Ezekiel and the Twelve:
Similar Concerns as an Indication
of a Shared Tradition?

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The book of Ezekiel is often divided into a tripartite literary structure. The temple building program in chaps. 40–48 has received not a little scholarly attention, but the preceding oracles in 33:1–39:29 and their function in the final form of the book have not received much consideration. Interestingly, the subject matter of the three sets of oracles in this section of Ezekiel corresponds with themes also evident in a synchronic reading of the Book of the Twelve. This essay examines the ideology for temple building made apparent through the literary structure of Ezekiel and the Twelve, and remarks are made regarding the significance of each “temple building story.”

Key Words: Ezekiel, Book of the Twelve, land, nations, temple building

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

It goes without saying that in the prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible, there are leitmotifs such as “land,” “people,” and “nations”—whether in pre- or postexilic literature—that are often given a programmatic or prominent role. Moreover, depending on the sociohistorical situation and the ideology of a given writer/editor, these themes are employed in diverse manners. Specifically within the prophetic literature, these notions or topoi may serve as programmatic structures and inscribed reading devices for how these compositions were meant to be received and read.¹

Author’s note: This essay is a revision of a paper given at the Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Boston, MA, in November, 2008. Our particular “reading” of Ezekiel and the Twelve is of a synchronic nature. Although diachronic concerns relating to compositional and transmission history are essential to note, they are outside the purview of our examination. I consider the final form of Ezekiel and the Twelve to be products of the Jerusalem literati in Persian Yehud.

In this essay, we will look specifically at Ezekiel's literary structure and ideological program where the conceptual development of land, people/ruler, and nations provides for the judgment and restoration of said themes and is consummated in the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple in Ezekiel's vision of chaps. 40–48. These elements in particular are constitutive for Ezekiel's temple building program. Second, we will examine the Twelve in order to discern in what ways these elements also serve as a reading strategy for a unified and coherent framework with respect to the postexilic temple. There is an observable judgment/restoration movement in the Twelve (or Minor Prophets) as well that then culminates in the rebuilding of the postexilic Second Temple in Persian Yehud. Third, some brief observations will be made for whether the two corpora share a similar motivation and tradition.

THE LITERARY STRUCTURE AND IDEOLOGICAL PROGRAM FOR TEMPLE BUILDING IN EZEKIEL

The book of Ezekiel is often divided into the tripartite literary units of 1–24, 25–32, and 33–48. The initial literary unit of Ezekiel 1–24 is a series of judgment oracles, both performative and symbolic, that explain to the reader the divine reason for the recent destruction and imminent restoration of the Jerusalem temple. The event that most poignantly signals the complete destruction of the city of YHWH is the death of the Zadokite priest’s wife. As YHWH would not mourn for his temple and land, so does YHWH tell the priest to refrain from mourning over the “desire of your eyes” in Ezek 24:15–27. After the Oracles against the Nations (hereafter, OAN) in Ezek 25:1–32:32, a new section describes oracles of restoration from 33:1-39:29. The final section of Ezek 40–48 gives great


3 For a review of the literary structure as well as other important aspects of the book, see Henry McKeating, Ezekiel (OTG, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 15–16.


5 Lawrence Boadt, “Ezekiel, Book of,” ABD 2 712. A slightly different scheme is given by Swanepoel where six units are also distinguished not by the six temporal markers but by the formula (Ezek 33 23, 34 1, 35 1, 36 16, 37 15, 38 1) See M G Swanepoel, “Die teologie van Esegiel 33–39,” NGTT 31 (1990) 5–22. Another essay by Boadt addresses the integral relationship between Ezek 33–37 and 38–48. He divides the units in a similar man-
detail for the idealized postexilic temple cult and the expectation of the territorial boundaries of Israel and Judah.6

As these sections are often understood to be demarcated in this manner, there is recent discussion as to how these individual pericopae contribute to the overarching ideological intention and development of the composition of Ezekiel. For example, Richard Davidson argues that the book of Ezekiel can be read as a literary chiasm.7 The literary framework is constructed in such a way that a cultic ideology is given a prominent role in the formation of the book.8 Generally speaking, the trajectory observed in the multiple subunits of the book demonstrate a program where YHWH's presence leaves the temple complex in Jerusalem (Ezek 1–11), and a vision of temple restoration whereby the divine glory cannot return to Zion (Ezek 40–48) until both Jerusalem and the nations are destroyed (chaps. 12–39). It is important to note that Zion and the nations are marked for desolation in the temple restoration program of Ezekiel. Although chaps. 34–39 provide oracles of judgment and restoration for both groups, Jerusalem and the nations are reconceptualized and given a new perspective that is temple focused.

The literary unit that immediately precedes the temple restoration program provided in chaps. 40–48 is what specifically concerns us here. The progression of judgment and restoration oracles in Ezek 33:21–39:29 and their function have already been succinctly laid out by Marvin Sweeney.9 Because this section immediately precedes the idealized description of the newly created temple and land in Ezek 40–48, it merits our attention.10 This unit functions as a systematic program of ruin and renewal of the land, people/ruler, and nations and provides the setting for a postexilic Jerusalem temple that eclipses anything actualized or imagined before by the Judeans. The six revelatory vignettes serve as a progressive parallelism where oracles 1–3 announce the destruction of land, people/ruler, and nations, respectively, and oracles 4–6 depict the restoration of land, people/ruler, and

10 Boadt labels chaps 33–37 as “salvation oracles,” but this may be overdrawn in light of the elements in Ezek 33–39 that are marked out for destruction and that the prophet formula provides for these chapters to be read as an integral literary unit Lawrence Boadt, “The Function of the Salvation Oracles in Ezekiel 33–37,” HAR 12 (1990) 1–21
nations. At the same time, the second set of oracles offers new insight into the postexilic world and the reconceptualization of these ideas. Each of the six oracles is clearly marked out by the formula “then the word of YHWH came to me saying” (ויהי יד רבד היה אלים לאמו). After evaluating the perspective and expectation of these concepts in Ezekiel, we will turn to the Twelve to see if this temple building ideology also serves as a mark of coherence for that prophetic corpus.

Because the oracles treat the destruction and restoration of land, people/ruler, and nations, we will look at each theme individually in order to understand best the development taking place within the framework of Ezek 33:21–39:29. The following outline of the extended oracles of desolation and restoration demonstrates the literary intentionality and artistry behind the composition. The ideological basis for the program of destruction and restoration is the defilement and purification of the elements of land, people/ruler, and nations. The cultic imagery is pervasive throughout the book, and the reorientation of ritual interests concerning the defilement and purification of the elements is of vital interest to the writer. It should be noted that even the first three oracles of destruction have vignettes of restoration as a secondary concern, and the second three oracles of restoration have vignettes of destruction also as a secondary concern. This notwithstanding, the following scheme shows that the constitutive elements of land, people/ruler, and nations are marked for de-creation and re-creation. Moreover, they all must go through a state of renewal in light of their role in Ezekiel’s temple building program to conclude the book.

A. Oracle 1: YHWH’s destruction of the land (33:23–33)
B. Oracle 2: YHWH’s destruction of the people/ruler (34:1–31)
C. Oracle 3: YHWH’s destruction of the nations (35:1–36:15)

B’. Oracle 5: YHWH’s restoration of the people/ruler (37:15–28)
C’. Oracle 6: YHWH’s restoration of the nations (38:1–39:29)

Although the oracular sequence begins in 33:23, the unit of 33:21–22 introduces a dating formula that is based on the destruction of the Jerusalem temple cult. As this dating scheme in Ezekiel looks back at the inception of the exilic period (e.g., Ezek 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1; 33:21; 40:1), the dating scheme in the postexilic temple-building books of Haggai–Zechariah look forward to the refoundation and rededication of the Second Temple (e.g., Hag 1:1, 15; 2:10, 18, 20; Zech 1:1, 7; 7:1). The dating formula that introduces 33:21–22 should not be overlooked as it prepares the reader for a new oracular series in 33:23–39:29. The emphasis on the exile (.Organization) and Jerusalem being struck down (_organization) in 33:21 provides the setting, and YHWH’s “opening the mouth” (Open the mouth) of the prophet in 33:22 provides

The divine response. The prophet Ezekiel, then, is a cultic, performative figure and sign for the revivification of the land, people/ruler, and nations.

**Destruction (33:23–33) and Restoration (36:16–37:14) of Land**

The description of how the land should be made desolate and restored is given in the first (33:23–33) and fourth (36:16–37:14) oracles. In the first oracle, 33:23–33, the reason for the desolation of the land is mentioned. The rebellion of the people can be seen in the breaking of dietary and community ordinances (33:25–26). Moreover, the land is personified through its rebellion against YHWH, which reflects the rebellion of the people. The elements of land and people are given close approximation within this first oracle of destruction. YHWH makes his authority and power known by reversing the fertility of creation and causing its “desolation and waste” (33:28–29, 35:3).

The word pair שִׁמְמָה מְשֶפְּרָה here in 33:29 is employed in this literary unit to suggest that all life and sustenance on the land will die and be returned to a state of dearth. Each de-creation event in this oracular sequence prepares the reader for the event of re-creation by means of the temple building program in 40–48.

Introduced by the recurring oracular formula (וַיְהִי בְּרֵי הַדָּר שְׁמֶפֶרֶת), the fourth oracle of 36:16–37:14 not only speaks of the process of restoration of the land with an explicit reference to the garden of Eden (36:35) and the renewal of the land from famine (36:29–30), but also it refers to a re-created humanity (36:27). A new heart and a new spirit is given to humanity so that it can obey the requirements of YHWH (36:26–27), and Ezekiel, the priest/prophet, is commanded to prophesy over the dry bones in order to bring about this life (37:1–10). This is one point of many in the Ezekiel narrative where priestly and prophetic identities converge. YHWH demonstrates his supremacy before Israel and the nations by returning the exiles to a new land in the form of a new humanity. This oracle demonstrates that the expectation of a restored and perpetual fertility over the land (36:33–34)

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17. Marvin Sweeney, “Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile,” in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (FAT 45; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 125–43. It is my idea that prophetic and priestly roles are defined and transformed based on the presence or absence of the Jerusalem temple and therefore the conceptual presence of YHWH.
is dependent on a cultic humanity that is ritually sprinkled with water (36:25). The writer is deliberate in connecting the recreated and ritualized humanity with the reversal of the land’s desolate and defiled status. Moreover, it is not simply a reversal of the “desolate land” (חאר נפשו) in 36:34; rather, the restoration is of a paradisiacal quality in the same verse where the land will be “cultivated” (ענוי), which reflects a garden not unlike Eden (ָּנָּב) in 36:35. This restoration event is predicated on a new humanity (that is, remade cultic functionaries) carrying and imaging YHWH by means of his breath/spirit (Ezek 36:27).

Destruction (34:1–31) and Restoration (37:15–28) of People/Ruler

Oracles two (34:1–31) and five (37:15–28) focus on the death and re-creation of the people of Israel typified through its rulers. The destroyed “shepherds of Israel” (וַדִּיוֹרֹת נְתָנָה) in the second oracle (34:2) are replaced by a new people in the fifth oracle (37:16) where the “sticks” (ץ) of Joseph and Judah are combined for one nation. Our second oracle offers the first insight into Ezekiel’s notion of the ideal ruler in contradistinction to the rulers who brought about the Babylonian exile. There is a need for a change of leadership, for the “shepherds of Israel” are consuming the people as opposed to their natural role of protecting and leading the people (34:2). In vv. 11–16, YHWH assumes the role abdicated by the political and religious leaders of Israel. The action of YHWH is seen in appointing one leader over the people. A Davidic figure will be set over Israel as a “prince” (נשי), and he will serve as a divine emissary (34:24). The rest of the passage describes imagery relating a New Exodus where the land is abundantly fertile and all hardship—whether from the antagonistic creation or other nations—is removed. The nexus between Davidic rule and a reconstituted land, which moves beyond a recreated Israel/Judah and speaks of an unparalleled existence for Israel dwelling in the land, is actualized under the “covenant of peace” (Ezek 34:25; Mal 2:4–6; cf. Num 25:11–13).

18 Sweeney notes the high concentration of purification rituals that occur in this literary unit to counteract the ritual defilements brought on by blood and death Marvin A Sweeney, The Prophetic Literature (Nashville Abingdon, 2005), 157–58
19 For an insightful treatment of divine presence in idols and humanity in Ezekiel, see Kutsko, Between Heaven and Earth
20 Zimmerli acknowledges that this lexeme is the preferred for Ezekiel, and this preference may infer a diminishing or temporal expectation of human kingship Walther Zimmerli, Ezekiel 2 A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel Chapters 25–48 (Hermenu, Minneapolis Fortress, 1983), 227–79
22 The discussion of whether “covenant of peace” is language that points to a conflict between the Zadokite and Aaronic lineages vying for priestly legitimation in Persian Yehud
relates two roles: king and priest.\textsuperscript{23} The language and context are important to understand, for with them comes the intimate connection between the kingly and priestly tasks of building and overseeing a new temple that becomes the impetus for a new creation, which is especially prominent in the Haggai–Zechariah accounts.\textsuperscript{24}

In oracle five and its content of a restored ruler (37:15–28), “David” (understood here as a future Davidide) is named as “king” (םלוע), “shepherd” (تصر), and “prince” (רשב) over the people (37:24–25).\textsuperscript{25} Elements are added here that point to a unified nation made up of the former kingdoms of Israel and Judah (37:15–22) and to the building of another temple or sanctuary for YHWH (37:26–28). Moreover, the “covenant of peace” language coupled with a renewed Davidic empire over one unified people of God points to Jerusalem as the political and religious center. As with the notion of a renewed land and the breath/spirit of YHWH on humanity as a divine functionary in oracle four (Ezek 36:25–38), the returned people are also “sanctified” with divine presence in this oracle (Ezek 37:28).\textsuperscript{26} Here, we have the inextricable relationship between a divinized humanity and a renewed earth in oracle four and a similar relationship between humanity (i.e., Israel) and a renewed presence of the YHWH sanctuary.

\textit{Destruction (35:1–36:15) and
Restoration (38:1–39:29) of the Nations}

Last, Ezek 35:1–36:15 and 38:1–39:29 are oracles concerning the destruction of the nations and the restoration of Israel. The nations (where Edom is set as a paradigm and identified as Mount Seir in oracle three and Magog as another paradigm for the nations in oracle six) are given over to God’s judgment. As we will see below in the Book of the Twelve, the warrant for YHWH’s wrath against Edom—a nation that is emblematic of the other international peoples—is their aggression against Jerusalem and YHWH’s

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{23} This emphasis in Ezekiel reflects a Zadokite ideology.
\item \textsuperscript{25} The role of a Davidide in Ezekiel is contested. The use of various lexemes (תור, לני, רב) to describe the Davidide’s function for a postexilic community supports the developing awareness and notion of such a figure in Yehud. In this regard, Ezekiel has another association with the Twelve—especially with the Haggai–Zechariah corpus—for the Davidic Zerubbabel provides for the rebuilding of YHWH’s temple and then disappears from the literature (cf. Zech 4:6–9).
\item \textsuperscript{26} Although outside the scope of this article, it seems that divine representation and presence in humanity takes a prominent place in the Babylonian Exile and influences the returnees, such as Zechariah and maybe even Haggai.
\end{itemize}
land (Ezek 35:5, 10; Amos 1:11; Obad 10–11). Although the other Gentile nations will be destroyed, Israel is instead set apart and spared final judgment and described in images of bounty and renewal (36:8–11).

The sixth oracle comprising chaps. 38–39 also has a condemnatory note against Gog, but this ruler and the other nations will be consumed at the great sacrifice of YHWH at the mountain of Israel (39:17–20). This feast of “eating flesh” and “drinking blood” of the nations culminates in YHWH’s full victory over the nations whereby in 39:21 he sets his “glory among the nations” (םַלְוָה לְגוֹ נְתָנָה). Two notable events occur in relation to this restoration event. First, YHWH shakes the earth (גֶּד יָמָן) on a scale that will be felt by all terrestrial life (38:19–20). Second, in 39:25–29 he returns the people to the land in v. 25 (אִשַּׁב אֶת הַשָּׁבוֹא עִלָּקָה) and “pours his spirit over Israel” in v. 29 (שְׁפַחַת אֲשֶׁר רֹדֵה לְעַל יִשְׂרָאֵל). These concepts are taken up in Joel and Haggai–Zechariah, both of which are concerned with interests in temple-building programs. This aspect of YHWH’s giving his breath/spirit to Israel serves as the fundamental precursor for temple building in chaps. 40–48. 27 It is commonplace in ANE temple-building stories to have a divine king (e.g., the Sumerian Gudea) or a deity (e.g., Baal or Marduk) build the earthly sanctuary. 28 We can see in this oracle the preparatory scene for restoration of the temple cult in chaps. 40–48, 29 but the unique contribution of Ezekiel—and later instances in the Twelve—is that divine cultic figures are made by YHWH in order to rebuild his earthly sanctuary. The concept of a recreated land and people is related to a Davidic leader, and a comprehensive judgment of all the nations must ensue.

Therefore, Ezekiel gives a systematic portrayal of how the land, people, and nations will be made desolate and restored—through much cultic imagery—before the building of a cosmic temple in 40–48. Further, ideas of a new humanity with YHWH’s spirit/breath and a certain figure with both kingly and priestly attributes are necessary for overseeing the new temple.

LAND, PEOPLE, AND NATIONS AS MARKERS OF COHERENCE IN THE TWELVE

Now we will transition to the Book of the Twelve. The concerns and motivations behind the final sequencing of these twelve prophetic writings are

often discussed, but much remains to be answered regarding the provenance, community, and intentions behind the final form and editing. This is where the book of Ezekiel may elucidate the discussion. Having observed the systematic portrayal of new land, people/ruler, and nations as preparation for temple building at the end of Ezekiel, all of these concepts are also present in and constitutive of the ideological program reflected in the Hebrew sequence of the Twelve. Generally speaking, the Twelve incorporate all these elements to provide a coherent program for the removal and the restoration of the land and people in relation to and dependant on a restored Jerusalem temple as the center for the worship of the nations. We will first look at the meta-structure of the Twelve, and we will examine some select passages and their contribution to our discussion.

Through a synchronic reading strategy, Hosea–Joel introduce these themes and lay out a reading program for the subsequent books in the Twelve. Hosea argues for a restored land that will bring forth a new people that will eventually participate in the renewed YHWH cult in Jerusalem (Hos 1–3). From the outset, the land is of primary concern to the writer. Hosea 1:2 understands the land as defiled and unfaithful to YHWH ( מוותא יאצר מנהיג יהוה ). The composition of Hosea—although having interests in northern traditions such as Exodus and Sinai—in light of the prologue and its emphasis on a Davidide as king over northern and southern territories is recast with a Judaean perspective. This “Judaean shift” concerns not only a future Davidide but also an expectation for a restored Jerusalem cult. The contribution of Hosea is that this expectation can only materialize if a new covenant with the earth is inaugurated in order to sustain a new people (Hos 2:20–25[18–23]). This ideological sequence is pervasive in the Book of the Twelve, where the land is either destroyed or restored prior to similar events being applied to the people. The new people in Hos 2:2[1:11] is depicted as the sons of Judah and Israel who “come up from the land”
This people is “sowed” by YHWH into the land in Hos 2:25[23], and they are sustained by the new creation described in chap. 2. Hosea does treat the notions of land and a people/ruler, but a concentration on the nations is not evident until Joel.

As the book of Joel comes next in the Hebrew sequence, this order is different from the Greek edition, where Hosea, Amos, and Micah begin the Old Greek or LXX. Reading the Twelve in this heuristic fashion opens up some valuable prospects in relation to issues of sequence, ideology, and community. With regard to the programmatic ideas set forth in Ezekiel, Joel continues these notions, but they are cast in a cosmic perspective signaled by the Day of YHWH event(s) when a new humanity dwells on YHWH’s mountain in Jerusalem, which serves as the source of fertility for the earth (Joel 4[3]:16–21). The interests of a new land and new people are of great concern to Joel, but the means by which these ideas are realized is through the mountain of YHWH at Zion. Moreover, as Hosea employs a terrestrial focus for the restoration of humanity from the earth, Joel employs this restoration of humanity from the heavens. In 3:1[2:28], the breath/spirit comes from YHWH in order to bring forth a new people. As mentioned above, Joel takes up the Day of YHWH theme, and this event can also be associated with the Day of Jezeel in the Hosea prologue (2:2[1:11]; 2:24[22]; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11; 3:4[2:31]; 4[3]:14; 4[3]:18). For Joel, the Day of YHWH treats not only the revivification of humanity by means of the breath/spirit of YHWH (3:1–5[2:28–32]) but also the gathering of the nations for judgment near Zion at the Valley of Jehoshaphat (4[3]:2, 12, 14). In a synchronic manner, the judgment of the nations near YHWH’s mountain transitions well to the so-called Oracles Against the Nations in the subsequent books of the Twelve.

Amos–Zephaniah function as the OAN of the Twelve and develop the mainline themes parallel with Ezekiel. Within this literary section treating the OAN in the Twelve, we can observe thematic and conceptual shifts in Micah–Zephaniah. The books from Amos-Jonah are the “formal OAN” for they directly address the nations and their treatment of YHWH’s land/temple and people. For example, just as YHWH “roars from Zion” against the nations in the concluding lines of Joel (4[3]:16), so Amos continues the YHWH theophany from Zion and his condemnation of the nations (Amos 1:2–2:16).

In the “Judaean shift” of the Twelve, Amos continues the prophetic condemnation against the “fallen” (נפל) Israel in 5:2 and shares hope for

the “falling booth of David” (תֹּלֵד דֵּיַר דָּוִד) in 9:11. Obadiah and Jonah directly assail Edom and Assyria for their treatment of the Jerusalem temple and YHWH, and only the latter seeks repentance. Micah–Zephaniah are the “informal OAN,” for they indirectly address the nations’ aggression against YHWH’s land/temple and people and set these judgments within the Divine Warrior theophanies. At the same time, YHWH is shown as the Divine Warrior who casts down the natural oppressors of his people, similar in fashion to the mythopoeic creation epics in Syro-Palestinian and Mesopotamian literature (Mic 1:1–7, Nah 1:2–8, Hab 3:2–15, Zeph 3:14–20). It is in this literary corpus that the nations are judged by YHWH for their violence against Israel/Judah (Amos 1:11, Obad 10, Jonah 1:2).

Haggai–Malachi focus on the postexilic temple setting and the temple’s symbiotic relationship to a paradisiacal land and newly created humanity. The archetypical program in which concern for a restored land (Hag 1:7–11) comes before a restored humanity (Hag 1:14) is observed in this last literary unit as well. Notably, any expectation of a new land or humanity is dependent upon the refoundation and rededication of YHWH’s earthly sanctuary at Zion. Regarding the third constitutive element, the international nations are depicted as offering sacrifice to YHWH both in Jerusalem (Zech 14:16) and in other lands (Mal 1:11, 14). In this idealized postexilic Yehud, the nations succumb to Yahwism and make pilgrimage to Jerusalem; otherwise, YHWH withholds rain from their lands (Zech 14:18). Just as Hosea begins with a concern for a “promiscuous land” (Hos 1:2), so Malachi concludes with a divine curse on the earth if anyone who does not properly adhere to the YHWH cult (Mal 3:24[4:6]). Therefore, the final collection of the Twelve portrays the destruction and restoration of the Jerusalem cult similar to Ezekiel, and this is accompanied by the reconceptualization of land, people/ruler, and nations parallel to but distinct from Ezekiel.

Hosea–Joel as a Reading Program for the Twelve

Having looked at the Twelve in very broad strokes, we will now focus on Hosea and Joel and consider in what ways they reflect a restoration program similar to the one observed in Ezekiel. Hosea 1–3 is an account of Hosea’s twofold performative act symbolizing God’s systematic destruction and re-creation of the land and people. In a manner similar to the sequence of Ezekiel’s oracles, the theme of land is taken up and reflected in the marriage imagery before the theme of people is taken up and reflected in the progeny from the prophet’s union with Gomer. The first performative


39. For issues relating to this oft-discussed marriage, see Graham I. Davies, Hosea (OTG; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 79–93; Duane A. Garrett, Hosea, Joel (ed. E. Ray Clendenen; NAC 19A; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 43–50; Marvin A. Sweeney, The
action is demonstrated by Hosea’s marriage(s) (Hos 1:2, 3:1–3), while the second action is demonstrated through the naming of the children: Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi (Hos 1:2–9). Effectively, this covenantal reversal depicts a removal of land (Jezreel), divine presence (Lo-ruhamah), and people (Lo-ammi) that provides an expectation for new covenantal offspring depicted in Hosea’s second marriage (Hos 3:1). As the lead book of the Twelve, Hosea sets forth YHWH’s rejection of the mother (that is, land) and her offspring (that is, Israel) and a reconstitution of a new land and Israel through a re-creation event. It appears that YHWH is first “married” to the land, and Israel is the offspring from this union. This is signalled by expressions such as “the land commits harlotry” in 1:2, and the covenant renewal is a creation event that begins with a betrothal to the earth (2:20–22[18–20]) and subsequently speaks of a new people designated as “my people” (חֵלֵד), followed by 2:25[23]. Moreover, in Hos 2:2[1:11] the new people come up or are born from the ground playing on the name Jezreel or “El sows” (חֵלֵד).

As more recent scholars argue that YHWH is “married” to or primarily related to the land, this notion is not unique to the ANE or even to the Twelve. The sequence of creation acts in Gen 1 first concerns the earth and created order before it concerns humanity. The Twelve adopt this ideological sequence or framework in which a renewal of the earth is set forth before a creation or renewal of humanity. The converse is also true. Zephaniah 1:2–3 takes up a complete reversal of creation starting with the land and beasts and encompassing all of humanity. Hosea 4:3 also speaks of a de-creation event, but this is only limited to the natural elements of the land and does not extend to the people. Although it should be noted that these ideas are communicated through Hebrew verse, and literary devices are used to show close association between “land” and “people,” the presence of YHWH being primarily identified with territorial space and only secondarily identified with a people fits well within an ancient Near Eastern milieu (cf. Exod 3). This conceptualization of divine presence

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40 Whether there is a second unidentified woman in chap 3 or whether Hosea takes Gomer again as his wife, the conceptual argument stands
41 Klaus Koch, The Prophets The Assyrian Period (trans Margaret Kohl, vol 1, London SCM, 1978–82), 82
45 Ronald E. Clements, God and Temple (Oxford Blackwell, 1965), 14–16
46 See Daniel I. Block, The Gods of the Nations Studies in Ancient Near Eastern National Theology (ETS 2, 2nd ed., Grand Rapids Baker Academic, 2000) Lambert cites a Sumerian text that clearly indicates the separate identities and levels of association between the land (i.e.,
and absence with land territory, and this relationship with land fertility is advanced by Ruth Scoralick. Not only does the interest of land provide for a structural coherence in the Twelve in Hos 1:2 and Mal 3:12, but this notion is symbiotically related to whether YHWH's presence is manifest at Zion. Although outside the scope of this examination, the Baal polemics are clearly discernible in Hosea and reflect the ideology of patron deities associated with land territory. This notion of deities associated with a territory of land is reflected in and communicated through the death of Ezekiel's wife and the prohibition that the prophet not grieve, which reflects a performative act—or lack thereof—for the removal of YHWH's temple (Ezek 24:15-27). Both prophetic texts, therefore, associate the "divine marriage" to YHWH's identity with and presence in the Jerusalem temple (so Ezekiel) and land of Israel (so Hosea), and the marriage represented by the priest Ezekiel and the prophet Hosea in each tradition signals a removal of the respective temple (so the death of Ezekiel's wife) and land (so the remarriage of Hosea).

Within the short Hoseanic oracle of 3:1-5, the nations formerly known as the kingdoms of Israel and Judah are united as one people; a new leader is established to rule over the people; and a return to a new land is anticipated. The picture of a land and people that are stripped and made desolate before experiencing a new act of creation is evident in the preceding oracles (Hos 2:10-15[8-13]). With the expectation of death comes the expectation for renewal led by a Davidide in Hos 3. If Hos 3:1-5 is an editorial insertion, then the final form is strengthened to anticipate Jerusalem as the center of YHWH's cult and a Davidide to play a prominent role (at least initially) in the restoration of the cult. Therefore, within the framework of Hosea's prologue, a movement begins the Twelve that is in line with Ezekiel's understanding of a new land and people that are ruled over by a Davidide closely aligned with priestly concern.


49 Sweeney, "Ezekiel," 139


and function. From the outset of Hosea, the restoration of land and people as precursors to a temple program prepares the reader for Joel's contribution to the conceptualization of land and temple in the Twelve.

The position of Joel in the Hebrew sequence now provides a new setting and development for the current discussion. Joel gives a cosmic perspective to temple concerns. The insect invasion in chap. 1 and human invasion in chap. 2 (regardless of how one understands their references) are two contexts where the Day of YHWH can be seen. The geographic point for these events is Zion (Joel 2:1).

Besides setting forth a temple focus for the Twelve in general, this text also anticipates a new humanity. Joel continues the line of thought from Hosea with the promise to restore "his land" and "his people" (Joel 2:18). In this verse, when YHWH is "zealous for his land" then he will necessarily have "pity on the people" (יְהוָה צָעַר לְאַרְצָו וּבָא לְעַנּוֹ). Again in line with the interest of Ezekiel's oracles, the topos of land is treated before that of the people in the Twelve, and the frequency of this development suggests an ideological program for restoration. Although not coterminous, the people are dependent on and subsequent to the earth. Moreover, the people imagined in Joel are remade by YHWH by means of his breath/spirit from the heavens (Joel 3:1[2:28]). It is noteworthy that in Hosea a new humanity comes up from the ground reminiscent of Hebrew creation accounts, while in Joel the creation of humanity occurs from above. This notion in Joel 3:1–2[2:28–29], where YHWH "pours out his spirit" (יְהוָה הוֹצֵא נַפָּח), is parallel to that found in Ezek 39:29 (שָׁמַעְתָּ הַנּוֹחַ וַיוֹדֵה), which immediately precedes and is essentially the last word before the temple restoration of chaps. 40–48. Ezekiel uses this language to signal the preparation for temple building, while Joel uses it in the context of the Day of YHWH, on which the restoration of land, people, and temple is initiated in this cosmic event. Both the Joel and Ezekiel texts suggest a newly conceptualized humanity as the precursor for temple building.

52. It is interesting that in both Ezekiel and the Twelve, the royal Davidide only has a role in the rebuilding of the nation and temple cult but not in their continual maintenance. Although this suggests the political conditions of Yehud under Persian hegemony, it also speaks to the dominant presence of the Zadokite priesthood in the postexilic era. It seems the Davidide figure in postexilic literature only serves as a temple builder in line with other ANE and Israelite building stories. For some observations, see Rex Mason, "The Messiah in the Postexilic Old Testament Literature," in King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar (ed. John Day et al.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 338-64.


55. The imperfect verb form in Joel as opposed to the perfect in Ezekiel signal a delayed event in the former and a more imminent event in the latter.
Amos—Zephaniah as the So-Called OAN of the Twelve

Now transitioning beyond Joel, the purpose of the so-called OAN (Amos—Zephaniah) in the Twelve is to bring the nations to Zion for retributive justice. This development corresponds with the subject of the nations in oracles three (35:1–36:15) and six (38:1–39:29) of Ezekiel. Just as the surrounding nations had participated in the destruction of YHWH’s temple and city, so would the Day of YHWH be the context for their return to Jerusalem to hear their indictment and sentence from the divine Judge. Moreover, both prophetic traditions of Ezekiel and the Twelve understand the judgment of the nations as necessary to usher in a new people of YHWH. In Ezek 25–32, each of Judah’s international neighbors receives oracles of judgment moving from north to south along the Transjordan region (Ammon, Moab, Edom) and up the Mediterranean coast from south to north (Philistia, Tyre, Sidon) and finishing the circuit with Israel and then Egypt. Of course, a similar systematic approach is only available in Amos 1:3–2:16, but within the literary unit of Amos—Zephaniah, some of the individual books take up the injustice performed by certain nations (for example, Obadiah against Edom; Jonah against Assyria; Nahum against Assyria; Habakkuk against Babylonia), and other books present divine theophanies as the cosmic resolution to unjust activity performed by other nations (for example, Micah against Judah; Nahum against Assyria; Habakkuk against Babylonia; Zephaniah against all the nations). Without this condemnation of the nations, there cannot be a new creation with a properly functioning Temple of YHWH (compare Zeph 3). The so-called OAN of the Twelve treats the judgment of the foreign nations before turning to the concepts of land and temple in the last literary unit of Haggai–Malachi.

As the literary unit Amos—Zephaniah treats the leitmotif of divine condemnation against the foreign nations (and even Israel and Judah), issues relating to the judgment and restoration of land, people/ruler, and nations are also evident. We will focus here on Amos 9:11–19 and Mic 4:1–5. Regarding the Amos passage, all three of our programmatic elements observed in Ezekiel are taken up here. First, the hope of a renewed Davidic house for the purpose of unifying the two kingdoms is set forth (9:11). Besides the hope of a Davidic presence and leadership—most clearly seen in the refoundation of the Jerusalem cult over the Northern and Southern Kingdoms—the people are also brought back to the land and permanently “planted” (נֵתֵּנִים) by YHWH in his land (9:14–15). Second, the nations that are designated and called by YHWH’s name (כַּל הָנֵחַ אֲשֶׁר נַעֲמָה שְׁמָיוֹ) recognize and are subservient to the Jerusalem YHWH cult (9:12), although they do not appear to make any sort of pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Third, the perennial agricultural cycle, and the wine running out of the

mountains and hills are mythical images of terrestrial fertility (9:13). Thus the restoration of the Davidic YHWH cult on Mount Zion in Amos 9 provides for a new cultic leadership in Jerusalem that is over both a restored people and the subservient nations in a new land that never ceases from earthly fecundity.

Also, Mic 4:1–5 brings together the elements of land, people/ruler, and nations in the context of the restored cosmic, cultic mountain of YHWH. Like with the previous Amos 9 passage, these verses are often set by commentators in an eschatological context. This view is not altogether persuasive for the description of YHWH’s mountain, and the surrounding activity reflect the restoration of the Jerusalem temple cult in postexilic Yehud. The “mountain of the house of YHWH” (יו들도 יהוה) is envisaged as the most prominent and tallest mountain in the land (4:1). The topographical irony is clear in that the Mount of Olives has a higher altitude than Zion, which is just over the Kidron Valley. YHWH’s mountain is the origin and center for terrestrial fertility and perpetuity among the “many nations” (גוֹדֵר וְהַר). Even the nations of the earth are given paradisical imagery as they “stream” (זרז) to YHWH’s mountain (4:2). As the “vine and fig tree” are emblematic for prosperity and blessing on the land, these images are incorporated into the idyllic scene at YHWH’s earthly mountain sanctuary (4:4). Although it is recognized that other nations still serve their patron deities, the international peoples still make pilgrimage and sacrifice to YHWH at Zion (4:5). From these passages in Amos 9 and Micah 4, it is clear that the land, people/ruler, and nations’ topoi receive considerable attention and may have a programmatic function in the Twelve. In a manner that corresponds to Ezekiel’s ideological development, these elements are constitutive to a temple building scheme in the Twelve.

**Haggai–Malachi and Temple Building with a New People for a New Land**

Steven Tuell has provided a number of points of correspondence between the books of Haggai–Zechariah and Ezekiel. He has carefully noted four thematic and literary associations. Both Ezekiel and Haggai–Zechariah give prominence to the restoration of YHWH’s Jerusalem sanctuary; the literary dating formulas relate to temple preparation and construction; the sequence of visionary episodes; and the first-person narrative of these vi-

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59 Mount Olivet or At-Tur measures 818 meters or 2,684 feet The Temple Mount measures 772 meters or 2,533 feet

60 A number of points of correspondence or maybe influence have been argued for in Steven S. Tuell, “Haggai–Zechariah Prophecy after the Manner of Ezekiel,” in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve* (ed Paul L. Redditt and Aaron Schart, BZAW 325, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 273–91
These points of correspondence are evident between Ezekiel and the Haggai-Zechariah corpus, and they all relate to expectations and descriptions of the postexilic temple, whether ideal (so Ezekiel), earthly (so Haggai), or heavenly (so Zechariah). Further, the dominant issue of temple restoration is not limited to Haggai-Zechariah, but it is also pervasive in Malachi. Although Joel and Jonah probably have a postexilic composition, it is in these last books of the Twelve, Haggai-Zechariah, and Malachi, where the rebuilding of YHWH's sanctuary is the chief concern.

As we have observed numerous times in the Twelve, the concern for a new land and people/ruler are foundational for these postexilic compositions. We will give a brief sketch of issues concerning land and people/ruler in this last literary section. From the outset of Haggai, the direct cause of the deteriorating land is the refusal of the people to restore YHWH's earthly sanctuary, the Jerusalem temple at Zion. As this divine task secures the fecundity of the land and the existence of the people in the land, a new people must receive the breath/spirit of YHWH to rebuild the temple cult (Hag 1:14). Once these restored groups take part in the laying of the foundation stone, then the land will begin to thrive (2:18-19). The descriptions are unrivalled by anything Israel had previously experienced or imagined. This blurring of mythical and historical events continues in the book of Zechariah. Here, the development continues the concerns for a restored land and people in Haggai, but the prophet experiences a night vision sequence (Nachtgesichte) where he makes a journey through the earthly temple and into the heavenly temple before returning to Jerusalem (1:8-6:8). As in Haggai, the principle actors are the remnant, Joshua, and Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel is specifically identified with the "spirit" in order to lay the temple foundation stone (Zech 4:6-9). Also, Zerubbabel is portrayed as the "Branch" (_meshiṯ_), signifying the royal Davidic figure. In similar manner to Ezekiel, the Davidide in the Twelve fades into the background and does not assume any throne in Jerusalem, whether historical or ideal.

The third programmatic element of the foreign nations is also present in this last literary unit. We will only select two texts where Yahwistic worship is "universalized" among the nations. Zechariah 14:18-19 bring together the topoi of the nations with the prominent interests of land and temple. The final lines of Zechariah 14 set Jerusalem as the center of international worship to the extent that if the surrounding nations do not make yearly pilgrimage to Zion for the autumn feast of Sukkoth, then their land will be under divine curse. If Yehud's neighbors do not comply, then they will experience plagues, famine, and drought that rival the Exodus tradition. Zechariah not only treats Jerusalem as the center of Yahwistic worship for all the nations but also communicates that land fertility originates and continues in Jerusalem.

Malachi 1:11 and 1:14 point to the influence of Yahwism outside the territory of Yehud. Although the nature of this Yahwistic worship in these passages is disputed, it is clear that knowledge and influence of Yahwism is present in an international context. In 1:11, the name of YHWH is stated twice to be “great among the nations,” and within this inclusio, incense (מַפיֶשׁ) and grain (מֶדֶדַת) are offered to him “from the rising of the sun and to its setting” (מְמַשֵּׁתָתָו דִּי מְבָאָה). Although it is noted that animal sacrifice is not mentioned here, it is certain that the various offerings are given to YHWH among the nations. In 1:14, YHWH is “feared among the nations” (שְׁמֵם דָּרוּ בָּהֵם). This reflects Zeph 2:11, where all the nations and their deities will “fear” (חֲסַר הָיוֹדֶה עִלְיוֹהוּ) and “bow down” (חֲסַר הָיוֹדֶה עִלְיוֹהוּ) before YHWH in their respective lands. The function of the nations motif in the Twelve is different from what occurs in Ezekiel. For in the former Yahwism is legitimate and necessary outside Israel, while in the latter there is no future for the nations—typified in the chief prince Gog.

We can see that all the elements of Ezek 33:21-39:29 with the death and creation of land, people/ruler, and nations are present in the Twelve. At the same time, the corresponding use of these elements in the Twelve does not preclude the idea that particular intentions are present in the Twelve that are not necessarily given in Ezekiel. For example, the identity shift in Ezekiel from priest to prophet—where the priest adds a prophetic role to his already-understood priestly designation in the absence of the Jerusalem cult—occurs inversely in the Twelve, where priestly identity is assumed into the prophetic role for the purpose of temple restoration in the literature of Haggai–Malachi. Further, the Davidide mentioned in Ezekiel and Hosea all but disappear once the Second Temple is refounded and rededicated. It seems, for both prophetic traditions, the royal, Davidic figure was primarily endowed with the task of temple building. Therefore, both the arrangement of Ezekiel and the Twelve share similar concerns for land, people/ruler, nations, and even royal and cultic figures—although these final two ideas serve primarily to set the conditions for land restoration and temple building. This leads us to some final observations.

**FINAL OBSERVATIONS OF SIMILAR TEMPLE-BUILDING CONCERNS FOR A SHARED TRADITION**

Although ultimately different in perspective and development of subject matter as prophetic texts, Ezekiel and the Twelve share similar concerns with the role and restoration of the pervasive themes of land, people/ruler,

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and nations. As space does not permit, it is important to note that scholars are observing more points of correspondence between Mesopotamian texts and those of Ezekiel and the Twelve.\(^{66}\) What we have noticed is that the ancient Near Eastern notions of divine presence in material objects, the royal annals concerning the repatriation of a people to a land, the suppression of cosmic and natural enemies, and Mesopotamian kings instantiating deities by means of building temples all find close parallel in the prophetic corpora of Ezekiel and the Twelve, and are all constitutive elements for ANE temple building stories.\(^{67}\) Both prophetic corpora exhibit a predilection for a systematic demise and re-creation of these elements before the building and functioning of a cosmic Jerusalem temple cult. The Twelve go into greater discussion for how these concepts are realized, and certain notable distinctions can be seen in the way these ideals are conceived. For example, Ezekiel does not provide evidence for Yahwistic worship among the nations. This idea is particular to the Book of the Twelve whether at the place of Zion (Mic 4:1–4, Zech 14:16–17) or in territories outside of Yehud (Mal 1:11, 14). The role of the nations in the Twelve is clearly to provide resources for restoring the Second Temple in Jerusalem (Joel 4[3]:1–2, Hag 2:6–7, Zech 14:14). Also, Ezekiel makes prominent the nexus of land and temple in chaps. 40–48, but the temple cult is not even addressed in the so-called restoration oracles of 33:21–39:29. On the other hand, the Twelve—beginning in Joel—bring to the foreground the inextricable link between the proper function of the Jerusalem temple cult and the perpetual, paradisiacal fertility of the land. Although both Ezekiel and the Twelve provide elements of an Israelite temple-building story, both prophetic corpora are conditioned by their particular historical and ideological concerns, which evince the differing development of land, people/ruler, and nations in each tradition.

It can be said that the sharing of these traditions between Ezekiel and the Twelve argues for a parallel consciousness and concern for a reinaugurated temple structure in the environs of a reconstituted people and land. Not only do the Twelve reflect this program on the level of the metanarrative, but also individual books take up this interest for land, people/

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ruler, and nations. This raises the question whether the Zadokite influence only resulted in writing and transmission of Ezekiel or whether this movement helped to inform the editing and sequencing of the Twelve as well. Certainly, later prophets of the restoration period such as Haggai and Zechariah were a part of the Golah community and supported Joshua and Zerubbabel in temple rebuilding efforts. The permanence of both the temple cult and the Davidic line in Jerusalem were essential to Zadokite tradition. In both prophetic traditions of Ezekiel and the Twelve, a new creation of land and people and the reappearance of Davidic and priestly leadership are the precursors for a cosmic temple of YHWH in Jerusalem. It may be argued that common tradents had a role in shaping both prophetic works. We have entertained some complex and deeply ingrained ideas in the socio-religious milieu of Israelite and Judean cultures. It stands to reason that the tradents behind the Book of the Twelve had something to say, and the book of Ezekiel might help us learn what that may have been.

68 Sweeney, “The Assertion of Divine Power,” 167 It should be noted that the recent monograph by Hunt argues for a revision of the Zadokite consensus. She posits that the Zadokites became prominent not in pre- or postexilic cultic circles but rather in the Hasmonean period. Her work is helpful in order to provide a corrective for an overdrawn Zadokite presence and influence throughout Monarchical Israel, but she fails to see the consistent witness of the Zadokite tradition with temple restoration movements such as Ezekiel and Haggai-Zechariah. Alice Hunt, Missing Priests: The Zadokites in Tradition and History (LHBOTS 452, New York & T Clark, 2006) For an insightful look at Zadokite tradition in Persian Yehud, see Joachim Schaper, “The Priests in the Book of Malachi and Their Opponents,” in Priests in the Latter Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets, and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets (JSOTSup 408, New York T & T Clark, 2004), 177–88
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