literatures," in *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature,* ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 122–43.

[42] Nathan MacDonald, *Priestly Rule: Polemic and Biblical Interpretation in Ezekiel 44,* BZAW 476 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015); see too the general treatment of Ezekiel's "law of the temple" in Steven S. Tuell, *The Law of the Temple in Ezekiel 40–48,* HSM 49 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992); also Jon D. Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48,* HSM 10 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 129–151.

[43] Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place," 56.

[44] Though several perspectives are at play in terms of the holy status of the city vis-à-vis the temple. See Soo J. Kim, "*YHWH Shammah*: The City as Gateway to the Presence of YHWH," *JSOT* 39, no. 2 (2014): 187–207.

contribution of this study. This has been introduced already in sections 1 and 3 above, so only a few additional remarks will be listed below.

1.) Psychological/Sociological Criticism.

Since this research utilizes models generated primarily among social psychologists, namely vocational psychology and trauma studies, it practices a method of psychological and sociological biblical criticism. Several specific studies have been cited in section 1 above, and though several general frameworks for the method have been published,[45] various forays have been made into prophetic literature.[46] Not only will this research draw upon established psychological/sociological-methodological paths, but it will also articulate a distinctive vocational psychological methodology to be applied to the corpus. A general introduction to occupational identity and vocational psychology studies will be given, in addition to a general introduction to the relationship of trauma studies to vocational psychology. Furthermore, the following aspects of vocational psychology will be highlighted and utilized in this research: "calling" and vocational identity; adaptability/foreclosure in vocational psychology; "double" vocational identity; and "unanswered" callings, especially as they intersect with those who have been forcibly displaced and as they result in various coping strategies like "moulding" and "job crafting." This methodology constitutes the main and most distinctive element of this study, the description and defense of which is taken up exclusively in chapter 2.

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[45] E.g., D. Andrew Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism,* GBS (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001); Wayne G. Rollins, and D. Andrew Kille, eds., *Psychological Insight into the Bible: Texts and Readings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007); Wayne G. Rollins, *Soul and Psyche: The Bible in Psychological Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999); Robert R. Wilson, *Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament,* GBS (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984); David J. Chalcraft, ed., *Social-Scientific Old Testament Criticism: A Sheffield Reader,* BibSem 47 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Daniel Y. Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Book of Ezekiel,* BBRSup 14 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016).

[46] E.g., Robert P. Carroll, *When Prophecy Failed: Reactions and Responses to Failure in the Old Testament Prophetic Traditions* (London: SCM Press, 1979); Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980); Daniel L. Smith, *The Religion of the Landless: The Social Context of the Babylonian Exile* (Bloomington, IN: Meyer-Stone Books, 1989); Bryon G. Curtis, *Up the Steep and Stony Road: The Book of Zechariah in Social Location Trajectory Analysis,* AcBib 25 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006).

2.) Literary/Form Criticism.

To rightly analyze the corpus of this study (the prophetic book of Ezekiel), form-critical tools are employed, particularly as it has been defined by Rolf Knierim[47] and promoted by Marvin A. Sweeney[48] and others.[49] While Knierim's concerns were primarily synchronic, diachronic analysis is grounded in this final-form analysis and is, in this approach, built upon thorough synchronic analysis.[50] This methodology will provide a synchronic analysis of texts under consideration and allow for a more controlled investigation of literary development in the book of Ezekiel.

3.) Inner-Biblical Interpretation/Intertextuality.

Because this study is concerned with relationships between Ezekiel and priestly literature, an inner-biblical method is employed. Though several terms are used by practitioners of this method (intertextuality, inner-biblical discourse/exegesis/allusion, reception history, etc.), a fairly standard approach is employed.[51] While the direction of dependence is notoriously difficult to determine in various passages, and debates abound concerning the relationship between P (and

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[47] Rolf Knierim "Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered," *Int* 27, no. 4 (1973): 435–68; idem, "Criticism of Literary Features, Form, Tradition, and Redaction," in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters,* ed. Douglas A. Knight and Gene M. Tucker, BMI 1 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press/Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1985), 123–65.

[48] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Form Criticism," in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application,* ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes, rev. and exp. ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 58–89; idem, *Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature,* FOTL 16 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996); idem, *Isaiah 40–66*, FOTL 19 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016).

[49] See in particular the essays in Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi, eds., *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003); and Wonil Kim et al, eds., *Exegetical and Theological Studies,* vol. 2 of *Reading the Hebrew Bible for a New Millennium: Form, Concept, and Theological Perspective,* SAC (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000).

[50] For examples of how these two analyses are linked, see Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39,* 11–12; Koog P. Hong, "Synchrony and Diachrony in Contemporary Biblical Interpretation," *CBQ* 75, no. 3 (2013): 521–39; Won W. Lee, *Punishment and Forgiveness in Israel's Migratory Campaign* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 47–72.

[51] This research is especially dependent upon Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); William M. Schniedewind, *Society and the Promise to David: The Reception History of 2 Samuel 7:1–17* (New York, NY/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66,* Contraversions: Jews and Other Differences (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Michael R. Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8,* LHBOTS 506 (New York, NY/London: T&T Clark, 2009).

H) and Ezekiel, the fact of association will be deemed important even though the primary interest is on where and how Ezekiel utilizes earlier material.[52]

4.) Comparative Method.

This research examines priesthood in Israel/Judah, particularly as it finds expression in Ezekiel, by drawing on analogies and examples from the ancient Near East and modern cultures and migrant groups studied by anthropologists and sociologists. Much work has been done in this area, and several studies have considered general/theoretical frameworks[53], application to Ezekiel[54], and application to the Old Testament priesthood.[55] Note that cross-cultural (both

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[52] The following volumes contain several chapters discussing general concerns about direction and specific analysis of Ezekiel: William A. Tooman and Penelope Barter, eds. *Ezekiel: Current Debates and Future Directions,* FAT 112 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017); Jan C. Gertz et al, eds., *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America,* FAT 111 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016). For a survey of scholarship on intertextual connections between Ezekiel and other writings, see Keith W. Carley, *Ezekiel Among the Prophets: A Study of Ezekiel's Place in Prophetic Tradition,* SBT 2/31 (London: SCM Press, 1975). Recent work has trended toward analyzing Ezekiel as dependent upon P (and/or H), e.g., Risa Levitt Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul: Ezekiel, the Exile and the Torah*, LHBOTS 358 (London/New York, NY: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002); Michael Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel's Use of the Holiness Code,* LHBOTS 507 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2009), following general trends set by Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship Between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem,* CahRB 20 (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1982). Linguistic dating has been heatedly debated, however, and scholarship is beginning to posit more complex models of direction/dependence. See Christophe L. Nihan, "Ezekiel and the Holiness Legislation: A Plea for Non-Linear Models," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America,* ed. Jan C. Gertz et al, FAT 111 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 1015–39.

[53] See the survey of works in Bryan D. Estelle, "The Old Testament and the Comparative Method," *The Confessional Presbyterian* 6 (2010): 145 n.2; also Mark W. Chavalas and K. Lawson Younger, eds., *Mesopotamia and the Bible: Comparative Explorations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002); J.J.M. Roberts, "The Ancient Near Eastern Environment," in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters,* ed. Douglas A. Knight and Gene M. Tucker, BMI 1 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press/Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1985), 75–121.

[54] E.g., Brian Neil Peterson, *Ezekiel in Context: Ezekiel's Message Understood in Its Historical Setting of Covenant Curses and Ancient Near Eastern Mythological Motifs,* Princeton Theological Monograph Series 182 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012); C.A. Strine, "*Chaoskampf* against Empire: YHWH's Battle against Gog (Ezekiel 38–39) as Resistance Literature," in *Divination, Politics, and Ancient Near Eastern Empires,* ed. Alan Lenzi and Jonathan Stökel, Society of Biblical Literature: Ancient Near East Monographs 7 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature), 87–108. The commentaries of Daniel Block and Margaret Odell make judicious use of ancient Near Eastern backgrounds in their interpretations; see Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel 1–24,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997); idem, *The Book of Ezekiel 25–48,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998); Margaret S. Odell, *Ezekiel,* Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005).

[55] E.g., Daniel E. Fleming, "Prophets and Temple Personnel in the Mari Archives," in *The Priests in the Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets, and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets,* ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Alice Ogden Bellis, LHBOTS 408 (London/New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2004), 44–64; Ada Taggar-Cohen, "Covenant Priesthood: Cross-cultural Legal and Religious Aspects of Biblical and Hittite Priesthood," in *Levites and Priests in Biblical History and Tradition,* ed. Mark Leuchter and Jeremy M. Hutton, AIL 9 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 11–24.

geographic and temporal) analogies have also been fruitfully explored, particularly regarding the Old Testament priesthood.[56]

[56] Jeremy Hutton, "All the King's Men: The Families of the Priests in Cross-Cultural Perspective," in *Seitenblicke: Literarische und historische Studien zu Nebenfiguren im zweiten Samuelbuch,* ed. Walter Dietrich OBO 249 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 121–51; idem, "The Levitical Diaspora (I): A Sociological Comparison with Morocco's Ahansal," in *Exploring the Long Durée: Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager,* ed. J. David Schloen (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 223–234; Johnson M. Kimuhu, *Leviticus: The Priestly Laws and Prohibitions from the Perspective of Ancient Near East and Africa,* StBibLit 115 (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008).

CHAPTER 2: VOCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AS AN EXEGETICAL TOOL

In addition to traditional exegetical tools employed in academic Old Testament scholarship, this research employs psychological/sociological criticism for understanding the way in which the book of Ezekiel depicts an ongoing priestly identity for the prophet Ezekiel. Though psychological/sociological criticism has been well established as an exegetical method in recent years, this project is concerned with a *specific branch* of psychology, i.e., vocational psychology. The use of vocational psychology is the *primary* methodological contribution of this study; it sets this research apart from other approaches to Ezekiel's priestly identity. This chapter details the method being formulated and used for this project. In preparation for the discussion of vocational psychology, we will survey work and occupational identity as is recoverable in the OT text.

Occupational Identity: An Historical and Biblical Reality

It would seem obvious that there existed a priestly identity that profoundly shaped those raised in priestly circles and prepared for priestly service. Regardless of how the history and development of the OT priesthood is reconstructed, there is a fundamental agreement that the priesthood was a significant institution at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and beyond, one which, in the words of Joseph Blenkinsopp, "formed a restrictive caste, jealously protective of its privileges and perquisites."[1] Patrick D. Miller explains: "Throughout Israel's history, the priest and the priestly community exercised a fundamental role in maintaining the order of life in the community and stood at the center of religious practice, whether carried out in a family setting or at local or state levels."[2] And regardless of whether "ordinary Israelites" ever interacted with a priest or the priesthood over the course of their lives in one of the many small settlements scattered throughout Israel and Judah,[3] the biblical texts are replete with evidence for

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[1] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel,* LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 67.

[2] Patrick D. Miller, *The Religion of Ancient Israel,* LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 162.

[3] For the distinction between official priestly religion and the "folk religion" of the ordinary Isaraelite/Judahite, see William G. Dever, *Did God Have a Wife? Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005); idem, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel: Where Archaeology and the Bible Intersect* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012); Susan Ackerman, *Under Every Green Tree: Popular*

a priestly group of tradents that preserved and propagated a distinctively priestly interpretation of the history of YHWH's dealings with Israel and Judah.[4] Blenkinsopp's description of the priesthood as a restrictive and protective caste is appropriate sociologically speaking. The "self-protective measures" employed by the priestly tradition to designate themselves as a unique group (i.e., genealogies, eponymous ancestry, incorporation rites, legislation, etc.) "characterize practically all skilled professions to this day, whether medical, legal, or academic."[5] A significant amount of data is available for thinking about the reality of occupational identity among Israel and Judah in Iron II-III, which proves beneficial for articulating a distinctively priestly occupational identity held by Ezekiel.

In the biblical texts, numerous passages depict work, some even attributing professional titles to workers. While a title does not necessarily lend itself to positing a psychology of worker identity, David L. Blustein is nonetheless impressed with the value of the biblical data: "Earliest mentions of working can be traced to the Judeo-Christian Bible, with its graphic and compelling narratives about power, spirituality, conviction, and, of course, work. Work as a form of human expression dates back to our ancient history as hunters and gatherers…."[6] We do seem to find something of an "identity of work" in Genesis 4:20–22a:

ותלד עדה את־יבל הוא היה אבי ישב אהל ומקנה ושם אחיו יובל
הוא היה אבי כל־תפשׂ כנור ועוגב וצלה גם־הוא ילדה את־תובל קין
לטשׁ כל־חרשׁ נחשׁת וברזל

> And Adah bore Yabel; he was the father of (the) tent dweller and (the one who has) livestock. And the name of his brother (was) Yubal: he was the father of (the) one who

Religion in Sixth-Century Judah, HSM 46 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992); Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2001); Richard S. Hess, *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007).

[4] For general approaches, see Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into Biblical Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978; repr. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1985); Jacob Milgrom, "Priestly ('P') Source," *ABD* 5:454–61; idem, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 3 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1991), 1–67. For specific introduction to H, see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22,* AB 3A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 2000), 1319–1443; Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995; repr. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007); Michael Dean Hildenbrand, *Structure and Theology in the Holiness Code,* Bibal Dissertation Series 10 (North Richland Hills, TX: Bibal Press, 2004).

[5] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet,* 67.

[6] David L. Blustein, *The Psychology of Working: A New Perspective for Career Development, Counseling, and Public Policy,* Counseling and Psychotherapy: Investigating Practice from Scientific, Historical, and Cultural Perspectives (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 4.

> plays the pipe and lyre. Now as for Zilah: she bore Tubal-Kain, the forger of everything fashioned[7] of bronze and iron.

These verses belong to the genealogy of Cain. He is described in 4:2 as a "worker of the ground" (עבד אדמה), alongside his brother Abel, a "tender of sheep" (רעה צאן), titles typical for Levantine economic life as imagined against the backdrop of subsistence survival.[8] It might be suggested that an additional work title for Cain is found in v. 17 (בנה עיר). However, the syntax of ויהי + participle makes this less likely a predication of a work identity than a periphrastic participle that continues action in past time[9] which should therefore be translated "and he was building a city" rather than "and he was a city-builder." While Cain's and Abel's work identity is stated to make narrative sense of their respective offerings to YHWH in vv. 3–4, the note in vv. 20–22a about the cultural achievements of Cain's progeny does not play a similar prosodic-narrative role. Modern research has noted the variegated use of genealogies (whether oral or written) and viewed the use of them as more ideological/imaginative than historical.[10] Narratively, according to Meir Sternberg, they function not as "a lump of pastness" as an historical approach would suggest, but ideologically as "an oblique intimation of the future."[11] Genesis 4 is a genealogy in the domestic sphere, which, comments Robert R. Wilson, "relate[s] individuals to other individuals and groups within the society and *define[s] social rights and obligations*" (italics added).[12] In the genealogical imagination of the Cain genealogy, members of these professional

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[7] Following the MT, though most translations follow the Targumic rendering: "The father of all who fashion…." For discussion and bibliography, see Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15,* WBC 1 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 95, n.22.b-b; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 236, n.4; Claus Westerman, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary,* trans. John. J. Scullion (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 332–334.

[8] Roland Boer, *The Sacred Economy of Ancient Israel,* LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 78.

[9] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15,* 95; following *Joüon,* 382. See too the discussion in *IBHS,* 628–29; Christo H.J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar,* 2d ed (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 187.

[10] For a summary of modern research, see Robert R. Wilson, "The Old Testament Genealogies in Recent Research," *JBL* 94, no. 2 (1975): 169–89; Yigal Levin, "Understanding Biblical Genealogies," *CurBS* 9 (2001): 11–46. The poetics and ideological/imaginative role of genealogies in the Bible have been studied extensively by Eviatar Zerubavel, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Ideology is further highlighted by Steven Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles,* LHBOTS 442 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2007), 31–42, who sees a "utopia-constructing" role for genealogies. See too Karin R. Andriolo, "A Structural Analysis of Genealogy and Worldview in the Old Testament," *American Anthropologist* 75, no. 5 (1973): 1657–69.

[11] Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading,* ISBL (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 45.

[12] Wilson, "The Old Testament Genealogies," 181. The role of genealogies and kinship relative to economics (which involves society and work) is discussed by Boer, *Sacred Economy,* 88–94.

classes (nomadic herders, musicians, and smiths) are singled out and given eponymous ancestors in the line of Cain, signaling a value placed upon these particular professions and their centrality in the social context of those who formulated this text.[13] This dissertation assumes that analogous professional identity-definition/preservation strategies are at work between the priestly profession (e.g., Exod 6:16–27, Num 17–20, 1 Chr 6) and the professions described in Gen 4.20–22a.

While elite groups in society (priesthood being one such group) have a vested interest in preserving their elite status, Gen 4:20–22a indicates that preservation and defense of work identity is not restricted to the elite. Regardless of historical or geographical context, people of every class of society have found significant personal meaning in their work, and "schools" were accessible even to the non-elite.[14] Blustein avers: "Working has been one of the constants in our lives; the experience of working unifies human beings across time frames and cultures."[15] Even among the non-elite, historians have observed work titles throughout the OT. In describing the civil institutions of ancient Israel, Roland de Vaux devotes attention to wage-earners, craftsmen, and merchants.[16] Oded Borowski looks at both rural and urban life, identifying farmers, herdsmen, potters, weavers, tanners, carpenters, masons, smiths, and merchants.[17] And as the "economy of the biblical world was dedicated to the two basic resources of land *and children*" (emphasis added), Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin include the midwife as a distinctive trade in ancient Israel.[18]

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[13] Westerman, *Genesis 1-11,* 331–34; Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis,* trans. Mark E. Biddle, Mercer Library of Biblical Studies (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 51–52. Gérard Nissim Amzallag, "Why Is the Cain Genealogy (Gen. 4:17–24) Integrated into the Book of Genesis?" *Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 55 (2018): 23–50; Michaela Bauks, "Intratextual Exegesis in the Primeval History—the Literary Function of the Genealogies in View of the Formation of Gen 1–11," *ZAW* 131, no. 2 (2019): 177–93.

[14] This has been surveyed extensively in the Roman historical context in Sandra R. Joshel, *Work, Identity, and Legal Status at Rome: A Study of the Occupational Inscriptions,* Oklahoma Series in Classical Culture 11 (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992). For non-elite access to schools, see Jan Dietrich, "Wisdom in the Cultures of the Ancient World: A General Introduction and Comparison," in *Teaching Morality in Antiquity: Wisdom Texts, Oral Traditions, and Images,* ed. T.M. Oshima, Orientalische Religionen in Der Antike 29 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 3–4.

[15] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working*, 3.

[16] Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions,* trans. John McHugh (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 76–79.

[17] Oded Borowski, *Daily Life in Biblical Times,* SBLABS 5 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003).

[18] Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250–587 BCE* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 67–81.

Levantine archaeologists seeking to understand broader societal structures in ancient Israel and Judah have mustered textual and material evidence that suggests the presence of workers. It is noteworthy that Borowski and William G. Dever even use the terms "profession," "occupation," and "vocation" to describe workers in ancient Israel.[19] What is more, several writers depict these groups as having "guilds"[20] and "trade secrets,"[21] language closely related to Blenkinsopp's idea of "self-protective measures" noted earlier. Citing archaeological data, Dever writes: "The archaeological evidence, although indirect, implies at minimum a number of occupations in which individuals were now engaged."[22] He proceeds to identify a lengthy list of workers from all classes of society, including chamberlains, couriers, administrators, shopkeepers, military officers, civic planners, engineers, financial professionals, healers, educators, and the like.[23] Where there are specialized workers, there are workspaces potentially designated exclusively for work-related activities. Avraham Faust presumes that cities that stationed soldiers (e.g., Arad, Lachish) "also contained other professions (not just farmers)," and thereby aggregates archaeological site reports to identify a significant list of "production installations" located within designated "industrial areas."[24] These demonstrate cohesion to and organization of different working groups in addition to civic-sponsored accommodation of such groups for the well-being of the local settlement. Thus, being a worker in specific trades carried a costly outlay of labor and resources to provide structures wherein workers could perform their tasks. Particular workers were thus associated by others (whether officials or builders) with particular and costly places.

A number of northwest Semitic epigraphic sources list professions worthy of consideration here. While titles of royalty or administrative personnel like שׂר (prince or

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[19] Borowski, *Daily Life,* 30; William G. Dever, *Beyond the Texts: An Archaeological Portrait of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2017), 461–62.

[20] Dever, *Beyond the Texts,* 463.

[21] Borowki, *Daily Life,* 31; Matthews and Benjamin, *Social World,* 67.

[22] Dever, *Beyond the Texts*, 461.

[23] Dever, *Beyond the Texts*, 461–62.

[24] Avraham Faust, *The Archaeology of Israelite Society in Iron Age II,* trans. Ruth Ludlum (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 31, 164–66. Cf. Rainer Kessler, *The Social History of Ancient Israel: An Introduction,* trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008), 110–111, who links the המשׁנה ("second [quarter]") of Zeph 1:10 with the professions in the following verse (v. 11, ישׁבי המכתשׁ, mortar layers; עם כנען, traders [lit. men of Canaan]; נטילי כסף, money counters/weighers), thereby viewing the המשׁנה as a professional quarter and translating המשׁנה as such. This is disputed, however, by Hillel Geva, "Western Jerusalem at the End of the First Temple Period in Light of the Excavations in the Jewish Quarter," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period,* eds. Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew, SBLSymS 18 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 204, who views the המשׁנה as a residential quarter and המכתשׁ as the Central/Tyropoean Valley.

governor), מלך (king), or אדן (lord[25]) are found regularly, reference is made to other workers such as נער (servant boy), צבא (military commander), ספר (scribe), משמר (guard), and אשר על הבית (who is over the house) who serve as functionaries of the state. Other professions are mentioned by name, however, from the artisan class. An inscription from the Ophel in Jerusalem identifies an individual as בן השרק בעמק ידת (son of the cutter in the valley of monuments).[26] Lachish Letter 16 makes reference to הנבא (the prophet).[27] Related to this, the Deir Alla Plaster Inscription mentions Balaam as a חזה אלהן (seer of the gods).[28] Samaria Ostracon 58 speaks of a כרם התל (vinedresser of the tel).[29] The Yavneh Yam inscription records the petition of a קצר (reaper), identifying himself as such in his request to the שׂר (governor).[30] And two Aramaic inscriptions, incised on pottery vessels, read לשקיא (belonging to the cup-bearer) and לטב[ח]יא (belonging to the cooks).[31] Of course, we also read of כהנם (priests) on the inscribed pomegranate from Jerusalem[32] and of תבנת כהן עשתרת (Tabnit, priest of Ashtart) on the Tabnit inscription from Lebanon.[33] In all of these examples, individuals were identified as workers via their occupational titles, further bolstering our confidence in the relevance of a social-psychological study of the occupational identity of priests in general and Ezekiel in particular.

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[25] Although note that the title אדון can function as an honorific title, used as a strategy in deferential language, rather than a work title. This is especially the case when accompanied by 1st person possessive suffixes: e.g., אדני "my lord" (Lachish 3 =*KAI* 193). For this feature see the summary in R. Andrew Compton, "Deixis Variation as a Literary Device in Ezekiel: Utilizing an Oft Neglected Linguistic Feature in Exegesis," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 28 (2017): 84–85. For general treatments relative to titular honorifics, see Bryan Estelle, "The Use of Deferential Language in the Arsames Correspondence and Biblical Aramaic Compared," *Maarav* 13, no. 1 (2006): 65–71; E. J. Revell, *The Designation of the Individual: Expressive Usage in Biblical Narrative,* CBET 14 (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996), 267. Marco Di Giulio, "Mitigating Devices in Biblical Hebrew," *Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt* 8/9 (2008): 33–62, includes the Lachish letters in his general treatment.

[26] For this text, see G.I. Davies, *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions: Corpus and Concordance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), #4.101. For יד as "monument," see *DCH* 4:82.

[27] For this text, see James M. Lindenberger, *Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew Letters,* 2d ed, WAW (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), #65.

[28] *KAI* 312.

[29] For this text, see Davies, *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions,* #3.058. For כרם as vinedresser as opposed to vineyard, see *DCH* 4:462.

[30] *KAI* 200.

[31] In John C.L. Gibson, *Aramaic Inscriptions Including Inscriptions in the Dialect of Zenjirli,* vol. 2 of *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 5-6 (i.e., inscriptions 3 and 4).

[32] "The Jerusalem Pomegranate," trans. K. Lawson Younger (*COS* 2.48:173).

[33] *KAI* 13. Though not a Levantine text, a Phoenician text from Cyprus (*KAI* 37) lists a number of cultic professionals whose payment is provided via the temple tax (see John C.L. Gibson, *Phoenician Inscriptions Including Inscriptions in the Mixed Dialect of Arslan Tash,* vol. 3 of *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982], 123–31).

One inscription stands out as particularly relevant for this research in that it depicts the accomplishment of a group of workers on a medium that seems to reflect a degree of pride in the work completed. The Siloam Tunnel Inscription (*KAI* 189) was discovered in 1880 and dated to the 8th century BCE.[34] The Siloam Tunnel in Jerusalem (also labeled "Hezekiah's Tunnel") has been traditionally associated with Hezekiah's preparation for the Assyrian siege.[35] However, this position has not been left unchallenged, especially in the last decade.[36] This research is concerned with the potential of the inscription itself for providing a window into worker identity regardless of where in the Iron II period the tunnel and text originate.

The text begins by providing an account of הנקבה (the breach) which was accomplished by two crews of חצבם (hewers, masons) digging through rock towards one another. Some have suggested that the workers followed a natural karst in the rock that enabled them to meet in the middle easily. However, the meeting point shows signs that the crews had to adjust their work toward the end of the project to ensure their meeting. Further examination of the tunnel's ceiling suggests that the entire project was hewn from architectural plans alone with no such help from a karst.[37] Either way, the meeting of crews was a significant achievement, and a sign of a job completed successfully. Assumptions about a royal social location of writing have led many to view the Siloam Tunnel Inscription as a royally commissioned, monumental inscription. Several things, however, mitigate against such an analysis.

First, the inscription was located ca. six meters inside the tunnel where it would not be visible to the populace, an odd feature for something intended to herald the king's benevolence

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[34] See Robert B. Coote, "Siloam Inscription," *ABD* 6:23–24.

[35] E.g., J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah,* 2d ed (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 412; Sandra Richter, "Eighth-Century Issues: The World of Jeroboam II, the Fall of Samaria, and the Reign of Hezekiah," in *Ancient Israel's History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources,* ed. Bill T. Arnold and Richard S. Hess (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 344–45.

[36] Ronny Reich, *Excavating the City of David: Where Jerusalem's History Began* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Jerusalem: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2011), 170, wrote somewhat guardedly in his 2011 volume covering the history of archaeological excavation in Jerusalem, making reference to the attribution of the tunnel to Hezekiah as being persuasive to him in his student days. However, he makes no reference to Hezekiah in the fulsome description of the structure found on pp.184–205. Published also in 2011, Reich and Eli Shukron, "The Date of the Siloam Tunnel Reconsidered," *TA* 38 (2011): 147–57, more decidedly dissociated the tunnel from Hezekiah, dating it to the early part of the 8th century BCE. Moving the other direction, Amihai Sneh, Ram Weinberger, and Eyal Shalev, "The Why, How, and When of the Siloam Tunnel Reevaluated," *BASOR* 359 (2010): 57–65, have downdated the tunnel to the early 7th century BCE, attributing its construction to Manasseh.

[37] Reich, *Excavating the City of David,* 184–205.

in constructing such a feature. William M. Schniedewind writes: "only those who worked on the tunnel and engraved the inscription would have known of the inscription's existence."[38]

Second, the inscription itself does not reflect the careful planning of known northwest Semitic royal inscriptions, as a significant blank space stands at the bottom of the surface area prepared for the text's inscribing. Schniedewind reasons: "Taken as it is, however, the blank part of the panel might suggest poor planning and execution of the inscription."[39] While the inscription is no mere graffito, it does not reflect the kind of care typically taken by the crown to placard its achievements.

Third, linguistic irregularities in the Hebrew of the inscription fit uncomfortably with what is known of royal Judean scribal practice: the use of ו for the 3ms suffix on רעו (his companion) contrasted with the standard biblical (Judean) orthography רעהו; the 3fs perfect verbal form הית instead of היתה; and the lexical item used for "spring" as מוצא instead of the more typical term מעין.[40] Gary A. Rendsburg and Schniedewind have analyzed these features as atypical for standard Judean Hebrew, but as expected in northern, more Aramaized dialects of Israelian Hebrew, suggesting that the scribe responsible for this text was not writing on behalf of the Judean crown but was associated with the workers (potentially Israelian) themselves.[41]

Fourth, Seth L. Sanders contends that the inscription does not speak with a "royal voice" but instead reveals a shift "from the king to the message itself. Not 'I am the king' but 'this is the story.'"[42] This feature of the Siloam Tunnel inscription might seem insignificant on its own, but coupled with the previous three elements, it becomes more important for determining the identity of the scribe and those responsible for commissioning the text. Sanders concludes:

> [B]y the eighth century memorial prose narratives have new heroes. Texts like the Siloam and Deir Alla inscriptions are monuments to prophets and stonecutters, not the king. Rather than identifying themselves with the ruler and addressing an anonymous audience in the king's voice, they identify themselves as texts: *spr* or *dbr*. They tell the stories of independent professionals who mediate images and language: craftsmen and prophets.

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[38] William M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 73.

[39] Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book,* 72.

[40] William M. Schniedewind, *A Social History of Hebrew: Its Origins Through the Rabinnic Period,* ABRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 90.

[41] Gary A. Rendsburg and William M. Schniedewind, "The Siloam Tunnel Inscription: Historical and Linguistic Perspectives," *IEJ* 60 (2010): 188–203. On the term "Israelian Hebrew" and sources relevant to its study, see Gary A. Rendsburg, "A Comprehensive Guide to Israelian Hebrew: Grammar and Lexicon," *Orient* 38 (2003): 5–35.

[42] Seth L. Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew,* Traditions (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 138.

> And it is precisely these mediating professions that best account for the inscriptions; skilled communicators quickly adapted the monumental styles and scripts to represent different types of agents: the collective craft, religious and kin groups to which they themselves belonged.[43]

Schniedewind further notes the implications of this text: “Here, outside the royal palace and the temple, writing is being used by engineers, craftsmen, and laborers to memorialize their accomplishment.”[44] While Schniedewind and Sanders employ these conclusions in their concern for understanding the role of Hebrew and textuality in society, they also support the burden of this research. In a situation where writing and textuality are deemed prestigious by a wide range of individuals, it is significant that a group of workers, identifying themselves as חצבם (hewers, masons), celebrate and memorialize their construction achievement using a prestigious medium: the monumental inscription. But in addition to a corporate occupational identity that seems to stand behind the Siloam Tunnel inscription, individual perceptions of occupational identity can also be extracted from the archaeological record.

Stamp seals and seal impressions found in archaeological excavations provide an important window into occupational identity in Israel and Judah. Significant for our purposes are the number of seals bearing occupational titles. Yet care needs to be taken in interpreting the significance of this. Seals were basically designed to provide formal endorsement or verification of documents or containers in political, legal, and economic contexts. It is expected that we would find seals bearing the occupational titles of individuals in these very contexts.[45] Seals bearing the titles מלך יהדה (king of Judah), עבד המלך (servant of the king), שר הער (governor of the city), פחת (governor of), and אשר על הבית (who is over the house) would seem necessary for the fulfillment of work tasks in royal/political and legal contexts.[46] The same might be said of the

[43] Sanders, *Invention of Hebrew,* 161.

[44] Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book,* 73.

[45] For general background and the social location of seals, see Christopher A. Rollston, “Seals and Scarabs,” *NIDB* 5:141–46. William W. Hallo, “‘As the Seal Upon Thine Arm’: Glyptic Metaphors in the Biblical World,” in *Ancient Seals and the Bible,* ed. L. Gorelick and E. Williams-Forte (Malibu, CA: Undena, 1983), 8, states that the “most basic, perhaps, indeed, the original significance of the seal, was legal.”

[46] All seal and seal-impression examples in this project are from the published material in the following collections: Robert Deutsch, *Messages from the Past: Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Isaiah through the Destruction of the First Temple* (Tel Aviv, Israel: Archaeological Center Publications, 1999); Graham Davies, *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions: Corpus and Concordance,* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 2004); Nahman Avigad, *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Jeremiah: Remnants of a Burnt Archive* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1986); Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1997); see also Part 1 of Meir Lubetski, ed., *New Seals and*

title מזכר (herald).[47] A legal context would also warrant an individual possessing the seal שׂער המסגר (gatekeeper of the prison). And economic contexts would give rise to any number of professions such as עבד (servant), נער (steward), הספר (the scribe), הרפא (the healer), and a variety of other apparent titles.[48]

Significant for this research are the examples of seals with the title כהן (priest). Nehemiah 10:1–28 [MT] contains an account of individuals with various work titles affixing their names (presumably accompanied by professional titles) to formal, covenantal (?) writings (אנחנו כריתים אמנה וכתבים).[49] These names and titles are written על החתום (upon the sealed [thing]), which seems to depict personal seals belonging to these individuals, although the language does not demand this specificity.[50] It is reasonable to view this as a reference to seals possessed and used by these individuals, and the fact that priests engage in this sealing activity presents priests as possessing seals containing professional titles. This reading is bolstered by seals and a bulla with priestly titles that archaeologists have found. Avigad and Sass[51] list two examples:

#28
לחנן בן חלקיהו הכהן
Belonging to Ḥanan son of Ḥilqiyahu the priest

#29
לצדק בן מכא //[לז]כריו כהן דאר
Belonging to Ṣadoq son of Mika // [Belonging to Ze]karyau priest of Dor

As Ḥanan and Ḥilkiah are mentioned as priests in the OT (Neh 12:41 and 2 Kgs 22:8 respectively), seal #28 has attracted considerable attention, although it is difficult to determine

Inscriptions: Hebrew, Idumean and Cuneiform, Hebrew Bible Monographs 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007), 9–70.

[47] Rollston, "Seals and Scarabs," 145.

[48] Although some titles, especially from non-Hebrew seals, may actually be proper names, and other titles may be either nicknames or components of proper names (e.g., אבימלך [Gen 20–21, 26; Judg 9] and עבד־מלך [Jer 38:7–16] is unlikely a work title). See suggestions in Avigad and Sass, *Corpus*, 466–68; cf. also the example of אכר, "farmer, ploughman," in Ran Zadok, "An Occupational Term Used as an Anthroponym in Judean Hebrew," *ZAW* 132, no. 3 (2020): 463–68.

[49] That they are "cutting" (כרת) this אמנה, and that כתבים stands in apposition to כתבים both formally and syntactically suggests a covenantal association to this action, though H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah,* WBC 16 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 332, notes that "binding agreement" better captures the political writing situation.

[50] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah,* 332. Note that in v. 1, החתום is singular, but v. 2 specifies that they wrote these על החתומים, now using the plural passive participle. The LXX understands plurality in both instances: v. 1, ἐπισφραγίζουσιν; v. 2, σφραγιζόντων.

[51] Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals,* 59–60.

whether this seal refers to either individual.[52] Seal #29 appears to have been written (and used) in two stages corresponding to each side of the seal (the two sides are indicated by //), although there is debate about which stage comes first.[53] Seal #28 is dated via paleography to the 7th century BCE, and seal #29 to the 8th century BCE via paleography and a *terminus ante quem* of the 733 BCE conquest of Dor by the Assyrians.[54] In addition, a bulla has been found with the title כהן גדל (high priest):

> ינתן כהן גדל ירשלם מ
> Yonatan, High Priest, Jerusalem, M

Paleography and history of the Hasmonean priesthood suggest a 2nd–1st century BCE date.[55]

While one might assume that priests, along with professionals mentioned above, would possess a stamp seal simply for administrative tasks relative to their work, two things complicate this picture. First, a seal is not necessary for designating a document as official. Ostraca from Arad, Lachish, Yavneh Yam, and Samaria are official, yet have no seals (at least not preserved) and are even written on broken pottery. Likewise, contracts and other official documents among the Elephantine Papyri contain official information about identity and authority in the colophons themselves. There are, however, composite approaches evident in two Neo–Assyrian cuneiform texts from Gezer, containing both signatures and seal impressions.[56]

Second, seals have a symbolic and metaphorical role that goes beyond administrative and legal functions. Thus, soliciting a craftsman to produce and possess a seal with one's name and profession (or kinship, social status, etc.) has ideological implications that cannot be reduced to practical concerns. Avigad and Sass suggest a development in the use of seals in ancient Near Eastern cultures: "First used as a means of magic power to secure property, the decorated seals were later inscribed with the names of their owners to serve the needs of literate people in an increasingly bureaucratic economic system, enabling them to sign their names on documents."[57] Yet even in this later period of bureaucratic function, seals did not lose a "metaphorical" (or

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[52] Although see Josette Elayi, "New Light on the Identification of the Seal of Priest Ḥanan son of Ḥilqiyahu (2 Kings 22)," *BO* 49, no. 5/6 (1992): 679–85.

[53] N. Avigad, "The Priest of Dor," *IEJ* 25, no. 2/3 (1975): 102.

[54] For the date of #28, see Josette Elayi, "Name of Deuteronomy's Author Found on Seal Ring," *BAR* 13, no. 5 (1987): 54–56; idem, "New Light on the Identification," 682. For the date of #29, see Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals,* 60.

[55] N. Avigad, "A Bulla of Jonathan the High Priest," *IEJ* 25, no. 1 (1975): 8–12.

[56] For transcriptions and translations of the texts, see Wayne Horowitz, Takayoshi Oshima, and Seth L. Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan: The Next Generation,* 2nd ed (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2018), 54–58.

[57] Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals,* 21.

symbolic) role and use in the eyes of the people who possessed them.[58] For example, some seals appear to have been carved clumsily, a situation difficult to imagine were professional craftsmen producing official seals for use in administrative settings. In light of this, Avigad has proffered the view that these seals had been executed by their owners, leading Schniedewind to suggest: "One has the impression that seal ownership became something of a status symbol in [the time of Jeremiah]."[59] Some seals were carved from precious stones and set in jewelry (as in the case of seal #28 mentioned above; cf. Exod 28:11)[60] and were used already in the second millennium BCE as prestige items collected and exchanged abroad.[61] Other seals functioned as amulets reflecting apotropaic concerns for guarding or blessing.[62] Seals also reveal an ideology of textualization, especially with the historical shift from iconographic to aniconographic seals.[63] And in the biblical texts, seals are metaphorical for the presence of and/or ownership by the individual whose name (or iconographic symbol) is inscribed on the seal (e.g., Gen 38:18; Jer 22:24; Hag 2:23; Song 8:6). In sum, this symbolic and metaphorical role of seals enables us to envision a meaningful professional identity possessed by priests, suggesting that the inscription כהן represents more than a pragmatic-administrative necessity.

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[58] Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals,* 22. Meir Lubetski and Edith Lubetski, "Forward," in *New Inscriptions and Seals Relating to the Biblical World,* ed. Meir Lubetski and Edith Lubetski, SBLABS 19 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature), x, explain: "The growth in the number of iconic and aniconic seals unearthed seems to reveal a rising group of officials eager to have a clearly recognizable symbol of authority with or without aesthetic qualities."

[59] Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 100. See Nahman Avigad, *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Jeremiah: Remnants of a Burnt Archive* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1986), 121.

[60] See Elizabeth E. Platt, "Jewelry, Ancient Israelite," *ABD* 3.829–30; Christopher A. Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel,* SBLABS 11 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 77–78.

[61] Joan Aruz, "The Art of Exchange," in *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.,* ed. Joan Aruz, Kim Benzel, and Jean M. Evans (New York, NY: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 388–91.

[62] Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms,* trans. Timothy J. Hallett (New York, NY: The Seabury Press, 1978), 78–79. For discussion of the use of writing for apotropaic purposes, see Jeremy M. Smoak, *The Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture: The Early History of Numbers 6:24–26* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 206), 134–37. Similar apotropaic ideas are suggested for a seal by Meir Lubetski, "*DML'*: A Seal from the Moussaieff Collection," in *New Inscriptions and Seals Relating to the Biblical World,* ed. Meir Lubetski and Edith Lubetski, SBLABS 19 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature), 75.

[63] Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book,* 100. Richard S. Hess suggests these also reveal increasing literacy (even if only "broader" or "functional" literacy) among a wider range of societal classes: Richard S. Hess, "Writing About Writing: Abecedaries and Evidence for Literacy in Ancient Israel," *VT* 56, no. 3 (2006): 345–46; idem, "Literacy in Iron Age Israel," in *Windows into Old Testament History,* ed. V. Philips Long, David W. Baker, and Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 91–92; although see the critique of Ian Young, "Israelite Literacy and Inscriptions: A Response to Richard Hess," *VT* 55, no. 4 (2005): 565–67. Hess's 2006 study is a response to Young.

The Discipline of Vocational Psychology

Vocational psychology is aptly defined as follows: "Vocational psychology, a specialty within applied psychology, is the scientific enterprise that conducts research to advance knowledge about vocational behavior, improve career interventions, and inform social policy about work issues."[64] In looking for textual data that would support a priestly occupational identity for the figure of Ezekiel, one must understand how individuals (whether in the past or present) relate to their work. Theorists have long analyzed the ways in which workers use their work in meaning-making. In the late 19th century, Karl Marx "articulated a view of work as a means of self-definition," focusing primarily on how "most workers were exploited, underscoring the divisive disconnection between modes of production and consequent feelings of alienation."[65] In the early 20th century, Sigmund Freud "observed that working helped to provide a sense of regularity to life and a connection to the broader social and cultural community."[66] In the latter half of the 20th century, Martin Heidegger, A. Gini, and T. J. Sullivan have articulated ways in which work "underscore[s] a sense of self-determination," providing individuals with "a means of connecting to their work and to establishing continuity in their existence" and noting that "work is the means by which we become and complete ourselves as persons; we create ourselves in our work."[67] In the wake of the industrial revolution, these perspectives led to an increasing specialization of psychologists seeking to provide career guidance.

Though work specialization existed long before the industrial revolution in the west, the psychological study of work has its prehistory in "the story of vocational guidance from 1850 to 1908," which was "intimately linked to the emergence of large commercial cities in which the factory system changed the keystone of the economy from agriculture to manufacturing."[68] Indeed, though the study of ancient history generally and biblical studies, in particular, is ripe for the utilization of vocational psychology, the appropriateness of ancient urban contexts as the

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[64] W. Bruce Walsh and Mark L. Savickas, "Current Issues and Innovations in Vocational Psychology," in *Handbook of Vocational Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice,* ed. W. Bruce Walsh and Mark L. Savickas, 3rd ed., Contemporary Topics in Vocational Psychology (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 3.

[65] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working,* 2.

[66] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working,* 2.

[67] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working,* 2.

[68] Mark L. Savickas and David B. Baker, "The History of Vocational Psychology: Antecedents, Origin, and Early Development," in *Handbook of Vocational Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice,* ed. W. Bruce Walsh and Mark L. Savickas, 3rd ed., Contemporary Topics in Vocational Psychology (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 17.

object of vocational psychological analysis has been eclipsed by the post-industrial concerns of the discipline itself.[69] We have already considered examples of work specialization in the ancient Levant, which invite comparison to post-industrial work specialization.

In the mid-19th century, the founding of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) sought to "improve the spiritual condition and mental culture of young men engaged in drapery and other trades."[70] Programs aimed at career counseling by the YMCA were soon picked up by professionals in education and social work, especially in the United States of America. Columbia University in New York led the charge in establishing the field of applied psychology, and in 1909 graduated Harry Hollingworth, who is termed "the first vocational psychologist."[71] That same year, Frank Parsons's book *Choosing a Vocation* was posthumously published, which has been hailed as the origin of the field of vocational psychology.[72] However, due to his death, others have demarcated this origin in Hollingworth's 1916 publication *Vocational Psychology*.[73] In the subsequent years, a number of institutions and individuals began to chart out measures and inventories of abilities and interests designed to provide a methodologically rigorous and scientifically measurable approach to career counseling, though one that focused on "orientation activities and intelligence testing" for workers. This has been described as vocational psychology's "observational era," a period whose end came sometime in the 1920s.[74]

From here, vocational psychology entered into its "empirical era," marked by an interest in aptitude and interest testing. In an effort to produce a "forecasting machine" that would "predict an individual's probable success in every possible occupation," vocational psychologists discovered something that would lead beyond mere concern for career counseling and pave the way for a more holistic and integrated sociological analysis of individuals and their work. Mark L. Savickas and David B. Baker explain:

> In 1931, the Hawthorne research group reported their most important finding—workers were intimately involved in their own social organization at the worksite. . . . This

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[69] Roland Boer has not shied away from this challenge, although his work is more generally concerned with ancient Israel's economy. Nevertheless, Boer has been intentional in his approach to steer clear of "anachronism." See Boer, *Sacred Economy,* 41–44.

[70] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 18.

[71] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 28.

[72] Frank Parsons, *Choosing a Vocation* (Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin, 1909). For this claim, see David L. Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," in *The IAAP Handbook of Applied Psychology,* ed. Paul R. Martin et al., Wiley-Blackwell IAAP Handbooks of Applied Psychology (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 185.

[73] H. L. Hollingworth, *Vocational Psychology* (New York, NY: Appleton, 1916). For this claim, see Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 29.

[74] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 37.

> involvement included subgroups, cliques, isolated individuals, as well as differential status, standards of behavior, codes of behavior, and traditions. The social group seemed to control productivity and even restrict it. Startling psychologists who had claimed productivity related to ability, they reported that performance and ability were unrelated. This major finding mean that performance on the job related more to group standards than to ability, causing industrial psychologists to abandon the simplistic idea of basing selection, training, and promises of efficiency of intelligence tests.[75]

And while subsequent decades would witness a split in the field with some specialists focusing on individual workers and others focusing on industries, the groundwork had been laid for understanding work identity as a sociological and social psychological phenomenon. Indeed, the "empirical era" ended with the publication of Eli Ginzberg et al.'s *Occupational Choice: An Approach to a General Theory,* which highlighted the idea of "development." Savickas and Baker note the contrast:

> Rather than viewing occupational choice as a point-in-time event, it conceptualized choice as a developmental process that spanned the years from late childhood to early adulthood. The developmental theory of vocational choice first articulated by Ginzberg and his associates prompted an explosion of career theories; almost one theory per year was published for the next 20 years.[76]

This new era was labeled "the theory era," which encompassed "vocational psychology's stabilization in the 1950s, consolidation in the 1960s, advancement in the 1970s, and its maintenance and then deceleration in the last 2 decades of the 20th century."[77] We will note several of the leading theories below. Still, it is significant that vocational psychology in 2005 was deemed to be at a point of "stagnation and decline" and in need of revitalization.[78] In this state of "low ebb," Savickas and Walsh note that as of 2005, vocational psychology's "contributions go unnoticed by most psychologists and few recruits enter the field."[79] The 4th edition of *Handbook of Vocational Psychology,* published in 2013, has engaged in this revitalization effort and charted a way forward for the discipline. It has been followed by other studies, most notably those of David Blustein,[80] though the utility of vocational psychology for historians of the ancient past and biblical scholars still has not been explored. By inquiring into

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[75] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 38.
[76] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 42.
[77] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 42–43.
[78] Walsh and Savickas, "Current Issues and Innovations in Vocational Psychology," 4.
[79] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 15.
[80] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working*; David L. Blustein, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of the Psychology of Working,* Oxford Library of Psychology (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2014).

how vocational psychology can serve as an exegetical tool, this research is one such foray into the field's revitalization effort. Specific strategies provided by the discipline will be described below.

Psychology in Biblical Studies and Exegesis

Pairing the word "psychology" with the word "exegesis" elicits a range of responses from readers, often negative. Usually, this is due to a narrow understanding of psychology, viewed primarily in terms of therapy and psychoanalysis of an individual conducted by a practitioner in an interview setting. Yet this narrow construal is unwarranted, as D. Andrew Kille observes: "Not even the definition of psychology itself has found common agreement."[81] Some of this breadth stems from the general use of the English word "psychology," as evident from the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "The science of the nature, functions, and phenomena of the human soul or mind."[82] While psychology initially trafficked in the study of the soul (ψυχή), thereby linking it to a constituent element of human nature spiritually or philosophically conceived, it has progressed through a range of objects such that Wayne G. Rollins has observed that the very term *psyche*/ψυχή "has dropped out of psychology in many quarters." He continues: "It had first been conceived of in English as *soul,* then *mind,* then *consciousness,* then *behavior*; finally the word itself became conspicuous for its absence from most psychology texts."[83] Indeed, the discipline at present is focused almost entirely on cognition as expressed by or observable in human behavior. Kille explains: "While many often understand psychology to be study of the mind or mental processes, one can study those processes only in reference to observable behavior."[84]

Throughout the history of biblical interpretation, people have sought to understand the Bible psychologically. The history of this practice has been summarized elsewhere and need not be rehearsed here in detail.[85] Particularly under the influence of Freud and Jung, psychological approaches to the Bible changed significantly. Freud's work in particular marked a "new era" in

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[81] D. Andrew Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism,* GBS (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 7.

[82] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "psychology."

[83] Wayne G. Rollins, *Soul and Psyche: The Bible in Psychological Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 6.

[84] Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism,* 1.

[85] A detailed description can be found in Rollins, *Soul and Psyche,* 3–32.

psychological theory in general, and both sought to apply their theories to biblical figures.[86] Yet not all biblical scholars welcomed this new era. Charges of speculation, anachronism, and reductionism have been leveled at psychological efforts, and the furious critique by Albert Schweitzer, rating psychiatric studies of Jesus as "'exactly zero' on both medical and historical grounds," seems to have been a major factor stunting work in psychology by biblical scholarship.[87] Even in 1983, Gerd Theissen offered his oft-cited quip: "Every exegete has learned that psychological exegesis is bad exegesis."[88] Thus, most of the 20th century was spent holding psychological exegesis at a skeptical distance.[89]

Petri Merenlahti, however, has observed that despite widespread antipathy to psychological interpretation, biblical scholarship has shifted dramatically. The existence of the ongoing Psychology and Biblical Studies program unit at the Society of Biblical Literature shows that this approach has been deemed useful by the guild. Merenlahti gives several reasons for its newfound acceptance:

> First, it seems that biblical scholars now have a better and more diverse idea of what contemporary psychology and contemporary biblical criticism are all about. They recognise that standard caricature images of a Freudian critic ("it's all Oedipal, or you are in denial") or a behaviourist critic ("the human mind is nothing but a sophisticated machine") are now severely outdated. On the other hand, they also understand that today's biblical criticism is more than just a combination of philological analysis and source-critical investigation. The increasingly popular applications of literary-theoretical and social-scientific approaches to biblical texts have paved the way for psychological approaches as well. Finally, biblical scholars have realised how thoroughly psychological their own 21st-century understanding is—and, on the other hand, how many topics of a genuinely psychological nature characterised biblical studies even before modern times. In that sense, all forms of biblical criticism might indeed be said to be, at least to some extent, psychological.[90]

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[86] Walter Bruggemann, "Psychological Criticism: Exploring the Self in the Text," in *Method Matters: Essays on the Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David L. Peterson,* ed. Joel M. LeMon and Kent Harold Richards, SBLRBS 56 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 216. For a detailed analysis of Frued's and Jung's contributions, see Rollins, *Soul and Psyche*, 33–60.

[87] Petri Merenlahti, "So Who Really Needs Therapy?: On Psychological Exegesis and Its Subject," *SEÅ* 72 (2007): 7–8; citing Albert Schweitzer, *Die psychiatrische Beurteilung Jesu: Darstellung und Kritik* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1913), 46.

[88] Cited in Merenlahti, "So Who Really Needs Therapy?," 7.

[89] Wayne G. Rollins, "The Bible and Psychology: New Directions in Biblical Scholarship," *Pastoral Psychology* 45, no. 3 (1997): 165–66.

[90] Merenlahti, "So Who Really Needs Therapy?," 8.

As psychological biblical criticism (Rollins' and Kille's preferred term for the discipline[91]) does not position itself vis-à-vis traditional critical categories, and as it has developed more and more along textual and rhetorical lines,[92] it has found a welcome place within the interdisciplinary field that is biblical studies and thus will be utilized in this research as such.

For this research, the value of psychological biblical criticism will be found along the following lines: First, its textual focus will allow this project to explore the priestly occupational identity of Ezekiel through the textual form of the book. This criticism does not purport to place Ezekiel "on the psychologist's couch" yet allows access to the cognitive and behavioral factors brought to bear on the priestly role of Ezekiel. Texts are, after all, "expressions of the structure, processes, and habits of the human psyche, both in individual and collective manifestations, past and present."[93] Even as it considers the character Ezekiel ben Buzi, it is careful to not lose sight of the limits of such an analysis. Kille warns: "The authors and compilers of the text did not use psychological language, nor did they intend to write case histories or personal journals. Although certain aspects of biblical terminology can be translated into psychological terms by analogy, the 'psychological human' is a distinctively modern phenomenon."[94]

Second, even though vocational psychology has its origin in western, primarily North American academies, and has been oft practiced by clinicians in that same locale, the field has adapted in the wake of concerns about cultural exclusivity. Jane L. Swanson notes that the field of vocational psychology is "currently in the midst of another paradigm shift into contextual and relational approaches."[95] This claim is borne out by a substantial body of literature looking at counseling in general and career counseling in particular from various cultural standpoints.[96]

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[91] Rollins, *Soul and Psyche,* 75; Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism,* 3.

[92] Merenlahti, "So Who Really Needs Therapy?," 11.

[93] Rollins, *Soul and Psyche,* 78.

[94] Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism,* 14–15; cf. Rollins, *Soul and Psyche,* 127–30. For discussion of how to relate "Ezekiel the historical person" to "Ezekiel the literary character," see David Nathaniel Phinney, "The Prophetic Persona in the Book of Ezekiel: Autobiography and Portrayal" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2004); Dalit Rom-Shiloni, "From Prophetic Words to Prophetic Literature: Challenging Paradigms That Control Our Academic Thought on Jeremiah and Ezekiel," *JBL* 138, no. 3 (2019): 565-86.

[95] Jane L. Swanson, "Traditional and Emerging Career Development Theory and the Psychology of Working," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psychology of Working,* ed. David L. Blustein, Oxford Library of Psychology (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2014), 56.

[96] For surveys, see Blustein et al. "Vocational Psychology," in *IAAP Handbook of Applied Psychology,* ed. Paul R. Martin et al., Wiley-Blackwell Handbooks of Applied Psychology (Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 192–93; Linda Mezydlo Subich, "Career Assessment with Culturally Diverse Individuals," in *Handbook of Vocational Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice,* ed. W. Bruce Walsh and Mark L. Savickas, 3rd ed., Contemporary Topics in Vocational Psychology (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 397–421. Multicultural concerns are especially evident in work related to career support for migrants. See Jenny Bimrose and Stephen

John J. Pilch has raised this concern in psychological biblical criticism (i.e., that this discipline has been shaped chiefly by a Western context),[97] and his voice has been heeded by the discipline as it has begun to better account for cultural distinctives in psychological analysis. The survey of texts and artifacts above has borne out the possibilities of a fruitful application of (vocational) psychological analyses of the ancient Levant.

Third, psychological biblical criticism provides an epistemological avenue of interpretation via its central role for "inferences" drawn from a holistic literary and historical investigation.[98] Andries G. van Aarde opines that psychological biblical criticism "gives a better account of more inferences than other available exegetical approaches."[99] While he might be faulted for overstatement—a *better* account? Perhaps instead, *a more lucid* account?—he is undoubtedly correct to note that "From the perspective of an operational pattern, other exegetical approaches—past or present—have not provided the psychological inferences that are explicitly or implicitly attached to the items demarcated above. . . . [What is at stake] is the identification of an epistemological model of inference to the best psychological explanation of data and human behavior manifested in texts."[100] It is true, as Merenlahti reports, that "'psychological exegesis' has often referred to applications of some specific psychological model or theory to biblical texts. Whether you find those applications useful or not will depend on how you feel

McNair, "Career Support for Migrants: Transformation or Adaptation," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 78, no. 3 (2001): 325–333; Philip Marfleet and David L. Blustein, "'Needed not Wanted': An Interdisciplinary Examination of the Work-Related Challenges Faced by Irregular Migrants," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 78 (2001): 381–389; Katja Wehrle et al., "Can I Come as I Am? Regugees' Vocational Identity Threats, Coping, and Growth," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 105 (2018): 83–101; Christine Robinson Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation of Refugees," *International Migration Review* 15, no. 1/2 (1981): 292–309; Geri Smyth and Henry Kum, "'When They Don't Use It They Will Lose It': professionals, Deprofessionalization and Reprofessionalization: the Case of Refugee Teachers in Scotland," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23, no. 4 (2010): 503–22.

[97] John J. Pilch, "Psychological and Psychoanalytical Approaches to Interpreting the Bible in Social-Scientific Context," *BTB* 27, no. 3 (1997): 112–16.

[98] For linguistic underpinnings to both inference and implicature, see Gillian Brown and George Yule, *Discourse Analysis,* Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 31–35; Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics,* Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[99] Andries G. van Aarde, "Progress in Psychological Biblical Criticism," *Pastoral Psychology* 64, no. 4 (2015): 482–83.

[100] Van Aarde, "Progress in Psychological Biblical Criticism," 484. The items "demarcated above" refer to elements of Rollins' statement: "The goal of a psychological-critical approach is to examine texts, their origination, authorship, modes of expression, their construction, transmission, translation, reading, interpretation into kindred and alien art forms, and the history of their personal and cultural effect, as expressions of the structure, processes, and habits of the human psyche, both in individual and collective manifestations, past and present" (Rollins, *Soul and Psyche,* 77–78).

about that particular model or theory in general."[101] Yet to approach Ezekiel through a "model or theory in general" does not require a spiral into subjectivity. Merenlahti notes that though psychological approaches have suffered from an "apparent disregard for textual, cultural and ideological aspects of interpretation," wherein he alludes a general ahistorical approach, he provides examples in the psychological study of Ezekiel and Jesus illustrating that "[p]sychobiographical studies of biblical characters are now culturally more sensitive and historically better informed."[102] A vocational psychological approach, applied to known historical and textual datum, will enable this research to observe a latent vocational identity that would slip through interpretive grids not keyed into this concern.

A final remark on this research's appropriation of psychological biblical criticism should be made here. Whereas much of the criticism that has been made of psychological approaches to Ezekiel has been due to its, at times, individualistic focus, and whereas vocational psychology is traditionally practiced in an individualistic setting (e.g., career counseling/guidance), it might seem that vocational psychology is poised to fall into the same excesses of the oft-criticized psychologized readings of the past. Nevertheless, a few items must be kept in mind. First, most of the problems identified in psychological approaches to Ezekiel have been due to psychoanalytical individualism, not collective and social psychological approaches. David Jobling, sensitive especially to the *textual* character of Ezekiel (both as an individual and as a book), endorses a social approach which this research aims to follow:

> [T]he very nature of the canon of Scripture suggests that we give methodological priority in the reading of biblical texts to the methods of social psychology over individual psychology. Even if we accept Ezekiel's historical setting in the early days of the Babylonian Exile, his traumatic experience is one that he shares with many other people, with a community in which he likely took a leadership role. May not a psychosocial analysis of the exilic *community* have more to tell us about Ezekiel's state of mind than individual psychoanalysis?[103]

[101] Merenlahti, "So Who Really Needs Therapy?," 13.

[102] Merenlahti, "So Who Really Needs Therapy?," 14, 27. D. Andrew Kille, "Psychological Interpretation," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible,* ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 654–55, warns: "In exegesis, it is important to recognize significant differences between the world of the Bible and our own, and not to apply modern psychological models indiscriminately. . . . For psychological interpretation to be fruitful, there must be a good fit between psychological insight and the biblical text. Psychological methods should be used in tandem with other exegetical and hermeneutical principles. A Psychological interpretation that does not take into account the insights of linguistic, structural, genre, and historical study runs the risk of psychologizing the text."

[103] David Jobling, "An Adequate Psychological Approach to the Book of Ezekiel," *From Genesis to Apocalyptic Vision,* vol. 2 of *Psychology and the Bible: A New Way to Read the Scriptures*, ed. J. Harold Ellens and

While Jobling neglects to mention the more specific community of the exilic priesthood, his remarks are still appropriate. Second, psychology is itself a *social* science and, as such, is practiced in both individual *and social/collective* settings, paired therein with sociology, anthropology, archaeology, and cultural anthropology.[104] Social-scientific approaches to biblical studies have been methodologically established and fruitfully pursued in the academic guild[105] thus, the use of vocational psychology in this research, even though the application of this particular discipline to the OT priesthood is de novo, is not an unprecedented move generally speaking; indeed it is a necessary move. Byron G. Curtis explains: "If we are to understand anything of the social world of biblical antiquity, something like the modeling method [of a social-scientific, comparative method] seems inevitable."[106] Furthermore, vocational psychology itself has been pursued in both individual and collective veins since the early part of the 20th century, as noted by Savickas and Baker: "The 1930s also saw the beginnings of the drift apart by vocational psychologists interested in individuals *and those interested in industries*" (italics added).[107] While the Israelite priesthood was not an industry per se, it was an institution and, as such, is open to analysis using institutional tools. Vocational psychology provides many such tools, as will be shown below.

Wayne G. Rollins, Praeger Perspectives: Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 204–5.

[104] Charles E. Carter, "Opening Windows onto Biblical Worlds: Applying the Social Sciences to Hebrew Scriptures," in *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches,* ed. David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 422, n. 5, explains: "The social and behavioral sciences refer to anthropology, sociology, political science, archaeology, economics, psychology, and the study of the behavioral aspects of cultural anthropology, social psychology, and biology."

[105] Robert R. Wilson has written extensively in this area, both of general theory and particular application of sociology in biblical studies. See Robert R. Wilson, *Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament,* GBS (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984); idem, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980). For other work in this field, see too Norman K. Gottwald, "Sociology of Ancient Israel," *ABD* 6:79–89; Stephen C. Barton, "Social-Scientific Criticism," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible,* ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 753–55; Carter, "Opening Windows onto Biblical Worlds," 421–51; part 4, "Prophecy and Society," in Robert P. Gordon, ed., *"The Place is Too Small for Us": The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship,* Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 5 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 275–412; David J. Chalcraft, ed., *Social-Scientific Old Testament Criticism: A Sheffield Reader,* BibSem 47 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997); and especially part 2, "Anthropology" in Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong, eds., *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives,* SBLSymS 9 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 119–238.

[106] Byron G. Curtis, *Up the Steep and Stony Road: The Book of Zechariah in Social Location Trajectory Analysis,* AcBib 25 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 27.

[107] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 39. See full discussion on pp. 39–41.

Vocational Psychological Theory

As with any field, within vocational psychology research a number of theoretical perspectives have been promoted as researchers and practitioners grapple with "transformations wrought by globalization and information technology."[108] Numerous sources chronicle developments in this the "theory era" of vocational psychology,[109] but it is striking to note how inapplicable some theories are for the study of ancient Israelite and Judean priests accessible only to historians via texts. This is not to say that each theory is entirely in conflict; each contains degrees of overlap (think of them as overlapping circles in a Venn diagram[110]). Thus this research is eclectic as it attempts to draw upon theoretical features appropriate to the object of inquiry.

Some methodological problems rule out the use of certain theories. As a noteworthy example, Person-Environment Theories (e.g., P-E Fit, Holland's Theory, the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment), while immensely popular, hold the view "that individuals seek out occupations that provide a good fit between their attributes and the characteristics of a given work environment."[111] These theories assume individual volition relative to career choice (whether the initial selection of a career or choices concerning ongoing career practice), but "the emphasis on choice and the assumption of lifelong development" does not fit well with the "reality of people who do not have the access to resources that might afford such choices."[112] Indeed, "the assumption that people have choices to make with respect to their work lives . . . is not the case for most workers in the world at the present time," and arguably has never been the

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[108] Savickas and Baker, "History of Vocational Psychology," 44.

[109] E.g., Nancy Arthur and Mary McMahon, eds., *Contemporary Theories of Career Development: International Perspectives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018); Steven D. Brown and Robert W. Lent, eds., *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work,* 2nd ed (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2013); Jane L. Swanson and Nadya A. Fouad, eds., *Career Theory and Practice: Learning Through Case Studies,* 3rd ed (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2015); Duane Brown and Associates, eds., *Career Choice and Development,* 4th ed (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

[110] Even where there is agreement on the description of a given theory, scholars have classified and grouped individual theories differently. Cf. the survey chapters of Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 185–208, and Cindy L. Juntunen and Christine E. Even, "Theories of Vocational Psychology," in *Theories, Research, and Methods,* vol. 1 of *APA Handbook of Counseling Psychology,* ed. Nadya A. Fouad, APA Handbooks in Psychology (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2012), 237–67.

[111] Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 187. See too Juntunen and Even, "Theories of Vocational Psychology," 239–44.

[112] Juntunen and Even, "Theories of Vocational Psychology," 256. Cf. David L. Blustein, "The Psychology of Working: A New Perspective for a New Era," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psychology of Working,* ed. David L. Blustein, Oxford Library of Psychology (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5–6.

majority situation.[113] Additionally, these theories assume that "the greater the congruence between the individual and the work environment, the greater the likelihood of a successful match."[114] These assumptions, however, are not readily compatible with the OT priesthood, wherein rational decision making for or against a "career" in the priesthood is not apparently operative (there is a familial/genealogical factor), nor is work-environment something depicted as something that can "match" individual skills or preferences. (It would be humorous to describe Nadab's and Abihu's problem in Lev 10:1–3 as a mismatch between their skills and preferences for strange fire and the job requirements of refraining from offering strange fire!) Similar problems exist with a very different theoretical model, variously described as Social Cognitive Career Theory or Social Learning and Cognition Theory.[115]

Several theories front a more meaningful role for external factors that intrude on career selection (whether such selection is made by the individual worker or by the community). Social Constructionist and Contextual Action Theory, being formulated in distinctively postmodern ways, "examine the person and environment interaction and the *role of context and culture* in vocational theory and practice" (italics added),[116] observing "how the experience of working is co-constructed within relationships and, more broadly, within cultural and social contexts."[117] The utility of these theories to the study of the OT priesthood is this awareness of the subtleties involved in individual occupational identity construction, although their emphasis has been traditionally on post-industrial examples of advantage and disadvantage (gender, race, sexual identity, disability, etc.) and thereby not as useful to this research's historical investigation on a character who would be considerably tremendously advantaged by modern standards. (I.e., Ezekiel as male, [presumably] Zadokite, and priestly.)

Likewise, Developmental Theories offer a set of tools with significant promise for this research. They broaden the context of worker identity, viewing "one's work life within a nexus of relational, familial, community, and leisure-based contexts across the life span."[118] Noteworthy to these theories is the analysis of both a "latitudinal dimension," a synchronic

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[113] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working*, 19.

[114] Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 187.

[115] Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 189. Note: this is also categorized under "Social Learning and Cognition Theories," see Juntunen and Even, "Theories of Vocational Psychology," 250–54.

[116] Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 190

[117] Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 190

[118] Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 188.

picture of varying roles and social spaces that an individual occupies, and a "longitudinal dimension," a diachronic picture of differing stages in life affecting work.[119] The invocation of the terms "synchrony" and "diachrony"—usually invoked as literary-critical methods—is intentional in my survey; as we will see below, developmental theories utilize a story/narrative model, which allows them to interface with a literary narrative source like the book of Ezekiel.[120]

Donald E. Super is a figurehead for developmental approaches, whose "life-span life-space theory" tracked these two dimensions throughout an ordinary lifetime, proposing five stages in career development: 1. Growth (a period concluding with adolescence); 2. Exploration (developing the ability to make career decisions based on interests, values, and abilities); 3. Establishment (adjustment to work expectations and seeking professional advancement); 4. Maintenance (ongoing adjustment to meet changes and challenges); 5. Decline/disengagement (preparation for retirement).[121] Additionally, he situated the waxing and waning of nine major roles played by many individuals (albeit not all) within and across these stages (child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and pensioner).[122] The strength of this theory is readily apparent as it incorporates both diachronic and synchronic situations and identities into the ongoing process of an individual's working life.

Super's work, especially his earlier studies, has been critiqued for its apparent inflexibility and determinism. However, he did not view all these stages and roles as identical or a progression shared by all. Particularly in the stage of maintenance, Super depicted a process called "recycling" wherein individuals met changing circumstances by returning to a previous stage (specifically exploration or establishment) and "recomplet[ing] the tasks associated with that stage on a new career trajectory."[123] (We will consider specific adaptation strategies used in

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[119] Blustein et al., "Vocational Psychology," 188.

[120] Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2002), 14, notes the appropriateness of these categories: "The book of Ezekiel can be described as an historical narrative about the activity of an exilic prophet." More specifically, Renz terms Ezekiel "a narrative about a communication" wherein the prophet "allows his audience to 'overhear' what Yahweh has to say to Jerusalem'" (pp. 16, 14).

[121] Donald E. Super, Mark L. Savickas, and Charles M. Super, "The Life-Span, Life-Space Approach to Careers," in *Career Choice and Development,* ed. Duane Brown and Linda Brooks, 3rd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1996),131–34; For a detailed commentary on the stages, see Mark L. Savickas, "Career Construction: A Developmental Theory of Vocational Behavior," in *Career Choice and Development,* ed. Duane Brown and Associates, 4th ed (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 167–82.

[122] Donald E. Super, "A Life-Span, Life-Space Approach to Career Development," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 16 (1980): 283–4.

[123] Juntunen and Even, "Theories of Vocational Psychology," 245; Savickas, "Career Construction," 180–81.

recycling below.) Super admittedly spoke rather ontologically in his work, leading Savickas to employ the label "career construction theory," which he states "adheres to the epistemological constructivism that says we construct representations of reality but diverges from the ontologic constructionism that says we construct reality itself."[124] This serves a significant role in historical research into the OT priesthood. While affirming the "storied" nature of life itself[125] and thereby avoiding the problems of positivism, it does not detach such constructions from history/reality itself as is in vogue in many postmodern (especially deconstructionist) approaches.[126] Savickas's description should resonate with textual scholars, particularly those with an affinity for the insights of psychological biblical criticism described above:

> Specifying an occupational choice . . . consists of constructing a story that engages the larger sociocultural context by organizing self-percepts and then positioning the resulting self-concept in society. An individual's career story crystallizes how that person sees him- or herself in relation to the world. Vocationally relevant traits such as abilities and interests constitute the substance of this story; yet the story's essence is the narrative theme that shapes the story's meaning, continuity, and distinctiveness.[127]

Furthermore, Savickas reveals the potency of story as a category that enables scholars to relate seemingly disparate life-work experiences. While pushing back against viewing Super's work as *the* story of vocational development and adaptation for all cultures in all historical periods, he sees it as *a* story that guides the formulation of and analysis of other stories:

> Other accounts are being narrated today as the global economy, information technology, and social justice challenge dominant narratives and rewrite the social organization of work and the meaning of career. These rich narratives chronicle untold stories and voice complexity. Although postindustrial societies are revisiting master narratives about work, the new story lines for contemporary lives are far from being clear, coherent, and complete. These new stories, rather than focusing on progress through an orderly sequence of predictable tasks, will increasingly focus on adaptability for transitions, especially coping with changes that are unexpected and traumatic.[128]

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[124] Savickas, "Career Construction," 154.

[125] Iain Provan, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman III, *A Biblical Historty of Israel,* 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 110–114.

[126] For the critique of postmodernism as applied to biblical history, see William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It? What Archaeology Can Tell us about the Reality of Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 1–52; Dever, *Beyond the Texts,* 19–34; Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel,* 1–80.

[127] Savickas, "Career Construction," 175.

[128] Savickas, "Career Construction," 182.

Savickas's remarks invite attention to the stories of ancient priests who narrated their own recycling, adaptability, and coping strategies.

To summarize the value of developmental perspectives for this research, we find among these perspectives framework that enables us to situate Ezekiel's situation within a vocational psychological inquiry appropriate to his station, both latitudinally and longitudinally. Indeed, we have nothing narrated of (Super's) growth, exploration, and establishment stages relative to Ezekiel's priestly life. Furthermore, it is unlikely that these stages involved the same kinds of volitional freedom exhibited in modern, post-industrial contexts. Indeed, this is a common *and important* critique of developmental perspectives, albeit one that does not dismiss their utility, critically used and adapted. Blustein, whose work is on the leading edge of modern developments in vocational psychology, models a careful way through these shoals. He describes Super's work as "one of the most important advances theoretically" since he "embedded the role of work into a more coherent and expansive set of assumptions about human development."[129] Yet Blustein can still embrace his work with critique:

> [Super's] self-concept implementation notion is based on the assumption that people have choices to make with respect to their work lives, which is not the case for most workers in the world at the present time. Despite this limitation, Super's perspective, that work provided an outlet for one's self-concept, captures an element of work behavior that is certainly worth striving for as technology increasingly makes repetitive work less available.[130]

Though some developmental perspectives have remained overly focused on volition in job choice, the field as a whole has continued to commit itself "to the poor and working classes and other marginalized people."[131] Though it might seem odd coupling Ezekiel as a priest (i.e., an elite in society) with the marginalized, attending to both the familial/genealogical factor that appears to determine Ezekiel's priestly career and to his exilic/refugee status does not remove him entirely from the experience of other marginalized workers. In sum, vocational psychology has established itself in theory and practice and provides tools for analyzing Ezekiel's priestly identity.

[129] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working,* 11.
[130] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working,* 19.
[131] Blustein, *The Psychology of Working,* 11.

Occupational Identity: Functions, Relation to Calling, and Multiplicity

Having sketched out the broad contours of the utility of vocational psychology for this research, we turn to specific topics in the field that can shed light on the book of Ezekiel in understanding its literary shape relative to Ezekiel's priestly (vocational) identity. First and foremost is the *reality* of occupational identity. While we have already considered this historically and biblically above, we turn now to vocational psychological formulations of this reality. Writing as part of a larger project on identity, Vladimir B. Skorikov and Fred W. Vondracek highlight the importance of work in humans: "Occupational identity has frequently been conceptualized as a major component of one's overall sense of identity. . . . From this perspective, it represents a core, integrative element of identity, serving not only as a determinant of occupational choice and attainment, but also as a major factor in the emergence of meaning and structure in individuals' lives."[132] This is due to its role "as a principal cognitive structure that controls the assimilation and integration of self-and occupational knowledge."[133] One's work, then, has three significant functions in life: pragmatic, social, and existential.

Blustein unpacks these three functions systematically, grounded first and foremost in occupational identity itself: "Working functions to provide people with a way to establish an identity and a sense of coherence in their social interactions. In other words, work furnishes at least part of our external identity in the world. . . . Working has a very personal meaning that is influenced to a great extent by individual constructions and by socially mediated interactions with others."[134] The personal-meaning generating power of working is related to its necessity for life itself—its pragmatic function: "The first function of work is the role that work plays in providing people with a means of accessing survival and power."[135] Apart from work, survival is impossible. Even in the case of those unable to work—children, the disabled, the elderly—, it is the *work of another* that enables the survival of these individuals. It should, however, be noted

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[132] Vladimir B. Skorikov and Fred W. Vondracek, "Occupational Identity," in *Domains and Categories*, vol. 2 of *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research,* ed. Seth J. Schwartz, Koen Luyckx, and Vivian L. Vignoles (New York, NY: Springer, 2012), 694.

[133] Skorikov and Vondracek, "Occupational Identity," 698.

[134] Blustein, *Psychology of Working*, 3.

[135] Blustein, *Psychology of Working*, 22. Note that in speaking of "power," Blustein is not referring to tyrannical power, but simply to "the actual exchange of work for money or goods and services, which then allows an individual to sustain his/her life" (p. 22). In this context, power can be labeled simply as the desire "to accomplish effects," no matter how mundane or benign (see Vern Sheridan Poythress, *Redeeming Sociology: A God-Centered Approach* [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011], 44).

that even limited types of work (e.g., a child's age-appropriate household chores) can contribute to survival, even if only in part and even if not absolutely necessary (e.g., if a child is unable to fetch water, someone else will).

But work also has a social function by connecting "people to their social context and interpersonal relationships."[136] On the one hand, this happens as work nearly always connects a worker to another individual through the exchange of work products with another or by affecting another with services. On the other hand, work positions an individual within a "broader social milieu," a community.[137] Sometimes this is explicitly recognized due to prestige awarded to certain types/classes of workers or due to the assignment of a work role to an inferior by a superior, thereby giving that individual a position in the community.[138] Other times this social connection is tacit and implicit.

However, both the pragmatic and social functions give rise to an existential function of work. When individuals survive by their work and practice a role of working relative to others, they self-attach or recognize meaning to their lives via their work, which Blustein describes as self-determination.[139] This meaning can be derivative of the extrinsic benefits of work (e.g., the pleasure of thriving, comfort of survival, or praise of others for work well done), though it can also be intrinsic, tied to a sense of calling to a given line of work, an internal constraint that focuses an individual on a particular type of work. Though the language of a vocational call stems from Martin Luther during the 16th century Protestant reformation, Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson note that "the idea of a calling has become predominantly secular in its meanings and uses."[140] This does not mean that divine agency is not operative in one's call; several studies in the modern period have noted that spirituality and religion play significant roles in viewing one's work as a calling.[141] This is an especially noteworthy observation for this research. If spirituality and religion can be shown to affect general career

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[136] Blustein, *Psychology of Working*, 22.

[137] Blustein, *Psychology of Working*, 22.

[138] Skorikov and Vondracek, "Occupational Identity," 706.

[139] Blustein, *Psychology of Working*, 22.

[140] Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson, "When Callings are Calling: Crafting Work and Leisure in Pursuit of Unanswered Occupational Callings," *Organizational Science* 21, no. 5 (2010): 974.

[141] E.g., Kieran Keohane and Myles Balfe, "The Nun Study and Alzheimer's Disease: Quality of Vocation as a Potential Protective Factor?" *Dementia* 0, no. 0 (2017): 1–12; Ryan D. Duffy, "Spirituality, Religion, and Career Development: Current Status and Future Directions," *The Career Development Quarterly* 55 (2006): 52–63; Marjolein Lips-Wiersma, "The Influence of Spiritual 'Meaning-Making' on Career Behavior," in *Journal of Management Development* 21, no. 7 (2002): 497–520.

decisions significantly, it stands to reason that an explicitly spiritual and religious profession (i.e., the priesthood) would be affected in similar if not more significant ways. After all, this general phenomenon would appertain to the religious work, but in addition, the unique religious content of the work would exert additional influence. While studies have not shown an *overwhelming* advantage for spiritual and religious individuals relative to their career tasks, at least one study has demonstrated that "significant relations were found between religiousness, spirituality, and a number of the career adaptability indices. Spiritual Awareness and Intrinsic Religiousness each served as significant predictors of career decision self-efficacy."[142]

But again, the idea of work as calling does inform the existential function of work. Now it must be noted that there is wide use of the term "calling" in vocational psychology. Its importance, however—whether for religious or secular reasons—has been thoroughly established, even as a distinctive vocational psychological theory.[143] What is more, though calling is more often expressed by those with work choices and prestigious positions, this is not always the case:

> Individuals with greater educational attainment, income, work volition, and who are employed will be more likely to feel they are living out their callings. Importantly, although we view access to opportunity as predictive of living a calling, this is just one of several variables in the model positioned as predicators. In other words, although access to opportunity makes living a calling more likely to occur, we believe that *individuals across the spectrum of opportunity may find ways to live out their calling* [emphasis added].[144]

This shows that the idea of calling is a significant factor even for lower classes of society; thus, it is an essential factor for the upper class, where the very challenges that make lower-class calling more difficult to realize are less prevalent.

One final aspect of the reality of occupational identity relevant to this research is the reality of multiple occupational identities held by an individual simultaneously. Since much of the discussion of Ezekiel centers around the relationship between his priestly and prophetic

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[142] Ryan D. Duffy and David L. Blustein, "The Relationship between Spirituality, Religiousness, and Career Adaptability," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 67 (2005): 437. Although they do note that their study showed that "religiousness and spirituality had only a minor relationship with progress in the career choice commitment process. While these relationships proved significant, their level of accounted variance in the overall models was low, reflecting a minor effect size" (Duffy and Blustein, "The Relationship," 437).

[143] Ryan D. Duffy et al., "Work as a Calling: A Theoretical Model," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 65, no. 4 (2018): 423–39.

[144] Duffy et al., "Work as a Calling," 427.

identities, the question of multiple work identities is highly relevant. Michael T. Sliter and Elizabeth M. Boyd noted in 2014 that an estimated 6.7 million Americans worked numerous jobs at the same time and yet reported that organizational research has paid relatively little attention to this phenomenon.[145] Much research exists on balancing various identities *with* occupational identity (e.g., family and work, hobbies and work, etc.), yet how individuals relate two or more work identities to one another or their overall identity has been relatively neglected.[146] However, Brianna B. Caza, Sherry Moss, and Heather Vough have moved this research forward through a combination of positive psychology (i.e., the study of "authenticity"[147]) and vocational psychology.[148] Two things stand out in their research: First, their utilization of "authenticity" contains significant overlap with "calling," as described above.[149] Second, their work has challenged the overly simplified approach of much scholarship concerning humans and multiple identities. They explain:

> Currently, most identity research assumes low levels of self-complexity, focusing on the effects of a single identity rather than the additive or multiplicative effects of several identities. . . . Yet people vary in their levels of subjective self-complexity based on the number of identities they hold closely and the degree to which these identities overlap . . . . Though identity theory suggests that one's multiple identities are arranged in a salience hierarchy, with only one identity relevant at any given time . . . , there is mounting evidence that identities can be "coactivated" . . . , such as when one is simultaneously aware of both his or her race and professional identities. People do not experience identities discretely, so it is critical for scholars to attend to how people experience the

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[145] Michael T. Sliter and Elizabeth M. Boyd, "Two (or three) is not equal to one: Multiple jobholding as a neglected topic in organizational research," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 35 (2014): 1045.

[146] There are some exceptions of note, including studies of particular industries have been conducted yielding useful insights, e.g., Nikitas Patiniotis and Gerasimos Prodromitis, "The 'Double' Vocational Identity of the Working Population in the Greek Tourist Industry," in *Identities at Work,* ed. Alan Brown, Simone Kirpal, and Felix Rauner, UNESCO-UNEVOC Book Series, Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Issues, Concerns and Prospects 5 (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 2007), 91–114. For a broader treatment of this reality, including not only case studies of various industries and nationalities, but also theoretical underpinnings under the rubric of a "boundaryless career," see Michael B. Arthur and Denise M. Rousseau, eds., *The Boundaryless Career: A New Employment Principle for a New Organizational Era* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[147] On authenticity in positive psychology, see William B. Swann and Brett W. Pelham, "The Truth About Illusions: Authenticity and Positivity in Social Relationships," in *Handbook of Positive Psychology,* ed. C. R. Snyder and Shane J. Lopez (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002), 366–81; Susan Harter, "Authenticity," in *Handbook of Positive Psychology,* ed. C.R. Snyder and Shane J. Lopez (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002), 382–94. For positive psychology in general, see C.R. Snyder and Shane J. Lopez, *Positive Psychology: The Scientific and Practical Explorations of Human Strengths* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007).

[148] Brianna Barker Caza, Sherry Moss, and Heather Vough, "From Synchronizing to Harmonizing: The Process of Authenticating Multiple Work Identities," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (2018): 703–45.

[149] It is noteworthy that Ryan D. Duffy et al. explicitly utilize positive psychology in their study of vocational calling relative to job loss: Ryan D. Duffy et al., "Calling among the unemployed: Examining prevalence and links to coping with job loss," *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 10, no. 4 (2015): 332–45.

> relationship among their identities, especially when it comes to experiencing authenticity.[150]

Indeed, multiple work roles possessed simultaneously are not necessarily an obstacle foisted upon a worker through unideal circumstances and in need of overcoming though often this is the case. Caza, Moss, and Vough noted that some researchers have pointed out that "the accumulation of multiple roles provides important resources such as status, security, and privileges that compensate or role strain . . . . People can use coping skills in ways that minimize role conflict and may even lead to role enhancement."[151] While Ezekiel's priestly and prophetic identities do stand in more tension than the work identities of "plural careerists" studied by Caza, Moss, and Vough, vocational psychology has provided yet another set of categories through which we can consider Ezekiel's vocational identity.

Occupational Identity: Unanswered Callings, Forced Migration, and Coping

We come at this point to the main import of vocational psychology for this research on Ezekiel's priestly identity: the adaptation and coping strategies used by workers facing unforeseen changes to their work status and challenges to their occupational identity. As noted above, in the maintenance stage of career development, Super and Savickas posited that changing circumstances lead workers through a process of recycling. And yet, as vocational identity is a deep-rooted reality for many, changing or relinquishing one's vocation is not done quickly or easily. Even for those in the recycling stage, occupational modifications do not necessarily lead to finding new and/or unrelated work. Indeed, the interrelationship of calling and work identity provides significant resiliency among individuals facing challenging work circumstances.[152] A substantial body of literature exists looking at so-called "unanswered callings."

Berg, Grant, and Johnson explore a range of activities pursued by workers in coping with challenges to their perceived occupational calling. Note their definition: "We define an *unanswered calling* as an occupation that an individual (1) feels drawn to pursue, (2) expects to be intrinsically enjoyable and meaningful, and (3) sees as a central part of his or her identity, but

[150] Caza, Moss, and Vough, "Synchronizing to Harmonizing," 707–8.
[151] Caza, Moss, and Vough, "Synchronizing to Harmonizing," 708.
[152] Duffy et al., "Calling among the Unemployed," 332–45.

(4) is not formally experiencing in a work role. An unanswered calling is thus an attitude toward a specific occupation that is not part of one's formal occupation role."[153] The first and second parts of this definition are unknown to Ezekiel—they may be true, but we have no direct evidence. The third part is highly likely, although it is the burden of this research to demonstrate this and highlight how this is evident. The fourth part requires nuance: i.e., there is a particular (indeed established) *version* of the priesthood that Ezekiel is not formally experiencing, though it will be argued that he is experiencing a crafted priestly occupation. Berg, Grant, and Johnson will note how the individuals they interviewed responded to their unanswered callings via "crafting" techniques. Though their research was unique in observing these techniques within the rubric of "calling," they are not the first to observe how people cope with challenges to their work.

David B. Hershenson has noted an irony of most career counseling theory and practice: even though people spend significantly more time *working* in a career than they do *choosing* it, most praxis in vocational psychology has historically centered on career choice.[154] This began to change in the 1970s with the development of several models of work adjustment. The Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment, a Person-Environment Theory mentioned above, has played a prominent role in the literature, even described by Beryl Hesketh and Barbara Griffin as being "in the best tradition of an empirically testable and applicable theory."[155] And yet, as P-E Fit theories in general have a limited purview, focusing as they do on individuals with sufficient *volition* relative to their career choice, the Minnesota Theory has been challenged by another model of work adjustment. Hershenson provided a developmental approach and surveyed a range of domains and systems that encompass a worker and dictate the limits or opportunities available to them in work adjustment.[156] This fits with what has already been observed about the utility of developmental perspectives for studying Ezekiel's priestly identity.

Research in work adjustment has been forced to reckon with the way in which adaptability and flexibility are at times hindered by occupational identity. When someone has an

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[153] Berg, Grant, and Johnson, "When Callings are Calling," 974.

[154] David B. Hershenson, "Work Adjustment: A Neglected Area in Career Counseling," *Journal of Counseling and Development* 74 (1996): 442.

[155] Beryl Hesketh and Barbara Griffin, "Work Adjustment," in *Handbook of Vocational Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice,* ed. W. Bruce Walsh and Mark L. Savickas, 3rd ed., Contemporary Topics in Vocational Psychology (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 84.

[156] Hershenson, "Work Adjustment," 442–43.

unanswered calling, they do not easily relinquish their work identity to pursue a new career. A change in employment does not necessarily signal a change in vocational identity.[157] Additionally, for those who conceive of their calling in specifically religious and spiritual ways, this is the case all the more.[158] Some nuance is necessary, however, thus Ryan D. Duffy and David L. Blustein have observed that significant differences lie between those whose religion is extrinsic [i.e., motivated by external factors] and those whose religion is intrinsic [i.e., motivated by positive, internal factors] as defined using the "Religious Motivation Scale."[159] They explain: "The analyses suggest that individuals who are motivated to be religious [for extrinsic] reasons as opposed to intrinsic reasons tend to be more likely to foreclose on a certain career choice, which is generally considered a less adaptive personality orientation in the career literature."[160] Of course, Ezekiel cannot be subjected to the Religious Motivation Scale. Even if he could, the bifurcation between extrinsic and intrinsic religious motivation is a uniquely modern phenomenon that would skew the data. Nevertheless, the fact that religious motivation regularly correlates with a stable occupational identity that is not easily relinquished and foreclosed upon enables this research to consider how Ezekiel, an explicitly religious individual with an explicitly religious vocation, might have been predisposed to approach an unanswered vocational call. Adaptation is a necessity for some, and where this adaptation does not occur in the form of a wholly new occupational identity, it occurs in more subtle ways through a circuitous process of imagination and exploration.[161]

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[157] For a study that correlates work story, work identity, and career change, noting how individuals integrate change into their identity, see Sabine Raeder and Gudela Grote, "Career Changes and Identity Continuities—A Contradiction?" in *Identities at Work,* ed. Alan Brown, Simone Kirpal, and Felix Rauner, UNESCO-UNEVOC Book Series, Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Issues, Concerns and Prospects 5 (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 2007), 147–81.

[158] For research that has probed the question of spirituality/religion and its relationship to work, see Deborah P. Bloch and Lee J. Richmond, eds., *Connections Between Spirit and Work in Career Development: New Approaches and Practical Perspectives* (Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing, 1997).

[159] Duffy and Blustein, "Relationship between Spirituality, Religiousness, and Career Adaptability," 434. The "Religious Motivation Scale" is more fully presented in R. L. Gorsuch and S.E. McPherson, "Intrinsic/extrinsic measurement: I/E-Revised and single-item scales," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28 (1989): 348–54; R.L. Gorsuch et al., "Perceived religious motivation," *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 7 (1997): 253–61.

[160] Duffy and Blustein, "Relationship between Spirituality, Religiousness, and Career Adaptability," 437.

[161] For examples, see Mark L. Savickas, "Career Construction Theory and Practice," in *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work,* ed. Steven D. Brown and Robert W. Lent, 2nd ed (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 155–63.

A significant cause of unanswered callings is forcible displacement or forced migration. For many in biblical scholarship, exile and forced migration are familiar topics. And yet Daniel L. Smith-Christopher cites a very stark reminder:

> [E]xile is the reality, whether chosen or forced, for an unprecedented percentage of the world's people in movement in the twentieth century, and this reality demands our attention. First and foremost, before any theological statement is made about exile, one must acknowledge that exile is the daily reality for millions of human beings at the opening of the twenty-first century.[162]

With the increasing awareness of forced migration today, psychology has moved quickly to provide resources for practitioners seeking to counsel modern-day exiles. The field of career counseling has been no exception. In light of this, just as biblical scholarship has drawn upon the sociology of exile in recent publications[163]—notably the experience of trauma, which has received a substantial amount of attention as a distinctive, psychological biblical criticism[164]—biblical scholarship also has resources in vocational psychology for understanding exile and forced migration, specifically for how the trauma of forcible displacement interfaces with work identity.

Vocational psychological treatments on forced migration utilize several concepts in understanding this multifaceted phenomenon. Maher M. Kharma, for example, has highlighted "occupational deprivation" as a cause of significant hardship for refugees that encompasses

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[162] Daniel L. Smith-Christpher, *A Biblical Theology of Exile,* OBT (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 28.

[163] The Society of Biblical Literature has for several years now featured a program unit devoted to "Exile-Forced Migrations in Biblical Literature," that has generated several valuable publications. E.g., John J. Ahn and Jill Middlemas, eds. *By the Irrigation Canals of Babylon: Approaches to the Study of Exile,* LHBOTS 526 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012); Mark J. Boda et al., eds., *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration,* AIL 21 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015). See too John J. Ahn, *Exile as Forced Migrations: A Sociological, Literary, and Theological Approach on the Displacement and Resettlement of the Southern Kingdom of Judah,* BZAW 417 (Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter, 2011). Two journals have recently published themed issues on this topic: see Tchavdar S. Hadjiev and David J. Shepherd, eds., "Migration, Foreignness and the Hebrew Bible," special issue, *BibInt* 26, no. 4–5 (2018); C.L. Crouch and C.A. Strine, eds., "Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Social Scientific Study of Involuntary Migration," special issue, *HBAI* 7, no. 3 (2018).

[164] Recent work of note includes David G. Garber, "Trauma Theory and Biblical Studies," *CurBR* 14, no. 1 (2015): 24–44; A. Groenewald, "'Trauma is Suffering that Remains': The Contribution of Trauma Studies to Prophetic Studies," *Acta Theologica Supplementum* 26 (2018): 88-102; "Eve-Marie Becher, Jan Dochhorn, Else Kragelund Holt, eds., *Trauma and Traumatization in Individual and Collective Dimensions: Insights from Biblical Studies and Beyond,* Studie Aarhusiana Neotestamentica 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014); David M. Carr, *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); David Janzen, "Claimed and Unclaimed Experience: Problematic Readings of Trauma in the Hebrew Bible," *BibInt* 27 (2019): 163–85.

Blustein's three significant functions in life noted above: pragmatic, social, and existential.[165] Shan M. Siddiqui et al. explain this as follows: "The concept of occupational deprivation involves disparities in the opportunity for people to participate in activities that hold personal, social and cultural meaning . . . . The underlying premise is that people are inherently occupational, which implies that being deprived of occupation, or engagement with day-to-day meaningful activities, is detrimental to their health."[166] Noting three examples of occupational deprivation—chattel slavery in the United States, Jewish displacement in Europe in the 1940s, and Palestinian displacement following the establishment of the state of Israel—Kharma reports how all three work functions were affected, and responses that were taken by each community to retain their personal freedom and identity (existential[167]), to preserve social bonds through solidarity with other displaced workers (social[168]), and to maintain their health, both mental and physical (pragmatic[169]). In this way, Kharma draws attention both to the reality of occupational displacement and its adverse effect on those forcibly displaced and the range of interventions being undertaken by practitioners.[170]

Semiotics has also been employed in conceptualizing the issues facing refugees relative to work.[171] In an oft-cited article, Christine R. Finnan studied how the electronics industry became a "symbol of opportunity" for Vietnamese immigrants to San Jose, California, who arrived in the 1970s following United States military involvement in Vietnam.[172] For these immigrants, becoming an electronics technician was a highly sought position even though many "were the elite in Vietnam and occupy the upper rungs of the occupational ladder."[173] Though

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[165] Maher M. Kharma, "The Dynamics of Occupational Deprivation on Displaced Individuals," (ERIC Database, 2010), http://eric.ed.gov/?q= ED509025.

[166] Shan M. Siddiqui et al., "Addressing Occupational Deprivation in Refugees: A Scoping Review," *Journal of Refugee and Global Health* 2, no. 1, art. 3 (2019): 1.

[167] Kharma, "Dynamics of Occupational Deprivation," 7, 36. The author emphasizes the contrast between meaning vs. meaninglessness.

[168] Kharma, "Dynamics of Occupational Deprivation," 6, 20, 36–38. Here both the reality of belonging (p. 6) and of opposing occupational injustice (pp. 20, 36–38) are described.

[169] Kharma, "Dynamics of Occupational Deprivation," 24–27.

[170] Siddiqui et al., "Addressing Occupational Deprivation," 4, note the wide array of techniques used by vocational psychologists and (refugee) career counselors, in part because of the "varied nature of displaced people, their cultures, new environments, and prior occupations."

[171] See Yuan Li, "A Semiotic Theory of Institutionalization," *Academy of Management Review* 42, no. 3 (2017): 520–47. Although the use of the phrase "meaning-making," which permeates vocational psychological literature, reveals the underlying role that semiotics plays in conceptions of work.

[172] Christine Robinson Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation of Refugees," *International Migration Review* 15, no. 1 (1981): 300.

[173] Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation," 300.

most Americans at the time viewed this profession as a lower class of profession (a so-called "blue-collar" job vis-à-vis a higher "white-collar" job), Vietnamese immigrants imagined the position quite differently.[174] Finnan explained:

> Vietnamese have given electronics technician jobs a middle class image. The requirements needed for the job, the work environment and options for advancement have characteristics Vietnamese associate with middle class occupations. Vietnamese like technician jobs because the requirements are mental, not physical. To them, the mental/physical distinction separates working class from middle class occupations.[175]

Both communal and cognitive factors contribute to this image production. As the community identified a number of agreed-upon virtues in the electronics technician profession, individuals conceived of the profession as virtuous (a "good job") and consequently conceived of themselves as ideal candidates for the profession. This is a common approach to occupational assimilation: "Occupational assimilation is described as both a social and a cognitive profess: social because of the important role the refugee community plays in the process; and cognitive in that, as refugees begin to identify with an occupation, they shape their self-images to complement the chosen occupational roles."[176] In sum, semiotics provides categories for understanding the experience of occupation deprivation among the forcibly displaced, as images and symbols become "metaphors they live by"[177]—generated to enable survival and flourishing relative to occupational identity. In this research, we will attend to the power of symbols in maintaining occupational identity in the face of an occupational threat, albeit in very different historical and geographical circumstances.

When it comes to the ways in which individuals adjust to unanswered callings as a part of the maintenance/management career stage (Super's act of "recycling"), vocational psychologists have noted some concrete coping strategies. Some broad-stroke terminology has been used to group these strategies. Savickas, citing Super, reported three ways workers engage their careers during the management stage: holding, updating, and innovating.[178] The last, innovating,

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[174] Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation," 308, "[T]he refugee community often grants the job higher status than Americans do."

[175] Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation," 301.

[176] Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation," 292. See too Christiane R. Finnan, "Community Influences on the Occupational Adaptation of Vietnamese Refugees," *Anthropological Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (1982): 161–69. In both articles, Finnan uses the language of symbol (i.e., "image") pervasively.

[177] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[178] Savickas, "Career Construction," 179.

encompasses several actions, including "breaking new ground by doing tasks differently, doing different tasks, or discovering new challenges,"[179] which may lead to new paths within a given career or a new career altogether. But innovating is not a knee-jerk or merely pragmatic move; it is elicited by a cognitive stance, one that Finnan labels "molding."

Molding occurs either by molding an image of oneself to fit the available jobs or molding an image of the available jobs to suit oneself.[180] Katja Wehrle et al. describe four kinds of molding responses to vocational identity threats. First, individuals engaged in "identity-protection responses" by (1) downplaying (derogating) the current threats to their vocational identity vis-à-vis the more significant threats they faced in their homeland, (2) accepting and positively reframing their new vocational situation, and/or (3) refusing to integrate their occupationally-deprived identity into their self-concepts.[181] Second, individuals engaged in "identity threat jujitsu," referring to the strategy in martial arts influenced by judo wherein the energy of an attacker (a negative) is harnessed and employed against the attacker (thereby making their attack a positive). In like manner, individuals faced vocational challenges by reframing them as vocational opportunities and pursuing them with vigor.[182] Third, individuals performed "identity-restructuring responses" wherein they (1) downgraded the importance of their former occupational identity in their overall self-concept, (2) viewed their occupationally deprived identity as a socially uniting and thereby as something positive, (3) decided to retrain for their same vocation according to the standards of their new country, thereby adopting the (temporary) identity as "student," and/or (4) opting out of their previous occupational identity entirely by vigorously pursuing a new line of work.[183] And fourth, individuals practiced combinations of the above: "The refugees also coped by combining identity-protection and –restructuring responses. While participants struggled to maintain their old identities, they also accepted necessary adaptations and thus restructured, and molded the meaning of their vocational identities."[184] Discussion of molding aligns well with a significant recent development in vocational psychological theory: attention to "job crafting."

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[179] Savickas, "Career Construction," 180.
[180] For specifics, see Finnan, "Community Influences," 164–67.
[181] Wehrle et al., "Can I Come as I Am?" 93–94.
[182] Wehrle et al., "Can I Come as I Am?" 94.
[183] Wehrle et al., "Can I Come as I Am?" 94–95.
[184] Wehrle et al., "Can I Come as I Am?" 95.

Job Crafting

The label "job crafting" is relatively new, coined by Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton in an oft-cited article from 2001,[185] though it reflects a concept present in earlier studies.[186] Wrzesniewski and Dutton define job crafting as "the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work."[187] This definition is admittedly broad, but it supports job crafting as a response to unanswered callings, as has been proposed by Berg, Grant, and Johnson, whose work we considered above when considering vocational "calling." In fact, Berg, Grant, and Johnson draw heavily upon the job crafting techniques observed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton.[188] And while Maria Tims, Arnold B. Bakker, and Daantje Derks have sought to distance job crafting from coping, describing the two as "conceptually different," the very definitional breadth of job crafting is why job crafting *is indeed* an appropriate category for studying how workers cope with unanswered callings, as Berg, Grant, and Johnson have shown.[189]

Before elaborating on the individual techniques used in job crafting, Wrzesniewski and Dutton describe what it means to craft a job:

> Crafting a job involves sharpening the task boundaries of the job (either physically or cognitively), the relational boundaries of the job, or both. Changing task boundaries means altering the form or number of activities one engages in while doing the job, whereas changing cognitive task boundaries refers to altering how one sees the job (e.g., as a set of discrete parts or as an integrated whole), and changing relational boundaries means exercising discretion over with whom one interacts while doing the job. By changing any one of these elements, an individual alters the design of the job and the social environment in which he or she works.[190]

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[185] Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton, "Crafting a Job: Revisioning Employees as Active Crafters of their Work" *Academy of Management Review* 26, no. 2 (2001): 179–201.

[186] Noted in Maria Tims, Arnold B. Bakker, and Daantje Derks, "Development and validation of the job crafting scale," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80 (2012): 173–74. For examples of "job redesign," a concept that has substantive overlap with job crafting, see J. Richard Hackman and Greg R. Oldman, *Work Redesign,* Organization Development (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1980); Carol T. Kulik, Greg R. Oldham, and J. Richard Hackman, "Work Design as an Approach to Person-Environment Fit," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 31 (1987): 278–296.

[187] Wrzesniewski and Dutton, "Crafting a Job," 179.

[188] Berg, Grant, and Johnson, "When Callings are Calling," 979–82.

[189] Maria Tims, Arnold B. Bakker, and Daantje Derks, "Job Crafting and Job Performance: A Longitudinal Study," *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 24, no. 6 (2015): 924.

[190] Wrzesniewski and Dutton, "Crafting a Job," 179–80.

They conclude this description with the thesis: "We argue that such actions affect both the meaning of the work *and one's work identity*" (emphasis added).[191] Thus there is a degree of symbiosis: while one's occupational identity and sense of calling can assert themselves in one's decision to job craft, job crafting, in turn, shapes one's occupational identity. In light of this, one can see why the idea of occupational identity is so important. Indeed, this identity stands at the center of most people's motivations for job crafting, which are, while complex, summarized by Wrzesniewski and Dutton as follows:

> The motivation for job crafting arises from three individual needs. First, employees engage in job crafting to assert some control over their jobs in order to avoid alienation from the work . . . . Second, employees are motivated to create a positive self-image in their work. Third, job crafting allows employees to fulfill a basic human need for connection to others.[192]

Note that there is some debate about who precisely can and/or does job craft. Wrzesniewski and Dutton state that even though their "framework implies that all employees are potential job crafters," not everyone *does* job craft, in part because not everyone *can*.[193] But this claim is disputed by Tims, Bakker, and Derks: "Although employees who are naturally more proactive may engage more comfortably in job crafting, we argue that everyone is capable of job crafting. That is, every job consists of specific job demands and job resources that could be increased and/or decreased."[194]

A number of factors affect how individuals practice job crafting. Tims, Bakker, and Derks have observed a range of job types represented by studies of job crafting (e.g., nurses, hairdressers, and salespersons).[195] This grounds their argument just noted that everyone is capable of job crafting. But having said this, it is also true that rank and tenure come to bear upon job crafting. Justin Berg, Amy Wrzesniewski, and Jane Dutton have noted that "job crafting is more complex than previously suggested by the job crafting literature" and conclude:

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[191] Wrzesniewski and Dutton, "Crafting a Job," 180.

[192] Wrzesniewski and Dutton, "Crafting a Job," 181. See expanded discussion on pp. 181–83. Notice how these three needs relate quite closely to Blustein's three "work functions" that we considered above:

- Avoiding alienation from work → Pragmatic
- Creating a positive self-image → Existential
- Fulfilling a need for connection to others → Social

See Blustein, *Psychology of Working,* 22, 67–152.

[193] Wrzesniewski and Dutton, "Crafting a Job," 187, 183.

[194] Tims, Bakker, and Derks, "Development and Validation," 175.

[195] Tims, Bakker, and Derks, "Development and Validation," 175.

> [E]mployees' perceptions of the freedom they have to adapt to challenges in job crafting do not necessarily reflect their level of formally endowed autonomy and power. Rather, our results suggest that employees at lower ranks occupy position in which they find it relatively easier to adapt their work environments to create more opportunities to job craft, while higher-rank employees feel more constrained despite being in positions of greater formal authority and power.[196]

Where higher-rank employees are quicker to settle with their job situation, lower-rank employees tend to take more creative approaches.[197] What is more, though it has not been studied in the same detail, Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton note that length of tenure in a given job (regardless of job rank) is a potentially fruitful direction for future research: "It is possible that employees with shorter tenures engage in more job crafting as they proactively shape their jobs to themselves and more readily see where changes could be made, while longer-tenured members may become more habituated to the job and treat it as a fixed entity."[198] Though Recent studies have taken up the question of job crafting among older workers,[199] as it now stands, the question of job tenure remains suggested by Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton alone. It is interesting to consider possibilities for Ezekiel. When he began his prophetic-priestly work in the thirtieth year (Ezek 1:1), this would place him in the category of shorter tenure and make him more likely to job craft a priestly work role that would sustain him throughout his career in exile. Additionally, he would have begun his work far removed from the established Jerusalem priesthood, suggesting an inferior type of priesthood (in the eyes of the Jerusalemites and perhaps of Ezekiel himself), which would also make him more likely to job craft. Though these possibilities are nearly impossible to prove definitively, research suggests that Ezekiel—regardless of rank or tenure, or job type—was in a position to job craft.

Job crafting has been shown to be quite complex. Though the importance of the categories proposed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton in 2001 have thus far stood the test of time, newer subdivisions have been posited within their categories, and additional categories have

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[196] Justin M. Berg, Amy Wrzesniewski, and Jane E. Dutton, "Perceiving and responding to challenges in job crafting at different ranks: When proactivity requires adaptivity," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 31 (2010): 160.

[197] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges," 179.

[198] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges," 182.

[199] See Carol M. Wong and Lois E. Tetrick, "Job Crafting: Older Workers' Mechanism for Maintaining Person-Job Fit," *Frontiers in Psychology* 8, art. 1548 (2017): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01548; Franco Fraccaroli, Sara Zaniboni, and Donald Truxillo, "Job Design and Older Workers," in *Age Diversity in the Workplace: An Organizational Perspective,* ed. Silvia Profili, Alessia Sammarra, and Laura Innocenti, Advanced Series in Management 17 (Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2017), 139–59.

been proposed (though not all of these are as directly focused on job changes as analyzed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton). Indeed in 2010, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (and joined by Berg) admitted that "job crafting is more complex than previously suggested by the job crafting literature."[200] In addition to the complexity of techniques used by workers, theorists and practitioners use a complex array of labels for job crafting techniques and domains.

The three primary forms of job crafting proposed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton[201] were as follows:

1. Task Crafting—changing the job's task boundaries
2. Relational Crafting—changing relational boundaries with individuals on the job
3. Cognitive Crafting—changing one's thinking about the job

They expanded upon these in 2010 by dividing each type of crafting into two related forms, which "represent the main ways in which participants described self-initiated changes made to the formal task, relational, or cognitive boundaries of their jobs."[202] Related closely to this, though filling in some details, are the job crafting techniques observed by Berg, Grant, and Johnson:[203]

1. Task Emphasizing
2. Job Expanding
3. Role Reframing
4. Leisure Crafting

The first three of these techniques share a degree of overlap with the three forms considered above, whereas leisure crafting is a new contribution. Its contribution to understanding coping techniques for those with unanswered callings is valuable; however, its usefulness to this research is limited by the lack of data related to leisure in Ezekiel.[204] The categories of Berg, Grant, and Johnson relate to those of Wrzesniewski and Dutton as follows:

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[200] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges," 160.

[201] Wrzesniewski and Dutton, "Crafting a Job," 185.

[202] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges," 165.

[203] Berg, Grant, and Johnson, "When Callings are Calling," 979–84.

[204] A fair amount of archaeological work has been devoted to leisure, particularly board games, in ancient Israel and Judah. Some excavated "game boards" are noted by Dever, *Lives of Ordinary People,* 174, 176, 184 and Shira Albaz et al., "Board Games in Biblical Gath," *BAR* 43, no. 5 (2017): 22, 68. Philippe Guillaume has sought to see in Psalm 18 a reference to "bull leaping," an activity known from Minoan reliefs from Crete. See Philippe Guillaume, "Bull-Leaping in Psalm 18," in *Metaphors in the Psalms,* ed. P. Van Hecke and A. Labahn, BETL 231 (Leuven: Peeters, 2019): 35–46.

Task Crafting	=	Task Emphasizing
	=	Job Expanding
Relational Crafting	=	N/A
Cognitive Crafting	=	Role Reframing
N/A	=	Leisure Crafting

We now turn to an examination of these forms and techniques, following Wrzesniewski and Dutton as the organizational schema and filling in with Berg, Grant, and Johnson.

Task crafting techniques involve two main features. First, workers have been found to alter the scope and nature of their tasks. This strategy retains significant continuity with the formal job description and managerial job expectations, though it exhibits various changes in the assigned tasks that enable the worker to find more satisfaction in the tasks as a whole.[205] Closely related to altering the scope and nature of their tasks, workers engage in task emphasizing, which involves "highlighting tasks that are already formally a part of one's job to pursue an unanswered calling, either (1) by changing the nature of an assigned task to incorporate aspects of an unanswered calling or by (2) dedicating additional time, energy, or attention to an assigned responsibility that is related to an unanswered calling."[206] Second, workers have been found to task craft by taking on additional tasks, a strategy involving discontinuity where the worker goes above and beyond their work responsibilities.[207] Related to this is job expanding, which involves "adding tasks to incorporate aspects of an unanswered calling, either by (1) taking no short-term, temporary tasks or by (2) adding new tasks to a job."[208] For this research, we will look at texts recounting Ezekiel's actions and texts where Ezekiel's oracular speech reveals his approach to his work, particularly where Ezekiel appears to stress topics not stressed in other priestly texts and part ways from priestly actions recorded in other OT texts. In these cases, we will consider how task crafting may be at work in Ezekiel's priestly identity.

Relational crafting involves (1) altering the extent or nature of relationships and (2) creating additional relationships. The former occurs among workers who highlight and emphasize certain things in their interactions with others on the job (whether colleagues or clients). The latter is evident in making and sustaining contact with individuals with whom the worker is not ordinarily engaged. Relational crafting is more challenging to observe in Ezekiel as

[205] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges," 165–66.
[206] Berg, Grant, and Johnson, "When Callings are Calling," 979.
[207] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges,"166.
[208] Berg, Grant, and Johnson, "When Callings are Calling," 981.

there are very few examples of recorded interaction with other individuals (e.g., Ezek 8, 14, and 20). Nevertheless, these contain material relevant to relational crafting, though such material appears to be scant. It is noteworthy that Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton found that workers did not view task and relational crafting as "mutually exclusive occurrences" and, in fact, found that they tended to track with one another.[209] Thus this research will subordinate relational crafting to task crafting in its analysis.

Finally, cognitive crafting involves (1) redefining one's perception of the type or nature of the tasks or relationships involved in one's job and (2) reframing one's perception of the job so that it is seen as a meaningful whole that positively impacts others rather than merely a collection of separate tasks.[210] Berg, Grant, and Johnson speak of cognitive crafting with the language of role reframing, a shift in thinking that involves "altering one's perception of the meaning of his or her work to match an unanswered calling, either by (1) establishing a cognitive connection to align the conventional social purpose of a job responsibility with an unanswered calling or by (2) broadening the conventional social purpose of a job responsibility to incorporate an unanswered calling."[211] The similarity of this to what was noted earlier concerning the cognitive strategies of Vietnamese electronics technicians is clearly evident.[212] While this research does not purport to "place Ezekiel on the couch" or interview him concerning his cognition of his work, our use of psychological biblical criticism will allow us to probe manifestations of the human psyche of which the *book* of Ezekiel is an expression.[213]

Lest these three forms of job crafting seem too narrowly prescribed, Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton noted that these techniques work in tandem with one another, dynamically engaging with one or more forms to different degrees at different times: "[O]ur findings provide initial evidence that the three different types of job crafting—task, relational, and cognitive—despite occurring in different domains, do not operate in isolation, but rather, are interrelated and can trigger or be triggered by one another."[214] We will thus treat these much as we aim to treat the

[209] "[Workers] often described task and relational crafting as occurring in conjunction with or giving rise to one another" (Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges," 165).

[210] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges,"165, 167. Note Sanket Sunand Dash and Neharika Vohra, "Job Crafting: A Critical Review," *South Asian Journal of Management* 27, no. 1 (2020): 137, for discussion of debates on cognitive crafting.

[211] Berg, Grant, and Johnson, "When Callings are Calling," 981.

[212] Finnan, "Occupational Assimilation," 292–309.

[213] Echoing the words of Rollins, *Soul and Psyche,* 78.

[214] Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton, "Perceiving and Responding to Challenges,"165.

several methodologies utilized in this work, not hermetically sealed off from one another, but enjoying a degree of interdependence.

In conclusion, this research is explicitly grounded in an established approach in applied psychology and vocational psychology, more so than previous research on the topic of Ezekiel's priestly identity. Our ability to arbitrate the question of Ezekiel's priestly identity is thereby improved, and our insight into the relevance of textual details to the question is broadened.

CHAPTER 3: EZEKIEL'S SIGN-ACTS AS FORMATIVE RITUALS OF A PRIESTLY, VOCATIONAL IDENTITY[1]

Ezekiel's mental state has long been an object of inquiry for biblical scholars. While Edwin C. Broome's 1946 study of Ezekiel's "abnormal personality" serves for many as the paradigm example of all that is wrong with psychological analysis of Ezekiel,[2] most scholars note that psychological analysis of Ezekiel can be pushed back at least to 1877, when August Klostermann published a paper correlating medical studies with Ezekiel's apparent illness symptoms, in particular, his muteness (Ezek 3:26) and being "bound" (Ezek 3:25, 4:8), the latter of which was associated with catalepsy.[3] What is especially interesting for our purposes is Broome's invocation of Ezekiel's sign-acts as evidence of his psychosis. He viewed Ezekiel's bound and mute sign-acts in 3:3–4:8 as a catatonic seizure, specifically as a form of schizophrenia, and the hair shaving sign-act of 5:1–4 as a masochistic wish for castration.[4] David J. Halperin's own controversial psychoanalysis of Ezekiel invoked the sign-acts as reenactment of Ezekiel's trauma. Not the trauma of exile, however, but a purported trauma of neglect during his infancy which Halperin reconstructs from Ezek 16:4–5 by identifying Ezekiel himself (rather than national Israel) with the young girl in this oracle.[5] He asserts that Ezekiel

> reenacted his ancient trauma. Bound (3:25, 4:8), restricted to his house (3:24), unable so much as to turn from one side to the other (4:8) for what seemed interminable lengths of time (4:5–6), he acted out again the terrifying immobility and helplessness of his infancy. His impulse to eat excrement, which he was able to restrain only by dint of a compromise measure (4:12–15), similarly recapitulates what must have been the experience of the filthy, untended baby of 16:4–7.[6]

Halperin's assessment of the hair shaving sign-act builds on that of Broome, again invoking childhood trauma, now of a sexual nature, causing him to long for self-harm, particularly

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[1] Note: a significant portion of this chapter was originally published in R. Andrew Compton, "The Sign-Acts of Ezekiel 3:22–5:17: Formative Rituals of Priestly Identity," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 29 (2018): 47–80, an article researched and written with the intent of serving as a chapter in the present thesis.

[2] Edwin C. Broome, "Ezekiel's Abnormal Personality," *JBL* 65 (1946): 277–92.

[3] August Klosterman, "Ezechiel: Ein Beitrag zu besserer Würdigung seiner Person und seiner Schrift," *TSK* 50 (1877): 391–439. For a selective survey of work since Klosterman, see David J. Halperin, *Seeking Ezekiel: Text and Psychology* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 7–38.

[4] Broome, "Ezekiel's Abnormal Personality," 279–280, 288–89.

[5] Halperin, *Seeking Ezekiel,* 173–74.

[6] Halperin, *Seeking Ezekiel,* 175.

castration, punishing himself for incestuous longings toward his abusive mother.[7] Admittedly, biblical scholars widely reject the Broome-Halperin hypothesis,[8] yet this does not mean that scholars do not view the sign-acts as puzzling. "Even those who reject specific psychological explanations struggle to explain what George Fohrer designated as the twelve 'sign-actions' of the prophet."[9]

The Sign-Acts and Ezekiel's Priestly Identity

In Margaret S. Odell's article that instigated the flurry of studies on Ezekiel's priestly identity, the sign-acts of Ezek 3:12–5:17 played a central role. Her delineation of the book's opening textual unit as encompassing all of Ezek 1–5 associates the sign-acts generally with Ezekiel's "call narrative," a feature she associates with other call narratives in the OT.[10] Yet what takes place in these chapters is not so much a narrative of call but what Odell describes as an initiation: "I propose to treat [Ezekiel's inaugural experience] as a prolonged process of transition from one role to another. Identified as a priest at the beginning of the narrative (1:2), Ezekiel assumes his role as a prophet at the beginning of chap. 6. In the intervening chapters, he undergoes a series of experiences that prepare him for this new role."[11] Though Odell aims to describe Ezekiel's relinquishment of his priestly role for a prophetic one, her discussion of his sign-acts and call narrative highlights significant conceptual overlap with the priestly ordination ritual of Lev 8–9. In fact, her assertion that "Ezekiel's inaugural experience is not a priestly ordination ritual"[12] feels disjointed from her utilization of secondary literature on ritual formation and her detailed correlations between Lev 8–9 and Ezek 1–5. She grounds this assertion in the claim that "Ezekiel cannot become invested in his role as a priest, *because he is not in the temple*" (emphasis added).[13] This claim will be challenged below in chapter 6, "A

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[7] Halperin, *Seeking Ezekiel,* 166 n.29, 229–30.

[8] See the survey in John J. Schmitt, "Psychoanalyzing Ezekiel," in *From Genesis to Apocalyptic Vision,* vol. 2 of *Psychology and the Bible: A New Way to Read the Scriptures,* ed. J. Harold Ellens and Wayne G. Rollins, Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 194–97.

[9] Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Ezekiel on Fanon's Couch: A Postcolonialist Dialogue with David Halperin's *Seeking Ezekiel,*" in *Peace and Justice Shall Embrace: Power and Theopolitics in the Bible, Essays in Honor of Millard Lind,* ed. Ted Grimsrud and Loren L. Johns (Scottdale, PA: Pandora, 1999), 127.

[10] Margaret S. Odell, "You Are What You Eat: Ezekiel and the Scroll," *JBL* 117, no. 2 (1998): 223; cf. her general discussion of unit delineation on pp. 229–234.

[11] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 235.

[12] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 236.

[13] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 237.

Visionary/Textual Temple for a Priest in Exile (Ezekiel 40–48)," and yet Odell seems to be aware of the difficulties of her claim. Two adjacent sentences show a seeming ambivalence: "Ezekiel appears to undergo a counterinitiation, a series of acts whereby *he relinquishes his priestly status*. The acts of eating the scroll, sitting in silence, and bearing guilt evoke memories, and thereby demonstrate the steps whereby *Ezekiel's identity as a priest is transformed*" (emphasis added).[14] Perhaps she sees sufficient difference between Ezekiel's priestly "status" and "identity" to warrant this claim. Still, suppose her objection about Ezekiel's insufficient proximity to the temple can be answered. In that case, very little in her analysis of the sign-acts suggests such a stark break in Ezekiel's vocational identity. Before considering other proposals in the flurry of studies, we'll turn to one that directly addresses this point in Odell's article.

While agreeing with Odell's analysis of Ezek 1–5 as a unified narrative of his call, Marvin A. Sweeney offers up a very different assessment relative to Ezekiel's priestly identity:

> [A] great many features of the book of Ezekiel are dependent upon the world view and practices of the Zadokite priesthood. Indeed, a close examination of these features demonstrate that Ezekiel did not give up his priestly identity for a prophetic role; instead, his prophetic role is an extension of his priestly identity under the influence of the very radically changed circumstances of Ezekiel's life in the Babylonian exile.[15]

Sweeney concedes parts of Odell's analysis—e.g., that Ezekiel's sign-acts mark him impure, that his role has been transformed—yet demonstrates just how surprising Odell's contention of outright priestly *relinquishment.* The binding of Ezekiel's tongue in 3:26 is connected with priestly work: "His dumbness also appears to be a priestly attribute in so far as priests remain entirely silent while offering holy sacrifice at the Temple altar."[16] Lying on his side and bearing the sin of the people is also highly symbolic for priestly work. Hayyim Angel traverses the sign-acts of Ezek 4 with similar sensitivity to priestly symbolism, particularly the liturgical and ritual role-playing priests play as boundary-crossers.[17] In sum, though Sweeney views Ezekiel as

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[14] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 237.

[15] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 129.

[16] Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 133. We will say more about this below.

[17] Hayyim Angel, "Ezekiel: Priest-Prophet," *JBQ* 39, no. 1 (2011): 39–40. See Richard D. Nelson, *Raising up a Faithful Priest: Community and Priesthood in Biblical Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 83–85, for the language of boundary crossing and Andrew S. Malone, *God's Mediators: A Biblical Theology of Priesthood,* New Studies in Biblical Theology 43 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 45–46, on priestly role-playing, also invoked below.

significantly limited vocationally speaking, his analysis of the sign-acts shows them, pace Odell, to underscore his ongoing priestly identity rather than undermine it.[18]

T.J. Betts appeals to Ezekiel's sign-acts in support of Ezekiel's priestly identity in three ways. First, he comments on Odell's proposal, following Sweeney in affirming Ezek 1–5 as a unified textual unit concerning Ezekiel's call to a distinctively *priestly*-prophetic role.[19] While essentially restating and employing Sweeney's modifications to Odell, specifically attending to the sin-bearing sign-act of 4:4–6,[20] Betts posits 2:8–3:3 as an additional sign-act supporting a priestly identity. While the visionary context of this unit distinguishes it from the latter acts considered below and thereby casts doubt on whether it is appropriately considered one of Ezekiel's sign-acts,[21] Betts views it as a priestly sign-act that symbolizes sacrifice, "likened to the priests' eating the sin offering and taking on the guilt of the people, absolving the guilt by the ingestion of the sacrifice,"[22] which further associates Ezekiel's call narrative with the priestly ordination of Lev 8–9. Second, Betts notes the theme of purity found in several of the sign-acts,[23] a priestly concern also pointed out by both Andrew Mein and Iain Duguid in their contributions to the flurry of literature.[24] This research will take up the importance of purity to Ezekiel's priestly identity below in chapter 4, "Purity and Impurity as Pressing Concerns for a Priest in Exile." Third, Betts treats sign-acts as one of Ezekiel's pedagogical methods, employed as part of his retooled, exilic priestly identity.[25] Duguid argues for something similar,[26] although Betts does so more exclusively in describing Ezekiel's priestly identity as now expressed in his

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[18] Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 133–34.

[19] T. J. Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest: A Custodian of Tôrâ,* StBibLit 74 (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2005), 53–57.

[20] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 61.

[21] Kelvin G. Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts: Rhetorical Nonverbal Communication,* JSOTSup 283 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 32, cites the visionary context as his ground for not including it with the other sign-acts.

[22] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 58; for the whole discussion of his proposed sacrificial interpretation, see pp.57–61.

[23] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 61–62.

[24] See Andrew Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 141–42; idem, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary, Character, and Anonymous Artist,* ed. J.C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 204–5; Iain M. Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place: Ezekiel's Contribution to the History of the Old Testament Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 55.

[25] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 121–24.

[26] Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place," 47–49, 51–52.

teaching of Torah. Thus for him, Ezekiel's sign-acts are *priestly* actions, although this research will take exception to Betts's eschewal of ritual in these passages.

While the other contributions to the literature flurry, for the most part, leave Ezekiel's sign-acts aside, Baruch J. Schwartz cites the bread baking sign-act of 4:9–17 as evidence Ezekiel no longer has a priestly identity. Though Odell viewed Ezekiel's objection in 4:14 as something of an exception to his priestly relinquishment,[27] Schwartz argues for the opposite: "YHWH's reply [to Ezekiel's horrified response in 4:14] is indicative of Ezekiel's own sad realization: such delicateness of habit is a thing of the past; all your priestly customs are obsolete."[28] This research will dissent from Schwartz's interpretation in chapter 4 below, but we already see something that will be illustrated throughout this project: Schwartz not only sees Ezekiel as only a *former* priest, he frequently invokes features that others see as evidence of an ongoing priestly identity as evidence for the contrary.

This chapter focuses on the sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17. While it recognizes that they have a communicative value, it nevertheless reads them chiefly as formative rituals in Ezekiel's vocational commission as a *priest*-prophet. As such, they fashion Ezekiel's priestly identity as it is practiced away from the traditional locus of priestly praxis, the Jerusalem temple and its altar, enabling him to embark on a distinctively *priestly* prophetic ministry to the exiles in Babylonia.

Sign-Acts in Prophetic Literature

Symbolic gestures or actions have long been associated with the OT prophets.[29] As a general phenomenon, there have been numerous interpretations proposed. Kelvin Friebel surveys five paradigms traditionally used to explain the purpose of prophetic sign-acts:

1. Sign-acts as inherently efficacious, creating a reality either due to magical overtones or to the power of the spoken word.
2. Sign-acts as prophetic drama which *express* reality (rather than create reality as view 1 suggests).

[27] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 247.

[28] Baruch J. Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel's Role in the History of the Israelite Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 70–71.

[29] For survey and bibliography, see K.G. Friebel, "Sign Acts," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets,* eds. Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 707–13; Paul A. Kruger, "Sign and Symbol: Theology of," in *NIDOTTE* 4:1224–28; V. H. Kooy, "Symbol," in *IDB* 4:474; Shalom M. Paul and S. David Sperling, "Prophets and Prophecy: In the Bible," *EncJud* 16:566–580; Edward Lipinski, "Signs and Symbols," *EncJud* 18:568–70.

3. Sign-acts as a sociological phenomenon, “acts of power” used to legitimate and authenticate a prophet’s status.
4. Sign-acts as a form of street theater, a way to attract attention through vivid actions.
5. Sign-acts as a type of rhetorical nonverbal communication used to persuade an audience of the prophet’s message.[30]

Though Friebel discusses ritual, he does not engage with more recent developments in ritual studies. Thus his analysis is understandably narrow. In his critique of paradigm 1, he focuses on what he calls “sympathetic magic ritual,” an approach that limits ritual to an action intended to manipulate reality.[31] In his explication of paradigm 5, he contrasts ritual with idiosyncratic actions: “Ritual (both religious and secular) action is often emblematic, stylized in performance, standardized in meaning, with that meaning being clearly understood by the participating culture-group, and performed only within the contexts of particular circumstances.”[32] Since sign-acts are individualistic, non-stereotypical, and frequently arising “out of particular exigencies of the moment to communicate messages,” he deems ritual to be an improper category due to ritual’s concern stereotypical, communal, and repeated action.[33]

The sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17 are indeed individual and idiosyncratic, but this does not preclude them from being ritual actions. On the one hand, these actions are repeatable. But on the other hand, their individual and idiosyncratic nature still serve a type of communicative goal, although to appreciate this, we must recognize that the knowledge gained by ritual is not entirely of the same order as non-verbal communication. Communication is not an inappropriate term to describe what happens with ritual, although we need to properly qualify the parameters of this communication.[34]

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[30] Kelvin Friebel, “A Hermeneutical Paradigm for Interpreting Prophetic Sign-Actions,” *Didaskalia* 12, no. 2 (2001): 29–38; idem, “Sign Acts,” 711–12. Note that Friebel ultimately espouses view 5.

[31] For definitions of magic and an attempt to attribute sign-acts to it via categories from speech-act theory, see Rodney R. Hutton, “Magic or Street-Theater: The Power of the Prophetic Word,” *ZAW* 107 (1995): 247–60.

[32] Friebel, *Jeremiah’s and Ezekiel’s Sign-Acts*, 59.

[33] Friebel, *Jeremiah’s and Ezekiel’s Sign-Acts,* 59.

[34] Note that W. D. Stacey, *Prophetic Drama in the Old Testament* (London: Epworth Press, 1990), 264–68, is critical of positions that emphasize communicative interpretations of sign-acts, yet does not explore the possibilities of ritual explanations even though he traverses some of the same paths of ritual theorists.

Sign-Acts, Theater, Ritual, and Knowledge

Priests vs. Prophets? Ritual vs. Communication?

At least since the time of Wellhausen, biblical interpreters have frequently pitted the priests against the prophets. The priests were thought to be traditionalists and legalists, content to reduce biblical religion to externals of law and ritual observance. In contrast, the prophets were preachers of an internal religion of the heart, not encumbered by externals and empty rituals.[35] This antagonism has been ably rejected in recent years, even by Protestant interpreters, even though many Protestants have often adopted Wellhausen's categories in their polemics against Roman Catholicism.[36] Yet a skeptical view of the priesthood and priestly ritual in particular still hovers in the thought of many.

Assuming a tension between priestly ritual and prophetic teaching, sign-acts in the prophets have often been distanced from ritual. Sign-acts are recurrently treated predominantly as a "visual aid" used to illustrate prophetic preaching to push back against viewing them as either a form of sympathetic magic or of ritual actions working *ex opera operata* ("from the work performed"). Usually, this latter position is a concern of Protestant interpreters; e.g., Horace Hummel, writing from a Lutheran perspective, prefers the label "action prophecies," which he describes as "a prophecy that is not verbalized (at least not initially), but rather is acted out, yet with the same predictive force as the prophet's verbalized sermons."[37] Latent in this approach, however, is a dichotomy between thought and action, one that has been challenged by recent ritual theorists and epistemologists, as will be considered below.

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[35] For a critical discussion of the history of this approach, see Ziony Zevit, "The Prophet versus Priest Antagonism Hypothesis: Its History and Origin," in *The Priests in the Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets,* eds. Lester L. Grabbe and Alice Ogden Bellis, JSOTSup 408 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 189–217. See too Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 75–100.

[36] For specifically Protestant rejections of this antagonism, see Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament,* trans. J. A. Baker, OTL (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1961), 1:392–436; William R. Millar, *Priesthood in Ancient Israel,* Understanding Biblical Themes (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001); Malone, *God's Mediators*; Edward T. Welch, *Created to Draw Near: Our Life as God's Royal Priests* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020); David S. Schrock, *The Royal Priesthood and the Glory of God,* Short Studies in Biblical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022); T. Desmond Alexander, *Face to Face With God: A Biblical Theology of Christ as Priest and Mediator,* Essential Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2022).

[37] Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* Concordia Commentary (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2005), 149. Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel,* NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 93, argues that the term "visual aid" is too weak a description of this phenomenon and takes some tentative steps toward a more holistic approach by calling them "affective aids."

Definition(s) of Ritual

One significant problem for interpreters is the underappreciated difficulty of defining the term "ritual." Most people believe they know what ritual is yet falter when trying to describe its constituent features. There are several reasons for this. First, from an emic perspective, positing equivalences to the word ritual in other languages (modern or ancient) is fraught with difficulty. Thus we see that ritual is itself a scholarly construct.[38] Second, from an etic perspective, definitions among theorists abound because ritual definitions are not the same as ritual theories.[39] There are larger taxonomical and familial issues at play in the analysis of rituals than can be settled with a single definition. Ronald Grimes explains:

> Events cannot be usefully understood using only two options: "ritual" or "not ritual." Rather, actions display *degrees* of ritualization. Actions are not binary, either ritual or not-ritual. Instead, there is a continuum, and events are more or less ritualized, depending on the qualities that appear in them . . . . You may wish to argue that only one or two (for instance, prescription and repetition or repetition and sacredness) are definitive of ritual. To do so would be to argue, at least implicitly, with other scholars who choose to treat other qualities as definitive. These are choices, not inevitabilities, so determining which is the definitive quality is neither a moral nor a metaphysical matter, only a practical one.[40]

Thus when analyzing Ezekiel's sign-acts, readers must be aware of the complexity of defining ritual before excising the sign-acts from their conceptual domain.

Though it may seem as though this chapter banters with defining *everything* as ritual (thereby viewing *nothing* as ritual), a broader phenomenological approach appears to hold the most merit for proffering the definition of ritual used here. In my estimation, the following two definitions of ritual are most suitable. Grimes offers an incredibly concise definition of ritual: "Ritual is embodied, condensed, and prescribed enactment."[41] A complementary, though more descriptive definition is posed by Jan Platvoet (followed by Gerald Klingbeil):

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[38] Michael Strausberg et al., "'Ritual': A Lexicographic Survey of Some Related Terms from an Emic Perspective," in *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts,* eds. Jens Kreinath, Jan Snoek, and Michael Strausberg, SHR 114/1 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 51–98.

[39] Ronald L. Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 189. Grimes has catalogued dozens of definitions of ritual in an appendix to this volume available online: "Appendixes for *The Craft of Ritual Studies*," http://oxrit.twohornedbull.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/grimes-craft-appendixes. pdf. See too Gerald A. Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap: Ritual and Ritual Texts in the Bible, BBRSup* 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 14–18; Barry Stephenson, *Ritual: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 70–85.

[40] Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies,* 193–94.

[41] Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies,* 195.

> [Ritual is] that ordered sequence of stylized social behavior that may be distinguished from ordinary interaction by its alerting qualities which enable it to focus the attention of its audiences—its congregation as well as the wider public—onto itself and cause them to perceive it as a special event, performed at a special place and/or time, for a special occasion and/or with a special message.[42]

Admittedly the Platvoet/Klingbeil definition is difficult to test (a criticism leveled by Grimes himself[43]), and the Grimes definition is a bit open-ended (as noted by Klingbeil[44]). Nevertheless, these definitions accommodate ritual analysis of the sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17 without ignoring any *rhetorical and non-verbal communicative* elements the sign-acts also contain.[45]

Ritual and Communicative/Formative Function

Even if one wishes to label sign-acts as illustrations or dramatizations of an underlying prophetic message, recent work in performance criticism has shown that performance itself is not far removed from ritual. In his analysis of the relationship between theatrical performances (drama) and rituals observed by anthropologists, Richard Schechner breaks down the divide by positing a perspectival approach: "No performance is pure efficacy or pure entertainment. The matter is complicated because one can look at specific performances from several vantages; changing perspectives changes classification."[46] What is more, there is a continuum upon which both efficacy/ritual and entertainment/theater fall, a continuum which Schechner labels "performance."[47] Along this continuum, movement happens in every act of ritual or performance of a theatrically scripted message:

> The move from ritual to theater happens when a participating audience fragments into a collection of people who attend because the show is advertised, who pay admission, who evaluate what they are going to see before, during, and after seeing it. The move from theater to ritual happens when the audience is transformed from a collection of separate

[42] Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap,* 18.

[43] Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies,* 190.

[44] Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 16.

[45] The italicized phrase is from Friebel, although note that he posits a binary approach: either the sign-acts are ritual, or they are rhetorical non-verbal communication. His definition of ritual, however, unnecessarily bifurcates between conventional and individualistic actions. Since the sign-acts are individualistic or idiosyncratic, he asserts that they cannot be ritualistic. See Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts*, 57–61.

[46] Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory,* rev. and enl. ed., Routledge Classics (London: Routledge, 2003), 130.

[47] Carolyn J. Sharp, *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible,* ISBL (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 127, similarly invokes the term "performance" for Ezekiel's sign-acts. Cf. Johanna Erzberger, "Prophetic Sign Acts as Performances," in *Jeremiah Invented: Constructions and Deconstructions of Jeremiah,* ed. Else K. Holt and Carolyn J. Sharp, LHBOTS 595 (T&T Clark, 2016), 104–116.

> individuals into a group or congregation of participants. These polar tendencies are present in all performances.[48]

Thus it should be noted that a decision to read Ezekiel's sign-acts as rituals does not undermine the role sign-acts play in communicating prophetic preaching. Ritual transforms participants, as does proclamation. However, how thought and action fit together is not always fully understood or appreciated.

One reason for suspicion of ritual among theologians has to do with how ritual has been studied and described. Catherine Bell has noted that "[t]heoretical descriptions of ritual generally regard it as action and thus automatically distinguish it from the conceptual aspects of religion, such as beliefs, symbols, and myths."[49] This being the case, it is no surprise that in modernity, many who argue that truth is chiefly arrived at via cognition recurrently view ritual as somehow *less than* communication.

Yet there are two problems with this approach to ritual. First, a modernistic approach to knowledge as cognition is not self-evident. While epistemologists note that knowledge is propositional, that does not make it merely or exclusively propositional. Furthermore, it is not only naïve to think that only direct speech has the ability to convey true propositions; it is misguided to think that propositions are the entirety of communication or even revelation. Kevin J. Vanhoozer explains:

> It is tempting to reduce the communicative act to its propositional content alone. Yet such an identification of divine discourse with propositional content is too hasty and reductionist, for it omits two other important aspects of the communicative action, namely, the illocutionary (what is done) and the perlocutionary (what is effected) . . . . The ministry of the Word involves more than communicating a few truths; it involves transmitting a whole way of thinking and experiencing.[50]

Second, knowledge and bodily action cannot be starkly divided. It is thus important to ask not simply what a given ritual teaches but also (if not primarily) how that ritual forms a knower.

An important feature that accompanies some ritual instructions in the OT is the concluding tag: "And/thus you will know that."[51] Of note are the directions for Sukkot. The

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[48] Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 157.

[49] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992), 19.

[50] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 68, 74.

[51] For full discussion of the recognition formula, see John F. Evans, *You Shall Know that I am Yahweh: An Inner-Biblical Interpretation of Ezekiel's Recognition Formula¸ BBRSup* 25 (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2019).

account, found in Lev 23:33–43, ends as follows: "You shall dwell in booths for seven days. Every native in Israel shall dwell in booths. So that your generations might know [למען ידעו] that in booths I made the sons of Israel dwell when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am YHWH your God (Lev 23:42–43)." Dru Johnson rightly identifies the import of this tag in this context: "The plain meaning of this passage presents modern readers with a problem: "Why can the generations *not* know that 'Israel lived in booths' merely by telling them?"[52] It is significant that the telic particle למען is used here, providing the apodosis to the contingency: "thus" or "in order that."[53] Johnson continues:

> Does not the reading of the command itself given them the very knowledge being described? If we take a strictly propositional view of knowing, we could say that Israel is meant to know an historical fact (e.g., "The table is brown," "Israel lived in booths," etc.). The epistemological goal is then to show what Israel knew (i.e., the fact) and how she could justify that knowledge. Knowledge—under a very common philosophical view—is knowing the fact itself ("Israel lived in booths") and showing how this could be true, or at least, coherent . . . . Nevertheless, for Leviticus the logical gap between what Israel's generations know and what they need to discern is not bridged by schemes of propositional justification or even the testimony of elders. That logical gap is bridged by ritualized practice that shapes the knower to recognize and subsequently discern what is significant about the historical reality.[54]

Thus Johnson concludes: "Israel does not need to know a fact; rather, she must embody the practice of Sukkot to discern the significance of her own historical realities (i.e., 'Israel was made to live in booths.')."[55]

While not every ritual instruction in the OT is marked with such an explicit epistemological tag, Johnson is certainly on the right track. Drawing Bell's theoretical-anthropological analysis into biblical-theological discourse, Johnson has enabled us to see the role that ritual plays in forming knowers. Thus the "priests vs. prophets" mentality, and especially the "ritual vs. teaching" dichotomy, both of which have already been questioned by biblical scholars as noted above, are shown to be wrong-headed. With this now in mind, we are able to turn to the sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17 and consider how they might play an important role not simply in illustrating the coming fate of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians but in

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[52] Dru Johnson, *Knowledge by Ritual: A Biblical Prolegomena to Sacramental Theology,* Journal of Theological Interpretation Supplement 13 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 152.

[53] *IBHS,* 511.

[54] Johnson, *Knowledge by Ritual,* 153.

[55] Johnson, *Knowledge by Ritual,* 153.

forming Ezekiel as a *priest*-prophet of the exile and enabling him to see “his prophetic role [as] an extension of his priestly identity under the influence of the very radically changes circumstances of Ezekiel’s life in the Babylonian exile.”[56] Ezekiel’s prophetic commission does not minimize his interest in ritual concerns but employs those very concerns in his work as a watchman.

Delineation of Texts

Discussion of the initial series of sign-acts in Ezekiel is often limited to 4:1–5:17. This delineation is due to content, not formal structural concerns. In reality, the sign-acts serve as part of Ezekiel’s commission, the beginning of which is marked by the divine word formula (ויהי דבר־יהוה אלי לאמר “The word of the Lord came to me, saying”) which initiates the oracle in 3:16. The following oracle begins with the divine word formula in 6:1, thereby delineating 3:16–5:17 as a formal unit of text.[57]

Having said this, 3:16–5:17 should not be read as detached from the preceding material. Form- and redaction-critical approaches tend to distinguish 1:1–3:15 from 3:16–5:17 due to the perception that each was crafted from a different genre. But Odell has argued for the unity of these two blocks of text on the grounds that prophetic *literature* regularly combines genres into single, coherent accounts. Building on the work of Sweeney and Ellen Davis, she concludes: “In the case of Ezek 1:1–3:15 and 3:16–5:17, I would suggest that the genres of call narrative and report of symbolic action have been combined into an extended, coherent composition that focuses on Ezekiel’s inaugural experience.”[58] Thus what we find in 3:16–5:17 is dependent upon 1:1–3:15 for its literary context and interpretation.[59]

Within the textual block of 3:16–5:17, sub-units are delineated using both form and content[60]:

[56] Sweeney, “Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet,” 127.

[57] Marvin A. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary,* Reading the Old Testament (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 35.

[58] Odell, “You Are What You Eat,” 230.

[59] For a full discussion of this delineation, see Odell, “You Are What You Eat,” 229–34.

[60] For discussion and delineation, see Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 35–42; Ronald M. Hals, *Ezekiel,* FOTL 19 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 22–36; Henry Van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies in Ezekiel” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1978), 139, 175.

A. 3:16–21
   1. Form: Divine word formula
   2. Content: Watchman commission
B. 3:22–27
   1. Form: Narrative alternation between 3rd and 1st person deixis (3:22–24) introduces the subunit
   2. Content: New location, "the valley" (הבקעה); theophany; introduction of muteness motif
C. 4:1–8
   1. Form: Sign-act introduced with ואתה ("and you")
   2. Content: Creation of Jerusalem siege model; actions performed with regard to the model[61]
D. 4:9–17
   1. Form: Sign-act introduced with ואתה ("and you")
   2. Content: Preparation of siege rations and purity concern
E. 5:1–17
   1. Form: Sign-act introduced with ואתה ("and you"); sign-act proper found in vv. 1–4; explanation of sign-act delineated by the initial messenger formula (כה אמר אדני יהוה "thus says the LORD") in 5:5[62]
   2. Content: Hair manipulation

While commentators debate about the finer delineation of units (e.g., Daniel Block distinguishes 4:12–15 as a separate sign-act due to its focus on the experience of exile vis-à-vis the siege experience[63]), such analysis does not invalidate the outline proposed above. Rather than viewing this kind of distinction as a wholly separate sign-act, they seem to function as individual rites in the larger sign-act ritual. Moreover, as this chapter is concerned with the sign-acts, our analysis only concerns sections B–E, although reference to section A will be made due to its overtone of priestly ordination.

While one might object to the decision to consider the sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17 in isolation from other sign-acts in Ezekiel or other prophetic books (e.g., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Zechariah), there are reasons for considering these chapters in isolation. Not only does Ezekiel make more use of the sign-acts than Jeremiah, his contemporary,[64] the function of these

[61] Note that ואתה occurs again in 4:3, but content precludes this from formally delineating a separate sign-act. The term מצור ("siege") unifies this sub-unit, occurring in vv. 2, 3, 7, and 8.

[62] Subsequent messenger formulae in vv. 7 and 8 are marked as syntactically subordinate to v. 5 via לכן ("therefore") and thus do not constitute new sub-units.

[63] Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24,* NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 185. So too Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 162.

[64] Hei Yin Yip, *Ezekiel's Message of Hope and Restoration: Redaction-Critical Study of Ezekiel 1–7,* BZAW 532 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2021), 99.

sign-acts within the material surveying Ezekiel's commission gives them a unique, vocational significant role not shared by other sign-acts in the book of Ezekiel. What is more, a priestly character is not as evident in the other prophetical books with sign-acts, not even in Jeremiah and Zechariah, where such a character might be expected. Additionally, some of the sign-acts outside Ezek 3:22–5:17 serve merely as aural and visual enhancements to the delivery of a message (e.g., clapping hands and crying "Ah!" [Ezek 6:11–12]; groaning [Ezek 21:6–7]), and others as a dramatic, analogic performance of an action that will be undertaken by the prophet's audience at a future time (e.g., taking a bag and going into exile [Ezek 12:1–16]; eating food in an anxious manner [Ezek 12:17–18]; etc.). While there is certainly some overlap with the sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17, this overlap does not preclude making finer distinctions and seeing the sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17 as playing a unique role in Ezekiel's expression of his priestly identity.

An Audience for the Sign-Acts?

Having delineated the units of Ezek 3:22–5:17, a word must be said about the audience. Interpreters who read the sign-acts as primarily communicative or illustrative in nature believe these acts to have been witnessed by an audience of Ezekiel's fellow exiles. Fundamental to their position is the public nature and intention of the performance. While observability and a public nature to the sign-acts are not irreconcilable with a ritual reading of these acts, it is worth considering to what degree they are actually presented as public.[65]

On the one hand, some indicators seem to refer to witnesses or other participants and might thereby present 3:22–5:17 as more public in nature. In 3:25, 3pl forms/suffixes are used for the act of binding Ezekiel: "And you, O son of man, look—*they* will place (נתנו) cords upon you and *they* will bind you (ואסרוך) with them, so that you will not go out in *their* midst (בתוכם)." These are conceivably references to the audience observing and participating in these acts. In 4:3, Ezekiel's work of besieging the model of Jerusalem is said to be "a sign for the house of Israel" (אות היא לבית ישׂראל), suggesting that the house of Israel would be present in this besieging

[65] As an important methodological note, Richard Benton draws attention to the problem of the word "audience" as it is used in regard to the sign-acts. Audience is often limited to the live audience of Ezekiel's day with insufficient attention paid to the literary audience assumed by the textualized form of Ezekiel as a book. See Richard Benton, "Narrator, Audience, and the Sign-Acts of Ezekiel 3–5," in *Studies in the Old Testament,* vol. 1 of *Festschrift in Honor of Professor Paul Nadim Tarazi,* ed. Nicolae Roddy, Bible in the Christian Orthodox Tradition (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2013), 135–40, 162–64.

sign-act.[66] Finally, in 4:12, Ezekiel is told to bake the loaf of barley in their sight (lit: before their eyes, תעגנה לעיניהם). Friebel cites these examples as proof of the publically witnessed nature of these acts.[67]

On the other hand, these features do not demand a public, communicative nature to these acts. The 3pl forms in 3:25, though active Qals are quite naturally translated as passive forms, as is regularly observed by grammarians, thereby leaving the subject of the verbs undisclosed.[68] Even if one assumes that this binding action is done (whether literally or figuratively) by "the people" (Representatives of the exiles? A mob of exiles?), this does not require positing them as an "audience" of his bound state. Though the 3pl suffixed preposition בתוכם does lend credence to retaining the active voice of the verbs, Hummel overstates things when he claims that passive translations constitute a "clash."[69] The identity of the subjects has been left ambiguous because *they* are not the focus of the event, the *bound state itself* is. Stating that the binding prevents Ezekiel from going out בתוכם does not equate the "them" with the subjects of the binding act. Ezekiel has already been בתוכם in 2:5 (referring to "the sons/descendants" [הבנים] in 2:4) and in 3:15 (referring to "the exiles" [הגולה, interestingly a feminine noun, collectively understood by the 3mp suffix on בתוכם]). What is in view is Ezekiel's inability to be בתוכם which hardly posits *them* as an audience to this bound state.

Concerning 4:3, that the siege model is called an אות היא לבית ישׂראל does not require that the house of Israel literally observe the model and Ezekiel's attending actions.[70] After all, the ל prefix regularly functions as a specifying particle. Thus it can be translated as "a sign *concerning*

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[66] Stacey, *Prophetic Drama,* 181, believes this to be the case: "There is no mention of an audience, but there is the comment at the end of v. 3 that this is a sign for the house of Israel. If, as seems likely, it is essential to the meaning of the word *ʾôṯ* that the deed be visible, then it must have been public." This position will be critiqued below.

[67] Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts,* 26. Friebel regularly discusses what the audience would have thought about the sign-acts, devoting considerable attention to their purported reactions in his rhetorical analysis and conclusion sections (cf. pp. 227–32, 243–47, 250–54).

[68] *IBHS*, 376 (what Bruce K. Waltke and Michael P. O'Connor label "pseudo-passive"); *GKC,* 460; *Joüon,* 543–44 (admittedly rare in biblical Hebrew, though common in Mishnaic Hebrew and Aramaic; see 543, n.6). The feature is also present in Modern Hebrew; see Ruth A. Berman, "The Case of an (S)VO Language: Subjectless Constructions in Modern Hebrew," *Language* 56, no. 4 (1980): 775. The ESV translates these verbs as passive, though this is not common among English translations. Note too the passive translations of Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24,* trans. Ronald E. Clements, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979), 147; and of Paul M. Joyce, *Ezekiel: A Commentary*, LHBOTS 482 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2009), 82.

[69] Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 108.

[70] Stacey, *Prophetic Drama,* 181,

the house of Israel."[71] The one who observes and processes this sign would then be Ezekiel himself.

With regard to 4:12, the baking of the barley loaf over human dung "in their sight" (תעגנה לעיניהם) does indicate a public exhibition of this action. Yet, it is striking that it is only the baking that is done publicly, not any of the other actions connected to the siege diet, especially not the eating of this loaf which is done in connection with Ezekiel's act of laying on his side (4:9b; cf. vv. 4–8). Though YHWH's word in 4:13 does interpret the significance of this unclean fuel to those living in exile, two things stand out. First, 4:13 introduces YHWH's speech simply with ויאמר יהוה "And YHWH said." This is not a full messenger formula and thus, as noted by Hummel, "gives the verse more the character of a solemn pronouncement *than of another communication* to the prophet *which he*, in turn, *should pass on to the people*" (emphasis added).[72] Any implications of this sign-act for the exiles are not actually said to them. Second, as 4:14–15 indicates, Ezekiel never actually used human dung to cook the loaf; God honored Ezekiel's request to avoid the impurity causing fuel. Thus, the supposed audience of this sign-act never actually witnessed anything related to its purported message. Ezekiel simply baked bread in public over cow dung with the implication that the sons of Israel would eat their bread by weight and with anxiety and that YHWH would cut off their food supply. Moshe Greenberg seeks to preserve the intent of 4:12–13 even in 4:15, stating: "If even after God's allowance, the prophet's act was to carry its original meaning, it must be supposed that—for ritual reasons?—priests were known not to use animal dung as fuel."[73] But this is precisely what is in question. We know very little about cooking praxis in ancient Israel and Judah.[74] Moreover, the fuel shift appears to mark a changed intention for the sign-act. The text describes an aborted sign-act about consuming impure food that is then replaced by a sign-act describing the lack of food for those in

[71] Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 113; *IBHS,* 206–7, cf. 210–11. Unfortunately, אות + ל constructions do not occur with sufficient regularity to be dogmatic, and there are no cases where אות + ל *must* be translated as a ל of specification, although Ps 86:17, which reads אות לטובה "a sign *of* goodness" comes closest. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 163, translates in this way.

[72] Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 144.

[73] Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel, 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 22 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1983), 108.

[74] Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel,* LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 64. Cf. Nathan MacDonald, *What Did the Ancient Israelites Eat?: Diet in Biblical Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 21; Robert I. Curtis, *Ancient Food Technology,* Technology and Change in History 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 205–10.

Jerusalem.[75] And if the meaning of the sign-act pivots with the move toward a new fuel, then the supposed communication of information to an audience of exiles via this act is further weakened. In sum: the practice of one aspect of this sign-act לעיניהם ("in their sight") is not a compelling ground for viewing the essence of this act as public and communicative to Ezekiel's contemporaries.

To conclude this section, two points bear emphasis. First, since there is no overwhelming evidence that the sign-acts in 3:22–5:17 were public performances whose practice was aimed at communication to Ezekiel's peers, utilization of the category "formative rituals of priestly identity" is well within the bounds of the textual evidence. Second, even if the preceding argument has not convinced readers to view these sign-acts as privately practiced, it does not follow that visible performance of these acts equals an exclusively public, strictly communicative intent. Whether anyone witnessed his sign-acts or not, this does not necessitate that the sign-acts of 3:22–5:17 were intended (primarily) for them.[76] Not every ritual is performed wholly hidden from those who are not ritual participants. The mere observance of a ritual does not make the observer a true participant.

Analysis of Texts

Ezekiel 3:22–27 (Section B)

After having stood in the presence of the כבוד־יהוה (usually translated "Glory of YHWH"; see discussion in chapter 5), a formal call describing Ezekiel's impending ministry is issued in 2:3–3:11. The theophanic manifestation of the כבוד־יהוה is primarily associated with priestly tradition which, when coupled with reference to Ezekiel's "thirtieth year" in 1:1, buttresses an interpretation of what follows through priestly vocational categories.[77] Furthermore, the textual block in 3:16–5:17 falls on the heels of Ezekiel's seven days of silence in 3:15, a period paralleling the seven-day waiting period during the priestly ordination ritual of Lev 8–9

[75] Note: This conclusion undergirds the complete analysis of section D below.

[76] Seeing as how these were most likely performed entirely in the privacy of his house, it would seem that at least his wife and any other members of his household might have witnessed them. Others *may* also have visited him, though this is not explicitly stated.

[77] See John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel,* BJSUCSD 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 79–93; Pieter de Vries, *The Kābôd of YHWH in the Old Testament: With Particular Reference to the Book of Ezekiel,* SSN 65 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 118–36; Elizabeth Keck, "The Glory of Yahweh in Ezekiel and the Pre-Tabernacle Wilderness," *JSOT* 37, no. 2 (2012): 201–218.

(specifically Lev 8:33).[78] His awestruck/appalled (from √שׁמם) silence is fitting for a priest and prepares for the "silence" of his dumbness that will be instituted 3:26.

In 3:22, Ezekiel is sent out to the valley (הבקעה), where he again stands before the כבוד־יהוה. In Ezek 8:4, the prophet will refer to the theophany of 8–11 as "just like" the vision he saw in 3:22–23 (כמראה אשׁר ראיתי בבקעה), and in Ezek 37:1–2, the Spirit of YHWH will meet him again in the famous "valley of dry bones."[79] In both later encounters, priestly concerns (the temple, purity) will dominate the scenes.[80]

The chief characteristics of section B are Ezekiel's bondage with cords (עבותים) and his dumbness. Interpreters are quick to connect Ezekiel's bondage with the captivity of the exiles, and yet the use of עבותים is important. Odell explains:

> Except in the Samson narratives, such cords are not associated with imprisonment. . . . In fact, the predominant usage of this noun is in the Priestly literature, where עֲבוֹתִים are the gold cords that are used to bind the ephod and breastplate of judgment on the high priest (Exod 28:14, 22, 24, 25; 39:15, 17, 18). Since the breastplate of judgment contains stones of remembrance on which are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes, then it is conceivable that these cords symbolically bind the people to the priest and keep them in his memory as he performs his duties.[81]

Thus what is in view is not simply the fact of captivity, but that Ezekiel *as a priest* is "captive"—i.e., symbolically and representationally linked—to the people. The specific mention of עבותים as the agents of his binding echoes priestly literature and forges this connection. Hei Yin Yip explains: "[I]n 3:25 the ropes (עבותים) that bind Ezekiel symbolizes [sic] the reinstatement of his priestly role. For these reasons, the reference in 4:8 to YHWH placing עבותים may also be interpreted as divine enablement of Ezekiel to carry out his priestly role in certain dimensions, namely the iniquity-bearing on behalf of the Israelites."[82] The title Ezekiel possesses throughout the book, Son of Man (בן־אדם), bolsters this priestly/representational image. This title rightly

[78] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 236, 238.

[79] For the relationship between the Spirit of YHWH and the Glory of YHWH, see Pieter de Vries, "The Relationship between the Glory of YHWH and the Spirit of YHWH in the Book of Ezekiel—Part One," *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 5 (2013): 109–27.

[80] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 139; idem, "The Destruction of Jerusalem as Purification in Ezekiel 8–11," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 144–55.

[81] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 246; cf. Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 55–56.

[82] Yip, *Ezekiel's Message of Hope and Restoration*, 125–26.

identifies Ezekiel as a member of the human race but does more: it marks him out as a representative man, a title that perfectly captures the station of the priest.[83]

Ezekiel's dumbness/silence further echoes priestly concerns, especially with the general practice of ritual in the sanctuary. Though the lexeme הס "silence" is not found here, the concept of silence is latent throughout. When הס is used in Scripture in association with God, it is a significant posture of respecting God's holiness. Habakkuk 2:20 is noteworthy: "As for YHWH, he is in his holy temple; silence [הס] before him, O totality of the earth [כל־הארץ]!" (cf. Neh 8:11; Zeph 1:7; Zech 2:17). Yehezkel Kaufmann has noted especially that sacral priestly duties in the temple were marked by the silence of the temple cult: "The priestly temple is the kingdom of silence. . . . P makes no reference to the spoken word in describing temple rites. All the various acts of the priest are performed in silence. . . . This silence is an intuitive expression of the priestly desire to fashion a non-pagan cult. . . . The silence of the temple cult also served to heighten the awe of holiness."[84] Though Kaufmann's suggestion that this silence is an intentional effort to "fashion a non-pagan cult" has been criticized, he has shown the tight connection that lies between silence and the priestly vocation. Though silence may seem uncharacteristic for a prophet, silence is a standard and easily recognized characteristic for an altar priest.[85]

Though in 3:26 YHWH makes Ezekiel's tongue cleave to his palate (ולשונך אדביק אל־חכך) specifically so that he will be dumb (ונאלמת) and unable to reprove them as an איש מוכיח (legal intercessor[86]), this does not limit the silence to this (non) communicative function. Gregory Yuri Glazov explains:

> As the watchman incurs bloodguilt by failure to reprove, Ezekiel's silence with regard to being an *ʾîš môkîaḥ* against the people entails that he should come to bear their sins and suffer on their account. This is of course the meaning of his suffering in 24.16–24 as well as in 4.4–8 which explicitly links the immobilization announced in 3.25 to a 'sin bearing'

[83] For support of this representational aspect, see C. Hassell Bullock, "Ezekiel, Bridge Between the Testaments," *JETS* 25, no. 1 (1982): 28; Gerard Van Groningen, *Messianic Revelation in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990), 739–40. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 31, focuses on this representational aspect as a distinctively *priestly* feature.

[84] Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile,* trans. Moshe Greenberg (Jerusalem: Sefer Ve Sefel Publishing, 2003), 303–4.

[85] See Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1995; repr., Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 148–152; idem, "Between Voice and Silence: The Relationship Between Prayer and Temple Cult," *JBL* 115, no. 1 (1996): 17–30. Though see the objection of Stephen L. Cook, "The Speechless Suppression of Grief in Ezekiel 24:15–27: The Death of Ezekiel's Wife and the Prophet's Abnormal Response," in *Thus Says the Lord: Essays on the Former and Latter Prophets in Honor of Robert R. Wilson,* ed. John J. Ahn and Stephen L Cook, LHBOTS 501 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2009), 231–32, who argues that this is—ironically—itself an argument from silence.

[86] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 156–7.

and thereby 'atoning' confinement reminiscent of the one worked once by Moses (cf. Deut. 9.13–21, 22–29).[87]

We will say more about the language of atonement with regard to section C (4:1–8), but suffice it to say, 3:26 invokes a broader set of implications than merely withholding intercessory speech.[88]

In sum, section B, the first sign-act, begins the ritual formation of Ezekiel for his distinctively *priestly*-prophetic work by addressing him as a representative for humanity (a בן־אדם), binding him with materials (עבותים) used elsewhere in priestly literature to symbolically bind the people to their priest via the breastplate of judgment (חשן משפט; Exod 28:13–29, 39:8–21), and causing him to observe silence as would the priests when entering the sanctuary to mediate between God and his people. Ezekiel is a prophet but begins his prophetic work with a priestly-like ordination ritual that forms him into a unique kind of prophet, a *priest*-prophet.[89]

Ezekiel 4:1–8 (Section C)

As noted above, this unit is often delineated into separate sign-acts. First, besieging the siege model (4:1–3), and second, Ezekiel's laying on his side (4:4–8). Yet viewing this as a single ritual complex with two separate rites makes the best sense of the repetition of מצור ("siege") in vv. 2, 3, 7, and 8. Two features of this sign-act reverberate with priestly and ritual concerns and will be considered.

First, Ezekiel is to construct a model of Jerusalem in his house (where he is currently bound and mute; so 3:25b) and surround it with model siege implements. Ezekiel 4:2 lists several items: a דיק (a siege wall for observing the siege and preventing people in the city from escaping), a סללה (a mound or ramp piled against the city wall that would enable siege engines better access for undermining the walls), מחנות (camps for the soldiers besieging the city), and כרים (battering rams which would climb the ramp and strike the walls with a heavy, blunt ram,

[87] Gregory Yuri Glazov, *The Bridling of the Tongue and the Opening of the Mouth in Biblical Prophecy,* JSOTSup 311 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 273.

[88] For a full discussion of the way in which Ezekiel does not function as an intercessor, see Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, "Ezekiel: A Compromised Prophet in Reduced Circumstances," in *Constructs of Prophecy in the Former and Latter Prophets and Other Texts,* ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Martti Nissinen, ANEM 4 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 175–95; cf. Robert R. Wilson, "An Interpretation of Ezekiel's Dumbness," *VT* 22, no. 1 (1972): 91–104.

[89] See Pieter de Vries, "Ezekiel: Prophet of the Name and Glory of YHWH—the Character of His Book and Several of Its Main Themes," *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 4 (2012), 100.

and also serve as a platform for archers).[90] Ezekiel himself is to set his face (והכינתה את־פניך אליה) toward "it."[91] Ezekiel hereby plays the role of YHWH,[92] besieging the city through the Babylonians, the human agent of his punishment.

What is peculiar, however, is the instruction in 4:3, "And as for you, take an iron griddle [מחבת ברזל] and set it [ונתתה אותה] as a wall of iron [קית ברזל] between you and between the city." A מחבת is a type of iron plate used in cooking, attested only five times in the OT. The four occurrences outside Ezekiel fall exclusively in the domain of the sacrificial system of the tabernacle/temple. The three occurrences in Leviticus describe regulations for preparing the מנחה ("grain-offering") using a מחבת ("griddle"). In 2:5, the type of flour to be used on the מחבת is specified. In 6:21 [MT 6:14], the priests are instructed to use a מחבת in preparing their own grain offerings. And in 7:9, grain offerings baked on a מחבת belong to the priests who offer them up.

In 1 Chr 23:29, the word מחבת occurs in a list of duties belonging to the Levites. Since it appears to fall in the middle of a list of foodstuffs, the word מחבת is frequently translated as a metonymy for the goods baked on it: "baked offering" or "griddle cakes."[93] It is possible, however, to view this as a reference to the griddle itself, thereby identifying this particular vessel as peculiar to the temple. In 1 Chr 23:29, the following items are certainly foodstuffs: לחם המערכת "showbread," סלת למנחה "flour for the grain offering," and רקיקי המצות "wafers of the unleavened bread." It is almost certain that מרבכת, a Hophal participle from √רבך ("to mix"), is also a food item, although one might be able to construe this as a mixing utensil or bowl. (Admittedly, the passive stem makes this an unlikely reading.) But the final term, כל־משׂורה ומדה "every measure of quantity or size" (ESV, cf. Ralph Kline[94]), refers to utensils. If the מחבת refers to the griddle itself, then the Chronicler notes that the Levites pay special attention to this item as a cooking

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[90] For surveys, see Mark J. Fretz, "Weapons and Implements of Warfare," *ABD* 6:894; Michael G. Hasel, "War, Methods, Tactics, Weapons of (Bronze Age Through Persian Period)," *NIDB* 5:808–10; Kyle H. Keimer, "Siege/s," *Encyclopedia of Material Culture in the Biblical World: A New Biblisches Reallexicon*, ed. Angelika Berlejung (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022), 869–79; Boyd Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament: The Organization, Weapons, and Tactics of Ancient Near Eastern Armies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2013), 234, 266. For a treatment of Bronze Age siege warfare, still useful for studying the Iron Age, see Aaron A. Burke, *Walled Up to Heaven: The Evolution of Middle Bronze Age Fortification Strategies in the Levant,* Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant 4 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 31–41

[91] The 3fs object suffix (אליה) likely refers to the city model itself (cf. 4:7).

[92] Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 181: "Ezekiel personates Yahweh."

[93] E.g., the following translate מחבת as "baked offering": Ralph W. Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary,* Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 444, 457; Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary,* OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 405, 420. Roddy Braun, *1 Chronicles,* WBC 14 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986), 229–30, translates מחבת as "griddle cakes."

[94] Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 444.

implement. If it is a metonymy for the baked goods themselves, it still demonstrates that the מחבת is known primarily for its role in sacrificial food preparation. In sum, the term מחבת should be understood as an item unique to the temple and thereby wielded exclusively or at least primarily by the priests as part of their professional duties.

Scholars have debated the metaphorical reference for the מחבת.[95] William Brownlee views the מחבת as Jerusalem itself being besieged.[96] Leslie Allen, Odell, Hummel, and Greenberg all view it as a metaphor for the barrier that was now erected between YHWH and the city.[97] Zimmerli and Eichrodt see the מחבת, being itself impenetrable and unbreakable, as a metaphor for the nature of YHWH's unrelenting siege against the city.[98] Paul Joyce and Block, however, take a different interpretation. For Joyce, "the iron plate is an external expression of Ezekiel's personal demonstration."[99] Though he does not specify the nature of this demonstration, he does identify the מחבת with Ezekiel himself. Block shares the view that the מחבת is a *type* of wall, but he says explicitly that Ezekiel *is* that wall. But what kind of a wall does Ezekiel represent between the besiegers and the besieged?

I contend that in the action of *placing* the griddle (נתן + מחבת), Ezekiel acts out the role of a priest, performing the role of an intermediary in an effort to mitigate YHWH's wrath. The מחבת draws attention to the placating and reconciling work of temple sacrifice. By his act of placing it between the two parties in conflict, Ezekiel acts as an intermediary.[100] Though there is no hint at any mitigation of YHWH's wrath at this point—and in fact, the following action of Ezekiel "setting his face" against the griddle shows him as immediately switching the role of YHWH in judgment—mitigation will come in following verses, particularly in 5:3 where the preserved

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[95] Stacey, *Prophetic Drama,* 182, is so flummoxed he resorts to source-/redaction-critical solutions: "[I]t seems best to suppose that v. 3 is an editorial attempt, and a confusing and unnecessary one, to strengthen the imagery of vv. 1f."

[96] William H. Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1–19,* WBC 28 (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1994), 64.

[97] Leslie Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19,* WBC 28 (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1994), 65; Margaret S. Odell, *Ezekiel,* Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 59; Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 150; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 104.

[98] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 162–63; Walter Eichrodt, *Ezekiel: A Commentary,* trans. Cosslett Quin, OTL (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1970), 83.

[99] Paul M. Joyce, *Ezekiel: A Commentary,* LHBOTS 482 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2009), 84.

[100] Though the מנחה ("grain-offering") is a gift-offering used in a variety of ways, Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 3 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1991), 196, points out that "The most likely definition for biblical *minḥâ* is 'a present made to secure or retain good will' . . . . The emphasis, then, is clearly propitiatory." Cf. Willis J. Beecher, "Should minḥāh be translated 'meal-offering'?" *Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature And Exegesis* 5 [1885]: 73). For a full discussion of the range of uses for the מנחה, see Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16,* 195–202; Richard E. Averbeck, "מִנְחָה," in *NIDOTTE* 2:978–90.

remnant first appears (cf. Ezek 9:1–6, 11 for continuation of the remnant theme). True, Jerusalem functions primarily as a personification of rebellion against YHWH. Still, Jerusalem herself will eventually be restored and purified (see Ezek 16:50–63) and will receive a stunning new name, יהוה שׁמה "YHWH is there" (48:35).[101]

The second feature of this sign-act lends credence to viewing it in ritual categories. In 4:4, Ezekiel is to lay on his side for a prescribed period of time and "place the sin of the house of Israel" on it (ושׂמת את־עון בית־ישׂראל עליו) and is told that thus "you shall bear their sin" (תשׂא את־עונם). The collocation נשׂא + עון is a predominantly priestly one.[102] While it can function as an expression of forgiveness (e.g., Exod 34:7; Num 14:18; Pss 32:5, 85:2; Isa 33:24; Mic 7:18), its most common meaning is to bear the burden and guilt of sin and suffer any of its consequences.[103] It is noteworthy that this collocation is connected with priestly rituals of expiation.[104] In Lev 16:22, the sins of the people are transferred to the so-called scapegoat who is sent away into the wilderness where it bears their sins (ונשׂא השׂעיר עליו את־כל־עונתם). In Exod 28:38, via the ציץ זהב טהור ("blossom/plate of pure gold") fastened to his turban, Aaron will bear the sin of the holy things consecrated by the people. And in Lev 10:17, Eleazar and Ithamar are excoriated for failing to eat the sin (or purification) offering (חטאת) which had been given so that they might bear the sin of the congregation (ואתה נתן לכם לשׂאת את־עון העדה).[105] Thus for Ezekiel to set and bear the sin "recalls the actions of the priest on the Day of Atonement" and thereby shows him as fulfilling "a normal priestly function."[106]

The nature of this act has caused some unease, and interpreters have quibbled over the nature of this as an expiatory act. Since Israel and Judah *are* both punished for their sin via exile

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[101] For reference to Ezek 16:50–63, see Julie Galambush, *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel: The City as Yahweh's Wife,* SBLDS 130 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 107–9; although Galambush seems to downplay the positive implications of this passage. Concerning Ezek 48:35, see Soo J. Kim, "*YHWH Shammah*: The City as Gateway to the Presence of YHWH," *JSOT* 39, no. 2 (2014): 187–207.

[102] For a full analysis of this concept, see Joseph Ching Po Lam, "The Metaphorical Patterning of the Sin-Concept in Biblical Hebrew" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2012), 144–208.

[103] Baruch J. Schwartz, "The Bearing of Sin in the Priestly Literature," in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom,* eds. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 8. Cf. Gary A. Anderson, *Sin: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 15–26; Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament,* Siphrut 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 57–58.

[104] See Yip, *Ezekiel's Message of Hope and Restoration*, 117–25, for detailed analysis of intertextual connections between Ezek 4:4–8 and Lev 10 and 16. By contrast, this is wholly neglected by C. L. Crouch, "Ezekiel's Immobility and the Meaning of 'The House of Judah' in Ezekiel 4," *JSOT* 44, no. 1 (2019): 182–197.

[105] Cf. Num 18:1, though here the priests and Levites bear their own sin, albeit sin committed against the sanctuary (עון המקדשׁ) and the priesthood (עון כהנתכם).

[106] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 176–77, 79.

(i.e., they bear their own sin; cf. Ezek 18:19–20), Ezekiel's own bearing of their sin must refer to something other than the priestly rituals cited above. Some have argued that Ezekiel is a substitution for the people, but this is not common.[107] But in an effort to distance Ezek 4:4–6 from a priestly act of substitution, some have minimized the ritual nature of this action. Though Hummel recognizes that priestly themes and language flood this account, he believes that connecting it too tightly to Lev 16:22, Exod 28:38, and Lev 10:17 causes problems. To mitigate these purported problems, he downplays the very thing we are arguing for in this chapter: Ezekiel's priestly identity. Hummel argues:

> [I]t should be noted that while Ezekiel had a priestly lineage (1:3), he had *not* assumed the office of priest, which happened at age 30; he was in exile in his thirtieth year, according to 1:1. Hence he could not officiate in any temple ceremony, even though he probably had been schooled in how to do so. *That alone renders any simple equation of Ezekiel's singular action prophecies with priestly rituals impossible, despite the fact that his frequent use of priestly language, as here, clearly reflects that background* (emphasis added).[108]

And yet, despite his protestations, Hummel describes Ezekiel's action ritually: "Ezekiel's 'bearing sin' must be taken as *representative,* not expiatory."[109] Because Hummel has so equated priestly ritual activity with expiation achieved "mechanically or magically," citing the Latin phrase *ex opera operato,* he cannot see that his own description shows Ezekiel to be engaged in *ritual* action![110] What is more, Hummel's denial of Ezekiel's priestly identity is precisely the issue in question. Should those scholars in the flurry, arguing for an ongoing priestly identity, be correct (as this research suggests they are), Hummel's other ground for denying the ritual implications of this sign-act is removed.

In this very act, Ezekiel does what priests have always done: he identifies with the people in the context of bearing their sins. Friebel writes: "In the enactment of 'bearing the iniquity,' Ezekiel was performing that which was a part of his function as a priest, for, within the priestly tradition, the culpability for the desecration of the Temple resided upon the priests as the

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[107] E.g., Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 164; Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1–19,* 66–67. Hummel incorrectly attributes this view to Greenberg; Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 152, n.21.

[108] Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 152.

[109] Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 153. Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 4A (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 461, shows how an action, even a sacrificial rite like that of the "red heifer" in Numbers 19, need not be sacrificial "in the usual sense" to bear "a similarity to certain major expiatory sacrifices in which the element of riddance was operative." Hummel does not take this kind of representational and ritual subtlety into sufficient consideration.

[110] Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 153.

people's representatives before God."[111] There is what might be called a "sacramental" aspect to this ritual act.[112] Like innumerable priests before him, Ezekiel is ritually forged as a representative of the people: "He gathers together in his symbolic connection Israel's guilt as a burden on his own life."[113] But again, this is not a ritual of sin-bearing per se; it is *a ritual of priestly formation*. Thus, interpreting the nature of this action by minimizing its ritual implications and echoes to other passages of priestly sin-bearing answers a question that is not being asked.

Before concluding this section, one final point must be observed. In some of these actions, Ezekiel represents YHWH in the performance, and in others, Ezekiel represents the people. This causes some trouble for interpreters who do not have recourse to a meaningful priestly identity operative in Ezekiel's performance of the sign-acts. For example, because Ezekiel is acting in the role of YHWH by besieging the model city in 4:1–2, 3b, interpreters are quick to identify the placement of the iron griddle as also an act symbolizing YHWH's anger against Jerusalem. And since the sin-bearing sign-act places Ezekiel in the role of the people, interpreters are quick to delineate 4:4–8 as a distinct sign-act.[114] As 4:7–8 return to the idea of laying siege from 4:3 (i.e., Ezekiel performing the role of YHWH), literary-critical explanations have also been proffered.[115]

This rapid variation of roles is explained by positing a meaningful priestly-vocational identity for Ezekiel. Andrew Malone describes priestly representation/role-playing as follows: "There are hints that the priests represent the people before God, especially when the high priest 'bears' in his breastpiece the twelve inscribed gemstones 'as a continual reminder before Yahweh' (Exod 28:29). More frequently, we find the priests representing God to the people, especially in instructing them about God's expectations (esp. Lev 10:10–11)."[116] The reason for this is due to the liminal status of the priest: the priest stands on the threshold between the realm of the people and the realm of God. Richard Nelson has labeled priests as "boundary-crossers"

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[111] Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts,* 221. Cf. Yip, *Ezekiel's Message of Hope and Restoration*, 116: "[I]n vv. 4–8 Ezekiel is performing his priestly responsibility of representing the Israelites before YHWH."

[112] For the association between sign-acts and sacraments, see J. W. Bowker, "Prophetic Action and Sacramental Form," in *Papers Presented to the Second International Congress on New Testament Studies, Part II*, vol. 3 of *Studia Evangelica,* ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 129–37.

[113] K. Koch, "עָוֹן," *TDOT* 10:558.

[114] Although Angel, "Ezekiel: Priest Prophet," 39–40, makes the suggestion that in bearing Israel's sin, "Ezekiel represents God Who had patiently borne Israel's sins for many years but now is prepared to destroy them."

[115] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 154–55, 165–68; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 118.

[116] Malone, *God's Mediators*, 46.

and "intermediaries."[117] Not only did this place significant restrictions upon the priests, which were not placed upon the people, but it also made the priest a type of "Janus" figure, looking at God from the people's perspective and looking at the people from God's perspective. Ritual was an important venue for performing this intermediary role:

> Ritual, and sacrificial ritual in particular, thus involves the crossing of boundaries . . . . In Israel it was the priest who facilitated these ritual "line breaking" movements across barriers. In order to do so, the priest himself had to pass routinely between profane space and holy space and handle holy things and hazardous substances, especially blood. Therefore the priest lived out an "in-between" existence in a sort of permanent liminal state.[118]

In light of this liminality, and especially in light of the role of ritual within the liminal state, the role-variation Ezekiel plays between YHWH, the people, and the priestly intermediary himself is expected and appropriate. Even the seemingly unpredictable variation is noticed by W. D. Stacey: "There is widespread agreement among commentators that, in this action, Ezekiel personates Yahweh, but, even without the precise instructions in v. 3b, he personates the besiegers as well. Yahweh has raised up a human agency to lay siege to his own city and Ezekiel, in dramatizing the event, represents both parties."[119] Thus one need not posit a redaction in 4:3 to explain the iron griddle nor interpret the griddle as another symbol of YHWH's judgment.[120] Likewise, it is not warranted to divide out the transition to human-representative in 4:4 as a separate sign-act or suggest that the sin-bearing action of 4:4–6 places Ezekiel in the role of God himself.[121] Neither are source- or redaction-critical solutions necessary for 4:4–6.

In Sum, section C carries on the ritual initiation of Ezekiel into his priestly-prophetic ministry. That it concludes with cords (עבותים) being placed upon Ezekiel (now by God himself, cf. 3:25) continues the theme introduced in section B: Ezekiel, being installed as a priest, is bound to the people he represents.[122] Though the first part of Ezekiel's ministry will be one of prophetic rebuke, he is nevertheless a priest, and the placing of a symbol of his priesthood (the

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[117] Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest,* 83–88; cf. D. Nathan Phinney, "Portraying Prophetic Experience and Tradition in Ezekiel," in *Thus Says the Lord: Essays on the Former and Latter Prophets in Honor of Robert R. Wilson,* ed. John J. Ahn and Stephen L Cook, LHBOTS 501 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2009), 239–41, who provides comparative, anthropological analysis of the work intermediary in Israel and primitive cultures.

[118] Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest,* 59.

[119] Stacey, *Prophetic Drama,* 181.

[120] See Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 162, and Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts,* 208, respectively.

[121] Pace Angel, "Ezekiel: Priest-Prophet," 39–40.

[122] Pace Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 180–81; and Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts,* 224. Both bifurcate between these two binding events by overplaying the role of the subjects of נתן.

iron griddle) between YHWH and Jerusalem hints at the ministry of restoration and mercy that he will begin after the fall of Jerusalem (Ezek 34ff.).

Ezekiel 4:9–17 (Section D)

In section D, Ezekiel is commanded to prepare bread using a mixture of grains and eat portions that resemble siege (or better, starvation) rations.[123] Ezekiel is also commanded to cook a barley cake over human dung, though after objecting to this, YHWH relents ad allows him to use cow dung as fuel. The grammatical ambiguity in 5:12 has led to delineating section D into two separate sign-acts: 5:9–11 as a sign-act about scraping together remaining bits of grain into a single loaf, and 5:12 describing the separate act of cooking a barley cake. It is important to note that the food in 5:9–11 is לחם (bread) or מאכל (a general word for food), whereas in 5:12, it is called an עגת שׂערים (cake of barley). Most translations identify the two in v. 12: "You shall eat it *as* a barley cake" (ESV; cf. NIV, NASB, KJV, CSB[124]), supplying the word "as" by translating this as an adverbial accusative. The suffix in 4:12 (תאכלנה, "you shall eat *it*"), however, is feminine, which does not find its antecedent in either of the terms for food mentioned prior (both of which are masculine).[125] There is some merit to this proposal; however, by doing so, the matter of the barley loaf and its fuel in 5:12–15 is intrusive since 5:16–17 returns to the issue of bread (לחם, cf. v. 9) and water (מים, cf. v. 11). Indeed, the distinctiveness of 5:12–15 seems to mark these verses as central to this larger section.

As we shall see in chapter 4 of this research, purity and holiness are dominant concerns in Ezekiel, more so than in other prophetic books. Mein observes: "The most significant feature is [Ezekiel's] use of language drawn from the cult to describe the actions of the people, and the state into which they have put themselves. This language is present in Ezekiel to a degree unparalleled outside the priestly legislation, and it is fair to say that the book is saturated with defilement and profanity."[126] Priestly purity is of particular concern, especially as we come upon

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[123] Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 39.

[124] Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19,* 47, translates this very freely: "The form in which you are to eat it is to be that of a barley cake" (following Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 149).

[125] Most commentaries note this grammatical feature.

[126] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 205–6. See too Mein's analysis of ritual language in idem, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 137–76. Cf. De Vries, "Ezekiel: Prophet of the Name and Glory of YHWH," 101–3. For general remarks, see Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 61–63; Henry McKeating, *Ezekiel,* OTG (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 86–89; Michael A. Lyons, *An Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* T&T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 19–20, 36.

section D, such that some have even treated the passage as a halakhic discourse on food purity.[127] In 4:14, we find the only objection to YHWH's instructions in the book, highlighting the importance Ezekiel places on his purity.[128] The expression בגללי צאת (with heaps of dung) only occurs here in the OT, though there are several important uses of צאה (dung) that may inform us as to the import of this instruction. It is used to describe the siege conditions in 2 Kgs 18:27 (and the Qere reading in Isa 36:12), where the Rabshakeh tells the men standing on the wall that those in the besieged city of Jerusalem are doomed to consume their dung and urine. And yet Ezek 4:12 does not describe consuming dung. Furthermore, Ezekiel's response to the instruction is specifically concerned with purity: "Aha, Lord GOD—Look, my soul/life has (never) been defiled/made unclean [מטמאה]" (4:14).

Most noteworthy are the occurrences of צאה (dung) in contexts of purity. Deuteronomy 23:9–14 deals with holiness in the Israelite camp. Verses 10–11 depict a man who is not clean/pure (לא־יהיה טהור) on account of a nocturnal emission (מקרה־לילה—literally "from an accident of the night). Then in v. 12, instructions are given for toileting, requiring a place outside the camp where dung (צאה) shall be passed into a hole and then covered. The reason for this is in v. 13: "For YHWH your God walks back and forth in the midst of your camp in order to deliver you and to give your enemies before you. And thus your camp shall be holy [קדוש]." Though the remainder of the verse stresses that YHWH should not see nakedness (ערוה) in the camp, not explicitly that dung in the camp renders it unholy or is impure, the use of purity/impurity language in v. 10 (טהור) does not warrant detaching the dung from this context. After all, it is instructive that Prov 30:12 pairs dung with a purity term: "A generation is clean [טהור] in its own eyes; but its dung [צאה] has not been washed (away)."

It seems to be along these lines that Ezekiel objects to the use of dung for cooking. Though this is the only passage in the OT explicitly stating that cooking over human excrement renders one impure, the inference that this was a long-held position is reasonable.[129] Ezekiel's

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[127] Meindert Dijkstra, "The Valley of Dry Bones: Coping with the Reality of the Exile in the Book of Ezekiel," in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times,* eds. Bob Becking and Marjo C.A. Korpel, *OtSt* 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1999)*,* 126–32.

[128] Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place," 55.

[129] Jodi Magness, "What's the Poop on Ancient Toilets and Toilet Habits?" *NEA* 75, no. 2 (2012): 85, notes that the Rabbi's did not consider human dung to be impure because of the fact that it is not explicitly stated as such, especially in the Torah. She observes, however, that the Qumran sect appears to have followed Ezek 4:14 as taking the opposite position of the Rabbis.

response to YHWH's instruction involves citing several other well-known taboos. Zimmerli explains:

> Ezekiel's complaint . . . contains a confession of his previous manner of life in which he had avoided all such crass uncleanness. The Book of the Covenant already forbade the eating of the flesh of mutilated animals (טרפה) with a reference to the holy character of the people (Ex 22:30). The flesh of dead animals (נבלה) is mentioned in Dtn 14:21; Lev 17:15 and other passages. Ezekiel 44:31 forbids the eating of both categories of meat, especially to the priests. The flesh of a sacrificial animal which had not been eaten by the third day, the holiness of which had become a dangerous uncleanness, is described as פגול in Lev 7:18; 19:7.[130]

Ezekiel's objection makes most sense if cooking over human dung is also a well-known taboo, silence in the OT notwithstanding.[131]

Odell recognizes the implications of this: "Ezekiel's interjection here, the only such interjection in the book, is filled with pathos, and not merely because Yahweh's command forces him to abandon yet another aspect of his priestly identity."[132] She continues:

> Commentators regularly note Ezekiel's evident desire to maintain purity, but more may be at stake. Since Ezekiel's protest is that he has never come into contact with death, he is concerned with much more than ritual purity. Or perhaps purity signified far more to Ezekiel than we have yet understood. Maintaining ritual purity involved separating oneself from death, with the larger goal of delivering the community from death.[133]

To tease this out, even if Ezekiel is not merely exercised over the prospect of abandoning another aspect of his priesthood, he is exercised over no less than that. Also, even if Ezekiel is concerned with more than ritual impurity, he is concerned with no less than ritual impurity. Ezekiel sees that death itself renders impure. This seems to stand behind the prohibition against his mourning for his wife in Ezek 24:15–27 (cf. Lev 21:1–13, where priests may only come into contact with the dead for certain blood relatives, wives being excluded).[134] Likewise, in the Gog/Magog oracle of Ezek 38–39, the bones of Gog and his multitudes who were killed in battle will be flagged and buried so as to cleanse (טהר) the land (Ezek 39:12, 14, 16).[135] Not only do dead

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[130] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 171.

[131] Anthropological and ritual approaches to feces ("scatology") has shown that human dung is considered impure in a wide range of cultures. See James J. Preston, "Purification: An Overview," *ER* 11:7504.

[132] Odell, *Ezekiel,* 65. Though note that this chapter parts ways with Odell over her contention that the sign-acts constitute a relinquishment of his priestly identity. Cf. Duguid's critique, "Putting Priests in their Place," 56 n. 44.

[133] Odell, *Ezekiel,* 65.

[134] Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 124.

[135] Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 187. Cf. Wojciech Pikor, *The Land of Israel in the Book of Ezekiel,* LHBOTS 667 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2018), 164.

bodies cause impurity, but so do bones (see Num 19:16–18). Thus we see Ezekiel responding in accordance with priestly legislation concerning purity and impurity, especially here in Ezek 4:14.

One might object to this analysis which emphasizes the importance of the initial instruction pertaining to human dung. After all, an historical audience would not have witnessed the switch from human to cow dung; thus, the former would possess no communicative import. In line with this, Friebel does not refer to the substitution. Of course, Ezekiel might have informed an audience of what happened, as suggested by Allen. However, this is strictly hypothetical and driven by an inability to explain the substitution in communicative categories without an announcement of the substitution by the prophet.[136] But this causes no difficulty for a ritual interpretation of the account. In a ritual reading, attention is shifted to what the substitution might have communicated to Ezekiel himself and how this encounter thereby functions ritually in forming Ezekiel's priestly identity.

One further objection might be raised, viz. 4:13 says explicitly that the sons of Israel shall eat their bread unclean. Therefore this sign-act still shows Ezekiel consuming impurity-causing food. This objection would indeed cause difficulty to this analysis were it not for the fact, as argued above, that the change in fuel also marks a shift in the intention of the sign-act. Again, the text describes an *aborted* sign-act about consuming impure food that is then *replaced* by a sign-act describing the lack of food for those in Jerusalem.[137] That is to say, Ezekiel no longer performed a sign-act demonstrating worry about impurity, and in its place performed one demonstrating worry about the *ability* to eat and *dismay* in eating in 4:16.

In section D, Ezekiel is presented with a scenario that will undermine his ability to function as a priest and is not forced to proceed accordingly. He is instead enabled to follow a scenario that causes no such relinquishment of his priestly identity. His concern for his vocational identity is thereby preserved.

Ezekiel 5:1–17 (Section E)

The sign-act in section E is unique among the sign-acts of Ezekiel due to its lengthy explanatory section (the sign-act proper is in 5:1–4, whereas the exposition comprises the whole

[136] Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19,* 70.

[137] Stacey, *Prophetic Drama,* 188–89, sees the same shift at work, although suggests a redaction–critical solution. Cf. Yip, *Ezekiel's Message of Hope and Restoration*, 110–12, 126–29.

of 5:5–17). Within this sign-act are two main rites: a shaving rite and a hair manipulation rite. Though it is easy to collapse the former into the latter, the two should be distinguished for their import since the former relates to Ezekiel himself in his priestly role, and the latter relates to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The emphasis of the entire sign-act and its explanation is on the hair manipulation and its representation of the destruction of Jerusalem, hence the statement in 5:5: “This is Jerusalem” (זאת ירושׁלם).[138] The feminine demonstrative pronoun זאת does not have an antecedent in the immediately surrounding verses but does seem to be a reference back to the siege model of 4:1, the brick (לבנה), which is a feminine noun. We will proceed to consider what, if any, elements of this sign-act fit the model of the sign-acts as ritual formation of Ezekiel’s priestly identity.

Scholars have generally suggested that this act falls in the intertextual orbit of Isa 7:20[139]:

In that day the Lord will shave	ביום ההוא יגלח אדני
with a razor	בתער
one hired in the region across the river	השׂכירה בעברי נהר
with the king of Assyria	במלך אשׁור
the head	את־הראשׁ
and the public hair	ושׂער הרגלים
and also the beard it will sweep away	וגם את־הזקן תספה

This is a reasonable intertextual association. The shaving described in Ezek 5:1–4 does describe the same type of situation we see in Isa 7:20, where a foreign monarch defeats the people of the city. Yet there are some noteworthy differences. Ezekiel 5:1 reads: “And as for you, O son of man, take for yourself a sharp sword [חרב חדה]—a barber’s razor [תער הגלבים] you shall take it for yourself. And pass it over [והעברת] your head [ראשׁך] and over your beard [זקנך]. And take for yourself balances of weight and divide them [i.e., the shaved hairs].” When comparing the two, the only words shared are razor (תער), head (ראשׁ), and beard (זקן). The verbs describing the razor’s action differ, and 5:1 specifies that this is a barber’s razor (תער הגלבים). Thus, there are some distinctives in Ezek 5:1 that should give us pause. It should not be missed that the word “hair” is not attested in Ezek 5:1 (or anywhere in the passage). Certainly, it is implied by the 3mp

[138] Michael A. Lyons, “Out of the (Model) City, into the Fire: The Meaning of Ezekiel 5:3–4,” *JBL* 138, no. 3 (2019): 605–623, proposes a wholly destructive depiction in this sign-act, pace a wide range of scholars who believe that Ezekiel’s binding of some hairs in the hem of his garment represents the preservation of a remnant.

[139] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 172; Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 192; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 108.

suffix on וחלקתם ("and you shall divide *them*"), but *its absence places initial focus on the shaving instrument and action itself.*

Two collocations of interest in Ezek 5:1 are worth noting that orient us towards the distinctiveness of this sign-act. First, the collocation "head and beard" occurs only 11 times. Five of these are in Leviticus (Lev 13:29, 30; 14:9; 19:27; 21:5), all of which reference priestly prescribed or proscribed activity for themselves or others. Psalm 133:2 refers to the anointing oil that runs down Aaron's head and beard. In Isa 7:20, 15:2, and Jer 48:37, the collocation is in a mourning context, as is Ezra 9:3, which records the mourning of Ezra *the priest*. It is noteworthy that this collocation occurs so frequently in priestly contexts. Second, the collocation "razor and sword" (in this case, placed in apposition to one another) is not elsewhere attested, preventing us from simplistically assimilating this sign-act to judgment passages involving the sword.[140] The sword will function as an instrument of YHWH's wrath throughout the remainder of Ezekiel, beginning already in 5:2. Still, the sword in 5:1 is depicted principally as a barber's razor (תער הגלבים), something that needs investigation.

Mentioning the word "barber" (גלב) suggests a connection between the sign-act and ritual activity. Since גלב is a hapax legomenon, we cannot find clarification within the OT as to its import. Lexicographers generally see גלב as a loanword from the Akkadian noun *gallābu,* "barber."[141] Barbers in the post-Sumerian period had three main venues of work: (1) slave administration, (2) sanctuary/temple maintenance, and (3) cosmetic and medical/surgical treatments.[142] A cultic setting for certain barbers is especially noteworthy. At Mari, a location with close west Semitic connections, the *gallābu* placed his razor before the goddess Ištar.[143] The root is also attested in Phoenician; thus, it is not necessarily a direct loan from Akkadian. *KAI* 37, a Phoenician text from Cyprus dated variously from the 6th to 4th centuries BC, contains a list of the expenses (תכלת) paid during a month of operations of the large temple located in modern-day Larnaca. Line 12 lists the expenses paid to the temple barbers:

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[140] The only occurrences of תער in the OT that do *not* refer to a sheath are Num 6:5, 8:7; Ps 52:4; Isa 7:20; Jer 36:23; and Ezek 5:1.

[141] *HALOT*, s.v. "גַּלָּב"; cf. *CAD*, s.v. "gallābu."

[142] *CAD*, s.v. "gallābu." Cf. Hayim ben Yosef Tawil, *An Akkadian Lexical Companion for Biblical Hebrew: Etymological-Semantic and Idiomatic Equivalents with Supplement on Biblical Aramaic* (Brooklyn, NY: KTAV Publishing House, 2009), 65.

[143] For general references to Mari and the Bible, see Daniel E. Fleming, "Mari and the Possibilities of Biblical Memory," *RA* 92, no.1 (1998): 41–78; idem, "History in Genesis," *WTJ* 65, no. 2 (2003): 251–62; Abraham Malamat, *Mari and the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

For the barbers, workers of the festival observances, 2 QPʾ	לגלבם פעלם על מלאכת קפא 2

Thus we see several attestations of cognates of גלב placing barbers firmly within cultic circles (and thereby in close proximity to priests).[144]

Though the OT does not mention any barbers associated with the Jerusalem temple, the fact that there is concern with hair in ritual contexts in the OT provides at minimum a connection between barbers and priests.[145] Hair has long been utilized in rituals in various geographical, cultural, and historical contexts.[146] Hair manipulation in OT rituals is quite limited comparatively. In the *sota* ritual of Num 5:11–31, the hair of the suspected adulteress is unbound (פרע; 5:11), which may be a sign of disgrace (as in mourning or leprosy rites) or a symbol of being laid open to the community.[147] Deuteronomy 21:10–14 legislates how a female captive can be taken as a wife by an Israelite man. She is to shave her hair, cut her nails, and discard the clothes she wore when captured before entering a time of mourning for her father and mother, after which she will become his wife. Hair cutting thereby serves as a transitional ritual.[148] Hair plays a role in determining impurity causing ailments in several passages in Leviticus, the remedy of which involves shaving.[149] Shaving rites also occur with the commissioning of Levites

[144] Another Phoenician inscription makes reference to a person titled גלב אלם, "barber of divinity" (*CIS* I 257:4). For references to this text, see John C. L. Gibson, *Phoenician Inscriptions: Including Inscriptions in the Mixed Dialect of Arslan Tash,* vol. 3 of *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 129, n.12; Charles R. Krahmalkov, *Phoenician-Punic Dictionary,* Studia Phoenicia XV (Leuven/Louvain: Peeters Publishers, 2000), 139; idem, *A Phoenician-Punic Grammar,* HdO 1.54 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 201; George A. Barton, "A peculiar use of *ìlani* in the tablets from El-Amarna," *JAOS* 15 (1890): cxcviii. A general survey of the Phoenician cult, including reference to temple barbers, can be found in Charles R. Krahmalkov, "Phoenicia," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible,* ed. David Noel Freedman (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 1053–56.

[145] Some of the references to hair relate to foreign practices in the OT, but not all. For a survey of hair in the OT, see Heinrich L.E. Luering and Ralph W. Vunderink, "Hair," *ISBE* 2:596–99; H. Trau, N. Rubin, and S. Vargon, "Symbolic Significance of Hair in the Biblical Narrative and in the Law," *Koroth* 9 (1988): 173–79. Cf. the older treatments of James G. Frazer, *Folk-Lore in the Old Testament: Studies in Comparative Religion Legend and Law,* abridged ed. (New York, NY: Tudor Publishing Company, 1923), 272–73, 377–97; William Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites: The Fundamental Institutions,* 3rd ed. (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1927), 323–35.

[146] See Christopher R. Hallpike, "Hair," *ER* 6:3738–41; E.E. Sikes and Louis H. Gray, "Hair and Nails," *ERE* 6:474–77.

[147] For the former interpretation, see Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers במדבר,* The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 40; for the later, see Marvin R. Wilson and Seth M. Rodriquez, "Hair," in *Dictionary of Daily Life in Biblical & Post-Biblical Antiquity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2015), 2:382.

[148] Saul Olyan, "What Do Shaving Rites Accomplish?" *JBL* 117, no. 4 (1998): 617–19.

[149] Olyan, "Shaving Rites," 619–20.

in Num 8:7 and with the Nazirite vow in Num 6:1–18.[150] During the Nazirite's time of separation, he is not to shave his hair (v. 5). Still, when the time comes for him to rejoin the community, he is to shave his "consecrated head" (ראשׁ נזרו) and offer the hair as a type of offering, placing it in the fire under the peace-offering (השׁלמים) (v. 18).[151] And though shaving is an acceptable aspect of mourning for most people, the priests were forbidden from doing so (Lev 21:5; cf. Ezek 44:20).[152] In sum, hair and shaving played a role in the Israelite cult, and thus one should not interpret the shaving act in Ezek 5:1 without recourse to the meaning of such rituals.

Israel may not have had individuals bearing a specific title who were tasked exclusively with this work (it may have been a general priestly task). However, there was an analogous, though still distinctively Yahwistic role for priests in Israel to that of the *gallābu*/גלבם in other Semitic contexts. Both the role of hair and shaving known generally in priestly circles and the presence of a hapax legomenon גלב (barber) with ritual and priestly connotations in neighboring cultures give a compelling priestly context to this act, strengthened by the presence of the priestly and ritual themes we have explored in the preceding sign-acts. We miss a significant aspect of this sign-act if we tie this shaving act solely to the military imagery of the חרב (sword).

In light of Babylonian ritual texts, a few scholars have also noted ritual overtones to Ezekiel's use of scales (מאזני משׁקל) to weigh the hair and his placement of some of the hair in his hem (בכנפיך).[153] Echoes of Babylonian literature and customs have been noted throughout the book of Ezekiel.[154] Block writes:

> A Babylonian magical ritual text provides an interesting analogue, particularly the following excerpt: "You hold a balance high, place the hair of his [the patient's] head in the hem of his garment and weigh them." Even if Ezekiel's operation lacks the magical significance of this text, at the very least the passage suggests that such activity was known in Ezekiel's Babylonian environment.[155]

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[150] Note the relevant texts in Judg 13:1–16:31 which include various aspects of the Nazirite vow.

[151] That the Nazirite is also to avoid contact with the dead ties in with the same concerns in Ezekiel mentioned above.

[152] For shaving and the mourning of non-priests, see Olyan, "Shaving Rites," 616–17.

[153] Wilfred G. E. Watson, "Splitting Hairs in Israel and Babylon," *Irish Biblical Studies* 4, no. 4 (1982): 193–97.

[154] Brian Neil Peterson, *Ezekiel in Context: Ezekiel's Message Understood in its Historical Setting of Covenant Curses and Ancient Near Eastern Mythological Motifs,* Princeton Theological Monograph Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012).

[155] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 193, citing the text in W. Farber, *Beschwörungsrituale an Ishtar und Dumuzi* (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977).

We might suggest that this sign-act is peppered then with references to ritual, even if the act itself is explained exclusively in the language of warfare and city destruction. Furthermore, in keeping with the private nature of the sign-acts, as argued above, our concern need not be with whether Ezekiel's audience might have perceived a ritual aspect to this sign-act but whether Ezekiel himself would have.

In sum, regardless of the broader themes of YHWH's judgment and the impending fate of Jerusalem in section E, there is a ritual thread that runs through this sign-act. The sign-act serves as yet another initiatory ritual forming Ezekiel's priestly identity in correlation with his prophetic work. Even the accompanying oracle/explanation of the sign-act in 5:5–17 makes specific reference to the defilement of the sanctuary (v. 11, את־מקדשי טמאת, "my sanctuary you have defiled"), and draws heavily on the curses from Lev 26:14–46 (cf. Ezek 5:2, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17), keeping the explanatory content firmly in the realm of priestly literature.[156]

Summary of Ritual Elements

Our analysis of the sign-acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17 coheres with the definitions proffered above. Grimes's short definition contained several elements, all of which are exhibited in the sign-acts analyzed:

- Embodied: Ezekiel's body is bound with cords (3:25, 4:8); he is silenced (3:26); he builds a model (4:1–2); he places a griddle (4:3); he lays on his side (4:4, 6, 9); he prepares food (4:9–12); he shaves (5:1a); he manipulates hair (5:1b–4).
- Condensed: Though Ezekiel's activity overlaps with non-ritual behavior, it is selective and representative of broader ritual concerns. One can lay on one's side, build a model, prepare food, etc., with no ritual implications, but in Ezekiel's case, these actions take place within a symbolic matrix that dramatizes ordinary life.
- Prescribed: YHWH instructs Ezekiel on the actions he is to perform and the order he is to perform them.
- Enacted: Though we read no narrative accounts recording the execution of these actions, Friebel has made an impressive case for their actual performance.[157]

The same can be said of the definition of Platvoet and Klingbeil:

[156] Sustained allusions to Lev 26 extend from Ezek 4–6 and are peppered through the remainder of the book. For a list of comparisons, see Michael A. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel's Use of the Holiness Code*, LHBOTS 507 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 162–65; cf. idem, "Marking Innerbiblical Allusion in the Book of Ezekiel," *Biblica* 88, no. 2 (2007): 245–50; idem, "Out of the (Model) City, into the Fire: The Meaning of Ezekiel 5:3–4," *JBL* 138, no. 3 (2019): 605–23.

[157] Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts,* 20–34.

- Ordered sequence: observed in the divinely prescribed instructions for the sign-acts, particularly in sections C, D, and E.
- Stylized social behavior: this category is in tandem with the comments just made about the sign-acts' "condensed" nature.
- Distinguished by alerting qualities: seen in the unexpected (from a prophetic perspective) turn to silence (3:26); the lengthy period of laying on his side (4:5–6); the jarring command (from a priestly perspective) to eat defiled food (4:12); and the manipulation of shaved hair (5:1b–4).

Platvoet's and Klingbeil's reference to a ritual's goal of "focusing the attention" of the audience, causing them "to perceive" the special nature of the symbolic action, is likewise exhibited herein, provided one does not view an audience of one (Ezekiel himself) as not being an audience or congregation properly speaking. Thus, it is clear that Ezekiel's actions are readily explained by the category of ritual.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the sign-acts in Ezek 3:22–5:17 with an eye toward a ritual function in service of forging a distinctive *priestly* identity to Ezekiel's prophetic commission. As we noted in the chapter introduction, it has not emphasized any psychological and traumatic symptoms that may overlap with the sign-acts. Nevertheless, that does not suggest that the sign-acts should be removed from the discussion of trauma. Several proposals exist for understanding the traumatological import of the sign-acts. Ruth Poser contends that in this narrative section, "repetition of the traumatic catastrophe plays the essential role,"[158] i.e., Ezekiel's bodily acts in these chapters are chiefly ways in which he replays the trauma of exile, yet now in control of the situation and able to avoid the injury and violation that the exile itself would have issued in fuller form. In this, she follows Nancy R. Bowen, who more explicitly links repetition and replay to a therapeutic technique: "Readers may be aware of how counselors help traumatized children, who may be too young to have the necessary verbal skills to describe what happened to them, to 'speak' about what happened through the use of therapeutic play, often using drawing, dolls, and other toys."[159] But Bowen sees this chiefly as a destructive action, akin to self-harm behavior exhibited by some trauma victims, which helps him to continue to "live out" the trauma through

[158] Ruth Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* VTSup 154 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 360, "Wiederholung der traumatischen Katastrophe die wesentliche Rolle."

[159] Nancy R. Bowen, *Ezekiel,* AOTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 28.

high-risk behavior and bodily harm that causes pain.[160] She surmises: “Commanded by God to reenact the trauma that God has already inflicted, Ezekiel ends up retraumatized.”[161] While these specific reconstructions depend upon the view that the sign-acts themselves are trauma-inducing rather than chiefly a response to exile-trauma—a view this author does not believe has been established sufficiently—they rightly highlight the intense suffering and difficulty Ezekiel faces in exile generally and regarding his priestly identity specifically. These sign-act/rituals are intrusive and, in some cases, exhausting.

The sign-acts, however, seem more readily incorporated into trauma analyses as *responses to* trauma or coping mechanisms that overcome or reframe that trauma. After all, this is widely attested in sociological, psychological, and vocational studies.[162] Moreover, the invocation of ritual categories in studying these sign-acts coheres with the regular invocation of rituals and ritualization by therapists and management. Reed A. Morrison, for example, argues that myths and ritual practices are neurobiologically hard-wired responses to dilemmas, such that a range of societies (across geography and history) construct them to cope with past trauma and prepare for inevitable real-life trauma (e.g., death and dying).[163] Yet management has also turned to ritual for promoting a positive workplace[164] and coping with workplace stressors, whether stressors experienced corporately as an organization[165] or by individuals facing workplace trauma and loss.[166] David and Mary Sherwin’s book, *Turning People into Teams: Rituals and Routines that Redesign How We Work,* is devoted exclusively to promoting rituals (which they define as “group activities during which people go through a series of behaviors in a specific

[160] Bowen, *Ezekiel,* 28. For psychological understanding of self-harm, see Robert Jean Campbell, *Campbell’s Psychiatric Dictionary,* 8th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 171 (s.v., “deliberate self-harm syndrome”) and 593–4 (s.v., “self-mutilation”); Gary R. VandenBos, ed., *APA Dictionary of Psychology,* 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2015), 292 (s.v., “deliberate self-harm (DSH).

[161] Bowen, *Ezekiel,* 29. See Rafael Furman, “Trauma and Post-Trauma in the Book of Ezekiel,” *OTE* 33, no. 1 (2020): 41, 49–53, for a similar approach to the sign-acts.

[162] E.g., Lars Johan Danbolt and Hans Stifoss-Hanssen, “Ritual and Recovery: Traditions in Disaster Ritualizing,” *Di* 56, no. 4 (2017): 352–60; Jiva Nath Lamsal, “Ritual, Resistance and Social Transformation: Politics and Poetics of the *Gaijatra* Festival,” *Journal of Ritual Studies* 34, no. 1 (2020): 17–30.

[163] Reed A. Morrison, “Trauma and Transformative Passage,” *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies* 31, no. 1 (2012): 38–40, citing Eugene G. D’Aquila and Charles D. Laughlin, “The Neurobiology of Myth and Ritual,” in *Readings in Ritual Studies,* ed. Ronald L. Grimes (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), 132–46.

[164] E.g., see Jessica R. Methot et al., “Office Chitchat as a Social Ritual: The Uplifting yet Distracting Effects of Daily Small Talk at Work,” *Academy of Management Journal* 64, no. 5 (2021): 1445–71.

[165] E.g., James Campbell Quick, “Crafting an Organizational Culture: Herb’s Hand at Southwest Airlines,” *Organizational Dynamics* 21, no. 2 (1992): 45–56 (see especially p. 50).

[166] E.g., Mark D. Rich, “Sacked for the Sabbath: Narrative, Trauma, and the (Jewish) Body,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (2011): 368–85 (see especially p. 372).

order"[167]) designed to improve corporate effectiveness and individual well-being at all stages of a typical project timeline. And a similar book by Kursat Ozenc and Margaret Hagen offers something of an apologia for bringing rituals into the workplace.[168] As we noted in chapter 2, though the Israelite priesthood was not an industry per se, it was an institution and, as such, is open to analysis using institutional tools. Thus, our invocation of ritual categories for vocational formation should not be dismissed as anachronistic, provided we keep in mind wherein the various points of overlap and difference lie.

That Ezekiel engages in as many sign-acts as he does and is also himself called a "sign" (מופת) has not gone unnoticed by scholars.[169] A subject usually performs signs: whether YHWH (Deut 6:22, Neh 9:10) or another individual or individuals (Exod 11:10, Deut 13:1, 1 Kgs 13:3). And while curses are called signs (Deut 28:46), it is rare for individuals to be called that (Ps 71:7; Isa 8:18, 20:3; Zech 3:8). Yet the predication of מופת of Ezekiel does have a unique profile, stated four times in the book in two separate chapters (12:6, 11; 24:24, 27), with the occurrence in 12:11 as a liturgical pronouncement in the mouth of Ezekiel himself: "I am your sign" (אני מופתכם).[170] Jacqueline E. Lapsley describes this מופת identity in a way that alludes to priestly role-playing noted above:

> In an important sense, Ezekiel is not so much a messenger whose message is designed to generate a particular response in the people, as much as he himself is a *sign* to the people which will bring them new knowledge about who Yahweh is and how he acts in the world. . . . Where Ezekiel is described as a מופת, the future of the people can be seen in his action (their going into exile, the possibility of mourning in the face of disaster eliminated).[171]

While this מופת identity does not appear to have priestly associations in Isaiah, it does in Zech 3:8, where it is the "associates" (רע) of Joshua the High Priest who are designated מופת. Sweeney

[167] David Sherwin and Mary Sherwin, *Turning People into Teams: Rituals and Routines that Redesign How We Work* (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2018), 2.

[168] Kursat Ozenc and Margaret Hagan, *Rituals for Work: 50 Ways to Create Engagement, Shared Purpose and a Culture That Can Adapt to Change* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2019).

[169] See e.g., Ralph W. Klein, *Ezekiel: The Prophet and His Message,* Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 34–51, a chapter titled "Ezekiel Will Be a Sign for You"; Stefano Salemi, "'I Have Made You a מוֹפֵת' (Ezekiel 12:6): A Linguistic-Theological Exegesis of Ezekiel as a מוֹפֵת" (PhD Diss., King's College London, 2020); Tiemeyer, "Compromised Prophet," 190 (cf. 190 n.57). In personal correspondence with Salemi and Tyler Mayfield, I have learned of several publications in various states of preparation that are devoted to Ezekiel's sign-acts.

[170] Many translations add a modifier to this (e.g., "sign *for* you") but Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 363, and Greenburg, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 208, render it as I have translated here.

[171] Jacqueline E. Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live?: The Problem of the Moral Self in the Book of Ezekiel,* BZAW 301 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 115.

and Al Wolters designate these associates as fellow priests.[172] Mark J. Boda admits a degree of uncertainty about their vocational identity yet still associates them with priestly work (either members of Zadokite or Levitical clans with temple responsibilities).[173] It would seem fitting, then, for a priest-prophet like Ezekiel, being given a מופת identity also borne by priestly associates elsewhere, to undergo a vocational formation via sign-acts saturated with priestly, ritual themes.

Though Odell argued that the sign-acts of Ezekiel constituted a relinquishment of priestly identity and a replacement by a prophetic identity, a ritual analysis of the sign-acts has shown this to be an inaccurate assessment. Indeed, that the account of Ezekiel's commission is shot-through with ritual elements bolsters Sweeney's conclusion that "Ezekiel did not give up his priestly identity for a prophetic role; instead, his prophetic role is an extension of his priestly identity under the influence of the very radically changed circumstances of Ezekiel's life in the Babylonian exile."[174]

Even if it is granted that Ezekiel provides a singular portrait of a priest in exile rather than a norm, universally practiced by the many priests who did depart to Babylon in the exile,[175] job crafting has been observed and classified by vocational psychologists in a wide range of settings. As extant biblical instructions for the priesthood assume life in the land and in proximity to the Jerusalem temple and its altar, it is reasonable to expect that priests made creative adjustments to accommodate their roles and responsibilities in an exilic context while ensuring sufficient continuity with those who preceded them in the priesthood. This would not be the first time practitioners of ritual in ancient Israel and Judah engaged in ritual, nor would it be the last.[176]

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[172] Marvin Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets,* 2 vols., Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 2.601; Al Wolters, *Zechariah,* HCOT (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 100.

[173] Mark J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 252–53 (cf. the text critical note on p.250). Note the objection of Max Rogland, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text,* Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Text (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 124, who identifies them simply as Zechariah's "fellow citizens" (i.e., the recipients of his message) since no "colleagues" or "companions" have been mentioned before in the text. This conclusion seems unwarranted.

[174] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 127.

[175] So Aelred Cody, *A History of Old Testament Priesthood,* AnBib 35 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 144, who is skeptical of the book's ability to inform historians of an exilic priesthood: "The house of the priest-prophet Ezekiel was a rallying-place for the elders of Judah in exile (Ezek. 8:1), but Ezekiel has nothing to say about any priestly activity of his own or of any other Jew in Babylonia."

[176] See the collection of studies in Nathan MacDonald, ed., *Ritual Innovation in the Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism,* BZAW 468 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016).

CHAPTER 4: PURITY AND IMPURITY AS PRESSING CONCERNS FOR A PRIEST IN EXILE

The Book of Ezekiel has been long observed as being concerned with purity and impurity in ways unparalleled by other prophetic books. A search of terms within the semantic domain of purity/impurity[1] shows that the proportion of purity words to total words in the book ranks Ezekiel third in density behind Leviticus and Exodus.[2] Leviticus has by far the highest density, with Numbers following Ezekiel. Simply analyzing the number of times the words קדשׁ (and its cognates), חלל, and חֹל occur in the book leads Ka Leung Wong to conclude that “the book is replete with the vocabulary of holy and profane. . . . The figures show *prima facie* that the idea of holy and profane is of some importance in the book.”[3] Indeed, Wong has stated elsewhere: “Ezekiel employs the vocabulary of holiness and purity more than any other canonical prophet.”[4] While it is true that Ezekiel echoes many motifs encountered in other prophetical books, Henry

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[1] For this study, this domain was established using the “Index of Semantic Fields” in *NIDOTTE,* 5.9–216. See the following entries: “Clean, pure,” “Cleansing, washing,” “Contamination, pollution,” “Defilement,” “Holy,” “Pollution,” “Profane, defilement, pollution, desecration,” “Purging,” “Purity,” “Sanctification,” and “Unclean.” From these entries, the following significant lexical items were identified in Ezekiel: טֻמְאָה (7x), טמא (35x), I חלל (36x), חֹל (4x), נִדָּה (5x), II נְחֹשֶׁת (1x), גֹּעַל (1x), געל (2x), שִׁקּוּץ (8x), שֶׁקֶץ (1x), פִּגּוּל (1x), קדשׁ (15x), קָדוֹשׁ (2x), קֹדֶשׁ (57x), טָהֳרָה (1x), טהר (12x), טָהוֹר (3x), כפר (6x), ברר (1x), and רחץ (3x). Note that I חלל and II נְחֹשֶׁת as so designated as particular roots following *HALOT.*

While the words תעב, תּוֹעֵבָה, and חָלָל could be included in these lexical searches, and while including them does affect the density percentages, each has challenges. The noun חָלָל is ordinarily a non-cultic term for one who is pierced or slain (*HALOT,* s.v. חָלָל). Ezekiel’s concern for pollution caused by corpses and bones might mean that the word has purity overtones in Ezekiel (cf. W. Dommershausen, “חָלָל *chālal* II,” *TDOT* 4:419.). Carol A. Newsom, “A Maker of Metaphors – Ezekiel’s Oracles Against Tyre,” *Int* 38, no. 2 [1984]: 159–60, has observed this as a word play in Ezekiel 28. To be safe, however, I have omitted it at the initial search stage.

The words תעב and תּוֹעֵבָה do occur frequently in Ezekiel (2x for תעב; 43x for תּוֹעֵבָה), these words have been evaluated differently by writers as relates to our approach in this chapter. For example, Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24,* trans. Ronald E. Clements, Hermeneia [Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979], 190, argues that Ezekiel uses תּוֹעֵבָה comprehensively for sins of cultic impurity (cf. Paul Humbert, “Le substantive *to‘ēbā* et le verbe *t‘b* dans l’Ancien Testament,” *ZAW* 72, no. 3 [1960]: 217–37; H. –D. Preuss, “ תּוֹעֵבָה *tô‘ēḇā*; תעב *t‘b,” TDOT* 15:598). Winston H. Pickett, “The Meaning and Function of T‘B/TO‘EVAH in the Hebrew Bible” [PhD diss., Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion, 1985], 267, 285–6, however, argues that the word cannot be limited to cultic sins, even in Ezekiel. I tend to side with Zimmerli et al., yet due to the ambiguity, I have omitted תעב and תּוֹעֵבָה at the initial stage of concordance work.

[2] This is based on percentages generated in Bibleworks 8 and following a similar methodology to Francis I. Anderson and A. Dean Forbes, “‘Prose Particle’ Counts of the Hebrew Bible,” in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Sixtieth Birthday,* ed. Carol L. Meyers and M. O’Connor (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 165–183.

[3] Ka Leung Wong, “Profanation/Sanctification and the Past, Present, and Future of Israel in the Book of Ezekiel,” *JSOT* 28, no. 2 (2003): 210–11.

[4] Ka Leung Wong, *The Idea of Retribution in the Book of Ezekiel,* VTSup LXXXVII (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 120.

McKeating has observed significant differences and idiosyncrasies exhibited by the use of the semantic domain of purity/impurity:

> Where the Ezekiel tradition differs markedly from earlier prophetic literature is not in the sins specified, but in the language in which they are spoken of. The book uses for preference the priestly/cultic language of defilement. . . . Along with the characteristic way of speaking about sin as "abomination" and defilement goes a characteristic emphasis on grace mediated through purification and expiation.[5]

Indeed, the role of purity and impurity has been recognized as a dominant feature of the book's rhetoric, such that Armin Siedlecki could lament its neglect in 1991:

> [T]he rhetoric of purity and defilement in the Hebrew canon has received little attention from biblical or literary scholars. Only a small number of studies have touched on the idea of pollution in Torah and Talmud. Furthermore, the book of Ezekiel, the style and content of which is undeniably characterised by concerns regarding contamination and purification, has been almost completely ignored by analyses of purity notions in early Israel. This neglect is especially surprising in light of the significant historical location of Ezekiel's rhetoric in regard to pollution and defilement.[6]

Correctives have been made since Siedlecki. Some researchers have taken up the theme of purity in Ezekiel in a sustained, focused manner, as evidenced by the dissertations of Albert Wei Tsin Miao,[7] Tova Ganzel,[8] and Lalnunzira Bungsut.[9]

Research on purity in the OT has made regular use of Ezekiel due to the book's recognized relationship to both P ("priestly source" or "priestly Torah") and HC ("holiness code") classified texts.[10] And yet most scholarship in this area has followed a similar tack: taking account *of* Ezekiel though neglecting to probe Ezekiel's unique contribution in detail.[11] Some

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[5] Henry McKeating, *Ezekiel,* OTG (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 86, 88.

[6] Armin Siedlecki, "Purity and Power: A Rhetorical Study of the Ideology of Purity and Defilement in the Book of Ezekiel," (M.A. thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 1991), 5.

[7] Albert Wei Tsin Miao, "The Concept of Holiness in the Book of Ezekiel" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1998).

[8] Tova Ganzel, "The Concept of Holiness in the Book of Ezekiel" (Hebrew) (PhD diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2005).

[9] Lalnunzira Bungsut, "Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel" (PhD diss., Graduate Theological Union, 2016).

[10] For a survey of the state of research, see Wil Rogan, "Purity in Early Judaism: Current Issues and Questions," *CurBR* 16, no. 3 (2018): 309–39.

[11] For typical examples, see Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Pollution, Purification, and Purgation in Biblical Israel," in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of his Sixtieth Birthday,* ed. Carol. L. Meyer and M. O'Connor (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 406–9; Susan Haber, *"They Shall Purify Themselves": Essays on Purity in Early Judaism,* ed. Adele Reinhartz, EJL 24 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008); Philip Peter Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World,* LHBOTS 106 (London: T&T Clark, 1992); Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

studies have made corrections. Jonathan Klawans draws more attention to Ezekiel, describing his input to the discussion as "the prophetic critique in transformation."[12] Similarly, Ellen van Wolde singles out Ezekiel 18, 22, and 33 for quantitative and qualitative reasons in her study on the cognitive processing of the lexeme טמא.[13] And yet, while a recently edited volume on purity contains a chapter on Ezekiel by Michael Konkel, the chapter focuses narrowly on Ezekiel 40–48.[14] In sum, Ezekiel's unique contribution to understanding purity in ancient Israel and Judah has been utilized, though not evenly, in extant research.

Purity and Ezekiel's Priestly Identity

With the advent and expansion of inner-biblical interpretation as a well-defined and widely-practiced methodology, the role that purity and holiness played in Ezekiel relative to other OT writings has become better understood. Michael A. Lyons avers that the way in which Ezekiel "diagnoses Israel's problem and offers a solution" uses "priestly ideology and traditions," which ideology and traditions are cast chiefly in purity concerns.[15] And when noting the "frequent use of priestly language" that is unsurprising for a priest-prophet like Ezekiel, purity and holiness dominate the examples.[16] In light of this, it is interesting to note how the authors who contributed to the flurry of studies on Ezekiel's priestly identity have assessed that identity relative to purity concerns.

When Odell argued that Ezekiel's prophetic commission involved relinquishing his priestly office, purity played a significant role. She depicts the situation as follows: Ezekiel finds himself in an impure land among an impure people and is even forced to practice sign-acts that render him impure.[17] And yet, as there is no temple within which he can affect the purification of

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[12] Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 94–97.

[13] Ellen van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies: When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition, and Context* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 211, 238–51.

[14] Michael Konkel, "The System of Holiness in Ezekiel's Vision of the New Temple (Ezek 40–48)," in *Purity and the Forming of Religions Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean World and Ancient Judaism,* ed. Christian Frevel and Christophe Nihan, Dynamics in the History of Religion 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 429–55.

[15] Michael A. Lyons, *An Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* T&T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 19. For Lyons' inner-biblical methodology, see idem, *From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel's Use of the Holiness Code,* LHBOTS 507 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 47–75.

[16] Lyons, *Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* 36.

[17] Margaret S. Odell, "You Are What You Eat: Ezekiel and the Scroll," *JBL* 117, no. 2 (1998): 247; Odell is unclear about whether she believes that Ezekiel actually consumed bread cooked over human waste.

the people, he cannot offer and consume the חטאת and lacks the typical structure for staving off the effects of impurity. And so Odell concludes: "Ezekiel's purity is now of value to no one. Unable to offer sacrifices that would harness his purity to the greater good of the community, Ezekiel has become a vestigial member of the body politic."[18] It is noteworthy that Odell limits her purview to Ezekiel's concern for his own *personal* purity as it relates to his priestly identity, perhaps explaining why purity takes up so little of her article despite its purported importance.

In the years following Odell, most writers have taken up this question of purity, though unequal attention has been devoted to the topic. T. J. Betts engages Odell's arguments explicitly and directly, although his focus is on Ezekiel's concern for his own personal purity, citing chiefly Ezekiel's objection to eating food cooked over human waste (Ezek 4:12–14) and Ezekiel's non-mourning his wife's death (Ezek 24:15–27) as speaking to Ezekiel's priestly status.[19] Against Odell, Betts describes any impurity Ezekiel might have contracted in exile as temporary and capable of being remedied by future purification. Consequently, impurity "does not necessitate the complete abolishment of the office or the prohibition from future service."[20] While Betts does hint at connections between purity legislation and the profile of Ezekiel's oracles of restoration,[21] he has largely left this unexplored, with the exception of accounting for Ezekiel's presence (albeit visionary) in the holy space of the ideal temple in Ezek 40–48. He notes (1) that the temple's fortress-like design has the protection against profanation at its core and (2) that Ezekiel's presence in this temple speaks to his authorization to be there.[22] Corrine L. Patton's treatment is exclusively concerned with personal purity. It plays a minor role in her overall treatment of priestly identity, merely noting its function as elevating Ezekiel "to the pinnacle of the priestly group"[23] and defining what is meant by Ezekiel's "righteousness."[24] Iain M. Duguid notes purity as a feature in pre-exilic priestly materials and, following Peter R.

[18] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 240.

[19] T. J. Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest: A Custodian of Tôrâ,* StBibLit 74 (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2005), 61–63.

[20] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 57.

[21] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 65. Betts draws on Marvin Sweeney's article, to be discussed below.

[22] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 74.

[23] Corrine L. Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile: Ezekiel as a Literary Construct," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 81, cf. 84.

[24] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 83.

Ackroyd, as a general phenomenon of the exilic and post-exilic periods.[25] He mentions Ezekiel's concern for personal purity and the significance of purity as it relates to his visionary tour of the temple (the core of which Betts cites, as noted above).[26] Duguid's unique contribution, however, is to understand Ezekiel's commission as a "watchman" (צֹפֶה) as having (chiefly) priestly overtones, drawing lines between righteous and wicked especially as these groups are also depicted in terms of clean and unclean.[27]

In contrast to the previously mentioned writers, Marvin A. Sweeney and Andrew Mein highlight the importance of purity. Sweeney notes concern for Ezekiel's personal purity, citing Odell's observations stated above, arguing that though "eating impure food and cutting his hair mark him as impure," they nonetheless "do not indicate that he has given up his priestly status and role."[28] Where Sweeney makes inroads to the potential payout of purity for priestly identity is in connecting Ezekiel's personal purity with that of the temple:

> Ezekiel is simply a priest who, like the sanctuary in Jerusalem, has been profaned and will need to be purified . . . . His eating of common food rather than the sacred portions of the Temple sacrifices and the shaving of his hair and beard both symbolize his own loss of sanctify as priest during a period when the holy precinct of the Temple itself can no longer claim pure or holy status while it stands under conditions of siege as a punishment for the profanation within.[29]

Yet what is significant is that Ezekiel 1–7, the textual unit describing Ezekiel's own concern for purity (yet also his inevitable impurity due to the divine command to perform defilement causing actions), is followed by a major textual unit in Ezekiel 8–11 wherein the temple itself is purified,

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[25] Iain M. Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place: Ezekiel's Contribution to the History of the Old Testament Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 45, 48 n.19. Duguid makes reference to Peter R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.,* OTL (Philadelphia, PA; Westminster, 1968), 101, where Ackroyd posits both the exilic age and the sixth century as one of uncertainty about God's power to provide for Israel.

[26] Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place," 53, 55–56. Note too his emphasis on sacrifice in the visionary temple as explicitly intended "'to cleanse the sanctuary,' in keeping with the general emphasis of these chapters on purification" (Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place," 58).

[27] Duguid, "Putting Priests in their Place," 52.

[28] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 128. Sweeney states that YHWH relented, thus Ezekiel did not consume impurity causing food. See Marvin A. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary,* Reading the Old Testament (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 39.

[29] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 133.

the prerequisite event for Ezekiel as a priest to purify an impure people.[30] Sweeney concludes with three purity-related topics that demonstrate the ongoing role of Ezekiel's priestly identity. First, there is Ezekiel's concern for the sanctity of YHWH's name, something he states was "the fundamental concern of the Zadokite priesthood."[31] Second, Sweeney interprets Ezekiel's actions in the wake of his wife's death as done in service of his ongoing personal purity.[32] Third, he notes the theme of purity playing a significant role in Ezek 37 and 38–39, oracles of restoration involving bones and the land. Though Ezek 37 has traditionally been read with an eye toward the motif of resurrection in the OT, Sweeney urges readers to consider its significance for issues of priestly purity:

> Death is the fundamental cause of impurity in priestly thought; as noted above, priests stand between death and life, and they are to have very limited contact with the dead. Consequently, the restoration of life to the dead in Ezekiel 37 constitutes an important metaphor for the restoration and resanctification of Israel . . . . The Gog of Magog oracles in Ezekiel 38–39 fill a similar role, except that they represent the purification of the world or creation at large rather than only Israel . . . . [T]he significance of the passage lies in the purification of the land once Gog is defeated.[33]

Sweeney notes the process described in Ezek 39 for properly burying impurity-causing corpses and connects the fires which burn for seven years to this process, the conclusion of which results in the land being cleansed and YHWH's name no longer being profaned.[34] Though still a relatively short study, Sweeney has expanded the reach of purity for understanding, noting that Ezekiel's personal concerns for purity relate to his solidarity with the people as a priest and that Ezekiel's view of restoration is cast in the language of purity and cleansing.

Mein's article[35] and published dissertation[36] engage the concept of purity in most detail. Noting that "the concepts associated with ritual and purity . . . dominate so much of the prophet's

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[30] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 134–27. Sweeney has elsewhere provided a detailed exegesis of the purification implications of Ezek 8–11: idem, "The Destruction of Jerusalem as Purification in Ezekiel 8–11," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 144–55.

[31] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 138.

[32] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 139. This observation was also utilized by Betts, as noted above.

[33] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 139–40.

[34] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 140.

[35] Andrew Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary, Character, and Anonymous Artist,* ed. J.C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 199–213.

[36] Andrew Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

moral discourse,"[37] Mein offers a description of Ezekiel as a priest in exile, which centers on the role that ritual—specifically ritual as it relates to clean and unclean—plays in the theological shape of the book as a whole. Interacting with Thomas Renz, he writes: "Renz is right to stress the importance of purity in Ezekiel's vision of the future, but he may have underestimated the prevalence of ritual concerns throughout the book and thereby also their potential importance for the maintenance of community and identity in exile."[38] This prevalence is evident in "three distinct, if overlapping aspects of this ritual focus, all of which contribute to the image of Ezekiel as a priest."[39] First, Ezekiel's sign-act concerning unclean food (Ezek 4:9–17) illustrates Ezekiel's concern for his personal purity and his concern for how purity can be achieved in exile in general via accommodation of the purity laws to the exilic reality.[40] Second, Mein notes a ubiquitous "symbolic use" of ritual (purity) language. Ezekiel takes "language drawn from the cult to describe the actions of the people, and the state into which they have put themselves."[41] It is striking that more systematically than any other prophet, Ezekiel uses the "image of uncleanness to describe ethical states."[42] He explains: "Even when the sins described are not in themselves ritual, Ezekiel will often use cultic language to describe them."[43] Third, Mein addresses the role of purity in the new temple of Ezekiel 40–48, noting not only the unprecedented language predicated on the temple making it more highly defensive and impregnable than any other sanctuary descriptor in the OT (Mein highlights the use of חומה and the description of the gates), but also how Ezekiel's תורה of the temple is both "intense" and conceives of Israel's duty "almost wholly in ritual terms."[44] In addition to integrating purity and its attending ritual into broader Ezekielian ethical concerns, Mein has made able use of anthropology in showing the appropriateness (almost expectedness) of purity and ritual taking on

[37] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 137.

[38] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 141. Citing Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel* (Boston: Brill, 2002).

[39] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 204.

[40] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 205. Mein thinks well of Meindert Dijkstra's descripton of this account as an early halakhic interpretation on the topic of preparing food in exile. See too Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 141–42 for a parallel treatment of this text. Note particularly that Mein focuses, via Ezek 4:9–17, not simply on Ezekiel's personal purity, but on how the text reflects collective/group purity concerns.

[41] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 206.

[42] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 146.

[43] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 145. Mein provides a detailed exegetical defense of this claim on pp.147–75, focusing on the use of טמא and חלל as they relate to YHWH's name and the Sabbath, as well as the symbolic role of blood (general bloodshed and female blood).

[44] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 207.

a more central role in a situation such as exile: "[R]itual becomes more important in situations of social uncertainty, where there is doubt about the constitution or boundaries or the group."[45] He thus concludes: "[T]o increase the importance of ritual is typical of social groups which perceive some threat to their continued existence."[46] We will expand on some of these same ideas below, but for now, it is important to note that Mein has anticipated the utility of trauma and migrant studies for a sociological understanding of Ezekiel's theological profile. All these support Mein's assertion of Ezekiel's ongoing priestly identity in exile and prove useful for this project's effort to assert the same.

Before proceeding further, it is crucial to consider Baruch Schwartz's analysis of Ezekiel's purity concerns since he does seem to recognize its importance and yet interprets it as speaking *against* Ezekiel's ongoing priestly identity. Though he admits that Ezekiel stresses contamination of the temple as the cause of YHWH's abandonment of the divine abode, and though he sees Ezekiel as indicting the pre-exilic priests for letting this happen while at the same time suggesting that in the future this kind of priestly failure will not occur again, Schwartz maintains that *during* the period of exile, the priests have no role to play. He claims that Ezekiel "does not place any of the responsibility for bringing about this improved state of affairs upon the priests, nor does he engage in the task of providing any such instruction. For Ezekiel, it is too late for priestly teaching to rectify the problem—YHWH alone, not the Israelites, will perform the purification of the future."[47] And so, in Schwartz's view, "the past negligence of the priesthood signals its *end*," and thus though Ezekiel does speak about purity and purity, nothing he says about this "constitutes torah."[48] He goes so far as to suggest that Ezekiel evidences his "total abandonment of the priestly role" via "radically new teaching about the maintenance of purity."[49] And contra most writers who see Ezekiel's sign-act in Ezek 4:9–17 as reflecting concern for personal purity, Schwartz claims that "Ezekiel made no real efforts to maintain his own priestly purity," contending that his objection to eating food cooked over human waste had

[45] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 139.

[46] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 140. Note, in these two quotes, Mein is building on a citation of and conclusions from Robert Wuthnow, *Meaning and Moral Order: Explorations in Cultural Analysis* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987).

[47] Baruch J. Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel's Role in the History of the Israelite Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 70.

[48] Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place," 70.

[49] Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place," 69.

more to do with disgust than purity.[50] It should be noted that Daniel I. Block's general criticism of Schwartz's essay applies to this question of purity: the issues are not quite so simple, the lines have been drawn too finely, and Schwartz's understanding of the (teaching) role of the priests is too narrow.[51] Schwartz has too quickly dismissed the import of the book's ubiquitous concern for purity when he claims that Ezekiel's teaching on purity is a "particularly telling example of Ezekiel's total abandonment of the priestly role."[52]

Purity Among Exiles:
Anthropological and Psychological Observations

It hardly needs to be stated that purity concerns play a role in Ezekiel's theological and ideological profile (and priestly writings in general). What accounts for this, however, has been variously stated. Daniel L. Smith-Christopher has observed that most theories of purity regulations arise out of theological commitments, citing the example of W. H. Gispen, who saw purity legislation as chiefly symbolic of the belief that Israel was a holy people who therefore must abstain from sin.[53] Yet often in the history of OT studies, purity concerns were attributed to a legalistic impulse of the priestly school (vis-à-vis the "vitality" of the prophets) and thereby viewed negatively as a decline.[54] Smith-Christopher notes that even when a positive read is given to purity concerns, as in the instance of calling Ezek 40–48 "utopian," this is still to treat purity legislation as "essentially unrealistic" and carrying "considerable contemporary theological baggage with it."[55] Furthermore, exclusively theological explanations tend to present "rather vague suggestions that the collection and editing of ritual law was a form of encouragement in the despair of exile."[56]

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[50] Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place," 70–71.

[51] Daniel I. Block, "In Search of Theological Meaning: Ezekiel Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 232–33.

[52] Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place," 69.

[53] Daniel L. Smith, *The Religion of the Landless: The Social Context of the Babylonian Exile* (Bloomington, IN: Meyer Stone, 1989), 144. For a more recent example following Gispen's trajectory, see Joe M. Sprinkle, "The Rationale of the Laws of Clean and Unclean in the Old Testament," *JETS* 43, no. 4 (2000): 637; "[T]he most important message conveyed by these laws is that God is holy, and man, conversely, is contaminated and unfit, in and of himself, to approach a holy God."

[54] See Smith, *Religion of the Landless,* 80, 139, 144.

[55] Smith, *Religion of the Landless,* 144.

[56] Smith, *Religion of the Landless,* 145.

Anthropology has observed, however, that ritual and purity play important social roles, especially among groups in "minority, dominated contexts," performing the function of "preservation and symbolic resistance of the group in question."[57] Smith-Christopher has more recently described purity as "nonconformity," a coping mechanism for "maintain[ing] identity against the pressures of dominant cultures," which is "essential to the survival of a minority witness."[58] In his work, Smith-Christopher has noted how Japanese-Americans, sent to internment camps during World War II, revived folk beliefs and rituals, investing many of these with new meaning, all in an effort to forge a new identity that would resist the identities imposed from above.[59] More explicitly invoking physical and ritual purity, he cites the example of Zionist Bantu churches in South Africa. These individuals portray their separation from those in the town via rituals, two in particular: First, they symbolically resist the influence of the town by preventing dust from the town from entering their worship by leaving dust-covered footwear outside the church building. Second, even "town air" is symbolically identified and banished ritual via liturgical shutting of doors and windows at specific points, even in stifling heat.[60] Though cross-cultural comparisons could be multiplied, two final examples stand out: the first, as it has been invoked by recent biblical research on involuntary migration. The second contains a modern parallel with ritual purity, priesthood, and exile.

In a themed issue of the journal *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* focusing on the social scientific study of involuntary migration as it relates to Jeremiah and Ezekiel,[61] three contributors invoked Liisa H. Malkki's study of Hutu refugees in Tanzania for illuminating the differences between Jeremiah and Ezekiel, particularly in terms of exilic city dwellers (the suggested focus in Jeremiah) and exilic refugee camp dwellers (the proposed focus in Ezekiel).[62] Malkki's research shows particularly how the concept of purity can be expanded and even mythologized

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[57] Smith, *Religion of the Landless,* 84.

[58] Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, *A Biblical Theology of Exile,* OBT (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002), 161. Chapter 6 is entitled "'Purity' as Nonconformity: Communal Solidarity as Diaspora Ethics."

[59] Smith, *Religion of the Landless,* 72–73, cf. 83–84.

[60] See discussion in Smith, *Religion of the Landless,* 83, 149.

[61] *HBAI* 7, no. 3 (2018).

[62] Liisa H. Malkki, *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995). For use of Malki's research, see C. A. Strine, "Is 'Exile' Enough? Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Need for a Taxonomy of Involuntary Migration," *HBAI* 7, no. 3 (2018): 289–315; C. L. Crouch, "Before and After Exile: Involuntary Migration and Ideas of Israel," *HBAI* 7, no. 3 (2018): 334–58; and David J. Reimer, "There—But Not Back Again: Forced Migration and the End of Jeremiah," *HBAI* 7, no. 3 (2018): 359–75.

as part of a concerted identity preservation effort, in this case, the effort of Hutu refugees living in camps. The Hutu she studied fled Burundi in 1972 and were now living in western Tanzania, either in a carefully planned yet physically isolated refugee camp called Mishamo or in the town of Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika. The Hutu living in Mishamo were well aware that not all Hutu refugees lived in camps. They viewed town life as a liability to Hutu identity and, as a consequence, viewed those Hutu living in Kigoma with suspicion and/or derision. The residents of Mishamo thus created a "mythico-history"[63] which viewed camp life as fundamental to being a Hutu exile and viewed as taboo any of the markings of an alternative experience of exile.[64] Malkki explains: "[T]he town refugees had become a mythico-historical category paradigmatic of the dangers associated with the relinquishing of displacement and refugeeness. Their place in the mythico-history of the camp shows how assimilation had become equivalent to a loss of purity."[65]

It is remarkable to see how the concepts of purity and impurity have been employed similarly to Ezekiel; various moral breeches (e.g., laziness, vagrancy, prostitution, drunkenness, petty theft, ivory smuggling) were deemed impure.[66] We noted this earlier in Mein's description of the "ritualization" of sin and ethics: "Even when the sins described are not in themselves ritual, Ezekiel will often use cultic language to describe them."[67] Those in the town associated with wealth and commerce were collapsed into a vocational category: merchant. Whether one was a cultivator, priest, student, or worked any number of non-merchant jobs, their affiliation with wealth and commerce made them "merchants" and thus implicated them in crimes related to merchant activities such as thievery and smuggling.[68] This assessment of impurity spilled over into the social imagination of the camp; Tanzanians (and consequently the Hutu town dwellers who lived in contact with them) were deemed *physically* dirty, with claims that they lived more closely to animal young and did not change clothes as frequently.[69] Yet Malkki notes the reality: "As an empirical question, of course, 'cleanliness' is of little interest, but considered as a form of social commentary on the relations of opposition in which people found their lives embedded, it

[63] Malkki discusses this in chapter 2, "The Mythico-History" (Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 52–104).

[64] "[The town refugees] stood for and even embodied imagined processes of assimilation and were thus a dangerous category" (Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 202).

[65] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 198.

[66] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 216.

[67] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 145.

[68] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 211, 216.

[69] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 145.

becomes more significant."[70] In contrast to the "merchant" Hutu from the town, those in the camp were kept from this wealth and commerce induced impurity due to the absence of wealth. The hard work of cultivation, vis-à-vis the purportedly easy life of commerce, provided a community free of impurity. (Note that camp residents held the vocational category "cultivator" regardless of their specific jobs.)

What is more, the camp itself was conceptualized as an agent of purification and/or rehabilitation. If town refugees moved to the camp, they would exchange their identity as merchants for that of cultivators and be restored to a suitably pure Hutu identity through the tests and lessons (i.e., the difficulty) of life in the camp, which would qualify them as "'a people' worthy of regaining the homeland."[71] While ritual actions apparently did not accompany this conceptualization of purity and identity, the expanded application of the category of purity as part of an exilic, camp-based, identity preserving strategy appears quite in harmony with that of Ezekiel's situation at what C.A. Strine has labeled "Camp Chebar."[72] Thus Mein's and others' observations of Ezekiel's purity-focused ethics find an echo in the situation of the Hutu, as has been observed by Malkki.

The second cross-cultural comparison involves the case of the Mandaean diaspora. Though Mandaeanism is frequently studied as an example of a gnostic religion,[73] its *endogamous* character also provides an *ethno*-religious character enabling it to serve as an analog to Judean religion and communal life, especially in the exilic period. As Mandaeism is a religion that places purity rituals at the center of its praxis and identity, it provides a significant illustration for our interest in Ezekiel's priestly identity.[74] The diaspora of the Mandaeans from their traditional home in Iran and Iraq began in the 1940s. However, it escalated significantly in the late 1980s and 1990s due to the war between Iraq and Kuwait.[75] This dispersion has been studied by anthropologists, psychologists, and religious scholars alike due to the significant trauma

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[70] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 145.

[71] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 221–22.

[72] Strine, "Is 'Exile' Enough," 301.

[73] E.g., Birger A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 314–32; Kurt Rudolph, "Gnosticism," *ABD* 2:1039; idem, "Mandaeism," *ABD* 4:500–502. For a nuancing of Mandaeism's complicated relationship to Gnosticism, see Edmondo Lupieri, *The Mandaeans: The Last Gnostics,* trans. Charles Hindley, Italian Texts & Studies on Religion & Society (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 8–10.

[74] For a survey, see Mehrdad Arabestani, "Ritual Purity and the Mandaeans' Identity," *Iran and the Caucasus* 16 (2002): 153–68.

[75] Majella Franzmann, "Mandaeism," *RPP* 8:21.

experienced by forcibly displaced Mandaeans, trauma most acutely felt in fear of cultural extinction and loss due to limitations placed on their praxis in the places of their exile.[76] A significant cause of grief and anxiety reported among Mandaeans is being "[r]efused permission to perform necessary religious rituals."[77] Angela Nickerson et al. explain how rituals not only provide cultural stability but also provide the resources for coping with the trauma experienced in exile, noting that inability to perform rituals causes something of a double wound: "Difficulty accepting the loss may also be particularly salient following sudden and violent losses in conflict-affected settings, given it is often difficult to perform important *cultural or religious rituals that represent transitional steps to accepting the loss*" (emphasis added).[78] And so, with the Mandaeans, we have a contemporary glimpse of how an exiled community with a central role for purity, ritual, and priesthood has coped with the exile. This will prove helpful as a point of comparison to Ezekiel.

Mandaean religious practice is famous for its rituals involving immersion in running water: *maṣbuta*, often called "baptism," although a very different rite from that practiced by Christianity apart from the shared elements of immersion in water and some overlap in the view of the rites' purifying symbolism and power.[79] This central role for rituals in running water (viewed by Mandaeans as a manifestation of the god *Hayyi*[80]) is why Mandaeism has been centered near rivers in Iran and Iraq.[81] However, access to waterways by Mandaean refugees for the purpose of *maṣbuta* is limited in many locations: "[for] Mandaean diasporas in cold places like Sweden, performing baptism at the banks of the rivers is almost impossible."[82] On the one

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76 Angela Nickerson, "Mental Health and Wellbeing of Mandaean Refugees" (PhD diss., University of New South Wales, 2009); Angela Nickerson et al., "Fear of Cultural Extinction and Psychopathology Among Mandaean Refugees: An Exploratory Path Analysis," *CNS Neuroscience & Therapeutics* 15 (2009): 227–36; Angela Nickerson et al., "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Prolonged Grief in Refugees Exposed to Trauma and Loss," *BMC Psychiatry* 14, article 106 (2014): https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-244X-14-106.

77 Nickerson et al., "Fear of Cultural Extinction," 229. Azam Naghavi, though not focusing on Mandaean refugees, notes the relationship between purity, trauma, and identity in her dissertation: Azam Naghavi, "'Double Strangers': Purity and Danger among Iranian Immigrant Women" (PhD diss., Monash University, 2014).

78 Nickerson et al., "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Prolonged Grief," 7.

79 For a discussion of the uniqueness of *maṣbuta,* see Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley, *The Mandaeans: Ancient Texts and Modern People,* AARTR (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 80–86.

80 Arabestani, "Ritual Purity and the Mandaeans' Identity," 158.

81 As stated by Olga Yoldi, "The Mandaeans: A Story of Survival in the Modern World," *Refugee Transitions* 32 (2017): 8.

82 Mehrdad Arabestani, "The Mandaeans' Religious System: From Mythos to Logos," *Iran and the Caucasus* 20 (2016): 267.

hand, this has led to trauma and stress, as noted above. But on the other hand, this has led to modifications of rituals. Mehrdad Arabestani explains:

> To solve the problem [of cold diaspora settings], the Mandaeans have made a pool inside a building, through, there is a disagreement between those who believe the pool can be supplied by city water as well, and those who believe the water must be supplied directly from *iardenā* [running water]. As regards to daily ablution, accessibility of *iardenā* is another important issue. For these reasons, the priests practically allow the believers to do their *rashāmeh* (ablution before prayer) and *ṭamāsheh* (ablution for removing acquired impurity and restoring purity) by tap water assuming it is 'running water'. . . . Some priests, especially those in the diasporas, show a more permissive attitude than those in homeland, something that conservative leaders do not endorse and believe this enters arbitrariness into ritual performance and causes confusion.[83]

While Ezekiel's novelty appears to be his expansion of ritual and purity language and categories beyond specific practices of ritual vis-à-vis the Mandaean emphasis on preserving the purity rituals intact even in the diaspora, there is significant overlap. First, both are unwilling to relinquish ritual and purity in the face of inability (whether real or apparent) to practice said ritual and purity. Second, both can be seen making modifications to ritual and purity that allow them to maintain their sense of identity to the ritual and purity as it was practiced before their displacement. And yet these modifications still come with a psychological cost as older Mandaeans see these modifications as an outright loss of Mandaean identity and face the genuine possibility that Mandaeism will be extinct in only a few generations. Nickerson notes this psychological toll: "Path analyses undertaken to investigate the relationships between fear of extinction, past experiences and psychological symptoms revealed that PTSD directly contributed to fear of extinction, with traumatic stress symptoms mediating the relationship between past trauma and fear for the future of the Mandaean culture."[84]

Related to this, though with a slight nuance that warrants separate treatment, is the effect that the forced migration of Mandaeans has had on the presence (and future viability) of the Mandaean priesthood. Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley recounts the near-tragic events of the cholera epidemic of 1831 that swept through Persia and present-day Iraq: "The cholera erased the entire Mandaean priesthood, leaving a decimated and demoralized lay population and only three or four sons of priests. Initiating one another into priesthood, Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun rescued the Mandaean religion from extinction and therefore merit hero status in

[83] Arabestani, "Mandaeans' Religious System," 267–68.
[84] Nickerson, "Mental Health and Wellbeing of Mandaean Refugees," 132.

Mandaean history."[85] And yet, as recent as 2010, it is estimated that the world population of Mandaean priests is minuscule: 10 serve in the (entire) diaspora, 27 in Iraq, and 4 in Iran.[86] Mandaeans feel this absence acutely. Buckley's interviews with Mandaeans living in the USA reveal a great concern for the souls of those who have died in exile without being able to receive the proper death rituals performed by a Mandaean priest. Some people nearing death have chosen to return to Iraq to die, despite its dangers, simply because priests can be found there. Yet many more have been unable to control the place of their death. Buckley recounts:

> After a while, I learn not to ask too many questions about the dead. It is a difficult problem for Mandaeans in U.S. exile who, then still without priests, cannot have proper death rituals . . . . I express my worry about the fate of Mandaean souls, where they might be now. But Lamea [the interviewee] prefers not to talk about it, not because she does not worry but probably because the problem is so immense.[87]

This challenge has led some to suggest that perhaps in the diaspora, the rules could be changed to allow a yalufa (a learned layperson) to do rituals ordinarily performed by a priest if a priest was unable to come.[88] On the one hand, this has not garnered much support; official priests are still "the only authorised ritual performers and the guardians of Mandaic tradition with an essential status in Mandaean identity."[89] On the other hand, this illustrates the pressures exiles face and the creative steps proposed (by some) to maintain an ethnoreligious identity with a central role for the priesthood in a diaspora where priests themselves are incredibly rare. It would be difficult to prove that the priesthood was viewed with the same kind of essentiality in ancient Israel and Judah as it is in the Mandaean diaspora. After all, Mandaean rituals require priestly officiated rituals at significant times not shared by Judah and Israel (e.g., in preparation for death). There is no sense that there was fear of priestly extinction in Ezekiel's day as there is for Mandaeans today.

Nevertheless, the priesthood was a central institution, and life in exile was forced to deal with the question of how religion was to be practiced without an active altar priesthood. The fact that Mandaeans have attributed heroic status to the few priests (Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun)

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[85] Jorunn J. Buckley, "Glimpses of a Life: Yahia Bihram, Mandaean Priest," *History of Religions* 39, no. 1 (1999): 34. Cf. Arabestani, "Ritual Purity and the Mandaeans' Identity," 157.

[86] Franzmann, "Mandaeism," 8:21. Buckley, *The Mandaeans,* 67, noted in 2002 that in the Midwestern United States of America (where this researcher currently resides) there is only a single (1!) Mandaean priest.

[87] Buckley, *The Mandaeans,* 29.

[88] Buckley, *The Mandaeans,* 67.

[89] Arabestani, "Ritual Purity and the Mandaeans' Identity," 157.

who prevented the extinction of the priesthood in the 19th-century cholera epidemic may provide insight into the community that preserved the traditions of Ezekiel ben Buzi. This is not to overstate the connection, but the Mandaean experience orients us to a particular community experiencing trauma over the prospect of its extinction, a prospect increased by the challenge of securing priests, debating modifications, and expansions to traditions and rituals that would allow it to maintain its historical identity in new and challenging circumstances.

Ezekiel's Priestly Presentation of Purity: Textual Selection

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, a concordance search of terms that fall within the semantic domain of purity/impurity reveals a high density of purity language relative to total words in the book, surpassed only by Leviticus and Exodus. By performing the same search within the text of Ezekiel, one can identify textual units that exhibit a higher density of purity language than other units.[90] Of course, this kind of statistical analysis is fraught with difficulty; thus, word counting calculation cannot be the primary indicator of a distinctive approach to purity in Ezekiel. It can, however, flag particular passages as having the potential for this approach, passages that can be further examined using more traditional exegetical and literary tools. In this research, we limit our analysis to the following:

- **Ezek 22:1–31**: Ezek 22:1–31 is more densely populated with purity terms than any other chapter in the book.[91] It contains three closely-related textual units which will be examined as a group.
- **Ezek 20:1–44**: This chapter coheres as a textual unit and ranks high in purity term density. Though other chapters are ranked higher in density we consider this chapter alone due to its literary integrity and its unique recounting of Israel's/Judah's history with substantial accents on purity.[92]

Of course, this analysis is, of necessity, quite selective. The textual unit that stretches from Ezek 33:21–39:29 contains several instances of purity concerns – particularly concerning the role of

[90] As a first step, the search tool in Bibleworks 8 was used to calculate the percentage of purity words relative to total words in each chapter. As a further test, a percentage was calculated using the words-per-chapter counts of Anderson and Forbes (Anderson and Forbes, "'Prose Particle' Counts of the Hebrew Bible," 174–75).

[91] Bibleworks 8 ranks it first with a percentage of 3.75%, and calculations using the chapter word counts in Anderson and Forbs rank it first with a percentage of 5.1%.

[92] Although note that while Bibleworks 8 ranks it third at 2.41%, calculations using Anderson and Forbes rank it fifth at 3.3%.

corpses and pollution of the land – and would be a fitting object of close study.[93] Likewise, Ezek 40–48 exhibits a high concentration of purity terms, in addition to a creative explanation of purity-related rituals in a utopian temple. (Note: these chapters will be taken up elsewhere in this research.[94]) A unifying factor between the two is how redemption and restoration are depicted in terms of purity and cleansing. Nevertheless, Ezek 22:1–31 and 20:1–44 provide a helpful glimpse into the role of purity in Ezekiel as a concern for a priest-prophet in exile.

Analysis of Texts

Ezekiel 22:1–31

Ezekiel 22 contains the highest density of purity/impurity language in the book and because of this, will be analyzed first. The chapter includes three separate oracles introduced by the divine word formula[95] (ויהי דבר־יהוה אלי לאמר):

- 22:1–16
- 22:17–22
- 22:23–31

In terms of *formal or syntactical* delineation, the three oracles of chapter 22 are neither connected nor are they differentiated from the preceding and following oracles. All of them serve as individual oracles subsumed under the date formula of Ezek 20:1 and within the textual unit of Ezek 20:1–23:49, which Sweeney has titled "Ezekiel's Oracles concerning the Punishment of All Israel."[96] *Thematically*, however, the three oracles of chapter 22 are connected and distinguished from surrounding oracles. In the following analysis, we will devote most of our attention to the

[93] Note that this study follows Tyler D. Mayfield, *Literary Structure and Setting in Ezekiel,* FAT 2/43 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 84–117, in viewing the date formulae as primary structural markers for the book of Ezekiel.

[94] See chapter 6, "Priest-Centered Eschatological Expectation in Ezekiel's Vision of the New Temple (Ezek 40–48)." For studies on purity that focus on these chapters, see Konkel, "The System of Holiness in Ezekiel's Vision of the New Temple (Ezek 40–48)," 429–55; Tova Ganzel, "The Defilement and Desecration of the Temple in Ezekiel," *Biblica* 89, no. 3 (2008): 369–79; idem, "The Concept of Holiness in the Book of Ezekiel" (Hebrew), 126–52; Xiubin Zhang, "Discourse Analysis of Ezekiel 40–48: Keeping God's Holiness" (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2017); Bungsut, "Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel," 213–240.

[95] For the divine word formula as a structural marker of secondary importance for Ezekiel, see Mayfield, *Literary Structure and Setting in Ezekiel,* 117–121.

[96] Marvin A. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 101.

first oracle (22:1–16)—a strategy taken by others analyzing purity in chapter 22[97]—and will treat the second (22:17–22) and third (22:23–31) oracles more briefly.

Ezekiel 22:1–16

The Epithet "City of Blood" (עיר־הדמים)

Upon an initial reading of Ezek 22, it may seem that its utility for mapping purity concerns in Ezekiel is minimal and that the density of purity language does not truly reflect a pervasive interest in purity. The first oracle of chapter 22 orients the reader to consider Jerusalem under the epithet "city of blood" (עיר־הדמים). Many interpreters read this epithet as chiefly concerned with the crime of murder.[98] After all, outside of Ezekiel, the collocation is found only in Nah 3:1, argued by most to be the source text for Ezek 22.1:

Woe, city of blood. All of it, a lie.	הוי עיר דמים כלה כחש
Plunder, full. Prey does not cease.	פרק מלאה לא ימיש טרף

Here in Nahum, Ninevah (Nah 1:1), referring *pars pro toto* for the famously destructive and bloodthirsty Assyria, is excoriated for its tyranny and, in this verse, is portrayed as a city "that has acted as a conqueror and assaulted and plundered others through the course of its rise to power."[99]

It is true that blood, particularly the phrase שפך דם, is a "metaphor for social ills" used frequently by Ezekiel.[100] Mein explains further: "Blood, and especially the shedding of blood, is his favourite image for violence in society, and this choice of image is another example of the ritualization of ethics to be found in the book."[101] And Ezekiel encompasses this shedding of blood/social sin within the realm of purity and impurity.[102] Nevertheless, as the mishandling of

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[97] Bungsut, "Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel," 160–84; van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 241–48; idem, "Cognitive Linguistics: A Cognitive Linguistic Study of the Concept of Defilement in Ezekiel 22:1–16," in *Biblical Interpretation and Method: Essays in Honour of John Barton,* ed. Katharine J. Dell and Paul M. Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 257–71.

[98] E.g., see Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 702, n. 16, who cites *Joüon* on the plural הדמים in defense of the attribution of murder.

[99] Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets,* Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 2:442.

[100] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 161; cf. Wojciech Pikor, *The Land of Israel in the Book of Ezekiel,* LHBOTS 667 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2018), 51–53.

[101] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 166.

[102] Bungsut, "Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel," 104, 182; Klawans, *Impurity and Sin,* 28–29.

blood is the quintessential act of impurity, Ezekiel appears to refer to Jerusalem as the "city of blood" due to concerns for ritual and purity.

The epithet "city of blood" (עיר־הדמים) is polysemic, although the language of purity that follows in the subsequent verses suggests that Ezekiel's use of it here collapses both social and cultic offenses into the realm of purity/impurity. What is more, in light of Ezekiel's frequent personification of Jerusalem as a woman and his focus on her sin/impurity in the very next chapter (Ezek 23), Eve Levavi Feinstein even suggests that "it is possible that the association of 'blood' with pollution here is meant to evoke menstruation."[103] This is quite reasonable in light of Ezekiel's treatment of נדה in the following verses (22:10; cf. 18:6, 36:17) and in light of the superimposing of two images (i.e., that of a bleeding woman and that of Jerusalem as a bloody city), a technique Ezekiel uses in 23:45 and 24:7–8 to equate female blood with immorality.[104] This kind of personification is common in Ezekiel. Still, it is striking that the epithet "city of blood" (עיר־הדמים) in Nah 3:1 is itself an extended metaphor that began in Nah 2:2 [MT], that draws on "the conceptual metaphor NINEVAH AS BODY." [105] The parts of Ninevah's body listed include the face, genitalia, chest (lit., לבב, 2:8 [MT]), voice, head, mouth, palm, and in 3:1, "blood"— עיר דמים. Thus Ezekiel, known for his employment of metaphors[106], utilizes an image that is already polysemic—referring to murder but also "embodying" or anthropomorphizing Ninevah—and further expands it, shifting the polysemy of Nah 3:1 to now cover both the crime of murder and cultic misuse of blood.[107]

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[103] Eve Levavi Feinstein, *Sexual Pollution in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 165. See too Elizabeth W. Goldstein, "'By the blood that you shed you are guilty': Perspectives on female blood in Leviticus and Ezekiel," in *Jewish Blood: Reality and Metaphor in History, Religion, and Culture,* ed. Mitchell B. Hart, Routledge Jewish Studies (London: Routledge, 2009), 68, n. 18; Nancy R. Bowen, *Ezekiel,* AOTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 134.

[104] Goldstein, "By the blood that you shed you are guilty," 59, 63.

[105] Karolien Vermeulen, "The Body of Nineveh: The Conceptual Image of the City in Nahum 2–3," *JHebS* 17, article 1 (2017): 14. For full listing of reference body parts, see pp. 13–14.

[106] For examples and surveys, see Karin Schöpflin, "The Composition of Metaphorical Oracles Within the Book of Ezekiel," *VT* 55, no. 1 (2005): 101–20; Newsom, "A Maker of Metaphors," 151–64; Lyons, *Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* 42–48; Julie Galambush, *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel: The City as Yahweh's Wife,* SBLDS 130 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 11–20; Sharon Moughtin-Mumby, Sexual and Marital Metaphors in Hosea, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 166–68; Joel K. T. Biwul, *A Theological Examination of Symbolism in Ezekiel with Emphasis on the Shepherd Metaphor* (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Langham Monographs, 2013), 4–5, 74–96.

[107] For a reading of sin and impurity via linguistic, specifically metaphorical categories, see Joseph Ching Po Lam, "The Metaphorical Patterning of the Sin-Concept in Biblical Hebrew" (PhD. diss, The University of Chicago, 2012), 411–36; cf. van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 241–48; idem, "Concept of Defilement in Ezekiel 22:1–16," 257–71.

Purity and Priestly Concerns Expressed via Parallelism

Several word pairs or triads in the first oracle (Ezek 22:1–16) appear in parallelism, highlighting purity as related significantly to Ezekiel's ethics. Block even suggests that "the heightened use of repetition and parallelism gives this oracle an elevated semi-poetic style. Although parallelism is a prominent feature of Ezekielian style as a whole, its pervasiveness here is exceptional."[108] The pairing of words is a common trope in Hebrew and other Semitic languages, both poetry and prose.[109] While this may, in places, reflect a conventional set of stock word-pairs (sometimes called "fixed-pairs"), psycholinguistics has noted the creative ways in which communicators forge associations between words.[110] Some of these word-pairs/word-associations place breaches of justice (some priestly, some seemingly non-priestly) in parallelism with matters of purity/impurity. Note the following:

v. 2

Will you judge? Will you judge the <u>city of blood</u>?	התשפט התשפט את־<u>עיר הדמים</u>
Then make known all her <u>abominations</u>.	והודעתה את כל־<u>תועבותיה</u>

We have alluded to the challenges of תועבה ("abominations") in this chapter already (see footnote 1). In v. 2, the words עיר הדמים and תועבה reinforce one another as concerned with purity. We have already discussed the purity/impurity implications of עיר הדמים, but note that in just a few verses (22:10–11), תועבה is paired with a series of sexual sins noted for their defiling nature. Reference is made there to "impurity of the menstruant" (טמאת הנדה) and making "impure via infamy/depravity" (חמא בזמה), drawing the word pair of v. 2 into the same conceptual orbit as vv. 10–11.

v. 3

A city which <u>pours out blood</u> in her midst, to enter her time	עיר <u>שפכת דם</u> בתוכה לבוא עתה
	ועשתה גלולים עליה <u>לטמאה</u>

[108] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 702.

[109] This is a heavily investigated phenomenon, particularly in following the discovery of the Ugaritic poetry. For bibliography, see Wilfred G.E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques,* 2nd ed., LHBOTS 26 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 143–44; cf. Yitzhak Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures,* AOAT 210 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984); Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Traditional Techniques in Classical Hebrew Verse,* JSOTSup 170 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 262–312.

[110] See Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism,* rev. and exp. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Dearborn, MI: Dove Booksellers, 2008), 65–72, and especially the psycholinguistic works cited in the notes. Also M. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 96–109.

And she makes idols upon herself,
to become unclean

In both v. 3 and v. 4, pouring out blood is associated with the impurity (טמא) that results from making גלול idols, a sin which “[i]n most of the cases . . . is connected with impurity.”[111] While שפכת דם and לטמאה do not fill the same formal or grammatical slots in the poetic lines, Adele Berlin explains that this is nevertheless a common way of achieving grammatical parallelism: “Many parallel lines are structured so that the terms which are semantically parallel serve different syntactic functions in their respective lines.”[112]

v. 4

With your blood which you pour out, you have become guilty	בדמך אשר־שפכת אשמת
And with your idols which you made, you have become unclean	ובגלוליך אשר־עשית טמאת

Note specifically that the spilling of blood causes אשם, which is in parallelism with טמא. While the noun form of אשם is found chiefly in P, the verbal form is more broadly attested.[113] As a word pair, however, אשם + טמא is found (apart from Ezek 22:4) only in Lev 5:2, 3; Num 6:12, all priestly texts.[114]

v. 5

Unclean of name	טמאת השם
Great of turmoil	רבת המהומה

These are but brief, parallel word-pair labels given by the scoffing of those who are near and far from Judah, and yet it is interesting to note the noun מהומה (turmoil), related to the verb הום, has its background in “the ideology of holy war.”[115] While trying to isolate the tradition history of “Holy/YHWH war” has been fraught with contention, there does appear to be a

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[111] Bungsut, “Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel,” 100.

[112] Berlin, *Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 57.

[113] D. Kellermann, “אָשָׁם, *ʾāshām*,” *TDOT* 1:431.

[114] These three texts are all assigned to P by Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Bible with Sources Revealed: A New View into the Five Books of Moses* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2003).

[115] Harry F. van Rooy, “הום,” *NIDOTTE* 1:1018. For general background, see Richard D. Nelson, “Holy War,” *NIDB* 2:879–82; Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel,* trans. John H. Yoder and Marva J. Dawn (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2000); Millard C. Lind, *Yahweh is a Warrior: The Theology of Warfare in Ancient Israel* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1980); T. R. Hobbs, *A Time for War: A Study of Warfare in the Old Testament,* OTS 3 (Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1989).

schematization of Holy War that was ultimately adopted into the Deuteronomic tradition and played a significant role therein.[116] In Deut 7:23, מהומה is the result of YHWH's interposition on behalf of Israel, clearing away the nations in the land of Canaan little by little. (YHWH literally "turmoils a turmoil"— והמם מהומה.) Following the מהומה, they will be destroyed (שׁמד). In Deut 28:20, however, Israel herself is the object of מהומה sent by YHWH. Among the curse sanctions for rejecting YHWH, Israel herself will receive the curse (המארה), the turmoil (המהומה), and the rebuke (המגרת) until Israel is destroyed (שׁמד). Ezekiel thus modifies this imagery, employing it as a feature of his purity-focused evaluation of Jerusalem.

vv. 10–11

[10] A father's nakedness, one has uncovered in you	ערות־אב גלה־בך
Impurity of the menstruant, they have violated in you	טמאת הנדה ענו־בך
[11] And one, the wife of his fellow, he has made an abomination	ואיש את־אשת רעהו עשׂה תועבה
And one, his daughter in law, he has made impure with infamy	ואיש את־כלתו טמא בזמה
And one, his sister – daughter of his father – he has violated in you	ואיש את־אחתו בת־אביו ענה־בך

These two verses are related to the "men of slander" (אנשׁי רכיל) in v. 9. Their wrongdoing is specified in vv. 9–12, alternating between 3pl and 3sg forms, though ultimately culminating in 2fs, showing that the sins of the "men" and "the man" (ואישׁ in v. 11) are the sins of personified Jerusalem. (The regular trope בָּךְ "in you" has kept 2fs forms in place throughout vv. 9–12; thus, the 2fs verbs in v. 12 are not as abrupt.[117]) This shift between symbol/metaphor and reality via deixis is a typical feature in Ezekiel.[118] In vv. 10–11, Ezekiel focuses on sexual misconduct, although cultic concerns have been found in v. 9 in that (1) the presence of the men of slander is "for the sake of bloodshed" (למען שׁפך־דם), something that has already been connected with impurity in vv. 3–4, and (2) there is mention of "eating on the mountains,"[119] an apparent

[116] Gwilym H. Jones, "'Holy War' or 'Yahweh War'?", *VT* 25, no. 3 (1975): 654–55.

[117] Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), 668.

[118] See Lyons, *Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* 44. For a study of this use of deixis to shift between metaphor and real-life referent elsewhere in Ezekiel (specifically Ezek 6), see R. Andrew Compton, "Deixis Variation as a Literary Devise in Ezekiel: Utilizing an Oft Neglected Linguistic Feature in Exegesis," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 28 (2017): 92–95.

[119] Though MT reads "to the mountains" אל־ההרים, BHS suggests that this means "on" listing "= ועַל" in the apparatus. Note that "[t]he prepositions עַל and אֶל are sometimes interchanges, especially in the books of Ezekiel and

reference to idolatrous ritual meals. Note that "eating on the mountains" has occurred earlier at Ezek 18:6, where it is paired with similar sexual misconduct resulting in impurity:

On the mountains, he does not eat	*אל־ההרים לא אכל*
And his eyes, he does not raise to the dung-gods of the house of Israel	ועיניו לא נשׂא אל־גלולי בית ישׂראל
And the <u>wife of his fellow he has not made impure</u>	<u>ואת־אשת רעהו לא טמא</u>
And to a <u>menstruating woman</u>, he has not drawn near (cf. Ezek 18:11, 15)	ואל־<u>אשה נדה</u> לא יקרב

In Ezek 22:10, the distinctively P sexual sin of cohabiting with one's father's wife,[120] ערוה + גלה, is paired with an issue related to physical (i.e., menstrual) impurity (נדה). A wanton disregard for purity is expressed by the fact that these men have violated (Piel of ענה [121]) this woman during her period of menstrual impurity. While some have suggested that rape is too strong of a translation, the word ענה here implies at least "the woman's unwillingness to acquiesce."[122] Significantly, it is not merely that they have violated women, but specifically women in an impure state.

Sexual sin intermingled with purity concerns are continued in v. 11. The three lines of the verse share a similar grammatical structure: ואיש את־ + Object + Verb (with compliment or adjunct[123]). The sinful actions (verbs + compliment/adjunct) of "the man" (אישׁ), all standing in parallel, are (v. 11a) "making abomination" (עשׂה תועבה), (v. 11b) "making impure with infamy/depravity" (טמא בזמה [124]), and (v. 11c) "violating in you [=the bloody city]" (ענה־בָךְ). Thus a less-specific sexual misconduct (v. 11c) is interwoven with explicit purity-related sexual misconduct (v. 11a–b). What is more, the objects in vv. 10–11 have tight associations with priestly material, specifically Lev 18 from HC[125]:

ערות־אב (nakedness of a father)	Lev 18:7, 20:11
אשת־רעהו (wife of his neighbor)	Lev 18:20

Jeremiah" (Christo H.J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar,* 2nd ed. [London: Bloomsbury, 2017], 331).

[120] For discussion of this collocation, see Risa Levitt Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul: Ezekiel, the Exile, and the Torah,* LHBOTS 358 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 42–43.

[121] See *HALOT,* s.v.. "II ענה."

[122] Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* 684.

[123] Following Robert D. Holmstedt, these terms are used as follows: a compliment is an obligatory constituent modifying a verb, and an adjunct is an optional constituent modifying a verb. See Robert D. Holmstedt, *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text,* Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible, (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 4–8.

[124] Note the adjunct בזמה is linked to sexual misconduct in Lev 18:17, 19:29, and 20:14.

[125] For parallels, see Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy,* 169–70, 175 (cf. 114–15, 117 for general associations). See too Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 40, 42–43.

אחתו בת־אביו (his sister, daughter of his father) Lev 18:9, 15, 17, 19

In sum, vv. 10–11 have cast a priestly hue over these sins of sexual misconduct. Bungsut notes Ezekiel's uniqueness:

> Ezekiel's formulation of criticisms against Israel with a picture of sexual wrongs might have close connections with Jeremiah's laments about adultery among his people, Hosea's against adulterous Israel and Levitical laws of the Holiness code. The influence of the priestly writings may also be felt. However, it is evident that Ezekiel clearly goes his own way. This is shown by the use of the idiom עשׂה תועבה "commit abomination with" in the context of sexual impurities in Ezekiel, which is not found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.[126]

These verses reveal a sustained parallelism connecting social and cultic sins.

vv. 12–13

[12] A bribe, they have taken in you	שׁחד לקחו־בך
For the sake of bloodshed	למען שׁפך־דם
Interest and profit you have taken	נשׁך ותרבית לקחת
And you have made **unjust gain** of your neighbor with oppression	**ותבצעי** רעיך בעשׁק
But me, you have forgotten	ואתי שׁכחת
declares the lord YHWH	נאם אדני יהוה
[13] Now Look! I have struck my hand	והנה הכיתי כפי
At the **unjust gain** which you have made	אל־**בצעך** אשׁר עשׂית
And concerning your blood which is in your midst	ועל־דמך אשׁר היו בתוכך

With v. 12, there is a shift to language more typically associated with "D," yet placed in parallel with priestly language. It begins with the accusation that a bribe (שׁחד) has been taken "for the sake of bloodshed" (למען שׁפך־דם), and while this language comes from the curses of Deut 27:25, we have already seen למען שׁפך־דם as a trope from vv. 3 and 9. In the following line a HC collocation, the sinful taking of "interest and profit" (נשׁך ותרבית; see Lev 25:36[127]), is associated with the Deuteronomic idea of forgetting YHWH.[128] And in v. 13, YHWH responds by striking his hand at (1) "dishonest gain" (בצע), a term that was placed in parallel with "interest

[126] Bungsut, "Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel," 176.

[127] Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy,* 178; cf. Samuel E. Loewenstamm, "נשך and מ/תרבית," *JBL* 88, no. 1 (1969): 78–80.

[128] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 92; Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972; repr., Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 357, 367.

and profit” (נשך ותרבית) in the previous verse, and (2) your blood which is in your midst (בתוכך), an expression repeated from Ezek 22:3.

vv. 15–16

[15] And I will scatter you among the nations	והפיצותי אותך בגוים
And I will disperse you among the lands	וזריתיך בארצות
And I will remove your impurity from you	והתמתי טמאתך ממך
[16] For you had profaned yourself in the eyes of the nations	ונחלת בך לעיני גוים
And you will know that I am YHWH	וידעת כי־אני יהוה

These verses exhibit several characteristics that we have seen already (purity parallelism and combination of priestly and Deuteronomic language), although they pose interpretive problems due to potential textual critical matters. The logic of v. 16—YHWH removing impurity, which then leads to Jerusalem profaning herself (both והתמתי and ונחלת as waw + perfect verbal forms)—is odd. LXX deals with this by translating ונחלת בך in v. 16 with κατακληρονομήσω (κατακληρονομήσω < 1cs form of נחל [= ונחלתי]), though this seems to be a misreading. Some translators follow this as insight into a more original 1cs reading (e.g., Zimmerli, Allen, Bungsut[129]), however translating ונחלת בך with a pluperfect/past perfect/iterative nuance (as we have done above[130]) not only seems warranted (i.e., the change from 1cs to 2fs invites us to consider that the verbs are functioning differently in the discourse), but makes good sense of thought progression (i.e., explaining the reason for the 1cs, waw + perfect verbs in v. 15): YHWH will scatter and purify *because* Jerusalem had profaned herself (with בָּךְ in v. 16 echoing language/continuing the theme encountered throughout the preceding verses[131]). In this reading, a past marked by profanation (חלל) begins to give way to a future hope that is also oriented toward purity concerns (something that will be expanded elsewhere in the book, e.g., Ezek 36:25, 29, 33; 37:23). Note that even if ונחלת should be translated future (as is וידעת in the next line), the fact of Ezekiel’s concern for purity remains, regardless of how one would wish to untangle this odd progression of thought (removal of impurity → profaning self).

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[129] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 454; Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48,* WBC 29 (Dallas, TX: Word, 1990), 30, 32; Bungsut, “Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel,” 180.

[130] See Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax,* 2nd ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 104–5; Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar,* 196.

[131] Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37,* AB 22A (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 457; Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* 670.

The first two lines of v. 15 uniquely combine priestly and Deuteronomic language. Kohn sees בגוים + פוץ in v. 15a as characteristically D terminology (cf. Jer 9:16 [MT 9:15]), even stating that "[t]he Priestly equivalent אזרה בגוים (Lev. 26:33) does not occur in Ezekiel."[132] Lyons has noted, however, that something more significant seems to be at play; Ezekiel uses an exegetical technique wherein an allusion is marked by "splitting and redistribution of elements in the borrowed locution."[133] What appears to be at work here, then, is that Ezekiel has employed a thoroughly (even if not exclusively) Deuteronomic expression for exile (עם + פוץ; Deut 4:27, 28:64; cf. 30:3[134]) and a priestly expression (גוי + זרה; Lev 26:33[135]), but has recombined them, giving a more priestly literary coloring to this Deuteronomic idea. We will witness the more sustained interleaving of D and P/HC language below when considering Ezek 20.

Ezekiel 22:17–22

Smelting, Dross, Refinement(?)

The second oracle of Ezekiel 22 is highly ironic. It utilizes the metaphor of metallurgy, which has significant potential (and precedent[136]) as a metaphor for purification but takes it in a surprising direction.[137] In Ezek 22:18–19, the image of dross (סוג/סיג) being separated from precious metals has its chief background in Isa 1:21–26.[138] There, Israel is personified as a city

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[132] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 88. For the Deuteronomic connection of פוץ, see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School,* 347.

[133] Michael A. Lyons, "Marking Innerbiblical Allusion in the Book of Ezekiel," *Bib* 88, no. 2 (2007): 247; cf. idem, *From Law to Prophecy,* 92–93, there called "splitting and recombination into parallel lines."

[134] Jason Gile, "Deuteronomy and Ezekiel's Theology of Exile," in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block,* ed. Jason S. DeRouchie, Jason Gile, and Kenneth J. Turner (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 290.

[135] Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy,* 101, 183.

[136] See Ezek 20:38 where the smelting verb ברר is used to indicate refining of the House of Israel; see Yitzhaq Feder, "The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East: Lexical Meaning as a Projection of Embodied Experience," *JANER* 14 (2014): 108.

[137] For historical and metaphorical descriptions of metallurgy, see Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel,* LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 164–76; Eveline J. van der Steen, "Metallurgy," *NIDB* 4:68–70; Hellmuth Pehlke, "Metallurgy," in *Dictionary of Daily Life in Biblical and Post-Biblical Antiquity,* ed. Edwin M. Yamauchi and Marvin R. Wilson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2016), 3:300–37; Robert Banks, *God the Worker: Journeys into the Mind, Heart, and Imagination of God* (Sutherland, Australia: Albatross Books, 1992; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2008), 47–81.

[138] Sweeney argues for Isaianic priority and posits the setting for Isa 1:21–26 between 732–701 BCE since "the passage presupposes normal trading conditions and an awareness of Assyrian policies toward its victims" (Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39: With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature,* FOTL 16 [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996], 85).

(קריה) where in v. 21, many reversals have taken place (faithfulness → harlotry; righteous ones → murders) and in v. 22, her fineries have become polluted or watered down:

Your silver has become dross	כספך היה לסיגים
Your beer is diluted with water	סבאך מהול במים

The corrupt leadership is exposed in v. 23, which results in YHWH announcing his judgment in v. 24, except that vv. 25–26 show his purposes to be ultimately restorative:

25 And I resolve[139] to turn my hand against you	ואשיבה ידי עליך
And I will refine (like lye) your dross	ואצרף כבר סיגיך
And I resolve to take away all your separations	ואסירה כל־בדיליך
26 And I resolve to restore your judges as formerly	ואשיבה שפטיך כבראשנה
And your counselors as at the beginning	ויעציך כבתחלה
Afterwards it will be said of you:	אחרי־כן יקרא לך
City of Righteousness, The Faithful City	עיר הצדק קריה נאמנה

What is more, reference to the crucible (כור) in Ezek 22:18, 20, and 22 has important inner-biblical connotations. In Deut 4:20, Egypt is described as a crucible of bronze (כור הברזל) from which Israel was taken (cf. 1 Kgs 8:51; Jer 11:4), though this expression has been interpreted variously.[140] And in Isa 48:10, YHWH has refined (צרף) Israel, testing (בחר [141]) her in the crucible of affliction (כור עני). The use of refining language, specifically צרף, links Isa 48:10 with Isa 1:25. And yet though Ezekiel references the crucible (כור), he avoids traditional language for smelting, stating instead that the House of Israel will be “melted” (נתך in vv. 20–22; cf. התוך in v. 22), a word used more commonly to refer to pouring out of divine wrath (e.g., Jer 7:20, 42:18, 44:6; Dan 9:11, 27; Nah 1:6). In fact, in v. 20, YHWH states, “I will gather (you) in my anger and in my rage” (אקבץ באפי ובחמתי), a characteristically Deuteronomistic expression for YHWH’s wrath.[142]

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[139] The first-person jussive (cohortative) forms have been translated as forms of “self-resolve”; see Arnold and Choi, *Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax,* 78.

[140] E.g., suffering and heat, transformation and hardening, purification, etc. For a survey of views, see Carsten Vang, “Israel in the Iron-Smelting Furnace? Towards a New Understanding of כּוּר הַבַּרְזֶל in Deut 4:20,” *HIPHIL Novum* 1, no. 1 (2014): 27, 32. Cf. Paula M. McNutt, *The Forging of Israel: Iron Technology, Symbolism, and Tradition in Ancient Society,* SWBA 8 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990), 249–60.

[141] The apparatus of BHS notes that 1QIs^a reads בחנתיכה (√בחן), a verb used of smelting in Zech 13:9.

[142] Kohn notes that P never describes YHWH’s anger in this way (Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 92).

The irony is that Ezekiel shifts to a metaphor of a crucible, immediately on the heels of an oracle significantly concerned with purity, yet does not describe the refining of Judah but her being destroyed. Nancy R. Bowen captures the jarring nature of this:

> Ezekiel's audience might assume that, as in Isaiah, they would undergo a refining process to remove their impurities or that suffering would strengthen their character (Rom 5:3–4). But Ezekiel goes in another direction. The metals are melted, not refined. There is no mention of purification or improvement. There is no indication of the end product . . . . YHWH is not trying to purify, YHWH is just melting Ore.[143]

Even though metals have been poured into the crucible in v. 18, the House of Israel is called the "dross of silver" (סגים כסף). And at the end of the process, the silver is simply a "melting" of silver that *remains in the midst* of the crucible (כהתוך כסף בתוך כור). Though several interpreters miss this stark picture,[144] Siedlecki (like Bowen) rightly identifies the contours of this oracle: "Ez. 20–22 [sic] demonstrates quite clearly that the heating of the crucible in Ez. 22 was never intended to refine or purify its contents, as had been the case with Isaiah's use of the metaphor. The focus is clearly on destruction."[145] This irony is especially acute when one recognizes that Ezekiel is a priest and thus one who is highly concerned with purity. The purifying crucible does not do what we see in Ezek 22:15, where YHWH says: "I will remove your impurity from you" (והתמתי טמאתך ממך). Instead of removing Judah's impurity, the crucible removes them!

Ezekiel 22:23–31

Purity and Priestly Failure

In the final oracle of Ezekiel 22, specific purity language occurs in two places. First, in v. 24, two predications (in parallelism) are made of the land (ארץ):

It is not cleansed	לא מטהרה היא
It is not rained on in the day of cursing	לא גשמה ביום זעם

The collocation טהר + ארץ is an important one for illustrating a priestly concern for purity in Ezekiel and will play a significant role in the restoration oracles of Ezek 36:16–38 and 39:11–16.

[143] Bowen, *Ezekiel,* 135-36.
[144] McNutt, *The Forging of Israel,* 239; Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 114.
[145] Siedlecki, "Purity and Power," 69.

Unfortunately, space does not allow for a consideration of these passages or this idea.[146] Second, the oracle inveighs against the priests in v. 26 chiefly for their failures in the realm of purity. This verse highlights several features of Ezekiel's overall treatment of purity which we consider in turn.

v. 26

As for her priests	כהניה
a) They have violenced my Torah	חמסו תורתי
b) And they have profaned my holy things	ויחללו קדשי
c) Between holy and profane, they have not divided	בין־קדש לחל לא הבדילו
d) And between impure and clean, they have not made known	ובין־הטמא לטהור לא הודיעו
e) And from my Sabbaths, they have hidden their eyes	ומשבתותי העלימו עיניהם
f) And I am profaned in their midst	ואחל בתוכם

The parallels between 22.26 and Zeph 3.4 are accepted by most as Ezekiel demonstrating dependence on Zephaniah.[147] Yet Ezekiel has made changes to Zephaniah's material relevant to our inquiry. First, condemnation of priests has been promoted in the order of leaders. (The order in Zeph 3:3–4, 1. Officials, 2. Judges, 3. Prophets, 4. Priests, has been rearranged in Ezekiel 22:25–29 to 1. Prophets, 2. Priests, 3. Princes, 4. Prophets [again], 5. People of the land.) Second, Zephaniah's items of accusation (profanation of holy → violencing Torah) have been reversed by Ezekiel (violencing Torah → profanation of holy), a common way of marking literary dependence (i.e., Seidel's Law).[148] Third, the singular noun קֹדֶשׁ ("that which is holy") in Zephaniah is changed to plural קָדָשַׁי ("my holy things") in Ezekiel, which Lyons identifies as "a technical term for priestly sacred donations (cf. Lev 22:2–16)."[149] And fourth, Ezekiel adds three more accusations and one result, which further sharpens the purity profile of his priestly critique. It is to the content of his critique that we now turn.

[146] Readers are directed to the survey of Pikor, *The Land of Israel in the Book of Ezekiel,* 55–57, 138–142, which highlights purity concerns in judgment and restoration relative to the land.

[147] See discussion in Lyons, *Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* 106–10. Ronald M. Hals, *Ezekiel,* FOTL 19 [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989], 162, however, notes that the similarities may be the result of "common legal language," and Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel,* VTSup 56 [Leiden: Brill, 1994], 72, notes a recent attempt to posit Zephaniah's dependence on Ezekiel.

[148] See Lyons, Marking Innerbiblical Allusion," 245–47.

[149] Lyons, *Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* 108.

Three key features stand out about v. 26a חמסו תורתי (they have violenced my Torah), the first line of the accusation. First, the verse unpacks what Ezekiel has in mind in v. 26a when he speaks of violencing the Torah.[150] Since the Torah is violenced specifically due to failure in the realm of purity, Ezekiel seems to be using the word Torah as a metonymy for the Torah's specific cultic/purity-related prescriptions.[151] P. J. Harland explains:

> The violence to the law manifested itself in the contravention of the ideology of separation with everything kept in its allotted place: clean and unclean, holy and profane. The impure had been allowed to infiltrate into the Temple to profane what was holy. The Sabbaths were disregarded and no difference was taught between clean and unclean, holy and common (cf. Lev 11:47; 20:25). As in violent crime where there is trespass on, and infringement of people's dignity, so the priests had caused the profane to break into areas where it should not have entered. They had violated the sacred areas.[152]

Harland further notes that the verb חמס is especially effective for highlighting Ezekiel's concern for purity:

> Given this impurity and pollution [i.e., for which Ezekiel has critiqued Judah], the term doing *ḥāmās* to the law was most appropriate. As we have noted *ḥāmās* is a term which is closely linked with bloodshed, and the pollution which arose therefrom. A people that did *ḥāmās*, who committed violence, were guilty of polluting the land by the blood which had been shed. . . . By the time of the exile the land is seen as thoroughly polluted (1 Kgs 14:24; Jer 2:7; Hos 6:8). By employing the term *ḥāmās* in connection with the law, Ezekiel is pointing to this pollution which had occurred.[153]

Some interpreters, however, seem uncomfortable with what appears to be too narrow a focus on the cult. E.g., Block reaches for more breadth: "Although the present context places the emphasis entirely on ceremonial aspects of the Torah, *presumably their crimes extended to violations of ethical regulations as well*" (emphasis added).[154] Hummel follows suit: "Ezekiel concentrates on ceremonial violations of the Torah, but *its moral implications are surely included*" (emphasis added).[155] At a minimum, this *protest against* a narrow focus on purity shows that the passage *naturally reads* as narrowly focused on purity. And yet Ezekiel's other uses of תורה appear in

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[150] Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* 676, explains: "The rest of the verse simply gives major genres of 'doing violence' to the Torah."

[151] F. García López, "תּוֹרָה *tôrâ*," *NIDOTTE* 15:617, confirms: "On balance we see that in both P and Ezekiel the nature of *tôrâ* is predominantly cultic: the word refers to concrete ritual laws." Cf. G. Liedke and C. Petersen, "תּוֹרָה *tôrâ* instruction," *TLOT* 3:1418–1419.

[152] P. J. Harland, "What Kind of 'Violence' in Ezekiel 22?" *Expository Times* 108, no. 4 (1997): 113.

[153] Harland, "What Kind of 'Violence' in Ezekiel 22?" 114.

[154] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 725.

[155] Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* 691.

strikingly focused contexts: priests (7:26, vis-à-vis other religious leaders who might be expected to be concerned with Torah conceived more broadly), the temple and its “most holy” surroundings (קדשׁ קדשׁים, 43:11–12), the temple and care for its holy things (44:5, note the following verses), and the priests who, as part of their instruction in purity and holiness (44:23), shall keep YHWH’s laws (תורה) “in all my [YHWH’s] appointed things” (בכל־מועדי; 44:24), which is subsequently unpacked in terms of consecrating the Sabbath (ואת־שבתותי יקדשׁו) and corpse pollution (44:25–26). It seems reasonable here to read a similarly focused meaning to Ezekiel’s use of תורה.[156]

The second feature is the parallelism of the first two failures (v. 26a–b); violencing of the Torah is associated with profanation of holy things (קדשׁים + חלל; v. 26b – on the import of חלל to this analysis, see below). It is important to note that earlier in the chapter (v. 8), these same two lexemes were associated in parallelism, albeit there a verbal form of חלל was associated with a nominal form of קדשׁים:

My holy things, you have despised	קדשׁי בזית
And my Sabbaths, you have profaned	ואת־שׁבתתי חללת

As noted above, when analyzing Ezek 22:3, word association/matching can occur between different grammatical slots in the clauses. Here the association occurs between different parts of speech, what Berlin describes as “nominal-verbal” syntactic parallelism.[157] That these words are associated is made explicit in v. 26b, where they stand in syntactical relationship as verb + object:

a) They have violenced my Torah	חמסו תורתי
b) And they have profaned my holy things	ויחללו קדשׁי

Verse 26 will close with mishandling of the Sabbath (the object of חלל in 22:8; see the dashed underlining) associated with YHWH himself being profaned:

e) And from my Sabbaths, they have hidden their eyes	ומשׁבתותי העלימו עיניהם
f) And I am profaned in their midst	ואחל בתוכם

[156] Steven Shawn Tuell, *The Law of the Temple in Ezekiel 40–48,* HSM 49 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 44–46.

[157] Berlin, *Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 54–56.

Thus a relatively consistent associative matrix is evident among these oracles, helping to underscore that Ezekiel has purity violations chiefly in view in his excoriation of the priests.

The third feature is how the verb חמס personifies the Torah relative to how this Torah-violence *personally profanes* YHWH himself. In surveying the use of all nominal and verbal forms of חמס, Harland notes that חמס is most commonly used of persons: "Hence it can be seen that the term [חמס as a noun] is a strongly personal one as it is only used in relation to human beings. The eight uses of the verb *ḥāmās* are similar."[158] Harland notes that while elsewhere in the OT, the verbal form is not as consistently personal as the nominal form, it can be, and in the case of Ezek 22:26, he argues that it is: "As the *tōrāh* was a direct expression of God's sovereign will, it was a strongly personal body of instruction. By employing a word which was used almost entirely for violence towards people, Ezekiel emphasizes that abuse of the law was a direct personal affront to God. In doing violence to the law, the priests were attacking God himself."[159] Indeed, the charge against the priests rounds off this concern, moving from the implicit personalization of "they have violenced my Torah" (חמסו תורתי) to the explicit personalization of "and I am profaned in your midst" (ואחל בתוכם).

It was noted above that חמס was associated with חלל (to profane), a verb with strong purity associations. The verb חלל is highly concentrated in Ezekiel, with Mein noting that it "forms a distinctive part of Ezekiel's description of sin in cultic terms."[160] Throughout the book, the following are profaned: the temple (7:21–22;[161] 23:39; 44:7), YHWH—either himself (13:19, 22:26) or himself via his holy name (20:39; 36:20–23) – and the Sabbath (20:13, 16, 21, 24; 22:8; 23:38), which is related to purity concerns in both Exod 31:13–14 and Ezek 20 as YHWH is therein said to be the one who "sanctifies" (קדשׁ) Israel. As noted above, the use of חלל in Ezek 22:26b as profaning "my (YHWH's) holy things" (קדשׁי) is related to the parallel pair a few verses earlier (Ezek 22:8):

My holy things, you have despised	קדשׁי בזית
And my Sabbaths, you have profaned	ואת־שׁבתתי חללת

[158] Harland, "What Kind of 'Violence' in Ezekiel 22?" 112.

[159] Harland, "What Kind of 'Violence' in Ezekiel 22?" 112.

[160] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 154. Mein treats the use of חלל in Ezekiel fully on pp.154–60.

[161] For discussion of why "its beautiful ornament" (וצבי עדיו) of 7:20 (the antecedent of 7:21–22) refers to the temple, see Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 155–56.

The despising actions against YHWH's holy things are herein associated with polluting actions against YHWH's Sabbaths.[162] Considering that the issue of Sabbath is also breeched in v. 26e, the accusation of חמסו תורתי ("they have violence my Torah") appears to be specifically related to the Torah's teaching concerning purity. The theme of purity is continued in the next pair of parallel lines (v. 26c–d). So in sum, though reversing Zephaniah's order and leading with the accusation of violence of the Torah, Ezekiel appears to retain his accent on purity in his words against the priests.

The next pair of lines (v. 26c–d) posit polarities that have not been properly divided by the priests and seem to carry on the distinctively purity-related contours to the priests' violencing of YHWH's Torah. On the one hand, there is the relationship between holy and profane (קדשׁ and חל) and on the other hand, is the relationship between impure and clean (טמא and טהור).[163] Ezekiel uses nearly identical language to Lev 10:10–11:[164]

[20]And to divide between the holy and the profane	ולהבדיל בין הקדשׁ ובין החל
And between the impure and the clean	ובין הטמא ובין הטהור
[11]And to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes	ולהורת את־בני ישׂראל את כל־החקים
Which YHWH spoke to them by the hand of Moses	אשׁר דבר יהוה אליהם ביד־משׁה פ

Ezekiel's use of בדל (divide) is vital to this research, particularly as it is, according to Mark S. Smith, "a hallmark priestly term for expressing the division of space and time."[165] Smith further

[162] Note that the despising of holy things (בזה + קדשׁים) paralleled with the profaning of Sabbaths in Ezek 22:8 finds an interesting intertext in Mal 1:6–7 where priests who despise YHWH's name (בזה + שׁם) did so when they offered impure food (Pual of גאל, cf. Ezra 2:62; Neh 7:64; Mal 1:12). The verb בזה may have attracted a specific reference to purity among priests in the exilic and post-exilic period.

[163] For a full exploration of these polarities as they are applied to social stratification in ancient Israel and Judah, see Saul M. Olyan, *Rites and Rank: Hierarchy in Biblical Representations of Cult* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 15–62; cf. Jenson, *Graded Holiness,* 40–88.

[164] There is debate about issues of priority and dependence here. For a survey issues relative to Lev 10:10, see Esias E. Meyer, "Divide and be Different: Priestly identity in the Persian period," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 68, no. 1, article #1202 (2012): 1–6, http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v68i1.1202. Ezekiel's use of the late biblical Hebrew construction בין + ל, vis-à-vis Leviticus' standard biblical Hebrew בין + בין , has been mustered to posit the priority of Leviticus over Ezekiel: see Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship Between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem,* CahRB 20 (Paris: Gabalda, 1982), 113–15; Mark F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition: The Language of the Book of Ezekiel,* LHBOTS 90 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990), 117–19. The sophistication of analyses that has begun to emerge is reflected in Christophe L. Nihan, "Ezekiel and the Holiness Legislation: A Plea for Nonlinear Models," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America,* ed. Jan C. Gertz et al., FAT 111 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 1015–39.

[165] Mark S. Smith, *The Priestly Vision of Genesis 1* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2010), 90.

notes: "The association of the root in these priestly contexts is a common place of biblical scholarship."[166] In addition to what we find in Lev 10:10–11 (division between holy and profane, impure and clean), there are several objects of בדל in priestly texts: clean and unclean creatures for eating (Lev 11:47), Israel separated from "the peoples" (העמים; Lev 20:24–26), Levites from the general population of Israel (Num 8:14, equated with cleansing [טהר] in v. 15; Num 16:9, 21).

While Leviticus speaks of dividing (בדל) between both word pairs, Ezekiel splits up the verbiage. Here in Ezek 22:26, Priests were to divide between holy and profane (also in 42:20) and to *"make known"* (Hiphil of ידע) impure and clean. This seems to be a stylistic rather than a formal or technical distinction since in Ezek 44:23, priests "teach" (ירה) between holy and profane.[167] Teaching (ירה), making known (Hiphil of ידע), and dividing (Hiphil of בדל) appear related to one another in Ezekiel's thinking. Mein explains:

> It is clear that for Ezekiel not simply the priests' role as ritual performers is at issue, but also their failure to make distinctions between ritual categories, and to teach those distinctions to the community . . . . For the book's authors the priests' role as ritual specialists went beyond the practice of sacrifice: they were also theorists and teachers, who defined and regulated the rules of religious observance for the community.[168]

Yet Ezekiel's use of בדל and ידע in chiastic parallelism[169] is not so far removed from the בדל injunction of Lev 10:10 since Lev 10:11 proceeds to enjoin the *teaching* of statutes (ירה + החקים) upon the priests.

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[166] Smith, *Priestly Vision of Genesis 1,* 254, n. 31; cf. Annette Schellenberg, "'And God Separated the Light from the Darkness' (Gen 1:4) – On the Role of Borders in the Priestly Texts of the Pentateuch," in *Borders: Terminologies, Ideologies, and Performances*, ed. Annette Weissenrieder, WUNT 366 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 23–41.

[167] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 3 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1991), 615, sees Ezek 44:23–24 as a fusion of priestly roles as described in P and D.

[168] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 203. For a thorough survey of teaching in Ezekiel, see Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 21–39, 89–129, though note that Betts seems to posit to strict of an either/or approach to ritual practice and ritual instruction.

[169] Holy and clean are opposite poles from common and impure which has led to diagrams that relate the analogous categories (e.g., James Barr, "Semantics and Biblical Theology—A Contribution to the Discussion," in *Congress Volume: Uppsala 1971,* VTSup 22 [Leiden: Brill, 1972], 15; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 616). Ezekiel 22:26, however, lists the polarities chiastically:

A) Holy (קדש)
  B) Common (חל)
    C) Not Divided (בדל)
    C¹) Not Made Known (ידע)
  B¹) Impure (טמא)
A¹) Clean (טהור)

As this is virtually the only place in Ezekiel where the prophet inveighs against his fellow priests, two things stand out: First, though they are critiqued, the priests do not seem to receive as harsh of a critique as other leaders. Iain Duguid explains:

> Their failures and sins had resulted in the profaning of Yahweh in their midst. These are serious offences—yet even in these offense the priesthood is not *singled out* for blame. Not only the priests but the whole city of Jerusalem is guilty of having "despised my holy things and profaned my Sabbaths" (Ezek. 22:8). Overall then, the priests must be adjudged to escape the condemnations of chapters 1–33 with remarkable little blame, certainly in comparison to every other stratum of society.[170]

Second, Ezekiel excoriates the priests exclusively for failure in the domain of purity. This is especially striking in that purity even eclipses sacrifice. Friedrich Fechter observes: "It seems astonishing that there is no mention [in 22:26] of the sacrificial cult at all."[171] So in sum, Ezekiel 22 reveals a deep concern for purity, yet one that is expressed in several novel ways. Yitzhaq Feder views this as a rhetorical technique: "In light of the explicitly emotive character of these writings, it does not seem far-fetched to claim that the authors were deliberately extending the traditional notion of pollution to maximize rhetorical effect. This point is particularly evident in Ezekiel."[172] In the chapter's conclusion, we will summarize the implications of this for Ezekiel's priestly vocational identity, especially relative to the concept of job crafting.

Ezekiel 20:1–44

As noted above, these verses cohere as a textual unit that ranks high in terms of purity term density. Ezekiel 20:1–44 presents a "tendentious history"[173] or even something of a "parody,"[174] portrayed literarily as an answer to the elders seeking to inquire of YHWH in v. 1, and pragmatically serving as the basis for judgment found in prophetic judgment speeches, and the basis for hope in light of YHWH's plan to use this judgment as purgation and restore a

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[170] Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel,* 75.

[171] Friedrich Fechter, "Priesthood in Exile according to the Book of Ezekiel," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 28.

[172] Yitzhaq Feder, "Defilement and Moral Discourse in the Hebrew Bible: An Evolutionary Framework," *Journal of Cognitive Historiography* 3, no. 1–2 (2016): 181–82, n.21.

[173] Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2005), 583–84.

[174] J. Lust, "Ez., XX, Une Parodie De L'Historie Religieuse D'Israel," *ETL* 43, no. 3–4 (1967): 488–527; Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 613.

purified Israel to the land.[175] While this oracle is important for understanding Ezekiel's theology of history,[176] it also provides a glimpse into his exegetical use of earlier texts, which is valuable for understanding Ezekiel's priestly identity.[177] As was noted in our treatment of 22:15 above, Ezekiel is known for utilizing both D and P/HC material. However, in the case of D, the language is generally refracted through priestly and (often in this chapter) purity categories. While identification of D locutions has helped disabuse the idea that Ezekiel was dependent *merely* on priestly traditions, it also highlights the influence of Ezekiel's ongoing priestly vocational identity as he crafted a priestly-prophetic tradition.[178] In two separate publications, Kohn has systematically delineated P and D language in Ezek 20, so I will not reproduce it here.[179]

Ezekiel 20:1–44 recounts Israel's history in terms of past, present, and future to connect the behavior of the elders who have come to inquire of Ezekiel (v. 1) with the wonton rebellion of four groups from Israel's past: those living in Egypt (vv. 5–9), the first wilderness generation (vv. 10–17), the second wilderness generation (vv. 18–26), and those who finally settled in the land (vv. 27–29). These four generations parallel the four generations of Psalm 106, accompanied by a significant overlap between the two texts. Each text, however, traverses its own path, with Psalm 106 more closely following Deuteronomic theology and Ezekiel interleaving Deuteronomic and Priestly themes.[180] The structure of the four generations relates to this research as each generation is guilty of rebellion that relates to purity concerns. At v. 31b, an

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[175] Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 103.

[176] Lyle Eslinger, "Ezekiel 20 and the Metaphor of Historical Teleology: Concepts of Bibilcal History," *JSOT* 81 (1998): 93–125; Thomas Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte im Ezechielbuch,* BZAW 180 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988); idem, "Transformation of History in Ezekiel 20," in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel,* ed. William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 127 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 159–86;

[177] Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 365–67; Corrine Patton, "I Myself Gave Them Laws that Were Not Good: Ezekiel 20 and the Exodus Traditions," *JSOT* 21 (1996): 73–90; Dalit Rom-Shiloni, "Facing Destruction and Exile: Inner-Biblical Exegesis in Jeremiah and Ezekiel," *ZAW* 117 (2005): 194–202; Preston Sprinkle, "Law and Live: Leviticus 18.5 in the Literary Framework of Ezekiel," *JSOT* 31 (2007): 275–93.

[178] See Keith W. Carley, *Ezekiel among the Prophets: A Study of Ezekiel's Place in Prophetic Tradition,* SBT II.31 (London: SCM, 1975), 57–62; Jason Gile, "Deuteronomic Influence in the Book of Ezekiel" (PhD diss., Wheaton College, 2013); Corrine L. Patton, "Pan-Deuteronomism and the Book of Ezekiel," in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism,* ed. Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 200–15.

[179] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 98–103; idem, "'With a Mighty Hand and an Outstretched Arm': The Prophet and the Torah in Ezekiel 20," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 159–68.

[180] For comparison of the two passages, see Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 615–16.

inclusio is formed with v. 3b, bringing the first subunit – concerning the past and the present – to a close:

[3] Is it to inquire of me that you are coming? As I live, I will not be inquired of by you, declares the Lord YHWH.	[31] And shall I be inquired of by you O House of Israel? As I live, declares the Lord YHWH, I will not be inquired of by you.
הלדרש אתי אתם באים חי־אני אם־אדרש לכם נאם אדני יהוה	ואני אדרש לכם בית ישׂראל חי־אני נאם אדני יהוה אם־אדרש לכם

Verse 32 serves as a transition into the future-oriented second subunit of this oracle in vv. 33–44. The focus shifts from the judgment of YHWH against the present generation to his purgation actions—YHWH "purges" (ברר) rebels and sinners—and his restoration of a remnant. Upon restoration to his holy mountain (הר־קדשׁי), YHWH will accept, among other things, "all your holy things" (בכל־קדשׁיכם; v. 40). Of note, Ezekiel uses a typically P expression in v. 41: "With a pleasing aroma, I will delight in you" (בריח ניחח ארצה אתכם).[181] The result at the end of v. 41 is that YHWH will be manifested as holy in/by them (ונקדשׁתי בכם) before the onlooking nations. The structure and rhetorical thrust of vv. 32–44 is tricky due to a variation in deixis and redefinition of those labeled בית ישׂראל. Beginning with v. 40, the epithet בית ישׂראל no longer refers to the *rebellious* people (as it had in vv. 13, 27, 30, 31, and 39) but to those who have been cleansed and restored to the land.[182]

Our focus is on how this chapter provides a glimpse into Ezekiel's purity concerns which color the grounds for Israel's punishment. The contents of the chapter occur "[u]nder the heading of 'judging' his people (v. 4a), which is elaborated in legal style (see 16:2 and 22:2) as making known 'the abomination of their fathers.'"[183] Already in v. 4, the chapter is oriented to priestly concerns. First, Ezekiel is to engage in a priestly act of "making known" (Hiph of ידע; cf. the above analysis of Ezek 22:26). Second, what specifically he is to make known are the fathers' "abominations" (תועבת; cf. the above analysis of Ezek 22:2 and 11). Thus what follows is Ezekiel's understanding of the sins that are chiefly classified as "abominations" (תועבת).

[181] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 55–56.
[182] For analysis, see Compton, "Deixis Variation as a Literary Device in Ezekiel," 100–102.
[183] Hals, *Ezekiel*, 135.

The first generation of "the fathers" whose abominations are being made known were in Egypt, and YHWH purposed to bring them out of their slavery to the land of promise. In preparation for this, YHWH said to them:

[7] Each, the detestable things of his eyes, cast out	איש שקוצי עיניו השליכו
And with the dung-idols of Egypt, do not make yourselves impure	ובגלולי מצרים אל־תטמאו

In v. 8, Ezekiel will recount that the fathers did not cast out detestable things (שקוצים) and did not abandon dung-idols (גלולים), thereby repeating these two key nouns related to impurity via טמא in v. 7. (Note the parallelism of the verse parallels the two volitives: "sending away" [שׁלך] and not making impure [טמא].) The noun גלולים has received much attention in Ezekiel studies as all but 9 of its 48 OT occurrences are in Ezekiel, and this chapter attributes their worship to all four generations (see vv. 7, 8, 16, 18, 24, 31, 39). Its etymology has been sought in several Semitic cognate words, including a noun referring to a "heap of stones" or a "wave" (cf. Hebrew גַּל), a verb meaning "to roll" (cf. Hebrew Iגלל; Akkadian *garāru*[184]) or "to soil/get dirty" (cf. Hebrew IIגלל), and a noun meaning "dung" (Hebrew גֵּל and Iגָּלָל).[185] Daniel Bodi has offered the most thorough study of the word's etymology and function in Ezekiel, positing a single root גלל/גל which has a basic sense of "roundness," and a subsequently derived meaning of "excrement," the later in part because of the characteristically rolled/rotund appearance of excrement.[186] The association between גלולים and dung is significant as it also showcases Ezekiel's emphasis on purity. Bodi explains:

> However, the specificity of Ezekiel stems from his particular use of the term *gillûlîm* which he attaches to impurity. He uses this term for theological purposes. To reject the גלולים is equivalent to the requirement to purify oneself, because for Ezekiel they represent the personification of impurity and the one who possesses them and worships them defiles himself and becomes impure.[187]

[184] See Hayim ben Yosef Tawil, *An Akkadian Lexical Companion for Biblical Hebrew: Etymological-Semantic and Idiomatic Equivalents with Supplement on Bibical Aramaic* (Brooklyn, NY: KTAV, 2009), 66.

[185] Roots designated I or II are following *HALOT*. See too H.D. Preuss, "גִּלּוּלִים *gillûlîm;* גִּלֻּלִים *gilulîm,*" *TDOT* 3:2; M. I. Gruber, "Gillulim גלולים εἴδωλα," *DDD* 346. Note that the physical appearance of dung as rolls or pellets does suggest a relationship between both terms. Also similar in both orthography and physical appearance is the word גַּל "heap" or "pile of stones" (*HALOT,* s.v. "גַּל"; BDB, s.v. "גַּל").

[186] Daniel Bodi, "Les *gillûlîm* Chez Ézéchiel Et Dans L'Ancien Testament, Et Les Différentes Pratiques Cultuelles Associées À Ce Terme," *RB* 100, no. 4 (1993): 510, "provenant du fait que les excréments d'origine humaine ou animale manifestent souvent la caractéristique de rotondité."

[187] Bodi "Les *gillûlîm* Chez Ézéchiel," 509–10, "Toutefois, la spécificité d'Ézéchiel provident de son employ particulier du terme *gillûlîm* qu'il rattache à l'impureté. Il se sert de ce terme à des fins théologiques. Rejeter

It is commonplace to view feces with disgust, although in many religions, feces—like other bodily excretions—are assigned a polluting quality.[188] Yet many scholars note that the Pentateuch does not treat feces as unclean in itself and thus suggest that "in the Old Testament excrement is not considered ritually unclean."[189] This is only partially true. Since we treated this issue already in chapter 3 with reference to the sign-act in Ezek 4:9–17, we will speak only briefly of it here. Suffice it to say that not all Jewish groups limited their purity regulations on the Torah. Jodi Magness notes that while the rabbis did, the Qumran sectarians did not; they also used the prophets.[190] And while the extent of Qumran's teaching on excrement is debated,[191] there is textual and archaeological evidence that they treated feces as defiling.[192] What is more, there is Mishnaic language suggesting that the priests disagreed with the rabbis: "[T]he Mishnah's description of the toilet in the Jerusalem temple indicates that, like the Qumran sect, the priests considered excrement impure and therefore required immersion in a miqveh after defecation."[193] In sum, though scatological evidence from the OT is slim,[194] Ezekiel appears to have explicitly drawn together imagery of feces and impurity, thereby highlighting, via his preference for the term גלולים, this priestly concern.

Ezekiel 4:12–15 is the fulcrum for understanding the book's treatment of dung and impurity with its subsequent application of that to idolatry via the גלולים. Though we will not fully retrace our analysis from chapter 3, a few remarks are helpful here. In v. 12, YHWH commands Ezekiel to bake food using "rolls of human dung" (בגללי צאת האדם) for fuel. Ezekiel objects in v. 14 that this would result in his becoming unclean (Pual ptc. מטמאה). And so, in v. 15, YHWH relents and assigns cattle dung (צפועי הבקר [following the *ketiv*]) in place of "human dung-rolls" (תחת גללי האדם). These verses are often cited as significant for discussing Ezekiel's

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les *gillûlîm* équivaut à l'exigence de se purifier, car pour Ézéchiel ils représentent la personification de l'impureté et celui qui les possède et les vénère se souille et deviant impur."

[188] Concerning disgust, see Thomas Kazen, *Emotions in Biblical Law: A Cognitive Science Approach,* Hebrew Bible Monographs 36 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2011), 34, 88–89; concerning feces and purity, see James J. Preston, "Purification: An Overview," *ER* 11:7504.

[189] Isván Czachesz, *The Grotesque Body in Early Christian Discourse: Hell, Scatology, and Metamorphsis,* BibleWorld (London: Routledge, 2014), 99.

[190] Jodi Magness, *Stone and Dung, Oil and Spit: Jewish Daily Life in the Time of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 140.

[191] Ian C. Werrett, *Ritual Purity and the Dead Sea Scrolls,* STDJ 72 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 277–78.

[192] Jodi Magness, "What's the Poop on Ancient Toilets and Toilet Habits?" *NEA* 75, no. 2 (2012): 82–85.

[193] Magness, *Stone and Dung, Oil and Spit,* 139. For further description of the temple toilet, see pp.142–43.

[194] Though Gershon Hepner, "Scatology in the Bible," *SJOT* 18, no. 2 (2004): 278–95, has suggested that OT writers spoke of feces often via innuendo, making their treatment of the topic at times difficult to identify.

ongoing priestly identity due to the concern for personal purity; thus, the association of idolatry with impurity via an idol associated with feces is especially fitting.[195] Moving beyond Ezekiel 4 to usage throughout the book, Ganzel suggests that relating גלולים to dung (rather than other proposed etymologies) is also part of “the tendency of Ezekiel to formulate his words bluntly.”[196] And so a combination of rhetorical and priestly-purity concerns have motivated this terminology, as described by John F. Kutsko, “Besides the obvious mocking tone this expression evokes, it additionally conveys the sense of impurity, both physical and cultic (note Ezek 4:12, 15).”[197]

The use of שׁקוצים in Ezek 20:7, 8, and 30 is significant for several reasons. In Ezekiel, שׁקוצים are often linked with impurity (טמא) and abomination (תועבה). They made the sanctuary impure (טמא) in Ezek 5:11. In Ezekiel 8–11, the lengthy vision of the purging of the temple, בהמה שקץ “detestable beast” forms were found on the walls of the temple (Ezek 8:10), and these were examples of the התועבות הרעות “evil abominations” that were being committed therein (stated in 8:9). Later in the vision, restoration is depicted in terms of removing “all its detestable things and all its abominations” (את־כל־שׁוציה ואת־כל־תועבותיה; 11:18, cf. 11:21). In Ezek 37:23, another aspect of restoration is that the people will no longer make themselves impure (טמא) with their detestable things (ובשׁקוציהם). What is more, lexicographers have noted that שׁקץ/שׁקוץ is used in two different senses: “The first appears only in Leviticus and refers to forbidden animals. The second is characteristic of Dtr literature, and is connected with the worship of false gods and idols.”[198] Interestingly, D. N. Freedman and A. J. Welch place Ezekiel’s use of שׁקוץ along with DtrH/prophetic literature and not with Leviticus.[199] While it is true that שׁקוץ only occurs in Deut 29:16, it is not sufficiently attentive to Ezekiel’s distinctiveness to simply conflate his usage with that of Deuteronomy. It is true that שׁקוצים in Ezekiel are idols, as in Deuteronomy, which differs from the noun שׁקץ in Leviticus (whether in P or HC texts). Ganzel explains:

> Ezekiel, on eight occasions, employs this term [שׁקוצים] in clear reference to idolatry (5,11; 7,20; 11,18.21; 20,7.8.30; 37,23), thus indicating that in Ezekiel, as in Deuteronomy, שׁיקוצים serves to denote idolatry. Although in the Priestly Sources שׁקץ

[195] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 61–62; cf. R. Andrew Compton, “The Sign-Acts of Ezekiel 3:22–5:17: Formative Rituals of Priestly Identity,” *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 29 (2018): 71–74.

[196] Ganzel, “The Concept of Holiness in the Book of Ezekiel,” 26, “אלא לנטיה שׁל יחקאל לנסח את דבריו בבוטות.”

[197] John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel,* BJSUCSD 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 34.

[198] D.N. Freedman and A.J. Welch, “שׁקץ *šqṣ*; שֶׁקֶץ *šeqeṣ*; שִׁקּוּץ *šiqqûṣ*,” *TDOT* 15:466.

[199] Freedman and Welch, *TDOT* 15:468.

does not have the capacity to "defile", once it became a pejorative name for idolatry, which indeed causes "defilement," this term can then be associated with defilement.[200]

Ganzel does note one exception to the use of שקץ in Priestly literature, in this case from HC: "Lev 20,25 indicates that שקצים do, in fact, transmit impurity: 'You shall not defile your throats (ולא תשקצו את נפשתיכם) with a quadruped or bird or anything with which the ground teems, which I have set apart for you to treat as impure (לטמא).'"[201] Thus with this term, Ezekiel adopts a Deuteronomic expression for idolatry but modifies it by incorporating it into the semantic domain of purity.[202] Tantalizing is Mayer I. Gruber's suggestion that שקוצים is used in Nah 3:6 as possibly referring to excrement.[203] Earlier, we noted that the expression "city of blood" in Ezekiel 22 was borrowed from Nah 3:1. Thus while fairly subtle, it is interesting to consider whether Ezekiel may have also had an image of fecal impurity in mind more generally when using this language. Note that Gruber is not alone in translating שקוצים in Nah 3:6 as dung or excrement.[204]

Ezekiel 20:9 concludes the rebuke of the first generation with the words that YHWH acted to prevent his name from being profaned (חלל) in the eyes of the nations. This orients us to a key element of Ezekiel 20, profanation (the verb חלל).[205] In fact, this textual unit contains the most references to profanation in the book (8x) and is one of two places in the book where Israel's past is conceived, according to Wong, as a "history of profanation."[206] The objects of חלל are YHWH's name (vv. 9, 14, 22, 39) and Sabbath (vv. 13, 16, 21, 24). Concerning the former, Ezekiel echoes a collocation found in HC (חלל + שם; Lev 18:21, 19:12, 20:3, 21:6, 22:2, 22:32[207]) which in vv. 9, 14, and 22 are part of a frozen expression depicting God's response to the sins of the first three generations: "But I acted for the sake of my name, that it might not be

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[200] Ganzel, "The Defilement and Desecration of the Temple," 371; cf. idem, "The Concept of Holiness in the Book of Ezekiel," 26–27; cf. Jacob Milgrom, "Two Priestly Terms: Šeqeṣ and Ṭāmēʾ," *Tarbiṣ* 60 (1991): 423–28 (Hebrew).

[201] Ganzel, "Defilement and Desecration of the Temple," 371, n. 12.

[202] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 89–90.

[203] Mayer I. Gruber, "Abomination שקוץ," *DDD* 3.

[204] Frances Klopper, "'Ninevah is in ruins—who will grieve for her?' The case of a ravished city in Nahum 3:4–7," *OTE* 16, no. 3 (2003): 620; Wilhelm J. Wessels, "Cultural sensitive readings of Nahum 3:1–7," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 74, no. 1, article #4931 (2018), 3, https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4931; Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets,* 2:443.

[205] For a general treatment of Ezekiel's use of חלל relative to other OT books, see W. Dommershausen, "חלל *ḥll* I; חֹל *chōl;* חָלִיל *chālîl*," *TDOT* 4:409–17.

[206] Wong, "Profanation/Sanctification," 211.

[207] Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy,* 174;

profaned in the eyes of the nations."[208] Kohn connects this to HC via לעיני הגוים (in the eyes of the nations), although Mein argues that "the use of this language to describe YHWH's state as the result of his people's destruction would appear to be Ezekiel's innovation."[209] Ezekiel appears to innovate further in that each of these texts depict YHWH's name as profaned according to its "dynamic" element (i.e., "significance according to force and effect") because YHWH's accomplishments are placed into question.[210] In Leviticus, however, the "dianoetic" element of YHWH's name ("significance according to meaning") appears to be in view in that these violations make YHWH's essence out to be like other gods.[211] In Ezek 20:39, however, that same dianoetic element seems to be in view as the fate of the rebellious exiles is said to *end* the ongoing profanation of YHWH's name that results from their "gifts and idols" (במתנותיכם ובגלוליכם).

The profanation of the Sabbath is not predicated on the first generation but is on the second and third generations. (Though the fourth generation escapes this indictment, we noted above that Ezekiel does conceive of his contemporaries as having profaned Sabbath [Ezek 22:8, 26].) The Sabbath is first inserted into the oracle at v. 12 and serves as a key link to priestly literature. In each occurrence in Ezek 20, it is paired with "statutes and rules" (חקה + משפט) and alludes to HC in at least three ways. First, vv. 11, 13, and 21 couple this word pair with the language of "doing" (עשׂה) them and "living" (חיה) by them, a feature also found in Lev 18:5.[212] Second, with one exception (v. 25), to be noted below, חקה in the collocation occurs in feminine plural (חקות) as is the case in HC, not in masculine plural (חקים) as is the case with D.[213] Third, in Lev 18:26 and 20:22, the word pair is associated with issues of purity (טמא and נדה) and abomination (תועבה) in surrounding verses, sharing Ezekiel 20's concern for purity. What is more, Sabbath in Ezekiel 20 is directly related to priestly texts in that it is explicitly termed "*my* Sabbath*s*" (שׁבתותי; cf. Exod 31:13, Lev 19:3, 30), differentiated particularly from D via the plural form.[214] As noted above, Ezek 20:12 shares the view of Exod 31:13 and 17 that the

[208] Hals, *Ezekiel,* 132–33, labels this "His change in mind to avoid the profanation of his name in view of the nations."

[209] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 42; Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 160.

[210] Wong, "Profanation/Sanctification," 216.

[211] Wong, "Profanation/Sanctification," 216, 219.

[212] Preston Sprinkle, "Law and Life: Leviticus 18.5 in the Literary Framework of Ezekiel," *JSOT* 31, no. 3 (2007): 275–93; cf. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy,* 174.

[213] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 99, n. 24.

[214] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 49–50; see especially p.49, n. 66, "D never uses the plural in reference to the Sabbath."

Sabbath is a sign (אות), whose purpose is that Israel might know (לדעת; cf. Ezekiel's recognition formula[215]) that YHWH is the "sanctifier" of Israel (Piel ptc, msg √קדשׁ; a P expression[216]). Perhaps most striking about Ezekiel's description of Israel's Sabbath profanation is the strong connection he makes to idolatry, particularly in v. 16. Wong explains:

> In v.16, after the reasons for not bringing the people into the land are given—namely, because they reject the ordinances, do not observe the statutes, and profane the Sabbaths—we read כי אחרי גללוליהם לבם הלך ('for their heart went after their idols'). The particle כי can be emphatic, but it is more likely to be causal. In this case, that their hearts go after the idols serves as an explanation for their misbehavior. In other words, idolatry leads to the profanation of the Sabbaths.[217]

This is highly significant in that not only does Ezekiel ramp up the priestly idea that idolatry pollutes to unprecedented levels (as detailed by Ganzel[218]), he connects that impurity causing idolatry to the profanation of YHWH's Sabbaths, itself something uniquely stressed by Ezekiel vis-à-vis other OT books.[219]

Ezekiel 20:25–26 has generated much discussion, chiefly due to its seemingly problematic presentation of YHWH:

[25] And also, I myself gave them	וגם־אני נתתי להם
statutes that were not good,	חקים לא טובים
and rules by which they could not live	ומשפטים לא יחיו בהם
[26] And I pronounced them unclean by their gifts	ואטמא אותם במתנותם
When they offered everything that opens the womb	בהעביר כל־פטר רחם
In order to appall them	למען אשמם
In order that they might know that I am YHWH	למען אשר ידעו אשר אני יהוה

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[215] Walther Zimmerli, *I Am Yahweh*, trans. Douglas W. Stott, ed. Walter Bruggemann (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1982; John F. Evans, *You Shall Know that I am Yahweh: An Inner-Biblical Interpretation of Ezekiel's Recognition Formula,* BBRSup 25 (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2019).

[216] Kohn, *New Heart and a New Soul,* 34.

[217] Wong, "Profanation/Sanctification," 214.

[218] See Tova Ganzel, "Transformation of Pentateuchal Descriptions of Idolatry," in in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel,* ed. William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 127 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010),45–46.

[219] Wong, "Profanation/Sanctification," 216, "Ezekiel differs from some other Old Testament books in stressing the relationship between idolatry and profanation of Sabbaths."

The attribution of giving statutes and rules that are neither good nor life-giving (in contrast to vv. 11, 13, 21) has been perceived as a counter-testimony to YHWH's character.[220] A number of explanations have been offered to this conundrum.[221] Of more relevance to this chapter, ואטמא of v. 26 has been almost universally translated in English Bibles and commentaries as "I defiled them," another puzzling thing to claim for YHWH, who has to this point blamed Israel for her own impurity. What has been almost universally missed by those who translate ואטמא as YHWH himself making Israel unclean, however, is the priestly coloring of v. 26. In many places (e.g., Lev 13:3, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22, 25, 27, 30, 44, 59), the Piel of טמא "refers to a cultic pronouncement rather than an action that produces defilement."[222] Kelvin Friebel continues: "Understood this way, 20:26 is stating that Yahweh is declaring the people to be ritually unclean and thereby unfit to worship him in his sanctuary."[223] I.e., ואטמא in v. 26 depicts *YHWH* as a priest engaged in making judgments about impurity. A similar thing happens in Ezek 24:13; YHWH is the subject of טהר (make clean) which Mark Boda interprets: "Here God is depicted as a priestly figure trying to cleanse the people of their uncleanness."[224] In light of this, Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann appropriately translates v. 26 as "Und ich erklärte sie für unrein bei ihren Gaben."[225] While depicting YHWH as a priest is not common in the OT, it does happen in Genesis 1, where God is the subject of the priestly verb בדל, something noted above concerning Ezek 22:26. Smith finds this striking enough to suggest: "God is presented not simply as the first builder. Genesis 1 further intimates that the universe is like a temple (or more specifically, like the Temple), with

[220] E.g., Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, "Ezekiel's Justifications of God: Teaching Troubling Texts," *JSOT* 55 (1992): 97–117; Andrew Mein, "Ezekiel's Awkward God: Atheism, Idolatry and the *Via Negativa*," *SJT* 66, no. 3 (2013): 261–77.

[221] E.g., Scott Walker Hahn and John Sietze Bergsma, "What Laws were 'Not Good'? A Canonical Approach to the Theological Problem of Ezekiel 20:25–26," *JBL* 123, no. 2 (2004): 201–18; Gili Kugler, "The Cruel Theology of Ezekiel 20," *ZAW* 129, no. 1 (2017): 47–58; Patton, "I Myself Gave Them Laws that Were Not Good," 73–90; George C. Heider, "A Further Turn on Ezekiel's Baroque Twist in Ezek 20:25–26," *JBL* 107, no. 4 (1988): 721–24; Rusty Osbourne, "Elements of Irony: History and Rhetoric in Ezekiel 20:1–44," *CTR* 9, no. 1 (2011): 3–15.

[222] Kelvin G. Friebel, "The Decrees of Yahweh That Are 'Not Good': Ezekiel 20:25–26," in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients: Essays Offered to Honor Michael V. Fox on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday,* ed. Ronald L. Troxel, Kelvin G. Friebel, and Dennis R. Magary (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 31.

[223] Friebel, "Decrees of Yahweh," 32.

[224] Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament,* Siphrut 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 269. Note that the use of זרק "to sprinkle" in Ezek 36.25 with God as subject is a unique feature which may also suggest YHWH performing a priestly role (see Pikor, *The Land of Israel in the Book of Ezekiel,* 138).

[225] Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Der Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiel Kapital 20–48,* ATD 22, 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), 300.

God presented as its priest of priests."[226] Priestly concern for purity reaches unprecedented heights in Ezekiel 20, with YHWH himself depicted as a priest declaring Israel unclean.

In sum, Ezek 20:1–44 provides another glimpse of Ezekiel's distinctive priestly identity, evidenced by his concern for purity. His tendentious history declares the תועבת (abominations) of the fathers and unpacks the constituent elements of this תועבה in two ways. First, as worship of both the גלולים (dung-idols) and שקוצים (detestable things), words which are significantly charged with purity contours or potential (1) lexically/etymologically and (2) pragmatically in terms of their use. Second, it highlights Israel's history as one of profanation (חלל), both of YHWH's name and his Sabbaths, which is subsequently answered by the work of YHWH in v. 12 as the one who sanctifies them (מקדשם—i.e., Israel). The specifics of this profanation activity and sanctifying work are distinctively P ideas. In fact, the entire unit has exhibited an interweaving of P/HC and D classified material, showing an awareness of both traditions, but one in which D themes are refracted through priestly concerns. In the end, our consideration of this priestly focus on purity culminates with YHWH himself depicted as a priest. Verses 33–44 tip the hand toward YHWH's plan of restoration, which is depicted in terms of purity as YHWH purges (ברר) rebels from Israel (v. 38), accepting their "holy things" (קדשיכם; v. 40), and accepting them as a "pleasing aroma" (ריח ניחח; v. 41), another typical P turn of phrase.

Conclusion

Earlier in this chapter, we noted identity preservation via the production of a Hutu mythico-history. Malkki explains: "Like the Bible stories and morality plays to which I have likened them, the [Hutu] refugees' historical narratives comprised a set of moral and cosmological ordering stories: stories which classify the world according to certain principles, thereby simultaneously creating it."[227] Utilizing the categories of pure and impure, the mythico-history of the Hutu was a "process of world making because it constructed categorical schemata and thematic configurations that were relevant and meaningful in confronting both the past in Burundi and the pragmatics of everyday life in the refugee camp in Tanzania."[228] Ezekiel

[226] Smith, *Priestly Vision of Genesis 1,* 92. Cf. the chapter entitled "Holy God as Priest" in Allan Coppedge, *Portraits of God: A Biblical Theology of Holiness* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 174–206.
[227] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 54.
[228] Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 55.

appears to engage in the same kind of world-making enterprise: characterizing, scripting, and erecting props that highlight the pervasiveness of purity and its importance for understanding the past, present, and future. Via construction of a mythico-history of its own, exiled Judean priests facing challenges to their (occupational) cultural expression made modifications to traditional approaches to purity and impurity that kept them in contact with the vocational concerns of priests who served before them.[229]

In chapter 2, we considered different forms of job crafting and noted three in particular: task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting. In many ways, the whole of Ezekiel reflects cognitive occupational crafting as the book is an expression of an ideology of Ezekiel's priestly circles. Relational crafting, however, does not appear operative, and frankly, it is difficult to describe with certainty how these chapters reflect specific task crafting techniques. However, it might be suggested that by invoking categories of purity and impurity with regard to social sins and crimes not previously associated with impurity, cleansing rituals might thereby be prescribed by priests in exile among the Judean refugees. At minimum, however, it seems to show that the task of teaching Torah, highlighted by Duguid and Betts,[230] is modified in the direction of "task emphasizing," which Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson describe as "highlighting tasks that are already formally a part of one's job to pursue an unanswered calling."[231] There is new emphasis placed on purity legislation of the *traditum* (the content of the tradition), forming a *traditio* (a stage in the tradition-transmission process) that appears much more concerned with purity than before. [232] But again, all of this implies that Ezekiel has engaged in cognitive crafting. He has imaginatively redrawn the contours of Israel's purity concerns, making connections and emphasizing details that heighten his and his hearers' attentiveness to purity in their lives in exile. There are a number of ways we see this evident.

Ezekiel has reached backward, drawing on authoritative traditions but recombining them in ways that highlight his view of their application to his present vocational milieu. We noted his

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[229] In this research, "myth" is used broadly invoking Malkki's discussion of the mythico-history of the Hutu refugees which "represented an interlinked set of ordering stories converged to make (or remake) a world" (Malkki, *Purity and Exile,* 55). It is chiefly this "world making" literary form that is in view. Cf. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion, and Authorship,* Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine 18 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1–7, who parses out definitions of myth and mythos in very useful ways.

[230] Duguid, "Putting Priests in Their Place," 48; Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest.*

[231] Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson, "When Callings are Calling: Crafting Work and Leisure in Pursuit of Unanswered Occupational Calling," *Organization Science,* 21, no. 5 (2010): 979.

[232] For these terms, see Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel,* 6–7.

utilization of a Deuteronomic *traditum* transmitted via a distinctively priestly *traditio*. Meaning and application of purity concerns from D texts has been refracted through or merged with concerns from P and HC texts, thereby modifying it to suit Ezekiel's contemporary situation. We noted that via parallelism, Ezekiel forges an association between Deuteronomic "holy war" tradition (המהומה) and purity: Jerusalem is a city that is unclean of name/great of turmoil (22:5). Related to this is Ezekiel's re-characterization of the term "Torah," scripting it to stand in as metonymy for the Torah's specific cultic/purity-related prescriptions and as a personification of YHWH himself as *the* holy and pure one (חמס in 22:26). Likewise, several metaphors are rescripted. Modification happens via irony, as when Ezek 22:17–22 draws upon a crucible metaphor but changes its reference from refining/purging to consumption/ destruction. Modification of metaphors also occurs in the epithet "city of blood" in 22:1, where Ezekiel takes an epithet used to embody Ninevah in Nahum and morphs it into an embodiment of Jerusalem with special focus on the city as a menstruating woman. This literary artistry was significantly aided via Ezekiel's use of parallelism, which is in harmony with psycholinguistic observations (cited by Berlin) wherein associations are forged between different words.

Ezekiel spoke both of the past and to the present via what Mein called his "ritualization of ethics."[233] We saw this in Ezek 22:12–13 as Ezekiel connected social and cultic sins. This was illustrated especially by his re-employing the language of bloodshed (שפך דם) as invoking the categories of purity and impurity, allowing him to rescript Jerusalem's history of murder as a history of impurity (22:3, 4, 6, 9, 12) so as to explain the circumstances of his present day. And in retelling Israel's history from Egypt to the present (20:1–44), Ezekiel's historiography amplifies the fathers' abominations as caught up with the impurity-causing sins of worshipping dung-gods, thereby indicting his contemporaries for their own participation in such acts (Ezek 20:30–31). Perhaps most strikingly, Ezekiel even predicates the priestly vocation of YHWH, depicting him as a priest pronouncing people unclean (20:26), which related to a similar phenomenon in 24:13 where YHWH is the subject of טהר, cleansing the people of their impurity. YHWH's priestly work continues into the future, with restoration cast in terms of cleansing, as seen in 22:15–16 and 20:38.

In sum, we have seen that purity is undoubtedly significant in Ezekiel for defining Israelite identity, as noted by Bungsut, i.e., differentiating the Judean exiles from other groups,

[233] Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* 145.

chiefly those who remained in Jerusalem.[234] And yet this significance goes beyond social identity. It is also significant for retaining Ezekiel's priestly/occupational identity via job crafting, enabling him to engage in his prophetic role as "an extension of his priestly identity under the influence of the very radically changed circumstances of Ezekiel's life in the Babylonian exile."[235]

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[234] Bungsut, "Purity and Group Identity in the Book of Ezekiel," 241.
[235] Sweeney, "Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet," 127.

CHAPTER 5: AN EXILIC-PRIESTLY VISION OF THE *KABOD-YHWH* (כבוד־יהוה)

The so-called *merkebah* (מרכבה) chariot-vision of Ezekiel 1 has often been met throughout history with befuddlement, eliciting several different, though fairly standard responses. One has been to flag the passage as dangerous, e.g., the Babylonian Talmud regulates the conditions for studying the *merkebah* in b. Ḥag. 13a, even recounting the Rabbinic teaching of a child who was killed while reading it. Another response has been to conflate the vision's imagery with known traditions, whether early Christian allegorical traditions of interpreting the four creatures as the four New Testament gospels or evangelists[1] or Christian trinitarian formulations with "some [church] fathers maintaining that Ezekiel saw only Christ and not God (since God is invisible), still others arguing that Christ and God were represented by the *hašmal* and fire (1:26) respectively (and are therefore two substances), and so on."[2] More recent interpreters conflate the vision with aviation technology, as is the case of various UFO cults and the Nation of Islam, examples that have received significant scholarly attention.[3]

Dale Allison ponders the puzzling nature of this state of affairs: "There are other visionary texts in Scripture that people have not tried to appropriate in the same first-hand way. Why is Ezekiel 1 different?"[4] Yet Allison believes an answer is not out of reach: "Ezekiel 1 and 8–10—just like Isaiah 6, another traditional stimulus for visions—unveil an unchanging reality. God's court is not subject to the vicissitudes and time and history, where rulers come and go and cities are built and destroyed."[5] This transitions us into the substance of this chapter, where we will consider the way in which Ezekiel utilizes the כבוד־יהוה traditions. The כבוד־יהוה visions in Ezek 1–3 and 8–11 will provide insight into Ezekiel's use of other traditions, juxtaposing stability and dynamism, YHWH's presence as both fixed and portable, in innovative ways. In conversation with Latin American theological formulation, this is then related to Ezekiel's coping strategy as an exile and a displaced priest.

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[1] For several examples, see Kenneth Stevenson and Michael Glerup, eds., *Ezekiel, Daniel,* vol. 13 in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture,* ed. Thomas C. Oden (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 4–6.

[2] Julie G. Galambush, "Ezekiel, Book of," in *DBI* 1:372.

[3] E.g., Dale C. Allison, Jr., "Ezekiel, UFOs and the Nation of Islam," in *After Ezekiel: Essays on the Reception of a Difficult Prophet,* ed. Paul M. Joyce and Andrew Mein, LHBOTS 535 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2011), 247–57; Michael Lieb, *Children of Ezekiel: Aliens, UFOs, the Crisis of Race, and the Advent of End Time* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998).

[4] Allison, "Ezekiel, UFOs and the Nation of Islam," 256.

[5] Allison, "Ezekiel, UFOs and the Nation of Islam," 256.

The כבוד־יהוה and Ezekiel's Priestly Identity

In the so-called flurry of publications concerning Ezekiel's priestly identity, the relevance of the כבוד־יהוה has been assessed variously. Surprisingly, though her research encompassed all of Ezek 1–5, Margaret Odell paid no attention to the כבוד apart from noting that Ezekiel's experience was comparable to that of the priestly ordinands in Leviticus 8–9: "[B]oth the ordinands and Ezekiel are admitted into the sanctuary, where they see the glory of God (Lev 9:23; Ezek 8:1ff.)."[6] Andrew Mein similarly makes only passing reference to the כבוד, and only to the vision of Ezek 8–11 at that, focused on how sin (specifically impurity) prevents the כבוד־יהוה from residing in Jerusalem's midst and how priestly-promoted purity enables its continued residence.[7] Several other writers in the publication flurry omit the discussion entirely.

More attention is paid by Corrine Patton, Marvin Sweeney, and Baruch Schwartz. In a passage oriented toward how Ezekiel defines the roles of prophets and priests, Patton addresses the topic of visions, noting that though visions are most often associated with prophetism, there are examples of priests having visions as well (she cites Exod 24:9–10; 1 Kgs 8:10–11, and Isa 28:7).[8] Thus, in surveying the visions of chapters 1, 8–11, and 40–48, she suggests that "priesthood is one more linking element often overlooked in these passages."[9] Patton does make a vocational observation, seeing Ezek 1 as establishing "Ezekiel as the representation of the legitimate but exiled priest, with full access to God's presence in the temple, even though he is impossibly removed in exile."[10] This corresponds to the "second commissioning" Ezekiel receives in Ezek 44:4–5—a vision passage also featuring the כבוד—that not only serves as an inclusio for the book as a whole but also marks a vocational transition: "The characterization of Ezekiel as a prophet begins to fade with this second commissioning."[11]

Similarly, Sweeney views the כבוד־יהוה visions throughout the book as related to Ezekiel's priestly identity, although he posits this as vocationally important right from the

[6] Margaret S. Odell, "You Are What You Eat: Ezekiel and the Scroll," *JBL* 117, no. 2 (1998): 236.

[7] Andrew Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile,* Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 119, 153.

[8] Corrine L. Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile: Ezekiel as a Literary Construct," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 78.

[9] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 86–87.

[10] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 87.

[11] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 87.

opening chapter. Not only does he view כבוד־יהוה as a "technical term to describe the presence of YHWH among the people at the time of the wilderness wandering (Exod 16:7, 10–12), in the tabernacle (Exod 40:34–38), and in the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 8:10–11; 2 Chr 7:1–3; cf. 1 Sam 4:21–22)," he interprets the opening vision in particular as "based upon the imagery of the ark of the covenant, which prior to the Babylonian exile was accessible only to the priests in the Holy of Holies of the Jerusalem Temple."[12] Several elements of the vision are classified as "temple-based motifs," concluding with a striking vocational observation: "Altogether, the imagery of Ezekiel's vision corresponds almost precisely to that of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies, and represents what one might expect of a priest educated for service in the Jerusalem Temple."[13] In the כבוד visions of Ezek 8–11, Sweeney notes the association with Ezek 1–3, although draws attention to priestly identity chiefly through its presentation of "the Temple as profaned by the sins or idolatry of the people, thereby requiring destruction that will purge it of impurity and begin the process of its restoration and resanctification."[14] It is this "purging" element that Sweeney sees as most significant to Ezekiel's priestly identity, although the linen dress of the man with the writing kit (Ezek 9:2) and the imagery of expiatory sacrifice at the temple altar also reflect priestly concerns.[15] Nevertheless, though he does not comment further on the priestly-vocational significance of the כבוד here, other publications have detailed the contours of the vision in Ezek 8–11 with a more sustained focus on the importance of the כבוד as a priestly element in keeping with his understanding of כבוד imagery as based on the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies of the Jerusalem temple.[16] Sweeney does not, however, discuss priestly-vocational implications of the כבוד in Ezek 43–44, choosing instead to highlight other elements of the temple vision as expressions of his priestly identity.

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[12] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 131.

[13] Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," 132.

[14] Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," 135.

[15] Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," 135–36.

[16] See Marvin A. Sweeney, "The Destruction of Jerusalem as Purification in Ezekiel 8–11," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 151–51; idem, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary,* Reading the Old Testament (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 52–69.

Schwartz, in an unpublished paper/lecture on the topic referenced in his flurry-contribution,[17] also notes the priestly associations of the כבוד vision of Ezekiel. However, he takes a decidedly different tack from Patton and Sweeney. While conceding that this is a priestly motif with a priestly origin, he suggests that this is not the main point of the vision. Instead, Ezekiel's chief interest is in how the divine presence or absence determines whether Jerusalem stands or falls.[18] Perhaps most surprising, Schwartz argues that this priestly motif (כבוד־יהוה) is proof that Ezekiel has *left* his priestly role *behind*: "When a priest becomes a prophet . . . [t]he fiery presence of God, always encased and obscured by a cloud in P, is now described in detail: made of light and radiance but not substance, and 100% human in form—as must be inferred from the first chapter of Genesis."[19] Of course, this research contests the claim that Ezekiel has relinquished his priestly vocation. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Schwartz—himself committed to the view that Ezekiel is at most only a *former* priest—recognizes the significant priestly associations forged by the visions of the כבוד.

With T. J. Betts, not only does one find the lengthiest treatment of the כבוד־יהוה visions in relationship to Ezekiel's priestly identity (not surprising due to its book-length form), but one also finds an unpacking of a unique suggestion regarding YHWH's own vocational assessment: "Yahweh demonstrated his recognition of Ezekiel's priestly status when he chose Ezekiel the priest to witness the three visions that contained several temple-based motifs."[20] Betts, following Sweeney, spells out the temple and ark imagery present in Ezek 1–3. After the temple was built, the ark of the covenant was accessible only to the high priests who had access to the holy of holies. This imagery itself reveals Ezekiel's priestly perspective: "The description involves images one might expect from one who was educated for priestly service in the Jerusalem temple."[21] Unique to Betts is his sustained analysis of this priestly identity through the other two כבוד visions in Ezekiel, more so than Sweeney and in more detail than Patton.

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[17] For the reference, see Baruch J. Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel's Role in the History of the Israelite Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 62 n.4.

[18] Baruch J. Schwartz, "When Priest Becomes Prophet" (Lecture, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, April 2004), 6–7.

[19] Schwartz, "When Priest Becomes Prophet," 9.

[20] T. J. Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest: A Custodian of Tôrâ,* StBibLit 74 (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 66.

[21] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest*, 68.

In discussing the visionary details of Ezek 8–11, Betts notes that the abominations being committed in the temple were specifically *cultic* abominations that called to attention Ezekiel's priestly interests.[22] But what is more, the vision involves Ezekiel not simply standing in the presence of the כבוד, a priestly prerogative, according to Betts, but is doing so in the temple itself, even more of a priestly prerogative. On the one hand, this is striking considering the content of the vision, centered as it is on temple defilement:

> Of particular importance is the fact that Yahweh actually took Ezekiel into the precincts of the Temple in the vision. If a major reason for the tour was to show Ezekiel Israel's defilement of the Temple, then would Yahweh have defiled it himself by taking a layperson into this restricted sanctuary even in a vision? The answer is no. . . . Ezekiel was chosen for the tour because he would not further desecrate the sacred space because of his priestly status.[23]

The presence of elders burning incense further illustrates the desecration of the temple by non-cultic personnel:

> The elders were encroaching upon the priestly responsibility of burning incense that served as a sweet aroma to Yahweh (Exod 31:1, 7–9, 27; Lev 16:12–13; Num 16:40). . . . Even though he recorded no response, Ezekiel the priest must have been horrified and outraged as he witnessed the images on the wall and the elders usurping the priestly prerogative of entering sacred space, officiating over cultic ritual, and offering incense even if it was only in a vision.[24]

While Ezekiel's presumed horror and outrage are not out of the question, Betts is correct that nothing is recorded; the proposed emotional response is speculative. In chapter 6, this research will consider how a visionary (or, in this case, a textual) temple might function spatially, further exploring Betts's suggestions to that effect in addition to broader studies on textuality and spatiality. At this point, suffice it to say that Betts's understanding of the text's world- or edifice-building capability does come to bear on his understanding of the significance of Ezekiel's presence within this visionary temple.

The focus of Ezek 8–11 is not merely Ezekiel's location in a visionary/textual temple, important as that is, but his location in the presence of the כבוד as it resides in the temple, albeit temporarily, moving slowly away from the temple and the city. Betts summarizes this scenario:

> As the presence of the "glory of Yahweh" depicted Yahweh's presence in the first vision, the departure of the "glory of Yahweh" depicted the departure of Yahweh's presence

[22] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest*, 69.
[23] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest*, 69.
[24] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest*, 71.

> from the Temple. Just as the priests witnessed the coming of "the glory of Yahweh" when the temple was first dedicated (1 Kgs 8:10–11), though he saw it in a vision, a priest witnessed its departure (Ezek 10:18–19; 11:22–23).[25]

This also relates to the final כבוד vision in Ezek 43–44. While Betts's interpretation of Ezek 40–48 as a whole is taken up in chapter 6, that chapter is concerned with the structures (temple and altar) themselves, not with the account of the כבוד returning to the temple. Here, however, we note Betts's conclusions about the return: "Only a priest could have stood within the inner sanctum of the Temple and witnessed this return."[26] So, in sum, Betts argues that the כבוד־יהוה in all three visions underscores Ezekiel's priestly identity, making him the most fulsome voice to this point in the flurry.

All these proposals mentioned above thus pave the way for an analysis of the כבוד־יהוה in Ezekiel. Different models have been explored, e.g., Schwartz's striking claim that a priestly motif is proof of non-priesthood and Betts's semblant visionary "ontology" (explored further in chapter 6) in which the visionary world does affect vocational identity in the material world as well. Yet all the approaches depend upon an inner-biblical exegesis and development of the כבוד־יהוה traditions, although whether this is a question of textual dependence and priority or whether this is dependent upon traditions that inform multiple texts is a difficult question to arbitrate, as noted in chapter 4.[27] Nevertheless, we will present here Ezekiel's relationship to other known biblical (chiefly Pentateuchal) traditions, then consider how they relate to trauma and migrant studies,[28] and finally, how they can be understood as job crafting strategies for a priest coping with a new place.

Proposed ANE Cognates and Parallels to כבוד־יהוה

A number of works have addressed the collocation כבוד־יהוה as a linguistic expression, an iconographic representation, and a divine epithet. Most recently, Pieter de Vries and Thomas

[25] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest*, 69.

[26] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest*, 76.

[27] See chapter 4, footnote 164 for references.

[28] Note that though these two inquiries are distinct, they are somewhat intermingled below, treated as "two sides of the same coin," following Elizabeth Esterhuizen and Alphonso Groenewald, "Towards a Theology of Migration: A Survival Perspective from Isaiah 1–12," *Transilvania* 10 (2021): 34, who explain: "The resounded consequences of migration are interconnected to trauma, and it cannot be referred to without being cognizant of this context."

Wagner have provided comprehensive surveys of the state of the question in all areas.[29] While it is not unimportant that כבוד is lexically associated with weight and, consequently, extended metaphorically to the "weightiness" of honor,[30] Gerhard von Rad has argued that in the collocation כבוד־יהוה, "the basic thought of weight is no longer present."[31] Furthermore, this research is concerned chiefly with the visual phenomenon that biblical traditions associate with the כבוד. This, after all, is what most keenly places Ezekiel's visions in relationship to other priestly traditions, as de Vries observes: "The כָּבוֹד of YHWH can relate to His mighty deeds, but also to His visible appearance behind them. We particularly see the latter in the texts of a priestly character."[32] Consequently, the concern of this research with priestly *vocational* identity will attend to the associations between visible כבוד manifestations and priestly ideas discerned in the traditional history found in biblical texts.[33]

Though Hebrew כבוד regularly denotes a visual presence often associated with theophany and vision/mysticism, there is strikingly little in extant comparative ancient Near Eastern literature and iconography to which כבוד can be tethered.[34] Of course, cognate words occur, and undoubtedly many of these traverse a similar semantic range, but for the visual manifestation of a deity to be so closely associated with כבוד was not found at all. This is especially surprising in light of the parallels noted between Psalm 29 (with v. 3 even recording an apparent epithet, אל־הכבוד) and the Ugaritic epic texts.[35] Though the *Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* proposes a noun, "kbd (IV)," with the meaning "splendour, glory," it only

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[29] See Pieter de Vries, *The Kābôd YHWH in the Old Testament: With Particular Reference to the Book of Ezekiel,* SSN 65 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 1–28; Thomas Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit: Bedeutung und Verwendung des Begriffs kābôd im Alten Testament,* VTSup 151 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 25–47. Note that there is intellectual cross-pollination in these works in that de Vries's monograph was originally a PhD dissertation with which Wagner interacted in the latter's own monograph. When de Vries's dissertation was published as a monograph, it updated the research survey to include Wagner's own work and conclusions.

[30] See, for example, the lexical/sociological analysis of כבוד־יהוה in Ezekiel by Daniel Y. Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Book of Ezekiel,* BBRSup 14 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 81–87.

[31] Gerhard von Rad, "כָּבוֹד in the OT," *TDNT* 2:239; though cf. idem, *Old Testament Theology,* trans. D. M. G. Stalker (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2005), 1:239.

[32] de Vries, *The Kābôd YHWH in the Old Testament,* 28.

[33] Note: the textual analysis below focuses exclusively on examples of כבוד as a concrete, visual phenomenon/manifestation rather than as an abstract or metaphorical way of describing YHWH's royal splendor, wealth, or honor.

[34] For example, J. E. Fossum, "GLORY כבוד δόξα," *DDD,* 348–52, does not list any literature from other ANE civilizations in his analysis of כבוד though such interaction is part of the format of *DDD*.

[35] Claus Westermann, "כבד *kbd* to be heavy," *TLOT* 2:597, even cites Psalm 29 to suggest that a meaning of cultic reverence "is a Can[anite] usage that depicts the importance of a god, esp[ecially] in his activity in nature."

identifies it in one place (1.92:29), where it is in a broken context.[36] Furthermore, although splendor, light, fire, and smoke are descriptive images found in ancient Near Eastern texts to portray divine magnificence, Moshe Weinfeld's survey of the imagery does not demonstrate lexical overlap,[37] nor does it depict these phenomena as a hypostasis or "independent being" as we find uniquely presented in Ezekiel.[38] Wagner sums up what can be said of cognate terms vis-à-vis the Hebrew כבוד of the Old Testament: "What is absent in comparison to the Old Testament, are forms of transformation of the idea. The root *kbd* / *kbt* in the world around Israel is used neither for the notion of human 'dignity' [Würde], that which arises from the respect of humans before God, nor for the notion of divine 'glory' [Ehre], that which becomes visible in the appearance of God."[39] This is not to say that the ancient Near East lacks the idea of luminosity-splendor as accompanying kings and gods. Some like Weinfeld,[40] Frank Moore Cross,[41] George Mendenhall,[42] and Jacob Milgrom[43] have sought to identify the Hebrew כבוד־יהוה with Akkadian *melemmu(m)*, "fearsome radiance, aura."[44] Yet Shawn Zelig Aster has studied the *melemmu(m)*/כבוד parallels in-depth and found the proposed parallels to be problematic: "The parallels between *kebod YHWH* and *melammu* are typological, rather than historical or indicative of borrowing. To claim that this is a historical or 'genetic' parallels [sic], some specific and distinct similarity between the two phenomena must be adduced. I have not found any evidence

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[36] Gregorio del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition,* trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson, 2 vols., HdO 67 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 1:427.

[37] Moshe Weinfeld, "כָּבוֹד *kāḇôḏ,*" *TDOT* 7:29.

[38] For these terms, see John T. Strong, "God's *Kābôd*: The Presence of Yahweh in the Book of Ezekiel," in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives,* eds. Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong, SBLSymS 9 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature), 72–82; Westermann, *TLOT* 2:601–602.

[39] Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit,* 25: "Was im Vergleich zum Alten Testament jedoch fehlt, sind Formen der Transformation des Begriffes. Weder für die Vorstellung menschlicher ‚Würde', die durch das Ansehen des Menschen vor Gott entsteht, noch für die Vorstellung einer göttlichen ‚Ehre', die beim Erscheinen Gottes sichtbar wird, wird in der Umwelt Israels die Wurzel *kbd* /*kbt* verwendet."

[40] Weinfeld, *TDOT* 7:28–31.

[41] Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 147–69; note esp. 153 n.30.

[42] George E. Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation: The Origins of the Biblical Tradition* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 48–66. Mendenhall relies heavily on A.L. Oppenheim, "Akkadian *pul(u)ḫ(t)u* and *melammu*," *JAOS* 63 (1943): 31–34.

[43] Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers במדבר,* The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 70–71.

[44] Definition from Jeremy Black, Andrew George, and Nicholas Postgate, *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian,* 2nd ed., (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), s.v., "melemmu(m)."

for such similarities."[45] For this research, it appears most fruitful to focus on Ezekiel's כבוד visions and note the connection to other OT texts that might represent shared or modified כבוד traditions.

The כבוד־יהוה in Varied Old Testament Traditions

Interpretations

It has long been suggested that the כבוד־יהוה is not the product of a particular Pentateuchal source but belongs to a traditional complex utilized by different sources. For example, Bernhard Stein's 1939 monograph argued: "that there is no single element in the *kebod YHWH* concept which is found solely in the material assigned to JE or solely in the material assigned to P."[46] The most significant point of contrast is drawn by scholarship between so-called "Name" (שֵׁם) theology and כבוד theology, associated with Deuteronomic and Priestly theological traditions, respectively.[47] Nevertheless, even here, things are not so easily delineated. Wagner has noted that the כבוד־יהוה appears *mainly* (schwerpunktmäßig erscheint) in four particular places: P, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Psalms.[48] Yet Wagner still suggests that several different images are used *within* each of these collections. For example, Ezek 39:21 associates the כבוד־יהוה with other ideas, and in Isaiah, Wagner observes: "In the later parts of the book *YHWH's kābôd* is described with images that cannot be found in earlier texts in the same book."[49] So, while this survey will focus on the relationship between P texts and Ezekiel, and mainly how Ezekiel's appropriation of כבוד might be situated against his priestly identity, it will seek to allow for sufficient variety in

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[45] Shawn Zelig Aster, "The Phenomenon of Divine and Human Radiance in the Hebrew Bible and in Northwest Semitic and Mesopotamian Literature: A Philological and Comparative Study" (PhD Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2006), 389–90; for his full critique, see 387–407.

[46] Aster, "The Phenomenon of Divine and Human Radiance," 343; referring to Berhard Stein, *Der Begriff Kebod Jahweh und seine Bedeutung für die alttestamentliche Gottreserkenntnis* (Emsdetten: Lechte, 1939), 64–69. 11. De Vries, *The Kābôd YHWH in the Old Testament,* 11, agrees: "Stein does not see any substantial difference between the representation of the glory of YHWH in the JE stratum and that of the P stratum of the Pentateuch."

[47] See Gerhard von Rad, "Deuteronomy's 'Name' Theology and the Priestly Document's 'Kabod' Theology," in *Studies in Deuteronomy,* trans. David Stalker, SBT 9 (London: SCM Press, 1953), 37–44; Tryggve N.D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies,* trans. Frederick H. Cryer, ConBOT 18 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982); idem, "The Name and the Glory: the Zion-Sabaoth Theology and Its Exilic Successors," *JNSL* 28, no. 1 (1998): 1–24.

[48] Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit*, 50, although see his "Belegstellenübersicht" on 13 for the few exceptions.

[49] Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit*, 49–50, "In den späteren Teilen des Buches wird der *kābôd* JHWHs mit Bildern beschrieben, die in früheren Texten desselben Buches nicht zu finden sind."

the literary and contextual usage of כבוד language within each textual collection. Wagner's approach appears sufficiently nuanced and will be emulated: "The connection of motifs that have not yet appeared in earlier texts with the idea of the divine *kābôd* has its own function for the respective (con)text. Consequently, with every text analysis, it is important to ask which motifs are used and how they shape the message of the individual text or the editorial level to which the text belongs."[50]

Just three years before Wagner's monograph was published, Benjamin D. Sommer published a monograph eminently relevant to the study of the כבוד; a study of divine embodiment employing the concept of "fluidity." This concept articulates how ancient texts could depict deities as having unbounded or "fluid" selves.[51] In his *Bodies of God,* Sommer analyzed traditions preserved in the Old Testament that depict YHWH's appearance, illustrating them in comparison with northwest Semitic inscriptions and ANE religious texts. This corpus of texts—varied culturally, geographically, and historically—provides a valuable methodological control and invokes other studies of a comparative-anthropological nature. In extra-biblical texts, Sommer notes two kinds of fluidity: fragmentation and overlap. He describes fragmentation as follows: "Some divinities have a fluid self in the sense that there are several divinities with a single name who somehow are and are not the same deity."[52] He describes overlap as "the *overlap* of identity between gods who are usually discrete selves. Several Akkadian texts describe one god as an aspect of another god. Others refer to two gods as a single god even though the same texts also refer to each of these gods individually."[53] The same fluidity can be identified in several northwest Semitic texts. Several gods named Baal and El (e.g., Baal of Ṣaphon, El of Ṣaphon) can be found in Canaan, i.e., fragmentation.[54] Terms like שׁם (name) and פנים (face, presence) in Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Punic texts are used of deities "to indicate an aspect of the divine self that is also distinct from the divine self," i.e., overlap.[55] But Sommer

[50] Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit*, 50, "Die Verbindung von Motiven, die in früheren Texten noch nicht erscheinen, mit der Vorstellung vom göttlichen *kābôd* besitzt eine eigene Funktion für den jeweiligen (Kon)Text. Folglich ist bei jeder Textanalyse danach zu fragen, welche Motive verwendet werden und wie sie die Botschaft des einzelnen Textes beziehungsweise der Redaktionsschicht, der der Text angehört, prägen."

[51] Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). On p.10, Sommer also uses the word "multiplicity" to describe this same phenomenon.

[52] Sommer, *The Bodies of God,* 13.

[53] Sommer, *The Bodies of God,* 16.

[54] Sommer, *The Bodies of God,* 24–26. For the Baal of Ṣaphon and El of Ṣaphon references, see p.25.

[55] Sommer, *The Bodies of God,* 26–27.

aims to prove that the fluidity model is not solely predicated on polytheistic religious cultures but also on monotheistic cultures, such that it proves to be a useful tool for analyzing Old Testament traditions as well.

While arguing that the "monotheistic worldview" of the biblical texts and the eighth-century Kuntillet Ajrud texts does not allow for overlap-fluidity (a claim for which he has received criticism),[56] Sommer does propose several examples of fragmentation-fluidity. The burden of his chapter 2, "The Fluidity Model in Ancient Israel," is to demonstrate that several texts (frequently associated with J and E) exhibit fragmentation wherein YHWH produces "many small-scale manifestations that enjoy some degree of independence without becoming separate deities."[57] Sometimes, these are geographical references, possible examples being found in 2 Sam 15:7, "YHWH in Hebron" (ליהוה בחברון), and Ps 99:2, "YHWH in Zion" (יהוה בציון). Other times these are references to manifestations of YHWH to individuals, e.g., the מלאך יהוה, the three individuals who visited Abraham in Gen 18 (one or more of whom are called YHWH), and the man who wrestled with Jacob (Gen 32). But not every Old Testament tradition embraces fluidity; the burden of chapter 3, "The Rejection of the Fluidity Model in Ancient Israel," is to position D and P (including Ezekiel) as traditions that are diametrically opposed to the fluidity of J and E, D via its invocation of שׁם (name) theology, and P/Ezekiel via the כבוד traditions.

While his work is helpful for its overall innovation and its attempt to systematize the ways in which D and P classified texts limit God's locale (D placing him in heaven with only his "name" dwelling in other places, P locating him wherever the כבוד appears, chiefly in an immanent/earthly location), he has been critiqued for collapsing Ezekiel's approach to YHWH's presence and כבוד into the fluidity-rejection model of P. Robin C. McCall avers that Sommer's identification of Ezekiel and P "oversimplifies Ezekiel's understanding of God's body and self, effectively diminishing the significant influence of non-Priestly thought on Ezekiel's conception of the *k^e^bôd YHWH.*"[58] McCall's analysis will be taken up below, but her point is well taken.

[56] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 38, 145–74, argues for an early establishment of monotheism in Israel, although his treatment of this subject has been critiqued. For example, Christophe Nihan, *review of The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel,* by Benjamin D. Sommer, *Numen* 58 (2011): 594–95, believes Sommer's treatment of this topic is muddled: equivocating between definitions of "ancient Israelite religion" and "biblical religion," and vacillating between whether or not terms like monotheism and polytheism have explanatory value.

[57] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 38.

[58] Robin C. McCall, "Body/Image: Divine and Human Bodies in the Book of Ezekiel" (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2012), 26.

Furthermore, Sommer often invokes ideas in support of a rejection of fluidity by P and Ezekiel, which upon closer examination, do not seem so clear-cut. And so, while our invocation of כבוד texts will be attentive to differences suggested by Sommer based on their purported source (J, E, D, P, etc.), it will not reject the possibility that some examples of כבוד in priestly literature—even in P classified texts—might also reflect fluidity. Sommer himself has noted that כבוד traditions are somewhat varied: “In a great many passages, it is difficult to say whether *kabod* refers to some substantial thing (that is, God’s literal physical presence) or whether the term is used metaphorically of the honor due to God.”[59] Thus it behooves us to tread carefully when interpreting כבוד texts, especially showing care to not assume that particular approaches to YHWH’s presence are necessarily incompatible with “priestly” ways of thinking. And yet Sommer’s proposal is still engaged here as it represents a significant new development in how the question of God’s presence in כבוד is analyzed.

Texts

The Old Testament contains several accounts wherein the כבוד appears or is said to dwell. Texts most saturated with references and detail include: Exod 16:17, 10; 24:16–17; 33:18, 22; 40:34–35; Lev 9:23; Num 14:10; 16:19, 17:7 [16.42];[60] 20:6; Deut 5:24; 1 Kgs 8:11 (= 2 Chr 5:14); 2 Chr 7:1–3; Ps 26; 85. Several rubrics have been used for classifying these texts. Focusing on Pentateuchal occurrences, Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, following Rolf Rendtorff, delineates between (1) texts that depict the כבוד in conjunction with crises in the wilderness narratives and (2) texts that depict the כבוד in conjunction with Sinai and the cult.[61] There are merits to this, although in doing so, he omits Exod 33:18–22, essential for understanding the כבוד in Ezek 1 and 8.[62] Others using tradition- or literary-critical tools in the Pentateuch have delineated between כבוד appearances in P and texts other than P—a junk-drawer of sorts that

[59] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 61.

[60] Where the MT versification differs from English translations, the MT versification will be cited first, with English versification placed after in square brackets.

[61] Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 80.

[62] Mettinger sets this passage aside for special consideration due to its combination of both כנוד and שׁם elements, the major distinction explored in his monograph (see Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 43–44, 126), but this very act begins to dimmish the usefulness of his classification to this research.

goes by various names ("non-P,"[63] "Weitere Pentateuchtexts,"[64] etc.). De Vries has discussed the difficulties inherent in delineating כבוד appearances and contents himself to grouping the texts based on similar narrative functions,[65] a tack also taken by Aster based on whether the passage refers only to the "perceptible Presence of God" or whether it also includes "God's importance and power as demonstrated through signs and wonders."[66]

This study is a selective analysis of כבוד texts in the Old Testament concerned chiefly with Ezekiel's appropriation of כבוד traditions in Ezek 1–3 and 8–11 in support of his priestly identity. As such, we will limit connections to texts depicting the כבוד in relation to the tabernacle or temple, specifically as they relate to the priestly performance of shrine duties: Exod 40:34–35; Lev 9:23; 1 Kgs 8:11//2 Chr 5:14; 7:1–3. We will also attend to the only passage other than Ezek 1 that depicts the כבוד anthropomorphically, specifically with human anatomy: Exod 33:18, 22. In comparing relevant texts, the following features will be emphasized: (A) Location of the כבוד; (B) Visual elements; (C) Accompanying divine actions or speech; (D) Human responses; (E) Divine fluidity. For organizational clarity, we term the primary כבוד texts outside of Ezekiel under the classification of "P" and "non-P" texts. Our analysis will focus on Ezek 1–3 and 8–11, which make the most original contribution to Ezekiel's portrait of YHWH as כבוד. Ezekiel 43 will be invoked in our analysis below, though it will not receive separate treatment. This is not to minimize its importance as a witness to Ezekiel's conception of God but seeks to situate it within the movement of the earlier visions, a move that Ezek 43:3 does itself, associates this return of the כבוד with both prior כבוד visions: "And it was as the vision of the vision which I had seen—the vision which I saw when he entered[67] to destroy the city [=Ezek 8–11], and also the visions were like the vision which I saw at the river Kebar [=Ezek 1–3]."

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[63] Thomas B. Dozeman, *The Pentateuch: Introducing the Torah* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017); idem, *Exodus,* Eerdmans Critical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009).

[64] Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit,* 367–81, for whom this set of texts is part of a larger chapter devoted to "wider contexts" (weiteren Kontexten).

[65] deVries, *The Kābôd YHWH in the Old Testament,* 119–20.

[66] Aster, "The Phenomenon of Divine and Human Radiance," 355–81.

[67] The MT reads בְּבֹאִי "when I came" (supported by LXX and Targum) though this seems to be a letter confusion of י for ו, such that it should read בְּבֹאוֹ "when he came" (several Hebrew manuscripts and Vulgate). Though Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), 1234–35, suggests a literary portrayal of Ezekiel's prophetic work relative to the destruction of Jerusalem that retains the MT, most scholars seek to emend to the 3sg suffix, although Jacob Milgrom and Daniel I. Block, *Ezekiel's Hope: A Commentary on Ezekiel 38–48* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 103 n.283, note that this is not without its own challenges.

The Portrait of the כבוד־יהוה in Ezekiel 1–3

The Book of Ezekiel opens with a sequence of textual units that center on the call of the prophet. While most scholars treat Ezek 1–3 as a discrete literary unit devoted to prophetic commissioning, we argued in chapter 3 that the sign acts of Ezek 3:22–5:17 also play a vocationally formative role and are therefore part of what Odell calls "an extended, coherent composition that focuses on Ezekiel's inaugural experience."[68] And while scholars traditionally delineate 1:1–3:15 as a separate unit from 3:16–5:17,[69] we do find that the כבוד appears in both, at 1:28, 3:12, and 3:23, this last reference even referring back to the vision in 1:28. ("And look, the *kabod* of YHWH was standing like the *kabod* which I had seen beside the river Kebar" [Ezek 3:23]. Both 1:28 and 3:23 end with an identical response: ואפל על־פני "And I fell on my face.")

Much of chapter 1 is devoted to descriptions of four key elements of the vision that stretches from 1:4–28a: the four חיות (living ones/creatures), the wheels, the רקיע (expanse, platform), and the דמות כמראה אדם (the likeness as the appearance of a man). This last element will be labeled דמות כבוד־יהוה (the likeness of the *kabod* YHWH) in v. 28. While it is the climax of the opening vision, the other three elements all contribute to Ezekiel's distinctively priestly interpretation of the vision. We begin by noting the five emphasized features.

(A) Location of the כבוד

The vision begins beside the river Kebar (1:1, 3), and this locale is important later in the book for identifying later manifestations of the כבוד (see 3:23, 10:20, 43:3). The כבוד arrives in 1:4 accompanied by a storm wind (רוח סערה) from the north, which Aloysius Fitzgerald connects with the sirocco or hot east wind, especially important due to the association of YHWH's chariot with the clouds.[70] This storm theophany is associated with the כבוד via the חשמל located in its midst (מתוכה), a mysterious word translated with glosses like "glowing amber," "electrum" (from LXX ἤλεκτρον) "gleaming metal," and the like,[71] a term specifically predicated of the body of

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[68] Odell, "You Are What You Eat," 230.

[69] E.g., Marvin A. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary,* Reading the Old Testament (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 23; Ronald M. Hals, *Ezekiel,* FOTL 19 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 8.

[70] See discussion in Aloysius Fitzgerald, *The Lord of the East Wind,* CBQMS 34 (Washington DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2002), 139, 178–79.

[71] C. John Collins, "חַשְׁמַל," *NIDOTTE* 2:316–17.

the man in v. 27. Yet the location of this storm morphs seamlessly with the presence of the כבוד seated on a throne above the רקיע that was above the four חיות (see 1:26–28), language that evokes the creation account in Genesis 1. While the northern location is not labeled wilderness/מדבר, the coming of the כבוד as visible from a distance does evoke the imagery of Exod 16:10, where the כבוד also arrives accompanied by similar phenomena. In Ezek 3:22, however, Ezekiel encounters the כבוד in הבקעה, usually translated "plain" although derived from √בקע, "to split, cleave," leading Horace D. Hummel to translate "valley plain."[72] Without apparent intent, Daniel I. Block does forge an association between הבקעה here and the wilderness of Exod 16:10 simply by his description of the locale: "Away from the rivers and canals, this region was wasteland."[73]

(B) Visual Elements

The presence of the four חיות can be considered a visual element of the כבוד, although they are not a consistent feature of the visual appearance (i.e., the creatures are absent in 3:22–23). However, they play an important part in coloring the scene of the vision. And their audial contribution in v. 24—like the sound of many waters (כקול מים רבים)—is shifted in Ezek 43:2 to the כבוד itself: "And its sound was like the sound of many waters." As these creatures are later identified as cherubim (Ezek 10:15 identifies them as such retroactively), this does associate them with the ark of the covenant and the holy of holies, not only as general temple/tabernacle décor but as the specific décor of the temple as described in Ezek 10.[74] Other passages (Exod 40:34–35; 1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chr 5:14, 7:1–3) also place the כבוד inside the tabernacle or temple. And while those texts do not explicitly mention the cherubim, Ezekiel appears to be filling in the details of the temple décor, fitting for a priest who would have access to that very sight in the shrines.[75]

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[72] Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* 106.

[73] Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 153. See too 153 n.18 where Block notes connections with the aridity of the valley of bones in Ezek 37:2.

[74] Although see McCall, "Body/Image," 67, who critiques this connection due to the appearance here of four cherubim, not the two associated with the ark/sanctuary.

[75] As noted above, Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," 131–32, has detailed these holy of holies associations; cf. Silviu N. Bunta, "In Heaven or on Earth: A Misplaced Temple Question about Ezekiel's Visions," in *With Letters of Light: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Early Jewish Apocalypticism, Magic, and Mysticism,* ed. Daphna V. Arbel and Andrei A. Orlov, Ekstasis 2 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 28–44, who also notes temple associations in Ezekiel 1.

Ezekiel 1:4, associated as we have seen with 1:26–28 via חשמל, provides several more visual elements associated with the approach of the כבוד. Ezekiel depicts the arrival of a storm wind (רוח סערה) in v. 4, whose appearance is itself ambiguous since the term can either focus on the destruction caused by the wind, the dust cloud that often accompanies the sirocco,[76] or a rain/hail storm as in Ezek 13:11, 13. It is accompanied by a cloud (ענן) which can also be associated with either the dust cloud of the sirocco or a raincloud, although the mention of "fire flashing"[77] (אש מתלקחת; lit. fire taking hold of itself) most naturally evokes the lightning of a rain/hail storm as seen in Exod 9:24 (the plague of hail against Egypt), the only other occurrence of the collocation in the Old Testament. Likewise, in v. 28, the cloud is associated with the rainbow (קשת) and described "in cloud on the day of the rain" (בענן ביום הגשם), also associating this storm theophany with rain and hail. Bright light (נגה) is not mentioned in any כבוד passages outside of Ezekiel,[78] although it is associated elsewhere with the storm theophany (2 Sam 22:13; Ps 18:13). The colors of the rainbow seem to be in view in v. 28, which describes the bright light as having the *appearance* of the rainbow (כמראה הקשת).

The most striking visual appearance of the כבוד in Ezek 1:26–28 is its humanoid or anthropomorphic form. Ezekiel is generally interpreted as hedging his description with the obsessive use of likeness (דמות) and appearance (כמראה).[79] And yet W. Randall Garr demonstrates that דמות often accompanies צלם ("image") in priestly literature when depicting bodily forms—especially *theophany* in bodily form.[80] Ezekiel's predicating body parts of the

[76] Fitzgerald, *The Lord of the East Wind,* 14, 136–39.

[77] The preferred translation of Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 92; and Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2005), 31.

[78] Isaiah 4:5 does mention נגה with כבוד, although the language of a canopy "over all the glory" (על־כל־כבוד) is not most natural for depicting the כבוד as a divine hypostasis. Other occurrences of כל כבוד (Gen 45:13; Isa 8:7, 21:16, 22:24) are abstract or metaphorical ways of describing splendor or wealth (see footnote 32 above), suggesting this is also the case for Isa 4:5. Commentators nevertheless differ; for example Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah,* OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 36–37, and Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature,* FOTL 16 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 111, strongly associate Isa 4:5 with Pentateuchal כבוד traditions whereas Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: An English Text, with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965), 1:186, and Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12: A Commentary,* trans. John Bowden, 2nd ed., OTL (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1983), 88, not invoking that background.

[79] See John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel,* BJSUCSD 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 89; Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: The Heart of Biblical Theology,* Religious Perspectives 26 (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1978), 259.

[80] W. Randall Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism,* CHANE 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 123; for a comprehensive lexical and theological analysis of these terms, see Garr's chapter 7, "The Nouns דמות and צלם," on 117–76. See too Sommer, *The Bodies of God,* 69, 224 n. 68, for further supporting data.

כבוד is not unprecedented, although it is rare, found only in Exod 33:18–23, where Moses requests that YHWH show him his כבוד. Not only does the כבוד have the "appearance of a man" (דמות כמראה אדם), particular reference is made to his "waist" or "loins" (מתניו), and the sections of his body above (למעלה) and below (למטה) his waist. No specific verb is used to depict his posture on the throne, although it is assumed the humanoid description leads most naturally to interpreting him as seated. In Ezek 3:23, the כבוד may also evoke a human form in that עמד ("to stand") is predicated on it. Admittedly עמד can refer to motionlessness, as is the case in several theophany texts where the cloud (ענן) stands in place (e.g., Exod 14:19, 33:9–10; Num 12:5, 14:14; Deut 31:15),[81] yet other passages associate the כבוד with the action or posture of priests and cherubim who stand (or are prevented from standing) nearby: 1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chr 5:14; Ezek 10:19. James Barr helps us appreciate just how striking is of a humanoid appearance of the כבוד in Ezek 1:

> Though the figure may be of human likeness [in both Isa 6 and Ezek 1], the main impression given is of something above and beyond the human. It is all the more interesting, therefore, in the still later Ezekiel, where the theophany is still more strongly influenced by cultic practice and gives an even stronger impression of something above and beyond the human, to find in the end (Ezek. i 26) as explicit statement of a human likeness at the center.[82]

Here we see one of several unique innovations that Ezekiel makes to the priestly tradition of the כבוד, something we will explore more below.

(C) Accompanying Divine Actions or Speech

Ezekiel 1:4 states that the storm encased כבוד was "coming" or "entering" (באה; from √בוא), and in 40:.2 and 4, the כבוד is explicitly/grammatically the subject of בוא. This action is not attributed to the כבוד outside of Ezekiel (although, as was the case with עמד mentioned above, other passages show people in the presence of the כבוד who either "enter" or are prevented from "entering": Exod 40:35; Lev 9:23; Num 20:6; 2 Chr 7:2). And of course, all this reminds us that the כבוד "stands" (עמד) as well (Ezek 3:23). The word קול is used in 1:24 and 43:2, although in

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[81] *HALOT* s.v. עמד. Although it would be interesting to consider whether the עמד of the cloud at the tabernacle is employed to mirror the work of the priests (remarks in ch. 4 above about YHWH himself depicted as a priest).

[82] James Barr, "Theophany and Anthropomorphism in the Old Testament," in *Congress Volume: Oxford 1959,* VTSup 7 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), 36.

both cases, the best translation seems to be "sound," not voice. The כבודdoes, however, speak for much of Ezek 1–3, sending Ezekiel (2:1–7), instructing him to eat the scroll (2:8–3:3), and instructing him to speak a message of warning to the House of Israel (3:4–11). There is a seven-day interruption in 3:14–15, followed by a resumption of YHWH's speech in 3:17–21, which does not indicate the presence of the כבוד even though the speech is of the same character as the three prior speeches in chapter 2–3. Nevertheless, it is when Ezekiel goes out to the valley-plain (הבקעה) in 3:22–23 that he again encounters the כבוד, beginning the series of speeches concerning sign-acts (which we considered in detail in chapter 3). In all of this, though there is an ominous character to the speeches due to the stubbornness and rebellious character of the House of Israel to whom Ezekiel is called to prophesy, this still seems best characterized as כבוד speech that is instructive and beneficial, as is the case in Exod 16, 24, 33; Num 20; and Deut 5. Nevertheless, this is one of a series of texts actually involving כבוד speech, something not typical of the shrine-oriented כבוד appearances that are our focus per Ezekiel's priestly identity: Exod 40:34–35; Lev 9:23; 1 Kgs 8:11//2 Chr 5:14; 7:1–3. (Note that when Ezekiel does encounter the כבוד in the temple [Ezek 8:4, 9:3], it does speak to him there as well.)

(D) Human Responses

The only action given in response to the כבוד in Ezek 1–3 is that of prostration. In both 1:28 and 3:23, the same phrase appears: ואפל על־פני "and I fell on my face." Falling on one's face (נפל + פנה) as a result of the כבוד appears in Lev 9:23–24, Num 16:19–22, and 17:7–10 [16:42–45]. (Note that נפל + פנה also occurs in Num 14:5 and 20:6, although their prostration is the result of the people's speech, not the appearance of the כבוד. Note too that prostration is found in Exod 33 and 2 Chr 7:1–3, although neither case uses נפל + פנה to portray that action.) Only in the case of Lev 9:23–24 is the act of falling on one's face a worshipful act.[83] Ezekiel's prostration is not as easily associated with the joyful worship-prostration of Lev 9:24, where רנן "shout for joy" accompanies the falling on the face, and as such has attracted a range of explanations: awed

[83] Dozeman, *The Pentateuch,* 391.

worship,[84] fainting,[85] shocked submission,[86] dread,[87] and even the posture for receiving ecstatic visions.[88]

(E) Divine Fluidity

Sommer views Ezekiel as a hallmark example of the rejection of divine fluidity, partly due to Ezekiel's classification as a "priestly text," which therefore shares—per his thesis—a priestly tradition of rejecting fluidity.[89] He goes so far as to claim that כבוד in P and Ezekiel should be presumed as referring to a single perception of God. However, this claim is deemed problematic by McCall, who detects the influence of non-priestly thought in Ezekiel's description and a utopian ideology that P does not share.[90] Ezekiel 10:20 does identify the four creatures as having been beneath "the God of Israel" when he appeared by the Kebar, thereby showing, according to Sommer, "that 'God' and 'Yhwh's *kabod*' are interchangeable terms for Ezekiel."[91] Yet the creation imagery invoked (e.g., רקיע "expanse," חיה "living creature," found regularly through the P designated creation account in Genesis 1 as noted above) opens up the possibility of viewing the כבוד not simply as a local presence of YHWH, removed from the Jerusalem temple and instead located in Babylonia. It also evokes the Zion-Sabaoth traditions,[92] a theology that "holds in tension the dual notion that YHWH's true home is in heaven, but YHWH may also be found on earth, in the Jerusalem temple."[93] Whereas Zion-Sabaoth theology

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[84] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 105; Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 129; William H. Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1–19,* WBC 28 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986), 19.

[85] Walther Eichrodt, *Ezekiel: A Commentary,* trans. Cosslett Quin, OTL (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1970), 59; cf. Nancy R. Bowen, *Ezekiel,* AOTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 17–19, 58–59, who associates the whole event chiefly with post-traumatic stress disorder. See too the trauma/rage observations made concerning the כבוד visions in Dereck M. Daschke, "Desolate Among Them: Loss, Fantasy, and Recovery in the Book of Ezekiel," *American Imago* 56, no. 2 (1999): 105–32. Ruth Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* VTSup 154 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 343, notes that with only a few exceptions, interpreters view the כבוד in Ezek 1 positively, a sign of divine devotion (Zeichen göttlicher Zugewandtheit) to the exiles.

[86] Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19,* WBC 28 (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1994), 60

[87] Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20,* AB 22 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 51, following Eliezer of Beugency.

[88] Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 30–31; who also suggests a connection with awed worship.

[89] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 58.

[90] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 222 n. 57; McCall, "Body/Image," 26–27.

[91] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 73.

[92] For Ezekiel's use of Zion-Sabaoth formulations, see John T. Strong, "God's *Kābôd*: The Presence of Yahweh in the Book of Ezekiel," 69–82; Tomas Renz, "The Use of the Zion Tradition in the Book of Ezekiel," in *Zion: City of Our God,* ed. Richard S. Hess and Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 77–103.

[93] McCall, "Body/Image," 65.

does not treat the כבוד־יהוה as synonymous with the *whole* of God's self, it does treat God in his *whole self* as capable of being located in multiple locations, leading McCall to accuse Sommer of undue strictness: "He assumes that a deity who is unified in self and body cannot exist in multiple places at once. A deity that exists in multiple places at once would be fluid rather than unified in nature. On this point Sommer leaves no room for the divine mystery of a God who, as the creator of both space and time, as able to remain unified in self while appearing in multiple places at once."[94]

Summary for Ezekiel 1–3

Ezekiel's prophecy thus begins with a dramatic vision of the כבוד־יהוה, steeped in priestly themes and images, yet in no way slavish in its adherence to priestly thought; drawing on a range of Israel's traditions and themes and creating a new priestly synthesis fitting for a priest in exile. On the one hand, his use of priestly themes and literature is evident. The כבוד arrives from a distance in wilderness-like terrain, alluding the to the wilderness appearance in Exod 16:1–10, a P classified account. Even though Sommer sees this wilderness account as indicating non-fluidity—the כבוד does not descend from heaven (as is common in E) but comes from a location on earth[95]—this is open to challenge. After all, YHWH's כבוד movement *toward* the camp is because, according to Moses, "he has heard your grumbling" (vv. 7, 9), and he was able to communicate this to Moses in speech in vv. 4–5. YHWH was in some measure present in the camp and with Moses apart from his כבוד. Further use of priestly themes and literature is seen in Ezekiel's response of prostration echoes the scene in Lev 9:23–24 (P). The cherubim-esque description of the four living creatures (identified explicitly as cherubim in Ezek 10:15) likewise represents a priestly, temple-based motif, precisely "what one would expect of a priest educated for service in the Jerusalem Temple."[96]

On the other hand, Ezekiel's anthropomorphic depiction of God in כבוד form is unprecedented for P, instead occurring only in Exod 33:18, 22. Exodus 33 as a whole expresses

[94] Robin C. McCall, "The body and being of God in Ezekiel," *RevExp* 111, no. 4 (2014): 382.

[95] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 228 n.93.

[96] Sweeney, "Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile," 132; see 131–32 for details. McCall, "Body/Image," 66–69, does push back against a distinctively priestly portrait given from the cherubim, although she does note that Zion-Sabaoth traditions do not unseat Priestly ones, even though Ezekiel "is not constrained by either."

the theme of "the presence of God in the midst of his people."[97] These verses are generally attributed to E (although Propp tentatively suggests J).[98] The and the events foretold in these verses take place in 34:5–28, attributed by many to J.[99] Admittedly, the fulfillment of this dialogue between Moses and YHWH in Exodus 34 does not contain the same anthropomorphic detail, nor is the descent in cloud in Exod 34:5–7 itself necessarily attributed to P.[100] Nevertheless the anthropomorphic detail of Exod 33:18–23 is significant with Moses said to see or not see (√ראה) YHWH's face (פנה; vv. 20, 23), hand (כף; v. 22), and back (אחור; v. 23). The כבוד is forecast to engage in other anthropomorphic acts: *setting* Moses in a cleft of rock (שׂים; v. 22), *covering* him with his hand (שׂכך; v. 22), and *moving-aside* his hand (סור; v. 23). Yet some details relate to P accounts of the כבוד such as Moses' response of worshipful prostration in Exod 34:8–9, much like Lev 9:23–24. Moses' response to YHWH in Exod 34:9, asking him to "go in the midst of us" (הלך . . . בקרבנו), does relate to the widely accepted interpretation of the appearance of the כבוד to Ezekiel in exile as a token of divine reassurance and comfort.[101] Louis Stulman describes this as YHWH even identifying with the displaced, traumatized refugee community as "a source of healing and newness for suffering Israel."[102]

The Portrait of the כבוד־יהוה in Ezekiel 8–11

Ezekiel 8:1 records the second date formula of the prophetic book, indicating the end of the first major section (1:1–7:27) and the beginning of the second major section (8:1–19:15). Tyler D. Mayfield identifies the similar form between these two major sections: "[Ezek 8–19] follows the same form as Ezek 1–7. There is a narrative introduction including the vision of Ezek 8–11, then a sequence of visions in 12–19. . . . So, the book commences with two similar literary

[97] Noth, *Exodus,* 253.

[98] William H. Propp, *Exodus 19–40,* AB 2A (New York: Doubleday, 2006), 584.

[99] See Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Bible with Sources Revealed: A New View into the Five Books of Moses* (New York: Harper One, 2003), 175–79.

[100] See Thomas B. Dozeman, *Exodus,* Eerdmans Critical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 731–39.

[101] E.g., Ralph W. Klein, *Ezekiel: The Prophet and His Message,* Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 26–28; Michael A. Lyons, *An Introduction to the Study of Ezekiel,* T&T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 146–47. See also commentaries like Eichrodt, *Ezekiel,* 58–59; Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 108; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 80–81; etc.

[102] Louis Stulman, "Ezekiel as Disaster/Survival Literature: Speaking on Behalf of the Loosers," in *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration,* ed. Mark J. Boda et al, AIL 21 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015), 141.

units in chapters 1–19."[103] This does not, however, preclude treating Ezek 8–11 as a distinct subunit with literary integrity of its own. Though scholars delineate and analyze smaller reports within Ezekiel 8–11,[104] there is substantial agreement about the unity of these chapters.[105] An inclusio is formed via material in 8:1–4 reversed (chiastically) in 11:22–25.[106] Having said this, the interpretation of this unity is debated. While some scholars interpret the chapters chiefly as an example of YHWH abandoning or being driven from Jerusalem and the temple on account of idolatry,[107] others stress YHWH's judgment of Jerusalem and the temple *for* its idolatry.[108] It does not take long to sense that treating this passage in such an either/or fashion is unwarranted.

Admittedly the כבוד is moving in an outward direction. From its presence established in 8:4, verbs of ascent (עלה, 9:3, 10:3, 11:23) and departure (יצא, 10:18) are used until the כבוד ceases its movement by "standing" (עמד) on/over/beside (על) the mountain east of the city. Yet the movement that 43:3 predicates of the כבוד in Ezek 8–11 is inward—that of "coming" (בוא) to destroy the city. On the one hand, it is unreasonable to look for rigid consistency between two visionary accounts, regardless of how closely they are associated. On the other hand, the movement of the כבוד throughout the temple in Ezek 8–11 is literarily intermingled with instructions for a judgment of destruction on the temple and the city. Intermingling permeates this passage. Notice that YHWH, the fiery "likeness as the appearance of a man" associated with חשמל (8:2, the apparent subject of numerous 3ms verbs in these chapters), the כבוד, and the Spirit (רוח) are also intermingled in Ezek 8–11, showing each and all as subjects of the judgment

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[103] Tyler D. Mayfield, *Literary Structure and Setting in Ezekiel,* FAT 2/43 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 105. Cf. Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel* (Boston: Brill, 2002), 68–71, who draws attention to the rhetorical use of sign-acts (Ezek 12) following the vision (Ezek 8–11).

[104] See contrasting proposals Hals, *Ezekiel,* 46; Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 53–54. Reconstructions of the development of these chapters are proffered exhaustively by Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24,* trans. Ronald E. Clements, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979), 230–35, and more economically by Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Der Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiel Kapital 1–19,* ATD 22, 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 132–34.

[105] H. Van Dyke Parunak, "The Literary Architecture of Ezekiel's *MARʾÔT ĔLŌHÎM,*" *JBL* 99, no. 1 (1980): 61–74, even depicts how the visions of chapters 1–3, 8–11, and 40–48 function together, even "nest inside one another" (62) within the book of Ezekiel.

[106] For details, see Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 272; Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19,* 129–30.

[107] E.g., Daniel Block, *The Gods of the Nations: A Study in Ancient Near Eastern National Theology,* 2nd ed (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013), 134–47

[108] E.g., William A. Tooman, "Ezekiel's Radical Challenge to Inviolability," *ZAW* 121 (2009): 498–514. See too the brief survey of scholarship provided in Key-Sup Hong, "Judgment and Restoration in the Temple Visions of Ezek 8–11 and Ezek 40–48 in the Light of Temple Theology" (PhD Diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2003), 19–20.

instructions and commands.[109] Both judgment and departure (i.e., presence and absence) are operating in this vision, creating a jarring paradox. As we analyze the depiction of the כבוד in these chapters (found at 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 18, 19; 11:22, 23), we will walk a fine line between predicating characteristics of the כבוד from subjects not formally labeled as כבוד (e.g., the fire and חשׁמל of 8:3) and yet not hastily collapsing the unique characterizations into one another, a reading that would lose what Walther Zimmerli identifies as "various aspects" of "divine intervention" herein.[110]

Before embarking on our analysis of Ezek 8–11, singling out the five features of the כבוד noted for Ezek 1–3, one final internal note should be made about the relationship of these chapters to other כבוד dense chapters in the book. Whereas we noted above that 43:3 associates the return of the כבוד to the visionary temple with both of the earlier כבוד visions (1–3 and 8–11), 43:3 seems to be following the precedent set by Ezek 8–11, which connects itself to the opening vision. William Tooman explains: "The link between 8,2 and 1,27–28 is forged by a dense constellation of identical locutions in the two passages. Ez 8,2 duplicates four locutions from 1,27–28: כעין חשמל; ממתניו ולמעלה; ממראה מתניו ולמטה; כמראה־אש. In 8,2, however, the locutions are inverted. . . . This is a paradigmatic example of Seidel's law."[111] Tooman concludes: "The purpose of the inversion in 8,2 [i.e., Seidel's law] is to draw the reader's attention back to 1,27–28, identifying the mysterious being with the divine presence (כבוד־יהוה; 1,28)."[112] We expect, then, to find much overlap between these two visions.

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[109] Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19*, 138, hints at the interpretive challenges and provisionally identifies all of the characters as YHWH. Cf. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 176–77, who describes a gradual literary identification of these characters using coordinate verbs, and Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 73, who states it even more strongly when he says that "'God' and 'Yhwh's *kabod*' are interchangeable terms for Ezekiel."

[110] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 236 states emphatically that "[t]he merging together of the subjects of the action: 1) the man 2) the spirit 3) Yahweh himself . . . must not be separated in a logical division and torn apart by literary criticism. The one divine intervention is here experienced by the prophet under various aspects." Moshe Greenberg, "The Vision of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 8–11:A Holistic Interpretation," in *The Divine Helmsman: Studies on God's Control of Human Events Presented to Lou H. Silberman,* eds. J. Crenshaw and S. Sandmel (New York, NY: Ktav, 1980), 155, uses apposition to identify the subjects: "The luminous figure—the majesty—appears at the start of the vision."

[111] Tooman, "Ezekiel's Radical Challenge to Inviolability," 500. Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 272, notes the same chiasm/inversion.

[112] Tooman, "Ezekiel's Radical Challenge to Inviolability," 501.

(A) Location of the כבוד

Ezekiel 8 begins with the Ezekiel sitting in his house when the hand of YHWH comes upon him, inducting him into the visionary experience.[113] Though v. 2 states that what he sees is the appearance of a man[114] (דמות כמראה־אש), the further description, as noted above, portrays this man as the כבוד from 1:27–28. Unfortunately, this most stunning locale receives very little attention either in the vision or in secondary literature. Though the OT records examples of private/household religion, it is usually presented negatively (e.g., Judg 17:1–13). This is certainly the case when private/household religion involves non-Yahwistic worship (e.g., Judg 6:11–32), although centralization ideals (generally attributed to the traditions evident in Deut 12)[115] leave little room for official, ritual forms of Yahwism practiced in private household settings. Still, some glimpses are found of YHWH's ark-presence in private households (e.g., 1 Sam 7:1–2; 2 Sam 6:10–11) that are not altogether negative (e.g., 2 Sam 6:11 says that the ark resulted in blessing to Obed-edom and his household), though admittedly not presented as ideal.

Not only is religious ritual ordinarily portrayed negatively in households, the receipt of visions are rarely located there either.[116] The only place where a vision (specifically a מראה) occurs in a house (בית) is 1 Sam 3:15. Interestingly in that account, it is another priestly figure (Samuel) receiving the מראה and it happens to be that his bedroom is the house of YHWH (בית־יהוה), the tabernacle in Shiloh. And the vision he receives is part of a complex of oracles wherein YHWH is said to raise up a "faithful priest" (כהן נאמן; 1 Sam 2:35) in place of the corrupt Elides. Mark Leuchter attends to some interesting details about the mode of revelation in the prophets vis-à-vis this account of Samuel receiving a מארה in the בית־יהוה:

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[113] Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 55.

[114] Reading אש as אִשׁ, "man" (spelled without *matres lectionis*) following LXX ανδρός instead of MT אֵשׁ, "fire."

[115] For discussion, see Thomas C. Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomist History: A Sociological, Historical, and Literary Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 56–65; Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), 23–52; though note J.G. McConville, *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy,* JSOTSup 33 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 21–38, for perspective that is critical of interpreting Deut 12 as a centralizing text.

[116] Mark Leuchter, "Sacred Space and Communal Legitimacy in Exile: The Contribution of Seraiah's Colophon (Jer 51:59–64A)," in *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration,* ed. Mark J. Boda et al, AIL 21 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015), 92–93, comments on the convention of priests and prophets receiving visions in locations that served important roles in forming communal devotion, something he sees fitting for Ezekiel's visions along the Kebar river. Strangely he ignores Ezekiel's house location, even as he cites the vision of Ezek 8–11 on the same page.

> Even if individuals like Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel possessed priestly heritage and drew inspiration from that background, their words are compelling because they drew inspiration from that background, their words are compelling because they function in a prophetic mode. Prophetic critique seems to have replaced the earlier practice attested within Samuel's origin narrative of a "new priest" arising from the ranks of Levites to supplant and replace a sanctuary's questionable priestly faculty.[117]

Yet as this research has argued, Ezekiel's priestly *identity* should not be so quickly demoted. Might it be that Ezekiel 8:1–3 is doing the exact opposite of what Leuchter suggests? In the following vision, Ezekiel will—as did Samuel—witness corruption in the sanctuary (potentially committed by priestly figures, though this is debated)[118] that is addressed by the instructions given by an obedient priestly figure (the man clothed in linen) to other obedient priestly figures (whom Sweeney identifies as such in part due to their presence at the bronze altar in 9:2).[119] Echoes to what Leuchter described as an "origin narrative of a 'new priest' arising from the ranks of Levites to supplant and replace a sanctuary's questionable priestly faculty" seems especially fitting for a priest in exile.[120]

Though interpreters largely ignore the fact that the כבוד appeared in Ezekiel's house (albeit in visionary form), rushing instead to analyze the catalog of abominations spelled out in the visionary journey to Jerusalem, Ezekiel's "house vision" of YHWH's כבוד may represent a vocationally significant moment. Some have treated Ezek 8:1–2 as the origins of synagogue or household worship in Judaism and early Christianity.[121] And while a considerable amount of gap-filling is required for such assertions, Ezekiel's house does appear to be a place where community figures gathered (cf. Ezek 14:1; 20:1 even says they came to him to inquire of [דרשׁ]

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[117] Mark Leuchter, *Samuel and the Shaping of Tradition,* Biblical Refigurations (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 45.

[118] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 243, argues that the 25 men worshipping the sun in 8:16 are priests, followed by Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20,* 259. Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel,* VTSup 56 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 68–72, however, argues that they are lay-leaders, chiefly since they are nowhere called priests and since 9:6 identifies them as הזקנים (the elders). This is a reasonable identification although by no means certain. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 57–59, appears to support a priestly identification, although stands a bit aloof. He disputes that those practicing what Ezekiel deems abominations are doing anything inappropriate, suggesting instead that Ezekiel's Zadokite emphasis is what condemns any non-Zadokite practicing ritual in the temple (cf., idem, *Jewish Mysticism: From Ancient Times through Today* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020], 153–54).

[119] Sweeney, "The Destruction of Jerusalem as Purification," 151.

[120] For further comparison of Samuel and Ezekiel, see Marvin A. Sweeney, "Samuel's Institutional Identity in the Deuteronomistic History," in *Constructs of Prophecy in the Former and Latter Prophets and Other Texts,* ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Martti Nissinen, ANEM 4 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 170, 174.

[121] See Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 54–55; William Greenhill, *An Exposition of Ezekiel* (1863; repr. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994), 193.

YHWH). Archeological evidence demonstrates household religious practice in Judah, and increasing attention has been paid to sacrality in/of the Israelite/Judean house.[122] While Ezek 8:1–2 seems to function literarily merely to set up the visionary journey to Jerusalem, that the כבוד appears (albeit briefly and in visionary form) in the *house* of a Zadokite Priest in exile may underscore Ezekiel's priestly identity as one who encounters the כבוד in a בית, though now adjusted to the absence of the Jerusalem בית wherein such encounters ordinarily took place (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chr 5:14, 7:1–3). If house sacrality was assumed by the Israelite/Judean worldview, how much more for the house of a priest? The vision will go on to say that YHWH would become for the exiles למקדש מעט ("a small sanctuary" or "a sanctuary for a short period" or some merging of both ideas)[123] in the lands where they had entered (Ezek 11:16). De Vries argues that the priestly-prophetic, presence-mediating ministry of Ezekiel himself is what is chiefly in view of the expression מקדש מעט.[124] It is tantalizing to consider that a priest, primed to expect an encounter of the כבוד in the בית/house that is the temple, now encounters it in his own בית, especially at a time (exile) when scholars have noted an increased importance on the household as the location for maintaining religious and cultural traditions.[125]

The vision immediately transfers Ezekiel to the temple in Jerusalem, a place one would more readily expect to encounter the כבוד (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chr 5:14, 7:1–3). The כבוד is expressly said to be "there" (שׁם), i.e., at the entrance of the gate of הפנימית, usually translated as "inner court."[126] Ezek 9:3, as recognized almost universally among commentators, occasions

[122] See Beth Alpert Nakhai, "The Household as Sacred Space," in *Family and Household Religion: Towards a Synthesis of Old Testament Studies, Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Cultural Studies,* ed. Rainer Albertz et al (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 53–71, surveys the archaeological data with a special eye toward the role of elders and women in such sacred households. Likewise, Abraham Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis: Settlement, Interaction, Expansion and Resistance,* Approaches to Anthropological Archaeology (London: Equinox, 2006), 80, notes the way in which four-room house architecture reflects and promotes concern for proper handling of purity and impurity. Cf. idem, "Purity and Impurity in Iron Age Israel," *BAR* 45, no. 2 (March/April, 2019): 36–43, 60–62.

[123] For discussion of the translational options, see Pieter De Vries, "The presence of YHWH in exile according to the Book of Ezekiel, with special reference to the meaning of the expression מִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט in Ezekiel 11:16," *OTE* 31, no. 1 (2018): 270–71. Elizabeth Keck, "The Glory of Yahweh in Ezekiel and the Pre-Tabernacle Wilderness, *JSOT* 37, no. 2 (2012): 208–9, opts for translating the expression as "a sanctuary in some measure," which nicely allows for merging to fit within the linguistic flexibility.

[124] De Vries, "The presence of YHWH in exile," 77–78.

[125] Jean-Philippe Delorme, "בית ישראל in Ezekiel: Identity Construction and the Exilic Period," *JBL* 138, no. 1 (2019): 127, 132, 138.

[126] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 277 n.21, addresses the omission of הפנימית in LXX and defends the typical translation of "inner *court*" in comparison with "outer court" language in 10:5.

interpretive challenges about the movement of the כבוד in what follows. Interpretive decisions are necessary even to translate the beginning of the verse:

[3] Now concerning the *kabod* of the God of Israel, (it) went up from over the cherub—where it had been upon it—to the threshold of the house.	וכבוד אלהי ישׂראל נעלה מעל הכרוב אשר היה עליו אל מפתן הבית

Many translate נעלה pluperfectly, "had gone up," [127] to highlight the parenthetical qualities of v. 3a—Block places v. 3a in parenthesis, and Brownlee even adds "[meanwhile]"[128]—although others depict this as movement undertaken by the כבוד at that very moment.[129] An identical location change is found in 10:4—from the cherub to the threshold—although a waw-consecutive + imperfect form of רום displaces the Niphal נעלה of 9:3. While some propose that a move back to the cherub must have occurred in the intervening time, Allen points out that the text does not attempt to resolve the apparent redundancy.[130]

The singular הכרוב (cherub) likewise introduces challenges. Is this intended to differentiate between *this* cherub and the cherubim that dominate Ezek 10 (explicitly identified in 10:15 with the living creatures [חיות] of Ezek 1–3)? While literary-critical solutions have been proposed,[131] Allen suggests that the singular would prevent confusion with the two cherubim on the ark of the covenant, thereby not placing the כבוד on the ark. However, he does concede that the cherubim on the ark might be considered a single complex, which he calls a "cherub structure."[132] Block simply labels the singular as a "collective," believing that τῶν χερουβιν in LXX reflects such a reading.[133] Wagner compares with singular/plural variation elsewhere in Ezekiel's visionary material and reads this literarily: "Like the grammatical confusion [surveyed in Ezek 1 and 8–11], the repetitions in the text are part of the linguistic design of the vision.

[127] E.g., Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 174.
[128] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 300; Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1–19*, 140, encloses the word in square brackets.
[129] Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 263.
[130] Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19*, 147.
[131] Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit,* 251–55, surveys and engages critically with literary-critical solutions, devoting significant attention to Zimmerli's suggestions.
[132] Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19,* 147.
[133] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 300 n.5.

These phenomena are used as a stylistic device to describe the particular impressiveness of the situation."[134]

However one wishes to resolve this matter of singular-plural variation, by 10:4 the כבוד is located at the threshold (מפתן), only depicted as a location in the temple complex in Ezekiel, from where its brightness (נגה) fills the court (חצר). (Note that filling [מלא] does associate the location of the כבוד with the temple in 1 Kgs 8:11, 2 Chr 5:14, and 2 Chr 7:1–3, as well as with the tabernacle in Exod 40:34–35, although in each of those cases, the whole of the כבוד fills the entirety of the structure, not just the court.) By 10:18–19, the כבוד resumes its place over the cherubim, although the location of the cherubim themselves seems to have moved: from the right (ימין) of the temple in 10:3 to an elevated position above this in 10:15, to the entrance of the east gate in 10:19. The vision ends with a final movement of the כבוד in 11:22–23, still above the cherubim, from the midst of the city (מעל תוך העיר, which may presuppose an unrecorded move to the midst of the city unless one follows Greenberg who sees it as an expression depicting the east gate as contiguous with the city wall)[135] to the mountain east of the city. Nothing more is said about the location of the כבוד which has invited speculation throughout the history about it residing on the mountain until the end of the exile or relocating to either heaven or Babylon per Ezek 1–3. Once again, the visionary context does not require an answer to this question.

(B) Visual Elements

As noted already, the כבוד is described with the same visual features found in Ezek 1:26–27, i.e., human/anthropomorphic features, fiery features, and חשמל, just as Ezekiel had seen in the valley-plain (בקעה, Ezek 8:4; cf. 3:22–23). Admittedly the pointed MT of 8:2 states that what Ezekiel saw was the appearance of fire (כְּמַרְאֵה־אֵשׁ), yet as noted above (see footnote 113), the reading אִישׁ "man" has been adopted here following LXX and most commentors, nearly all of whom reference Zimmerli's suggestion that this had to do with a "reverence for the divine appearance."[136] (Note the Targum of Ezekiel, which had a tendency to avoid anthropomorphism already, expands significantly on this verse stressing the fiery appearance as cloaking "the glory

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134 Wagner, *Gottes Herrlichkeit,* 254–55, "Wie die grammatischen Verwirrspiele gehören auch die im Text vorhandenen Wiederholungen52 zur sprachlichen Gestaltung der Vision. Diese Phänomene werden als Stilmittel verwendet, die besondere Eindrücklichkeit der Situation zu schildern."

135 Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 191.

136 Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1,* 216.

which the eye is unable to perceive and at which it is impossible to look" [יקר דלא יכלא עינא למחזי ולא אפשׁר לאסתכלא ביה].[137]) There is a suitableness to the pun, however, since this man's hips/loins (מתנים) themselves have the appearance of fire (אֵשׁ) and luminescence like the sparkling of חשמל (זהר כעין החשמלה). Association of מתנים with luminosity and חשמל is a direct reference to 1:27. Likewise, in keeping with Ezekiel's stress in chapters 1–3 on blunting the directness of the visual features through terms like appearance (מראה), Ezek 8:3 states that the man stretched out the תבנית (pattern, form) of a hand (cf. the association between כבוד and יד in Exod 33:22).[138] As we noted above about the location of the כבוד in the house, anatomy predicated on the כבוד is incredibly brief. However, it does provide a more direct connection to another known כבוד text (i.e., Exod 33:18–23).

In 10:4, the כבוד is again associated with cloud (ענן), which fills the temple structure comparable, especially to Exod 40:34–35 (although note the numerous other accompanying cloud appearances in Exod 16:7, 10; 24:16–17; Num 16:19; 17:7; Deut 5:24; 1 Kgs 8:11//2 Chr 5:14). Bright light (נגה) appears again (cf. Ezek 1:4, 13, 27), though as noted above, is not mentioned in any other כבוד passages (barring debate over Isa 4:5; see footnote 77 above), though it is associated with storm theophany in 2 Sam 22:13 and Ps 18:13. Visual features are present in Ezek 8–11, although they are mentioned relatively sparsely.

(C) Accompanying Divine Actions or Speech

Though YHWH, the man-likeness (of 8:2), the כבוד, and the Spirit (רוח) are intermingled as noted above, listing every action performed by one of these characters in this section does not yield valuable data for comparison. Instead, only those actions or speech predicated on a character in close proximity to the כבוד will be noted. Throughout the vision, the כבוד is the subject of actions of posture (עמד, "standing" [10:18; 11:23]; שׁלח, "stretching/extending" [8:3]), action (לקח, "taking/seizing" [8:3]; נשׂא, "lifting" [8:3]; בוא, "bringing" [Hiph; 8:3]), and movement (עלה, "go up" [9:3; 10:4; 11:23]; יצא, "depart" [10:18]). As noted above, עמד is

[137] See Samson H. Levey, *The Targum of Ezekiel: Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, ad Notes,* ArBib 13 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987), 34–35, of which my English translation is a modification and notes the avoidance of anthropomorphism throughout the targum to Ezekiel.

[138] Note that כבוד and תבנית occur in close proximity in Exod 24:16–17 and 25:9, where YHWH reveals the תבנית of the tabernacle though Ezek 8:3 does not appear to be any kind of allusion to the כבוד appearance in Exod 24:16–17, even though it does invoke the same יד/hand imagery of the כבוד appearance in Exod 33:22.

predicated on the כבוד only in Ezek 3:23. Exodus 40:36–37 notes that the cloud (associated with the כבוד in 40:34) would עלה regularly to indicate that the Israelites should decamp (see too Numb 9:15–23). While YHWH is said to stretch (or not stretch) out his hand in Exodus (Exod 2:5, 24:11), and while Exod 24:11 is closely connected with YHWH's visual appearance (vv. 10–11 twice says that people saw [ראה and חזה] God), the expression there refers to punishment. The hand-stretching action of the כבוד in Ezek 8:3 does not seem to reflect this idea (unless one wishes to construe it as a substitutionary, priestly action like the sin-bearing sign-act in 4:4–6, an unprecedented interpretive move). Yet this is quite ironic considering how saturated with punishment is the remainder of Ezek 8–11.

Throughout the vision, YHWH—sometimes mentioned as כבוד, sometimes identified as YHWH—speaks. The vision is dominated by speech, suggested by Van Dyke Parunak as an adapted ריב against those committing idolatry in the temple.[139] The כבוד itself is most explicitly connected to speech in 9:3, where the subject of ויקרא (and he called) is most naturally the כבוד which was introduced at the beginning of the verse with a *casus pendens*. Ezekiel 8:4–5 may also indicate the כבוד as the subject of speech (ויאמר), although one might object that v. 4 is a parenthetical note about the כבוד ("and look—there was the kabod" [והנה־שם כבוד]) that interrupts the actions of the man. And yet, as we have identified the man himself with כבוד already, v. 4 need only provide the explicit nomenclature for what was already recognized by the description in v. 2. Whether speech is being directed to Ezekiel (throughout 8–11), to the man clothed in linen tasked with marking off those people to be protected from YHWH's punishment (9:3–4), or to the six men with their striking implements (כלי מפצו; 9:2, 5–7), the message/instruction he coveys is chiefly one of condemnation, either pronouncing guilt or instruction for the executioners.

Ezekiel seems to depict the כבוד much as we find in Num 14 and 16–17, where he pronounces judgment and actively metes out the punishment against the grumblers and Korah with his associates. Admittedly the punishments themselves differ. Whereas Num 16:31–33 describes death as being swallowed by the ground, Num 14:37 and 17:11–15 [16:46–50] both describe death by plague (מגפה and הנגף are used interchangeably). While Ezek 9:5, 7, 8 uses the

[139] Van Dyke Parunak, "Literary Architecture," 67–69, 74, although there is room to dispute his invocation of this prophetic form without loss of its prosecutorial force. E.g., Hals, *Ezekiel,* 46–47, labels chapter 11 as a disputation, what Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel,* 65, describes more narrowly as a disputation oracle sequence.

word נכה to depict the action of the strikers, there is significant overlap in semantic range,[140] not to mention that Num 14:12, 45 predicates נכה action against the grumblers. (Note too that those who receive the mark are not to be touched [נגשׁ; 9:6], further underscoring the striking component of the punishment.) One additional feature of the punishment appears noteworthy; Num 14:42–44 stresses to those who refuse to accept YHWH's verdict and try to enter the land that YHWH is not with them. Ezekiel 10–11 will portray the same thing as the כבוד abandons the temple and the city. A meting out of punishment by the כבוד is also found in Lev 9:23–10:2, where the כבוד appears to the people in 9:23 and then subsequently consumes the burnt/ascension offering (עלה) in 9:24 and Nadab and Abihu in 10:2. As with the Numbers accounts, the punishment in Ezek 8–11 differs from that in Leviticus, but the כבוד as the subject of judgment actions does link the accounts conceptually.

(D) Human Responses

The only recorded response is that of Ezekiel telling (דבר) the exiles what he had seen after the termination of the vision (11:25). Whereas several כבוד texts show a human response of speech (e.g., Num 14:39, 16:28–30; Exod 34:9; 1 Kgs 8:12–13//2 Chr 6:1–2), only in Numbers 14 and 16, the passage noted above for the shared כבוד-action of pronouncing and meting out judgment, do we find the one who stood in the presence of the כבוד speaking to his contemporaries about the implications of what he saw.

(E) Divine Fluidity

While much of what we noted above concerning fluidity in Ezek 1–3 is reiterated by Sommer concerning Ezek 8–11 (and is thereby liable to the same response offered there), Sommer does take this vision, populated as it is with movement and cherubim, to discuss the difference between "locative" and "utopian" visions of the cosmos and divine presence therein.[141] Unlike the permanence of YHWH's presence in Jerusalem envisioned by the Zion-

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[140] *HALOT*, s.v., נדף; *HALOT*, s.v., נֶגֶף. Note that *HALOT*, s.v., נכה, indicates that Num 11:33 uses the expression in reference to plague: "And YHWH struck the people with a very severe plague" (ויך יהוה בעם מכה רבה מאד).

[141] See Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 83, where he notes his indebtedness to categories formulated by Mircea Eliade and revised by J. Z. Smith in this discussion.

Sabaoth theology, a locative vision, P texts envision a wandering or locomotive center.[142] Interestingly, this does not thereby make P's rejection of locative models a "utopian" model—it still stresses God's immanence—but now it detaches YHWH's presence from necessarily residing in any one location: "The locomotive model, then, combines aspects of locative and utopian ideologies: At times, the center moves toward the periphery, while points in the periphery can become, temporarily, a center."[143] This corresponds to the way in which priestly texts associate YHWH with the cherubim, who not only serve a static throne role in the temple but also provide a mobile platform that accompanies YHWH's travels as well (Sommer cites Ezek 9:3, 10:1–20, and 11:22, as well as Ps 18:11). Though locomotion does allow YHWH to leave the temple—something that Sommer views as unique to Ezekiel 8–10—this does not change the radically immanent theology of priestly texts:

> Having entered, the *kabod* could exit, and of course it could eventually come back, as Ezekiel predicts it will do in 43.1–5.
>
> This whole set of intimately connected narratives found in P and Ezekiel, then, concerns the decision by the God who lives in heaven to dwell instead on earth, God's decision to abandon an earthly abode because of the nation's sin, and God's decision some day to return. Indeed, *a central theme of priestly tradition—perhaps,* the *central theme of priestly tradition—is the desire of the transcendent God to become immanent on the earth this God had created*.[144]

Is this actually what Ezek 8–11 is telling us about the כבוד?

As with Sommer's fluidity discussion in Ezek 1–3, McCall provides needed nuance and clarification. Her critique of Sommer's conflation of Ezekiel and P. Ezekiel is especially constructive. After all, it is not quite as "locomotive" as Sommer imagines; his "vision of restoration is more explicitly locative in its ideology than P's: the restored temple is located atop a high mountain, at the center of a radiating sphere of holiness (43:12), and it will be in the center of the land once it has been equally divided amongst the tribes (47–48)."[145] And yet this locative vision of restoration seems different from the locomotive vision of Ezek 1–39, especially as YHWH abandons the temple in Ezek 8–11. In reality, the locative/locomotive dualism does not match the nimbleness of the prophetic portrayal. Yes, YHWH can up and leave the temple on the cherubim, and yes, that absence does spell disaster for those in Jerusalem who

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[142] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 86–87.
[143] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 87.
[144] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 74, italics in original.
[145] McCall, "Body/Image," 79.

will face the destruction of the city and temple at the hands of the Babylonians. But at the same time, the very fact that YHWH can appear to Ezekiel in Ezek 1–3 with no record of him leaving the temple to do so, and can even untether himself from the cherubim, moving between them and the threshold in Ezek 9:3 and 10:4, does show that for Ezekiel "there is no one place, no thing, no touchstone that the people may approach that will inherently and reliably provide access to the divine for all time."[146] Note that even after the כבוד vision ends in Ezek 11:24, Ezekiel continues to be privy to the word of YHWH for the remainder of the book. Ezekiel 12:1 immediately records, "Now the word of YHWH came to me saying," which admittedly is a divine word formula. Yet, its pervasiveness throughout the book puts Ezekiel in touch with YHWH's revelation, whether for condemnation or comfort, whether to be conveyed or personally appropriated.

While McCall argues that "Ezekiel's understanding of the divine selfhood allows for a measure of fluidity that is not present in the Priestly material,"[147] it should be noted that this exact situation appears evident in several P classified כבוד texts in the Pentateuch. In Exod 16:7, 10, Sommer sees the location in the wilderness as indicating a non-fluidity approach; the כבוד does not descend from heaven (as is common in E) but comes from a location on earth.[148] Yet YHWH's כבוד movement *toward* the camp is because, according to Moses, "he has heard your grumbling" (vv. 7, 9), and he was able to communicate this to Moses in speech in vv. 4–5. YHWH was in some measure present in the camp and with Moses apart from his כבוד. In Exod 40:34–35, the fact that the כבוד can both cover/settle upon the exterior and also fill the interior of the tent does not necessitate a rejection of fluidity. Indeed, it is wholly in the vicinity of the tabernacle/tent, but the different locations in and around the tabernacle may not be so easily collapsed into a single, undifferentiated space. (Although Lev 1:1, immediately following narratively-speaking, does say that YHWH spoke to Moses from the tent [מאהל], which may indicate just such undifferentiation.)[149] Verse 35 only says that the כבוד prevents Moses from *entering* the tent even though one might conclude that its presence above (covering) the tent could also prevent his approach. Priestly thought (if that is what this passage represents) may not

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[146] McCall, "Body/Image," 85.
[147] McCall, "Body/Image," 91.
[148] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 228 n.93.
[149] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 73, interprets the מן preposition more specifically as "from *within* the tent" (emphasis added).

reject fluidity entirely. In Num 20:6, the כבוד appears to Moses and Aaron at the doorway to the tent of meeting, instructing them in vv. 7–8 to speak to the rock to cause it to yield water. After their return to the people (distance is presumed between the rock and the tent in v. 6) and failure, YHWH resumes speaking in v. 12, this time with no manifestation of the כבוד. Thus it is difficult to construe this as P's rejection of fluidity, as Sommer claims, whose focus on the lack of descent language keeps him from addressing the horizontal spatial separation.[150]

Summary for Ezekiel 8–11

As we saw above regarding Ezek 1–3, Ezek 8–11 also integrates priestly ideas and images of the כבוד with other, non-priestly images, chiefly the anthropomorphic elements of Exod 33:18–23. Much of our summary of chapters 1–3 also holds for chapters 8–11. After all, what is exhibited in Ezek 8–11 evokes some of the same imagery found in Ezek 1–3. In both passages, we find cloud imagery, human anatomy (though less detailed in Ezek 8–11), and association with the temple (though this is less pronounced in chapters 1–3, the association forged there only via the living creatures who are only later identified as cherubim). Yet Ezek 8–11 also uses some descriptions of the כבוד not found in chapters 1–3, e.g., fire imagery, filling (מלא) action, judgment speech, and plague/punishment. The temple-vision context of Ezek 8–11 lends itself to parallels with other temple/tabernacle filling כבוד passages (Exod 40:34–35; 1 Kgs 8:11, 2 Chr 5:14; 7:1–3), an idea that will be expressed in Ezek 43–44 where the כבוד returns to the temple, entering (בוא) and filling (מלא) it (43:4–5; 44:4). Yet it seems to share a *sustained* set of parallels with כבוד-as-judge/executioner accounts (i.e., Lev 9:23–10:2; Num 14:10; 16–17). In this way, it stands in contrast with the vision of Ezek 1–3, where the כבוד functioned chiefly as part of a commission and beneficial set of instructions for Ezekiel. Though the כבוד is not standing in judgment against Ezekiel, it is so oriented against the rebels who are distorting the worship of YHWH.

John F. Kutsko notes that Ezekiel's presentation of the כבוד effectively accomplishes two fundamental elements of a successful, exilic theology: maintain God's transcendence while still invoking images of God's proximity. Interestingly he observes how the wilderness-judgment accounts ably perform this task:

[150] Sommer, *Bodies of God,* 74, 76, 81, 228 n.93.

> Through such concrete portrayals of God [sic] presence, Ezekiel's vision functions in a way that is similar to the *kĕbôd yhwh* that brings an end to the wilderness murmurings Num 14:10; 16:19; 20:16): the appearance of God's glory introduces divine judgment (theodicy), guarantees the presence of God in the midst, and affirms the divinely appointed leadership (Moses and Aaron in Numbers, the prophet himself in Ezekiel. These observations understand the purpose of the *kābôd* in Ezekiel as stressing the reality of God's presence in the people's midst and the role of the prophet who mediates that presence.[151]

While this research aims to show that Ezekiel mediates God's presence not simply as a prophet but as a *priest*,[152] Kutsko has helpfully illuminated the connection between the temple context of Ezek 8–11 and the wilderness context of the כבוד-judgment passages that stand in such close relation. In Ezek 20, Ezekiel makes "a direct connection between the exile and the wilderness tradition,"[153] showing that "the image of the wilderness tradition is key to Ezekiel and his interpretation of the exile."[154] In this way, Ezekiel's priestly-prophetic role is effectively associated with the priestly-prophetic role of Moses vis-à-vis the compromised priesthood in the Jerusalem temple, promoting or tolerating the idolatry being practiced therein.[155]

Ezekiel's Refugee "Doctrine of God"

In Christian systematic theology, the coherent presentation of God identified in the canon of the OT and NT has in the last century or so been termed "theology *proper*," due in part to the etymology of the word "theology" from the Greek words θεός + λόγος meaning "word of God" ("of" functions either objectively or subjectively to indicate a word *from* God or a word from humans *about* God).[156] While the word theology can be attached to other nouns to color the other

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151 Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 91.

152 Corinna Körting, "The Cultic Dimension of Prophecy in the Book of Ezekiel," in *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration,* ed. Mark J. Boda et al, AIL 21 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015), 121–32, approaches Ezek 14 from much the same priestly-prophetic angle.

153 Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 94.

154 Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 95.

155 Much work has been done explicating the connection between Moses and Ezekiel. See Nevada Levi DeLapp, "Ezekiel as Moses—Israel as Pharaoh: Reverberations of the Exodus Narrative in Ezekiel," in *Reverberations of the Exodus in Scripture,* ed. R. Michael Fox (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 51–73; Rebecca G. S. Idestrom, "Echoes of the Book of Exodus in Ezekiel," *JSOT* 33, no. 4 (2009): 489–510; Risa Levitt Kohn, "A Prophet Like Moses? Rethinking Ezekiel's Relationship to the Torah," *ZAW* 114 (2002): 236–254; Henry McKeating, "Ezekiel the 'Prophet Like Moses'?" *JSOT* 19, no. 61 (1994): 97–109.

156 Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology,* trans. George Musgrave Giger, ed. James T. Dennison (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1992), 1:2, though writing in the 17th century C.E., ably captures the etymological understanding: "Among Christians, the word 'theology' is used either inadequately (with reference to

noun with a decidedly religious or biblical hue (e.g., theology of the body; theology of sin; theology of creation; etc.), this shows how the word theology intuitively stands at the center of a religious, theistic view of the world. One's view of God—nature, attributes, immanence, disposition, actions, etc.—stands as an epistemological and ontological starting point for making sense of one's world.[157]

Theoretical presentations of so-called "God-talk" and the debates over the past few centuries concerning "religious language" have grappled with how statements about God can be considered fact-representing or value-ascribing utterances.[158] While traditional Christian dogmatics has continued to affirm the knowability of God and the sufficiency of canonical Scripture for providing a unified, harmonizable portrait of God,[159] these newer strains of theological thought have provided the occasion to think more concretely about specific contexts that elicit unique understandings and portrayals of God.

Since the rise of critical biblical scholarship, increasing attention has been paid to how contextualization can be found among the books of the OT and NT themselves. John J. Scullion, for example, reconstructs the journey through differing conceptions of God throughout the OT as follows: "The Hebrew Bible was some eight hundred years in the making and bears many a print, faint and firm, of Israel's struggle with the Canaanite religion and its pantheon with which it lived side by side. There are many stages in the process that lead to the monotheism of

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the efficient to mean a discourse of God [*Theou Logon*], and with reference to the object, a discourse about God [*logon peri tou Theou*]) or adequately inasmuch as it denotes both a discourse of God and a discourse about God. . . . [T]his nomenclature embraces the twofold principle of theology: one of being, which is God; the other of knowing, which is his word." Rodney Stark, *One True God: Historical Consequences of Monotheism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 16, indicates that the term theology can be secularized when employed by non-theistic religions, although this usage of terms relates chiefly to one's worldview. What theistic religions call theology non-theistic religions call wisdom.

[157] Admittedly worldviews need not be theistic. See David K. Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 98–107, for a survey of Friedrich Nietzsche's employment of *Weltanschauung* language and categories from an atheistic/naturalistic perspective. Stark, *One True God*, 11, notes that religions that do not profess the existence of supernatural beings (what he calls "godless") are less significant for sociological analysis since it is rare to find consistently godless practitioners of religion; usually only a small number of elites in societies containing godless religions "have ever actually pursued them in their pure form."

[158] Fergus Kerr, "Religious Language," in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought,* ed. Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 608.

[159] E.g., Michael S. Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology: The Divine Drama* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002); idem, *Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005); idem, *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion, and Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Deutero-Isaiah. The journey was not along a straight path."[160] Though Scullion notes that monotheism ultimately prevails, scholars have assessed the variegated ways in which individual OT books and even distinct traditions preserved in the various books depict Israel's one god.[161] While the rise of inner-biblical interpretation (intertextuality, etc.) has been employed generally in OT studies and specifically in Ezekiel studies, specialized analyses of distinctive doctrines of God among OT books (what Konrad Schmid also calls "perceptions and impressions of God")[162] have been less frequent. Yet fruitful work can be done in this area, as evident in the essays collected in the volume *The God Ezekiel Creates,* initially delivered in the Society of Biblical Literature Section on "Theological Perspectives on the Book of Ezekiel" from 2010–2012.[163] While some of the studies in this collection interact with trauma and refugee studies (notably the contribution of Katheryn Pfisterer Darr,[164] albeit a critical appraisal of the employment of trauma studies by Louis Stulman and Hyun Chul Paul Kim), none have looked into a particularly fruitful area of comparative study for Ezekiel's exilic-contextualized doctrine of God, i.e., the context of Latin American "border theology."[165]

Ezekiel's "Doctrine of God" in Conversation with Latin American Theology

The advantage of Latin American theology for our inquiry is that it is contemporary (immediately observable to anthropologists, sociologists, and religious scholars), it is a

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[160] John J. Scullion, "God (OT)," *ABD* 2:1042.

[161] The scholarship on this topic is vast, but representative examples are Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel,* The Biblical Resource Series, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002); William Foxwell Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process,* 2nd ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1957). Albrecht Alt, "The God of the Fathers," in *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion,* trans. R.A. Wilson, BibSem (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 3–77.

[162] Konrad Schmid, *A Historical Theology of the Hebrew Bible,* trans. Peter Altmann (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019), 277–304.

[163] Paul M. Joyce and Dalit Rom-Shiloni, *The God Ezekiel Creates,* LHBOTS 607 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016).

[164] Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, "The God Ezekiel Envisions," in *The God Ezekiel Creates,* ed. Paul M. Joyce and Dalit Rom-Shiloni, LHBOTS 607 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 1–23. In spite of this critique, Darr does note the value of modern disaster and trauma studies for illuminating biblical texts (22).

[165] One of the chief American interpreters in Old Testament Latin American theology is M. Daniel Carroll R. (Rodas). See idem, *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2013); idem, "Latino/Latina Biblical Interpretation," in *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible,* ed. Michael J. Gorman (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 311–23. Note too that in this research, I draw on what appears common to both Latin American theology and Latino/a theology in North America. Jean-Pierre Ruiz, in personal correspondence, has noted that specialists in this field delineate significant differences between these groups, so this research aims to steer clear of conflation while still utilizing the formulations found under the umbrella that covers both these areas.

presentation of God that is developed upon and in conversation with the OT,[166] and it is a theology that is contextualized in the "two-sided coin" of migration and trauma.[167] Our brief consideration here provides some comparative analysis between Ezekiel's presentation of God as/in כבוד and modern-day examples of emphasizing particular aspects of God in light of migrant-trauma experience. While Latin American theological formulations are chiefly associated with liberation theology, the two expressions are not precise synonyms; the latter is a particular expression of the former: "Theology 'in Latin America' includes liberation theology, but as a geographical description embraces all expressions of Christian theology there since the arrival of C[hristopher] Columbus in what was later to be called 'America.'"[168] Nevertheless, there are areas of overlap where the narrower liberation theology does represent a development of broader Latin American theology, e.g., the focus on a contextual theology, specifically the context of poverty and powerlessness.[169]

Latin American theology (including liberation strands) generally stresses theodicy,[170] although Sixto J. García has made an even bolder claim: Latino/a theology *is* theodicy.[171] The context of poverty and oppression at the hands of tyrannical governments in Latin American countries causing citizens to flee has brought theologians to wrestle with the character and role of God in the Latin American context.[172] And yet even the struggles of Christian migrants to

[166] The work of Gustavo Gutiérrez is noteworthy in this regard. Gaspar Martinez, *Confronting the Mystery of God: Political, Liberation, and Public Theologies* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2001), 139, notes that whereas social science had driven much liberation theological formulation, "Gutiérrez uses the Bible as the main source of [his] work." (See too 297 n.219.)

[167] Esterhuizen and Groenewald, "Towards a Theology of Migration," 34.

[168] Hermann Brandt, "Latin America, Theology in," *RPP* 7:348. See too the range of studies in David Thomas Orique, Susan Fitzpatrick-Behrens, and Virginia Garrard, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020); Kristy Nabhan-Warren, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Latinx Christianities in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

[169] See discussion in Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *Twentieth-Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 214–19.

[170] E.g., Harvey Cox, "Complaining to God: Theodicy and the Critique of Modernity in the Resurgence of Traditional Religion—Latin American Liberation Theology," *Archivo di Filosofia* 56, no.1–3 (1988): 311–325. For definitions and a basic orientation to theodicy in biblical and theological discourse, see James L. Crenshaw, "Theodicy," *NIDB* 5:551–55; Heinz Werner Weßler et al, "Theodicy," *RPP* 12:592–601.

[171] See discussion in Sixto J. García, "The Latino/a Theology of God as the Future of Theodicy: A Proposal from the Dangerous Memory of the Latino/a Jesus," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology,* ed. Orlando O. Espín (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 131–32.

[172] Antonio González, "The Trinity as Gospel," in *The Trinity Among the Nations: The Doctrine of God in the Majority World,* ed. Gene L. Green, Stephen T. Pardue, And K. K. Yeo (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 70–71, notes that "pure monotheism" has been perceived as legitimizing governmental and ecclesiastical oppression in Latino/a contexts, such that social models of the Trinity have been preferred as part of a critique of earthly authoritarian structures.

assimilate into North American society while still maintaining their cultural (both social and religious) identity have occasioned theodicy. Related to both of these points (though focused on the latter), Justo L. González comments that “Hispanics in this country are a people in exile,”[173] an identity that Jean-Pierre Ruiz ably and explicitly connects to Ezekiel.[174] García’s contention (that Latino/a theology *is* theodicy) is grounded in the thesis of Johann Baptist Metz that “theology, from Auschwitz onwards, can only be *theodicy,* and more specifically, theodicy from the cry of the innocent victims.”[175] Yet Sweeney—explicitly invoking the Shoah/Holocaust (cf. García’s reference to Auschwitz)—has noted that theodicy is found throughout the OT, especially in Ezekiel. Though arguing that Ezekiel’s is inadequate for a post-Shoah theodicy in that it blames the victims, Sweeney does observe that “Ezekiel never challenges the sanctity, power, or moral character of YHWH, and always attempts to justify YHWH’s actions by accusing the people of wrongdoing in order to protect YHWH.”[176] Similarly, much Latin American theology engages in what García calls the “cathedral effect”—a desire to retain a distinctively Christian theological identity grounded in Christian Scripture, and in conversation with the Christian intellectual tradition, including such historical figures as Thomas Aquinas and Augustine of Hippo.[177]

Having said this, Latino/a theology does not thereby simply repristinate the theology of the creeds nor (especially) the more complex doctrine of God formulated in western scholasticism. González provides an especially fitting exemplar. In two chapters dealing with theology, González takes issue with western approaches to the doctrine of God. In chapter six, “Let the Dead Gods Bury Their Dead,” he critiques traditionally formulated understandings of God’s omnipotence and impassibility before zeroing in on Patripassianism (also called

[173] Justo L. González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1990), 41.

[174] Jean-Pierre Ruiz, “Exile, History, and Hope: A Hispanic Reading of Ezekiel 20,” *The Bible Today* 35 (1997): 106–13.

[175] García, “The Latino/a Theology of God as the Future of Theodicy,” 131.

[176] Marvin A. Sweeney, *Reading the Hebrew Bible After the Shoah: Engaging Holocaust Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2008), 145.

[177] García, “The Latino/a Theology of God as the Future of Theodicy,” 134, 141–42, 149–50. Note that on 142–146 García also invokes modern Roman Catholic theologians (Walter Kasper and Hans Urs von Balthasar). For Augustine, see Justo L. González, *The Mestizo Augustine: A Theologian Between Two Cultures* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016). For this concept of *Mestizo/Mestizaje* (drawn from a Spanish term for “mixed race”), See Jorge A. Aquino, “*Mestizaje:* The Latina/o Religious Imaginary in the North American Racial Crucible,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology,* ed. Orlando O. Espín (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 283–311.

modalistic Monarchianism or Appolinarianism)[178] as a positive formulation that serves Latino/a theology. Noting that at the time, the Nicaean position prevailed in the western church, there was something of an irony in that Arianism was not as popular among the masses as was Patripassianism. González explains: "Patripassianism . . . implied that the Father had suffered the passion of Christ. . . . [T]he reason this doctrine was so attractive to so many in the church was that it showed clearly that God was one of their number. God was not like the emperor and his nobles, who had an easy life in their lofty positions. God had toiled and suffered even as they must toil and suffer every day."[179] This very distinction between those who are powerful and those who are weak—those who are settled and those who are displaced—is what has impressed itself on Latino/a theology in such a formative way. González is worth citing at length:

> Hispanic Americans are becoming increasingly aware of this situation. This in turn is leading some to abandon the Christian faith altogether, as either oppressive or at best inoperative in a situation of oppression. And there is no doubt that faith in a "prime unmoved mover" or a "Supreme Being" may well be a means of sacralizing oppression. But faith in the living God of the Bible, in the Crucified One who is "of one substance with the Father," has enormous liberating and subversive power. It is faith in a God who joins the dispossessed in their struggle and marches with them to victory, liberation, and new life. It is faith in the God who is a minority and who therefore speaks Spanish.[180]

González notes that in the present situation of Hispanics trying to settle in the United States, this phrase, "God speaks Spanish," means that "the oppressed who speak Spanish . . . are given a special hearing."[181] In the face of pervasive messaging that "their culture and language are inferior, and that they must conform to the language and culture of the majority," this suffering-God theology reassures them that "God hears and understands."[182]

Ezekiel's presentation of God in כבוד might be fruitfully related to this same dynamic of suffering, displacement, theodicy, and the retention of belief. This is not to suggest that Ezekiel invokes a "heretical" position vis-à-vis earlier traditions upon which he draws. However, Sommer does treat fluidity and non-fluidity (as one example) as incompatible and contradictory. Nor is it to say that González's presentation of either the Nicene situation or of Latin American theological adaptations corresponds in every regard to the particulars of Ezekiel's treatment of

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[178] The standard survey on these topics remains that of J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines,* rev. ed. (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1978), 119–23, 289–95.

[179] González, *Mañana,* 109.

[180] González, *Mañana,* 110–11.

[181] González, *Mañana,* 111.

[182] González, *Mañana,*111.

the כבוד. Nevertheless, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's summary of González work is instructive for helping religious and biblical scholarship think through possibilities of adaptation of the doctrine of God globally and textually: "Whatever the final judgment of the historical-theological accuracy of this Hispanic historian-liberationist's reading of the development of the doctrine, it is highly useful for helping wake up theologians to the ideological and power-laden implications of beliefs and doctrines."[183] Note that, like these Latino/a theological formulations,[184] Ezekiel's grappling with the reality of his exilic experience of life and vocation does not lead him to detach himself from the priestly intellectual tradition enshrined in the texts of the OT. (Although he does detach himself from those priests who held to YHWH's inviolable temple presence [e.g., Ezek 11:15].)[185] His employment of כבוד traditions connects him to his priestly and non-priestly forebears though creatively, not rigidly or in a retrenching manner.

While the image of a suffering or traumatized God in Ezek 8–11 has been ably critiqued by Darr,[186] writers have suggested something of a refugee-like, reticent response of the כבוד to depart: "It halts again on the mountain of the city, as though loath to abandon the city altogether."[187] "It departs slowly, haltingly, as if reluctant to leave."[188] Exiles who left the city, looking back one last time at the place many thought could not be violated, would be surprised and comforted by the fact that YHWH in כבוד was not absent from them, still located in the sanctuary of the Jerusalem temple. Instead, his כבוד was still with them as מקדש מעט (Ezek 11:16), invoking the term used in the Pentateuch exclusively for the tabernacle, itself a mobile house for YHWH. Nathan MacDonald observes that "there is a striking solidarity shown by Yhwh with his people by being a 'sanctuary to some extent' (11:16) in exile."[189] While YHWH's exit from the land was intentional (he abandons it; עזב) vis-à-vis the people who were taken

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[183] Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Doctrine of God: A Global Introduction,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 143.

[184] For some significant observations on the relationship between trauma and vocational psychological concerns among Latin American migrants, see Augusto Rodríguez, "God's Protection of Immigrants: A Personal Reflection from a Hispanic Pastoral Perspective," *Latin American Theology* 3, no. 2 (2008): 82–84. Rodríguez emphasizes the blow to one's self esteem when they are forced to accept jobs "lower than their studies and abilities would warrant" (83).

[185] See Block's incisive remarks in Daniel I. Block, "The God Ezekiel Wants us to Meet: Theological Perspectives on the Book of Ezekiel," in *The God Ezekiel Creates,* ed. Paul M. Joyce and Dalit Rom-Shiloni, LHBOTS 607 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 177–78.

[186] Darr, "The God Ezekiel Envisions," 13–18.

[187] Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 191.

[188] Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel,* NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 147.

[189] Nathan MacDonald, "The God that the Scholarship on Ezekiel Creates," in *The God Ezekiel Creates,* ed. Paul M. Joyce and Dalit Rom-Shiloni, LHBOTS 607 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 195.

against their will (they were distanced; רחק), the effect is the same: YHWH is a God who dwells in his sanctuary, yet he still is near those with whom he wishes to dwell even when they are far from the temple.

In conclusion, it is worth considering the wheels (אופנים) in Ezek 1 (as well as the interpretive bewilderment of many over said wheels) since these relate to the presence of YHWH among the exiles. While Ezekiel's detailed observations of these wheels have been linked to his response to trauma,[190] there is also a fascinating juxtaposition of stasis and dynamism.[191] These particular kinds of wheels are found on chariots (Exod 14:25; Nah 3:2) and agricultural implements used for winnowing and threshing (Prov 20:26; Isa 28:27), yet significantly also on the ten bronze stands in the Jerusalem temple (1 Kgs 7:30–39). Thus they are proximate to YHWH's כבוד in the (stationary) temple, yet are themselves objects that enable motion, in this case, the ability to move heavy objects like the temple stands, each made of solid bronze and carrying 220 gallons of water (note that the water alone weighed some 1,835 lbs./832 kg.). Wheels move these heavy (כָּבֵד) objects and also accompany the movement of the "heaviest" entity itself, the quintessential כָּבֵד object, the כבוד־יהוה! Due to its association with wilderness associations in all the Pentateuchal traditions, the כבוד was a fitting way to capture establishment and stability alongside locational flexibility and presence in exile.

Conclusion

Our research has continued to invoke the different forms of job crafting we discussed in chapter 2: task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting.[192] The topics covered in each chapter of this project continue to relate to different job crafting techniques. While this research continues to suggest that cognitive crafting occurs pervasively—not only concerning the topics

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[190] Ruth Poser, "No Words: The Book of Ezekiel as Trauma Literature and a Response to Exile," in *The Bible Through the Lens of Trauma,* ed. Elizabeth Boase and Christopher G. Frechette, SemeiaSt 86 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2016), 39–40.

[191] Relating dynamism to trauma and theology, David G. Garber, "'I Went in Bitterness': Theological Implications of a Trauma Theory Reading of Ezekiel," *RevExp* 111, no. 4 (2014): 352–55, interprets the כבוד passages as depicting God as one who "breaks in," although he interprets this inbreaking as highly negative, more a cause of trauma than a coping mechanism for trauma. Cf. Garber's more expansive treatment in idem, "Trauma, History, and Survival in Ezekiel 1–24" (PhD diss., Emory University, 2005), 111–36.

[192] Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton, "Crafting a Job: Revisioning Employees as Active Crafters of their Work" *Academy of Management Review* 26, no. 2 (2001): 179–201; Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson, "When Callings are Calling: Crafting Work and Leisure in Pursuit of Unanswered Occupational Callings," *Organizational Science* 21, no. 5 (2010): 973–994.

each chapter considers but also concerning the book as a whole which is an expression of an ideology of Ezekiel's priestly circles—task and relational crafting techniques have been less frequently observed. With Ezekiel's presentation of the כבוד, however, we finally have some material more suggestive of a form of relational crafting.

A number of theological treatments of vocation explore the idea of one's work not only as service and honor rendered unto God but as ordained by God.[193] Pope John Paul II's 1981 encyclical letter on human work, *Laborem Exercens,* goes so far as to invoke the category of *imitatio dei* for relating human work to God:

> The word of God's revelation is profoundly marked by the fundamental truth that *man,* created in the image of God, *shares by his work in the activity of the Creator* and that, within the limits of his own human capabilities, man in a sense continues to develop that activity, and perfects it as he advances further and further in the discovery of the resources and values contained in the whole of creation.[194]

But the role of God and human work is not the exclusive object of theological inquiry; vocational psychologists have explored the relationship between work and employees' views of God, spirituality, and religion. Though this is admitted by vocational psychologists to be a neglected area of inquiry, recent studies are beginning to shed light on its value for understanding meaning-making and coping strategies in worker well-being.[195] Spirituality has been observed as a significant resource that fuels the intrinsic motivation that promotes job crafting. Tae-Won Moon et al. have found that "the effect of employees' spirituality and their job performance was fully and sequentially mediated by employees' intrinsic motivation and job crafting."[196]

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[193] E.g., Daniel M. Doriani, *Work: Its Purpose, Dignity, and Transformation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2019); James M. Hamilton, Jr., *Work and Our Labor in the Lord,* Short Studies in Biblical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017); Benjamin Quinn and Walter R. Strickland II, *Every Waking Hour: An Introduction to Work and Vocation for Christians* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016); R. Paul Stevens, *Work Matters: Lessons from Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012); Ben Witherington III, *Work: A Kingdom Perspective on Labor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011).

[194] John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens* [Encyclical Letter on Human Work], sec. 25, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html.

[195] Sebastiaan Rothmann, Laura Anne Weiss, and Johannes Jacobus Redelinghuys, "Cultural, National, and Individual Diversity and their Relationship to the Experience of Meaningful Work," in *The Oxford Handbook of Meaningful Work,* ed. Ruth Yeoman et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 435–36, survey a number of recent studies and conclude: "Perceiving one's work in spiritual terms can lead to a deeper sense of meaningfulness and the experience of a purpose at work. Religious people also more often see their work as a calling." (436)

[196] Tae-Won Moon et al., "Does Employees' Spirituality Enhance Job Performance? The Mediating Roles of Intrinsic Motivation and Job Crafting," *Current Psychology* 39 (2020): 1627. See 1621–22 for discussion of spirituality, intrinsic motivation, and job crafting. See too Ryan D. Duffy and David L. Blustein, "The Relationship between Spirituality, Religiousness, and Career Adaptability," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 67 (2005): 429–40.

Especially striking is the research concerning how employees' specific belief in and about God also aid their commitment to their professions. Black V. Kent explains: "What little scholarship there is suggests attachment to God is associated with affective organizational commitment, a measure of emotional connection in the workplace. Those who are emotionally connected to God also emotionally commit to fellow employees and workplace organizations."[197] Attachment theory, a field that studies the "strong disposition on the part of offspring in many mammalian species to seek proximity to and contact with a specific figure . . . and to do so particularly in certain situations such as when he or she is frightened, ill, or tired,"[198] has evolved from its initial focus on children and parents to analyzing the varied ways in which adult attachment styles promote well-being across a range of attachment relationships.[199] (E.g., studies have shown correlations between attachment styles between romantic partners and their work attachments and organizational commitments.)[200] Significantly, studies have shown that attachment to God is linked with overall physical and mental health, and they have begun to show how strong attachments to God correlate with strong attachments in the secular domain, particularly with a strong commitment to one's work.[201]

In sum, Ezekiel's distinctive presentation of God as כבוד might be read against the context of relationship crafting. Not only does his ongoing priestly identity enable him to mediate the presence of YHWH to the exiles, his cognitive crafting relative to his theology—framing God as כבוד, yet not slavishly adhering to a single textual tradition—allows him to serve a deity who remains with him far from the traditional locus of divine, כבוד presence: the Jerusalem temple and its altar. And again, while Ezekiel cannot be "placed on the psychologist's couch" (an expression we have invoked elsewhere in this study) to tell whether this is what is at work in his

[197] Blake Victor Kent, "Attachment to God, Religious Tradition, and Firm Attributes in Workplace Commitment," *Journal of Social Psychology* 157, no. 4 (2017): 485.

[198] This definition from Pehr Granqvist and Lee A. Kirkpatrick, "Religion, Spirituality, and Attachment," in *Context, Theory, and Research,* vol. 1 of *APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality,* ed. Kenneth I. Pargament, Julie J. Exline, and James W. Jones, APA Handbooks in Psychology (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2013), 139.

[199] For a history and overview of the discipline see the contributions to part 1 "Overview of Attachment Theory" in Jude Cassidy and Phillip R. Shaver, eds., *Handbook of Attachment: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications,* 3rd ed. (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2016), 3–88.

[200] For sample studies, see Blake Victor Kent, Matt Bradshaw, and Kevin D. Dougherty, "Attachment to God, Vocational Calling, and Worker Contentment," *Review of Religious Research* 58, no. 3 (2016): 344.

[201] Kent, Bradshaw, and Dougherty, "Attachment to God, Vocational Calling, and Worker Contentment," 344; Granqvist and Kirkpatrick, "Religion, Spirituality, and Attachment," 148–50; Kent, "Attachment to God," 485–501.

occupational identity preserving work of job crafting, we do not need him to tell us this. Most workers employ strategies like these instinctively (i.e., they cannot recite the theoretical underpinnings of attachment or career adaptation strategies they employ on a day-to-day basis); thus, looking for Ezekiel to do the same is highly anachronistic and outright uncommon. Instead, Ezekiel's presentation of the כבוד read in tandem with vocational psychology enables new possibilities for thinking through how the themes and contents of his prophetic book might also reflect possible vocational coping strategies.

CHAPTER 6: A VISIONARY/TEXTUAL TEMPLE FOR A PRIEST IN EXILE (EZEKIEL 40–48)

The Temple and Ezekiel's Priestly Identity

When Margaret Odell began the flurry of studies devoted to Ezekiel's priestly identity, proximity far from the Jerusalem Temple was a key factor in her assessment of Ezekiel as one who relinquished his priestly identity for a prophetic one. While granting significant priestly themes and emphases, Odell's decision to relegate these to Ezekiel's priestly *background* was partly because he was faced with "the *impossibility* of continuing in that role apart from the Temple" (emphasis added).[1] The lack of temple proximity is no small factor in her argument:

> Ezekiel cannot become invested in his role as a priest, because he is not in the Temple . . . . Instead, Ezekiel appears to undergo a counterinitiation, a series of acts whereby he relinquishes his priestly status. The acts of eating the scroll, sitting in silence, and bearing guilt evoke memories of the lost context of the Jerusalem Temple, comment on such memories, and thereby demonstrate the steps whereby Ezekiel's identity as priest is transformed.[2]

Ezekiel's distance from the temple and its altar places him in "an impossible situation" for a priest.[3]

In the ensuring research of the flurry that followed, this theme of temple-absence was employed variously. Some, like Baruch Schwartz, have interpreted this as a significant obstacle to Ezekiel's ongoing priestly identity: "Continued cultic service by priests was utterly unthinkable without the temple, and was unimaginable in Babylonia."[4] This undergirds his contention that in Ezekiel's time, "the priests themselves were no longer priests. They were simply former priests, and their descendants were merely people of priestly lineage—a fact that was later to be of considerable importance, but which was of no significance whatsoever the moment the temple went up in flames."[5] Others, however, have not shared this confidence. Andrew Mein, for example, notes that though the absence of the temple does put Ezekiel in an

[1] Margaret S. Odell, "You Are What You Eat: Ezekiel and the Scroll," *JBL* 117, no. 2 (1998): 248.

[2] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 237.

[3] Odell, "Ezekiel and the Scroll," 240.

[4] Baruch J. Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel's Role in the History of the Israelite Priesthood," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 64.

[5] Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place," 64.

awkward position, the situation is not so either-or: "[E]ven in the absence of the temple and sacrificial system, he still actively promotes the concepts and categories which belong to them."[6]

While true that Ezekiel promotes *ideas* ordinarily linked to the temple, the book of Ezekiel also does end with the presence of a temple, albeit a visionary and textual one: Ezekiel 40:1–44:31. (Note that the temple comes into few in a few additional places in chs. 45–48, so for simplicity, this chapter will speak inclusively of Ezekiel's temple in chs. 40–48.) But does this visionary/textual temple have any bearing on Ezekiel's priestly identity, and/or can it be considered a legitimate temple for the purposes of priestly roles as construed by Odell? Schwartz would argue no. Related to the question of purity, he writes: "The temple was no more; one need not maintain ritual purity in order to enter a *visionary* temple (nor does one need even to be a priest—see Isa 6) or to participate in the consecration of its alter."[7] Schwartz treats the visionary nature of the temple as chiefly illustrating its non-existence, or at least views its lack of *material* existence as unable to meaningfully relate to the material existence of priests who may derive importance from it.

Corrine Patton, however, has not taken such a dim view of the situation. After linking Ezekiel's vision reports (chs. 1, 8–11, 40–48) with each other and with the priesthood, she concludes: "The inaugural vision established Ezekiel as the representation of the legitimate but *exiled priest, with full access to God's presence in the temple,* even though he is impossibly removed in exile" (emphasis added).[8] And though the temple of Ezekiel 40–48 is a visionary one, it is significant enough to enjoin a "law of the temple/house" (תורת הבית; 43:12) which Ezekiel is to teach *in his priestly office.*[9] Patton explains: "[T]he book's insistence that the role and function of the priest not only continues to exist but also is a vital component for mediating a vision of restoration is significant."[10] She concludes: "As a priest, he is a conduit for true teaching. This priestly role is especially emphasized in the final vision. He is the one who will preserve the torah of this temple vision and clarify the obligations incumbent upon the

[6] Andrew Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary, Character, and Anonymous Artist,* ed. J. C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 200, 213.

[7] Schwartz, "A Priest Out of Place," 70.

[8] Corrine L. Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile: Ezekiel as a Literary Construct," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 87.

[9] Steven Shawn Tuell, *The Law of the Temple in Ezekiel 40–48,* HSM 49 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992), 45, makes the case that the "law of the temple" refers to "the ritual laws regulating access to the Divine Presence (entrances and exits) which are to come" in the following chapters.

[10] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 88.

community."[11] Patton, more than Schwartz, has offered nuance, although she does not develop the latent possibility of the non-material/visionary temple's *reality.* Mein is more suggestive in this regard:

> The rituals that provide meaning and continuity no longer belong to the actual worshipping life of the Jerusalem temple, but neither do they have their principal meaning in a nostalgic remembrance of past glory. Rather, the temple that provides their meaning and context is the temple of Ezekiel's vision and imagination. And as the temple is transformed, so too is Ezekiel's priesthood: the performance of his responsibility to teach תּוֹרָה shows him in no "vestigial" role, but rather one that is powerfully creative—a priestly ministry appropriate to the new context of life in the Diaspora.[12]

The visionary temple is the Jerusalem temple *transformed,* fitting for a priesthood that has also undergone inevitable transformation due to exile. Though he does not spell out the literary and philosophical underpinnings that enable such a claim (something we will do below), Mein exchanges Schwartz's and Odell's relatively flat reading toward one with more texture.

More so than Mein, T. J. Betts engaged Odell's interpretation of temple-absence head-on in his defense of Ezekiel's priestly identity. Perceiving Odell's conclusions of the lack of a physical temple to be a significant challenge to his thesis (i.e., that Ezekiel's priestly identity consists primarily in his custodianship of Torah, a function of the priesthood which Betts believes was central even prior to the destruction of the temple), Betts devotes considerable space to her argument in his third chapter.[13] Of most interest, however, is an interesting tension unresolved in Betts' approach, which might be relieved via contemporary work in spatiality.

On the one hand, Betts is very interested in the lack of temple as it supports his contention that Ezekiel's priesthood would have a focus on Torah instruction different from those before him who also performed ritual/altar service. His interpretation of the scroll eating vision in Ezek 2:8–3:3 is illustrative:

> The scroll's symbolism of *tôrâ* would have also hinted at the type of prophetic priest Ezekiel would be in exile without the Temple and in an unclean land. His call was to restore *tôrâ* to its proper place with the people and remind them that while *tôrâ* was meant as a gift of grace to them, it also contained consequence should they violate the covenant of grace. Ezekiel's description of his call described a commission that utilized both his roles as priest and prophet.[14]

[11] Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile," 88.
[12] Mein, "Ezekiel as a Priest in Exile," 213
[13] T.J. Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest: A Custodian of Tôrâ,* StBibLit 74 (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2005), 47–88.
[14] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 60–61.

In fact, Betts turns Odell's objections on their head, arguing that "[a]lthough there could be priests without a temple, there could be no temple without priests."[15] The lack of a temple poses no problem for the priesthood.

On the other hand, Betts' interpretation of the temple vision in Ezek 40–48 does view the temple with some importance: "Of all the evidence testifying to Ezekiel's priestly status, the act of Yahweh leading Ezekiel into the temple is perhaps the most momentous."[16] For an argument that has sought to distance priests from the necessity of a temple, this places a significant value on the importance of a temple for confirming and illustrating Ezekiel's priestly identity. Betts writes:

> This priority of safeguarding the sanctity of the sanctuary again points to the significance of Yahweh's chose [sic] of Ezekiel to tour the Temple. With all of the emphasis on protecting sacred space, Yahweh would not have brought Ezekiel into the confines had Ezekiel have [sic] been unauthorized to enter. Because of his priestly status, Yahweh chose Ezekiel to take the tour and receive the *tôrâ* of the Temple. Anyone besides a priest would not have been qualified. Only a priest could have fulfilled the role that Ezekiel played in chapters 40–48.[17]

And so Betts' argument seems to depend both on a physical temple *not* existing, which might distract Ezekiel from a focus on Torah instruction, and also on a visionary temple existing which might testify to his priestly identity and provide him with a "Torah of the temple" (תורת הבית). Betts even summarizes the chapter by speaking of the visionary temple as *the* temple: "Yahweh demonstrated his recognition of Ezekiel's priestly status when he permitted Ezekiel into the temple."[18] Two sentences later, he capitalizes the word temple: "Yahweh would not have permitted Ezekiel to enter the Temple had he have been unauthorized to do so."[19] Even if these are mere typographical errors, they illustrate something important: careful readers *ought* to fumble a bit when attempting to describe these temples, and contemporary research in critical spatiality has illuminated why there can be an easy interchange between a material temple and a visionary/textual one.

[15] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 56.
[16] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 76.
[17] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 74.
[18] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 78.
[19] Betts, *Ezekiel the Priest,* 78.

In what follows, we survey a range of studies that might be compared to cogs in a machine that, when assembled, work together to enable textual spatialization to come to the foreground as a plausible framework for understanding Ezekiel's literary temple as *the Temple* that supports his priestly identity. After some preliminary remarks, we will invoke the well-trod path of textualized ritual before moving into modern analyses of cyberspace, which have problematized simple bifurcations between media space and physical/material space. Of particular note is the study of *religious* use of cyberspace for religious, ritual praxis. From there, we will see that several scholars of Judaism, biblical texts, and contemporary (to ancient Israel) southern Levantine archaeology have studied the construction of space via media. That will position this research to employ a spatial reading of Ezekiel's temple that will undergird and further develop Betts's reading strategy, drawing on recent studies using spatial categories to the texts of Ezekiel 40–48 and specifically applying it to our understanding of Ezekiel through vocational-psychology and trauma-response categories.[20]

Space, Text, and Temple in Ezekiel 40–48

Though the history of the interpretation of Ezek 40–48 is vast and wide ranging in some regards, there is a fair amount of homogeneity and consensus. Because of the sheer number of factors one must juggle when analyzing these texts, Daniel I. Block—who sees ten factors or elements—has concluded that "it is not surprising that scholars have arrived at such widely divergent conclusions considering the nature and meaning of Ezekiel's final vision. The shape of our work will depend on how we juggle these elements, and how we rank them."[21] Nevertheless, though the secondary literature does exhibit a range of views, Ellen F. Davis argues that these views can be grouped with one of two approaches:

> Much scholarly discussion concerning the Temple vision revolves around the question of its status as a speech act. One of two approaches is commonly taken. According to the first, the chief value or difficulty in the vision lies in its prescriptive force; i.e., it is exerting the illocutionary force of a command. Such a view is represented by Bertholet's

[20] Note: some of the material that follows overlaps with Ralph Andrew Compton, "Spatial Possibilities for Reading Ezekiel 40-48: A Visionary and Textual Temple for a Priest in Exile," *SEÅ* 87 (2022): 141-64.

[21] Daniel I. Block, "Envisioning the Good News: Ten Interpretive Keys to Ezekiel's Final Vision," in *Beyond the River Chebar: Studies in Kingship and Eschatology in the Book of Ezekiel* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), 170.

influential description of the vision as a "constitutional sketch" . . . . The second mode of reading the vision is as a purely descriptive piece.[22]

Davis highlights Yigael Yadin and Walther Eichrodt as examples of scholarship in this "second mode," both of whom view Ezekiel's temple as describing a divinely built temple (either future or present, though heavenly).[23] Others also fit this second mode by viewing Ezekiel's temple as fundamentally repristinating the architecture (regardless of its visionary, eschatological, or utopian genre) of Solomon's temple,[24] the second temple,[25] or ANE temples (e.g., the temple of Apollo at Delphi as argued by Jacob Milgrom,[26] other temples of the Neo-Babylonian period,[27] etc.). Patton has demonstrated the methodological challenges of relating Ezekiel's temple to Solomon's or the second temple (or even to extant ANE temples, although she leans toward the influence of Mesopotamian temple-building practices).[28] Instead, she has isolated and identified various influences that need not be limited to developments on or exegesis of Solomon's temple.[29]

Certainly, not everyone has rigidly followed the prescriptive or descriptive modes as laid out by Davis. For example, in his discussion of the map-character of described space, Jonathan Z. Smith devotes considerable attention to Ezek 40–48: "The 'structure' (correlated with 'temple' in Ezekiel 40:5) is not any extant building. It is an ideal construction, unconstrained by

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[22] Ellen F. Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll: Textuality and the Dynamics of Discourse in Ezekiel's Prophecy*, LHBOTS 78 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 120.

[23] Apart from millennial traditions which view Ezekiel's temple as a future, human-made structure, most evangelical scholarship has focused on either Christological or cosmological, new-creation significance. See e.g., John B. Taylor, "The Temple in Ezekiel," in *Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Theology,* ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Simon Gathercole (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 59–70; G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God,* New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 335–64, who draws together both heavenly (structural) and eschatological threads.

[24] A view generally posited by older commentators, e.g., E. L. Allen, "The Book of Ezekiel: Exposition," *IB* 6:283, who suggests that the vision drew upon "the seer's recollections of Solomon's temple from the days when it still stood"; cf. G. A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Book of Ezekiel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1936), 425, who sees this structure based partly on Solomon's temple and partly on Babylonian sanctuaries.

[25] Tova Ganzel, "Between the Prophet and his Prophecy: Ezekiel's Visionary Temple in its Historical Context," in *The Believer and the Modern Study of the Bible,* ed. Tova Ganzel, Yehudah Brandes, and Chayuta Deutsch (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2019), 472, describes the ambivalence of rabbinic sources as part of a larger survey of literature on the subject.

[26] Jacob Milgrom, "The Unique Features of Ezekiel's Sanctuary," in *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and Its Cultural Environment in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 293–305; Jacob Milgrom and Daniel I. Block, *Ezekiel's Hope: A Commentary on Ezekiel 38–48* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 44–53.

[27] Tova Ganzel and Shalom E. Holtz, "Ezekiel's Temple in Babylonian Context," *VT* 64 (2014): 211–226.

[28] Corrine Patton, "Ezekiel's Blueprint for the Temple of Jerusalem" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1991), 1–27. See p. 178, for her assertion of Mesopotamian influence.

[29] See Patton, "Ezekiel's Blueprint for the Temple of Jerusalem," 27, for this methodological point.

the pragmatics of architecture or the accidentalities of history."[30] Indeed, Ezekiel's temple maps out four ideologies: (1) power based on a sacred/profane dichotomy, (2) status based on a pure/impure dichotomy, (3) civic and territorial, and (4) orientational.[31] Herein, Smith sees a sophisticated interleaving of redundancies that inscribe particular ideological themes in a visionary, spatial form. In another example, John S. Bergsma extends observations made by Walter Zimmerli (who viewed Ezekiel's temple as a symbol of liberation) by describing the temple of Ezek 40–48 as a "built Jubilee."[32] Bergsma extrapolates this chiefly from its dimensions wherein multiples of twenty-five (half a jubilee) and fifty dominate (even the land allocation and the dimensions of the holy city fit this numerical schema), but also from a recognition of "a larger patterns of allusions or references to the jubilee throughout the book of Ezekiel."[33] Yet Davis herself seems aware of the possibility of these alternatives, stressing that the temple vision text is actually world *creating*, i.e., inviting "imaginative participation in alternative modes of reality, which open up new understandings and possibilities for our existence simply by virtue of their difference from immediate experience.[34] Spatiality studies illuminate how Ezekiel's temple vision engages in a world-creating enterprise that does situate Ezekiel as a priest associated with a temple and its altar.

While modern bias has made it difficult for many to accept a *visionary* temple as capable of functioning in this way, [35] it is not reasonable to conclude that this was the case for ancients, nor does it grapple with the way in which even moderns treat various non-material depictions as "real." Recent promotion of Mark Zukerberg's online "metaverse" reveals how the concepts of "presence," "space," and even "reality" are undergoing significant redefinition. Edward W. Soja's delineation and definition of space represents a hallmark example of these new directions. Whereas older perspectives on space bifurcated between materiality and conception, treating the former as real and the latter as imagined, Soja observes that this dualism does not do justice to way humans conceptualize space. He proposes a third category, Thirdspace, explaining: "I define

[30] Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual,* CSHJ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 49.

[31] Smith, *To Take Place,* 56.

[32] John S. Bergsma, "The Restored Temple as 'Built Jubilee' in Ezekiel 40–48," *Proceedings – Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 24 (2004): 75–85.

[33] Bergsma, "Restored Temple as 'Built Jubilee,'" 79.

[34] Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll*, 122.

[35] See, e.g., Karl Hoheisel, "Vision/Vision Account: I. Religious Studies," *RPP* 13:351, "[f]or the psychology of religion, visions are false perceptions whose unreality the visionary does not recognize (hallucinations) or does (pseudo-hallucinations)."

Thirdspace as an-Other way of understanding and acting to change the spatiality of human life, a distinct mode of critical spatial awareness that is appropriate to the new scope and significance of being brought about in the rebalanced trialectics of spatiality-historicality-sociality."[36]

Yet critical spatiality is not concerned purely with ideology. Jon L. Berquist explains that "postmodern geography never allows the discourse to remain in the imagination, but instead returns always to the material and the spatial. Space consists of 'socially constructed worlds that are simultaneously material and representational' . . . ."[37] Thus, this research utilizes Thirdspace as a reading strategy for considering how Ezekiel's textual temple might indeed function as a *real* temple.[38] Yet it is critical to understand how recent studies in textuality enable this move.

Of course, at its best, biblical scholarship has refused to let reality vs. non-reality serve as the chief interpretive dualism. For example, speaking of Amos (though appropriate to other visionary accounts) John D. W. Watts explains: "'Vision' and 'word' belong together. The prophet's message cannot be understood apart from those great moments when God revealed his counsel and the prophet was allowed to see eternal meaning in temporal appearance."[39] Yet going one step further in our apologia for the utility of Ezekiel's temple for understanding his priestly, vocational identity, it is undoubtedly significant that what we are dealing here with is not chiefly a *visionary* temple but a *textual* one. Except for Ezekiel himself, the only access anyone has ever had to this temple is via text; thus, the question of spatiality and textuality is at the forefront of our inquiry.

Literature on textuality has demonstrated that textual scholarship has often failed to attend to the physicality of the texts themselves. Though it almost sounds truistic, David M. Carr explained: "We fail to grasp a crucial aspect of the ancient function of texts if we focus exclusively on their contents."[40] After all,

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[36] Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996), 10.

[37] Jon L. Berquist, "Introduction: Critical Spatiality and the Uses of Theory," in *Constructions of Space I: Theory, Geography, and Narrative,* ed. Jon L. Berquist and Claudia V. Camp, LHBOTS 481 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2007), 3.

[38] Malachy Udochukwo Theophilus, "*Kāḇôḏ* (GLORY), *rûaḥ* (SPIRIT), and *yaḏ* (HAND): Divine Presence and Activity in Ezekiel (Ezek 1-3; 8-11; 40-48): Thirdspacing the Exile and its Implications to the Theology of Divine Presence" (SThD diss., Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, 2020), has applied Soja's Thirdspace to Ezekiel studies.

[39] John D. W. Watts, *Vision and Prophecy in Amos* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1958), 50.

[40] David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 10.

> Within a largely oral world and even in oral-literate contexts, texts had a numinous power that we in the twenty-first century all too often forget. Writing made mute tombstones talk, statues pray to a deity around the clock, and so on. In this sense, the earlier analogy of [ancient texts as] computer disks is inaccurate because it minimizes the almost magical importance of the materiality of texts in an oral culture. Moreover, it fails to look at how such material textual objects might function in nuanced ways in specific institutional settings, often wholly unconnected to the ability of participants to read such texts.[41]

While Carr is right that texts have exhibited this "numinous power" in largely non-literate cultures, even within highly literate (and even modern!) cultures, texts have a functional breadth far too underappreciated. We will consider several examples that undergird our contention that Ezekiel's *textual*, visionary temple does indeed serve as his occupational-identity grounding temple.

Conceptual Resources for Textualized Structures from Textualized Rituals

That ritual action can be preserved in a text is a well-attested phenomenon in the ancient Near East, in the Levant, and narrowly in the biblical texts. It has been examined methodologically and exegetically (chiefly in relation to Leviticus and Numbers) by a number of scholars under the nomenclature of "narrativized" or "textualized" ritual.[42] Noteworthy exemplars of the performative power of writing are written blessings and curses. Famous examples of curses are found in extant execration texts, notably from Egypt, wherein names of enemies (either personal names or toponyms) are inscribed on an object and then ritually destroyed.[43] While it is true that for these execration texts the "magical effect is not in the writing itself, but in the ritual breaking of the figurine or bowl that contains the written text," this is not always the case.[44] In Num 5:11–31, the famous *soṭa* text, the priest writes words of curse on a scroll whose words are then washed into a bowl. The suspected adulteress is then required to

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[41] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 10.

[42] Bryan D. Bibb, *Ritual Words and Narrative Worlds in the Book of Leviticus,* LHBOTS 480 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2009); Christian Frevel, "Practicing Rituals in a Textual World: Ritual *and* Innovation in the Book of Numbers," in *Ritual Innovation in the Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism,* ed. Nathan MacDonald, BZAW 468 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 129–50; James W. Watts, *Ritual and Rhetoric in Leviticus: From Sacrifice to Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[43] See Donald B. Redford, "Execration and Execration Texts," *ABD* 2:681–82; Mark E. Biddle, "Execration," *NIDB* 2:365–66.

[44] William M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 27.

drink the watery-inky mixture (v. 24, lit., המים המאררים "the cursed waters" or מי המרים המאררים "the waters of cursed bitterness") which, upon ingestion, will affect physical ailments should she be guilty. William M. Schniedewind explains:

> The writing in the water gives the water a magical property. The magic water can now discern whether the jealous husband is right in his accusation. The ritual testifies to the power and magic of *written* words. The similarities between this ritual and Egyptian rituals suggests that the ancient Israelites had notions of writing that they shared with their southern neighbors.[45]

Other parallels with the Egyptian execration texts have been found in the Old Testament,[46] the Semitic textual tradition found in the Sefire inscription, the Arslan Tash amulets, and the incantation ritual series *Maqlû* and *Šurpu*, which provides crucial context for the curses and blessings of Deuteronomy 27–28.[47]

The textualization of ritual blessings is also well attested in the Levant and the Old Testament. Alice Mandell has demonstrated that the inscriptions from Kuntillet Ajrud exhibit an epistolary style (which Schniedewind has linked to the forms of prophetic speech[48]) and are highly reminiscent of the language of the Psalms (especially Ps 118:25–26).[49] She thus argues that "performative ritual" is central to the backdrop of these written benedictions and that their textualization served to "enhance their efficaciousness."[50] Similarly, Jeremy D. Smoak has analyzed the inscribed blessings on the Katef Hinnom amulets, attending carefully to their written-ness and amuletic form. While this wearable writing is evidence of an ideology that attributed a numinous power to written blessings, which had "the express purpose of protecting people from various types of danger,"[51] they also, in their funerary setting, "presence" the divine, creating a "permanent performance" of divine presence in blessing, achieved by the buriers, for

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[45] Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book,* 29.

[46] See Michael S. Donahou, *A Comparison of the Egyptian Execration Ritual to Exodus 32:19 and Jeremiah 19,* PHSC 8 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010).

[47] Melissa D. Ramos, "Spoken Word and Ritual Performance: The Oath and the Curse in Deuteronomy 27–28" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2015).

[48] William M. Schniedewind, *The Finger of the Scribe: How Scribes Learned to Write the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 95–119

[49] Alice Mandell, "'I Bless you to YHWH and his Asherah'—Writing and Performativity at Kuntillet ʿAjrud," *Maarav* 19, no. 1–2 (2012): 131–162.

[50] Mandell, "I Bless you to YHWH and his Asherah," 148, 162.

[51] Jeremy D. Smoak, *The Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture: The Early History of Numbers 6:24–26* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 37.

the dead.[52] This is comparable to the observation of Anne Katrine Gudme in reference to Egyptian funerary inscriptions: "[T]he presence of a ritual text in a tomb represents the ritual competence of the deceased. In this way, the text itself stores ritual competence, which is expected to ensure ritual efficacy."[53] The buried inscriptions at Katef Hinnom "reflected the burying group's desire to found, preserve, store, and protect the very priestly rituals that gave voice to a *present* priestly order above ground."[54] While Smoak has, like Mandell, made connections between west Semitic amulets and the Psalms,[55] what is especially relevant to this research is his claim: "The acts of writing the blessings were not mundane activities, but rather *performative acts that sought to materialize the blessing*" (emphasis added).[56] We will explore how texts can "materialize" or spatialize seemingly non-material, non-spatial edifices below. While these examples have only scratched the surface of the analyzable data (numerous other sites in the Levant provide examples of textualized blessings and prayers[57]), they nevertheless orient us toward the significant import of textualization and invite us to consider how not only actions but edifices might be constructed and/or preserved textually as well.

Though still discussing textualized *ritual*, Scott Noegel introduces terminology that eases the way from discussion of textualized *action* to textualized *structures*, what he calls "the ontology of words."[58] Interestingly, Noegel sees this "ontological understanding of words" as valuable not only for ritual and judicial texts but also as having deepened our understanding of creation myths.[59] Thus drawing together Noegel's (and others') appropriation of textual categories for ritual and Davis' own textualized approach to Ezekiel's temple vision report, noted

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[52] Jeremy D. Smoak, "Wearing Divine Words: In Life and Death," *Material Religion* 15, no. 4 (2019): 442, 446.

[53] Anne Katrine Gudme, "Dyed Yarns and Dolphin Skins: Temple Texts as Cultural Memory in the Hebrew Bible," *Jewish Studies* 50 (2014): 13*, here citing the work of J. Podemann Sørensen.

[54] Smoak, "Wearing Divine Words," 438.

[55] Jeremy D. Smoak, "Amuletic Inscriptions and the Background of YHWH as Guardian and Protector in Psalm 12," *VT* 60 (2010): 421–32; idem, "'Prayers of Petition' in the Psalms and West Semitic Inscribed Amulets: Efficacious Words in Metal and Prayers for Protection in Biblical Literature," *JSOT* 36, no. 1 (2011): 75–92; idem, "May YHWH Bless You and Keep You from Evil: The Rhetorical Argument of Ketef Hinnom Amulet I and the Form of the Prayers for Deliverance in the Psalms," *JANER* 12 (2012): 202–36.

[56] Smoak, *Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture,* 39.

[57] For a survey of extant texts, see Susan Niditch, *Oral World and Written Word: Ancient Israelite Literature,* LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 46–48; Smoak, *Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture*, 39, 159, n. 126;

[58] Scott Noegel, "The Ritual Use of Linguistic and Textual Violence in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East," in *Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual,* vol. 3 of *State, Power, and Violence,* ed. Axel Michaels (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 34.

[59] Noegel, "Ritual Use of Linguistic and Textual Violence," 36.

above as "world-*creating*," appears to be a reasonable, interpretive move. And while this chapter takes this interpretation in new directions in its application of textualized space (or perhaps we might call it *spatialized text*) to Ezekiel's priestly identity, it does find some precedents in various fields. A selective historical survey (not necessarily in chronological order) will introduce us to some of these precedents.

Conceptual Resources for Textualized Structures from Cyberspace

Cyberspace presents an especially interesting expansion to notions of place that provides fruitful venues for considering textual spatiality. Science-fiction writers first began to use "cyberspace" in the 1980s, yet the term has considerable elasticity. This definitional flexibility helpfully allows the conceptual resources of cyberspace analysis to be more readily applied to other media. As an illustration, Lance Strate notes that while it is chiefly concerned with computer science and telecommunications, "[a]t its broadest, *cyberspace* has been applied to everything from television viewing and telephone conversations to theater and cave painting."[60] Indeed, modern theorists of cyberspace note that our understanding of place has been stretched by recognizing cyberspace's existence as a *place* and the reflection of its relationship to material places. Donald G. Janelle and David C. Hodge note that cyberspace is "home to virtual worlds (e.g., virtual cities and virtual landscapes) that parallel the behavioral settings and rules of places and social networks in physical space, and some [of said worlds] that don't."[61] Yet for those who might wish to invoke real vs. fiction to cordon off cyberspace/virtual place from material space and place, Janelle and Hodge note that "more complex forms of organization are emerging in ways that extend the functional-physical continuum, bypassing customary spatial relations and embedding traditional places in broader networks of linkage beyond the physical reach of daily transport systems."[62] New work has begun to explore how concepts and models developed for

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[60] Lance Strate, "The Varieties of Cyberspace: Problems in Definition and Delimitation," *Western Journal of Communication* 63, no. 3 (1999): 383.

[61] Donald G. Janelle and David C. Hodge, "Information, Place, Cyberspace, and Accessibility," in *Information, Place, and Cyberspace: Issues in Accessibility,* ed. D. G. Janelle and D. C. Hodge, Advances in Spatial Science (Berlin: Springer, 2000), 4.

[62] Janelle and Hodge, "Information, Place, Cyberspace, and Accessibility," 7.

physical space might transfer to virtual space and vice versa.[63] As an example, the phenomenon of online dating has demonstrated that cyberspace and place are intertwined in a bewildering number of ways.[64]

Ken Hillis, in articulating what he calls "the architecture of language," argues that "[a]ll forms of writing are spatial."[65] This begins to draw together the possibilities of cyberspace and less technologically advanced forms of media-enshrined space. While there are ways in which cyberspace uniquely spatializes writing, this seems to be a technological advancement of potential that has been latent in all kinds of texts all along. In a material world that poses limitations to its residents, a virtual world with unlimited possibilities might seem preferable: "[virtual environments] seem to subvert this resistant materiality, and they contribute toward undermining our grasp of it. They suggest that the lived world need not be embraced but simply reprogrammed until it matches 'our' desires."[66] And yet the material world provides unique motivation or "seeds of opportunities" as we "negotiate, compromise, and move" in the face of material limitations rather than simply subverting those limitations via programming.[67] But cyberspace interestingly provides opportunities for negotiating material limitations by mitigating the effects of material limits, even if it cannot eradicate completely, depending on how one conceptualizes the ability of media to spatialize. Hillis offers tantalizing possibilities:

> Who and where we think we are depends, at least in part, on how space is conceptualized. If, given the ongoing proliferation and social embrace of electronically mediated communication, individuals increasingly believe that significant components of their identity are capable of relocation 'within' communication devices such as on-line [information technologies] and [virtual environments], then the ways in which these people relate to space and their place on this earth will reflect this belief.[68]

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[63] Michael Batty and Harvy J. Miller, "Representing and Visualizing Physical, Virtual and Hybrid Information Spaces," in *Information, Place, and Cyberspace: Issues in Accessibility,* ed. D. G. Janelle and D. C. Hodge, Advances in Spatial Science (Berlin: Springer, 2000), 135.

[64] See Andrea J. Baker, "Down the Rabbit Hole: The Role of Place in the Initiation and Development of Online Relationships," in *Psychological Aspects of Cyberspace: Theory, Research, Applications,* ed. Azy Barak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 163–184.

[65] Ken Hillis, *Digital Sensations: Space, Identity, and Embodiment in Virtual Reality,* Electronic Mediations 1 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 1999), 160.

[66] Hillis, *Digital Sensations*, 203.

[67] Hillis, *Digital Sensations*, 203

[68] Hillis, *Digital Sensations*, 202.

Is it possible that Ezekiel's temple may serve as something analogous to or anticipating cyberspace, where Ezekiel could "relocate" those parts of his priestly identity that required the presence of a temple and altar?

A corpus of secondary literature has begun to develop considering cyberspace from a religious and/or theological perspective.[69] In 1996, Stephen D. O'Leary published work based on the nascent use of the World Wide Web by religious communities.[70] While he surveyed a range of ways in which religious practitioners utilized the web for devotional purposes, of note, was his commentary on the online religious practice of self-designated "Technopagans," who "view the internet as a theater of the imagination" with "performative rituals that create their virtual reality through text."[71] These practitioners note that though "[c]yberspace is without geographic features in the ordinary sense," there is, nevertheless, "a kind of geography here, a landscape composed of sites, nodes, systems, and channels between systems."[72] O'Leary was even able to observe a cyber-architectural feature that resonates with Ezek 43:13–27, the eMedia construction of an alter utilized in a Gaelic Samhain media ritual: "The designers of the page used a program called Labyrinth to simulate an altar in three-dimensional space, upon which ritual participants placed offerings of graphic designs and images."[73] Here, the traditional pagan harvest festival was relocated to cyberspace/media, a harbinger of possibilities for other media-based spatial transferals.[74]

The literature has described two particularly interesting interfaces between cyberspace and biblical/ancient Judean traditions. Brenda E. Brasher noted a distinctively Jewish appropriation of cyberspace via a "cyber-Seder," which took place at Lincoln Center, New York,

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[69] See, e.g., the encyclopedic treatment in Heidi A. Campbell, ed., *Digital Religion: Understanding Religion Practice in New Media Worlds* (London: Routledge, 2013). See too Morton T. Højsgaard and Margit Warburg, eds., *Religion and Cyberspace* (London: Routledge, 2005); Heidi A. Campbell, *When Religion Meets New Media,* Media, Religion, and Culture (London: Routledge, 2010); Margaret Wertheim, *The Pearly Gates of Cyberspace: A History of Space from Dante to the Internet* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 1999); Roxanne D. Marcotte, ed., "New Virtual Frontiers: Religion and Spirituality in Cyberspace," special issue, *The Journal of the Australian Association for the Study of Religion* 23, no. 3 (2010).

[70] Stephen O'Leary, "Cyberspace as Sacred Space: Communicating Religion on Computer Networks," *JAAR* 64, no. 4 (1996): 781–808.

[71] O'Leary, "Cyberspace as Sacred Space," 797.

[72] O'Leary, "Cyberspace as Sacred Space," 799.

[73] O'Leary, "Cyberspace as Sacred Space," 805.

[74] Rachel Wagner, "This is Not a Game: Violent Video Games, Sacred Space, and Ritual," *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies* 15 (2014): 12-35, offers a related foray into this subject, focusing on the cyber world of video games which have not only increasingly been played online but now even use devices like smartphones to merge the game world with the surrounding material world of the smartphone user/game player.

on April 12, 1998, yet was "attended" by a sizeable group via the web.[75] While participants and organizers expressed some uncertainty as to whether the online guests were "participants" or merely "observers," the use of a chat room by both the online and in-person attendees suggested the former.[76] (Computer terminals were set up at the Lincoln Center venue so that the in-person attendees could engage those online with messages.) Another Jewish appropriation of cyberspace is noted in O'Leary's more recent work: i.e., websites that focus on devotional practices relative to the Western "Wailing" Wall (the כותל/Kotel) in Jerusalem. These sites allow practitioners to send an electronic prayer that will then be printed and placed in a crack in the Kotel. This example, however, illustrates the complexities of the use of cyberspace (and even reflects O'Leary's backpedaling from some of the optimism of his earlier article), chiefly in that "[w]hile prayer, devotion, and contemplation may be performed while surfing the Web, the rituals themselves remain offline."[77] I.e., a *physical* prayer paper is placed in the *material* Kotel in Jerusalem. O'Leary surmises:

> This may be a transformative experience for believers who use the Web to perform a devotional ritual, but there is an evident importance attached to the physical space, . . . the paper stuffed into the crack in the Wall. It is a considerable leap from this to what we may consider the next step: the cyber-temple, the virtual Jerusalem, where cyberspace is itself the location of pilgrimage and the focal point of devotion. It is possible to imagine that Jewish people could ever come to accept and practise a purely virtual enactment of this ritual? Isn't the physicality of the place itself something that cannot be dispensed with?[78]

And yet he does envision, albeit with hesitation, a positive role for virtual sacred space:

> This may be farfetched. But it is possible to conceive of a "virtual Jerusalem" that is the site of a very different kind of pilgrimage and prayer from those that are now conducted. And it may be that such a development could provide something in the psychic economy of world religions that would operate as a counter-force to those who seek to gain control of sacred grounds by means of military force.[79]

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[75] Brenda E. Brasher, *Give Me That Online Religion* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 72–78; though cf. the skepticism of the utility of this vignette expressed by Lorne L. Dawson, "The mediation of religion experience in cyberspace," in *Religion and Cyberspace,* ed. Morton T. Højsgaard and Margit Warburg (London: Routledge, 2005), 26–27.

[76] Brasher, *Give Me That Online Religion*, 76–77.

[77] Stephen D. O'Leary, "Utopian and dystopian possibilities of networked religion in the new millennium," in *Religion and Cyberspace,* ed. Morton T. Højsgaard and Margit Warburg (London: Routledge, 2005), 42.

[78] O'Leary, "Utopian and dystopian possibilities," 42.

[79] O'Leary, "Utopian and dystopian possibilities," 42–43.

There are still obstacles to sacralizing cyberspace, yet an all-or-nothing approach seems unnecessary for determining the success or failure of such an effort. We see in these vignettes a minimizing of physical/material absence via media presence.[80] But can exilic writing even be said to *approximate* cyberspace?

O'Leary's indebtedness to Walter J. Ong on the media of writing, here applied to the media of cyberspace, shows potential in this regard. Ong has posited a correlation between writing and the restructuring of human thought. Despite caveats,[81] the utility of his work has been well-attested in studies of Hebrew writing and literacy.[82] Davis, drawing on Ong and others, isolates textualization as a key attribute of Ezekiel's prophetic book, going so far as to claim that Ezekiel's unique contribution to the prophetic corpus is his exploitation of the potential inherent in writing.[83]

While cyberspace ritual might, at first glance, seem a bridge too far from Ezekiel, several things should be kept in mind. First, scholars following Davis have admitted that Ezekiel exhibits unique textual innovations. Per the utilization of Ong by Davis and others, scholarship has increasingly recognized the ability of writing among ancient writers for opening up new imaginative vistas. This has, in turn, enabled *at minimum* an analogy between the ability of ancient and modern writers to exploit available media (whether text on parchment or clay media or electronic text making up the material of cyberspace) as a site for relocating sacred space. Second, such a move is not unprecedented in Ezekiel scholarship. Though his comment is offered only in passing, Brian Boyle's association of Ezekiel and cyberspace/eMedia is poignant: "One might well suggest that the sanctuary plan in these chapters is, in effect, a virtual tour, similar to a web site. The point of the text could well be then that the reader finds the divine

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[80] For more on embodiment and physicality in eMedia ritual, see Maria Beatrice Bittarello, "Contemporary Pagan Ritual and Cyberspace: Virtuality, Embodiment, and Mythopoesis," *Religious Studies and Theology* 27, no. 2 (2008): 171–94.

[81] Though Ong has been criticized for being too technologically deterministic (E.g. in Seth L. Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew,* Traditions [Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009], 44–45), O'Leary, "Cyberspace as Sacred Space," 786, argues that the critique is unfair: "[T]he evolutionary model of culture that Ong proposes is neither deterministic nor strictly linear . . . . [H]e never proposes a simplistic cause-and-effect mechanism . . . but rather views technology as both a cause and an effect of the transformation of the human spirit."

[82] William M. Schniedewind, "Prolegomena for the Sociolinguistics of Classical Hebrew," *JHebS* 5, no. 6 (2004): section 2.14.

[83] Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll*, 39. Davis tempers perceived determinism in Ong on p.36: "Literacy is better seen as an ingredient, not a recipe for various forms of critical thinking or social development."

presence in the text itself, rather than a constructed building."[84] This latter observation will be examined further below. What this survey has demonstrated is that modern conceptions of cyberspace and eMedia share potent overlap with ancient conceptions of the numinous power of writing. In both cases, spatially informed readings of media (whether ancient or modern) prove to be fruitful for understanding the ability of texts to invoke or even recreate the presence or a given place.

Conceptual Resources for Spatialized Texts from Judaism and the ANE

Several ancient texts reveal imaginative views of spatialized textuality, whether explicitly or implicitly, that position Ezekiel relative to a textual temple similarly to modern religious practitioners relative to (sacred) cyberspace. To begin with, though Ben Sira 44–50 has been studied from a variety of perspectives,[85] most intriguing for our purposes is Claudia V. Camp's use of Soja's definition of Thirdspace (discussed above) to describe the compositional strategy of the text. She argues that Ben Sira "constructs a Temple space by means of compressed, hymnic allusions to the stories of great men from the about-to-be-biblical tradition."[86] Comparing Sira's work composing the poem to constructing an edifice, Camp describes the work as "snap[ing] two intersecting chalk lines, one horizontal, one vertical," which results in a horizontal work of history and a vertical, edificial structure.[87] It concludes with Simon the High Priest, horizontally *and vertically* "capping off" the work:

> We realize finally where we have been all along, not moving through time and narrative, but located in one place, meeting body after body, name after name, as the temple has been erected before us, enclosing the body of the scribe. The names and bodies of men constitute the Thirdspace that contains the name of God.
> It's a tall building.

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[84] Brian Boyle, "'Holiness Has a Shape': The Place of the Altar in Ezekiel's Visionary Plan of Sacral Space (Ezekiel 43:1-12, 13-17, 18-27)," *ABR* 57 (2009): 17.

[85] For a survey of literature, see Friedrich Vinzenz Reiterer, "Review of Recent Research on the Book of Ben Sira (1980–1996)," in *The Book of Ben Sira in Modern Research: Proceedings of the First International Ben Sira Conference, 28–31 July 1996, Soesterberg, Netherlands,* BZAW 60 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 23–60; P. C. Beentjes, "Some Major Topics in Ben Sira Research," *Bijdragen* 66 (2005): 131–44; Alexander A. Di Lella, "The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Resources and Recent Research," *CurBS* 4 (1996): 161–81.

[86] Claudia V. Camp, "Storied Space, Or, Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple," in *'Imagining' Biblical Worlds: Studies in Spatial, Social and Historical Constructs in Honor of James W. Flanagan,* ed. David M. Gunn and Paula M. McNutt, JSOTSup 359 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 69.

[87] Camp, "Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple," 71.

> As we see when the vertical line finally snaps. The magnificent layering of imagery for Simeon begins in the heavens. The high priest emerging from the inner sanctuary is
>
> Like the morning star among the clouds,
> Like the moon when it is full;
> Like the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High,
> And like the rainbow gleaming in glorious clouds ([Sira] 50.6–7).[88]

It is here that Camp invokes Kalinda Rose Stevenson's spatial study of Ezekiel 40–48 (what Stevenson describes as "territoriality" or "territorial rhetoric").[89] In contrast to the horizontal construction of a temple in Ezekiel 40–48 (horizontal in that it does not provide heights in its "blueprint"), Ben Sira is more oriented toward verticality: "Access to heaven is available to all, but through a single point in space alone, that point manifest in the body of the high priest in whom the whole space and meaning of the temple inheres."[90] Effectively, Ben Sira "built a Temple through textual bodies."[91] It is unclear to what extent Ben Sira might have spatialized this temple text. Camp believes this enabled Ben Sira to construct an edifice that though copied by later scribes in the presence of women, could expunge the presence of women as in the "real [Jerusalem] Temple made of earthly substances."[92] But what is clear is that spatiality has opened up an awareness of textual space with significant potential for understanding the structure and purpose of the poem.

The Mishnah provides another example of the potentialities of spatial thinking, mainly as Ishay Rosen-Zvi has analyzed Tractate Sotah.[93] While much of his work has relevance to chapter three of this research concerning ritual and sign-acts, it also provides a foray into the possibility of viewing the text as space, specifically the text of the Mishnah as a spatialized, textual temple. Rosen-Zvi nudges us toward this possibility in his introduction, which is said to focus on "temple and gender," with highly tantalizing wording: "Tractate Sotah serves here as a case study for exploring two main issues: the way in which the *Temple and its rituals are constructed in the Mishnah* and supervision of women and feminine sexuality in Tannaitic discourse" (emphasis

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[88] Camp, "Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple," 76.

[89] Kalinda Rose Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation: The Territorial Rhetoric of Ezekiel 40–48,* SBLDS 154 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996).

[90] Camp, "Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple," 77.

[91] Camp, "Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple," 77.

[92] Camp, "Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple," 79.

[93] Ishay Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual: Temple, Gender and Midrash,* Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 160 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

added).[94] As he will draw on recent performative approaches to the Mishnah, some of which describe Mishnaic ritual as "verbal actualization of the Yom Kippur temple service" and recommend viewing "the Mishnah's rituals as hyper rituals, as more ritual than ritual," Rosen-Zvi's language of a temple *constructed* in the Mishah becomes especially acute.[95]

The afterword of his monograph also purports to outline "a larger project concerning the Mishnah and the Temple (or the *Mishnaic Temple*) of which the current study is one chapter" (emphasis added).[96] Again, the wording is enticing; the *Mishanic* quality of this temple appears to signal more than simply that the temple is described in the Misnah, but rather that it is somehow constructed in or by the Mishnah. Throughout the afterword, Rosen-Zvi highlights how Mishnaic rituals assume and even "establish the Temple as a constant presence."[97] He continues: "The Temple is an existing reality, and it is discussed and debated with the same punctiliousness and elaboration as the laws of benedictions, menstruation or *demai,* which continued to be practiced in the second century, and the laws of kings, death by a court and Sanhedrin, which may have never been practiced at all."[98] While distancing himself from Jacob Neusner's view of the Mishnah as "an alternative ritualistic-textual world," Rosen-Zvi does suggest that "[a]n attenuated version of Neusner's thesis should acknowledge that the Mishnah accommodates two distinctive forces pulling in opposing directions. One provides instructions for the lived reality, while the other offers an alternative to that very same reality."[99] He concludes by arguing that "[t]he Tannaitic house of study, and the Mishnah in particular, *create a textual realm* that is unconstrained by their contemporary reality" (emphasis added).[100]

This research is not the first to see Rosen-Zvi's work as relevant to spatialized textuality. In a study focused on place-attachment experienced by exiles, specifically Jeremiah's coping with the loss of a homeland via the creation of a land mythology, Mark Leuchter connects the 7th–6th-century prophet Jeremiah with a similar textual strategy in the Mishnah as articulated by Rosen-Zvi: "[T]he Mishnah (redacted ca. 220 CE) was not constructed to remember past ritual conduct in the Jerusalem temple, but rather to *be* a new temple, obviating any need to rebuild a

[94] Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual,* 5.
[95] Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual,* 236.
[96] Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual,* 16.
[97] Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual,* 245.
[98] Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual,* 246.
[99] Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual,* 247, 248.
[100] Rosen-Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual,* 253.

physical space or structure. As Rosen-Zvi observes, the framers of the Mishnah created a literary sanctuary to define the collective identity of rabbinic society in the Galilee."[101] Leuchter notes the world-building possibilities here: "[T]he textual iteration of the earlier 'homeland'—Jerusalem and its satellite villages—licensed and sanctified rabbinic life in the Galilee, defining the responsibilities and worldviews of the rabbinic sages as carrying forward the cosmic potency of temple ritual."[102] If it is precisely through this *textualized* "homeland" that the sages remained in touch with the "cosmic potency of temple ritual," it is a proper application to view the *textualized* temple as doing the same for Ezekiel.

In 1947, several years before studies in spatiality began in earnest, Patrick W. Skehan offered a novel reading of Prov 9:1, "Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars," which is of note for our consideration of Ezekiel's temple. Rather than viewing this as a house with seven pillars whose construction was described in the text, Skehan suggested that the house of seven pillars *was* the text of Proverbs 1–9.[103] In a later article, Skehan expanded his analysis to include all 31 chapters of Proverbs as a house and further suggested that it was a textual model of the Jerusalem temple: "The Book of Proverbs is the house of Wisdom. That is to say, its author-compiler-designer (for he was all three) wrote the Hebrew text of his composition in such a way that its layout in the columns of his scroll visibly showed forth the design of a house, which he himself identified (Prv 9,1) as Wisdom's House."[104]

Skehan's proposal, however, never garnered widespread acceptance, likely due to several factors. Chiefly was the resort to conjectured emendation to line up the textual "columns" of the house.[105] Yet another factor may have prejudiced older readers against his proposal: the non-sequitur we noted above, i.e., non-material = unreal. More recent scholarship, in possession of more recent exegetical tools, appears to have become more circumspect and open to Skehan's proposals, at least in some regards. Bálint Károly Zában, for example, explains:

> As opposed to Skehan, I maintain that even if Wisdom's house was not built in the fashion in which he envisaged it, that is set lines and columns that follow the

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[101] Mark Leuchter, "A Resident Alien in Transit: Exile, Adaptation and Geomythology in the Jeremiah Narratives," *HBAI* 7 (2018): 318.

[102] Leuchter, "A Resident Alien in Transit," 318.

[103] Patrick W. Skehan, "The Seven Columns of Wisdom's House in Proverbs 1–9," *CBQ* 9, no. 2 (1947): 190–98.

[104] Patrick W. Skehan, "Wisdom's House," *CBQ* 29, no. 3 (1967): 162.

[105] More details critiques can be found in Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 18A (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2000), 323; Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 9–10.

measurements of the Solomonic Temple, the putative house-building may still allude to other aspects of successful building such as metaphors, metaphorical language, themes, motifs, imageries, structure and the like. To accept this view the calculations of Skehan are not necessary.[106]

He concludes: "[T]he most enduring features of Skehan's work are the recognition of the fact that understanding the book of Proverbs in tectonic terms is substantial."[107] Mary Douglas drew inspiration from Skehan, suggesting that Leviticus "projects" the desert tabernacle. She refers to it as "text plotted on a building"[108] and associates this with Greek "pattern poetry," where line length, spacing, and justification create a visual shape depicting the poem's content. Tantalizing for our proposal here (especially as it relates to the altar passage in Ezek 43:13–27), Douglas includes in visual layout the Greek poem "Dosiadas: the First Altar," which is "a poem in iambic metre, [whose] lines [are] in the form of an altar."[109] All this guides her analysis of Leviticus, which she views as a stand-in of sorts for the destroyed temple in Jerusalem:

> In this light the book is somewhat like a pilgrimage text. The worshippers make a journey of commemoration to a shrine and go round it with the sacred book as their guide, saying the words, marking out with their footsteps the very place of creation, or at least a space assigned by God to stand for his act of creation. Back into the problems of representation again, it is all taking place in the mind of the sixth- or fifth-century pilgrim, after the first destruction of the temple. There is no tabernacle, the faithful are not moving around in it, all the movement is in the book that they are reading, or hearing through their ears. Learning the book becomes a way of internalizing the tabernacle.[110]

For Douglas, the physical, "architectural space" of the tabernacle is recreated in the "space of the book," all so that Leviticus' "teaching on plural sanctuaries" (in contrast to Deuteronomy) might be actualized in the replication of copies of Leviticus itself: "Correctly mapped on to space, their [i.e., the faithful's] temple once consecrated will be as sacred as the original tabernacle, and they can build as many as they need."[111] In general, Douglas's approach has been received more favorably than Skehan's, although she has received criticism on a number of fronts. And on the question of literary structure and spatial projection, reviewers offer opposite assessments of her proposal. Christophe Nihan details the "forced" nature of some of Douglas' correspondences—

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[106] Bálint Károly Zában, *The Pillar Function of the Speeches of Wisdom: Proverbs 1:20–33, 8:1–36 and 9:1–6 in the Structural Framework of Proverbs 1–9,* BZAW 429 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 41.

[107] Zában, *The Pillar Function of the Speeches of Wisdom,* 45.

[108] Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 199.

[109] Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature,* 197–98.

[110] Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature,* 230.

[111] Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature,* 230–31.

e.g., Lev 16, which describes Aaron's entry into the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur, falls in the Outer Court in parallel with Lev 2, which deals with grain offerings—and notes that most of the proposed parallels "are rather vague and only seldom corroborate by a rigorous formal analysis."[112] Yet having critiqued thus, Nihan does express a modest degree of approval for a spatialized-textual reading of the book: "Douglas' recent interpretation of the book of Leviticus as a literary projection of the wilderness sanctuary is based on a correct insight (as already Exod 25ff., Leviticus does include a literary representation of the sanctuary."[113] He elaborates: "Furthermore, the reader/listener of Leviticus is allowed even into the most remote sections—see, in particular, the inner-sanctum in Lev 16—which, according to this legislation itself, are strictly forbidden to him. In this respect, it is legitimate to understand Leviticus as a literary and spiritual 'pilgrimage' of sorts into the 'textual' sanctuary of the wilderness."[114] Skehan and Douglas have nudged scholarship toward spatialized-textual readings, albeit inviting ambivalence about their success due in part to the passages they examined. Yet this does offer a precedent for a spatialized-textual reading of Ezekiel's temple, a passage containing significantly more promise for such an analysis.

The most recent work in this survey of spatiality in biblical studies has advanced this discussion significantly, invoking the function of inscriptional texts in temple space and applying it to the placement of particular types of texts within textual "space." By analyzing the role of inscribed blessings in temple architecture, Jeremy Smoak has offered a new perspective on the literary context of Num 6:24–26, the so-called "Aaronic Blessing."[115] Scholarship has traditionally focused on orality/liturgical use when analyzing the Aaronic Blessing.[116] However, the discovery of the Katef Hinnom amulets (noted above) has cued scholars to other examples of inscribed blessings and the distinctive role of textuality relative to blessing.[117] Comparing Num 6:24–26 with cultic, inscribed blessings from Ekron and Byblos, Smoak suggests reading the Aaronic Blessing similarly as an inscribed blessing, whose literary setting acts as "textual space"

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[112] Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus,* FAT 2.25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 84–85.

[113] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 84.

[114] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 84, n. 74.

[115] Jeremy D. Smoak, "From Temple to Text: Text as Ritual Space and the Composition of Numbers 6:24–26," *JHebS* 17, no. 2 (2017): 1–26.

[116] E.g., Rolf P. Knierim and George W. Coats, *Numbers,* FOTL 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 96; Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 4A (New Haven, CT: Anchor Yale Bible, 1993), 236–44.

[117] Niditch, *Oral World and Written Word*, 46–48; Smoak, *Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture*.

similar to how blessings were inscribed and displayed in temples as physical space: "[t]he incorporation of the priestly blessing in the text of Numbers in the textual space around the tabernacle may be productively understood as a textual adaptation of the very practice of inscribing and displaying blessings in temple space."[118] When one examines the proximity of inscribed blessings to dedicatory and votive offerings in temple spaces, Smoak contends that "the organization of the text of Numbers itself preserves spatial memory – specifically, a discursive mapping of temple space."[119] The details of these inscriptions and their respective architectural settings illuminate significant possibilities for spatializing texts.

The Ekron inscription, dated to the late 7th century BCE, specifically mentions the "temple" (*bt,* cf. בית), which was built, but contains a recorded blessing of the goddess *PTGYH* that she would guard (*šmr*, cf. שמר) him and bless (*wtbrk*, cf. ברך) his land, the same word-pair found in Num 6:24.[120] Significantly, this inscription was both large (60 x 40 cm.) and prominently installed near the focal point of the Ekron temple's inner chamber, leading Smoak to conclude: "The inscription attests to the act of writing and *displaying* blessings as components of dedicatory practice in temple space in the late Iron Age Levant. The inscription itself formed an important part of the décor of the temple; this artifact marked the convergence of discourse and the materiality of the temple."[121] Elsewhere, Smoak has noted the import of the physical layout of the inscription: "[T]he pictoral character of the text mimicked the shape and size of the blocks of the temple. That is, the division of the inscription into five lines that created a rectangular shape conforms to the rectangular shape of the blocks of the building."[122] Indeed, one can see something of a blurring of the difference between the text itself and the building:

> By setting the text within the wall, the inscription's reference to a "temple" would now be conveyed by its physical integration into the architectural design of the building. Graphically, the shape of the text as a block of the temple also worked to minimize a distinction between the text and the temple. What was temple and what was text became blurred in a way that only a refocusing upon the graphic three dimensional aspects of the inscription could clarify.[123]

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[118] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 4.
[119] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 9.
[120] For the official publication of this inscription, see Seymour Gitin, Trude Dothan, and Joseph Naveh, "A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron," *IEJ* 47, no. 1–2 (1997): 1–16.
[121] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 12.
[122] Jeremy D. Smoak, "Inscribing Temple Space: The Ekron Dedication as Monumental Text," *JNES* 76, no. 2 (2017): 332.
[123] Smoak, "Inscribing Temple Space," 332.

With the 5th/4th century BCE Phoenician YHMLK inscription from Byblos (*KAI* 10), we find a similar example of a blessing text located within a sanctuary.[124] Though it was not discovered in situ, as was the Ekron inscription, its use of near demonstrative pronouns with reference to temple architecture (e.g., *this* bronze altar [המזבח נחשת זן, line 4], *this* gold gateway [והפתח חרץ זן, line 4], *this* portico [והערפת זא, line 6], etc.) strongly suggests its display within the sacred precinct being described. Like the Aaronic blessing, YHMLK uses the terms ברך (line 8) and חן (line 10; cf. חנן in Num 6:25). And like the Ekron inscription, "the Byblos inscription represents another instance of the practice of inscribing and displaying blessings in temple space. Similar to the Ekron inscription, the Byblos inscription draws attention to the importance that written blessings held as part of the dedication and décor of such space."[125] Much like the Ekron inscription, Smoak suggests that the Byblos inscription mimicked the construction of physical space textually: "the text of the Byblos inscription served as a textual microcosm of the spatial layout of the courtyard of the temple, by describing the altar, inscription, ad dedication in the space of the stele."[126]

In light of this inscriptional analysis, Smoak charts an exegetical way forward that moves beyond traditional literary critical tools: "I contend that the inscriptions from Ekron and Byblos be used to encourage scholars to reflect more *upon the influence that the memory of space may have had upon literary technique and organization*" (emphasis added).[127] And so, rather than viewing the text of Numbers 6–7 as reflecting the accompanying of votive offerings with spoken blessing (i.e., ritual actions performed in sequence), Smoak argues that their textual proximity reflects their spatial proximity in typical temple spaces.[128] Thus we find a model that creatively reimagines a text's ability to serve as space: "The text of Numbers formed an innovative space in which the ritual authority of the priestly blessing could be located or given new ritual expression."[129]

Smoak's analysis of these inscriptions has significance for more than just the interpretation of Num 6:24–26. For example, Timothy S. Hogue has utilized this basic approach

[124] In addition to *KAI,* see John C. L. Gibson, *Phoenician Inscriptions: Including Inscriptions in the Mixed Dialect of Arslan Tash,* vol. 3 of *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 93–99.

[125] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 14.

[126] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 14.

[127] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 16.

[128] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 21.

[129] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 24.

for analyzing the Decalogue of Exod 20:1–17, aided by "monumentality" studies, another promising discipline for future research.[130] And though the studies of Skehan and Douglas were conducted without these spatial, exegetical tools, the plausibility of their respective theses is hereby enhanced, even if not every detail can withstand scrutiny. This research can move forward with the suggestion that the text of Ezekiel 40–48 serves a similar spatial function for Ezekiel's priestly identity. And pace those who would demean the value of a visionary, textual temple for such a purpose, Smoak offers a defense of textual space as significant space:

> We should avoid the temptation to see the relocation of the blessing from the realm of temple space to textual space as a reduction of its perceived ritual importance or efficacy. Instead, the present study has sought to emphasize that the textualization of the blessing in the space of Numbers represented an important modification or re-contextualization of its ritual importance. But we should not overlook the importance that the appeal to or mapping of the temple space in the realm of the text played in preserving and recontextualization its ritual significance and the ritual authority of those who used the blessing.[131]

In their introductory remarks to *Constructions of Space III*, Jorunn Økland, J. Cornelis de Vos, and Karen Wenell suggest the following: "Within a text, it is possible to open up and construct other spaces apart from the 'real' spaces of temples and sanctuaries" (note: the scare quotes are original and especially important).[132] The studies we have surveyed have provided concrete examples of this phenomenon that apply to the text of Ezekiel.

So in sum, our survey has demonstrated that spatializing a text is attested in a number of historical periods using a variety of media and surveyed using a range of analytical and exegetical tools. Thus our application of it to Ezekiel's literary temple is a precedented and fitting move. Admittedly, positing Ezekiel 40–48 as a surrogate for the Jerusalem temple may feel like a bridge too far—the triumph of theory over established interpretive tools, eisegesis over exegesis, etc. What is more, the exclusively prescriptive/descriptive taxonomy observed by Davis carries much sway in the literature, and the modern, western bias against an ontology of vision or text (noted by Goodman and Carr) has eclipsed a more comprehensive range of

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[130] Timothy S. Hogue, "The Eternal Monument of the Divine King: Monumentality, Reembodiment, and Social Function in the Decalogue" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2019). For a summary of the discipline, see Timothy Hogue, "The Monumentality of the Sinatic Decalogue: Reading Exodus 20 in Light of Northwest Semitic Monument-Making Practices," *JBL* 138, no. 1 (2019): 80–5, especially the works referenced.

[131] Smoak, "From Temple to Text," 24.

[132] Jorunn Økland, J. Cornelis de Vos, and Karen Wenell, "Introduction," in *Constructions of Space III: Biblical Spatiality and the Sacred,* ed. Jorunn Økland, J. Cornelis de Vos, and Karen Wenell, LHBOTS 540 (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), xvii.

applications for far too many interpreters. But with a fuller appreciation of the application of spatiality and the use to which it has been put in secondary literature, we are better equipped to explore the way in which a textual temple can indeed ground a vocational identity for a priest in exile. From here, we turn to texts in Ezekiel 40–48 with an eye for spatiality, considering details that support such a reading and scholarly analyses that have already made exegetical inroads via using spatial-exegetical tools.

Analysis of Texts

Ezekiel 40:1-4: The Purpose of Ezekiel's Visionary "Tour"

There is almost universal emphasis among commentators that Ezekiel is shown the temple in order to declare it to the House of Israel. His commission in 40:4 reads:

A) And the man said to me:	וידבר אלי האישׁ
B) "Son of man, see with your eyes and hear with your ears, and set your heart toward all that I am showing to you.	בן־אדם ראה בעיניך ובאזניך שׁמע ושׂים לבך לכל אשר־אני מראה אותך
C) For in order that you might see have you been brought here.	כי למען הראותכה הבאתה הנה
D) Declare all that you are seeing to the house of Israel."	הגד את־כל־אשר־אתה ראה לבית ישׂראל

Daniel Block depicts this in vocational terms, though he appears to be assuming a (chiefly) prophetic vocation: "Ezekiel is to concentrate on what the guide is about to show him. After all, he is not simply a tourist visiting an historical site, or even a worshiper on a pilgrimage to a shrine. He is a mediator of divine revelation. Twenty years after his call to prophetic ministry he is still functioning as a spokesman for God the exiles in Babylon."[133] Certainly, there is a furthering of the "declarative" element of 40:4d in 43:10 (employing √נגד) and 44:5–31 (employing √אמר in v. 6), what Ruth Poser calls a "concretization" (Konkretisierungen/ konkretisiert[134]) of 40:4. Two things, however, should be noted. First, though the instruction to "declare" (הגד) occurs after the purpose clause in 40:4c (כי למען), it is asyndetically juxtaposed

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[133] Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 515.

[134] Ruth Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* VTSup 154 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 276.

with it; translations that add a copula "and" or "then" mask the syntactical disconnect.[135] Second, the syntactical construction כי למען is especially marked, attested elsewhere only in Josh 11:20, 1 Sam 17:28, and 1 Kgs 15:4 (though in the last example, it is being used adversatively: "nevertheless"). The collocation √ראה + למען occurs only in Exod 16:32; Isa 5:19, 41:20; and in 1 Sam 17:28 with a כי (√ראה + כי למאן), almost the exact form we find in Ezek 40:4c (כי + למען + infinitive construct of ראה + finite verb):

Ezek 40:4 For the purpose of your seeing you have been brought here	כי למען הראותכה הבאתה הנה
1 Sam 17:28 For the purpose of the seeing of the battle you came down	כי למען ראות המלחמה ירדת

Ezekiel 40:4, like 1 Sam 17:28, highlights the importance of Ezekiel's *seeing*; i.e., Ezekiel's seeing is not merely penultimate to his declaring, it is the *reason* for his seeing. While his declaring is undoubtedly not detached from his seeing (declaring what he sees will play a role later in the vision), it is unwarranted to demote the act of seeing in the introduction to the vision from having a purpose for Ezekiel all its own. Much like the sign acts we noted in chapter three, the formative—indeed *vocationally* formative element of the temple tour should not be subordinated to its communicative element.

Ezekiel 40:5–42:20: Ezekiel's "Temple Tour"

The units and sub-units in Ezekiel 40:1–42:20 have been delineated variously by interpreters, but there is a widespread agreement that 43:1 begins a new textual unit, supporting the delineation of chapters 40–42 as a distinct unit of text. For example, Henry Van Dyke Parunak labels 40:1–42:16 as "Description of the New Temple" and treats 43:1–46:24 as a distinct unit labeled "Oracles in the New Temple."[136] Marvin A. Sweeney likewise delineates 40:2–42:20 as the "First vision account: tour of the new temple," and 43:1–48:35 as the "Second vision account: Halakhot pertaining to the temple."[137] Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann and Daniel Block follow suit, with the former treating 40:5–42:20 as a single unit labeled "Die

[135] E.g., Block, *Ezekiel 25–48,* 512; Milgrom and Block, *Ezekiel's Hope*, 61; NLT; LXX.

[136] Henry Van Dyke Parunak, "Structural Studies in Ezekiel" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1978), 510–23. Curiously he omits 42:17–20 from consideration.

[137] Marvin A. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 196–97.

Tempelbeschreibung,"[138] and the latter as two architecturally descriptive sub-units: "The Design of Sacred Space (40:5–46)" and "The Dimensions of Sacred Space (40:47–42:20)."[139] (Note that Pohlmann and Block also bracket out 40:1–4 labeled "Visionäre Einleitung,"[140] and "Preamble."[141]) However, this does not suggest that Ezekiel 40:5–42:20 is somehow at odds with Ezekiel 43ff. Benjamin Kilchör offers a fair warning that to interpret chs. 40–42 in isolation is to interpret them out of context: "The continuation of the temple architecture from Ez 40–42 by showing the return of the Kabod in this very temple shows that Ez 40–42 should not be understood statically as the heavenly temple that stands there timeless, unshaken by the destruction of the Jerusalem temple."[142] After all: "In Ez 40–42 nothing of the presence of the Kabod can be ascertained, the whole temple seems to be empty and is never referred to as a sanctuary. In addition, the entire temple architecture in Ez 40–42, with its emphasis on the gates and the division into an inner and an outer forecourt, is designed for the return of the Kabod."[143]

On the one hand, his point is well-taken—we will indeed consider the return of the כבוד and other elements of Ezekiel 43 both below and in chapter five. On the other hand, however, Kilchör's critique seems to (1) overstate the impression made by the absence of the כבוד and (2) does not require the complete rejection of analyses that isolate 40–42, something he admits in the case of Steven S. Tuell's work to be considered below.[144] Indeed, the return of the כבוד in 43:1–12 shows that—at least from a synchronic perspective—Ezekiel's temple *is* inhabited by the כבוד; i.e., the *emptiness* is not necessarily as jarring as Kilchör suggests. He does seem to overstate the situation: "Without Ez 43,1–11 Ez 40–42 remains absolutely incomprehensible in

[138] Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Der Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiel Kapital 20–48,* ATD 22, 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), 543.

[139] Block, *Ezekiel 25–48,* 516, 539. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48,* 577, also speaks of an awkwardness of the transition from 42:20 to 43:1; this is a 'semi-independent' unit.

[140] Pohlmann, *Der Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiel Kapital 20–48,* 540.

[141] Block, *Ezekiel 25–48,* 511.

[142] Benjamin Kilchör, *Wiederhergestellter Gottesdienst: Eine Deutung der zweiten Tempelvision Ezechiels (Ez 40–48) am Beispiel der Aufgaben der Priester und Leviten,* Herders Biblische Studien 95 (Freiburg: Herder, 2020), 225, "Allein schon die Fortführung der Tempelarchitektur aus Ez 40–42 durch die Schau der Rückkehr des Kabod in ebendiesen Tempel zeigt, dass man Ez 40–42 nicht statisch verstehen sollte als den himmlischen Tempel, der zeitlos dasteht, unerschüttert durch die Zerstörung des Jerusalemer Tempels."

[143] Kilchör, *Wiederhergestellter Gottesdienst*, 225 n.123, "In Ez 40–42 ist nichts von der Anwesenheit des Kabod festzustellen, der ganze Tempel scheint leer zu sein und wird auch nie als Heiligtum bezeichnet. Zudem ist doch die ganze Tempelarchitektur in Ez 40–42 mit ihrer Betonung auf den Toren und der Aufteilung in einen inneren und einen äußeren Vorhof auf die Rückkehr des Kabod hin konzipiert."

[144] Kilchör, *Wiederhergestellter Gottesdienst*, 226, "The considerations that lead Tuell to interpret Ez 40–42 as a word icon of a heavenly sanctuary are, in my option, justified." ("Die Überlegungen, die Tuell dazu führen, Ez 40–42 als Wort-Ikone eines himmlischen Heiligtums zu deuten, haben meines Erachtens darin ihr Recht.").

the architectural and theological intention."[145] After all, no internal textual features draw attention to the absence of the כבוד, only the contextual addition of the actual return of the כבוד in 43:1–11. And as a point of comparison, the other analogous shrine-plan passages in the Old Testament (Exod 25:10–27:21, 36:8–38:20, 40:1–33; 1 Kgs 6:1–38, 7:13–51 // 2 Chr 3:1–4:22, 5:11–14) likewise end with the visible presence of YHWH taking up residence, yet can hardly be said to be "absolutely incomprehensible" (schlechterdings unverständlich) in and of themselves. Significant information is derived from the survey of the structures and their contents. Whatever "seeming emptiness" (scheint leer) exists in 40–42, attention is not sufficiently devoted to it. It certainly does not undermine a spatialized-textual role that Ezekiel 40–42 might play both on its own and in synchronic/literary anticipation of forthcoming developments in Ezekiel's temple tour.

Ezekiel 40:5–42:20 eludes a simple, formulaic structure. Scholars do discuss the inclusio formed in 40:5 and 42:20 by the mention of a "wall all around" (חומה + סביב סביב),[146] and the language of a "pattern" has been used by several writers, although the contours of the said pattern are not always sharp and clear. For example, Stevenson suggests the pattern to be "defining the area before considering its function,"[147] something shared by Ezekiel 40–48 and P. This is reasonable, although more content-driven and conceptual than formal. Likewise, Tuell speaks of a "pattern of the Temple description," one from which 40:38–43 and 41:15b–26 are said to "depart significantly."[148] However, apart from defining and plotting "guidance and measurement formulae,"[149] he leaves this pattern relatively undefined. This is not surprising given the variegated nature of the guidance formulae—Horace Hummel identifies six synonymous features to the traditionally labeled guidance formula (Hiphil of בוא + 1cs suffix).[150] Furthermore, it is unclear whether the prevalence of מדד in these chapters can be described as a measurement *formula.*

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[145] Kilchör, *Wiederhergestellter Gottesdienst*, 234, "Ohne Ez 43,1–11 bleibt Ez 40–42 schlechterdings unverständlich in der architektonischen und theologischen Intension."

[146] Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), 1196; Stepheen L. Cook, *Ezekiel 38–48: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22B (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 127.

[147] Stevenson, Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 137.

[148] Tuell, *Law of the Temple,* 29.

[149] Tuell, *Law of the Temple,* 22–25.

[150] Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* 1168.

Though there is significant variation, some procedure to the tour is evident. In some places, the text is dominated by terse labeling of architectural features and their measurements (e.g., 41:6–14), whereas in other places, more detailed descriptions of architectural features are provided either with measurements of various sub-features (e.g., 41:20–22 discusses the north-facing gate of the outer court, providing its dimensions in cubits, and then provides dimensions for its windows, porches, and palm tree reliefs, and distances between the north-facing gate and another gate) or without them (e.g., the side rooms [והצלעות] in 41:6–8, the thresholds [הספים] and their environs in 41:16–20, the chambers [לשׁכות] in 42:10–14, etc.).[151] While diachronic analysis treats some more detailed sections as accretions to the text, it is difficult to do so using formal criteria. Even the narratival shape of the text makes diachronic analysis complex since, according to Block, the apparent insertions lend “realism to the account. As anyone led around a new site by a tour guide knows, the leader often pauses along the way to describe a particular feature with greater detail.” Ezekiel 40:38–46 is commonly treated as one such insertion; Zimmerli handles it entirely separate from the surrounding context.[152] Interestingly vv. 45–46 record a rare speech from the tour guide that explicitly differentiates between the Sons of Zadok, who alone have access to the altar, and the remainder of the Sons of Levi, who do not.[153] Ezekiel 42:13–14 also records a speech from the guide concerning the priests, although Zimmerli does not treat this similarly to the (purportedly) spoken addition in 40:38–46.

It appears noteworthy that the temple tour proceeds in this typical, *verismo* fashion. While this section does prepare the locus to which the כבוד will return, its function does not appear to be limited to this. Certainly, nothing is indicated explicitly in the text. This tour then invites us to employ a spatially-aware exegetical method to understand the text’s rhetorical function.

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[151] Menahem Haran, “The Law-Code of Ezekiel XL–XLVIII and its Relation to the Priestly School,” *HUCA* 50 (1979): 47–48, has sought to isolate all the linguistic elements that propel the tour forward, but his analysis still reveals considerable lexical and organizational variety.

[152] Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2: A Commentary on th eBook of the Prophet Ezekiel Chapters 25–48,* trans. James D. Martin, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1983), 365–69.

[153] Ezekiel’s perspective on the relationship between Zadokites and others has been long studied by exegetes. See especially Raymond Abba, “Priests and Levites in Ezekiel,” *VT* 28, no. 1 (1978): 1–9; J. Gordon McConville, “Priests and Levites in Ezekiel: A Crux in the Interpretation of Israel’s History,” *TynBul* 34 (1983): 3–31; Rodney K. Duke, “Punishment or Restoration? Another Look at the Levites of Ezekiel 44:6–16,” *JSOT* 40 (1988): 61–81; Nathan MacDonald, *Priestly Rule: Polemic and Biblical Interpretation in Ezekiel 44,* BZAW 476 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015).

Ezekiel 43:13–27: Ezekiel's "Textual Altar"

After a pause in the temple tour wherein Ezekiel witnesses the כבוד returning to the temple (43:1–12), the text (somewhat) resumes the tour, although there are some noteworthy changes. The absence of (angelic) guidance and measurement motifs are striking, although Tuell reminds us that these are not present at every stop of the temple tour in chs. 40–42; thus, their absence here should not be assigned too much interpretive weight.[154] What is more, measurement terminology does occur in vv. 13–17. But more significantly, Tuell has observed the "richly symbolic names that these verses give to parts of the alter,"[155] elsewhere labeled "mythic designations,"[156] as distinctive to these verses. Yet the temple tour did single out this altar in 40:47b, though it did not provide its measurements there. Thus a resumption of the tour is not overly surprising, and positively speaking, it singles out the altar for unique emphasis. Furthermore, A. J. van den Herik suggests that it is no accident that altar is sandwiched ("ingeklemd") between two manifestations of the כבוד (43:1–6 and 44:1–4); he argues that it is literally the focal point of the meeting-place between the כבוד and the people of Israel.[157] Not only does this make it one of the twin focal points of the tour (along with the holy of holies[158]), the shift that occurs after this point—from vision to instruction—marks the altar description itself (43:13–17) as "the substantive and structural center of 43–44," further specified as "the mathematical center of the temple complex."[159] Indeed, 43:1–44:4 forms both the high-point/climax of ("hoogtepunt van") and the transition/tipping-point in ("omslagpunt in") Ezek 40–48 as a whole.[160]

[154] Tuell, *Law of the Temple,* 46.

[155] Steven Tuell, *Ezekiel,* NIBCOT (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009), 303.

[156] Tuell, *Law of the Temple,* 46.

[157] Arie Johannes van den Herik, *Een woonplaats voor de Heilige: Onderzoek naar de strekking en relevantie van Ezechiël 40–48 vanuit een christelijk-theoogische optiek* (Apeldoorn: Labarum Academic, 2016), 117, "Zij ligt namelijk ingeklemd tussen twee beschrijvingen van de komst van de *kābôd* van JHWH (43:1–6 en 44:1–4) en vormt er de kern van (zie §3.3.1). Het is letterlijk het brandpunt van de ontmoeting tussen de aanwezige *kābôd* en het volk Israël."

[158] A point noted by Paul M. Joyce, *Ezekiel: A Commentary,* LHBOTS 482 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 230, building upon Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 40–41.

[159] Van Den Herik, *Een woonplaats voor de Heilige,* 125, "Daarom vormt de altaarbeschrijving (43:13–17) het inhoudelijke en structurele midden van 43:1–44:4. Het altar is ook het mathematische middelpunt van het tempelcomplex." Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 40, agrees: "In this geometry of holiness, the architectural center of the complex is not the Holy of Holies but the altar."

[160] Van Den Herik, *Een woonplaats voor de Heilige,* 125.

Two points stand out in this passage: first, the presentation of vertical dimensions, and second, the second-person deixis of vv. 18–27. Concerning the first: In the temple tour of chs. 40–42, Stevenson points out that no vertical dimensions are provided for the temple *building,* and the only structures that receive vertical dimensions are the wall around the complex (חומה / הבנין; 40:5), the four tables (ארבעה שלחנות; 40:42) and the wooden altar (המזבח עץ; 41:22).[161] With the altar, however, that changes. There is a text-critical issue in Ezek 43:13b wherein the LXX explicitly uses the word ὕψος ("height"), used in previous chapters to translate גבה ("height") (see 40:5, 42; 41:8, 22). And in fact, in 43:13 it translates גב which has led many to suggest that the final *heh* of an original גבה was lost here due to haplography:

וזה גב המזבח	καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ὕψος τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου
And this is the base of the altar.	And this is the height of the altar.

Not everyone has been convinced. Block believes that the LXX reflects the translation of a dittographic error that crept into the Hebrew manuscript tradition (an extra *heh* added to גב due to the article of המזבח),[162] and Zimmerli argues that though the LXX does aid comprehensibility, it thereby omits "a corresponding expression to introduce the measurement of the width."[163] Though their arguments are unconvincing to this researcher, even if one does not read the explicit reference to height offered by the LXX restoration of גבה, sufficient attention is nonetheless given to upward measurements using other constructions (e.g., מן +עד, v. 14; למעלה + מן, v. 15). What this achieves, according to Cook, is "the rhetorical role of projecting the altar into reality."[164] Height of objects in this tour, he contends, "begins to bring them to life . . . . 40:47 situates the altar, and 43:13–17 allows it to become real."[165] And so, Ezekiel's textual temple is not centered upon a textual altar.

This altar, however, engages Ezekiel, as is evident from the use of deixis in the passage. Deixis is always noticed, sometimes identified as such, and yet rarely recognized as having the literary implications that it does.[166] When a text addresses someone as a "you," implications

[161] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 5.

[162] Block, *Ezekiel 25–48,* 592 n. 14.

[163] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, 424 n. 13.

[164] Cook, *Ezekiel 38–48*, 198.

[165] Cook, *Ezekiel 38–48*, 198. Cook attributes this to Stevenson, although her description on the cited page does not approximate the ontological thrust of Cook's comment.

[166] For an introduction to some of these implications, see Judith F. Duchan, Gail A. Bruder, and Lynne E. Hewitt, eds., *Deixis in Narrative: A Cognitive Science Perspective* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009). An initial foray into deixis in Ezekiel drawing upon recent research was published by this researcher here: R. Andrew

abound about who chiefly is in view and how readers are incorporated into the world of the text.[167] In Ezek 43:18–27, scholars have noted the alternation between 2sg and 3pl deixis of verbs and suffixes (with a single 2pl example in 43:27, which is nearly always ignored).[168] Note the following subject deixis:

vv. 19–21a	second person singular
v. 21b	third person singular
v. 22a	second person singular
v. 22b	third person plural
v. 23–24a	second person singular
v. 24b	third person plural
v. 25a	second person singular
vv. 25b–27b	third person plural
v.27c	first person singular[169]

Though various literary-critical suggestions have been proffered,[170] most work has sought to understand how 2sg forms relate to Ezekiel. With only a few exceptions,[171] most see the 2sg deixis as addressing Ezekiel himself, particularly as it casts Ezekiel as a new Moses.[172] As such, it scripts Ezekiel *into* the narrative world of the altar. Admittedly there is some tension in this. Cook avers: "Block . . . and Duguid . . . are too literal minded in assigning Ezekiel himself a prominent role in the decontamination ceremony. As has been argued, this utopia is *not* to be built and dedicated in real time. In using the second-person 'you' here, the text simply addresses

Compton, "Deixis Variation as a Literary Devise in Ezekiel: Utilizing an Oft Neglected Linguistic Feature in Exegesis," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 28 (2017): 77–107.

[167] Catherine Petrany, *Pedagogy, Prayer, and Praise: The Wisdom of the Psalms and Psalter,* FAT 2/83 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 42–84, draws attention to the "communicative orientation" of texts based on the use of deixis, drawing also on W. Derek Suderman, "Prayers Heard and Overheard: Shifting Address and Methodological Matrices in Psalms Scholarship" (PhD diss., Toronto School of Theology, 2007). Both note that address in the text has the ability to script readers themselves *into* the textual world.

[168] Friedrich Fechter, "Priesthood in Exile According to the Book of Ezekiel," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality,* ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 29-31, pays close attention to this shifting deixis.

[169] Block, *Ezekiel 25–48,* 605. Cf. the outline in Ronald M. Hals, *Ezekiel,* FOTL 19 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 309–10, which maps out the deixis of more than just verbal subjects.

[170] For a survey, see Kilchör, *Wiederhergestellter Gottesdienst*, 77–79.

[171] E.g., Pohlmann, *Der Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiel Kapital 20–48,* 580, argues that it refers to Israel; Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48,* 1253, attributes the 2sg actions to a future group of priests.

[172] See Jon D. Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48,* HSM 10 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 38; John F. Evans, *You Shall Know that I am Yahweh: An Inner-Biblical Interpretation of Ezekiel's Recognition Formula,* BBRSup 25 (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2019), 142; Rebecca G. S. Idestrom, "Echoes of the Book of Exodus in Ezekiel," *JSOT* 33, no. 4 (2009): 504; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, 436; Hals, *Ezekiel,* 311; Block, *Ezekiel 25–48,* 604–13.

Ezekiel as a stand-in for people in general."[173] Yet this objection seems to vacillate. While admitting that the utopia is "projected into reality"/allowed to "become real" (noted above) *within* the text, Cook backtracks by refusing to entertain the possibility that Ezekiel's altar-participation may happen within the text as well. Admittedly it is hard to imagine precisely how this would work. Still, Cook's dithering does illustrate how challenging it is for interpreters to avoid demoting the textual world to something less real than the material world. But finding himself officiating at a textual altar may be precisely what we would expect from a priest coping with a new place, refusing to relinquish his priestly, vocational identity even though physically separated from a material temple and altar. Indeed, Katheryn Pfisterer Darr agrees, suggesting that we might "discern here a *compensation* of sorts" (emphasis added).[174]

So in sum, the altar description, like the temple tour, invites us to employ a spatially-aware exegetical method to understand the text's rhetorical function. Several studies have attempted just that, paving the way for our employment of this approach in service of Ezekiel's exilic, priestly vocational identity.

Scholarship Employing Spatial Categories for Ezekiel 40–48

General Studies and Applications

Having analyzed the key texts, this section now surveys four complementary studies that employ a spatial mode of interpreting Ezekiel's temple, demonstrating that our interpretive method is part of a larger conversation regarding texts and space in Ezekiel. The first two begin by positing analogies with ritual texts and objects in cross-cultural settings, the final two draw upon the broader, theoretical-spatial categories surveyed above.

In 1986, Susan Niditch explored the "visionary context" of Ezekiel 40–48,[175] aided by comparison with Tibetan Buddhist mandalas. Several scholars have observed textualization and iconographic strategies in Buddhist *writings*, noting even how first century C.E. scholar monks argued the authenticity and authority of newer Mahayana texts by invoking the presence of the

[173] Cook, *Ezekiel 38–48*, 196.
[174] Kathern Pfisterer Darr, *The Book of Ezekiel: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections* in *NIB* 6:1568.
[175] Susan Niditch, "Ezekiel 40–48 in a Visionary Context," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 208–24.

Buddha *in* the texts: "[T]he books were understood to be equivalent to the Buddha himself."[176] Niditch preceded these scholarly approaches in her comparative reading of biblical and Buddhist media: textualized visions and mandalas. While mandalas are known visually as symbolic representations or evocations of the cosmos for use in ritual acts, Niditch notes that these are all expressions of the "real" or "highest-order mandala," i.e., "the actual sacred realm."[177] These other expressions or "orders" of mandalas, crafted from a variety of media (e.g., colored sand, painted on cloth or the walls and ceilings of temples, drawn on paper, built life-sized from materials, etc.), while not providing immediate contact to the sacred realm itself, do give an experience of that realm. She explains that via the media mandala: "The Buddhist attempts to enter the sacred realm and to become, as it were, a part of the picture [media]."[178] She connects it to Ezekiel directly (differences in cultural settings notwithstanding) by observing how Ezekiel's media temple—and remembering that the temple itself is a representation of the cosmos[179]—is one part of the cosmic portrait of restoration, which includes the land/cosmos in Ezekiel 45 and 47–48: "On one level, Ezekiel's vision *is* the building, *is* the cosmos, as the mandala in each of its orders is a cosmos. The vision's images, reported in words, form pillars and courtyards, and constitute a world; its images are real and have a reality as does the mandala."[180] Niditch further aligns the textual temple and (future) material temple: "[T]he temple to be rebuilt is to be regarded as a full-scale mandala in hewn stone and wood rather than one of word images. Both are valid and real. Only in this way can the full symbolic value of Ezekiel's temple vision be appreciated."[181] Thus, while expressing somewhat "prescriptive" sentiments, she has still imbued Ezekiel's *textual* temple with significant spatial content.

Building on Niditch's study, Steven Tuell proposes a reading of Ezekiel's temple informed by the Eastern Orthodox Christian theology of icons. This comparison again invokes the shared media-nature of the icon and the textual temple of Ezek 40-48. Tuell interprets

[176] Jacob Kinnard, "It Is What It Is (Or Is It?): Further Reflections on the Buddhist Representation of Manuscripts," in *Iconic Books and Texts,* ed. James W. Watts (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 152. See too the study of Buddhist textual ritualization in Yohan Yoo, "Possession and Repetition: Ways in which Korean Lay Buddhists Appropriate Scriptures," in *Iconic Books and Texts,* ed. James W. Watts (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 299-313.

[177] Niditch, "Ezekiel 40–48 in a Visionary Context," 212.

[178] Niditch, "Ezekiel 40–48 in a Visionary Context," 213.

[179] For a general overview, see the studies in Deena Ragavan, ed., *Heaven on Earth: Temples, Ritual, and Cosmic Symbolism in the Ancient World,* OIS 9 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2013). For focus on the Jerusalem temple in the OT, see Jon D. Levenson, "The Temple and the World," *JR* 64, no. 3 (1984): 275–98.

[180] Niditch, "Ezekiel 40–48 in a Visionary Context," 213.

[181] Niditch, "Ezekiel 40–48 in a Visionary Context," 213.

Ezekiel's tour of the visionary temple as a heavenly ascent chiefly intended to demonstrate that YHWH's promised presence is still available to the exiles apart from the Jerusalem temple, the traditional medium of YHWH's presence (so Pss 48:13–14; 84:8; 42:2–6).[182] The temple had an iconic function much in line with later Eastern Orthodox articulation of iconic mediation: "Here [Ps 48:13–14], Zion functions in a manner very much like the icon in Eastern Orthodoxy. The Orthodox icon is understood to be a window into heaven. Reverence paid to the icon passes through to the heavenly realm, while the icon communicates to the worshiper an experience of heavenly reality."[183] Though the exiles themselves could not re-enter Ezekiel's vision ecstatically, they could still participate in the reality of his ascent:

> Ezekiel's detailed report of his vision would appear to be, at least in part, the means of [YHWH's promised] presence. . . . The reader of the text is able to experience what the prophet experienced, independent of the original visionary; however, this (admittedly indirect) experience is disciplined and controlled by the fixedness of the written text . . . . The text of Ezekiel's vision, thus, could become an aid to devotional piety, like the icon in Orthodoxy.[184]

Tuell is not the only person to suggest that text can be appropriately compared to a visual icon. Karel van der Toorn has argued that Deuteronomy's professed aniconic stance is complemented (or complicated!) by the iconic role played by the written word: "The ban on images and the emphasis on the Torah are complimentary: the Torah was to take the place of the image . . . . The void left by the cult images was filled by the written word: upon their doorposts and their gates, where images had formerly been placed, the Israelites would henceforth write portions of the Torah (Deut 11:20)."[185] (As an aside, note that several Jewish and Christian liturgical traditions treat the *physical book* of the Bible like an icon—processing with it, elevating it, incensing it, housing it in a sacred shrine, and/or placing it on an altar or table-throne, etc.—thus the ability of a text to function as a liturgical/iconic object is one recognized still today.[186]) Just as the vision mediated YHWH's temple-presence to Ezekiel, the textual temple mediated it to the exiles in an

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[182] Steven S. Tuell, "Ezekiel 40–42 as Verbal Icon," *CBQ* 58 (1996): 661.

[183] Tuell, "Ezekiel 40–42 as Verbal Icon," 661. On the "in between" function of icons, see Andrew Louth, *Introducing Eastern Orthodox Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 115–16.

[184] Tuell, "Ezekiel 40–42 as Verbal Icon," 662.

[185] Karel van der Toorn, "The Iconic Book: Analogies between the Babylonian Cult of Images and the Veneration of the Torah," in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East,* ed. Karel van der Toorn, CBET 21 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 241.

[186] For a survey of more recent practices and their historical precedents, see Richard T. Lawrence, "The Altar Bible: *Digni, Decori, et Pulchri*," *Worship* 75, no. 5 (2001): 386–402.

ongoing fashion, available not merely in tiles of ecstatic vision but whenever one takes up the text.

Comparative readings like those of Niditch and Tuell might, like the comparisons made with cyberspace above, strike some interpreters as a bridge too far. Certainly, they are quite far removed culturally from that of Ezekiel's temple text. Nevertheless, they do demonstrate an attempt to read Ezekiel's temple account with more attentiveness to spatial categories.[187] Two more studies, however, show a spatial reading of Ezek 40-48 driven less by comparative methods and more pervasively by spatial theory.

Stevenson, whose work was introduced above, summarizes Ezekiel 40–48 as "the work of a visionary who changes the society of post-exilic Israel by changing access to space. The concern is not to provide a building plan for a building but to restructure the society from pre-exilic monarchy to a post-exilic temple society without a human king."[188] Resisting the identification of Ezekiel's temple as a blueprint, Stevenson notes that the measuring enjoined upon Ezekiel yields measurements of *space,* not measurements of the *structures*. Similarly, vertical dimensions are lacking, with only three exceptions in 40:5, 40:32, and 41:22, leading Stevenson away from over-emphasizing the structure itself. And though it is possible to plot the floorplan based on these measures spaces (as she has done at several points in chapter 1), there is a clear emphasis on the "proportion" of the house (Stevenson's preferred translation for תכנית in 43.10[189]) rather than its architectural dimensions. Thus these measurements, and the shapes they outline (nearly all perfectly square, indicating cosmic significance[190]), are considered expressions of "territoriality," a term from human geography defined as "the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area."[191] She summarizes: "The three essential facets of territoriality are *classification of area, communication of boundaries,* and *enforcement of*

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[187] Mark S. Smith, *Where the Gods Are: Spatial Dimensions of Anthropomorphism in the Biblical World,* AYBRL (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 3-5, 109-12, warns against too quickly dismissing spatial theorizing in studying ancient texts. His warning is appropriate to studies like these as well and his proposed method for identifying spatial impulses in ancient texts is careful and controlled.

[188] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 160.

[189] For her lexical treatment, see Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 17–18, cf. 33.

[190] John Strange, "Theology and Politics in Architecture and Iconography," *SJOT* 5, no. 1 (1991): 27 (see especially n.4), 30.

[191] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 11, citing Robert David Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History,* Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 19. For more on human geography, see Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 151–54.

access."[192] Ezekiel is indeed concerned with access enforcement—chiefly of the laity and the king[193]—and she sees Ezekiel 40–48 as a text concerned with accomplishing a rhetorical purpose in a specific context of perceived exigence. Stevenson labels the genre of these chapters "territorial rhetoric."[194]

But what is most significant for this research is Stevenson's shifting the parameters of typical exegetical work on Ezekiel by drawing on the discipline of territoriality and geography: "Human geography has to do with the social organization of space. Contemporary human geographers have argued that this priority of history over geography has been a pervasive blind spot in social science disciplines, beginning in the nineteenth century and continuing to the present."[195] Because of this blind spot, "[s]cholars have tended to concentrate on temporal questions without giving equal attention to spatial matters. History has prevailed over geography."[196] (Note that in this focus on blind spots, she is accomplishing something similar to Smoak: enlisting hitherto un- or under-utilized exegetical tools.) This claim emboldens our research and thus seeks to pay attention to space in ways much scholarship of Ezekiel's temple has neglected. Ironically, Stevenson has paid insufficient attention to the temple itself depicted via the territorial rhetoric. For her, the textual temple in Ezekiel 40–48 is chiefly a mechanism to promote a future society—admittedly centered on a future physical temple—that has redrawn social hierarchies that demote those with high standings who have abused their power via imperial policies.[197] According to Stevenson, Ezekiel 40–48 is chiefly a "social manifesto,"[198] a proposal that certainly has merit but does not seem as indebted to the architectural detail of Ezekiel 40–48 that her placarding of territory and space would invite. While she is undoubtedly correct that this temple vision is concerned with demarcating space and access, she has not done justice to the *templeness* of Ezekiel 40–48—i.e., why use *this* mechanism for promoting this social manifesto, and not some other mechanism or metaphor? The temple depicted in the text seems like a husk to be discarded to get at the purported *real* core of the text's social message.

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[192] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 11.
[193] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 164–65.
[194] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 162.
[195] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 161.
[196] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 161.
[197] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 151–53.
[198] Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 157.

Stevenson’s work has nonetheless done interpreters a great service but has also been employed with more sustained attention to the value of the temple-space itself for its rhetorical purpose.

In 2006, Hanna Liss returned the discussion of Ezek 40-48 to a place which assigns a properly central role for the temple.[199] Part of a more extensive collection of research on fictionality,[200] Liss suggests that the function Ezekiel’s temple plays is driven by the command of God in Ezek 43:11 not simply to make known (הוֹדַע) but to “write” (וּכְתֹב) the “design of the house” (צוּרַת הַבַּיִת). Just as the sign-acts of Ezekiel are no mere theatrical accompaniment to prophetic speech but “have a performative character,” as we argued in chapter three, Liss states: “The same applies now to the command to write and thus for the writing down of the vision as *tôrâ*. Comparable to the performative character of the priestly texts (reliefs) on Late-Egyptian temple pylons, the literalization of the vision represents a performative action creating the reality it bears witness to.”[201] What is more, in spite of all the measuring and exactness of detail, Ezekiel—nor anyone else—is commanded to build (בנה) the structure, but instead: “The command to describe, i.e., to *write,* replaces the command to build the temple.”[202] This produces a fascinating irony in the text wherein this structure, which excludes many from its most sacred inner places, is described in detail to those who would otherwise have no access to it:

> The literary presentation, describing this place as unapproachable as possible, simultaneously makes it increasingly accessible the more the text progresses . . . “one has to notice how easily the depiction [in this text] takes form in front of the reader. The temple is erected by means of the reading.” This place is inaccessible and accessible at the same time, since everyone gains the right of entry and admission simply by reading.[203]

She concludes that Ezekiel’s temple is “far more than a written testimony of prophetic visionary experience. It replaces reality, taking place in the realm of history, by a reality in the ‘realm of

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[199] Hanna Liss, “‘Describe the Temple to the House of Israel’: Preliminary Remarks on the Temple Vision in the Book of Ezekiel and the Question of Fictionality in Priestly Literatures,” in *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature,* ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2006), 122–43.

[200] Hanna Liss, “Kanon und Fiktion: Zur literarischen Funktion biblischer Rechtstexte,” *BN* 121 (2004): 7–38; idem, “The Imaginary Sanctuary: The Priestly Code as an Example of Fictional Literature in the Hebrew Bible,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period,* ed. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 663–89.

[201] Liss, “Describe the Temple to the House of Israel,” 142.

[202] Liss, “Describe the Temple to the House of Israel,” 142.

[203] Liss, “Describe the Temple to the House of Israel,” 135; note that Liss is citing Michael Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen: Studien zur zweiten Tempelvision Ezechiels (EZ 40–48)*, BBB 129 (Berlin: Philo Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 2001), 249

the text.'"[204] For Liss, this literary character guarantees that the temple and its holiness will never be violated again: "Only within literary fiction the difference between the holy and the profane, the clean and the unclean can be upheld in such a way that the *kābôd* can 'reside among the people of Israel forever' (43:7)."[205] Ezekiel as a priest plays a significant role in "officiating in" this *textual* temple, though like the structure itself, his work relative to the temple will take place in the text itself. However, by textualizing this vision, he creates the world wherein this occurs and positions himself as one able to arbitrate that world to the exiles.

Studies Invoking Trauma and Psychology

Bennett Simon, a clinical psychoanalyst who writes about the intersection of psychoanalysis and literature, has noted several elements of Ezekiel that serve as coping mechanisms for a people facing "tensions and anxieties implicit in the story of the relationship between God and the house of Israel."[206] While his study traverses the book of Ezekiel, it is particularly anchored to chs. 40–48 since these chapters contain textual features which have particular relevance to clinical psychology and trauma:

> In my clinical work, I have encountered people who use measurement, geometry, and precise structural detail as psychological defenses. Various forms of obsessive compulsive behaviors—highly ordered, precisely counted, and ritualized—are often employed in the service of warding off painful affects, forbidden aggressive and sexual thoughts, and at times painful memories of traumatic events.[207]

Of the 52 occurrences of √מדד (to measure) in the Old Testament, 34 occur in Ezekiel, only in Ezek 40–48. Furthermore, 29 of these occur in chs. 40–42. Another high-index lexeme of measurement אַמָּה (cubit) occurs most commonly in Ezekiel (89x), exclusively in chs. 40–48, and all but 2 of these occur in chs. 40–43. (Note that the next highest occurrences of אַמָּה in the OT are from the temple and tabernacle chapters noted above: Exod 25–27 [27x], 36–38 [29x]; 1 Kgs 6–7 [45x]//2 Chr 3–4 [21x].) The same can be said of the noun מִדָּה (measurement, size), where Ezek 40–42 contains 19 of the OT's 55 occurrences, and the noun רֹחַב (width, breadth), where Ezek 40–42 contain 38 of the OT's 146 occurrences (note that the book as a whole has 39% of

[204] Liss, "Describe the Temple to the House of Israel," 143.
[205] Liss, "Describe the Temple to the House of Israel," 143.
[206] Bennett Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision of the Restored Temple: From the Rod of His Wrath to the Reed of His Measuring," *HTR* 102, no. 4 (2009): 434.
[207] Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision," 413.

the occurrences of רֹחַב, all but 2 of which occur in chs. 40–48, and the next most densely populated book is Exodus containing 15%).

Though Simon does not show these calculations of lexical density, he is right to observe that Ezek 40–48 stands in contrast to the rest of the book due to its "geometric and numerical emphasis."[208] He assesses this further: "Measurement, boundary, geometrical precision, recurrent right angles, squares, rectangles, cubes (but no circles or triangles)—these constitute the main substance of Ezekiel's last prophetic vision."[209] All of this serves as a coping mechanism, fitting for a priest in exile:

> My supposition is that the geometric vision is defensive, adaptive, and, potentially, creative—a way of struggling with problems of evil, contamination, and imperfection, including imperfection in the relationship between God and human worshippers. We yearn for some geometric and arithmetic precision because our desires and passions are terribly imprecise, indeed at times verging on the chaotic and the unbounded. The beauty and elegance of mathematics inspire awe in us, contrasting with the persistence of a certain ugliness and lack of grace in our innermost world, let alone in the external social and political world. Geometry cleanses, orders, and puts strict, defined boundaries in place.[210]

Notice that while Simon observes the existential and emotional concerns met by geometric precision, he also observes its appeal to ritual and cult: *contamination*. While these chapters do not present a graphically, artistically stylized text that might arrest the imagination like a mandala or a textually-artistic representation of a structure (like we note above of the Greek poem "Dosiadas: the First Altar"), they nevertheless preserve elements that exhibit parallelism, right angles, and perfect squares, a feature highlighted by Stevenson as well.[211] Indeed, Simon notes that vis-à-vis the wilderness tabernacle and Solomon's temple, Ezekiel's temple has "no explicitly round or even cylindrical elements…. Everything is square or rectangular."[212] However, Simon is not the only writer who has recognized in Ezekiel's temple a psychological coping mechanism.

Ruth Poser has developed a thorough traumatological reading of Ezekiel, treating the whole of the book as a narrative progression through clinical stages of trauma, culminating with Ezekiel 40–48 as "a literary representation of space and a priestly imagination of a 'safe

[208] Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision," 411.
[209] Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision," 415–16.
[210] Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision," 414.
[211] See chapter 2, "The Shape of the Holy," in Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation,* 37–48.
[212] Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision," 428.

place.'"[213] "Safe places" in a therapeutic context are usually verbal and imaginative, although they can be physical, material places—or symbols of these places—that promote restoration and healing. And in psychodrama—a technique using theater, drama, and role-playing—a safe space can be physically "staged" in a venue devoted to therapeutic care.[214] The temple vision of Ezekiel 40–48 should be read, according to Poser, as "the imagination of a 'safe place.'"[215] This is a fitting conclusion, yet she notes that this is a safe-space imagination that has been concretized via textuality: "Ezekiel 40–48 is not dealing with an imagination applied in therapeutic practice, but with a narrated imagination that is part of the plot of the Book of Ezekiel and thus a piece of ancient literature."[216] She captures this distinctively *literary* emphasis elsewhere with expressions like "*literarischer* Raumdarstellung" (literary representation of space) and "Texträumlichkeit(en)" (text-space[s]),[217] and in so doing, she draws on the work of both Liss and Tuell. With Liss, she sees that the temple text does not present itself as designs to be implemented extra-textually (außertextweltlich) but rather to be taken seriously as spaces *in* the text,[218] which "narrated spaces," following Tuell, "enable those who hear or read, who 'go along' with Ezekiel, to experience the temple and the closeness of YHWH—in a temple-less and God-distant time."[219]

In the end, Poser does not believe that Ezekiel 40–48 represents a fully successful synthesis of trauma (gelungene Trauma-Synthese) since she believes, citing Nancy R. Bowen, that Ezekiel remains over-obsessed with purity, holiness, sacrifice, offerings for guilt, atonement, etc., all of which is deemed evidence of "hypervigilance . . . which is symptomatic of PTSD."[220]

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[213] Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 342, "als literarische Raumdarstellung und priesterlich geprägte Imagination eines 'sicheren Ortes.'"

[214] Christian Stadler, "Von Sicheren Orten und Inneren Helfern: Elemente von Psychodramatherapie mit traumatisierten Menschen," *Zeitschrift für Psychodrama und Soziometrie* 1 (2002): 179. Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 627, utilizes Stadler's discussion of safe spaces and so-called inner-helpers, fantasized individuals "who never let you down" (die einen nie im Stich lassen).

[215] Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 629, "als Imagination eines 'sicheren Ortes' lesen."

[216] Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 629, "Es bleibt allerdings zu berücksichtigen, dass wir es in Ez 40–48 nicht mit einer in therapeutischer Praxis angewandten, sondern mit einer erzählten Imagination zu tun haben, die Bestandteil des Plots des Ezechielbuchs und damit eines Stücks antiker Literatur ist."

[217] Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 617, 622.

[218] Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 622, "umzusetzenden Entwürfen begreift, sondern sie als Räumlichkeiten *im Text* wahr- und ernstzunehmen versucht."

[219] Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 622, "So ermöglicht es der *erzählte* Raum den Hörenden bzw. Lesenden, die mit Ezechiel ‚mitgehen', den Tempel und die Nähe Jhwhs zu erfahren—in tempelloser und gottferner Zeit."

[220] Nancy R. Bowen, *Ezekiel,* AOTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 257, as discussed in Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 631.

Additionally, Ezekiel's only occasional and indirect reference to the disaster (das Unheil) of 587/86 BCE is viewed as proof that Ezekiel is unable to mention the catastrophe by name without being triggered or "retraumatized."[221] Her assessment of Ezekiel's success (or lack thereof) appears unwarranted or at least tenuous. Yet, her analysis has yielded some helpful insights into the attempt to recreate a space using a text. Indeed, the recent work of Rafael Furman appears to have utilized Poser's conclusions while avoiding this misstep: "[T]he description of the future ideal temple in chapters 40–48 constitute a kind of therapy for the prophet's hurting soul. *Moreover, the writing proses* [sic] *in itself is a way of coping with the trauma*" (emphasis added).[222]

Conclusion

This chapter has explored Ezekiel's temple vision through the lens of spatiality, considering theoretical approaches to spatiality and spatiality-informed analyses of Ezekiel's temple. Doing so demonstrates that viewing Ezek 40–48 as a spatialized text/textual temple tracks with trajectories established already in the exegetical literature. We noted the purpose of the "temple tour" from Ezek 40:4—"that you [Ezekiel] might see." And while the following temple vision does, no doubt, contain much of communicative interest for Ezekiel's audience/reader(s), we suggested that the (vocationally) formative element of the temple tour should not be subordinated to its communicative element. Comprehensive spatial groundwork has been laid by Stevenson. Important studies by Niditch and Tuell invoked mandalas and icons to explain how a media (textual) temple might be viewed as providing access to a transcendent reality. Liss has accomplished something similar via "fictionality," a spatially sensitive approach to Ezek 40–48 that highlights its "world-making" abilities. The formative element of this temple was then explored via Simon and Poser, both of whom approached texts as coping mechanisms, especially as architectural precision provides order in a chaotic world, and as textual depictions of places can indeed serve as a psychological "safe space" (sicheren Ortes). But drawing vocational psychology, we find potentially fruitful venues for seeing how Ezek 40–48 might form and undergird Ezekiel's specific priestly *vocational* identity.

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[221] Poser, *Das Ezechielbuch als Trauma-Literatur,* 631.
[222] Rafael Furman, "Trauma and Post-Trauma in the Book of Ezekiel," *OTE* 33, no. 1 (2020): 55.

In chapter 2, we surveyed forms of job crafting practiced by workers as a coping mechanism for unanswered callings. Ezekiel 40–48 seem to lend themselves to analysis via some of the crafting reported in the respective studies of Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton,[223] and Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson.[224] First, cognitive crafting—though arguably a hallmark of the entire book of Ezekiel, which is an expression of the ideology of Ezekiel's priestly circles—plays a unique role here as efforts to employ a textual temple as a surrogate for the material temple traditionally associated with the Jerusalem priesthood are themselves specific examples of cognitive and role reframing, i.e., "altering one's perception of the meaning of his or her work to match an unanswered calling."[225] From one perceptive, Ezekiel's work has no connection to the Jerusalem temple. Yet from a perspective that has been altered to account for the ability of texts to carry spatial "freight"—Ezekiel's work *can indeed* be viewed as temple-related. Though this chapter labored to challenge the reality vs. non-reality dualism often applied to material vs. visionary/textual objects or space, it is essential to remember that a spatial understanding of the temple-text does not mean there is no cognitive or imaginative adjustment to be made to experience a vision or text as reality. Cognitive reframing, however, should not be seen as somehow diluting reality.

By focusing on textuality, this research has also opened up another intersection between vocational psychology, (priestly) occupational identity, and Ezekiel's temple. Above, we noted Carr's warning against focusing on the content of texts to the neglect of their physicality, or better, their "materiality."[226] By being physically written down, the temple of Ezek 40–48 has become a material object, much like the inscribed blessings noted by Smoak above. Suppose one were to follow Duguid and Betts in their proposal that Ezekiel has focused his attention on the priestly work of teaching Torah (presumably in its written form, although this should not be overstated[227]). How might production of and proximity to a physical temple-text affect his identity as a priest?

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[223] Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton, "Crafting a Job: Revisioning Employees as Active Crafters of their Work" *Academy of Management Review* 26, no. 2 (2001): 179–201.

[224] Justin M. Berg, Adam M. Grant, and Victoria Johnson, "When Callings are Calling: Crafting Work and Leisure in Pursuit of Unanswered Occupational Callings," *Organizational Science* 21, no. 5 (2010): 973–994.

[225] Berg, Grant, and Johnson, "When Callings are Calling," 981.

[226] Citing Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 10. For the importance of materiality more generally, see Alice Mandell and Jeremy D. Smoak, "Spaces, Things, and the Body: The Material Turn in the Study of Israelite Religions," *JHebS* 19 (2019): 1–42.

[227] For discussion, see "How the Torah Became a Text," chapter 7 in Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book,* 118–38. Christopher A. Rollston, "Inscriptional Evidence for the Writing of the Earliest Texts of the Bible:

Vocational psychologists have noted that office décor plays a role in understanding one's workplace identity.[228] Kris Byron and Gregory A. Laurence have published a vital study of this phenomenon, noting that workspace personalization is not solely intended to communicate identity to others but also (sometimes chiefly or exclusively) to themselves: "Although past research on personalization has focused on personalization as a means of communicating identity information to others . . . , we found that some personalization was intended only for 'personal consumption.'"[229] Workspace objects or décor that had (1) "meanings that could not be discerned by others" or were (2) "placed out of others' view," proved to be symbolic reminders of self.[230] These items sometimes aided workers by reminding them of desired goals and values (whether work or non-work/leisure related). Other times, they helped employees regulate their sense of workplace identity by undergirding aspects of their professional lives. Byron and Laurence report:

> [P]articipants often referred to their personalization as conveying work identities. One study participant stated that his and his coworkers' *Star Wars*-related personalization demonstrated that "a lot of us have, you know, that techie background." Others said that their personalization shows that "I am a real estate agent," "I am . . . in a management-type role," and "I'm a designer," and conveys that "I worked at Pfizer," "I worked for GM," and "I am interested in forensic accounting."[231]

At the risk of speculation, might the physical presence of a temple text in proximity to a priest in exile serve analogously to office décor as a vocational "symbolic self-representation" that enables Ezekiel to stay invested in and focused on desired priestly-vocational goals and values? While a definitive answer to this question is unavailable to us (i.e., we cannot "put Ezekiel on the couch" to find out), vocational psychology provides conceptual categories for relating the

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Intellectual Infrastructure in Tenth- and Ninth-Century Israel, Judah, and the Southern Levant," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America,* ed. Gertz et al., FAT 111 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 15–45, has provided an exhaustive survey of the state of pre-exilic epigraphy in the southern Levant and demonstrated that there was at least capacity "for the production of historical or literary texts in ancient Israel or Judah prior to the eighth century." (p. 45).

[228] E.g., Kimberly D. Elsbach, "Interpreting workplace identities: the role of office décor," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 25 (2004): 99–128. Sanket Sunand Dash and Neharika Vohra, "Job Crafting: A Critical Review," *South Asian Journal of Management* 27, no. 1 (2020): 124, relate job crafting and office décor via another strategy, "[e]nvironmental crafting" which "refers to the variations employees make in their physical working conditions."

[229] Kris Byron and Gregory A. Laurence, "Diplomas, Photos, and *Tchotchkes* as Symbolic Self-Representations: Understanding Employees' Individual Use of Symbols," *Academy of Management Journal* 58, no. 1 (2015): 312.

[230] Byron and Laurence, "Diplomas, Photos, and *Tchotchkes* as Symbolic Self-Representations," 312.

[231] Byron and Laurence, "Diplomas, Photos, and *Tchotchkes* as Symbolic Self-Representations," 306.

presence of a textual temple to a job-crafting strategy. Rather than shift Ezekiel's priestly identity exclusively toward a narrowly-defined role of "teaching Torah," a spatial understanding of Ezek 40–48 offers new possibilities for a holistic priestly, vocational identity adjusted to the exigencies of life in exile.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This research began with a survey of the flurry of secondary literature that developed between 1998–2005, debating the nature of Ezekiel's priestly identity. Whereas many nuances and gradations are found within the flurry, the prominent positions gravitate toward viewing Ezekiel either as a priest in exile engaged in a prophetic calling or as a prophet in exile whose vocation is shaped by his priestly upbringing and former priestly status. In seeking to revive the discussion from its apparent stalemate, this research approached the question with categories supplied from vocational psychology, trauma, and migrant studies. In doing so, it sought to defend the following thesis:

> A reading of the prophetic book of Ezekiel, informed by categories and features of vocational psychology and migrant trauma studies, enables readers to view key themes, theological emphases, and textual features in the book as consonant with vocational and traumatological job-crafting and coping strategies. This enables Ezekiel's vocational identity to be understood naturally as that of a priest, coping with trauma and adjusting and expressing his priestly vocation (including its ritual, cultic, and sacred-spatial concerns) in the new social context of exile.

Over the course of five main chapters, the vocational-psychological method was detailed, contextualized, and applied to Ezekiel's sign-acts (ch 3), oracles with a high density of purity language and concern (ch 4), visions of the כבוד־יהוה (ch 5), and visionary/textual temple (ch 6). These topics did not exhaust the possibilities for a reading of Ezekiel cued into vocational-psychological, job-crafting, and migrant trauma concerns. Still, they served ably as a foray into this type of reading and a cross-section of topics that undergird Ezekiel's priestly identity. The flurry of secondary literature was found to engage these topics, and their selection and analysis yielded suggestive results for positing job-crafting strategies in Ezekiel. A summary and synthesis of this research shows how this is the case.

The introduction (ch 1) surveyed the state of the question, introducing readers to the flurry of studies and preparing readers for the approach of this research. Chapter 2 served as a detailed explication of the key tenet of the hermeneutical method: vocational psychology. Not only did it survey examples of vocational awareness in biblical and northwest Semitic epigraphic texts, but it also drew attention to recent developments in textualization—especially the material reality of texts and methods of textual production—as themselves able to shed light on our inquiry. The discipline of vocational psychology was then introduced and presented as having

precedent for biblical studies via recent developments in psychological biblical criticism. From there, vocational psychological observations about the resiliency of occupational identity and calling amid unanswered vocational callings were seen to undergird job-crafting strategies. The strategies—specifically task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting—were positioned as reading strategies for the themes observed in chapters 3–6.

Chapter 3 considered Ezekiel's sign-acts but took a different turn than most treatments of these prophetic actions. Whereas sign-acts in the prophets are chiefly read as non-verbal communication cued into a prophetic, proclamatory vocation, chapter 3 took a closer look at ritual theory and read the sign-acts as formative rituals of a priestly identity that Ezekiel was in the process of crafting due to the new circumstances and occupational context far from the Jerusalem temple and its altar. Chapter 4 examined the role of purity and impurity in Ezekiel, noting that the book has a density of purity language surpassed only by Leviticus and Exodus. Not only did it survey two of the passages most densely populated with purity language, but it also did so in conversation with significant anthropological work that has seen an emphasis on purity as a hallmark for people groups (Mandaeans and Hutu) who have experienced forced migration and retrench and expand purity and impurity in the service of group identity differentiation and preservation. Ezekiel's concern for purity was read in terms of task emphasizing.

Chapter 4 studied Ezekiel's visions of the כבוד־יהוה in Ezek 1–3 and 8–11, relating it especially to Pentateuchal accounts of the כבוד using a taxonomy of characteristics: (A) the location of the כבוד; (B) visual elements of the כבוד; (C) divine actions or speech accompanying the כבוד; (D) human responses to the כבוד; and (E) questions of how these כבוד accounts relate to proposals regarding divine fluidity. After surveying Ezekiel's unique emphases in his presentation of God as כבוד, we compared divine attribute emphasizing with theology as it has been presented in recent Latin American border theology. Reading Ezekiel's doctrine of God via categories of relational crafting and migrant attachment theory enabled a suggestive approach to Ezekiel's nuances and emphases vis-à-vis other passages traditionally designated as priestly.

Finally, chapter 5 examined the vision of Ezek 40–48, focusing on the textual presentation of the building and its altar, drawing on the recent developments in textuality, critical spatiality, materiality, and monumentality. Using scholarly resources from textualized rituals and cyberspace, it suggested that Ezek 40–48 might be best understood as a "spatialized

text," a *textual* temple that served as a sufficient surrogate for the Jerusalem temple now far away from Ezekiel in exile. Previous studies employing spatial categories in Ezekiel were combined with studies that have connected spatiality to trauma and psychology, leading to a reading of the textual temple as an example of job crafting, chiefly as cognitive crafting.

While earlier studies of Ezekiel's priestly identity have made significant inroads into the exegesis of key passages and themes in the book, the lack of awareness and utilization of vocational psychology led to overstatements about relinquishing his priestly identity or exercising his priestly identity in areas that required no modification in exile (i.e., the teaching of Torah). More work can be done in this area as other significant passages remain to be interpreted with an eye to job crafting concerns: e.g., the vision of dry bones in Ezek 37:1-14 and the Gog-Magog oracle in Ezek 38-39 which relate to priestly concerns for purity; the account of Ezekiel's wife's death in Ezek 24:15-27 which is a sign-act that also relates to purity; as well as a more priestly-vocation-centered reading of the book's oracles which will further highlight the priestly vocational profile of the book.

But future research will not only seek to understand how Ezekiel's priestly identity reflects vocational psychological observations but expand this to other Old Testament with priestly associations. For example, the book of Jeremiah formally originates from priestly circles, specifically from the priests in Anathoth of Benjamin (מן־הכהינם אשר בענתות בארץ בנימן), although it has a very different theological profile from the Zadokite profile of Ezekiel. A vocational psychology reading of Anathothian priestly identity holds promise for understanding varying forms of priestly vocational identity in the history of Israel and Judah.[1]

The book of Zechariah holds similar potential. Zechariah's lineage from Iddo connects him to a priestly family (Zech 1:1; cf. Ezra 5:1, 6:14; Neh 12:4, 16), yet his frequent appeals to prophetic traditions attract the bulk of the attention of interpreters.[2] Nevertheless, Stephen L.

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[1] For preliminary work on the priests of Anathoth and their relationship to the Deuteronomistic History, see Brian Neil Peterson, *The Authors of the Deuteronomistic History: Location a Tradition in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 23-35; see too the insightful attention to this topic in Corrine Patton, "Layers of Meaning: Priesthood in Jeremiah MT," in *The Priests in the Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets, and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets,* ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Alice Ogden Bellis, LHBOTS 408 (London/New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2004), 149-76, and Mark Leuchter, *The Levites and the Boundaries of Israelite Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 189-217.

[2] E.g., Michael R. Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8,* LHBOTS 506 (New York, NY/London: T&T Clark, 2009); Mark J. Boda and Michael H. Floyd, eds., *Bringing Out the Treasure: Inner Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9-14,* JSOTSup 370 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2004); Suk Yee Lee, *An Intertextual Analysis*

Cook and Marvin A. Sweeney have each sketched some brief, yet significant priestly features evident in Zechariah which invite a vocational psychology reading of this visionary, post-exilic book.[3] And, of course, the book of Malachi, replete with references to the priesthood, invites a distinctive vocational psychological reading to supplement the thorough analysis of Julia M. O'Brien,[4] as well as the shorter studies of Deborah W. Rooke[5] and Lester L. Grabbe,[6] all relating to priesthood in Malachi.

In addition to these, there are several other (non-priestly) texts that nonetheless may reflect vocational awareness (e.g., Amos the נקד, "sheepherder," [1:1] בוקר, "herdsman," and בולס שקמים, "gatherer of sycamore figs" [7:14]). And texts wherein trauma and migrant concerns echo will be especially fruitful for engaging in this kind of vocationally-sensitive reading strategy.[7]

In sum, while this research has not only moved forward the discussion that stalled at the close of the flurry of literature on Ezekiel's priestly identity, it has opened up new vistas for historical reconstructions of the Israelite and Judean priesthood and new avenues for textual reading via an interdisciplinary use of tools hitherto under- or unutilized in academic Old Testament studies.

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of Zechariah 9-10: The Earlier Restoration Expectations of Second Zechariah, LHBOTS 599 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016).

[3] Stephen L. Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism: The Postexilic Social Setting* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 138-53, 215-17; Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets,* 2 vols., Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 2.562–63.

[4] Julia M. O'Brien, *Priest and Levite in Malachi,* SBLDS 121 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1990).

[5] Deborah W. Rooke, "Priests and Profits: Joel and Malachi," in *Priests and Cults in the Book of the Twelve,* ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, ANEM 14 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016), 81-98.

[6] Lester L. Grabbe, "The Priesthood in the Persian Period: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi," in *Priests and Cults in the Book of the Twelve,* ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, ANEM 14 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016), 149-56.

[7] Alexiana Dawn Fry, "The Sin of Gibeah?: Reading Judges 19 and Hosea 9-10 in the Context of Migration and Trauma" (PhD diss., Stellenbosch University, 2021), has provided a foray into this arena which invites engagement with sustained vocational-psychological/job-crafting awareness.

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