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A DOOR OF HOPE: BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL  
REFELCTIONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD  
IN THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

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by  
David Christopher Berry II  
May 2020

**APPROVAL SHEET**

A DOOR OF HOPE: BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL  
REFLECTIONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD  
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For the glory of the triune God of the gospel and the splendor of the Bride of Christ

“There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God”

Psalm 46:4 ESV

“And in that day

The mountains shall drip sweet wine,

and the hills shall flow with milk,

and all the streambeds of Judah

shall flow with water;

and a fountain shall come forth

from the house of the Lord

and water the Valley of Shittim”

Joel 3:18 ESV

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## PREFACE

It is an evidence of God's sweet grace and my profound privilege to be a graduate of the Doctor of Ministry program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. As I considered other seminaries, I could find no other whose faculty had influenced me more through their writing than those of Southern. When the D.Min. in Biblical Theology launched, it was a distant dream that I could even consider it. Thanks to President R. Albert Mohler Jr., the staff and faculty, and Drs. Jim Hamilton and Brian Vickers, directors of the program. Special thanks to Dr. Samuel C. Emadi, my doctoral advisor, whose grace, encouragement, and support saw me through the program.

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the finish line. This was a burden we bore together. May King Jesus build his church through our unity, by the Spirit, with his Word, for the Father's fame.

To my bride, Rachael. You are far more precious than rubies, and the heart of your husband trusts in you. Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all. You were the one who encouraged me to do this, and you are the one who made it possible to reach the end. Fifteen years, six children (five with us, one on the way), five churches, three states, three schools. The Lord, you and I have been, and will remain, the constant by God's grace.

Pearl Noelle, Sayde Jayne, Ginger Anne, Rosie Joy, April Darling, and Baby Son, know that Mommy loves you, Daddy loves you, and Jesus loves you most of all. Each of you is my favorite. Te amo seventeen. I win.

To my mom, Linda. Your support made this possible. Thank you. When I think of what Christ is like, I think of you. When I think of what it is like for the church to worship her Savior, I think of you. I love you!

Lord, your mercies are new every morning, and your grace is greater still. When my spirit clothed immortal, wings its flight to realms of day, this my song through endless ages: Jesus led me all the way. Thank you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Dave Berry

Flagstaff, Arizona

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

While the twelve Minor Prophets contribute to biblical theology, they might not even be missed if removed from the Bibles of many Christians.<sup>1</sup> Regrettably, the Book of the Twelve may often be a graveyard for many Bible reading plans. The Book of the Twelve, however, is no less inspired and no less the Word of God than Romans or any other part of Scripture. Indeed, on the road to Emmaus, Jesus stated that all the prophets bore witness to him, which of course, includes the Twelve (Luke 24:25–27). Therefore, to lose the Twelve is to miss the fullness of Scripture and its testimony of the gospel. A cursory survey of the evangelistic sermons in the book of Acts demonstrates that the Book of the Twelve is a significant source text for a number of these messages.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of this project is to demonstrate how the theme of the kingdom of God develops in the Book of the Twelve from a biblical-theological perspective.<sup>3</sup> This will be accomplished in two parts. First, it will be established that the twelve Minor Prophets are to be read as a compositional unity historically known as the Book of the Twelve. Subsequently, four aspects of the kingdom of God will be investigated: Davidic kingship, exile and second exodus, covenant, and the day of the Lord.

<sup>1</sup> The twelve Minor Prophets, in order, are Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The term “minor” is reference to size of each book in comparison to Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, not a reference to importance.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Peter’s use of Joel in his Pentecost sermon in Acts 2:16–21, Stephen’s use of Amos in Acts 7:42–43, Paul’s use of Habakkuk in the synagogue of Pisidia in Acts 13:40, and James’s use of Amos at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15:15–17.

<sup>3</sup> This project is intended to serve as the foundation for an adult Bible study.

## What Is Biblical Theology?

This work falls under the interpretive discipline of biblical theology. While a spectrum of description and practice exist in this field, this work will adhere to what Sequeira and Emadi call, “a self-consciously Reformed<sup>4</sup> and evangelical understanding of the discipline of biblical theology.”<sup>5</sup> Even among evangelicals, however, there is no current consensus as to definition and practice. But as will be demonstrated below, the variance among evangelicals is minimal and often a matter of nuance. To that end, I will briefly survey recent proposals by James Hamilton, G. K. Beale, Brian Rosner, and Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum regarding the nature of biblical theology. Following the survey, I will provide an evaluation and synthesis of their respective proposals.

Hamilton succinctly proposes that biblical theology seeks “to understand and embrace the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors.”<sup>6</sup> In this definition, Hamilton portrays biblical theology as a hermeneutic that observes how later Old Testament authors read, interpret, and apply texts of earlier Old Testament authors and subsequently, how New Testament authors do the same.<sup>7</sup> Notably, for Hamilton this interpretive perspective is not merely to be “understood”

<sup>4</sup> “Reformed” is used here not in the broad sense of covenant theology but as a set of theological convictions and hermeneutical practices that emerge out of the Reformed tradition.

<sup>5</sup> Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi, “Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 11–34. For a recent survey of the spectrum of biblical theological practice, see Edward W. Klink III and Darian R. Lockett, *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Comparison of Theory and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012). See also the excellent evaluation of Klink and Lockett by Peter J. Gentry, “The Significance of Covenants in Biblical Theology,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 20, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 9–33. Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012) offers a survey of some leading evangelical biblical theologians up to 2004.

<sup>6</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide To the Bible’s Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 15. See Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010) for his definition in practice. There, Hamilton notes, “I hasten to embrace the humility articulated by Schlatter and recently restated by Schreiner: there is more than one way to pursue biblical theology, and there can be no final, definitive treatment of the subject” (38).

<sup>7</sup> Hamilton employs the term “intertextuality” to describe Scriptures’ use of Scripture. He elaborates, “Understanding what the biblical authors wrote demands an understanding of how literature functions. Among other things, being sensitive to the literary dimensions of biblical texts requires us to discern how authors structured their work, what kinds of things they assumed their audience would know, and the perspective from which they intended their work to be interpreted . . . . The task of biblical theology is to identify and demonstrate such assumptions.” James M. Hamilton Jr., *With the Clouds of Heaven: The Book of Daniel in Biblical Theology*, *New Studies in Biblical Theology* 32 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 23, 25. In a similar vein, Abner Chou understands the study of intertextuality as an investigation of what the writers were thinking, or the “quest for authorial logic.”

but also “embraced” in the interpretive practice of those doing biblical theology. That is to say; the Bible teaches us how to read and interpret itself. Hamilton understands the interpretive perspective to be “the framework of assumptions and presuppositions, associations, and identifications, truths, and symbols that are taken for granted as an author or speaker describes the world and the events that take place in it.”<sup>8</sup> Simply, interpretive perspective is the “thought world” of the biblical authors furnished by terms, concepts, and themes. Further, understanding the interpretive perspective acknowledges that the biblical authors did not recount every possible detail. Instead they intentionally selected, arranged, and presented their material displaying a “more true” account in that the audience is enabled to see more clearly how the episode fits “into the true story of the world.”<sup>9</sup> Scripture is God’s divine interpretation of his own acts in history. Implicit in Hamilton’s definition is that the boundary of biblical theology is the entirety of Scripture. The text sets the interpretive agenda for the biblical theologian not the other way around.

G. K. Beale summarizes his approach to biblical theology as “canonical, genetic-progressive (or organically developmental, as a flower develops from a seed and bud), exegetical, and intertextual.”<sup>10</sup> He explains, “a biblical-theological approach to a particular text

and notes, “Individual Old Testament texts are windows into larger contexts because they are *intentionally* part of a series of passages the prophets have woven together. The apostles thought through certain passages with certain biblical theological ideas because the prophets had already made those associations. The Old Testament writers derived certain concepts from their careful exegesis of prior revelation and integrated those concepts into their writings. These become the presuppositions and backbone of the apostolic rationale . . . . The way they read is the way they wrote and the way we should read them. By this, their hermeneutic is our hermeneutic.” Abner Chou, *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 21–22.

<sup>8</sup> Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 15.

<sup>9</sup> Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 15–16. Hamilton’s words are reminiscent of John Sailhamer, who notes, “The task of biblical theology is to allow the fixed reality of the narrative world to shape and inform our understanding of the real world, not the other way around. . . . In narrative texts the reader is given the privileged perspective of the author.” John H. Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 70, 72. The only way to comprehend God’s acts is for him to explain himself to us in the Bible and illuminate that explanation by his Spirit. Elsewhere Hamilton clarifies, “The only access we have to the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors is what they wrote.” Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 21.

<sup>10</sup> G. K. Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 15. Beale has recently stated, “It may be better to use the phrase ‘inner-biblical exegesis’ or ‘inner-biblical allusion’ instead of ‘intertextuality,’ since the former two nomenclatures are less likely to be confused with postmodern reader-oriented approaches to interpretation, where the term ‘intertextuality

seeks to give its interpretation first with regard to its own literary context and primarily in relation to its own redemptive historical epoch, and then to the epoch or epochs preceding and following it.”<sup>11</sup> For Beale, biblical theology is self-conscious about canon, literary sensitivity, the “organic development” of the storyline, the relationship between the epochs, and “inner-biblical exegesis” between the biblical authors.

Brian Rosner offers the well-received definition: “Biblical theology may be defined as theological interpretation of Scripture in and for the church. It proceeds with historical and literary sensitivity and seeks to analyze and synthesize the Bible’s teaching about God and his relations to the world on its own terms, maintaining sight of the Bible’s overarching narrative and Christocentric focus.”<sup>12</sup> Rosner highlights that biblical theology is an endeavor “in and for” the church and attentive to the unfolding Christocentric metanarrative of Scripture. Significant to this definition is the “analysis and synthesis” of Scripture “on its own terms.”<sup>13</sup> By implication, the text sets the agenda and introduces the topics, themes, and terms to be considered.<sup>14</sup>

had its origin.” G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 40. Hamilton, however, is “not ready to surrender this handy term” but clarifies, saying, “In using [intertextuality] I am focused on authorial intent, and I employ it as an umbrella term for ways later biblical authors engage earlier Scripture.” Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 22n4.

<sup>11</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, 9.

<sup>12</sup> Brian Rosner, “Biblical Theology,” in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity and Diversity of Scripture*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 10. Similar to Rosner’s Christological focus, Graeme Goldsworthy proposes, “Biblical theology is the study of how every text in the Bible relates to every other text in the Bible. It is the study of the matrix of divine revelation. At the heart of the gospel is the person of Jesus Christ; he is the word of God come in the flesh. The nature of the gospel is such that it demands that it be at the center of the biblical message. Biblical theology is, then, the study of how every text in the Bible relates to Jesus and his gospel. Thus, we start with Christ so that we may end with Christ. Biblical theology is Christological, for its subject matter is the Scriptures as God’s testimony to Christ. It is therefore, from start to finish, a study of Christ.” Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 80. For Goldsworthy, biblical theology is a whole-Bible exercise in the unfolding of the gospel. This is to say, biblical theology is about beholding the person, promises, and provisions of Jesus Christ as they are foretold in, and unfold across, Scripture.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Schreiner echoes this aspect in defining biblical theology as “a whole-Bible theology, describing the theology of the various biblical books on their terms and in their historical contexts.” Thomas R. Schreiner, *Hebrews*, *Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation* (Nashville: B & H, 2015), x.

<sup>14</sup> In a similar vein, Hamilton notes, “If we are pursuing the [interpretive perspective of the biblical authors], we do not bring themes to the Bible but examine the texts to see how later biblical authors have developed thematic issues set forth in earlier biblical texts . . . . Similar questions can be asked of those who argue for one schematic understanding of the Bible’s storyline over another. Did the biblical authors intend to communicate this schema rather than another? If someone proposes a schematic outline of Israel’s history (as do covenant theologians, dispensationalists, and biblical theologians such as Goldsworthy), the question they must answer is: Where did the biblical authors themselves indicate that this was their own schematic perspective on the Bible’s big story?”

Influenced by Rosner, Gentry and Wellum propose,

Simply stated, [biblical theology] is the *hermeneutical* discipline which seeks to do justice to what Scripture claims to be and what it actually is. In terms of its claim, Scripture is nothing less than *God's* Word written, and as such it is a unified revelation of his gracious plan of redemption. In terms of what Scripture actually is, it is a *progressive* unfolding of God's plan, rooted in history, and unpacked along a specific redemptive-historical plot line primarily demarcated by covenants. Biblical theology as a hermeneutical discipline attempts to exegete texts in their own context and then, in light of the entire Canon, to examine the unfolding nature of God's plan and carefully think through the relationship between *before* and *after* in that plan which culminates in Christ. As such, biblical theology provides the basis for understanding how texts in one part of the Bible relate to all other texts, so that they will be read correctly, according to God's intention, which is discovered through the individual human authors but ultimately at the canonical level. In the end, biblical theology is the attempt to unpack the "whole counsel of God" and "to think God's thoughts after him," and it provides the basis and underpinning for all theology and doctrine.<sup>15</sup>

Gentry and Wellum note that biblical theology is concerned with how the parts of the biblical storyline fit together in each of their respective covenantal-historical contexts and in the light of the new covenant. They catchphrase their lengthy definition of biblical theology as "progressive covenantalism."<sup>16</sup>

This brief survey of prominent evangelical biblical theologians reveals more similarities than dissimilarities in their understanding and practice of biblical theology. All are in agreement that biblical theology is a hermeneutical discipline that involves Scripture interpreting Scripture and an understanding that the Bible is the unified and progressively unfolding history of redemption culminating in Christ. Each contributor agrees that interpreters need literary

Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 26–27.

<sup>15</sup> Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 33–34 (emphasis original).

<sup>16</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 24. Gentry and Wellum's chief criticism of both Hamilton's *God's Glory in Salvation* and Beale's *New Testament Biblical Theology* is that both works lack the recognition that the divine "covenants are the key to the plot structure of the Old Testament," and "a detailed investigation of those covenants is necessary to understand God's eternal plan of salvation centered in Christ" (13–14). Against Hamilton, who seeks to establish the central theme of Scripture, they state, "Before one argues for the overarching *theme* of Scripture, one must first wrestle with the unfolding nature of the biblical covenants and their fulfillment and consummation in Christ" (12; emphasis original). Against Beale, they argue, "It is for this reason that we are convinced that Beale's otherwise full treatment of subjects goes awry when he comes to the end of his work" (14). Gentry and Wellum root Hamilton's and Beale's missteps in their oversight to first properly unpack the biblical storyline across the divine covenants, and since Hamilton and Beale's starting points err, so do their conclusions.

sensitivity to the particular location of a text in relation to other texts.

Each of these definitions, however, also provide unique aspects that contribute to a fuller understanding of biblical theology. Hamilton rightly argues that readers should adopt the interpretive method of the biblical authors. Rosner emphasizes the exclusivity of the biblical-theological task to the church. Disagreement among these biblical theologians seems to primarily revolve around understanding how the metanarrative “fits” together. Lack of an agreed upon framework as a starting point leads to the varied nature of biblical-theological works. Thus, unique and correct to Gentry and Wellum is their convincing and conclusive demonstration that the biblical metanarrative is “unpacked along a specific redemptive-historical plot line primarily demarcated by covenants.”<sup>17</sup>

In summary, biblical theology recognizes Scripture’s own interpretive framework of how every text fits within the whole as it progressively unfolds the person, promises, and provisions of Jesus Christ and his new covenant. Based on the similarities and unique contributions of the descriptions above, a composite definition might be as follows: Biblical theology is a hermeneutical discipline in and for the church that seeks to understand and embrace the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors on their own terms and canonical contexts that progressively unfold and escalate across the divine covenants in light of the overarching Christotelic<sup>18</sup> metanarrative. This composite understanding of biblical theology will provide the framework for this project.

### **Literature on the Book of the Twelve**

The following resources provide a foundation for exploring and establishing a biblical-theological understanding of the kingdom of God in the Book of the Twelve. The resources broadly fall under four categories. The first are works that, to varying degrees, consider the Book

<sup>17</sup> See especially Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 21–37.

<sup>18</sup> Rosner uses the term “Christocentric”; however, as I will discuss below, the term “Christotelic” is more precise.



of the Twelve as a literary and/or theological unity. The second, where the preponderance of resources are found, contains works that focus on the Minor Prophets as individual books with little to no consideration or agreement to their overall unity. The third category is Old Testament or Whole Bible biblical theologies that interact with the Book of the Twelve. The fourth are works that address and/or indirectly relate to the structure and interpretation of the Book of the Twelve.

### **Category 1: Exegetical Works and Commentaries Exploring the Twelve as a Unity**

One of the most prolific writers on the Book of the Twelve in recent history is James D. Nogalski. His two-volume *The Book of the Twelve* in the Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary series addresses an overview of ancient traditions regarding the Minor Prophets and treats them as a single collection.<sup>19</sup>

*Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, edited by James D. Nogalski and Marvin A. Sweeney,<sup>20</sup> is part of the Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series. It consists of thirteen entries detailing various aspects of the Minor Prophets from the assertion that they function as a literary unity. The first half of the book explores various ways of reading and understanding the Twelve as a book. The second half then investigates the literary implications of reading the Twelve as a book.

In *The Twelve Prophets in the New Testament*,<sup>21</sup> Michael B. Shepherd, explores the ways the New Testament writers understand and utilize the Twelve as a single book.

<sup>19</sup> James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011); Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> James D. Nogalski and Marvin A. Sweeney, eds., *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, SBL Symposium Series (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000).

<sup>21</sup> Michael B. Shepherd, *The Twelve Prophets in the New Testament*, Studies in Biblical Literature 140 (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).

In *The Unity of the Twelve*,<sup>22</sup> Paul House first provides a brief history of the interpretation of the Minor Prophets, and then explores the genre, structure, plot, use of characters and point of view of the book(s).<sup>23</sup>

In *The Message of the Twelve: Hearing the Voice of the Minor Prophets*,<sup>24</sup> Richard Alan Fuhr Jr. and Gary E. Yates, present a recent work that is comprehensive in nature. The first part explores the compositional nature and canonical setting of the Twelve. The second part, and bulk of the book, then commentates the Twelve book by book.

In *Reading the Latter Prophets*,<sup>25</sup> Edgar Conrad focuses on reading the body of prophetic literature rather than focusing on a single prophetic book. Attention is given to the importance and implications of the order and arrangement of prophetic books for reading. He closes the book by with “Reading the Twelve in light of the Major Prophets.”<sup>26</sup>

In *The Twelve Prophets*,<sup>27</sup> Marvin A. Sweeney writes a two-volume commentary on the Minor Prophets from a Catholic perspective. Sweeney approaches the Twelve as both a single volume and a collection of twelve individual prophets. He establishes the literary structure of the Twelve as well as each individual book.

## **Category 2: Exegetical Works and Commentaries on Select Minor Prophets**

The following two volumes of the Word Biblical Commentary series come highly

<sup>22</sup> Paul R. House, *The Unity of the Twelve* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990).

<sup>23</sup> Referring to the Book of the Twelve as “book(s)” is a helpful way to capture the unity and individuality of these various prophets.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Alan Fuhr Jr. and Gary E. Yates, *The Message of the Twelve: Hearing the Voice of the Minor Prophets* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016).

<sup>25</sup> Edgar W. Conrad, *Reading the Latter Prophets: Toward a New Canonical Criticism*. New York: T & T Clark International, 2003).

<sup>26</sup> Conrad, *Reading the Latter Prophets*, 243–67.

<sup>27</sup> Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000); Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000).

recommended:<sup>28</sup> volume 31, *Hosea–Jonah*, is authored by Douglas Stuart, and volume 32, *Micah–Malachi*, is authored by Ralph Smith.<sup>29</sup>

In *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*<sup>30</sup> series, eleven of the twelve Minor Prophets are covered across five volumes (Amos is not addressed): *Hosea* by John Andrew Dearman; *Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* by Leslie C. Allen; *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* by Palmer O. Robertson; *Haggai and Malachi* by Pieter A. Verhoef; and *Zechariah* by Mark J. Boda.

In *The Tyndale Old Testament Commentary*<sup>31</sup> series, the twelve Minor Prophets are covered across five volumes. The authors of the volumes are as follows; David Allen Hubbard authors two volumes: *Hosea, Joel, and Amos*, T. Desmond Alexander, David W. Baker, and Bruce K. Waltke comment on *Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, David W. Baker explores *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, and Andrew E. Hill completes the series with *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*.

In *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*,<sup>32</sup> published by

<sup>28</sup> John Glynn, *Commentary and Reference Survey: A Comprehensive Guide to Biblical and Theological Resources* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003), 91.

<sup>29</sup> Douglas Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 31 (Grand Rapids: Thomas Nelson, 1988); Ralph L. Smith, *Micah–Malachi*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 32 (Grand Rapids: Thomas Nelson, 1984).

<sup>30</sup> John Andrew Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); Leslie C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976); O. Palmer Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990); Pieter A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987); Mark J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

<sup>31</sup> David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Survey*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009); Hubbard, *Joel and Amos: An Introduction and Survey*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009); T. Desmond Alexander, David W. Baker, and Bruce K. Waltke, *Obadiah, Jonah and Micah: An Introduction and Survey*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009); David W. Baker, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah: An Introduction and Survey*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009); Andrew E. Hill, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An Introduction and Survey*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012).

<sup>32</sup> Thomas E. McComiskey, ed., *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009).

Baker Academic, is a three-volume series recently bound into a single volume. Edited by Thomas McComiskey, the series contains such notable authors as Bruce Waltke (*Micah*), F. F. Bruce (*Habakkuk*), J. Alec Motyer (*Zephaniah and Haggai*), and Douglas Stuart (*Malachi*).

The Anchor Yale Bible Commentary Series<sup>33</sup> is international and interfaith in authorship. The series aims to explore historical and cultural contexts of the biblical books informed by sociological and literary criticism. This series provides twelve volumes on the Minor Prophets: *Hosea* by Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman; *Joel* by James L. Crenshaw; *Amos* by Göran Eidevall; *Obadiah* by Raul R. Raabe; *Jonah* by Jack M. Sasson; *Micah* by Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman; *Nahum* by Duane L. Christensen; *Habakkuk* by Francis I. Andersen; *Zephaniah* by Adele Berlin; *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8* by Carol and Eric Meyers; *Zechariah 9–14* by Carol and Eric Meyers, and *Malachi* by Andrew E. Hill.

### Category 3: Biblical Theologies

In *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*,<sup>34</sup> Stephen Dempster authors a seminal biblical theology read from a canonical perspective. Dempster excels at seeing the forest along with the trees by tracing key themes across the Old Testament.

In *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology*,<sup>35</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr. presents arguably one of the most premier works in biblical theology. Hamilton's

<sup>33</sup> Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Hosea*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 24 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); James L. Crenshaw, *Joel*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 24C (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Göran Eidevall, *Amos*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 24A (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Paul R. Raabe, *Obadiah*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 24D (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 24B (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Micah*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 24E (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Duane L. Christensen, *Nahum*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 24F (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Francis I. Andersen, *Habakkuk*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 25 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); Adele Berlin, *Zephaniah*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 25A (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 25B (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 25C (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Andrew E. Hill, *Malachi*, Anchor Yale Bible Commentary, vol. 25D (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

<sup>34</sup> Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

<sup>35</sup> Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation*.

attention to terms and literary features as they are repeated by the biblical authors is deeply insightful.

In *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*,<sup>36</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner forgoes a book-by-book approach to the Twelve. Schreiner adopts a thematic approach, systematically tracing themes as they unfold within the Twelve.

In *Old Testament Theology*,<sup>37</sup> Paul House adopts a canonical-thematic approach. House traces themes as they unfold across the text, thereby demonstrating the unity of the Old Testament.

#### **Category 4: Encyclopedic Resources and Other Works**

In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*,<sup>38</sup> edited by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, one finds a foundational tool for exploring how the New Testament authors interpret and utilize the Book of the Twelve as fulfilled in Christ's new covenant.

In *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi*,<sup>39</sup> David A. Dorsey provides a unique resource. Dorsey explores and highlights the unique literary style of the Hebrew authors, especially as they pertain to chiasmic structures. Dorsey looks at not only the literary structure(s) within each book of the Old Testament but also larger literary units that span multiple books.

In *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*,<sup>40</sup> edited by T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner, the reader is given a robust resource that provides foundational material for a biblical

<sup>36</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013).

<sup>37</sup> Paul R. House, *Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998).

<sup>38</sup> G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007).

<sup>39</sup> David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999).

<sup>40</sup> Alexander and Rosner, *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*.

theological reading of the Minor Prophets.

In *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*,<sup>41</sup> Brevard Childs authors a foundational work that investigates historical critical problems, the canonical shape, and theological and hermeneutical implications for each section of the Tanak.

### **Biblical Context of the Twelve**

The Book of the Twelve fits into a unique location in the larger framework of Scripture. Establishing the biblical context of the Twelve will be addressed in five steps.

#### **Step 1: The Canonical-Literary Setting of the Twelve (Textual Horizon)**

Jesus indicated the Old Testament was partitioned into three major sections, “These are my words that I spoke to you . . . that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (Luke 24:44). Further evidence of this three-fold shape of the Old Testament is found in passages such as Luke 11:50, “From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary.” Abel was the first murder recorded in Scripture. Zechariah, however, was murdered in 2 Chronicles 24:20–21. Zechariah was not the last murder chronologically, but he was the last murder literarily as Chronicles is the final book of the three-fold ordering.<sup>42</sup> The title of the three-fold division and sequence of the Old Testament, Tanak, is derived from the first Hebrew letter of the title of each section: Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Writings).<sup>43</sup> The Tanak is also referred to as the canonical ordering of Scripture.<sup>44</sup> Grudem defines canon as, “the list of all the books that

<sup>41</sup> Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979).

<sup>42</sup> Miles V. Van Pelt, ed., introduction to *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 32.

<sup>43</sup> Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation*, 59–60.

<sup>44</sup> Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 50.

belong in the Bible.”<sup>45</sup> This work will utilize the terms “canon” and “canonical” both as a reference to the received books of Scripture and the ordering of those books.

In canonical order, the Twelve resides at the end of the second section, the Prophets, which are comprised of eight books.<sup>46</sup> These eight books are further subdivided into two sections of four books each, the Former and Latter Prophets.<sup>47</sup> The Latter Prophets contain the Books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and The Twelve. Thus, the Book of the Twelve closes the section of the Latter Prophets and bridges the gap into the third and final section, the Writings.

## **Step 2: The Book of the Twelve (Textual Horizon)**

In Acts 7:42 Stephen quotes Scripture in his defense of Christ before the high priest. Stephen states, “But God turned away and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets.” Stephen then quotes Amos 5:25–27. His grammar is noteworthy. In the preface to his quote of Amos, Stephen refers to “the book (singular) of the prophets (plural).” This inspired passage in Acts demonstrates the twelve Minor Prophets were considered a single book. Hamilton notes, “The order of the Twelve seems to reflect an intentional arrangement that resulted in these twelve prophets’ being read together as a single book.”<sup>48</sup> This is not to deny the reality of twelve different authors or the diverse temporal settings of their composition. It is, however, to emphasize that the Twelve were taken together as a literary unit at the time of Christ such that they could collectively be referred to as “the book of the prophets” (Acts 7:42). Hamilton continues, “This intentional arrangement can be seen from the way that key words found at the end of one book often recur at the beginning of the next.

<sup>45</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 54.

<sup>46</sup> In contrast to modern Bibles, which locate the Twelve at the end of the Old Testament.

<sup>47</sup> Jason S. DeRouchie, “Jesus’ Bible: An Overview,” in *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Jesus’ Bible*, ed. Jason S. DeRouchie (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2013), 43.

<sup>48</sup> Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*, 229.

Where there are not key words, there are sometimes thematic links.”<sup>49</sup> Stephen Dempster refers to the individual prophetic works as “chapters” rather than books in the overall structure of the Book of the Twelve.<sup>50</sup>

From another vantage point, the Book of the Twelve can be considered a “thematized anthology.”<sup>51</sup> Linguistic and thematic links “stitch” the books together forming a single literary piece. Dempster synthesizes, “Not every prophet in this collection predicts all these events, but the entire combination presents a more panoramic view of the future than is found in the previous prophets.”<sup>52</sup> Put differently, the “voice” of the twelve Minor Prophets unites them in their diversity with literary threads binding them together. Thus, far from being a diverse collection of writings, the Twelve exhibit remarkable unity.

### **Step 3: The Twelve in Relation to the Former and Latter Prophets (Epochal Horizon)**

Taken as a whole, the Book of the Twelve stands in similar size and shape as the previous three prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. This unit of four books, the Latter Prophets, stand in contrast to the previous unit, the Former Prophets. The Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) bring the unfolding narrative begun in Genesis to a close.

From a literary standpoint, the Latter Prophets provide God’s perspective on the events narrated in the history of the Former Prophets. The Latter Prophets seem to have Torah open in front of them, particularly Deuteronomy, and thunder God’s righteousness in response to the continual covenant breaking of Israel. Hamilton insightfully states, “When we proceed into the Latter Prophets, instead of a continuation of the narrative storyline, we find poetic commentary

<sup>49</sup> Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*, 229–30.

<sup>50</sup> Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 182.

<sup>51</sup> David L. Petersen, “A Book of the Twelve?,” in Nogalski and Sweeney, *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, 10.

<sup>52</sup> Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 182.



on that storyline. Isaiah through Malachi is thus commentary on Genesis through Kings.”<sup>53</sup> Dempster notes, “The book of the Twelve concludes the prophetic commentary.”<sup>54</sup> Thus, the Twelve carry forward God’s poetic commentary begun in Isaiah. As such, a unity also exists among these four major prophetic books. The last three books of the Twelve, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi also provide unique commentary on the post-exilic events recorded at the end of the Writings, particularly, Ezra and Nehemiah.

The Twelve advance and add concepts, ideas, and themes found in the earlier books of the Latter Prophets. Using the “analogy of Scripture,” Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel provide the literary backdrop and context for the Book of the Twelve. Thus, no reading of the Twelve is complete without reference to these previous prophetic books.

#### **Step 4: The Twelve in Relation to Tanak (Epochal Horizon)**

As with any literary work, the Book of the Twelve not only relates to and informs what precedes it but also what follows it, namely the Writings. Like the Later Prophets, the bulk of the Writings also provide poetic commentary on Genesis through Kings.<sup>55</sup> The final books of the Writings (Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles) resume that narrative paused in Kings.<sup>56</sup>

The nature of this poetic commentary may be illustrated by analogy. Consider how the anticipated release of Season One of a hit TV show is accompanied by actor interviews, director’s commentary, extended footage, and sneak peaks of the next season. The poetic commentary of Isaiah though Ecclesiastes, particularly the Twelve, functions in much the same way. God provides his “director’s commentary” on the earlier historical events recorded in

<sup>53</sup> Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*, 60–61.

<sup>54</sup> Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 182.

<sup>55</sup> Specifically, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Song, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes.

<sup>56</sup> Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*, 61.

Genesis through Kings giving additional insight and understanding of those events (“extended footage”). At the same time, God also foretells (prophetically and typologically) what he will accomplish in days to come (“sneak peaks”). In this sense, the Book of the Twelve looks backwards and forwards in God’s unfolding plan of redemption.

### **Step 5: The Twelve in Relation to the Canon (Canonical Horizon)**

When confronting the religious leaders, Jesus stated, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me” (John 5:39). No passage of Scripture is fully read until it is finally interpreted in light of Christ. This holds true for the Book of the Twelve.

Gentry and Wellum are especially helpful in explaining how to read any passage in light of the entirety of Scripture.<sup>57</sup> It bears repeating they note that the covenantal-canonical design of the Bible necessitates a three-tiered reading of any given passage. The first tier is the “textual” level which surveys the passage at hand via grammar, syntax, and context. The second tier is the “epochal” which reads a passage “in light of where they are in redemptive-history, or where they are in terms of the unfolding plan of God.”<sup>58</sup> Thus intertextual relationships are noted with respect to the overarching covenantal context of the given passage. The third is the “canonical” tier which reads each text in light of reaching its end, goal, and summation in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ and his new covenant.

The Book of the Twelve then is not an end in itself. Its end is Christ. Thus, every thematic and linguistic thread of the Twelve unfolds the gospel, first promised in Genesis 3:15, traced across each subsequent book of the Bible, concluded in Christ and explained in the New Testament.

<sup>57</sup> What follows is deeply influenced by Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 92–102.

<sup>58</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 94.

## **The Kingdom of God in the Book of the Twelve**

It has been well argued that a central theme of Scripture is the kingdom of God.<sup>59</sup> It is the purpose of this project to explore the development of the kingdom of God in the Book of the Twelve from the foundational standpoint of biblical theology. But what is the kingdom of God? For the purposes of this work, we may further ask, what are the components of the kingdom of God? At minimum the kingdom of God is comprised of the divinely appointed king, the people of the king, the covenant that governs the relationships of the people with God and one another; and the realm of the king's reign, the land.

Since Scripture presents the kingdom of God as thwarted in the garden only to then be progressively reinstated across the successive divine covenants, another element related to the kingdom of God is divine warfare. There are foreign enemies of the king and breakers of covenant within his own kingdom. Scripture presents the kingdom of God progressively advancing in the context of opposition from without and covenant insurrection within. One lens through which the Twelve view divine warfare is through the exodus. From shackles to Sinai to the promised land, provides a major typological back drop and intertextual lens by which the Twelve develops the notion of the kingdom of God and divine warfare. The other is the theme of the eschatological the day of the Lord in which God exacts burning justice upon his foes and redeems his elect remnant.

The components or themes that comprise the kingdom of God are deeply intertwined, indeed nearly inseparable. As is common with the Latter Prophets, a single prophetic utterance may intermingle and unfold multiple sub-themes of the kingdom of God. This project will seek to explore four kingdom of God sub-themes: the Davidic king, exile and the second exodus, covenant, and the day of the Lord.

<sup>59</sup> E.g., see Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*; Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*; Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty*.

## **Davidic Kingship in the Twelve**

Genesis 3:15 is the first promise of the savior. Here, a son of Adam is announced who will right all the wrongs of the first father, Adam.<sup>60</sup> Knowledge of this figure grows across the covenants, highlighted by God's promise to King David that the Messiah would descend from his lineage.

Isaiah expands this understanding of Great David's Greater Son by identifying him not only as the suffering servant who himself will be given as a covenant sacrifice for the people (cf. Isa 49:1–9) but will also be God in the flesh (Isa 7:14). Fast forward to the Twelve and understanding of the person and work of the Savior grows. Amos declares, "In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old" (Amos 9:11). Micah 5:2–4 alerts us to the location of the birth of the coming king in the oft-quoted "Christmas passage." Zechariah informs us that God will "bring my servant the Branch" and that he "will remove the iniquity of the land in a single day" (Zech 3:8–9). While shrouded in mystery, the Twelve conjure hope in the hearts of exiles who long for redemption at the hands of the Lord.

## **Exile and the Second Exodus in the Twelve**

In the exodus, God vindicated himself by crushing Egyptian gods, breaking the oppressors, bedecking his people with wealth, taking them through the waters on dry ground, giving the Mosaic covenant, bringing Israel through the wilderness and the second generation into the promised land. Yet Israel kept sacrificing to idols (Hos 11:1–7). They were in need of a new exodus (Hos 11:8–11; 14:1–9). Due to their rebellion, God will bring plagues upon Israel reminiscent of Egypt (Joel 1:1–12; 2:1). Yet God's name given at Sinai will be over them once more when they return (Joel 2:12–13). Indeed, God will drive their enemies into the sea as he did

<sup>60</sup> To be precise, Jesus is designated as the "Last Adam" in 1 Cor 15:45 and as Adam's typological fulfillment in Rom 5:14. From a literary standpoint, Gen 3:15 unleashes a plot tension that requires the reader to look for a son, another Adam, who will right all the wrongs of his father. In this light, all genealogies are colored in a new expectant hue. The heads of the subsequent covenants are each stylized as another Adam in its own right and each with his own fall until Christ's advent, who is the "True Adam."

Pharaoh (Joel 2:20). Israel will be taken from the land with hooks and the pestilences of Egypt will be among them (Amos 4:2, 10). But the day is coming when peoples from many nations shall flow to the rebuilt house of the Lord (Micah 4:1–7). Israel will be exiled into Babylon, but the Lord will redeem them and rescue them from their enemies (Micah 4:10). Just as the Lord appeared as fire and cloud against Pharaoh, so too will he appear against his adversaries and flood them (Nahum 1:3, 8). Indeed, God will crush the head of the wicked for the salvation of his people (Hab 3:13). As Israel plundered the Egyptians so the remnant of God’s people will plunder the nations, be gathered for festival, and have their shame changed to praise (Zeph 2:9; 3:18–19). God’s Spirit remains in the midst of the remnant of his people, and he will shake the nations as he did in Egypt to deliver his people (Hag 2:5–6). They shall be gathered from exile (Zech 8:7–8).

### **Covenant in the Twelve**

One of the most prominent features of the Book of the Twelve is that of covenant lawsuit language towards Israel. Covenant lawsuit language indicts covenant breakers via the witness of Deuteronomy and often expands into language concerning the cosmic judgment of the nations. The focus at hand will be on the nation of Israel.

Hosea depicts Israel as a wife of whoredom (see Hos 1:2). Joel portrays Israel as drunkards (Joel 1:5). Amos indicts them for various forms of social injustice and opulent ease (Amos 6:1). Jonah embodies the lack of concern for and neglect of God’s salvific glory among the nations. Micah furthers the notions of covenant breaking through the wicked devising various species of social injustice on their beds (Mic 2:1). The list goes on.

Interwoven among these pronouncements of sin and judgment are promises of salvation and joy. Salvation is often portrayed as for those who are poor and oppressed (i.e. those not breaking covenant). Yet their salvation is inextricably tied to the work of Great David’s Greater Son. Indeed, those who are faithful to the covenant look to the promise of one day being filled with God’s Spirit (Joel 2:28–29).

## **The Day of the Lord in the Twelve**

The concept of the “day of the Lord,” a period of eschatological judgment, is introduced by Isaiah and used by all subsequent prophets. References to the concept exceed (and need not be bound by) the exact phrase. Isaiah uses the phrase three times; Jeremiah once; Ezekiel twice; and the Book of the Twelve a full twelve times across five books. The book of Zephaniah is illustrative, “The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there” (Zeph 1:14). Malachi adds that the Lord will send Elijah before the day of the Lord (Mal 4:5).

Following on the heels of the prophetic pronouncements of Isaiah through Ezekiel, the day of the Lord spoken of in the Twelve brings together a mysterious eschatological expectation: the end-time hope of God’s oppressed people. If the day of the Lord is darkness and destruction for the wicked, it is light and life for the righteous remnant. This period brings together the groanings of this present creation and looks to the advent of a New Heavens and New Earth.

### **Ministry Context**

When I first wrote this, I was serving as the Pastoral Assistant at Gresham Bible Church in Gresham, Oregon, a suburb of Portland.<sup>61</sup> Portland, and the surrounding region, is known for being a bastion of so-called alternative lifestyles and progressive ideologies. The folk motto of the town is “Keep Portland Weird.”<sup>62</sup> In the opening scene of the television show *Portlandia*, a character states, “[Portland is] the place where young people go to retire.”<sup>63</sup> Fundamental to the independent oddness of this region is the issue of identity. For Portlanders, one’s identity and understanding of the world is self-defined. Indeed, what might be considered the religion-of-self, which is as old as the fall, flourishes. In 2015, Portland had the second

<sup>61</sup> I was called to be the Senior Pastor of Flagstaff Christian Fellowship in Flagstaff, Arizona during the final stages of writing.

<sup>62</sup> [Keepportlandweird.com](http://Keepportlandweird.com), “Keep Portland Weird,” copyright 2017. A simple Google search will turn up lists of cultural oddities, most of which fail in Christian propriety.

<sup>63</sup> *Portlandia*, season 1, episode 1, aired January 21, 2011, on the IFC (formerly known as the Independent Film Channel). Discretion is advised in watching the video.

largest LGBTQ census in the nation.<sup>64</sup> In ranking America's "most sinful cities," CNN Travel declared Portland to be first in "lust" due to having the most strip clubs per capita as well as earning the title of the nation's "most promiscuous city."<sup>65</sup> Portland State University is a promoter of progressivist activism with students donating to the terrorist organization Hamas and allows students to identify as one of nine genders with another nine sexual orientations.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, one writer declared liberal Portland to be America's most politically violent city.<sup>67</sup> These are all symptoms of hearts committed to the allegiance of self. The greatest need of Portlanders is to receive and embrace the true identity offered in Christ. As Dr. James Hamilton notes, "What we think and how we live is largely determined by the larger story in which we interpret our lives."<sup>68</sup> Portlanders need the true story of the world. Biblical theology via the lens of the Book of the Twelve contributes to it.

Gresham Bible Church is not immune to these cultural leanings. Some have been saved out of distinctly "Portland" lifestyles. Others have been raised in homes that have sought to offer refuge from the very existence of those lifestyles. Together, we meet and are made new in the gospel. One of the greatest needs of the saints of Gresham Bible Church is a far more expansive understanding of the true world into which we have been saved. As Hamilton notes, "Biblical theology is a way to get into another world, the world inhabited by the biblical

<sup>64</sup> David Leonhardt and Claire Cain Miller, "The Metro Areas with the Largest, and Smallest, Gay Populations," *New York Times*, March 20, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/21/upshot/the-metro-areas-with-the-largest-and-smallest-gay-population.html>.

<sup>65</sup> Jordan Rane, "America's Most Sinful Cities: The Places to Visit to Feel Good, Not Guilty, about Your Hellish Habits," *CNN Travel*, February 15, 2012, <http://travel.cnn.com/explorations/life/americas-most-sinful-cities-021551/>. Discretion is advised in viewing this article.

<sup>66</sup> Martin Cizmar, "Portland Is Home to the Most Liberal College in America. No, Not That One," *Willamette Week*, February 8, 2017, <http://www.wweek.com/news/2017/02/07/portland-is-home-to-the-most-liberal-college-in-america-no-not-that-one/>.

<sup>67</sup> Casey Michel, "How Liberal Portland Became America's Most Politically Violent City," *Politico Magazine Online*, June 30, 2017, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/06/30/how-liberal-portland-became-americas-most-politically-violent-city-215322>.

<sup>68</sup> Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 11.

authors.”<sup>69</sup> This is not escapism from the sorrows and sufferings of this world; it is to see this world rightly and to know how to interpret and live truly in this age to the praise of God’s glorious grace.

An exploration of ways the Book of the Twelve fits in and contributes to biblical theology will equip the saints of Gresham Bible in two primary ways. First, as worshippers, they will be better prepared to understand and embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ as it unfolds across the canon of Scripture. Second, they will be better prepared to herald Jesus as ambassadors of another world calling people out of darkness and into Christ’s marvelous light.

<sup>69</sup> *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 22.



## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL METHOD AND THE CANONICAL ORDER OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

#### **Methodology**

Biblical theology understands that the Bible demands and models its own hermeneutic. Continuing in the vein of self-consciously Reformed and evangelical biblical theology, I will explore four key facets of the biblical authors' interpretive perspective.<sup>1</sup> Combined, these interpretive facets reveal the thought architecture of the biblical writers. These four facets include: the canonical facet; the progressive covenantal facet; the three-horizon facet; and a right understanding of typology. Like the facets that make up a single diamond or like the four legs providing stability to a chair, each interpretive facet is essential in understanding and embracing the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors. Miss a facet, lose a leg, and one is in danger of losing the authors' interpretive perspective.

#### **The Four Facets**

**The canonical facet.** While the Tanak ordering of the Old Testament will be established below, the significance of the shape of the Tanak and the entire canon will be

<sup>1</sup> For additional resources on interpretation and biblical theology not already referenced, see Ray Lubeck, *Read the Bible for a Change* (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2005); Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005); G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012); Peter J. Gentry, *How to Read and Understand The Biblical Prophets* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017); Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006); John H. Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995); Abner Chou, *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018).

addressed.<sup>2</sup> Scripture contains various literary genres but as a whole it is presented as a metanarrative.<sup>3</sup> The ordering of the Tanak, both at the tripartite level and book level, influences our reading strategy. Dempster acknowledges, “The overall design of Tanakh provides a hermeneutical lens through which its content can be viewed.”<sup>4</sup> He continues, “Canonization provides a literary context for all the texts, creating one Text from many.”<sup>5</sup> At the tripartite level for example, Hamilton builds on Dempster to show that the structural and locational function of the Latter Prophets and (most of) the Writings serves as “poetic commentary” on the narrative

<sup>2</sup> After acknowledging that the Old Testament was originally written on separate scrolls, only later to be combined into a book with the advent of codices, Stephen Dempster notes, “Linguistic, stylistic, and thematic devices ensured that conceptual unity was established, even if technological limitations precluded physical unity . . . . A physical unity was created to maintain the conceptual unity in much the same way that multi-volume works are stored in a special order on the same library shelf in a modern library.” Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, *New Studies in Biblical Theology* 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 21. In other words, the canonical importance and arrangement of the Tanak was inherent in the text itself (conceptual unity) even if the text was not produced and compiled all at once (temporal and physical unity). Further, see the discussion on “Canon 1” and “Canon 2” in Stephen G. Dempster, “Canons on the Right and Canons on the Left: Finding a Resolution in the Canon Debate,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52, no. 1 (March 2009): 47–77. By way of a modern literary example of the function of the “canonical level,” consider *The Lord of the Rings*. It is a single tale divided into three volumes. Each volume is subdivided into two books, and each book is subdivided into chapters. Thus, three levels (chapter, book, volume) provide a conceptual unity that unfolds the metanarrative. By analogy, the full story of *The Lord of the Rings* is only seen at the “canonical level,” which unites and makes sense of the many subplots across the saga.

<sup>3</sup> Zooming in from the canonical level to the genre level, narrative still dominates as the main form of communication in Scripture. Lubeck identifies three major types of literature in the Bible and catalogues them based on chapter count: Discourse (272 chapters or 23 percent of Scripture), Poetry (387 chapters or 33 percent of Scripture), and Narrative (502 chapters or 44 percent of Scripture). See Lubeck, *Read the Bible for a Change*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Lubeck, *Read the Bible for a Change*, 42. Gentry similarly notes, “The exegesis and interpretation of individual books is sometimes dependent on the arrangement of the canon.” Peter J. Gentry, “The Significance of Covenants in Biblical Theology,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 20, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 17. Gentry’s remark is made in light of a discussion on the location of Chronicles and the function of its interpretive bearing whether it follows Kings (per the Septuagint [LXX]) or as the last book of Tanak following Nehemiah. A similar point can be made of Ruth and whether it follows Judges or Proverbs or is prefixed to Psalms. The meaning of a book does not change based on canonical location, but its literary context does. Discourse analysis/discourse criticism acknowledges that communication and authorial intention occurs “above” the sentence level. Robert Bergen illustrates, “One of the most basic contributions that discourse analysis has made to the field of language studies is the recognition that language is multi-tiered. Like the human body, which is composed of harmoniously integrated systems composed of organs, which are made of cells consisting of subcellular structures, which integrate molecules made up of atoms, which are themselves ordered patterns of subatomic particles, so is human language hierarchically organized.” Robert D. Bergen, “Text as a Guide to Authorial Intention: An Introduction to Discourse Analysis,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30, no. 3 (September 1987): 329. Bergen continues, “Each successively higher level of textual organization influences all of the lower levels of which it is composed. Language is organized from the top down. Thus, within narrative, story-level considerations place constraints upon episodes, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, words, syllables, and letters, while word-level considerations place constraints only upon syllables and letters” (330). Understanding Scripture as metanarrative moves the biblical theologian to investigate not only books of the Bible but how the order of those books contributes to and advances the grand story.

<sup>5</sup> Lubeck, *Read the Bible for a Change*, 43.

section of Torah through Former Prophets while also prophetically looking forward to the new covenant.<sup>6</sup> Thus, an interpretive relationship exists at the book level as well as tripartite level. Biblical theology therefore, acknowledges that the ordering of the books influences interpretation.<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this work, the Book of the Twelve will be read in light of their canonical location in the Latter Prophets contributing to a poetic commentary on Genesis through Kings while prophetically looking forward to the new covenant.

**The progressive covenantal facet.** Gentry and Wellum thoroughly and convincingly demonstrate that the metanarrative of Scripture progressively unfolds and expands across six divine covenants: (1) creation covenant, (2) Noahic covenant, (3) Abrahamic covenant, (4) Mosaic covenant, (5) Davidic covenant and, (6) the new covenant.<sup>8</sup> These covenants form the backbone of Scripture.<sup>9</sup> A divine covenant may be defined as a relationship predicated upon an oath-bound commitment between God and a human partner(s). The divine covenants are not monolithic. Each is a unique (albeit related) relationship with God during a particular time, initiated for specific purposes.<sup>10</sup> At the Tanak level, while Torah unfolds the Creation, Noahic,

<sup>6</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 60–61. The narrative resumes at the end of the Writings with Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Hamilton notes that this same tripartite shape and function is discernable in the New Testament wherein Gospels-Acts provide narrative, the Epistles function as discursive commentary, and Revelation resumes as an apocalyptic narrative (64).

<sup>7</sup> A curious thought experiment in one's Bible reading would be to replace the uninspired book titles with sequential numbers, like chapters in a novel. Thus, Genesis becomes "1," Exodus "2," and so on. This experiment would yield a different literary vantage point on the metanarrative than viewing the various books of the Bible as a divine library that only have loose literary bearing on one another and can be read without respect to sequence.

<sup>8</sup> Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 22. Gentry and Wellum have deeply shaped and informed my hermeneutical understanding as evidenced in this section. They also convincingly demonstrate the presence of a creation covenant; see *Kingdom through Covenant*, chaps. 5–6. Their work is commendable.

<sup>9</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 21.

<sup>10</sup> By way of analogy, the progressive covenants of the Bible can be compared to a long-distance relay race. Each stage of the relay race represents a progressive covenant. The runner represents the head of each covenant. Passed from one runner to the next is a baton inscribed with "Genesis 3:15." Adam runs to Noah, Noah to Abraham, and so on. The central link between these covenants is the advancement and expansion of the first promise of the gospel given in Gen 3:15, which finds its end, goal, and fulfillment in the new everlasting covenant of peace in Jesus Christ (cf. Matt 5:17–18; Luke 11:31–32; 24:27, 44; 1 Pet 1:10–12). A breakdown in this covenantal analogy, however, is the wrong impression that Abraham stops running when he reaches Moses. Rather,

and Abrahamic covenants, it is dominated by the Mosaic covenant. The Former Prophets advance the narrative under the shadow of Sinai chronicling the repeated failure of Israel to keep covenant while at the same time introducing the Davidic covenant. The Latter Prophets pronounce the Mosaic covenant as broken and promise a new everlasting covenant of peace to be inaugurated by the Davidic Suffering Servant.<sup>11</sup> The Writings unfold in light of the broken Mosaic covenant and promise of the new covenant as God's people sojourn in exile. The New Testament fulfills and completes all that the Old Testament prepared for and inaugurates the eschatological era of the new covenant of Jesus Christ. Gentry argues, "it is our contention that apart from thinking through the relationships between the biblical covenants, one does not fully grasp the Bible's own intra-systematic categories and thus how the parts are related to the whole in the overall plan of God."<sup>12</sup>

**The three-horizon facet.** The progressive covenantal nature of Scripture necessitates reading the Bible from three vantage points: textual; epochal; canonical. By way of illustration, trifocals are specialized corrective eyewear with lenses divided for near, intermediate, and farsightedness. These types of glasses serve as analogy for how one must "see" any given text of Scripture. The vantage points or "horizons" as Gentry and Wellum call them, are essential for accurate exegesis.<sup>13</sup>

it is a multi-stage team race wherein each runner of a new stage joins the previous ongoing runner(s). So David joins the team of Noah, Abraham, and Moses, all running together. Each runner represents his stage, the stages build upon one another, and all reach their end, goal, and fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

<sup>11</sup> The phrase "new everlasting covenant of peace" is a composite of the terms the Latter Prophets use to describe the covenant inaugurated by Christ. Cf. "new covenant" (Jer 31:31–34), "everlasting covenant" (Jer 32:36–41; 50:2–5; Ezek 16:59–63), and "covenant of peace" (Isa 54:1–20; Ezek 34:20–31; 37:15–28). Among other things, the overarching promises of a new everlasting covenant of peace in the Latter Prophets compel attentive readers to ask, "Which David, which Zion, which temple, which Exodus, and which covenant people are being prophesied about?"

<sup>12</sup> Gentry, "The Significance of Covenants in Biblical Theology," 23. In failing to recognize the Bible's own plot-structure, Gentry contends, "How we put the themes of Scripture together and also how we emphasize some themes and de-emphasize others depends on the biblical theologian's own skill. There is no independent way to adjudicate whether the result is, in fact, the storyline of Scripture or an appropriate approximation to the biblical metanarrative" (23).

<sup>13</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 93.

The first vantage point is the “textual horizon,” the immediate context of a passage that considers the text at hand, the book in which it is found, and the specific covenantal context in which it is written. Each covenant is unique and plays by its own rules. To confuse the covenants is to confuse God’s unfolding plan and ultimately, to confuse the storyline of the gospel. This vantage point takes note of the uniqueness of a particular covenant.

Second, the “epochal horizon” considers how the text relates to the preceding covenant(s).<sup>14</sup> Although the covenants are not the same, they are related and advance God’s plan of the gospel. They interact with and inform one another. This vantage point takes note of the relationship(s) between the covenants, noting continuities and discontinuities, and how the storyline unfolds.

Finally, the “canonical horizon” interprets texts in light of the new covenant inaugurated through the person and work of Jesus Christ and the entire canon of Scripture.<sup>15</sup> No passage of Scripture can be fully interpreted until it is finally read in light of Christ’s new covenant. Indeed, to fail to read the Bible from this third horizon is to read the Bible “un-Christianly” and misinterpret the text.<sup>16</sup> Each horizon or focal point must have its proper emphasis within the metanarrative.

**The typological facet.** Crucial to interpreting Scripture is a proper understanding of typology.<sup>17</sup> Typology is a key literary feature God used to unfold the biblical narrative. Typology

<sup>14</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 94.

<sup>15</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 99.

<sup>16</sup> In John 5:39, Jesus says “You search the Scriptures because in them you think you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.” This passage is one of many indicating that the Old Testament is ultimately about Christ and that to miss him is to miss the authorial intent of the text.

<sup>17</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 102–8. A close but not synonymous relationship exists between “typology” and “mystery.” Gentry and Wellum note:

Typology is more ‘indirect’ prophecy, which corresponds well with the Pauline emphasis on ‘mystery’ (see, e.g. Eph 1:9–10; 3:1–10). In a number of places, Paul says that the gospel was hidden in the past, but now, in light of the coming of Christ, is made known and disclosed publicly for all to see. Simultaneously, then, Scripture says two things: first, the gospel was *promised* beforehand and was *clearly* revealed through the prophets (e.g., Rom 3:21), while, secondly, it was *hidden* in ages past and *not* fully known until the coming of Christ (e.g., Rom 16:25–27). How do we bring these two ideas together? A crucial way to reconcile these two ideas is through typology. Given the indirect nature of it, not only does typology require careful discernment;

consists of recurring patterns of such things as persons, promises, events, institutions, and structures that are designed by God to prepare for and point to their completion in the new covenant. They progressively connect and escalate across the covenants finding their fulfillment, end, and goal in Jesus Christ. In this sense, typology is a subset of prophecy and is therefore, “prophetic and predictive” in nature.<sup>18</sup> Typological structures are patterns designed and defined by God to lead to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Further, typological patterns serve as seams or “typological ties” between the progressive covenants effectively stitching the covenants sequentially while providing a thread of escalating continuity between the covenants. Schrock highlights the interdependent relationship between types and covenants saying, “types fill out the details of the covenants, and the covenants, in turn, provide each type . . . [with] the parameters in which they live, move, and have their being.”<sup>19</sup>

#### The progressive covenantal nature of Scripture and its interdependence with

it also requires the passing of time in order to determine how the “type” is fulfilled in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ” (104; emphasis original).

G. K. Beale and Benjamin Gladd seem to interpret a similar relationship. After evaluating every reference of “mystery” in both Testaments, they note, “With the exception of a few occurrences, the revealed mystery is in some form or another linked to Old Testament references and bound up with the person of Christ . . . . We could synthesize the New Testament data (as it pertains to mystery) as follows: Now that Christ has come, God rules and reigns over the covenant community in an unanticipated manner.” G. K. Beale and Benjamin L. Gadd, *Hidden but Now Revealed: A Biblical Theology of Mystery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 321, 326. Beale and Gladd draw the following hermeneutical implication: “Full or complete meaning is indeed actually ‘there’ in the Old Testament text; it is simply partially ‘hidden’ or latent, awaiting a later revelation, whereby the complete meaning of the text is revealed to the interpreter” (330). In other words, the Old Testament authors had some understanding or awareness that a full and final interpretation would be given but they were not privy to what the final and full meaning was (e.g., Daniel’s interpretation of Jeremiah’s seventy weeks). Sounding very similar to the understanding of typology presented here, Beale and Gladd continue, “We have repeatedly seen in all the occurrences of *mystery* that the unveiled mystery is in some way organically linked to strands of meaning in the Old Testament, however slender those strands are” (336). The description and close relationship between “typology” and “mystery” seem to clarify:

Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look (1 Pet 1:10–12).

<sup>18</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 103.

<sup>19</sup> David Schrock, “What Designates a Valid Type? A Christotelic, Covenantal Proposal,” *Southeastern Theological Review* 5, no. 1 (Summer 2014): 5–6. Underscoring the progressive covenantal nature of typology Schrock warns, “Problems occur when interpreters move directly from the type to Christ, without travelling along the path of covenantal progress. Such a hasty method, usually based on outward similarities or bare predictions, opens the door to allegory and unwarranted spiritualizing” (16).

typological structures elicits an archetype-ectype-antitype pattern.<sup>20</sup> The archetype is the basis of the type and establishes its nature. The ectypes function as intermediate and escalating installments of the type, normally across the covenants. The antitype is the end, goal, and fulfillment of the type in the person and work of Christ.<sup>21</sup> In other words, a type does not move immediately to Christ, skipping over the covenants. Rather typological patterns progressively unfold through the covenants.

Beyond the covenantal nature of types, Emadi notes four additional features essential to identifying a biblical type. A biblical type is historical, prospective, escalating, and textual.<sup>22</sup> Types are historical in that they are grounded in “actual historical events, persons, and institutions.”<sup>23</sup> They are prospective or forward looking rather than retrospective or backward looking. Types do not become types retroactively via apostolic imagination but by the apostles reading the “prospective patterns” across the covenants under the illumination of the Spirit.<sup>24</sup> Types demonstrate escalation in that they unfold and develop across the covenants under the

<sup>20</sup> Schrock, “What Designates a Valid Type?,” 17.

<sup>21</sup> Often, even though Christ is the antitype, additional expression of fulfillment is seen in his body, the church.

<sup>22</sup> Samuel Cyrus Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and the Story of Joseph: A Literary-Canonical Examination of Genesis 37–50” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 30. See also Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi, “Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 11–34.

<sup>23</sup> Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and the Story of Joseph,” 30. Types are not literary fiction; they are literary devices. As the divine Author unfolds the true story of the world in Scripture grounded in real people, places, events, and institutions, he does so from his divine perspective. For example, Joseph really was a type of Christ. The way Joseph’s life is selectively conveyed and arranged in Scripture by the Holy Spirit highlights the historical reality that he was a type. However, knowing that Joseph was a type of Christ is only truly seen and revealed in Scripture, not the historical events to which Scripture attests.

<sup>24</sup> Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and the Story of Joseph,” 33. Emadi helpfully elaborates: The fact that OT types anticipate New Covenant realities does not negate that Christ often fulfilled the OT in surprising, unexpected ways. Additionally, affirming the prospective nature of OT types does not mean that interpreters prior to Pentecost could have discerned all that the OT typologically anticipated. As Paul states, even though the Law and Prophets bore witness to Christ (Rom 1:2. 3:21; 15:8; Gal 3:8), the gospel was a ‘mystery that was kept secret for long ages’ (Rom 16:25–27). Thus, Christian interpreters after the resurrection have a privileged interpretive location in redemptive history. Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension, coupled with his apostles’ ministry and the work of illumination by the Spirit, shed light on the typological structures of the OT. Certain OT types are only discernable retrospectively. This retrospection, however, does not ‘create’ the type. The association is not reader-imposed. Instead, this retrospection is a recognition that some OT types were ‘hidden in plain sight’—only intelligible by the light of later revelation (34).

rubric of Old Testament promise and New Testament fulfillment. Types are also textual in that they are drawn from the “language, sequence, and storyline of the Bible itself” rather than conformed to an extra-textual grid imposed upon the text.<sup>25</sup> Typology is not allegory, finding esoteric hidden spiritual meaning in a passage. Typology is not analogy where “this just so happens to be like that.” Nor is typology a form of interpretive anarchy haphazardly finding Jesus in everything. In this regard, Schrock proposes that types must be demonstrably Christotelic. He states,

By *Christotelic*, I am suggesting that typology is eminently eschatological. While every type has its place in history, its historical locus is insufficient for discerning its final significance. Following Jesus’ own hermeneutic, the apostles make this assertion regularly: Christ is the end of the law (Rom 10:4), the fulfillment of every promise (2 Cor 1:20), the fullness of wisdom (Col 2:3), and the substance of the shadow (Col 2:17; Heb 10:1) . . . when the antitype is Christ himself, it is possible to see a long line of mini-types proceeding from the first historical type to Christ himself.<sup>26</sup>

A Christotelic understanding of typology is covenantally and canonically aware that Christ has been the driving force and unfolding goal of Scripture from the very beginning (John 5:39; Luke 24:27, 44). The term *Christotelic* is arguably more precise—and, in my estimation, better—than the commonly used *Christocentric* in describing how Jesus and his new covenant “show up” in the Old Testament while at the same time being the end and goal to which the metanarrative leads. In sum, a biblical type is historical, textual, progressive, prospective, covenantal, escalating, and Christotelic.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Emadi avers, “Correspondences between events which contravene or go beyond Scriptural testimony cannot be considered types since these correspondences emerge from readers’ imaginations and not from the exegetical data.” Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and the Story of Joseph,” 35.

<sup>26</sup> Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and the Story of Joseph,” 6, 24. Schrock understands his covenantal, Christotelic approach to typology to be a *via media* between typological minimalists and maximalists. While leaning towards Goldsworthy’s maximalist approach, Schrock presents a more constrained position that moves away from Goldsworthy’s “Christocentric” presuppositionalism to a “Christotelic” model akin to that of Beale. See Schrock, “What Designates a Valid Type?,” 3–26. Beale states, “I like this term *christotelic* better than *christocentric*, since it refers more explicitly to approaching Old Testament texts without attempting to read Christ into every passage—something which some wrongly construe to be a Christocentric reading. The goal of the whole Old Testament is to point to the eschatological coming of Christ.” G. K. Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 86.

<sup>27</sup> By way of illustration, the unfolding and expanding of typological structures across the covenants can be likened to the dawning of the sun over a mountain range. As the sun rises (across the covenantal landscape), the uniform black backdrop of the mountain range takes on more depth, texture, and hue (meaning) as it becomes



## **Biblical Theological Method in Summary**

The operative definition of biblical theology in this work is a hermeneutical discipline in and for the church that seeks to understand and embrace the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors on their own terms and canonical contexts as they progressively unfold and escalate across the divine covenants in light of the overarching Christotelic metanarrative. Inherent in this definition is the canonical awareness that the Christotelic metanarrative progressively unfolds across the six divine covenants necessitating a three-horizon reading of a given text while being observant of the prospective typological ties that stitch the covenants together. Gentry argues a progressive covenantal approach provides the basis to adjudicate and arbitrate between any and all biblical theological proposals.<sup>28</sup> Biblical theology, then, is the blueprint for reading the Bible according to its own terms and is the basis for proper interpretation.

### **A Biblical Theological Understanding of Canonical Order**

If understanding and embracing the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors is fundamental to the task of biblical theology, then that seemingly includes reading Scripture with the same “shape” or “book order” as the biblical authors. Canon criticism or the study of the “shape” of the Bible refers to the ordering of the biblical books and the accompanying literary influence that order has on interpretation. Sailhamer notes, “canon criticism addresses the question of the meaning of the biblical texts in their present form in the Old Testament canon.”<sup>29</sup> He continues, “The major task of a canonical analysis of the Hebrew Bible is to understand the

increasingly visible to the watchful eye. Once the sun has fully risen (light of the new covenant), the breadth and depth of the mountain range can full be appreciated. This analogy speaks to the reality that “typological ties” become increasingly visible as they progress across the covenants.

<sup>28</sup> Gentry, “The Significance of Covenants in Biblical Theology,” 22–24. Schrock similarly states, “Because biblical covenants unify the canon without reducing Scripture’s epochal diversity, they form an appropriate biblical backdrop for testing the validity of any typological relationship.” Schrock, “What Designates a Valid Type?,” 26.

<sup>29</sup> Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 97.

peculiar shape and special function of the books that comprise the Hebrew canon [focused] on the final form of the text itself.”

To press the issue of the canonical ordering of the books of the Old Testament may, to some at the lay level, seem arcane and ancillary—an “ivory tower” endeavor without benefit or bearing on biblical interpretation or life in the local church.<sup>30</sup> As this section will reveal, however, canonical order does, in fact, affect interpretation. Indeed, if the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors was furnished by a particular order of books endorsed and authenticated by Jesus, then the burden of proof of why the books should *not* be in canonical order lies with dissenters. What follows is a brief defense and demonstration of the tripartite canonical order of the Old Testament, or the Tanak, as a critical feature of biblical theology.<sup>31</sup> I will argue that the modern ordering of the books of the Old Testament is a deviation from what the “canonicler”<sup>32</sup> intended, what intertestamental writings affirm, and what Jesus and the

<sup>30</sup> Curiously and anecdotally, changing the order of the books of English Bibles is well received in other contexts. The Bible publishing industry of the Western world has produced a multitude of “Chronological Bibles” that dissect, conflate, and relocate Scripture in historical order without regard to authorial intent or literary design. Their continued publication seems to evidence they have been embraced by consumers. One publisher notes:

The canonical order presents a dilemma. To understand the Bible the reader must understand something of the history to which the Bible refers. At the same time, though, the historical background is not readily apparent from the order of the books in the Bible itself. *The Chronological Study Bible* makes the Bible’s historical background more accessible by rearranging the Bible text. (*The Chronological Study Bible: New International Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2014), xiii).

In other words, the publishers contend that canonical order makes the Bible less intelligible, whereas chronological order helps the reader truly make sense of the Bible. Statements such as this are part of the problem, not the solution. I would argue that part of the dilemma is that there were no Christian Bibles in canonical order at the time of writing.

<sup>31</sup> TaNak is an acronym for the three-fold ordering of the Old Testament: *Torah* (Law/Pentateuch), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), *Kethubim* (Writings). Notably over the last thirty years, an increasing number of evangelical biblical theologians and Old Testament theologians have firmly embraced and based their works on the Tanak order. A brief sampling includes Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*; Paul R. House, *Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1998); William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel: A Theological Survey of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002); Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*; Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*; Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*; Miles V. Van Pelt, ed., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016). Thomas Schreiner, on the other hand, dissents, asking, “Should the canon be explored in terms of its Hebrew order or Christian order? Some regard this issue to be of major importance, but its significance is exaggerated. In my judgment, the central themes of the OT theology are not affected dramatically whether one follows the Hebrew order or the order used in English translations.” Thomas R. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), xv–xvi.

<sup>32</sup> A designation coined by Sailhamer referring to the (presumed) individual (Ezra?) who gave the canon its final shape. See Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 240. On Sailhamer’s use of “canonicler,” Dempster explains, “This person provided a lucid perspective for viewing the material, stitching the major divisions of the biblical books with literary seams that emphasized the text’s authority, eschatology, and importance as an

authors of the New Testament confirm. Five prominent lines of evidence will be examined in chronological order; the Old Testament, *Ecclesiasticus* by Jesus Ben Sirah, Qumran 4QMMT, the New Testament, and Philo.

### **Evidence for Canonical Order: The Old Testament**

The first line of evidence for canonical order looks at the Old Testament for textual clues that may affirm or deny tripartite order. First, the opening of each section of the Tanak principally deals with the Word of God: In Torah Genesis 1 opens with God speaking into existence creation; In the Prophets Joshua 1 opens with admonitions to obey God's Word; In the Writings Psalm 1 begins with the blessed man who delights in God's Word.

Second, from the opposite vantage point, the ending of each section of the Tanak is thematically linked: Deuteronomy concludes Torah and ends with the death of Moses and the lingering promise of another prophet like Moses (Deut 34:1–12); Malachi closes the Prophets and ends mentioning both Moses and the return of the prophet Elijah (Mal 4:4–6); Chronicles concludes the Writings and ends with Israel's exodus from exile in Babylon and the expectant hope of the prophet (2 Chr 36:15–16, 22–23). Thus, thematic links stitch the opening and closing of the Tanak.

Third, moving internally from the bookends of each section of the Tanak, verbal and thematic elements stitch together the "seams" connecting the closing of one division and the opening of another. The end of Torah (Deuteronomy) and beginning of the Prophets (Joshua) are stitched together with unique discussion surrounding Joshua (Deut 34:9–12; Josh 1:1–9). The seams between the Former (Kings) and Latter Prophets (Isaiah) are stitched together as Kings describes the fall and captivity of Israel and the beginning of the Latter provides commentary on

object of unity. The larger design of the Text and the sequence of the books within it are also important, since they provide the hermeneutical lens for the text. Since readers of a text always 'seek to understand the parts in light of the whole,' preceding and succeeding content constrains meaning. . . . The received Tanakh structure is in the form of a literary narrative that cuts across the neat tripartite divisions. The narrative frame gives literary cohesion to the biblical text." Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 39; quoting Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 214.

that Fall (cf. 2 Kgs 25 with Isa 1). The end of the Prophets (Malachi) and beginning of the Writings (Psalms) are stitched together as Malachi 4:1–5 ends with a focus on the Law as well as God coming to “strike the land with a decree of utter destruction,” and Psalms 1–2 opens with the blessing of obeying God’s law and the admonition that the Son “shall break [the nations] with a rod of Iron and dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel” (Mal 4:1–6 ; Ps 1:1; 2:1–12).

Commenting on the verbal stitching between Torah and the Prophets, Dempster notes,

This is too coincidental to be anything less than a deliberate editorial strategy in which one section of the canon is closed, and the context sketched for the next. . . . This new division has been anticipated, validated, and yet somehow subordinated to the Torah since Moses is still regarded as the pre-eminent prophet. . . . Can it be an accident that at the end of the next section of the canon there is mention of the coming of a prophet who was most like Moses in the Hebrew Bible?<sup>33</sup>

Sailhamer also notes, “If we pull back and view the TaNaK in terms of its boundary markers, comparing Deuteronomy 34 with Malachi 3 and Joshua 1 with Psalm 1, we can see a remarkably coherent line of thought.”<sup>34</sup> Thus there is remarkable literary symmetry in the Tanak.

The beginning, end, and internal seams of each section are connected. Sailhamer concludes,

The Hebrew Bible as we now have it comes to us with a particular shape: the TaNaK (the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings). It appears that this shape was not an historical accident, but rather the result of a deliberate attempt to establish certain fundamental notions about the Hebrew Bible. Specifically, it was an attempt to provide an apologetic for the Hebrew Canon itself. That apologetic was necessary, it appears, in light of the decline of the role or prophecy and the growing importance of the written Word as a means for determining the will of God.

The presence of these verbal and thematic seams that stitch the Tanak together is what Dempster calls, “an extraordinary fact.”<sup>35</sup> A discernable literary design has been woven into the fabric of the Old Testament by the canonizer that yields an interpretive shape to the text. As with any

<sup>33</sup> Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 55–56.

<sup>34</sup> Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 249.

<sup>35</sup> Dempster’s “extraordinary fact” will be discussed further in chapter 3. See Stephen G. Dempster, “An ‘Extraordinary Fact’: Torah and Temple and the Contours of the Hebrew Canon: Part 1,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 48, no. 1 (1997): 23–56; Dempster, “An ‘Extraordinary Fact’: Torah and Temple and the Contours of the Hebrew Canon: Part 2,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 48, no. 1 (1997): 191–218. See also Dempster, “Canons on the Right and Canons on the Left,” 47–77.

literary work that ultimately presents itself as narrative, the ordering of the books influences the reading of the text. Texts are not read in a vacuum but in an unfolding relationship with one another. At the very least, this evidence for intentional shape includes the tripartite ordering of the text that positions key books at the beginning and end of each division.

### **Evidence for Canonical Order: *Ecclesiasticus/Ben Sirach***

The second line of evidence for a canonical order comes from the apocryphal work *Ecclesiasticus* by Jesus Ben Sirach circa 200 to 175 BC along with the appended prologue by his grandson who translated the work from Hebrew into Greek circa 132 BC.<sup>36</sup> Among other things, this work is a large collection of Old Testament quotes and allusions that function like a commentary on the Old Testament. The prologue notes,

My grandfather Jesus, who had devoted himself especially to the reading of *the Law and the Prophets and the other books of our ancestors*, and had acquired considerable proficiency in them, was himself also led to write something pertaining to instruction and wisdom, so that by becoming familiar also with his book those who love learning might make even greater progress in living according to the law. (Sirach Prologue NRSV; emphasis added).<sup>37</sup>

Chapters 44–49 bear a structural similarity to Hebrews 11 tracing a godly lineage of “famous men” (Sirach 44:1 NRSV). Sirach’s lineage ordering follows the chronology of Torah through the Former Prophets (Enoch to Josiah [Sirach 44:1–49:7]), the Latter Prophets (Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Prophets [Sirach 49:8–10]),<sup>38</sup> and the Writings (Zerubbabel, Joshua, Nehemiah [Sirach 49:11–16]).<sup>39</sup> The final list and order of names following the Twelve

<sup>36</sup> Paul D. Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 41.

<sup>37</sup> The language of the grandson clearly presumes that the work of Sirach is not part of “the law.” Rather the aim of the work is to help those who “live according to the law” make “even greater progress” in the law (Sirach Prologue). The grandson’s use of “law” seems to function as a catchall for his thrice-repeated phrase “the Law and the Prophets and the other books.”

<sup>38</sup> Isaiah’s absence among the list of Latter Prophets is curious in Sirach 49:6–10. It is likely due to the fact that Isaiah was previously mentioned twice with regard to his ministry to Hezekiah in Sirach 48:20–22. Ben Sirach’s mention and use of the Twelve will be explored further in the next chapter.

<sup>39</sup> Zerubbabel and Joshua being central figures in Ezra-Nehemiah.

seem out of place as the text abruptly returns to some of the earliest names in Scripture roughly tracing them in reverse chronological order (Sirach 49:14–16).<sup>40</sup> It is very plausible that Sirach was forming an inclusio since he began and (almost) concluded with Enoch. While this is fitting, it is likely that Sirach also has the opening lines of Chronicles in mind which lists five of these six men in the first four verses (1 Chr 1:1–4).<sup>41</sup> If this is the case, Sirach brilliantly reverses the chronology of the names in Chronicles to end his survey of the Tanak forming an inclusio while at the same time distinguishing Scriptural heroes from intertestamental heroes.<sup>42</sup> If correct, then Sirach references a third section of Scripture following the Law and Prophets ordered with Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles.

The prologue to *Ecclesiasticus* clarifies this point, stating, “Many great teachings have been given to us through *the Law and Prophets and the others that followed them . . .* so my grandfather Jesus, who had devoted himself especially to the reading of *the Law and the Prophets and the other books of our ancestors . . .* even *the Law itself, the Prophecies, and the rest of the books . . .*” (emphasis added). Three times the prologue refers to a tripartite division of the Old Testament. The section called, “the other books,” seems at the very least to have concluded with Chronicles as discussed above.

Beckwith underscores the fact that the language the grandson uses for a third section testifies to a distinct body of literature recognized as authoritative in their day.<sup>43</sup> To the original audience, “other books” would likely have meant a specific body of works rather than an undefined and open section. The grandson’s preface intimates that Sirach was in essence a

<sup>40</sup> Enoch, Joseph, Shem, Seth, Enosh, Adam.

<sup>41</sup> Admittedly, Joseph is out of place in Sirach’s list.

<sup>42</sup> One possible explanation for Sirach ending with Adam is to bracket off this section of famous men from the final man, Simon Ben Onias, beginning in Sirach 50:1. Simon was an intertestamental figure. It seems Sirach’s literary function of listing Adam last functions to (1) bring a conclusion to biblical history with reference to the position of Chronicles as the (presumed) last book and (2) to distinguish between biblical history and intertestamental history.

<sup>43</sup> Roger T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 111.

devotional commentary on the three-fold division and ordering of the Old Testament. Further, the fact that the grandson did not define what he meant by “*the law and the prophets and the other books*” (emphasis added) lends credibility to the notion that the community to which he and his grandfather wrote understood the Scripture to be ordered in this way. If there had been a concern by the author that he might be misunderstood as to what was meant by “the law” or “the prophets” or “the other books,” it would seem likely he would have specified their meaning.

Dempster notes there is a “clear separation between the five books of the Torah and the Prophets, with Joshua considered to be a prophet . . . [with] one group of heroes called by the name of a book: The Twelve.”<sup>44</sup> The implication of these final chapters is that Sirach, his contemporaries, and grandson understood the Old Testament canon to exist in three broad divisions of Law, Prophets, and “the other books.” Taken together, *Ecclesiasticus* demonstrates that the intertestamental community understood their Hebrew Bible to be composed of a three-fold division. Notably for this study, this included the twelve Minor Prophets as a single book.

### **Evidence for Canonical Order: Qumran 4QMMT**

The third line of evidence comes from Qumran fragments 4QMMT dated to the first or second century BC. This collection of fragments are also known as the Halakhic Letter or the Sectarian Manifesto and are part of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Dempster notes, “the designation of ‘Law and Prophets’ is found consistently, and it is possible to interpret a third category as ‘David,’ based on the reading of the text, although the text is clearly fragmentary . . . , [possibly] refer[ing] to a third section of the canon initiated by the Psalms.”<sup>45</sup> Interpretation of this fragment is varied and debated yet based on the evidence thus far, I agree with Dempster’s assessment that a tripartite reading of the fragment is likely.

<sup>44</sup> Dempster, “Canons on the Right and Canons on the Left,” 59–60.

<sup>45</sup> Dempster, “Canons on the Right and Canons on the Left,” 62.

## **Evidence for Canonical Order: The New Testament**

The fourth line of evidence is from the New Testament. First, there are numerous occasions in which the writers of the New Testament refer to the Old Testament as a whole. Outside the common term “Scriptures,” the body of Old Testament literature is explicitly referred to as the “Law and Prophets” thirteen times, primarily by Christ.<sup>46</sup> In each of these instances, audiences understood “Law and Prophets” to refer to the entirety of the Old Testament. This phrase points to a shared grammar between speaker and audience. The “Law and the Prophets” was short-hand for not only the Old Testament in general but for its divisions and ordering in particular. The lack of explanation of this phrase by the New Testament writers indicates this ordering was common knowledge. Jesus did not need to explain what he meant by “Law and Prophets” to his audience(s). Neither did Philip to Nathanael nor Paul before Felix, before Agrippa, and to the church in Rome (John 1:45; Acts 24:14; 26:22; Rom 3:21). Indeed, Luke’s narrative of the synagogue in Antioch intimates it was customary to read from the “Law and Prophets” every Sabbath day (Acts 13:13).

Second, in both Luke 24:27 and 24:44, Jesus refers to the whole tripartite canon as Law, Prophets, and Psalms. It is worthwhile to pause and ponder what may have been Jesus’s logic in referencing Tanak order. On the one hand, Jesus could have just as easily referred to the differing order of the Septuagint to make his point or to validate it as the text tradition to follow.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, if order was unimportant, he could have used the simpler and more common term, the Scriptures, in order to avoid confusion by seeming to elevate one text tradition over another (the Tanak versus the LXX) or to avoid intimating that any ordering of books

<sup>46</sup> By Christ: Matt 5:17; 7:12; 11:13; 22:40; Luke 16:16; 24:27, 44. By Philip: John 1:45. Luke narrates that the synagogue leaders in Antioch read from these two sections in Acts 13:15. The apostle Paul cites them before Felix (Acts 24:14), before King Agrippa (Acts 26:22), and as his custom in evangelizing the Jews in (Acts 28:23; cf. Rom 3:21). Each of these passages follows the order of “Law and Prophets,” except on two occasions, when they are reversed in Matt 11:13 and Acts 26:22.

<sup>47</sup> The Septuagint (LXX) is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament circa 250 BC. The writers of the New Testament frequently cite or loosely quote from the LXX, validating it as Scripture. Yet the LXX presents a different ordering of the books of the Old Testament from that of the Tanak referenced in Sirach, Qumran, Philo, and the New Testament. The reason for the deviation of LXX is not entirely clear.



mattered at all. The fact that Jesus chose the Tanak against the options available indicates he had a specific text tradition in mind. Jesus's choice of Tanak lends further support to the notion that book sequence is significant.

Third, further indicators of the full tripartite ordering include when Jesus spoke of “the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah” (Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51). Not only was this a reference to the first and last murders recorded in canonical order (Genesis and Chronicles respectively), it is also another confirmation of a third division with Chronicles presumably at the end.<sup>48</sup> The singular witness of the New Testament is that the Old Testament was ordered, read, and referred to as Law, Prophets, and Psalms.<sup>49</sup>

### **Evidence for Canonical Order: Philo**

The fifth line of evidence is from Philo (c. 20 BC–AD 50), an early first-century Alexandrian philosopher. In *De Vita Contemplativa* 25 he clearly references the tripartite order of

<sup>48</sup> Three other instances from the New Testament are of note. While inconclusive on their own, when read in light of the evidence at hand, they seem to lend further weight to the tripartite division of the Old Testament. The first is the appearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:3–4; Mark 9:4; Luke 9:30). The interpreter must question why these two figures. Why not Adam, Abraham, David, or Isaiah? Notably, Moses represented the law, which he mediated and wrote, and Elijah represented the prophets of whom he was considered foremost until John (2 Kgs 2:11; Mal 4:5; Matt 11:11–15). The selection of Moses and Elijah intimates a representation of the Word of God as Law and Prophets. Second, Hebrews 11 traces the lineage of the old covenant faithful. This lineage begins with creation and extends to David (Heb 11:1–32). This ordering of names reflects the canonical order of Law and Former Prophets. The author then mentions “Samuel and the prophets” and proceeds to highlight the various ministries of unnamed prophets. This movement seems to be a strong indicator that author is now thinking broadly of the second section of the canon, specifically the Latter Prophets. For example, Jeremiah was “beaten” and put in “chains” (Heb 11:36; cf. Jer 20:2; 37:15). Amos was “mocked” (Heb 11:36; cf. Amos 7:10–17). Tradition indicates that Isaiah was “sawn in two.” See Thomas R. Schreiner, *Hebrews*, Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation (Nashville: B & H, 2015), 372. Curiously, in Hebrews 11:33–34, the author notes those who “stopped the mouths of lions” (cf. Dan 6:22) and those who “quenched the power of fire” (cf. Dan 3:25). The two-fold reference to Daniel following broad stroke comments of the prophets may reveal that the three-fold division of the Old Testament shapes the authors thinking. Admittedly, after referencing Daniel, the author returns to further feats of the prophets. These feats, however, are broadly representative of what happened to prophets in general, and there is a strong possibility that references such as Nehemiah 9:26–30 and 2 Chronicles 16:7–10; 24:20–21; 30:10; 36:15 were in the writers' mind. At the very least, the writer of Hebrew's thinking conclusively traces Law, Former Prophets, and Latter Prophets. Third, it appears that the tripartite division of the Scriptures also undergirds the writer of Hebrew's argument for “rest” in chaps 3–4. The author's theological conclusion on “rest” is rooted in the timing and interplay of Moses, Joshua, and the Psalms, of which each also represents the tripartite order. Even though the author's arguments hinge upon the chronology of these Scriptures (Heb 4:7–8), it would be anachronistic to presume that he has any other ordering of Scripture in mind than the tripartite ordering.

<sup>49</sup> Granted, the third division, *Kethubim*, receives less attention than the other two, but it is present, nevertheless. Jesus's use of “Psalms” in the context of Luke 24:44 has every indication of being used as a synecdoche extending beyond itself to a third section of books, just as “Law and Prophets” reference a series of books.

the Old Testament, “(the) Laws, and (the) Oracles given by inspiration through (the) prophets and (the) Psalms, and the other books by whereby knowledge and piety are increased and completed.” Beckwith notes that Philo’s reference to “other books” is not likely to be a fourth section of Scripture but instead a reference to books outside the canon considered valuable.<sup>50</sup>

### **Conclusion for Canonical Shape**

While additional witnesses from the second century and beyond could be marshalled to further substantiate the Tanak order, the evidence at hand, both internal and external, demonstrates that the Bible is meant to be read in canonical order. Far from being arbitrary or novel, the very presence of the canonizer’s redactions indicate that Scripture was intended to be read this way. Hamilton goes so far as to say that redactions were presumably done under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.<sup>51</sup> Further, Jesus’s confirmation of the Tanak, even his use of it to make theological points (as does the author of Hebrews) indicates canonical order has interpretive bearing on the text. If the task of biblical theology includes embracing the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors and if the biblical authors read and made theological points based on the three-fold division of Scripture, then the Christian interpreter is to do the same. Beckwith’s statements concluding his chapter on the order of the canonical books states,

The further back the traditional order can be traced, therefore, the further back can the closing of the canon be traced. If in Jesus’ day it was accepted fact that the last book of the canon was Chronicles, just as the first book was Genesis, then this confirms that the traditional order was already in existence and was more generally followed than any one order has been since. For if the first and last books were settled, in accordance with the traditional order, the natural inference is that the intervening books were also settled, in accordance with the traditional order, and that consequently the canon was closed. So, despite the later fluidity of order which both Jewish and Christian tradition reflect, the earliest evidence is of a single, agreed order, and since this order is referred to by Jesus, it provides a measure of confirmation that the closing of the canon had already taken place by

<sup>50</sup> Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the Church*, 117.

<sup>51</sup> Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*, 64.

Jesus' time.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, the Tanak is the earliest attested order of the Old Testament and informs the Christocentric reading that is affirmed by Jesus himself. As it pertains to this work, the Book of the Twelve is read in the literary light of its canonical position following the Former Prophets, residing at the end of the quartet of Latter Prophets but preceding and informing the Writings.

<sup>52</sup> Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the Church*, 222.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE COMPOSITIONAL UNITY OF THE TWELVE: HISOTRICAL AND INTERTEXTUAL EVIDENCE

In the field of canonical studies, Stephen Dempster has noted it is a “remarkable fact” that the Old Testament is intentionally arranged in the Tanak order.<sup>1</sup> This intentional arrangement is evidenced by a clustering of linguistic and thematic features converging at the seams of three sections of the Hebrew Old Testament. These features “stitch” the canon in a particular, intended order, an order that is not just physical but conceptual. This purposeful arrangement is theological in nature, influences the reading of the canon as a whole, and is arguably intended by the Holy Spirit.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate the “remarkable fact” regarding the canon is likewise, a “remarkable fact” for the Book of the Twelve. The thesis of this chapter is that the so-called Minor Prophets are to be read as a compositional unity known as the Book of the Twelve rather than a loosely related collection of prophets. Beyond physical and conceptual unity, compositional unity implies the existence of unique literary features that tie the Twelve into a single unit. While not denying the historicity of the twelve individual prophets, compositional unity implies an interpretive framework, drawn from the text itself, that indicates the Twelve are designed to read as a collective whole.

As recent as 1993, James Nogalski could remark concerning the Twelve, “Fresh translation of relevant passages reveal that the seams between the writings of the Book of the Twelve exhibit a remarkably consistent phenomenon *which has received little scholarly*

<sup>1</sup> See Stephen G. Dempster, “An ‘Extraordinary Fact’: Torah and Temple and the Contours of the Hebrew Canon: Part 1,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 48, no. 1 (1997): 23–56; Dempster, “An ‘Extraordinary Fact’: Torah and Temple and the Contours of the Hebrew Canon: Part 2,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 48, no. 1 (1997): 191–218.

*attention.*”<sup>2</sup> The presence of stitch-words, which are literary features that link the end of one book with the beginning of the next, signal that the twelve Minor Prophets are to be read as a single book.<sup>3</sup> This chapter is not an attempt at reconstructing the redactional history of the Twelve. Rather, this chapter will approach the Twelve according to their final, canonical form in pursuit of discovering their compositional unity.

This study will begin with a survey of historical evidence for the unity of the Twelve. Next, an investigation of stitch-word phenomena between the seams of the twelve books will be undertaken. Lastly, three passages from the New Testament will be examined to discover if the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors viewed the Twelve as a book or as a collection of prophets.

### **Historical Evidence for the Compositional Unity of the Twelve**

Interpreters can read the same biblical texts and reach different conclusions. Sound hermeneutical principles and historical awareness can help mitigate disagreement or at least help interpreters understand each other better. This is true for the Twelve. By and large, among lay evangelical Christians, it is taken for granted that the twelve Minor Prophets are a loose collection of prophetic material. At the scholarly level, various evangelical commentary series demonstrates this same perspective that the Twelve are not a compositional unity and are to be read as individual works.<sup>4</sup> But has viewing the Minor Prophets as a loose collection of prophetic

<sup>2</sup> Emphasis added. James Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 217 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 20. A comprehensive bibliography of works (1987–2017) that exclusively address the Twelve to varying degrees as a unity may be found online at Charles Convoy, “The Book of the Twelve Prophets as a Whole: General Studies,” *Biblical Bibliographies*, last modified December 8, 2019, <https://www.cjconroy.net/bib/twelve-studies.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> Nogalski uses the term “catchwords” translated from the German *stichwörter* (“stitch-words”). The research surrounding these phenomena frequently uses descriptive terms such as “seams” and “threads” that are “stitched” together. Therefore, I find “stitch-words” to be a more clarifying phrase than “catchwords.”

<sup>4</sup> There are simply no Christian commentary sets that treat the Twelve as a compositional unity except for James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011); Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011). As the writing of this thesis was underway, Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library

material always been so? To answer this question, a survey of historical witnesses to the Twelve will be undertaken. This survey will examine eleven historical sources to ascertain how the ancients viewed the Twelve—as a unity or twelve loosely related prophets.

### **Ecclesiasticus/Ben Sirach (c. 200 BC)**

Ben Sirach 44–49 are a catalogue of “famous men” that demonstrate Sirach is thinking through the Old Testament in the Tanak order. After referencing the prophets Isaiah (48:23–25), Jeremiah (49:6), and Ezekiel (49:8), Sirach 49:10 states, “May the bones of the Twelve Prophets send forth new life from where they lie, for they comforted the people of Jacob and delivered them with confident hope” (NRSV). In Sirach, the prophets are depicted as buried together and that their words collectively comforted Jacob. Based on Sirach’s meticulous listing of names for six consecutive chapters, referencing “the Twelve Prophets” hardly seems to be a shorthand time saver from listing each of the twelve prophets individually. Instead, the language demonstrates that a degree of unique relationship exists among the Twelve that is not shared with Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel. Indeed, Sirach refers to the Twelve as a plural unit. If he had Isaiah-Ezekiel in mind he could have said, “the Fifteen Prophets.” The phrasing indicates the Twelve shared a unique relationship with one another that they did not share with other prophetic literature. Sirach’s language dually acknowledges the Twelve are both a unit (“the Twelve”) and a collective (“Prophets”). It is not evident from Sirach if the Twelve are a compositional unity, but it is evident they were a conceptual unity.

### **Qumran 4QXII<sub>a-c,e</sub> (c. 150–25 BC)**

Qumran combines the Twelve together in a single scroll. This convention does not prove the compositional unity of the Twelve yet neither does it disprove it. Redditt notes that Qumran manuscript evidence shows that the order of the Twelve in the Masoretic text goes back

(Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018), was published.

to at least 150 BC<sup>5</sup> The significance of Qumran then, is that the Twelve were organized as a physical unity. Taken with Sirach, the intertestamental period shows the Twelve were both a physical and conceptual unity.

### **Nahal Hever 8HevXII gr (c. 50 BC–AD 50)**

Nahal Hever 8HevXIIgr is a Greek Minor Prophets scroll that reflects Hebrew rather than Septuagint order.<sup>6</sup> The scroll contains parts of Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Zechariah.<sup>7</sup> Significant to Nahal Hever is that it maintains both the compilation and order of the Twelve evidenced in Qumran.

### **Josephus (c. AD 37–100)**

Josephus was a first-century Jewish historian. In his work *Against Apion* 1.8, he states, “For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, as the Greeks have, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all past time; which are justly believed to be divine.”<sup>8</sup> Josephus divides these twenty-two books as five from Moses, thirteen recording events from Moses to Artaxerxes, and four contain hymns and precepts (*Ag. Ap.* 1.8). Redditt emphatically notes that “the Twelve would not have been omitted and could not have been counted individually.”<sup>9</sup> It is important to highlight that Josephus’s numeric listing of the Hebrew canon would become the standard measurement device among canon lists for nearly the next millennia (a topic that will be explored below).

<sup>5</sup> Paul L. Redditt, “The Formation of the Book of the Twelve: A Review of Research,” in *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*, edited by Paul L. Redditt and Aaron Schart, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 325 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 1.

<sup>6</sup> The Septuagint order diverges from Hebrew order in the first six books listing Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, and Jonah.

<sup>7</sup> Michael B. Shepherd, *The Twelve Prophets in the New Testament*, Studies in Biblical Literature 140 (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 2.

<sup>8</sup> Flavius Josephus, *The Works of Josephus*, trans. William Whiston, rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 776.

<sup>9</sup> Redditt, “The Formation of the Book of the Twelve,” 1n3.

### **MurXIII (c. AD 75–100)**

MurXII is a Hebrew scroll of the Twelve from the Judean wilderness. Similar to the Qumran evidence above, it follows traditional Hebrew order and contains parts of Joel through Zechariah.<sup>10</sup>

### **Melito (c. 170)**

Melito was the bishop of Sardis. Ellis notes that in answering questions concerning the number and order of the Hebrew books Melito replied, “. . . of the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Twelve in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Esdras.”<sup>11</sup> Melito explicitly notes what is presumed with Josephus, that the Twelve are counted as one book.

### **Baba Bathra 14b (c. AD 200)**

Baba Bathra is a Baraita of the Babylonian Talmud. A Baraita is rabbinic discussion or commentary written around the time of the Mishna (AD 200) but not included in it. The Baraita, which Ellis notes is signaled by the opening phrase, “our rabbis taught,” likely dates before AD 200.<sup>12</sup> The tractate reads, “Our rabbis taught that the order of the Prophets is Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, the Twelve.” The significance of this Baraita is that it is not concerned with the limits of the canon but the identity and order of the books.<sup>13</sup> For the case at hand, that Baraita is concerned to show that the twelve so-called Minor Prophets are counted as one book, the Twelve. Indeed, the rabbis did not even delineate which books (and their order) comprised the Twelve. The lack of further explanation presumes what was meant by “the Twelve” was common knowledge. Baba Bathra and Melio demonstrate that, by the end of the second century, both Christian and Jewish traditions continued to view the Twelve as a

<sup>10</sup> Shepherd, *The Twelve Prophets*, 3.

<sup>11</sup> E. Earle Ellis, “The Old Testament Canon in the Early Church,” in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin Jan Mulder and Harry Sysling (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 658–59.

<sup>12</sup> Ellis, “The Old Testament Canon,” 660.

<sup>13</sup> Ellis, “The Old Testament Canon,” 660.



conceptual unity counted as one book.

### **Athanasius (AD 367)**

David Brakke notes that Athanasius of Alexandria's thirty-ninth *Festal Letter* "remains one of the most significant documents in the history of the Christian Bible."<sup>14</sup> In the Letter, Athanasius numbers the Old Testament as twenty-two books and states, "And finally the Prophets, the twelve being reckoned as one book . . ." Here again, the Twelve are counted as one book.

### **Jerome (AD 331–420)**

Jerome of Bethlehem produced the Latin Vulgate Bible circa AD 390. Jerome intended the Vulgate to follow the order and count of the Hebrew Old Testament against the Septuagint and to exclude the apocryphal works (although he eventually added some).<sup>15</sup> Ellis notes that a preface of Jerome's lists the books of the Old Testament with both their Hebrew and Latin names in the Tanak order and enumerates the books as Law (5), the Prophets (8), and the Hagiographa (9).<sup>16</sup> Jerome's organization of the Old Testament in tripartite order, with the Twelve counted as single book, harkens all the way back to Ben Sirach. Nogalski and Sweeney note, "In his introduction to the Twelve Prophets in the Vulgate, Jerome states, *unum librum esse duodecim Propetarum*, 'the Twelve Prophets are one book.'"<sup>17</sup>

At some point after Jerome, likely the early medieval period, the Vulgate was rearranged to follow the book order of the Septuagint along with the addition of the

<sup>14</sup> David Brakke, "A New Fragment of Athanasius' Thirty-Ninth Festal Letter: Hersey, Apocrypha, and the Canon," *Harvard Theological Review* 103, no. 1 (2010): 47.

<sup>15</sup> Ellis, "The Old Testament Canon," 676. Curiously, Rufinus, a contemporary of Jerome who preferred the Septuagint and understood it to be inspired against Jerome's preference for the Tanak, still considered the Twelve Prophets a single book. See Edmond L. Gallagher and John D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity: Texts and Analysis* (New York: Oxford, 2017), 218, 221.

<sup>16</sup> Ellis, "The Old Testament Canon," 676.

<sup>17</sup> James D. Nogalski and Marvin A. Sweeney, eds., preface to *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, SBL Symposium Series (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), ix.

deuterocanonical books.<sup>18</sup> Jerome's Vulgate grew to become the Bible of the west until the Reformation (AD 1517–1648). The Roman Catholic Church adopted the Vulgate at the Council of Trent (AD 1545–1563) and the Reformers began their respective native translations during this period. Each tradition, however, retained the Septuagint order of the Old Testament rather than the Tanak order which Jerome intended.<sup>19</sup>

### **Canon Lists**

It was noted above that Josephus set the standard for numbering the books of the Old Testament as an aid to delineating the canon. This practice was picked up by the church Fathers and subsequent leaders for many centuries.<sup>20</sup> The recent work by Gallagher and Meade surveys and analyzes the biblical canon lists from early Christianity.<sup>21</sup> Their work covers Jewish (to the Babylonian Talmud, AD 600), Greek (to Epiphanius, AD 315–402/3), Latin (to Pope Innocent I, AD 402–417), and Syriac (St. Catherine's Monastery Syriac List, eighth-ninth century) lists. What is astounding about these lists is, not the lack of witness to the Twelve, but the overwhelming evidence for it. Much of the scholarly discussion typically surrounds which books are in the canon lists and in which order. The Twelve viewed as a unit is a reality largely obscured by these other issues. That the Twelve are almost universally read as a physical and conceptual unity is a historical fact. Indeed, so thorough is the evidence, it is difficult to find evidence to the contrary. The vast majority of canon lists simply state "the Twelve Prophets" without specifying what those Twelve prophets are. Gallagher and Meade note, "The Twelve

<sup>18</sup> Codex Amiantinus (c. AD 700) is the oldest complete version of the Latin Vulgate and retains Jerome's Tanak order. See Gallagher and Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists*, 258. The Wycliffe Bible (AD 1382–1395) follows the Septuagint. It appears a book-order change occurred during the seven-hundred-year period intervening these texts.

<sup>19</sup> In my estimation, had Jerome's tripartite order been retained in the West, even with the Reformation, the debated issue of the Tanak in general and the Twelve in particular would not be an issue.

<sup>20</sup> Regarding the Old Testament, most lists count either twenty-two or twenty-four books. The variance in count is not due to additional books but to the combining or separating of books (e.g., counting Samuel or Ezra-Nehemiah) as either one or two books.

<sup>21</sup> Gallagher and Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity*.

Prophets is the common patristic designation for the Minor Prophets, nearly always counted as a single book.”<sup>22</sup>

All evidence seems to point to the towering theological figure of Augustine (AD 354–430), a contemporary of Jerome, as the source for no longer viewing the Twelve as a unit but as twelve individual books.<sup>23</sup> Not only did Augustine include in his canon list all the deuterocanonical books eventually canonized at Trent, he also numbered the Old Testament books as forty-four, a significant departure from the twenty-two or twenty-four norm. His list of forty-four involves counting the Twelve as individual books. Augustine is also credited as the first to refer to the Twelve as the twelve Minor Prophets (in *City of God* 18.29). However, in *On Christian Teaching* 13.38, Augustine states, “There remain the books of the prophets properly so called, the individual books of the Twelve Prophets who, because they are joined together and never separated, are counted as one.”<sup>24</sup> Despite his acknowledgment of the Twelve counted as one, Augustine’s practice and enumeration had profound influence and moved the church away from the historical roots of considering the Twelve as one book.

### **Masoretic Text (Seventh–Tenth Century)**

Outside of Christianity, a few features of the Masoretic Text underscore the compositional unity of the Twelve. The Talmud states that the books of the Old Testament are to be separated in manuscripts by four blank lines, whereas the individual books of the Twelve Prophets are to be separated from each other by three blank lines.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, Matthew Shepherd notes, “The Masoretic Text, which marks the mid-point of every biblical book does not

<sup>22</sup> Gallagher and Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists*, 200n128.

<sup>23</sup> Gallagher and Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists*, 225–30. Augustine is generally considered as one of, if not the most, important theologians in the Western church. His thought and practice has shaped the church for over a millennium.

<sup>24</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* 13.38, quoted in Gallagher and Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists*, 228.

<sup>25</sup> Nogalski and Sweeney, preface to *Reading and Hearing the Twelve*, ix. The authors presume that the three-space feature is a unique indicator of the status of the Twelve’s as both individual books and as a compositional unity.

mark the mid-point of each book of the Twelve.” He notes rather, “it marks Micah 3:12 as the mid-point of the whole book of the Twelve.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, the Twelve is treated as a single book. Elsewhere Shepherd notes, “The masora at the end of Malachi clarifies that ‘the book is the Book of the Twelve,’ showing that the Masoretes thought of Hosea-Malachi as a single composition that was transmitted as a whole.”<sup>27</sup> In sum, the unique line spacing, mid-point, and commentary of the Masoretes all confirm the unbroken reality that the Twelve are a compositional unity.

## **Conclusion**

This historical survey has demonstrated the overwhelming evidence that the Twelve Prophets were considered one book and read together as a unit. The Twelve were both a physical and conceptual unity. The Rabbis have maintained this tradition through the Masoretic Text to the present day. In the West sometime in the early medieval period the book order was changed and the Twelve were no longer counted and considered as one book. This occurred despite the witness of canonical lists, Jerome’s strong conviction of the Hebrew order, and the popularity of his Vulgate. This departure was likely due to the influence of the Septuagint as the preferred source text for translation along the authoritative teaching of Augustine.

The historical evidence does not answer *why* the Twelve were considered a conceptual unity, it simply points out that it was so until the early medieval period. Evidently, some things are lost in translation. The Septuagint’s translation from Hebrew and rearrangement of the Twelve likely obscured the presence of stitch-word phenomena (discussed below). This would likely give rise to a new paradigm that would obscure the original and intentional design of the Twelve as evidenced by stitch-words.

<sup>26</sup> Shepherd, *The Twelve Prophets in the New Testament*, 3.

<sup>27</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 23.

## Excursus on Masoretic versus Septuagint Text

At this point, a note for favoring the Masoretic Text over the Septuagint is appropriate, although the issue exceeds the scope of this work. The key difference between the two traditions involves the ordering of the first six books:<sup>28</sup>

The Masoretic Text: (1) Hosea, (2) **Joel**, (3) **Amos**, (4) Obadiah, (5) Jonah, (6) *Micah*.  
The Septuagint: (1) Hosea, (2) *Amos*, (3) *Micah*, (4) **Joel**, (5) Obadiah, (6) Jonah.

In both text traditions, Hosea is first and Obadiah connects with Jonah. The dispute is the location of Joel, Amos, and Micah.

Barry Allan Jones has argued for Septuagint order (but with Jonah closing the Twelve per 4QXIIa).<sup>29</sup> Shepherd disagrees and convincingly argues for retaining Masoretic order.<sup>30</sup> Shepherd notes there is no Hebrew manuscript evidence to explain the Septuagint arrangement while conversely there is Greek manuscript evidence for the Masoretic text. After discussing the evidence, Shepherd states, “The arrangement of the Septuagint of the Twelve is most likely a case of secondary editorial maneuvering rather than an original piece of composition.”<sup>31</sup> Finally, Shepherd highlights that stitch-words (discussed below) retained in the Septuagint presuppose the arrangement of the Masoretic text.<sup>32</sup> Shepherd concludes, “A reader not sensitive to these purposes [stitch-words] would probably have felt free to rearrange the books to a more immediately suitable order . . . [whereas] the New Testament authors were evidently in tune with the theological purposes of the Twelve . . . [as] their quotations presuppose the order of book as

<sup>28</sup> **Bold**, *italics*, and underline added for clarity in book order comparison.

<sup>29</sup> Barry Alan Jones, *The Formation of the Book of the Twelve: A Study in Text and Canon* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

<sup>30</sup> See discussion in Shepherd, *The Twelve Prophets in the New Testament*, 74–76; Shepard, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 12–21.

<sup>31</sup> Shepherd, *The Twelve in Prophets in the New Testament*, 75.

<sup>32</sup> Shepherd, *The Twelve in Prophets in the New Testament*, 75. For example, Shepherd points out the Greek rendering of Amos 9:12 appears to have the Masoretic Amos-Obadiah sequence for its basis not the Septuagint Amos-Micah sequence.

they appear in the Masoretic Text (e.g., Acts 15:17).”<sup>33</sup> Shepherd is correct in his assessment, as the following section on stitch-words will demonstrate.

### **Biblical Evidence for the Compositional Unity of the Twelve: Intertextual Stitch-Words**

The survey of historical sources and canon lists presenting the Twelve as a unity may be dismissed by some as merely a manuscript convention or tradition with little to no bearing on interpretation.<sup>34</sup> However, a stunning feature exhibited within the Book of the Twelve decisively reveals its compositional unity. That stunning feature is the presence of stitch-words. The seams between the individual books of the Twelve exhibit a remarkable degree of intertextuality through the clustering of words, phrases, and/or thematic concepts that “stitch” the end one book with the beginning of the next. This unique display of intertextuality is akin to the verbal and thematic stitches that link the opening and closing of each section of the Tanak. The phrase “compositional unity” captures the idea of the canonizer’s work to stitch the twelve Minor Prophets into a single volume, meant to be read as a whole, from the vantage point its canonical location without denying individual authorship of each book.

### **Criteria for Stitch-Word Phenomena**

The foundational question to ask is what constitutes a valid stitch-word. A fair critique

<sup>33</sup> Shepherd, *The Twelve in Prophets in the New Testament*, 76.

<sup>34</sup> For example, a skeptic may point to Baba Bathra 14b, which includes a discussion on the location of Hosea and why the book is placed with the Twelve rather than before Isaiah. Baba Bathra 14b reads concerning the book of Hosea, “Since his book is so small, it might be lost [if copied separately].” Baba Bathra 14b, quoted in Gallagher and Meade, *Biblical Canon Lists*, 68. Gallagher and Meade interpret this statement to reveal a concern of the Rabbis that due to brevity, the Minor Prophets might be lost. See Gallagher and Meade, *Biblical Canon Lists*, 68n62. By implication, one could argue that placing the Twelve together was a safeguard and matter of necessity, not for literary and theological reasons. While this might be true, Baba Bathra 14b also reveals that the Rabbis had a concern for the ordering of the books for thematic and theological reasons. In arguing for the textual order of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Twelve, Baba Bathra 14b also states, “Let us see again. Isaiah was prior to Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Then why should not Isaiah be placed first?—Because the Book of Kings ends with a record of destruction and Jeremiah speaks throughout of destruction and Ezekiel commences with destruction and ends with consolation and Isaiah is full of consolation; therefore, we put destruction next to destruction and consolation next to consolation.” Baba Bathra 14b, quoted in Gallagher and Meade, *Biblical Canon Lists*, 68. At the very least, this passage reveals that the Rabbis were concerned for the safety of the books and also with how their arrangement affected interpretation. That the Twelve were put together on a single scroll for safety purposes does not preclude that such action was also for compositional and interpretative purposes.

of merely linking words is that it offers no restraint. Virtually any book of the Bible could be considered connected. The models presented by Richard Schultz, James Nogalski, and Matthew Shepherd will be surveyed.

Schultz is cautious in “seeing” the stitch-word phenomena and acknowledges difficulties caused by too broad of a definition of intertextuality.<sup>35</sup> He posits that, “One should look for indications of *contextual awareness*, including *interpretive re-use*, which indicates verbal *dependence* which is conscious and purposeful, even though one may not be able to determine the direction of borrowing with any certainty [authors italics].”<sup>36</sup> In short, Schultz indicates the validity of an intertextual relationship is discovered if stitch-words are being used in similar contextual/conceptual ways across the corpus. Schultz would fall on the minimalist end of the spectrum of “seeing” stitch-words.

Nogalski acknowledges, “Safeguards should be established to avoid idiosyncratic recreations which do not exhibit some reasonable likelihood of having actually occurred.”<sup>37</sup> Nogalski understands multiple types of intertextuality to exist and therefore offers five (often over-lapping) criteria. (1) Quotations: The use of pre-existing phrases, sentences, or paragraphs which are taken from another source. (2) Allusions: One or more words whose appearance intends to elicit the reader’s recollection of another text (or texts) for a specific purpose. (3) Catchwords: Catchwords function as a type of allusion by using/reusing significant words to refer to another text(s). (4) Themes and Motifs: Literary devices that take a topic (e.g., judgment, flourishing) and lift it beyond the immediate literary horizon of a particular book to span multiple books.<sup>38</sup> (5) Framing Devices: Within the Twelve, at least six types of framing devices

<sup>35</sup> Richard L. Schultz, “The Ties That Bind: Intertextuality, the Identification of Verbal Parallels, and Reading Strategies in the Book of the Twelve,” in Redditt and Schart, *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve*, 27–45.

<sup>36</sup> Schultz, “The Ties That Bind,” 32.

<sup>37</sup> James D. Nogalski, “Intertextuality and the Twelve,” in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts*, ed. James W. Watts and Paul R. House, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series* 235 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 102–24.

<sup>38</sup> Nogalski does not offer a concise definition as he does for his other criteria. The definition offered

can be illustrated: superscriptions, genre, similarities, structural parallels, the juxtaposition of catchwords, and canonical allusions.<sup>39</sup> Nogalski would fall on the maximalist end of the spectrum in terms of “seeing” stitch-words.

Matthew Shepherd provides three main criteria for determining the internal composition of the Twelve. First, is the presence of stitch-words. However, he also qualifies that stitch-words stand apart from the material that precedes and follows. That is, the presence of stitch-words should exhibit a uniqueness and clustering at the end and beginning of books. Second, is the development of Hosea 3:4–5, which Shepherd understands to be programmatic for the Twelve. He elaborates, “When each of the seams picks up the message of these verses [Hosea 3:4–5] and develops their language and theme, it is a sign of intelligent design.”<sup>40</sup> He continues, “The author uses this technique to unify the theological message of the Twelve.” The third criterion is dependence on the book of Jeremiah. Shepherd states, “Whenever the first two criteria are met (seam and message), there is a citation from the book of Jeremiah.” Shepherd establishes solid criteria for identifying the internal composition of the Twelve.<sup>41</sup> Shepherd may be considered a restrained maximalist. His criteria are convincing and will serve as the basis for evaluating stitch-words.

### **Stitch-Words in the Twelve**

What follows is a brief examination of stitch-word phenomena.<sup>42</sup> The focus will be on here is a composite of statements he makes in an attempt to represent him fairly.

<sup>39</sup> Nogalski, *Intertextuality and the Twelve*, 103–19. For a critique of Nogalski’s works, see Ehud Ben Zvi, “Twelve Prophetic Books or ‘the Twelve’: A Few Preliminary Considerations,” in Watts and House, *Forming Prophetic Literature*, 125–57. See also the more recent Ehud Ben Zvi and James D. Nogalski, *Two Sides of a Coin: Juxtaposing Views on Interpreting the Book of the Twelve/the Twelve Prophetic Books*, Analecta Gorgiana 201 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009).

<sup>40</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 23.

<sup>41</sup> Shepherd’s third criteria for the dependence on Jeremiah needs more investigation and nuance. His contention is that the redactor of the Twelve used Jeremiah as an ingredient for what I am calling stitch-words. However, as will be seen below, dependence upon Jeremiah is not present at every seam (although dependence can often be found elsewhere in the respective books). Far more prominent is the presence of the Hosea 3:4–5 program in tandem with stitch-words. Dependence upon Jeremiah may not be as critical as Shepard posits.

<sup>42</sup> The examination of these criteria is largely dependent upon Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the*



the seams of the books rather than thematic threads that run through the Twelve (which also function to “sew” the books together). To reiterate, the phrase “stitch-word” is a catch-all phrase that is not limited to individual words but also phrases, statements, and thematic elements that may not use the same terminology but do refer to the same theme. Stitch-words almost always reside at the beginning and end of books. Typically, the connection is found at adjoining seams.<sup>43</sup> On occasion, however, the connection can be found at the beginning or end of one book and the beginning or end of another.<sup>44</sup> Instances where some scholars find stitch-word phenomena, but the contextual evidence is not strong, will be footnoted.<sup>45</sup>

**Hosea-Joel.** Shepherd convincingly argues that Hosea 3:4–5 is a “programmatically, eschatological introduction to the Book of the Twelve.”<sup>46</sup> Hosea 3:4–5 reads, “[4] For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods. [5] Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the Lord and to his goodness in the latter days.” The passage indicates that the monarchy, the temple system, and idolatrous ways will be removed from Israel. However, in “the latter days,” the children of Israel will “return” and seek God and the Davidic king. The intertextual relationship of Hosea with Jeremiah is striking:

*Twelve*; Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*; Shepherd, *The Twelve Prophets in the New Testament*; Shepherd, “Compositional Analysis of the Twelve,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 120, no. 2 (2008): 184–93; Shepherd, “The New Exodus in the Composition of the Twelve,” in *Text and Canon: Essays in Honor of John H. Sailhamer*, ed. Robert L. Cole and Paul J. Kissling (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 120–36; James M. Hamilton Jr., *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010).

<sup>43</sup> Adjoining seams: Hosea-Joel; Joel-Amos; Amos-Obadiah; Micah-Nahum; Habakkuk-Zephaniah; Zephaniah-Haggai; Haggai-Zechariah; Zechariah-Malachi.

<sup>44</sup> Opposing seams: Jonah-Micah; Nahum-Habakkuk. The connection between Obadiah-Jonah is less concrete to establish.

<sup>45</sup> As with hermeneutics, identifying stitch-words is both a science and an art. Not all will be convinced of a stitch-word’s presence. Nogalski, it seems, is a good example of one who is willing find stitch-words through repetition of unique terms regardless of context. Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Twelve*, 21–57. I am more convinced by terms that also bear a contextual relationship (per Schultz, “The Ties That Bind,” 27–45). I find the criteria of Shepherd entirely convincing. Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 23–36.

<sup>46</sup> Shepherd, “Compositional Analysis of the Twelve,” 185.

Hosea 3:5: Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the Lord and to his goodness in the latter days.

Jeremiah 30:8–9: And it shall come to pass in that day, declares the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off your neck, and I will burst your bonds, and foreigners shall no more make a servant of him. But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

The timing of both passages is “the latter days” in which Israel will be liberated from exile, thrust into a new exodus, and will return to God and the Davidic king. These themes will become prominent in the Twelve.

The stitch-word is found between Hosea 14:9 and Joel 1:2–3:

Hosea 14:9: Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.

Joel 1:2–3: Hear this, you elders; give ear, all inhabitants of the land! Has such a thing happened in your days, or in the days of your fathers? Tell it to your children, let your children tell their children, and their children to another generation.

Hosea ends with a contrast of the righteous and the wicked and a proverbial call for the “wise” to know. Joel begins his book by calling to the wise, namely the elders of the land, to give ear and know. The concept of both passages harkens back to Hosea 3:5 and the call to return and seek the Lord. Shepherd also notes the Jeremiah connection with the wise (Hosea) in the context of rebuke (Joel), “Who is the man so wise that he can understand this? To whom has the mouth of the Lord spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness so that no one passes through?” (Jer 9:12).

A conceptual reversal exists between the end of Hosea and the beginning of Joel. In Edenic terms harkening to Deuteronomy 28, in Hosea 14:4–8 God promises that the “olive, grain, vine, and wine” will flourish. However, in Joel 1:2–12, the “drunkards of wine are called to wail, locusts have stripped the land barren, and the grain is destroyed, the wine dries up, the oil languishes, and gladness dries up from the children of man.”<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> It is worth noting a thematic linkage where Joel ends in similar agricultural fashion as Hosea. Both close by discussing a future time when “wine, milk, streams, and fountains all abundantly flow.”

**Joel-Amos.** The verbal stitch is clear and striking, not only between Joel and Amos, but also Jeremiah:

Joel 3:15: The Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem.

Amos 1:2: The Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 25:30: The Lord will roar from on high and from his holy habitation utter his voice.

In Joel the Lord roars in salvation of his people, in Amos and Jeremiah he roars in judgment of all peoples. Thus, a stitch-word connection and thematic contrast of salvation and judgment exist at the seams of Joel-Amos in keeping with the salvation and judgment program of Hosea 3:4–5.

The link between the end of Joel and the beginning of Amos are also geographical in nature. Joel references Tyre, Sidon, all the regions of Philistia, Egypt, and Edom (Joel 3:4, 19). Amos opens largely addressing these same places with judgment, Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammonites, Moab, Judah, and Israel.

**Amos-Obadiah.** Referencing back to the Davidic king of Hosea 3:4–5, Amos ends with a glorious vision of the Lord raising up the fallen booth of David and Obadiah ends with Saviors on Mount Zion and “the kingdom shall be the Lord’s” (Obad 21). The end of Amos and the brevity of Obadiah yields a number of connections:

Amos 9:12: That they may **possess** the remnant of *Edom* and all the nations who are called by my name, declares the Lord who does this.

Obadiah 1: Thus says the Lord GOD concerning *Edom* . . . .

Obadiah 19–21: The exiles of this host of the people of Israel shall **possess** the land of the Canaanites . . . , and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall **possess** the cities of the Negeb.<sup>48</sup>

Amos ends, and Obadiah begins by referencing Edom. The end of Amos discusses the children of Israel “possessing” Edom under the leadership of David. Obadiah closes with the exiles “possessing” the land. As for the connection with Jeremiah, Obadiah 1–5 and Jeremiah 49:9, 14–

<sup>48</sup> Italics and bold have been added for clarity.

17 are both judgment oracles of Edom that closely follow each other linguistically.

**Obadiah-Jonah.** The connection between Obadiah and Jonah is not jarringly visible like the stitch-words of the previous seams. Shepherd argues that the juxtaposition of Obadiah and Jonah creates a meaning of its own.<sup>49</sup> Obadiah is an expected judgment oracle against the wicked Edom. Jonah is an unexpected salvation story of wicked Nineveh and the unrepentance of God's chosen prophet. Among the Twelve, Amos, Obadiah, and Jonah are also uniquely connected through their geographic and city focus.<sup>50</sup>

**Jonah-Micah.** Similar to the thematic juxtaposition of Obadiah and Jonah, the relationship between Jonah and Micah is not typical of the Twelve.<sup>51</sup> In this instance, the stitch does not fall directly at the seam but at the end of each book.<sup>52</sup> Both Jonah 4:2 and Micah 7:18 are rough citations of Exodus 34:6–7a:

Exodus 34:6–7a: The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.”

Jonah 4:2: For I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.

Micah 7:10: Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.

Jonah faulted God for being merciful and gracious whereas Amos worshipped God for it. The

<sup>49</sup> Shepherd, “Compositional Analysis of the Twelve,” 28.

<sup>50</sup> Nogalski's stich-word suggestion that the mention of “casting lots” and “his calamity/evil” in Obadiah 11, 13 and “their evil” and “cast lots” in Jonah 1:2,7–8 seems to be a mere verbal repetition rather than a stitch-word. His suggestion is unconvincing by Schultz's and Shepherd's criteria. Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Twelve*, 34.

<sup>51</sup> I do not find Nogalski's stich-words convincing. He cites a cluster of terms when Jonah was in the belly of the fish (“holy temple; water; mountains; I descended; idols”; Jonah 2:5–9) as stich-words with Micah 1:1–7 when God leaves his “holy temple, descends, mountains and lowlands melt like water, he will destroy idols.” See Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Twelve*, 36. Hamilton notes the juxtaposition where Edom positions itself to rejoice over Judah's destruction (Obad 1:12–14), and Jonah positions himself to rejoice over Nineveh's destruction (Jonah 4:5). Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation*, 230.

<sup>52</sup> There certainly is a thematic link at the seams of Jonah-Micah in which Micah appears to have a very similar message as Jonah of impending judgment and doom.

rough citation of Exodus 34:6–7 furthers the programmatic salvific themes of Hosea 3:4–5. Shepherd also notes that the middle verse of the Twelve, Micah 3:12, is also cited by Jeremiah 26:18.<sup>53</sup> The context of the Jeremiah passage is his life being spared. In Jeremiah the elders cite and quote Micah 3:12 as evidence that, since Hezekiah did not execute Micah for his prophetic judgments, neither should they execute Jeremiah.<sup>54</sup>

**Micah-Nahum.** Similar to the Jonah-Micah connection above, Micah and Nahum exhibit a similar stitch-word repetition of Exodus 34:6–7. However, whereas Jonah-Micah cited Exodus 34:6–7a, emphasizing grace and mercy, Nahum 1:2–3 emphasizes judgment by citing Exodus 34:7b. Thus, the stitch-word is both a citation completion and contrast:

Nahum 1:2–3: The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty.

Exodus 34:7b: But who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and children's children, to the third, and fourth generation.

Micah and Nahum are united in their combined allusion to Exodus 34:6–7, which again carries forward the programmatic passage of Hosea 3:4–5.<sup>55</sup>

**Nahum-Habakkuk.** The two prophets, Nahum and Habakkuk are bookended by their stitch-word connection. Nahum resumes the latter-day theme, especially in 1:7, by referring to “the day of trouble.” Nahum 1:7 states, “The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.” Habakkuk closes in 3:16 stating, “yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon the people who invade us.” It is interesting to observe Habakkuk is “taking refuge” as it were, by heeding Nahum’s word that the “Lord knows who

<sup>53</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 29.

<sup>54</sup> In my estimation, it is too weak a connection to be a formal stitch-word, but it is interesting to note the juxtaposition that Jonah was a prophet who wanted to die because of his message of salvation, and Micah is connected with Jeremiah, a prophet who did not want to die because of his message of judgment.

<sup>55</sup> Shepherd comments, “While it is possible to identify some of Jeremiah’s language (e.g., Jer 3:5; 31:34), it is perhaps best to be content with the influence of Jeremiah on Micah 3:12.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 30.

takes refuge in him.” Once again, the Hosea 3:4–5 themes of latter days, salvation, and judgment reside in the stitch-word locations of the Twelve. Habakkuk 2:13b is a citation of Jeremiah 51:58b.

**Habakkuk-Zephaniah.** Zephaniah picks up the “day of distress” language of Nahum-Habakkuk (Nah 1:7; Hab 3:16), that stands in the broader “day of the Lord” stream begun in Joel and, is in keeping with the Hosea 3:4–5 program. Zephaniah’s depiction and use of “the great day of the Lord . . . , a day of . . . .” The marker “day of” is repeated six times and conceptually stitches to Habakkuk (Zeph 1:14–15). Both Habakkuk and Zephaniah call all to “be silent” before the Lord (Hab 2:20; Zeph 1:7).

**Zephaniah-Haggai.** The seam between Zephaniah and Haggai appears to have the fewest clear stitch-words among the Twelve. This seam, however, exhibits an abrupt stylistic shift similar to the Obadiah-Jonah seam. Nogalski notes that Zephaniah closes with pronouncements of “at that time” when God will save his people and deal with their oppressors (Zeph 3:19–20).<sup>56</sup> Haggai opens with the stitch-word sequence of the people declaring “the time is not yet” for the rebuilding of the temple to which God responds, “is it a time for you to dwell in paneled houses?” (Hag 1:2–3). The shared context between the two books is the Hosea 3:4–5 paradigm of salvation and judgment, where Zephaniah is associated with the return of the Davidic king and Haggai with God’s palace-temple.

**Haggai-Zechariah.** The two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, were contemporaries (Ezra 5:1–2) and thematically connected with the cultic concern for the temple and high priest (Hag 1–2; Zech 3:1–10). Haggai closes with a discussion of “Zerubbabel my servant . . . , and [I] make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you” (Hag 2:23). Shepherd notes this is a citation and reversal of Jeremiah 22:24 where Coniah (Jehoiachin) is likened to a signet ring on God’s

<sup>56</sup> Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Twelve*, 49.

finger which he is about to tear off.<sup>57</sup> In Zechariah 3:8 the Lord declares he will “bring my servant the Branch,” a statement that closely connects with the “servant” statement of Haggai and “Branch” language of Jeremiah (Jer 23:5; 35:15). Zechariah’s opens with a concern that the people “return from their evil ways” which harkens to the call in Hosea 3:4–5 to “return” to the Lord as does the concern for the return of the Davidic king and restoration of the temple system. A further connection with Jeremiah is found in Zechariah’s reference to the seventy-year captivity (Zech 1:12; Jer 25:11–12).<sup>58</sup>

**Zechariah-Malachi.** The statement, “The oracle of the word of the Lord” only occurs three times in Scripture: Zechariah 9:1; 12:1; Malachi 1:1. This functionally places the book of Malachi as a third oracle installment and unites the book with the messianic, eschatological focus of Zechariah which also furthers the Hosea 3:4–5 thematic program of the Twelve. Shepherd offers an interesting insight regarding the Jeremiah connection: The Gospel of Matthew cites Zechariah 11:13 as if it were attributed to Jeremiah.<sup>59</sup>

**Stitch-Word Conclusion.** The phenomenon of stitch-words is a “remarkable fact.” If this phenomenon were present in one or two books, it might be easily dismissible. But eleven concrete instances are beyond coincidence. If the phenomenon was exclusively restricted to clusters of terms, the evidence might be debated and interpreted otherwise. Nearly every seam among the Twelve, however, bears correspondence with Hosea 3:4–5, is related to Jeremiah, and bears unique contextual, linguistic, and thematic connections in close proximity to the end and beginning of books. The evidence is clear: the Twelve is designed as a compositional unity.

<sup>57</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 32.

<sup>58</sup> Nogalski highlights a cluster of terms (“earth; riders; horses; man; chariot; throne”) shared between the seams of Haggai-Zephaniah that he considers stitch-words. Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Twelve*, 51–52. The relationship, however, seems dubious at best as the distribution of these words, in my estimation, are too distant and not unique terms.

<sup>59</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 33.

## **The Witness of the New Testament**

A skeptic may remain unconvinced by the evidence of the various types of stitch-words and interpret the phenomenon differently. In my estimation, the investigation will be solved if it can be ascertained how the New Testament authors viewed and read the so-called Minor Prophets. In other words, if the New Testament authors read the Twelve as a compositional unity, then so should the interpreter. Indeed, to not read the Twelve as the New Testament authors, is to put the interpreter on the path of misinterpretation.

This final inquiry will seek to uncover if the New Testament authors exhibit an awareness of the compositional unity of the Twelve or if they view the twelve prophets as a loose collection. Answering this question requires looking for citations that may or may not reference the Twelve as a whole. If the New Testament authors view the Twelve as a compositional unity, it would be expected to find some expression or acknowledgement on their part that indicates this. Typically, New Testament citations of the Old Testament follow a pattern similar to, “this was to fulfill what the prophet (name) said,” followed by a citation from the prophet. To investigate this, it must first be observed how a New Testament author introduces the citation formula and secondly, what citation(s) follow(s). Three passages in Acts will be explored: Acts 7:42–43; 13:40–41; 15:15–17.

**Acts 7:42–43.** In Acts 7, Stephen presents his biblical-theological speech to the Jewish council. Two Old Testament citations are used. In verse 48 Stephen uses the common formula and states, “as the prophet says,” and then proceeds to quote Isaiah 66:1–2. In verse 42, however, Stephen declares, “As it is written in the book of the prophets,” and then he proceeds to quote Amos 5:25–27. Unlike the Isaiah citation, the grammar of the Amos quote is unique. He cites the “book” (singular) of the “prophets” (plural) and then proceeds to quote from the prophet Amos (single). Three explanatory options exist. (1) a textual transmission error occurred that made “prophets” plural when it should be singular, a transmission error that has not yet been remedied



by extant manuscripts.<sup>60</sup> (2) Stephen is making a generalization of how all prophets normally speak (without reference to the unity of the Twelve), of whom Amos is representative.<sup>61</sup> (3) Stephen reads and understands the Twelve to be a compositional unity hence his clear reference to the “book of the prophets.”<sup>62</sup> At face value, the reading of the text is straightforward and clear—Stephen refers to a book that contains multiple prophets. History tells us there is such a book, the Twelve. If one’s interpretive paradigm did not include an option for reading the Twelve as a compositional unity and conversely, understood the twelve to be a loose but related collection, the second option would seem most plausible. However, if one’s interpretive paradigm did allow for the unity of the Twelve, especially bearing the weight of the textual and historical evidence (as presented above), then the natural and straightforward explanation would be that Stephen was a good, Spirit-filled exegete (as was Luke the recorder) and understood the Twelve as a compositional unity.

**Acts 13:40–41.** This text is the apostle Paul’s biblical-theological sermon at Antioch in Pisidia with four Old Testament citations. Paul cites two Psalms and Isaiah 55:3. He draws his sermon to a close in verses 40–41 saying, “Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about . . . ,” and then he cites Habakkuk 1:5. This formula matches the one Stephen used in Acts 7 minus the reference to “the book.” Once again, “prophets” (plural) followed by

<sup>60</sup> Only *cop<sup>G76</sup>* reads differently. It appears to be a scribal attempt to correct the (supposed) awkward “book of the prophets” to the smoother “Amos the prophet.” Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 307.

<sup>61</sup> This is not to deny that the Latter Prophets have a collective voice within the metanarrative and provide prophetic commentary. The aim here is to try to discern what was in the mind of Stephen, Luke, and the hearers when they heard this reference. Luke did not insert an interpretive comment to explain what Stephen meant. This implies that the hearers at the time understood exactly what Stephen meant. He was not accused of misinterpreting Scripture by the religious leaders; rather, he was murdered by them for interpreting Scripture well! The absence of narrative comments also leads one to believe that Luke presumed that his readers would also understand what was meant.

<sup>62</sup> It is difficult to find commentaries that reflect on that nature of Stephen’s citation. That said, the following is a brief sampling of those who agree that Stephen is referring to the Book of the Twelve: Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Society, 1972), 161; Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), 180; Kenneth O. Gangel, *Acts*, Holman New Testament Commentary, vol. 5 (Nashville: Boardman & Holman, 1998), 108.

the citation of a prophet (singular).<sup>63</sup> It was demonstrated above that it is more plausible that Stephen understood the Twelve as a unity and used his citation as such rather than a loose generalization of how all prophets normally speak. Here a collection of prophets are mentioned yet only one is cited. The natural question is, “which prophets?” Is this a reference to all prophets in general or a subset of unique prophets? Admittedly this is a judgment call. Evidence must be weighed. Is Habakkuk cited as a representative of all prophets or of the Twelve? In light of the conclusions made regarding Stephen, it seems more plausible that the apostle Paul read the Twelve as a compositional unity and that is reflected in his citation formula. Paul used Habakkuk as a representation of the collective voice of the Twelve. Paul is also likely using “Prophets” as shorthand for “the book of the prophets.” Paul’s audience would have thought of the Twelve as the book and the citation, “prophets” followed by Habakkuk would have alerted the audience to this fact. Whether as shorthand, a collective voice, or both, it seems best to interpret this reference as a reference to the Twelve.<sup>64</sup>

**Acts 15:15–17.** At the Jerusalem council, James offered his judgment with an Old Testament citation. James begins his citation formula by saying, “And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written . . . ,” and then he cites Amos 9:11–12. This passage is similar to Acts 13 above. When the text states the “words” (plural) of the “prophets” (plural) with Amos citation (singular), it seems James, like Paul, is moving from general (this is how prophets speak) to the specific (citation of Amos as representative). Is James making a general reference to how all prophets speak or a specific reference to the Book of the Twelve? In light of the witness of the previous two passages, I believe the evidence tips the scale decisively in the direction of the

<sup>63</sup> copG76 reads differently, moving from the more difficult “what is said in the prophets” to the smoother “what is said in Habakkuk the prophet.” Metzger, *Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, note on Acts 7:40.

<sup>64</sup> For agreement that this is a reference to the Twelve see Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on Acts*, note on Acts 13:40.

Book of the Twelve.<sup>65</sup> By implication, James indicates the Twelve are a chorus so-to-speak, singing the same song, each with his part to play. What Amos says, the Twelve says. If this is the case, this is a powerful argument for the conceptual and compositional unity of the Twelve.

**Conclusion.** Stephen, Paul, and James were all excellent exegetes, as was Luke, the inspired author. The unique citation formula employed in the three passages above evidence that the New Testament characters (those narrated by Luke) and author(s) read the Twelve as a unified book. They could simultaneously apply all the words of the Twelve to one prophet and one prophet as speaking for all the Twelve. The citation formula confirms the notion that the Twelve is a compositional unity rather than a loose collection.

### **Concluding Thoughts on the Compositional Unity of the Twelve**

The thesis of this chapter is that the so-called Minor Prophets are to be read as a compositional unity known as the Book of the Twelve rather than a loosely related collection of prophets. A historical survey of eleven historical sources demonstrated that viewing Hosea through Malachi as one book was the norm, not the exception, by early interpreters. The historical sources understood the Twelve as both a conceptual and physical unity.

An examination of stitch-words (contextual linguistic stitches and thematic threads) concentrated at the book seams of the Twelve, along with programmatic elements from Hosea 3:4–5, and connections with Jeremiah revealed that the twelve prophets are designed to be read as a compositional unity. This conclusion was confirmed by an examination of three passages in the book of Acts which uniquely offer citation formula and quotes that reveal the authors of the New Testament understood the Book of the Twelve to be a conceptual and compositional unity.

For those engaged in the task of biblical theology, the compositional evidence of the Twelve strengthens engagement in canonical studies and the reading of the Old Testament as the

<sup>65</sup> Again, for agreement that this is a reference to the Twelve, see Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on Acts*, note on Acts 15:15.

Tanak. Further, any foray into biblical theology, especially whole Bible biblical theology, will need to grapple with the Twelve as a compositional unity and their contribution to the metanarrative of Scripture.

For the local church, seeing and reading the Twelve as a compositional unity can breathe new life in a number of ways. First, into the pulpit as the Twelve are preached in relationship to one another as is intended. Second, in personal devotions as the saints re-engage with fresh eyes this often neglected and mysterious Book. A study of the Twelve can be an entryway into the broader world of biblical theology, and the hope we have in our Saving King, Jesus Christ, who is the end, goal, and fulfillment of all the Twelve convey.

## CHAPTER 4

### GREAT DAVID'S GREATER SON: DAVIDIC KINGSHIP IN THE TWELVE

Adam in the garden is depicted as the under-king of creation and son of the Most High (Gen 1:27–28; cf. 5:1–3). As head of the cosmos, Adam was to exercise kingly dominion emanating from the garden by cultivating all creation to fruitfulness as he and his wife imaged God to all the cosmos. In this way, all creation would be the kingdom of God enjoyed by his creatures (cf. Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14). God's creation of Adam in his image and bequeathal of regal status over creation reveals the divine intention to rule and reign over the cosmos through a son.

Adam's sin of disobedience through the attempt at self-defining autonomy was a failed coup. The under-king wanted to be his own king. The head of the covenant broke the very covenant he was to mediate and uphold. God's intention and plan in creation was twisted, kingdom violated, and kingship misrepresented. The fall becomes the dirty soil from which the gospel seed grows (Gen 3:15). God's intention has not changed. A son of Adam will be born to not only undo all that Adam did but usher in something even greater. The promise of the seed of the woman sets up the literary expectation across the canon for a new Adamic king who will finally and fully usher in the kingdom of God. This promise of the Adamic king develops across the canonically shaped divine covenants.

Noah is stylized as a new Adam to bring relief from ground, thereby undoing the curse (Gen 3:17; 5:29). The name "Noah" hints at the "rest" that is to be restored in relation to God. In these ways, Noah develops the ministry and promises of the Adamic king as codified in the Noahic covenant (Gen 8:20; 9:1–3).

Abraham defeated kings and is treated as royalty by Melchizedek (Gen 14:17–22). Abraham bears the once forfeited Adamic role of being a blessing, now to all the nations (Gen 12:2–3). The Abrahamic covenant brings forward the hope and promise of the righteous king, represented by Abraham, as the covenant passes through Isaac to Jacob (Gen 15:6–18; 26:1–4; 35–9–15). Jacob prophesies a king will arise from his son Judah (Gen 49:8–12).

Under the Mosaic covenant, the promise of the future king continues to take shape in the oracles of Balaam (Num 23:21–24; 24:3–9, 15–19). Moses prescribes laws for the future king that position the king as the lead word-filled worshipper among the people (Deut 17:14–20). This hints that as the king goes, so goes the people, much like the human race in Adam.

The promise of the Adamic king finally takes its focus in a son of David. The Davidic covenant specifies the promised one will be an eternal king, descended from David (2 Sam 7:12–16). In this way, the Adamic king will be great David's greater son (cf. Ps 110:1).

The future Davidic king finds full flower in the Latter Prophets against the backdrop of the persistent failures of all the previous Davidic kings. Isaiah-Ezekiel's development of the promise of the Davidic king will be explored in tandem with the Twelve.

### **Davidic Kingship in the Twelve**

Eight key passages in the Book of the Twelve address the promised Davidic Messiah. These passages are (1) Hosea 1:10–11, (2) Hosea 3:4–5, (3) Amos 9:11–15, (4) Micah 5:2–5a, (5) Zechariah 3:8–10, (6) Zechariah 6:10–15, (7) Zechariah 9:9–10, and (8) Zechariah 12:10. Drawing from the previous Latter Prophets, these passages develop and advance the thematic notion of the Davidic king. Each will be explored in succession below with a synthesis to follow. This chapter will conclude with a brief analysis of the

use of Amos 9:11–12 in Acts 15:15–17.

### **Davidic Kingship in Hosea**

**Hosea 1:10–11.** Hosea 1 opens with the shocking declaration of God to Israel, “you are not my people, and I am not your God” (Hos 1:9). Under the leadership of her kings, the nation had repeatedly broken covenant with God. Yet God promises a future day when, “in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ it shall be said to them, ‘Children of the living God,’” (Hos 1:10). In that future day a reunion shall take place among the divided kingdom and Israel and Judah shall together, “appoint for themselves one head” (Hos 1:11).<sup>1</sup> Not since King Solomon had the nation been united under one head (1 Kgs 12:1–33). Further, the promise of a new “head” echoes against the cursed Davidic lineage of Jehoiachin and recalls the prophesy of the Davidic Branch (Jer 22:30; Jer 23:5–8). The promise of a new “head” in Hosea is bound up with the reunion and restoration of the people, a return to a new covenantal relationship with God all couched in terms of a “new exodus” (Hos 1:10–11). This opening pronouncement of a new “head” in Hosea sets up the Davidic expectation in the Book of the Twelve. Indeed, a new Davidic king, a new covenant, and a new exodus are intertwined and inseparable from one another, like facets on a diamond. When the Twelve take up the topic of David, even in literary isolation from these other topics, they are presumed, akin to focusing on one facet of the diamond while presuming the whole.

Hosea 1:11 ends stating, “And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.” God instructed Hosea to name his son Jezreel as a prophetic sign of judgment in which God will put “an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel” (Hos 1:4).

<sup>1</sup> Marvin Sweeney observes, “This apparently is a reference to a leader or king, and recalls the rule of the house of David over both Israel and Judah in the days of both David and Solomon. Although this sentiment is not made explicit in the present context, the references to the restored Davidic rule in Hos 3:1–5 makes it clear that this is the ultimate goal of the present statement.” Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 24.

Shepherd notes a sound play in the Hebrew between Jezreel and Israel.<sup>2</sup> God will punish the house of Jehu for the “blood of Jezreel” (Hos 1:4). God commanded Jehu to strike down evil king Ahab, which he did in Jezreel (1 Kgs 9:1–13; 10:11). Even though Jehu obeyed God’s command, Jehu “did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam . . . which he made Israel to sin” and “was not careful to walk in the law of the Lord, the God of Israel, with all his heart” (1 Kgs 10:28–31). In this passage “house of Jehu” is parallel with “kingdom of the house of Israel” (Hos 1:4). Jehu’s overall disobedience appears, therefore, to be the reason for God’s judgment pronounced in Hosea, summarized as, “the blood of Jezreel.” The location of this judgment of the house of Israel will occur in the Valley of Jezreel (Hos 1:4).<sup>3</sup>

What then is to be made of the use of Jezreel in the context of restoration and blessing at the end of Hosea 1:11? Contextually, Jezreel either refers to an individual or to a place, possibly both. The words of judgment in Hosea 1:2–9 have shifted to words of salvation in 1:10–2:1 so it seems the use of Jezreel in verse 11 carries a positive connotation. “Jezreel” means “God sows.”<sup>4</sup> The promise of verse 10 is that the, “children shall be like the sand of the sea which cannot be measured” (Hos 1:10).<sup>5</sup> A conceptual play appears to be at work here. In the judgment portion of the text, the son named Jezreel prophetically points to the Valley of Jezreel which will be sown with the dead bodies and broken bows of Israel (Hos 1:2–6). The blessing portion of the text geographically returns to the place of judgment (the Valley of Jezreel) saying, “in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people’ is shall be said to them,

<sup>2</sup> Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018), 40.

<sup>3</sup> Note the conceptual link of land/location with God’s reasoning for Hosea marrying Gomer: “for the land commits great whoredom” (Hos 1:2).

<sup>4</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 40.

<sup>5</sup> This is an intertextual reference to the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 22:17; cf. 15:5).



‘Children of the living God’” (Hos 1:9–10). The place that once was a valley sown with dead bodies is now a place sown with children as numerous as the sand on the seashore.<sup>6</sup> This reversal and play on words is confirmed in the restoration passage of Hosea 2:21–23: “And in that day I will answer, declares the Lord, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer *Jezeel*, and *I will sow* her for myself in the land” (emphasis added). When verse 11 closes declaring the restored people will together “go up from the land,” it is possible to detect a double meaning where “Valley of Jezreel” is idiomatic of all the nations to which the people were driven (Isa 27:13; Jer 23:3–8; Mic 4:6). Who will lead the second exodus out of Jezreel? The king Jezreel will. The use of Jezreel at the end of verse 11 appears to be an all-encompassing perspective where the new head/king is called Jezreel, parallel to Hosea’s son in verse 2. He will also lead the second exodus out of Jezreel.<sup>7</sup> The place of judgment has become a place of blessing and the son of judgment has become a son of blessing, “for great shall be the day of Jezreel.”<sup>8</sup> The greatness spoken of does not appear to point to anything unique about the geographical location. The “day of Jezreel” either refers to the day of deliverance or to the deliverer himself. The play on words likely implies both. In this light, “day of Jezreel” conceptually parallels the salvific elements of the, “day of the Lord” (Hos 3:4–5; Mic 4:1–8).

Viewing “Jezreel” as a title or name of the appointed “head” warrants

<sup>6</sup> Sweeney similarly states, “Just as Jezreel signifies the bloodshed that will be visited upon the dynasty of Jehu, so the metaphor of sowing seeds conveys the imagery of restoration and regrowth.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 24.

<sup>7</sup> James Nogalski rightly sees a wordplay between the use of Jezreel as the name of Hosea’s first child and the use of Jezreel at the end of v. 11; however, he does not go far enough. He states, “While Hosea 1:4–5 used Jezreel as a symbolic name to pronounce judgment, Hosea 1:11 reconfigures Jezreel as a symbol of political reunification and restoration.” Nogalski limits the use of Jezreel to a national reunion but does not make the connection of Jezreel to the “head” mentioned in the same text. James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 44.

<sup>8</sup> That the head/king is a son is implicit in Hos 1:10 when all the people are called “children of the living God.”

additional biblical-theological observations. The name Jezreel (“God sows”) plays upon the Hebrew word for seed (*zera*).<sup>9</sup> The first promise of the gospel states, “I will put enmity between your [seed] and her [seed]; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel” (Gen 3:15).<sup>10</sup> Genesis 3:15 sets forth a significant interpretive agenda across Scripture focused on barren and/or pregnant women and the male seed they give birth to. “Seed” becomes loaded with theological freight. The promise of the Savior-seed passes to Abraham and then to his grandson Jacob to whom God reiterates, “I will make your [seed] as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude” (Gen 32:12; cf. Gen 22:17). Hosea 1:10 uses this Abrahamic covenant language and ties it to the seed sower himself, Jezreel. The title itself, Jezreel intimates that the king is the one who has sown the seed of the children of Israel. The Seed promised in Genesis 3:15 has come and fulfills the multitude of seed promised to Abraham. If this interpretation is correct, Jezreel functions as a messianic title for the Davidic king.

**Hosea 3:4–5.** In Hosea 3 God commands the prophet to marry an adulteress, “even as the Lord loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins” (Hos 3:1). The duration of time this woman lives with Hosea, unable to commit her adulteries, is symbolic of Israel’s exile out of the land of her harlotries (Hos 3:2–3; cf. Hos 2:4–13). The duration in which Israel shall dwell in exile, “without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods” shall be “many days” (Hos 3:4). After this lengthy period, “Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king” (Hos 3:5). This will be the first time those of the northern kingdom, now reunified with the southern kingdom, genuinely seek out a Davidic king since they rejected Davidic kingship (cf. 1 Kgs 12:1–33). The mention of “David their

<sup>9</sup> Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 23.

<sup>10</sup> The ESV translates the Hebrew for “seed” (*zera*) as “offspring.” I have replaced the ESV’s use of “offspring” with “seed” (in brackets) for the sake of comparison.

king” is a reference to a future Davidic son, not to be mistaken as a literal resurrected David who leads the return from exile (cf. Ps 110:1; Acts 2:25–36). Absent upon their return from exile are the idolatrous elements surveyed in verse 4. Instead, “they shall come in the fear of the Lord and to his goodness in the latter days” (Hos 3:5). The arrival of the Davidic king leads to the banishment of idols.

### **Davidic Kingship in Amos**

**Amos 9:11–15.** Following a pronouncement of judgment on God’s enemies is a promise of future salvation (Amos 9:1–10). “In that day” God indicates a future restoration in which he “will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old” (Amos 9:11).<sup>11</sup> The “booth of David” figuratively refers to all that is involved with a kingdom namely, covenant, king, people, and land.<sup>12</sup> As such, this passage implies that the raising up of the ‘booth of David’ is the inauguration of king, covenant, people, and land. God will show himself faithful to the Davidic covenant in raising up all that is involved with the fallen booth of David (2 Sam 7:4–17).

The literary reference to “Booth of David” here in Amos builds upon the previous prophets. Isaiah begins his prophecy likening the daughter of Zion as a booth in a vineyard and besieged city (Isa 1:8). Yet in the latter days, the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful, the glory cloud of God will reside over the whole of Mount Zion and there will be a booth for shade by day (Isa 4:2–6; Zech 12:7–9).

Interestingly, the raising up of the “booth of David” is cast in Edenic language where plowmen overtake reapers, “mountains drip sweet wine,” and God “plants” his

<sup>11</sup> Per Sweeney, “This the rebuilding of the old Davidic empire.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 273.

<sup>12</sup> Nogalski agrees: “This phrase functions as a metaphor for a kingdom that had ceased to exist with the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC.” Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 360. Sweeney states, “The passage presupposes Yhwh’s prior punishment of the people which will be redressed at the time the Davidic rule is restored.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 274.

people “on their land” (Amos 9:13–15). For the purposes of this inquiry into kingship in the Twelve, the connection between Edenic language and the “booth of David” is fascinating. This connection casts an Adamic light on the future Davidic son. The future David, along with his kingdom, appear to be not just a restoration to what was lost in the Fall but an escalation and expansion beyond what the original Eden could have been. Implicit in the commands to Adam was that he was to cultivate the garden to flourishing and expand its borders until Eden and creation were co-extensive.<sup>13</sup> That was subverted and perverted in the Fall of Adam. Expectant in the first gospel promise of a second Adam given in Genesis 3:15 is that he would restore all that was lost by the first Adam.<sup>14</sup> The language of Amos 9:11–15 depicts that restoration. The repaired “booth of David” also possesses “the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name” (Amos 9:12).<sup>15</sup> Whereas the first Adam should have filled the earth with his family but failed, the Lord is doing so by adding the nations to the “booth of David.” Indeed, Shepherd observes a word play between “Edom” and *adam* (mankind) at work allowing for the Edom to be representative of all nations.<sup>16</sup> This expansion of the peoples occurs in the linguistic context of agricultural affluence. Thus, the Davidic king, his kingdom, covenant, people, and land are depicted as what Eden should have been but better (cf. Isa 11:1–16; 65:17–18, 21–22, 25). The seed of Jezreel has sprouted and blossomed.

<sup>13</sup> See G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 17 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), 82.

<sup>14</sup> At the very least, the last Adam’s work would include the crushing of Satan, the undoing of death, the reversal of the curse, the horizontal restoration of people, and the vertical reunion of people with God.

<sup>15</sup> Shepherd asks, “What is the sense of the verb “possess here? Does it have a positive connotation such as inclusion within the kingdom, or does it have a negative one as in the sense of dispossession? It is clear from the use of the verb in Obad 19 that Israel will conquer the land of Edom and defeat any enemies therein, but Amos 9:12 seems to allow for a believing remnant of Edomites who are representative of all Gentiles who bear the name of the Lord (cf. Zech 2:11).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 202.

<sup>16</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 203.

## Davidic Kingship in Micah

**Micah 5:2–5a.** In this passage God has given his people up until the time when, “she who is in labor has given birth (Mic 5:3). The male child born of the clan of Judah in “little” Bethlehem Ephrathah, the birth place of David, shall be ruler in Israel (Mic 5:2, see Gen 49:8–12; 1 Sam 16:1; 17:12; Ruth 4:11–22).<sup>17</sup> Yet the baby born is, “from of old, from ancient days” and “shall stand . . . in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God” (Mic 5:2, 4). This passage presents this ruler as from “ancient of days,” a title of the Lord (Dan 7: 9, 13, 22).<sup>18</sup> At the same time, this passage depicts this ruler as distinct from the Lord, relying upon the Lord’s strength and bearing his name. The solution to this apparent discrepancy of identity is found in the doctrines of the Trinity and the incarnation, along with the creedal formulation of the hypostatic union.

This birth narrative of a Davidic king has significant literary ties with Isaiah.<sup>19</sup> The virgin born child of Isaiah 7:14 named “God is with us” is linked to the eternal Davidic son of Isaiah 9:6–7. The Davidic son of Isaiah 9:6–7 bears designations solely reserved for the Lord, “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father” (Isa 9:6; cf. 10:20–21). Micah adds to this portrait the location of the birthplace of the Davidic king and

<sup>17</sup> Shepherd observes, “The use of the woman in labor to mark the time can be understood in at least two ways. One possibility is that it is an allusion to the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14b. But it is equally plausible in context to say that giving birth is a metaphor for fulfillment (cf. Mic 4:9–10).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 265. Sweeney provides an interesting observation on the use of “little” as a descriptor, noting, “The term plays upon the common Israelite tradition that the younger overcomes the older or that the less powerful overcomes the more powerful. This motif is expressed especially in relation to Jacob’s supplanting of his older brother Esau (Gen 25–27; 32–35), Joseph’s supplanting his older brothers (Gen 37–50), the selection of the small tribe of Benjamin as the royal tribe of Israel (1 Sam 10:17–27), and the selection of David as king over his older brothers (1 Sam 16:1–13).” Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 388. It seems that not only was the town of Bethlehem “little,” but so is the Davidic king born in her, as the New Testament has much to say about the unexpected meekness and lowliness of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 11:29; 12:20; Phil 2:1–11).

<sup>18</sup> Contra Sweeney, who considers this a reference to the Davidic covenant: “The Davidic traditions emphasize the antiquity of David’s covenant as ‘an eternal/ancient covenant’ (2 Sam 23:5) that ensures that his descendants will rule ‘forever.’” Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 388.

<sup>19</sup> Sweeney notes, “The address to Bethlehem Ephrata . . . draws heavily upon the traditions of eternal Davidic kingship in Israel in order to point to a time when Israel will enjoy peace and security from its enemies.” Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 387.

reinforces the expanse of his reign to the ends of the earth.

The reign of this king shall be one in which, “he shall stand and shepherd his flock” which includes the return of the “rest of his brothers” (Mic 5:3–4). This passage is a close parallel to Isaiah 11:10 which states of the Davidic son, “In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall all the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.” Both passages use the unique language of the king “standing” resulting in the return, not only of Israel but also the return of the nations. The people’s safety and security are due to the king’s shepherding (Mic 5:4).

Micah’s notion of a Shepherd-King builds upon the previous Latter Prophets (e.g., Isa 40:10–11; Jer 23:1–6; Ezek 34:1–31). The identity and ministry of the Shepherd-King includes, the Lord God himself ruling as he tends his flock like a shepherd, carrying them, and gently leading those with young (Isa 40:10–11). Jeremiah predominately serves as a scathing rebuke of Israel’s earthly shepherds and of God’s indictment against them. In Jeremiah 23:3–4, God declares he will gather the remnant of his flock out of all the countries where he had driven them and set caring shepherds over them. Connected with these caring shepherds is God’s declaration he will “raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land” (Jer 23:5). More than that, the name of this Davidic Branch, “will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness’” (Jer 23:6). The connection of Jeremiah’s Davidic-Branch-Shepherd is corroborated in Ezekiel 37:24: “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd.”<sup>20</sup> This Davidic son will be prince forever, an everlasting covenant of peace will be cut, God will dwell among his people, set his sanctuary among them forevermore, and the people will walk in God’s rules, in their land (Ezek 37:24–28). Ezekiel 34 chronicles God’s fury at

<sup>20</sup> That this passage is not referring to the first David as now resurrected but rather to the promised eternal Davidic son of 2 Sam 7:1–29 is made clear in the next verse: “and David my servant shall be prince forever” (Ezek 37:25; cf. 2 Chr 17:11–14).

unrighteous shepherds, declaring that he himself “will be shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down” (Ezek 34:15). Micah’s description of the baby born from of old in Bethlehem, born to reign to the ends of the earth, brings forward second exodus shepherding language from the previous Latter Prophets.

### **Davidic Kingship in Zechariah**

**Zechariah 3:8–10.** This vision begins with Joshua the high priest, clothed in filthy garments, standing before the angel of the Lord with Satan present to accuse him (Zech 3:1–3). The Lord proceeds to rebuke Satan, take away Joshua’s iniquity, and clothe him in clean garments (Zech 3:2–5). After stating that the men before Joshua are a sign, God declares in heavily freighted words “behold, I will bring my servant the Branch . . . , and I will remove the iniquity of the land in a single day” (Zech 3:8–9).<sup>21</sup>

Zechariah 3:8 is the first reference to the Servant-Branch in the Twelve. The term “servant” is commonplace among the Latter Prophets and used variously of individuals and nations. The link of “servant” to the title “the Branch,” however, is far from benign and is highly significant for the development and advancement of the

<sup>21</sup> Sandwiched between these words in Zech 3:9 is the enigmatic statement, with disputed meaning, “For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares the Lord of hosts.” Disagreement abounds as to the meaning and purpose of this stone as well as this statement’s function between the promise of the Servant-Branch and the removal of the iniquity of the land. Sweeney understands Zech 3:1–10 to be the ordination of Joshua as high priest, with the stone described in v. 9 (“the stone I have set before Joshua”) as being a rosette fixed to the front of the priestly turban. Sweeney presumes that the engraved inscription is the same as the one mentioned in Exod 28:36 (“Holy to Yhwh”), serving as a sign that Yhwh will remove the guilt of the land in one day, just as the rosette in Exod 28:38 indicates that Aaron will take upon himself the guilt incurred by the people of Israel. Sweeney resolves the difference between the gold on Aaron’s turban and the stone on Joshua’s as Zechariah’s metaphoric use of Isaiah 28:16, where Yhwh intends to lay a “tested,” “precious,” and “sure” foundation stone in Zion. Sweeney believes the allusion to Isa 28:16 is understood metaphorically in relation to proper leadership of the nation. Sweeney understands the seven eyes or facets on the stone as read in relation to the metaphorical portrayal of the seven-branched temple lampstands as the eyes of Yhwh in Zech 4:2, 10. Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 603. Shepherd alternatively offers that the stone is a prop in the vision that clearly represents someone or something else, possibly the Messiah or the Messianic kingdom—likely both. Shepherd suggests that the engraving on the stone calls to mind the engraving of the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones of the priestly garment (Exod 28:9, 11, 21, 36; 39:6, 9, 30), perhaps in anticipation of the picture of the Messiah in Zech 6:12–13 as both priest and king along with the impending removal of iniquity from the land. The eyes on the stone, unless they depict the omniscience of the Messiah, are likely the all-knowing eyes of God that providentially and perfectly watch over the Messiah and his kingdom. Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 411.

promised Davidic king. Isaiah 11 ties together the child prophecies of Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6–7, now portraying the Davidic son variously as a “shoot, branch, and root” from the stump of Jesse (Isa 11:1, 10). The Davidic Branch will be full of the Spirit, reverse the curse upon creation, reign righteously, judge the wicked, and be a beacon-like signal for the nations to bring about the second exodus (Isa 11:2–16; cf. Isa 4:2–6; Jer 23:5–8; 33:14–26).

Isaiah 42 introduces the “servant songs” and ties the servant’s identity to the Branch by drawing on imagery, themes, and allusions from Isaiah 11 thus linking and creating the Servant-Branch identity (cf. 42:1 with 11:1, 12; 42:3 with 11:3–5; 42:6–7 with 9:1–2). Isaiah 49 furthers the understanding of the identity and mission of the Servant-Branch stating, “And he said to me, ‘You are my servant Israel, in whom I will be glorified’” (Isa 49:3). The text clarifies “Israel” not as a reference to the nation but to the Servant-Branch when his mission is explained, “And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him” (Isa 49:5–6). The mission of the Servant-Branch, however, was not only to bring back Jacob and Israel as, “it is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth” (Isa 49:5–6). In Isaiah 49, the Servant-Branch as “Israel” will not only recover the nation of Israel but also the Gentiles. The Servant-Branch-Israel would himself be given as a covenant to the people (Isa 49:8). Salvation would be accomplished and applied when the Servant-Branch, described as a “young plant” and “root” in chapter Isaiah 53, “was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed” (Isa 52:13–53:12).

When Zechariah 3:8–9 speaks briefly of “my servant the Branch” and “the removal of the iniquity of this land in a single day,” it functions like a hyper-linked text



that imports that theological significance of the Servant-Branch from Isaiah-Ezekiel into the Twelve. The result of the arrival of the Servant-Branch in Zechariah and removal of iniquity in that day is that, “every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree” (Zech 3:10; cf. 1 Kgs 4:25).<sup>22</sup> The Edenic language of Zechariah 3:10 signals the work of the Servant-Branch is not only priestly atonement through the removal of sin and the ethnic reconciliation between Israelites and Gentiles, but also the restoration of cursed creation (see Mic 4:4; cf. Isa 2:2–4; Jer 23:5–8).

**Zechariah 6:10–15.** Here the Lord commands gold and silver to be taken from four specific men of the exiles to be fashioned into a crown and placed on the head of the high priest, Joshua, the son of Jehozadak (Zech 6:9–11).<sup>23</sup> It is then to be pronounced of Joshua, “Behold the man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord” (Zech 6:12). Moreover, the Branch is “he who shall build the temple of the Lord and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne . . . . There shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zech 6:13). Zechariah 3:8 states that Joshua and his friends are, “men who are a sign,” so the statements of Zechariah 6 appear to continue to speak symbolically. As a sign, the elements of this passage point beyond themselves. The sign in Zechariah 6 presenting Joshua as a royal priest coronated and enthroned has a number of interpretive difficulties. One difficulty is whether one or two people are spoken of regarding coronation and enthronement. The two references to “crown” are plural in the Hebrew and two people appear in view at the end of verse 13, “between them both” (cf.

<sup>22</sup> This is an intertextual link with 1 Kgs 4:25, which reads, “And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon.” The broader literary scope of 1 Kings 3–10, prior to the Adamic fall of Solomon, is portrayed as the fulfillment of God’s promises in the Abrahamic covenant and return to Eden in keeping with the creation covenant.

<sup>23</sup> Regarding the men, Shepherd states, “There is no background information provided for these individuals, and such information appears irrelevant.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 426.

Zech 6:11, 14).<sup>24</sup> Another difficulty is the theological tension of presenting Joshua in kingly terms, particularly if one person is in view in this passage. Both difficulties are intertwined but will be addressed in sequence.

Regarding the first difficulty of whether one or two individuals is in view, Joshua is obviously clear from the context. A second person, if that is what is implied by plural “crowns” and “peace between them both,” is not specified. The likely candidate for a second person is Zerubbabel. Haggai 2:2–9 issues God’s encouragement to both Zerubbabel and Joshua to be strong and work in tandem in building the temple with God himself giving peace (cf. Zech 6:13). Zerubbabel, descended from David, is described as leading in and participating in the rebuilding of the temple but is referred to as “governor” rather than “king.” Additionally, Zerubbabel is not even mentioned in Zechariah 6 which appears to rule him out as the intended referent of the prophecy (Hag 1:14; 1 Chr 3:1, 16–19; Ezra 3:2, 8–13; 5:2).<sup>25</sup> It is possible to see Zerubbabel implicit in the text but the plain reading of the passage views a single individual, Joshua.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> It is also possible to interpret the phrase “and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zech 6:13) not as a reference to two different individuals but peace between two offices, namely, the union of king and priest in a single person, a point to be explored below.

<sup>25</sup> Shepherd makes a similar observation:

‘Branch’ picks up the description of Zerubbabel in Haggai 2:23 and clarifies that Zerubbabel is only a prefiguration of one who is still to come (see Tg. Jon. Zech 3:8b). This is evident from the fact that Zerubbabel is already present as a leader in the community, but the one of whom the Lord speaks here is yet to come in the future—not to mention the fact that Zerubbabel never actually reigned as king. (Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 411).

Sweeney states, “One must also consider the fact that the name Zerubbabel is derived from the Akkadian term *zer babil*, ‘seed/branch of Babylon.’ Insofar as Zerubbabel was the grandson of King Jehoiachin, the designation of ‘branch’ as the future Davidic monarch must clearly take his role as potential king of a restored Judean state into consideration.” Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 601. Nogalski, on the other hand, suggests:

Twice the word, ‘crowns’ appears in the plural form (6:11, 14), but only the high priest Joshua is mentioned as the one who will wear the crowns. As a result, most English versions translate ‘crown’ as singular. That there is more than one crown mentioned creates the expectation that there should be more than one person wearing them. Thus, presumably this oracle originally referenced both Zerubbabel and Joshua as recipients of these crowns, but subsequent political events prompted the removal of direct references to Zerubbabel. In short, the evidence that original references to Zerubbabel were removed or replaced from this oracle is quite strong, and this action suggests a deliberate attempt in the text’s redactional history to downplay Zerubbabel’s role as a political leader who might threaten Persian king Darius. (James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 880).

<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, if Joshua is depicted here as wearing two crowns, then this is in keeping with

Regarding the second difficulty Shepherd rightly asks, “Why does the Lord instruct Zechariah to put a royal crown rather than a priestly turban on the head of the high priest?”<sup>27</sup> It is possible to understand this sign as a second Levitical throne installed to rule alongside the Davidic throne. Another possibility is that the sign may suggest the Davidic dynasty will be replaced with a Levitical one. It is also possible the text intimates the Davidic throne will have a priest upon it thereby uniting kingdom and priesthood in one Davidic descendent. The unbreakable and everlasting nature of the Davidic covenant makes the first option unlikely and removes the third option entirely (1 Chr 17:11–14; cf. Isa 49:1–16; 54:7–10; 55:3–4).<sup>28</sup> The text does not explain how it is possible for a Davidic king-priest to exist since the priesthood was entrusted to the lineage of Levi, especially the high priesthood of Aaron (cf. Exod 40:13–15).<sup>29</sup> Zechariah simply intimates that it will be so. From a canonical perspective, looking forward to Psalm 110:4, the interpretation of a single Davidic priest-king is confirmed when the text reads, “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.’” Thus, it appears best to interpret the symbolism of Joshua’s coronation as pointing beyond itself to the forthcoming reality of a Davidic priest-king.

One’s understanding of the coronation and throne referenced above influences one’s interpretation of Zechariah 6:13: “and there shall be a priest on his throne and the

the only other person in Scripture also depicted as wearing more than one—Jesus Christ. Rev 19:12 reads, “His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.” That Joshua is also referred to as the Davidic Branch in Zechariah 6:12 suggests that elements of a typological structure are present in the person of Joshua.

<sup>27</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 426.

<sup>28</sup> See Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum’s compelling exegesis and analysis that the proper rendering and interpretation of Isaiah 55:3 regarding the everlasting covenant God will make is performed by the faithful kindness of a future David; it is not a reiteration and reference to the historical David. If correct, this rendering would disallow any additional throne. Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 410–21.

<sup>29</sup> Shepherd offers an interesting historical note: “The Qumran community tried to resolve this with a theory of two Messiahs: the Messiah of Aaron and the Messiah of Israel (4QDa 10 I, 12; 1QS 9:11; 1QSa 2:11–22).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 428.

counsel of peace shall be between them both.” From the Davidic priest-king perspective, the peace likely has the connotation of the union of these two biblical offices in a single individual. Peace between the offices in the sense of unity and wholeness. “Peace between them both” may additionally carry the connotation there is now peace between the throne of the king-priest and the throne of God in heaven. Peace with God indicates acceptance of the priesthood where there once was rejection, especially acceptance of sacrifice (cf. the replacement of Joshua’s filthy garments with pure vestments in Zech 3:1–10; see also Isa 1:11–17; 66:3; Jer 6:20; Mal 1:10).

Zechariah 6:12 indicates once again that Joshua is to be named symbolically the Branch (see previous discussion on Zech 3:8). Here, the man whose name is Branch, shall “branch out from his place,” will build the temple of the Lord, and shall bear royal honor (Zech 6:12–13). The notion of the Branch branching out alludes to the “shoot from the stump of Jesse and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit” (Isa 11:1). The branching out seems best to be understood as a recovery of a remnant of people to the Lord (cf. Isa 11:10–16). The Branch’s ministry of rebuilding the temple builds upon Zechariah 3:3–9 where Joshua was outfitted with clean priestly garments and a priestly stone. The literary flow of Zechariah 3 and 6 consists of God preparing the priest to not only offer worthy and right sacrifice but to offer sacrifice in God’s worthy and right place. While the restoration of the temple and sacrificial system are recorded in Ezra-Nehemiah, the fact the Shekinah glory did not return to that temple, suggest something eschatological is at work in Zechariah (cf. Exod 40:34–38; 1 Kgs 8:1–11; Ezra 3:10–13; 6:14–18; Neh 6:15). The broken Mosaic covenant, the promise of the new covenant, and the eschatological focus of Zechariah strongly suggest a priesthood and temple beyond Ezra-Nehemiah. An eschatological priesthood and temple unlike those of the Mosaic covenant and bound with the new covenant (cf. Jer 31:31–34). Zechariah indicates the Davidic king will be the High Priest of the new covenant.

**Zechariah 9:9–10.** In this oracle on the judgment of Israel’s enemies, the people are summoned to rejoice and shout greatly for, “Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zech 9:9). The reign of this humble king involves him speaking, “peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth” (Zech 9:10). Contrary to the war horse of a military general, the king comes lowly on a foal. Yet this king has the authority and persuasion to speak peace uniting all the nations with his reign extending to the ends of the earth. Unlike all of Israel’s previous kings, this king is righteous and having salvation and rules all creation (cf. Isa 11:1–16).

An alternative interpretation exists on the portrait of the king displayed in this text. The alternative stems from the meaning of the Hebrew word translated, “humble,” in tandem with the actions of the king riding on a donkey.<sup>30</sup> The term is used to describe how the Egyptians “afflicted” the Israelites (Exod 1:11–12). In Isaiah the same term is used to describe Isaiah’s suffering servant who is “afflicted” by God (Isa 53:4, 7). The Suffering-Servant-Branch of Isaiah has already been shown to have literary ties with the Davidic Branch-king of Zechariah. Shepherd indicates this term normally describes a righteous person afflicted by the wicked.<sup>31</sup> This text can be rendered, “Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, *afflicted* and mounted on a donkey” (Zech 9:9; emphasis added).

The other aspect of an alternative observation has to do with the king riding a donkey. Genesis 49:9–12 likens the future scepter-holding king from Judah as a war-lion who binds his donkey to the vine with clothing drenched in wine like blood (cf. Num

<sup>30</sup> I am dependent on Shepherd (*Commentary on the Twelve*, 444–45) for these observations.

<sup>31</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 444.

24:9, 17).<sup>32</sup> King Absalom rode into battle on a donkey (2 Sam 18:9). King David had his son Solomon ride his mule on the day Solomon was anointed king over Israel (1 Kgs 1:33, 38, 44). The notion that a donkey is a symbol of humility and meekness may not be as universal or strong as is assumed. Instead donkeys may at times be a symbol of royalty and military might.<sup>33</sup> This leads Shepherd to conclude that the juxtaposition of this verse is not that a high king is on a lowly donkey but that of an afflicted king on a symbol of regal might.<sup>34</sup> From this perspective, there is precedent in the Twelve that the afflicted king may be returning from military victory, approaching for coronation, or both (cf. Hos 1:11; 3:5; Mic 2:13).

The salvation this king brings appears to be beyond mere cessation of hostility through the military victory he seems to have achieved on his own (Zech 9:1–8, 16). All the nations are not completely destroyed as Gentile survivors are enveloped in the kingdom which necessarily requires them becoming members of the covenant (Zech 9:10). Salvation in this passage, therefore, is covenantal in nature. Salvation presumes the war is over, blood is spilt, and atonement made on behalf of the covenant members. The canonical expectation of the afflicted Branch-King leads to the conclusion that he is also the mediator of the new covenant.

**Zechariah 12:10.** Zechariah 12 is an oracle about God making Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples and describes the valiant victory of the people over their oppressors. Using the prophetic signifier, “on that day,” this passage locates a future fulfillment (Zech 12:3–4, 6, 8, 9, 11). Curiously, after the Lord pours out a “spirit of grace and pleas for mercy” upon Jerusalem, the people will look upon the

<sup>32</sup> The reader must ponder whether the wine like blood is the King Lion’s, his enemies’, or both (cf. Isa 52:14–15; 53:4–5; 63:1–6).

<sup>33</sup> Donkeys appear in some cases to have been a sign of wealth, prestige, or valuable gift (Judg 5:10; 2 Sam 16:2; 19:26).

<sup>34</sup> See Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 445.

Lord, “on him who they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn” (Zech 12:10). The mourning of the people will be vast and widespread. Even so, “on that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness” (Zech 13:1).

Working backwards in this passage, the cleansing of the people from sin and uncleanness appears to be in response to their mourning over, “him who they have pierced” (Zech 12:10). Grammatically, the antecedent to “him” is “the Lord.”<sup>35</sup> The discussion on the Servant-Branch from Zechariah 3:8–10 brings clarity to this passage. The intertextual linkage of Zechariah 3:8–10 along with the Suffering-Servant of Isaiah 53 provides precedent and a literary backdrop for understanding this passage as referring to God as pierced by his people. The term pierced describes a puncture wound, typically received in battle (cf. Num 25:8; Judg 9:54; 1 Sam 31:4). Shepherd asks, “How is it possible to pierce the Lord?”<sup>36</sup> As an odd shift in pronouns takes place from first to third person (“look on me, on him”), the answer is that this is none other than the divine Davidic king, Suffering-Branch, messiah of the Latter Prophets.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, “He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed” (Isa 53:5).

The description of the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem mourning for him as one mourns for an “only child” and weeps over a “firstborn” has strong linguistic ties with Genesis 22 and Abraham’s tested sacrifice of Isaac.<sup>38</sup> God told

<sup>35</sup> Curiously, for as detailed and involved as his commentary is on the Twelve, Nogalski does not address this passage beyond a side note, without explanation, that Christians use this passage as a Christological proof text but not according to the original meaning of the text. Nogalski, *Micah–Malachi*, 950.

<sup>36</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 464.

<sup>37</sup> Passages such as this depict the Christian doctrine of the Trinity from a veiled, mysterious Old Testament perspective.

<sup>38</sup> I am indebted to Sweeney for his passing observations on the connections with Gen 22.

Abraham in Genesis 22:2, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there . . . on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” Although Abraham had an older son, Ishmael, Isaac is called his only son, the son he loves. Abraham’s faithful obedience leads to the sparing of Isaac, God’s provision of a ram, the naming of the place “The Lord will provide as it is said to this day, ‘On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided’” (Gen 22:14). God then reiterates his covenant with Abraham likening his descendants to sand and stars who will possess the gate of their enemies and, “in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen 22:17–18; cf. Mic 1:10). The connection between these passages is not just literary but geographical. God told Abraham to take Isaac to a mountain in the land of Moriah. Second Chronicles names the location of Solomon’s temple as, “Jerusalem on Mount Moriah” (2 Chron 3:1). In Zechariah 12:10 the location of the piercing of the Lord and mourning of the people is Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah (Zech 12:6–13:1). God’s cleansing of his people from their sin and uncleanness demonstrates the reality that, “on the mount of the Lord it shall be provided” (Gen 22:14).

### **Synthesis of the Davidic King in the Twelve**

Hosea opens the Book of the Twelve with the promised reunification of the nation under one “head,” referring to a Davidic king. Not only does Hosea set up the Davidic expectation of the Twelve but also introduces a new title for the messiah, Jezreel. The name Jezreel has strong literary ties with the seed conflict introduced in Genesis 3 and with the promised seed of the Abrahamic covenant. Jezreel also plays on the concept on the Davidic king sowing a righteous remnant in the land. Hosea describes the reunification of the remnant in the land as covenantal in nature, cast in second exodus

Despite his observations, however, Sweeney does not seem to understand this passage as Messianic and is agnostic as to the identity of who is pierced, though he sees close affinities with the death of Josiah in the valley of Megiddo. Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 688.



terms. Hosea places this moment, “in the latter days” after which the children of Israel will seek both the Lord their God and the Davidic son.

Amos uses Edenic language to describe the rebuilding of the fallen booth of David. The “booth of David” is representative of all that is concerned with the Davidic kingdom, namely the restoration of the king, covenant, people, and land. Amos brings forward to the Twelve the connection found in Isaiah between “booth” and “Branch” language. Further, the language of Amos casts the restoration of the “booth of David” in an Edenic and Adamic light. The portrait in Amos is that the restoration of the fallen booth of David fulfills what was implicit in the garden wherein the kingdom covers the earth and all nations have united themselves to the Adamic-Davidic king.

Micah describes the unassuming birth location of the Davidic king in Bethlehem. The baby born will be from ancient of days and have an expansive reign that covers the earth. The Davidic son’s reign will be one of shepherding that begins with him standing and drawing his people from all the places to which they had been driven. Micah’s shepherd language brings forward ties from Jeremiah and Ezekiel where Shepherd-Branch language are intertwined.

Zechariah makes explicit what is implicit in Micah by importing the Servant-Branch language from Isaiah-Ezekiel into the Twelve. The arrival of the Servant-Branch in Zechariah signals the removal of iniquity. Using Edenic language, the Servant-Branch is connected with atonement that removes sin, brings about ethnic reconciliation between Israelites and gentiles, and reversal of the curse. The Servant-Branch will be a Davidic king-priest who will build the temple and restore peace between God and his people. The king will arrive on a donkey having been afflicted and bringing salvation with him leading to a restored covenantal relationship with God. This king is the one whom the people pierced, the one whom the people mourn over, the one who will pour out grace and mercy, and the one who will cleanse the people from their sin and uncleanness.

## **The New Testament's Use of the Davidic King in the Twelve**

What follows is a brief examination of the use of the Book of the Twelve in the New Testament regarding the Davidic king. Due to the scope of this work, one key passage will be considered. Acts 15:15–17 will be explored attempting to discern how Luke quoting James, read, interpreted, and applied Amos 9:11–12.

Acts 15 describes the Jerusalem council. Controversy erupted and confusion persisted with the inclusion of Gentiles into the church. A dispute waged between Paul and Barnabas against men from Judea who taught, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1–2). This teaching undermined everything Paul preached about the free grace of the gospel. A council was held in Jerusalem in which “the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter” (Acts 15:6). Believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees declared, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses” (Acts 15:5). Peter provided testimony against the party of the Pharisees indicating the Holy Spirit made no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, and to go back to Moses would be a yoke neither the fathers nor those present at the council could bear (Acts 15:7–10). Rather, Peter argued, salvation is through the grace of the Lord Jesus, implying the works of the law were to no avail (Acts 15:11). Barnabas and Paul then related the signs and wonders God performed through them among the Gentiles with the advance of the gospel (Acts 15:12). In light of the preceding gospel testimony, James then rendered a judgment to “not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God” by requiring them to come under the law of Moses (Acts 15:13, 19). The conclusiveness of James’s judgment, to which all the assembly agreed, was the citation of Amos 9:11–12 as biblical evidence for the inclusion of Gentiles and their not needing to keep the law.

The widespread agreement of the council intimates they all understood James’s

citation of Amos 9:11–12 to be definitive.<sup>39</sup> Gospel testimony, coupled with signs and wonders, in light of Amos 9:11–12 led the council to positively decide no one had to keep the Mosaic law anymore. Yet it does not appear to be a straight line between the conclusion of the council and the text of Amos 9:11–12. Acts 15:16, citing Amos 9:11, speaks of the rebuilding of the tent of David. Acts 15:17, citing Amos 9:12, explains the rebuilding of the tent of David is so that “the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord.” There is no explicit mention of either the Mosaic or new covenants in this passage. What is not immediately clear is how the council understood this citation to be definitive and what the relation of the rebuilding of the tent of David is to both the Mosaic and new covenants.

In Amos 9:11, the raising up of the fallen booth of David is idiomatic shorthand of God doing all that is necessary to restore the Davidic king, kingdom, covenant, and people. From the vantage point of Amos 9, the context of the Twelve had already indicated the Mosaic covenant was broken, a restoration was coming through a Davidic king, a new eternal covenant would be made, and the Spirit would be indiscriminately poured out upon any person who calls upon the name of the Lord (cf. Hos 1:2–11; 2:16–20; 3:5; Joel 2:28–32). Following Amos 9, the context of the Twelve continues to reveal that the Gentiles will be converted and call upon the name of the Lord, and the Davidic king-priest, afflicted and pierced, will remove the sin of the people through the blood of the covenant (cf. Zeph 3:9; Zech 2:11–12; 3:8–10; 6:12–13; 9:9–11; 12:10–11). In Amos 9:11–12, the raising up the fallen booth of David stands in the intertextual stream of all the promises associated with the future new covenant in the Twelve. The raising up of the fallen booth is nothing short of the establishment of the

<sup>39</sup> Shepherd notes that Acts 15:17 adopts the LXX of Amos 9:11–12. He states that the LXX (Alexandrinus) understands Amos 9:12 to allow for a believing remnant of Edomites, representative of all gentiles, to bear the name of the Lord. “The LXX takes ‘in order that they may possess (*iyreshu*) the remnant of Edom’ and renders, ‘in order that the remnant of mankind (*adam*) may seek (*idreshu*) the Lord.’ The LXX translator likely ‘brought out the sense of the proto-MT on the basis of similarities known to him (Edom/*adam* and *iyreshu/iydreshu*).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 203.

new everlasting covenant of peace, through the sacrifice of the divine Davidic king, and the ingathering of Spirit-filled Jews and Gentiles alike, through a second exodus. It should be noted that the council of Jerusalem was presumably aware of the context of Amos 9:11–12 in the Twelve.

James’s citation of Amos 9:11–12 in light of gospel testimony and the undeniable ministry of the Holy Spirit to fall upon Jew and Gentile alike, is a fitting summary of the continuing expansion of the church beyond Jerusalem.<sup>40</sup> Amos 9:11–12 is fundamentally covenantal in nature and cannot be rightly understood apart from the work of the Davidic king to usher in the new covenant in place of the Mosaic covenant. This is underscored by the inclusion of Gentiles explained in Amos 9:12, “that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old.” The Pharisees’ demand to keep the law they were unable to keep is the antithesis of Peter’s argument that salvation is by grace in the new covenant. Furthermore, a covenant change is presumed in Acts 15 in light of the Lord’s Supper, that is, the new covenant in Jesus’s blood (cf. Zech 9:11; Luke 22:20). To keep the law of Moses would be to reverse the progress of revelation in the covenants and undo their fulfillment in Christ. Indeed, to keep the law of Moses would be to tear down the rebuilt booth of David.

<sup>40</sup> Shepherd notes the LXX of Amos 9:11–12:

Is of course adopted in Acts 15:17 where Luke presents James at the Jerusalem council making the definitive argument for the inclusion of the Gentiles in God’s kingdom . . . Such a reading seems warranted by the latter part of Amos 9:12, which reads, ‘and all the nations upon whom my name is called.’ This expression is so strongly associated with Israel as the people of God (e.g. Deut 28:10; Isa 63:19; Jer 14:9; 2 Chr 7:14) that Redak (Rabbi David Kimhi) thought that the relative clause (‘upon which my name is called’) must apply to Israel rather than the nations . . . Such language is employed here to show that a remnant of believing Gentiles will become part of the people of God. (Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 203).

Nogalski reads Amos 9:11 as the destruction of Edom (contra Shepherd) and overstates the differences between the MT and the LXX with regard to citation purposes in the NT:

What makes these variations so interesting is that the fluidity of translation, especially when combined with the theological and christological lenses of the New Testament writers, radically changes the original meaning of the Hebrew text from a message of conquest to a model of openness to foreigners. The LXX’s deliberate change for a new context (the Greek-speaking Jewish Diaspora) opens the door for James to offer the crucial support of Paul’s mission to the Gentiles that changed the course of Christian history. (Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 357).

“From of old” it has been known that a covenantal change was coming. With this in view James develops Amos 9:11–12. Amos knew a change was coming but he would not have known the detailed specifics of how the fulfillment of the change would occur. James does not contravene the meaning of Amos 9:11–12, rather he rightly applies its past prophetic significance to present realities of fulfillment.

## CHAPTER 5

### EXILE AND THE SECOND EXODUS IN THE TWELVE

In the opening chapters of Genesis, the garden of Eden is portrayed as God's temple-palace.<sup>1</sup> God, the King of the Universe, intended to rule creation through his image-bearing vice-regents, Adam and Eve. Genesis implies that only the garden of Eden was cultivated and Adam's role was to "work it and keep it" (Gen 2:15).<sup>2</sup> This role, with the help of Adam's wife and presumed children, was to extend the borders of the garden of Eden until it filled all the earth.<sup>3</sup> In this way, the kingdom of God would fill creation while the kingdom citizens imaged forth the ethical, invisible, and relational glories of the king who walked among them (cf. Gen 1:27; Rev 21:1–4).

Adam and Eve broke covenant with God, rejected him, and their failed coup led to the cursing of creation and their exile from the presence of God in the garden (Gen 3:6–24). The way was shut (Gen 3:24). They were ejected east out of the garden into the wilderness of exile and estrangement from God.

Years later, Adam's descendants through Abraham were in bondage to slavery in Egypt (Exod 1:8–22; 3:7–12). With a strong arm and outstretched hand, God delivered his people through the man Moses by wonderful and terrible plagues (Exod 6:6; Deut 4:34; 5:15). God had come down to his son in exile to liberate him from slavery and bring him into the promised land, which is portrayed as a new Eden (Exod 4:22–23). God led

<sup>1</sup> G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 17 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), 70.

<sup>2</sup> John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 84–85n8.

<sup>3</sup> Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 81–87.

his people in the wilderness, judged their enemies along the way, and after 40 years brought them into their new Edenic home (Num 32:13; Deut 26:9). God covenanted with the people that if they remained faithful, agricultural blessings would overtake them, and they would live fruitful, peaceful lives (Deut 28:1–14). If they broke covenant, however, curses would overtake them, and eventually they would be sent back in exile, returning to Egypt to sell themselves as slaves but have no buyer (Deut 28:15–68). The fall of Israel would be Adam and Eve’s insurrection all over again.

God gave Israel kings who were meant to represent the Lord’s rule over his people. King Solomon and his early kingdom was stylized as the fulfillment of all God’s Edenic promises (1 Kgs 10:1–25). But Solomon, the people, and nearly every subsequent king “did what was right in his own eyes” and broke covenant with God generation after generation (1 Kgs 11:1–14). God sent prophet after prophet to call the people to repentance through threat of judgment and promises of restoration (2 Kgs 17:13–14).

The Latter Prophets provide divine commentary on the covenant-breaking rebellion of the people. They describe the consequences of sin through the thematic lenses of exile and wilderness wandering. They also describe redemption and restoration through the thematic lenses of a second exodus and return to an Edenic paradise. The Latter Prophets use the writings of Moses typologically to develop and explain God’s covenant faithfulness in judgment and restoration of his people.

### **Exile and the Second Exodus in the Twelve**

While the Book of the Twelve can be characterized as a sustained meditation on exile and the second exodus, five key passages will be explored. These passages are (1) Hosea 2:14–15; (2) Hosea 11:1–12:14; (3) Amos 9:11–15; (4) Micah 4:1–10; (5) Zechariah 10:6–12. They will be investigated in the literary order of the Twelve with a synthesis to follow. This chapter will conclude with a brief analysis of the use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15.

## **Exile and Second Exodus in Hosea**

**Hosea 2:14–15.** Alternating between promises of judgment and salvation, Hosea chapter 2 continues the adultery metaphor began in chapter 1. Judgment due to Israel’s whoring and adultery becomes linked to the land when God threatens, “I will make her like a wilderness and make her like a parched land” (Hos 2:3). Israel will be “hedged up with thorns” and God will “lay waste her vines and her fig trees” (Hos 2:6, 12). The judgment for adultery becomes inextricably bound to judgment of the land. God declares the land has become evil because its fruitfulness is used for the worship of Baal (Hos 2:7–13). This portrait stands in typological continuity with Adam and Eve’s fall in the garden, the curse of thorns, and their exile east into the wilderness (Gen 3:18, 24). Hosea now portrays the promised land as undergoing a similar cursing of thorns and thistles. Cursing of the land is the result of the pollution and devastation of human sin. Cursing of the land signals exile: “I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals . . . , and [she] went after her lovers and forgot me, declares the Lord” (Hos 2:13). Israel is to be banished into exile and receive “no mercy” because she is not God’s people as a result of her repeated whorings (Hos 1:9; 2:2, 5). Exile is the proper punishment for rebelling against the king and inciting insurgency in the king’s land.

The prophetic pattern of the Latter Prophets, especially the Twelve, is that pronouncements of judgment are usually followed by promises of restoration and blessing. Portrayed in typological fashion after the exodus from Egypt, God states, “Therefore I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her . . . , and there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt” (Hos 2:14–15). With many judgments, God delivered Israel from bondage to slavery in Egypt, bringing them through the Red Sea and into the wilderness where God walked among them, leading them into the promised Edenic land (Lev 26:11–13). Hosea’s word picks up those of Ezekiel 20:33–36:

As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out I will be king over you. I will bring you out from the



peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter judgment with you, declares the Lord God.

Ezekiel likens the nations as a “wilderness” comparable to the wilderness of Egypt. Ezekiel also indicates that God’s actions of both sending into and delivering from exile are demonstrations of God’s kingship over his people. Whereas Ezekiel’s words emphasize God’s purging of rebels from true Israelites as he did during the wilderness wanderings, Hosea’s words emphasize God’s tenderness in alluring his people back to him in the wilderness.<sup>4</sup> The tender words with which God will betroth his people to himself stand in contrast to the stern words of judgment previously pronounced due to Israel’s infidelity (cf. Hos 2:16–20). The wilderness is a place of both judgment and salvation (Hos 2:3, 13–14). As it was in the period of the exodus so it will be again with the second exodus.

Hosea appears to make a conceptual connection between the harsh words concerning the Valley of Jezreel and the Valley of Achor (Hos 1:4–5; cf. Hos 2:15). The Valley of Jezreel was the place of God’s judgment upon his people and sowing the valley with their dead bodies. The Valley of Achor harkens back to Joshua 7 when Israel “broke faith in regard to the devoted things, for Achan . . . of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things” (Josh 7:1). Israel had suffered defeat and routing in the battle against Ai because Israel transgressed the covenant when Achan coveted and took some of the spoil

<sup>4</sup> Marvin Sweeney understands the allurements of the people into the wilderness to function on several levels, including seduction as a form of deceit. He also sees the allurements as possibly having a “cultic context insofar as it also expresses the marriage practices of the tribes of Benjamin at the sanctuary at Shiloh as described in Judges 21:15–24 in which men lie in wait for maidens who dance in the vineyards at harvest time.” He then observes a third function as playing upon exodus themes. Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 33–34. Having moved from the judgment portions of the text into salvation portions, it seems hardly fitting for Sweeney to read descriptions of God as a deceitful seducer and kidnaper of child brides. Not only does this grate against God’s self-disclosure across Scripture, but it also contradicts the goodness of the salvific context of the present passage. Sweeney even notes in the next statement (of God’s speaking tenderly to Israel) that it is the language of lovers, where he then cites Boaz’s speech to Ruth (Ruth 2:13).

for himself (Josh 7:19–21). Achan was brought to the Valley of Achor, stoned by the people and he, along with all his things, were burned with fire (Josh 7:25). The judgment on Achan concludes, “And they raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day . . . . Therefore, to this day the name of the place is called the Valley of Achor” (Josh 7:26). Hosea’s use of “Valley of Achor” colors Israel’s sin as like Achan’s, with their worship of Baal and subsequent exile into the wilderness. In this light, “Valley of Achor” appears to be carrying forward the same metaphor of “Valley of Jezreel.”

Yet now in the place of judgment there is the promise of hope. The Valley of Achor, the place of trouble and dead bodies, will be transformed by God into a “door of hope” (Hos 2:15).<sup>5</sup> Where there once was no escape and only wrath there is now a gate of salvation through which God will tenderly shepherd his people. Hosea’s promise of hope builds upon Isaiah, “Sharon shall become a pasture for flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down, for my people who have sought me” (Isa 65:10). Indeed, “afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the Lord and to his goodness in the latter days” (Hos 3:5).

The response of the people is that they, “shall *answer* as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt” (Hos 2:15; emphasis added). Shepherd makes a fascinating observation regarding Israel’s “answer.” In Hebrew, the term “answer” is a homonym with “sing.”<sup>6</sup> Shepherd notes, “After the

<sup>5</sup> Sweeney notes that “Achor” means “trouble” and identifies the location of the Valley of Achor as defining the eastern boundary of the City of David: “In this regard, the identification of the Valley/Plain of Achor with *Petach Tiqvah*, ‘the door of hope,’ employs the geographical features of the land to make the point that Israel’s hope leads to Jerusalem.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 34–35. If Sweeney is correct regarding the geographical location and cardinal direction, then the Valley of Achor/Door of Hope has strong biblical-theological ties. Adam and Eve were exiled to the east (Gen 3:24). The door of the tabernacle in the wilderness (and subsequent temples) faced east whereby those who entered would need to turn and head west (Exod 26:22, 35; Num 3:38). God abandoned his temple heading east to later return heading west (Ezek 10:18–19; 43:2). In Hosea, per Sweeney’s observation, the people are judged in the eastern Valley of Achor to then turn to the “door of hope” and head west, home to Jerusalem (Hos 2:16; 3:1–5).

<sup>6</sup> Homonyms are two or more words that share the same spelling but have different meanings

account of the exodus in Exodus 14 and the Song of Moses in Exodus 15:1–18, Miriam and the women come out and ‘sing’ (Exod 15:20–21).<sup>7</sup> The Lord made a way through the walls of the Red Sea for the salvation of his people and judgment of his enemies, so too in Hosea the place of judgment (“Valley of Achor”) became a place of salvation (“door of hope”). The people in the day of Moses responded with song leading to the covenant on Mount Sinai. The people in the prophecy of Hosea “answer” a presumed “yes” to God’s tender marriage proposal in the wilderness leading to a new covenant (cf. Hos 2:18). The literary and conceptual parallel to both accounts makes Shepherd’s observation convincing. God intends the reading of the people’s response in the second exodus to be in concert with their response in the first exodus.<sup>8</sup>

**Hosea 11:1–12:14.** Broadly speaking, Hosea 11–13 is an extended reflection on God’s love for Israel. These chapters are intermingled with reflections on Israel’s past bondage in Egypt, pronouncements of judgment leading to a new exile, tempered by declarations of God’s intent to lead his people in a second exodus.

Israel is bent on turning away from God (Hos 11:7). Ephraim has surrounded God with lies and the house of Israel with deceit and the Lord has an indictment against Judah and will punish Jacob for his ways (Hos 11:12; 12:2). The Lord sent prophets to lead and guard the people, but they sinned more and more increasing in their skill at crafting idols (Hos 12:10–14). All the goodness and provision the Lord showed to his people they attributed to Baal (Hos 11:2). God pronounces judgment, and “the sword will

and origins. See Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018), 48.

<sup>7</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 49.

<sup>8</sup> Sweeney also understands this passage to play upon the themes of the exodus but does not make the same verbal connection as Shepherd. Sweeney, however, does make a connection earlier in the judgment portion of this passage (Hos 2:2–13) with the vineyard song of Isa 5:1–7, wherein the Lord sings a song of judgment to Israel. See Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 31. In my estimation, taken together, these observations of song allusions in both portions of the passage are mutually reinforcing and convincing.

rage against their cities . . . and devour them because of their own counsels” (Hos 11:6). In words conveying a second exile God declares, “I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; I will again make you dwell in tents, as in the days of the appointed feast” (Hos 12:9). The result of Ephraim’s ongoing and unrepentant sin is exile from the land. Once again, the Twelve indicate that just as Adam and Eve were exiled out of the land, it is happening again. The people rejected God therefore he will eject them from his kingdom. Even though he had been the Lord their God from Egypt and knew them in the wilderness, they grazed, became full, forgot their savior, and therefore he will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs (Hos 13:4–8; cf. Deut 6:10–15; 31:20; 32:15).

Regarding exile God states, “they shall not return to the land of Egypt, but Assyria shall be their king, because they have refused to return to me” (Hos 11:5 cf. Hos 12:1).<sup>9</sup> This was fulfilled in 2 Kings 17 which chronicles the destruction, capture, and displacement of the northern kingdom by Assyria (2 Kgs 17:1–41). God explained that Israel did not depart from their sins “until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had spoken by all his servants the prophets” (2 Kgs 17:23). The southern kingdom of Judah was later destroyed and exiled by the Babylonians in 2 Kings 25. Hosea’s words in 11:5 allude to and fulfill the promised curses for covenant unfaithfulness spoken by Moses in Deuteronomy 28. After a long and sobering litany of increasingly severe pronouncements of judgment, Moses concludes “And the Lord will bring you back in ships to Egypt, a journey that I promised that you should never make again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will

<sup>9</sup> Shepherd discusses a translation issue regarding whether the Hebrew negation “not” (לֹא) belongs to the end of 11:4 (as Shepherd believes) or to the beginning of 11:5 (as the ESV reads). According to Shepherd, if the negation belongs to 11:5, it would render the statement as a rhetorical question expecting an answer of yes (“Will he not return to the land of Egypt? Yes, he will”). Shepherd observes, “A statement that he will not return to Egypt would clearly be out of sorts with the context of the book (Hos 8:13b; 9:3) and the chapter (Hos 11:11).” Shepherd understands 11:5 not as a literal return to servitude in Egypt but rather a figure for future captivity in Assyria. Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 93n103, 96. An ESV footnote alternatively offers the word “surely” in place of “not.” A layer of deep irony may be at work since Israel’s desire all through their wilderness wanderings was to return to Egypt. Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 114.

be no buyer” (Deut 28:68; cf. 2 Kgs 25:26). The children of Israel experienced a two-stage exile from the land according to the promises and covenant curses stipulated on Sinai summarized as a return to Egypt.

Hosea 11–13 also presents the other side of judgment, salvation. After rhetorically asking how he can give up Israel, God declares, “My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender” (Hos 11:8). As such, the Lord shifts the metaphor of husband/wife to father/son when he says, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son” (Hos 11:1). He continues, “I led them with cords of kindness, with bands of love . . . I bent down and fed them” (Hos 11:4). Although Israel deserves obliteration for their covenant unfaithfulness, the tender mercy of God moves him to promise, “I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim . . . , and I will not come in wrath” (Hos 11:9).<sup>10</sup> Therefore God promises to deliver his people from exile saying, “They shall go after the Lord; he will roar like a lion; when he roars, his children shall come trembling from the west; they shall come trembling like birds from Egypt, and like doves from the land of Assyria, and I will return them to their homes” (Hos 11:10–11).<sup>11</sup> A second exodus will begin with the roaring of the Lord to gather his people and return them home from the ends of the earth. This is not the roar of judgment in Hosea 13:7 but the roar of the King Lion who crushes the head of his enemies in order to save and deliver his people from the wilderness of captivity (cf.

<sup>10</sup> So Shepherd: “He will reliably and undeterredly stay the course of eventually establishing a new covenant people of God.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 97. James Nogalski observes the irony in 11:9 where God’s statement that he is “not a man” as the grounds for the grace and mercy he will show Ephraim is contrasted with his “fatherly love” in the previous verses. “Ironically, this statement comes immediately after what is perhaps the most humanlike portrayal of divine emotional suffering in all of Scripture.” James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 161. Sweeney views an underlying motif of the law pertaining to the rebellious son in Deut 21:18–21. Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 113.

<sup>11</sup> “Tremble” may be synonymous with “fear” in Hos 3:5, when the “children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and they shall come in *fear* to the Lord and to his goodness in the latter days” (emphasis added). Nogalski alternatively suggests that “tremble” may be a reference of the speed with which the birds return to the Lord. Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 162.

Amos 1:2).<sup>12</sup> The prophet Joel adds, “The Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth quake; but the Lord is a refuge and stronghold to the people of Israel (Joel 3:16). The second exodus liberates the people from their false trust in Egypt, Assyria, and the Baals. Now they trust in the Lord who called them.

### **Exile and Second Exodus in Amos**

**Amos 9:11–15.** Amos 9:11–15 is one of the principle passages in the Twelve that indicates what God has in store for his people following the second exodus (cf. Isa 11:6–9; 65:17–25). The opening verses of this passage describe the rebuilding of the kingdom or “booth” of David, a kingdom in which many gentiles, called by God’s name, are ingrafted into the covenant kingdom (Amos 9:11–12).<sup>13</sup> The end goal of the second exodus is God’s kingdom people in the new Edenic land. Arboreal, agricultural, pastoral, and viticultural terms characterize the new Eden overshadowed by the restoration of God’s shalom. Directly echoing Joel, “The mountains will drip sweet wine, and the hills shall overflow with it . . . . They shall plant vineyards and drink wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit” (Amos 9:13–14; cf. Joel 3:18).<sup>14</sup> This is a land overflowing with better milk, better honey, and better wine, a land better than Eden and better than old Israel (cf. Isa 25:6–8; Ezek 36:33–36; Rev 21:9–27; 22:1–5).<sup>15</sup> So fruitful

<sup>12</sup> Sweeney understands the roaring of the lion to be a call for the cubs to follow: “Although such an image is well known from the natural world, it is politically significant as well in that the lion is the symbol of the tribe of Judah and its role as ruler of the other tribes (Gen 49:8–12; cf. Amos 1:2).” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 116. Building upon Sweeney’s statement, it is possible to understand that this is the Davidic Lion of the tribe of Judah who is doing the roaring (cf. John 10:27).

<sup>13</sup> See the previous chapter for the discussion of the Davidic king and restoration of the kingdom.

<sup>14</sup> As Shepherd writes, “It is important to note that these physical realities are just as much a part of the eschaton as the spiritual ones are. There is no exegetical warrant for spiritualizing a passage like this into a series of metaphors. God created a real world (Gen 1–2) and he intends to restore it in the last days. The composer personalizes this for the reader when he adds to the end of Amos 9:15, ‘says the Lord your (m. sg.) God.’” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 204. Sweeney understands the references to planting vineyards, drinking wine, and making gardens as recalling the common expression that each person shall sit under vine and fig tree without fear (cf. 2 Kgs 18:31; Isa 36:16; Mic 4:4; Zech 3:10). Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 274.

<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Shepherd says, “This is the ideal of the new and improved Garden of Eden (Isa.

will be the land that “the plowman shall over take the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows seed” (Amos 9:13). These words echo the covenant promise of Deuteronomy 28:2 where “all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you.” The overtaking of blessing promised by Amos indicate the people dwell in the land in a new covenantal context that exceeds what Israel had prior to their fall (Jer 31:27–34; Ezek 36:22–36).

Not only does Amos depict the restoration after the second exodus in Edenic terms but the prophet conflates the idea and describes the people themselves in Edenic terms, as the planting of the Lord, never to be uprooted again (Amos 9:15).<sup>16</sup> In one sense, the people “planted” by the Lord contrasts his previous “plucking” of them for judgment (Jer 24:6–7). Planting language also has strong ties with Isaiah’s use of vineyard and garden terminology to describe the people before exile and after their return (Isa 5:1–7; 60:21; 61:3; cf. Isa 11:1; 53:2). Amos implies the additional nuance that just as God “planted” (נטל) the garden of Eden so too he will “plant” (נטל) his people (Amos 9:15; Gen 2:8; cf. Isa 61:3). The people become inseparable from the new Eden. The Edenic planting of the people, however, is greater than the original garden of Israel because it now includes all the nations called by God’s name, joined to the Davidic king (Amos 9:11–12). Whereas Adam and Eve were to populate the garden but failed and

51:3; Ezek 36:35) . . . . This is the language Isaiah uses to describe the new creation and new Jerusalem (Isa 65:17–18, 21–22; cf. Deut 6:10–15; Jer 31:5; Ezek 28:26).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 204. The scriptural descriptions of the place of God’s dwelling are profound. “A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers” (Gen 2:10). Genesis describes the land below these rivers as opulent and fruitful, beneficiaries of the overflowing goodness of the place where God walked. After the exodus, the promised land was also a place of overflowing of milk and honey (Exod 3:8; Deut 26:15; cf. Deut 31:20). The descriptions of the land following the second exodus not only include overflowing milk and wine but also a fountain from the house of the Lord (see Joel 3:21; Amos 9:13–14; cf. Ezek 47:1). And in the age of glory, a glorious river shall flow from the throne of Christ (Rev 22:1–3). With Jesus’s first sign of making abundant (overflowing?) wine at the wedding in Cana and his preaching the gospel of the kingdom, one can see a possible allusion that includes the “mountains dripping sweet wine.”

<sup>16</sup> Shepherd asks why Edom can be representative of gentile nations and observes that one reason is “the graphic similarity between ‘Edom’ and *adam* (“mankind”) highlighted by the LXX here and by other texts elsewhere (e.g. Ezek 34:31, 35; 36:37–38).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 203.

Israel was to be a blessing to the nations but failed, under the new Davidic king, the land is restored to an Edenic state and populated with people from every tribe, tongue, and nation as promised in the Abrahamic covenant. The purpose of the second exodus is to restore all that was lost in the fall and return God's kingdom people and place to an Edenic state far greater than the first.

### **Exile and Second Exodus in Micah**

**Micah 4:1–10.** The prophet Micah picks up the second exodus and return to the kingdom theme saying, “for now you shall go out from the city and dwell in the open country; you shall go to Babylon,” and from there, “you shall be rescued” (Mic 4:10; cf. Mic 7:12–15). God promises to assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away and those whom he has afflicted (Mic 4:6).<sup>17</sup> Remarkably, the Lord intends to make these lame persons his remnant and those he had cast off into a strong nation (Mic 4:7; cf. Mic 5:7–8). While this may be a literal description of people lame by birth or maimed by the ravages of war and exile, it is unlikely every single man, woman, and child is so physically. The use of “lame” does not appear to be pejorative or a form of taunt because of the second exodus context and God's steadfast love (Mic 7:20).<sup>18</sup> “Lame” more likely describes God's assessment of the spiritual condition of the remnant.<sup>19</sup> While the term “lame” may find its counterpart in God's description of the

<sup>17</sup> According to Nogalski, “This promise presupposes a period of devastation and exile that looks well past the eight century BC.” James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 558.

<sup>18</sup> As Sweeney asserts:  
Indeed, the return of the blind and lame remnant of Jacob to Jerusalem (Jer 31:8) points to the lame figure of Jacob in Gen 32:32. Jacob's exile from the land of Israel to Aram in order to find a bride and to escape the wrath of his brother Esau and his eventual return (Genesis 25–35) forms the basis for prophetic conceptualizations of the exile of Israel and its return to the land (e.g. Jeremiah 30–31; Isaiah 40–55). (Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 382).

<sup>19</sup> In Lev 21:18, 21, God declares of Aaron's priestly sons that “no one who has a blemish shall draw near, a man blind or lame . . . . No man of the offspring of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the bread of his God.” If true physical lameness is characteristic of all the remnant, then none who return, including the tribe of Aaron, are eligible for the priesthood. If this is the case, this passage would then be intimating a change in the order of the priesthood in keeping with the new covenant



sickness of his people in Isaiah 1, the context here is of those who are rescued from exile not those who are about to be punished by exile (cf. Isa 1:5–6). Who are the lame? Speaking of the same regathering, the prophet Joel makes clear, “It shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved . . . , and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls” (Joel 2:32). Shepherd adds that these are, “those who are the children of Abraham by faith (Gen 17:5–6, 16; 35:11; Rom 4:11; see also Gen 12:3; 27:29; 49:8, 10).<sup>20</sup> Micah wonders, “who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance” (Mic 7:18)? Like Israel in Egypt, “lame” appears to be a description of the helpless state of the people in their second exile.<sup>21</sup> Their spiritual condition that drove them into exile remains one of needing atonement. Just as God passed over the people in Egypt, Micah declares that the Lord is a God who passes over transgression. Micah’s words lead to the presumption that God’s passing over of transgression will require the sacrifice of another lamb (cf. Isa 53:7). The promise of return causes Micah to exclaim, “He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love . . . he will tread our iniquities underfoot and will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea” (Mic 7:18–19).<sup>22</sup>

Once the second exodus is complete, “the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills”

promised by Jeremiah that is “not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord” (Jer 31:32).

<sup>20</sup> “This continues the development within the Twelve of the inclusion of the nations in God’s kingdom as established by the Amos-Obadiah-Jonah sequence.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 255.

<sup>21</sup> This backdrop serves as the second exodus context for the inbreaking of the kingdom of God through Jesus’ ministry of preaching, healing, miracles, and subduing evil spirits. Israel’s physical and spiritual inability in the exodus, typologically advanced by Micah, finds fulfillment and resolution in the person and work of Christ (Matt 9:1–38; John 2:11; 3:2).

<sup>22</sup> “Treading underfoot” is a significant theological motif first promised in the garden where the Last Adam would crush Satan under his feet (Gen 3:16; Rom 16:20). Micah’s phrasing carries forward this idea. He does not explain how this “treading” will take place, but it depicts a crushing of sin that does not crush us.

(Mic 4:1; cf. Dan 2:34–35, 44–45; Rev 21:10).<sup>23</sup> Many nations will flow up to the mountain proclaiming to one another, “Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord . . . , that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths” (Mic 4:2). All the peoples of the earth will be hungry for the Word of God and will help one another walk in the very light of that Word (cf. Deut 8:3; Ps 119:105). Micah explains that the desire of the nations to go to the mountain is because “out of Zion shall go forth the law” (Mic 4:2).<sup>24</sup> In light of the broken Mosaic covenant and promises of the new everlasting covenant of peace (unlike the Mosaic covenant), this promise of the Torah going forth must necessarily be the new Torah of the new covenant (cf. Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:22–35).<sup>25</sup> In a reversal of Joel 3:10, this new Torah will undo the former conflict among the nations whereby they “beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Mic 4:3; cf. Isa 2:4).<sup>26</sup> Universal peace, flowing from Zion, will yield the fruit of “every man

<sup>23</sup> “But it must be understood as a statement concerning the status and importance of Zion and the Jerusalem Temple as the center of the cosmos.” Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 378.

<sup>24</sup> Mic 4:2 reads, “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” Shepherd astutely observes:

The combination ‘Torah and the word of the Lord’ shows an early, inner-biblical awareness of the canonical designation ‘Moses and the Prophets’ (i.e. the Pentateuch and the books of the Prophets as an abbreviated reference to the Tanakh [cf. Luke 24:27, 44]; see also Isa 1:10; 8:16; Zech 7:12), the phrase ‘the word of the Lord’ being a familiar introduction to the prophetic speech in literature.”

Anticipating rebuttal, he argues, “Lest the reader find this anachronistic, it is to be noted that this is the vantage point of those who gave the Bible its final shape in its entirety (Ezra 7:6, 10). (Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 256n28).

<sup>25</sup> This notion will be explored further in chapter 6 (“Covenant and the Twelve”) of this thesis. To Shepherd, “The Torah provides the light of wisdom and salvation that the Messiah will bring (Deut 4:6; Isa 9:2–7; 42:6; 49:6; Mic 7:8–9; Ps 19:7–9; 119:105; Prov 6:23; John 1:4; 5:39, 46; 2 Tim 3:15).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 258.

<sup>26</sup> Mic 4:1–3 is a nearly identical with Isa 2:2–4. Isa 2:1 states, “The word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.” Both prophets were contemporaries from a historical perspective. Isaiah’s introductory formula leads to the conclusion that Micah borrows from Isaiah (unless, of course, the Spirit inspired the same worded prophecy through both men). From a canonical perspective, the passage in Isaiah is followed by pronouncements of judgment, whereas Micah’s passage is followed by pronouncements of the second exodus. Isaiah heralds what will happen to those not called, and Micah heralds what will happen to those who are called. In both cases, the mountain of the house of the Lord will be exalted as the highest of mountains. While the Book of the Twelve is heavily weighted with judgment and the day of the Lord, the emphasis of Micah provides a ray of hope that will burst forth in the gloom of darkness on that day. Shepherd agrees that Isaiah has textual priority (rather than both sources drawing from a third primary source) and that Mic 4:1–5 is a careful reading and interpretation of Isa 2:1–5, which is the programmatic passage of the book of Isaiah (cf., the corresponding bookend in Isa 66:18–25).

under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken” (Mic 4:4; cf. 1 Kgs 4:25; Zech 3:10). Judgment of the nations, exile, followed by a second exodus will usher in an everlasting period, which Micah personalizes for all believers, “we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever” (Mic 4:5).<sup>27</sup> All of this, return, restoration and eternal peace, shall be because “the former dominion shall come, kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem” (Mic 4:8). The Davidic king shall lead the nations into his kingdom as they stream to him.

### **Exile and Second Exodus in Zechariah**

**Zechariah 10:6–12.** Zechariah 10 is bookended beginning with the promise of the Davidic king arriving in Zion mounted on a donkey, speaking peace to the nations, and ruling to the ends of the earth (Zech 9:9–11). And ends with the mourning of all Israel when they look upon the king they have pierced as a fountain is opened to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness (Zech 12:10–13:1). Zechariah 10 emphasizes the deliverance and restoration of the people through the lens of the second exodus. God will whistle and they shall return from all the nations to which he had scattered them (Zech 10:8–9). They will return from Egypt and Assyria to Gilead and Lebanon until there is no room for them because “they shall be as many as there were before” (Zech 10:8, 10).<sup>28</sup>

Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 254. Nogalski similarly observes, “The verse assumes that instruction (Torah) and the word of Yhwh (a phrase associated with the prophets in Old Testament tradition; see Joel 1:1) emanate from the city.” Nogalski, *Micah–Malachi*, 557.

<sup>27</sup> Mic 4:5 reads, “For all the people walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.” The beginning of this verse would, at first glance, appear to be either a contradiction to the broader text or an indication that in the eternal future, the worship of false gods will persist. Upon further consideration, however, Micah writes from his present vantage point into the future. At Micah’s present, the nations still worship false gods. By faith, Micah declares that “we” (i.e., all who believe by grace through faith) will believe now, forever, to world without end. Contra Nogalski (*Micah–Malachi*, 557), who see Mic 4:5a as a peaceful coexistence among the nations and their gods.

<sup>28</sup> Shepherd writes, “The people will increase as they once increased in the land of Egypt (Zech 10:8b; see Exod 1:7; Hos 1:10). They had been as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the grains of sand on the seashore in accordance with the covenant with Abraham (Gen 15:5; 22:17), but now only a remnant remained (Isa 10:22).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 451. According to Nogalski, “Zechariah’s portrayal of the return from exile deliberately alludes to Hosea, where the expectation of deportation to Egypt and Assyria appears quite prominently in Hosea 7–14 (see Hos 7:11; 9:3, 6; 11:5, 11; 12:1 14:3).” Nogalski, *Micah–Malachi*, 920.

Indeed, there “will be no room for them” indicating the vast number of peoples who will comprise the kingdom, as many as stars in the sky and sand on the seashore and “it will be as though I had not rejected them” (Zech 10:6, 10; cf. Gen 22:17).<sup>29</sup>

An abrupt shift in pronoun occurs in verse 11—“he” (third person singular) from the surrounding “I’s” (first person singular). Continuing the second exodus motif, “He shall pass through the sea of troubles and strike down the waves of the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall be dried up” and “the pride of Assyria will be laid low, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart” (Zech 10:11).<sup>30</sup> One possible explanation for the shift in pronoun is the designation of Israel as God’s son (cf. Exod 4:22; Hos 11:1, “Out of Egypt I called my son”). Another possibility is the shift in pronoun is a reference to the Davidic king who will lead his people out of exile. If the Davidic king is in view, he is stylized as a new Moses who leads the people in processional victory through the parted waters having crushed Egypt and Assyria. A Davidic reference is strengthened by Zechariah 10:4 which describes the coming of the “cornerstone” and “peg,” both messianic references (cf. Isa 8:14; 19:13; 22:23; 28:16; Dan 2:44–45). Since the Davidic king embodies the nation in himself, it is feasible to take this as a double reference to both the people and

<sup>29</sup> Sweeney observes:

Yhwh’s statement, ‘and they shall be as though I had not rejected them,’ is theologically problematic. The analogy of the restoration of Job’s dead children indicates that one cannot reverse the effects of rejection and exile even through restoration (Job 42:13–15). The modern experience of the Shoah likewise calls into question divine assertions of mercy in the aftermath of catastrophe. Nevertheless, the statement must not be taken literally, but as a reference to Yhwh’s commitment to build toward the future once exile is completed. (Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 673).

I do not have the competency to interact with Sweeney’s comments regarding the Shoah, but I do want to point out what his comments lack—the gospel hope of the resurrection. Job did not receive his slain children back, but he would go to them (cf. 2 Sam 12:23). Job could say, “Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face” and “For I know my redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth” (Job 13:15; 19:25). The promises of the new exodus are eschatological and eternal. There is hope beyond the grave for God’s covenant people, and he does bring beauty out of ashes (Isa 61:3). This is made possible by the cross of the Davidic king, Jesus Christ, where the fullness of God’s wrath and love are displayed. The promises of Zechariah point beyond themselves to the day of full restoration when every tear will be wiped from our eyes, the curse reversed, and death shall be no more (cf. Rev 21:4; 22:3). This is not to make light or minimize the horrors of the Shoah; it is to maximize the eternal hope promised in the Twelve that leads to the cross and crown of Christ.

<sup>30</sup> Shepherd observes that the language of v. 5 (“and they shall put to shame the riders on horses”) anticipates the new exodus imagery in Zech 10:10–11 in line with the destruction of Pharaoh’s chariot army in the Red Sea. Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 450.

the king (cf. Isa 48:3, 5–6). With the Davidic king in view, Zechariah ascribes to the Messiah kingship like David, prophetic and mediatorial office like Moses, and alludes to a priestly role (Zech 12:10; 13:1).

The reason for the second exodus is due to the fact that the Lord will have compassion on them and “they shall be as though I had not rejected them (Zech 10:6; cf. Isa 54:7–11). The grounds for redemption and restoration are within God himself, “for I am the Lord their God and I will answer them” (Zech 10:6). The response of saved sinners to demerited favor is that “their hearts shall be glad as with wine” and “their children shall see it and be glad; their hearts shall rejoice in the Lord” for he redeemed them (Zech 10:7–8; cf. Zech 12:10–13:1).

### **Synthesis of Exile and Second Exodus in the Twelve**

Hosea likens the expulsion of Israel from the land to Adam and Eve’s ejection from the garden of Eden. The King of Heaven’s people have broken covenant once again and must be removed from the king’s land just as in the garden. As the garden was subjected to the curse so too the land of Israel is described with curse-like terms as the people enter exile. The sin of Israel with the Baals is likened to Achan’s sin from the time of Joshua. Indeed, the people attributed all their goodness to the Baal’s. Yet the wilderness of judgment will become the place of salvation. Just as God brought Israel out of Egypt, so too will he bring them out of the wilderness of the peoples. Just as God had called his son Israel out of Egypt, his compassion moves him to now roar for his son from all the nations to which God had driven them. The valley of Israel’s trouble will be transformed into a door of hope. The people of Israel will sing a new song of deliverance and worship as they had done on the shores of the Rea Sea when they return home in the new exodus. The King Lion will shepherd his people home.

Amos emphasizes the grace and gifts God has prepared for his children when they return home. Indeed, in terms echoing the first garden, God has prepared a new and

better Eden for his people. The mountains and hills will drip and overflow with wine, the land will be full of gardens, and so fertile will it be that the plowmen will overtake reapers. Blessings will overtake the people like a flood. Even the people themselves will be the “planting of the Lord” implying the beauty and fruitfulness he will graciously cause them to be. But the people are not just Israel. All the nations called by God’s name will be citizens of the new kingdom, happily covenanted with the Davidic king and the High King of Heaven. Amos intimates the purpose of the second exodus is to restore all that was lost in the Fall, regaining the garden on greater terms, now populated by people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

Micah continues to build on the second exodus theme describing that God will recover for himself a remnant of the lame and outcast. God’s description of the remnant reveals their spiritual poverty and need for atonement and redemption. God is the one to provide atonement and redemption because he pardons iniquity and passes over transgression. Indeed, God is a king who delights in steadfast love and will do all that is necessary to bring the helpless outcasts to himself, treading their sins underfoot and casting their trespasses into the depths of the sea. Amos further describes the exaltation of the “mountain of the house of the Lord” and implies a new Torah will go forth in association with the Davidic king, nations will walk in light of the new Torah, and peace will prevail as plowshares are crafted from swords.

Zechariah advances the exile and second exodus motif when God is described as whistling for his people to bring them back from the nations. So many people will be recipients of deliverance and respond to God’s call that “there will be no more room” in the land for them. Zechariah indicates that the Davidic king, stylized as a new Moses, will lead the people safely through the sea of troubles. God’s redemption of rebels is not because of anything in them but due to his compassionate love. The people’s response to the second exile, entering the kingdom, and being planted in the land is full-throated rejoicing with hearts gladdened as with wine.

### **Excursus: The Grain, Wine, and Oil**

A unique thematic thread that runs through the Twelve is the triad, “the grain, the wine and the oil” and its association with exilic judgment and the promised blessing following the new exodus. The triad takes shape in Deuteronomy with the promised bountiful blessing of God in giving the “grain, wine, and oil” in the promised land (Deut 7:13; 11:14; cf. Lev 23:13; Num 18:12; Deut 12:17; 14:23; 18:4). In this light, “the grain, wine, and oil” has close association with the description of the promised land also “flowing with milk and honey” (cf. Deut 26:15; 27:3). The threat and removal of the “grain, wine and oil” for covenant breaking becomes a central indicator of divine judgment (Deut 28:51 cf. Deut 31:20).<sup>31</sup>

The Latter Prophets, especially the Twelve, pick up and utilize “the grain, wine and oil” as proving God faithful to his covenantal word and as commentary on the plight of the people (cf. Jer 31:12). In Hosea, the harlotry of Israel is described, “For she said, ‘I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and drink’” (Hos 2:5). The bitter irony, however, is that she did realize that it was the Lord “who gave her the grain, the wine, the oil, and who lavished on her silver and gold, which they used for Baal” (Hos 2:8). God, therefore, will judge her and “will take back my grain in its time, and my wine in its season” (Hos 2:9). Joel similarly prophesies of judgment where “the fields are destroyed, the ground mourns, because the grain is destroyed, the wine is dried up, the oil languishes” (Joel 2:10). Haggai also prophesies, “and I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine; the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on man and beast, and on all their labors” (Hag 1:11). The Twelve therefore, uses this motif, literally and figuratively, as a call to repentance, a return to covenantal faithfulness, and an explanation for Israel’s agricultural hardships.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. the irony in Ruth 1, when there was no bread in the house of bread. Famine was less an agricultural issue than it was a theological issue.

After the second exodus, however, when God betroths the people to himself forever, in that day “I will answer declares the Lord, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel, and I will sow her for myself in the land” (Hos 2:21–23). Joel declares that God will become jealous for his land and have pity on his people and will send “to you grain, wine, oil, and you will be satisfied . . . . The threshing floors shall be full of grain; the vats shall overflow with wine and oil” (Joel 2:19, 24). The promise of restoration in the Twelve includes agricultural abundance in a land where the reaper overtakes the sower (cf. Amos 8:13). The promise of the “grain, wine, oil” is meant to instill hope in the people and spur them on to covenantal faithfulness with the Lord. To mix the metaphor, “the grain, wine, and oil” serve as theological barometer showing which way the covenant-keeping wind is blowing.

### **The New Testament’s Use of the Second Exodus in the Twelve**

What follows is a brief examination of the use of the Book of the Twelve in the New Testament. Due to the scope of this work, one key passage will be considered. Matthew 2:15 will be explored attempting to discern how Matthew read, interpreted, and applied Hosea 11:1.

Matthew 2 chronicles the birth and early life of Jesus Christ. Joseph was warned in a dream to flee to Egypt and remain there, for Herod was seeking to destroy Jesus, the one born king of the Jews (Matt 2:1, 13). The family remained in Egypt until the death of Herod and subsequently returned to Israel (Matt 2:19–21). Matthew cites this episode as a fulfillment of Hosea 11:1 indicating “what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I called my son’” (Matt 2:15). With a glance back at the context of judgment in Hosea 11:1, it is not immediately clear how Matthew is reading Hosea to understand Jesus’s flight to Egypt as the fulfillment of prophecy. Is Matthew using Hosea 11:1 as a decontextualized “proof-text” in a way that Hosea would not recognize, or is he



reading Hosea typologically, or somehow else?<sup>32</sup>

The broader literary agenda of Matthew is to present Jesus as the new and true Moses/Israel.<sup>33</sup> Matthew achieves this literary agenda by selecting and arranging the narratives of Jesus' birth, early life, and opening events of his ministry to pattern after the events of Moses/Israel, primarily in Exodus. Jesus was called out of Egypt as was Moses/Israel (cf. Exod 4:22–23; Matt 2:13–21). From a literary vantage point, Matthew collapses time and presents the next major episode of Jesus's life after exiting Egypt as passing through the waters of baptism as Israel had done through the Red Sea (cf. Exod 14:19–31; Matt 3:11–17). Jesus was led into the wilderness for forty days of temptation as Israel had been for forty years (cf. Deut 8:2; Matt 4:1–11). Jesus then calls the first of his twelve disciples as Moses had led the twelve tribes of Israel (cf. Exod 24:4; Matt 4:11–22; 10:1–4). Jesus then went up on a mountain and indicated he came to fulfill the Mosaic covenant and by implication inaugurate the New Covenant just as Moses had gone up Sinai to deliver the Mosaic covenant (cf. Exod 19:20; Matt 5:1). Then, unlike Moses, Jesus came down the mountain and proceeded to heal the sick, cast out demons, calm storms, and proclaim the gospel of the kingdom (see Matt 8–9).

<sup>32</sup> Craig Bloomberg observes:

Sometimes one hears an eager apologist cite the more than two hundred Old Testament prophecies that the New Testament teaches were fulfilled in Jesus. Then some miniscule mathematical probability of all these events randomly coalescing in the same person is used to 'prove' the messiahship and deity of Jesus. The problem is that only a small handful of these Old Testament references were predictive in their original contexts. Micah 5:2 (cited in Matt 2:6) does indeed prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, a prediction that excludes most self-styled messianic claimants a priori. But Hos 11:1 (cited in Matt 2:15) does not even contain future-tense verbs; it declares in a past event—"Out of Egypt I called my son." . . . Matthew is following standard (indeed, fairly conservative) form of Jewish 'typology' in interpreting the Scriptures here. Key patterns of activity ascribed to God recur in striking, discernable patterns such that the believer can only affirm the same hand of God as work in both events. The apologetic is more subtle than with directly predictive prophecy but no less persuasive. (Craig L. Bloomberg, "Matthew," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 2).

Typology is a subset of predictive prophecy given, among other things, its prospective nature as discussed in chap. 2.

<sup>33</sup> As Bloomberg states, "'Out of Egypt' is the first of several parallels in Matthew's infancy narrative to events from the life of Moses, leading some to conclude and speak of a Christological portrait of Jesus as a 'new Moses.'" Bloomberg, "Matthew," 8.

Hosea writes within the literary context of pronouncements of another exile that is typologically tied to the pattern of exile of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden and the nation of Israel from Egypt into the wilderness. Hosea also writes with pronouncements of hope of a second exodus and return to a new Edenic homeland. Hosea's use of the exodus of God's son from Egypt is typological in nature.<sup>34</sup> Just as when the nation first exited Egypt and continued their idolatry in the wilderness, even though they were God's son, so too in the time of Hosea, God's son continued his idolatry. The judgment of Israel's sin by sending them into exile again will lead to their salvation and second exodus from Egypt (Hos 11:5, 11). Hosea develops and advances what happened in the first exodus and wilderness wanderings under Moses and applies it to the nation during his day. Hosea indicates the pattern of what happened under Moses will happen again.

Matthew reads Hosea as Hosea reads Moses. The typological link between sonship is clear and fulfilled in Christ (Exod 4:22–23; Hos 11:1; Matt 3:17). What is not clear is the nature of Hosea's use of "son." Is Hosea referring to the nation of Israel as viewed from the context of Exodus 4:22–23?<sup>35</sup> Or is Hosea referring to the nation represented by the future king as viewed from the context of Numbers 23:22; 24:8?<sup>36</sup> Or

<sup>34</sup> See the discussion on typology in chap. 2 of this thesis.

<sup>35</sup> Blomberg states:

Occasionally attempts have been made to argue that 'son' in Hosea is messianic . . . as an individual, not the Israelites as a people . . . , but none of the other five uses of 'son' in Hosea suggests this at all. . . . It is better, though, to understand Matthew's actual use of Hosea 11:1 as a classic example of pure typology: 'the recognition of a correspondence between New and Old Testament event, based on a conviction of the unchanging character of the principles of God's working' . . . . The original event need not have been intentionally viewed as forward-looking by the Old Testament author; for believing Jews, merely to discern striking parallels between God's actions in history, especially in decisive moments of revelation and redemption, could convince them of divinely intended 'coincidence.' (Blomberg, "Matthew," 8).

Contra Blomberg, my understanding of typology includes the perspective that later authors would know, in some sense, the prophetic nature of a typological reference.

<sup>36</sup> Building off the canonical perspective of Brevard Childs, Sailhamer believes the context of Hos 11:1 is a future oriented reference. Sailhamer notes that earlier in Hosea, the expectation of a Davidic king associated with the second exodus was established. Thus, a *sensus literalis* (the sense could itself have been drawn from Hosea's exegesis of the Pentateuch) is preferred over a *sensus plenior* (a fuller sense or meaning the author would not have been aware of). Hosea was not referring to the event itself but to the

is it a typological combination of both?

In Numbers 23:21 Balaam says of the people, “The Lord their God is with them, and the shout of a king is among them.” This utterance speaks of a future king in Israel. The very next verse, Numbers 23:22 opens saying, “God brings them out of Egypt.” Balaam’s prophecy then closes in verse 24 with a strong intertextual allusion to the kingly Judah prophecy of Genesis 49:8–12 (cf. Num 24:6–9). The context of Balaam’s oracles implies a future that resembles the past. Another exodus will occur but led by a king lion of the tribe of Judah (Num 23:4; 24:7; 17–19). In my estimation, Hosea’s understanding and use of Hosea 11:1b is from the prophetic perspective of Balaam’s oracles in typological continuity with Exodus 4:22–23. Hosea is inspired and aware that a king will lead a second exodus. Also viewing Balaam’s oracles as the referent for Hosea 11:1, Shepherd states,

Thus, the figurative relationship between the original exodus and the new exodus is already established in the composition of the Pentateuch. Hosea’s citation in Hosea 11:1b is only the beginning of a section that moves from the original exodus (Hos 11:1b) to the metaphorical return to Egypt (Hos 11:5) and finally to the new exodus out of Egypt (Hos 11:11). And for the composer of the Twelve, this new deliverance would not take place apart from the eschatological king of Hosea 3:5. The prophet’s interest in a recapitulation of Egyptian bondage (Hos 8:13; 9:3) and the hope of a new exodus (Hos 2:16–17) has been well developed by the time the reader reaches this juncture, and the remainder of the Twelve will sustain this interest (e.g., Mic 7:15; Zech 10:10).<sup>37</sup>

A typological pattern exists from Israel as God’s son in Exodus 4:22–23, to Balaam’s oracle of a future Judaic king leading a second exodus, to the vantage point of Hosea, to the fulfillment in Christ as explained by Matthew.

In light of the larger literary strategy of Matthew presenting Jesus as the new and true Moses/Israel, the use of Hosea 11:1 presents Jesus as the fulfillment of the

event as construed in the Pentateuch because Hosea was engaged in “intertextuality.” Hosea “referred to the meaning of the exodus, not from his own historical understanding of that event, but rather from the viewpoint of the canonical Pentateuch.” John H. Sailhamer, “Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2001): 91.

<sup>37</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 94–95.

typological pattern of exile/second exodus. Hosea read Balaam's oracles typologically and in turn, Matthew followed the same pattern reading Hosea typologically. God sent Jacob's son Joseph to Egypt for the safety and salvation of Abraham's offspring. Hosea indicates the next exile will lead to Israel's salvation. In Matthew God sent Jesus and his family to Egypt for their safety (Matt 2:13–15; cf. Gen 50:15–21).<sup>38</sup> Jesus was the exile par excellence to whom all other exiles and exoduses point in keeping with his condescension, incarnation, and *kenosis* per Philippians 2:5–11.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> An ironic typological twist occurs in this passage. It was the killing of sons that ultimately led Israel out of Egypt. It was the threat of killing God the Son that drove Jesus into Egypt.

<sup>39</sup> It should be noted that exile in Scripture is normally an indicator of judgment by God due to persistent and unrepentant covenant breaking. Exile may also be an indicator of displacement of a person due to the sin of another. The child Jesus was an exile due to displacement by Herod. The church is in exile not as punishment but as refugees who have crossed the Red Sea of baptism and are sojourning in the wilderness of this age until the Davidic king shepherds Christians home.

## CHAPTER 6

### COVENANT IN THE TWELVE

A divine covenant may be defined, at its most basic level, as an oath-bound relationship initiated by the Lord with one or more parties. A divine covenant is typically signaled and summarized with a statement akin to, “you will be my people and I will be your God” (Exod 6:6–8; Hos 2:23). The interpretive perspective of this work is that the divine covenants form the literary and conceptual backbone to the canonical metanarrative of Scripture. The divine covenants are the exclusive context in which a person may be in right relationship with God: No covenant, no relationship with God. Divine covenants are necessarily imperial in nature in that they define and regulate the relationship between the King of Creation and the subjects of his kingdom, his vice-regents (cf. Gen 1:28; 9:2; 14:17–19; Exod 19:6; 2 Sam 7:16; Isa 55:3). Five divine covenants link and progress the advance of God’s kingdom, the Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants. Like the pylons that support a bridge, the successive divine covenants are the means by which God upholds and advances the metanarrative concerning the gospel of his kingdom in this fallen world, culminating in the new everlasting covenant of peace in King Jesus.

#### **Covenant in the Latter Prophets**

The Latter Prophets serve a number of canonical purposes, one of which is to highlight and explain the persistent and unrepentant covenant breaking of Israel displayed in the Former Prophets. Specifically, Israel broke the Mosaic covenant and incurred God’s righteous covenantal wrath against their unfaithfulness. Covenant breaking is insurrection against king and kingdom citizens.

Another role of the Latter Prophets is to introduce the promise of the new covenant. Isaiah conveys that God will come in Davidic flesh and recover a remnant from all nations through a second exodus (Isa 9:6–7; 11:1–16; 49:1–9). The divine Davidic king will be the sinless suffering servant who himself will be the covenant for the peoples (Isa 53:10–12; 55:4). Jeremiah emphasizes the newness and contrast of the everlasting covenant of peace with the Mosaic covenant. Unlike the Mosaic covenant, all members of the new covenant will be believers because all will have the word internalized and etched on their new hearts (Jer 31:31–34). Also implicit is a degree of knowledge and access to the Lord democratized among all the members of the new covenant that were only given to Moses and Aaron under the Mosaic covenant (Jer 31:34). Ezekiel emphasizes the Spirit-wrought change that will accompany the members of the new covenant. The Spirit will give new spirits, new unified hearts, cleanse from sin, and be the agency by which the people walk in God’s new covenantal ways (Ezek 11:19–20; 34:23–25; 36:24–28).

Built into the Latter Prophets’ introduction of the promise of the new covenant are descriptions of the previous divine covenants’ relationships with the new covenant. Israel bore two signs from two covenants, circumcision for the Abrahamic covenant and Sabbath for the Mosaic covenant (Gen 17:11–14; Exod 31:12–17). The nature of the promises of the Mosaic covenant led to God’s rejection of the people of Israel when they rejected him (Deut 28:1–68). Yet the nature of God’s promises to Abraham allowed God to maintain his eternal promises to the seed of Abraham despite their faithlessness. Indeed, the Abrahamic covenant intimates that God himself would be faithful for both parties and bear the covenant curses of his viceroys’ disobedience (Gen 15:7–20; 22:8).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the discussion by Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum on the perspective that viewing covenants as either unilateral or bilateral does not accurately accord with Scripture’s own presentation of the covenants. Scripture presents the covenants as having both unilateral and bilateral elements. This prompts Gentry and Wellum to say:

It is only by maintaining the dual emphasis of unconditional/conditional in the biblical covenants, leading us to their fulfillment in the unbreakable new covenant grounded in God’s obedient Son, that

Related to this is the everlasting nature of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:16; cf. 17:11–14). The Latter Prophets enigmatically convey God’s wisdom and faithfulness in upholding the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, in the context of the broken Mosaic covenant, through the promise of the new everlasting covenant of peace. The Twelve assume and develop these covenantal notions from Isaiah-Ezekiel.

### **Covenant in the Twelve**

Four key passages in the Book of the Twelve will be explored that directly address the motif of covenant. These passages are (1) Hosea 1:8–11, (2) Hosea 2:16–20, (3) Hosea 6:7, (4) Zechariah 9:1. Drawing from the previous Latter Prophets, these passages develop and advance the thematic notion of the new covenant. Each will be explored in succession with an excursus on the use of the covenant name of God in the Twelve followed by a synthesis of the passages. This chapter will conclude with a brief analysis of the use of Hosea 1:10 in Romans 9:26.

### **Covenant in Hosea**

**Hosea 1:8–11.** Hosea 1 portrays the persistent and unrepentant covenant breaking of Israel as “whoredom” (Hos 1:2–3). The people prefer and worship the Baals rather than the Lord. Hosea is to name his two children, “No Mercy” and “Not My People,” as sure signs of impending doom for the nation (Hos 1:6, 9). The consequence of the people’s covenant breaking is God’s declaration that, “you are not my people, and I am not your God” (Hos 1:9).<sup>2</sup> God’s statement is the corollary of the standard covenant

we appreciate Scriptures incredible Christological focus . . . . It is Christ alone, God the Son incarnate, that the covenants find their fulfilment and this built-in *tension* finds its resolution. (Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 608–11 (emphasis original)).

<sup>2</sup> According to Michael Shepherd:

Israel is no longer God’s covenant people until he restores them in a new covenant relationship. Therefore, he is no longer their covenant God. He refers to himself here by his covenant name in the first-person form in which he explained it to Moses in Exod 3:14. There he indicated that he was the God who would be present with his people (cf. Exod 3:12). Here he says that he will not be that God to them anymore. Unfortunately, most English versions do not pick up this feature of the Hebrew text

formula, “I will be your God and you will be my people” (cf. Gen 17:7–8; Exod 6:7; Lev 26:12; Isa 41:10; Jer 11:4; 30:20; Ezek 36:28; see also Ruth 1:16).<sup>3</sup> The shock of God’s words in Hosea 1:9 is that the Mosaic covenant is declared annulled. There is no indication that this is merely hyperbolic language and that the Mosaic covenant is actually still intact. As clear as can be, God said, “you are not my people and I am not your God.” God’s words are directed to the northern kingdom as he will still have mercy on the house of Judah whom he will save but “will not save them by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen” (Hos 1:7; cf. 2:18).

Despite the thundering judgment and finality of God’s words to Israel he declares, “Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered” (Hos 1:10). The grounds for the future hope and restoration of Israel is not the annulled Mosaic covenant but the Abrahamic covenant.<sup>4</sup> The words of Hosea 1:10 are an appeal to God’s covenant promises to Abraham and his offspring (cf. Gen 13:16; 15:5–18; 22:17; 32:12). Where Israel was once “not my people” it shall be said of them, “Children of the living God” (Hos 1:10). Curiously, on that day of reunion, “the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together” (Hos 1:10). The implications of restoration of Israel and reunion with Judah suggest a new covenant. For Israel, the Mosaic covenant was annulled therefore they stood in need

(e.g. NRSV). (Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018), 41). Marvin Sweeney notes, “The phrase is translated literally, ‘and I AM not I AM to you’” (capitalization added for emphasis). Sweeney acknowledges this “signifies a disruption of the relationship between Yhwh and Israel” but does not make the covenantal link. Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 22. James Nogalski also softens the text, saying, “Yhwh threatens to rescind a concept closely connected to Israel’s national narrative about the escape from the Egyptian slavery, and in a real sense threatens Israel’s very existence.” James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 43. Contra Nogalski, God’s words in Hosea are not a threat but a declaration.

<sup>3</sup> “In all cases, this statement and its variants functions as the basic expression of the relationship between Yhwh and the people of Israel.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Sweeney considers Gen 22:17 (the deliverance of Isaac) and Gen 32:13 (Jacobs return to the land and reconciliation with Esau) as the backdrop to Hos 1:10. Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 23.



of a new covenant. For Israel and Judah to be reunited also suggests a covenantal change for Judah as well. God's faithfulness to himself and Abraham will move him to establish a new covenant, different from that with Moses.

The day of covenantal restoration and reunion with Israel and Judah coincides with their appointing "for themselves one new head" (Hos 1:11).<sup>5</sup> As previously discussed, this new head will be the Davidic king.<sup>6</sup> Peter Gentry has convincingly argued of Isaiah 55:3 that the new everlasting covenant will be brought about by the Davidic son.<sup>7</sup> In other words, a future Davidic son, as an act of God's steadfast love, will himself make the new everlasting covenant of peace with the peoples. If Gentry is correct in his exegesis of Isaiah 54–55, then the covenantal backdrop of Hosea 1:6–11 and the reunion of Israel and Judah under one head, is the new covenant ushered in by the Davidic king.<sup>8</sup> In this way, God's faithfulness to his promises in the Davidic covenant also contribute to the inauguration of the new covenant. In this way, Hosea opens the Twelve by showing that the basis of the new covenant is God's faithfulness to the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants despite the broken Mosaic covenant.

**Hosea 2:16–20.** Similar to Hosea 1, Hosea 2 opens with pronouncements of judgment and exile. Judgment and exile are then followed by promises of a second exodus and hope (Hos 2:14–15). After the second exodus God will remove the names of the Baals from the mouth of the people and they will call the Lord, "My husband" (Hos

<sup>5</sup> "The language of appointing a head comes from Numbers 14:4 (Neh 9:17) where the Israelites wanted to replace Moses and return to Egypt. But now the language takes on a positive connotation in that a new Moses will lead a new exodus not from Egypt, but from Assyria and Babylon. According to Targum Jonathan this head will be from the house of David (cf. Ezek 34:23; 37:24)." Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 42.

<sup>6</sup> See chap. 4 ("Great David's Greater Son: Davidic Kingship in the Twelve") of this thesis.

<sup>7</sup> Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 406–21.

<sup>8</sup> In the Latter Prophets, any reference to the future Davidic king is necessarily covenantal in nature. God's promises to the first David of a future eternal David are codified in the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:8–29; 1 Chr 17:3–27).

2:16–17). Whereas Hosea 1 was a portrait of divorce, Hosea 2 depicts a new marriage. This follows the words of Jeremiah regarding the new covenant, “not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord” (Jer 31:32). Unlike Israel’s marriage under the Mosaic covenant, in this new marriage God “will betroth you to me forever” (Hos 2:19). God will betroth the people to him “in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and mercy” (Hos 2:19).

The context of this new marriage is a new covenant. “I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground” (Hos 2:18).<sup>9</sup> Building upon the appeal to the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants in Hosea 1:10, the language of Hosea 2:18 echoes the Noahic covenant. What is the significance of Hosea making an appeal to the Noahic covenant?<sup>10</sup> God made the Noahic covenant with Noah, his family after him, and “with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth” (Gen 9:8–10). The promise of the Noahic covenant was “never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth” (Gen 9:11). The command of the Noahic covenant was for Noah, his descendants and all living creatures to “be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it” (Gen 9:7).

Isaiah 54 is an extended prophetic discussion on the relationships between the

<sup>9</sup> Shepherd notes, “This is not a covenant renewal. The old covenant is broken. The passage in Jeremiah 31:31–34 describes the new covenant first of all by saying that it is not the old covenant (cf. Deut 29:1). It will be an unconditional covenant rather than a conditional one, and the Torah will be on the heart (effective) rather than on the tablets (ineffective).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 49–50n41. Nogalski understands this passage to teach that God “promises to (re)establish a covenant with creation, echoing the language reminiscent of creation themes and the Noah covenant.” Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 57. However, Nogalski neglects the significance of this covenantal statement in light of the overarching context of the broken Mosaic covenant and promise of the new covenant.

<sup>10</sup> The Noahic covenant is the upholding of the creation covenant, much like the renewal of wedding vows. See discussion in Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 155–61.

covenants.<sup>11</sup> In Isaiah 54 God likens his judgment on Israel as “like the days of Noah to me” (Isa 54:7–11). Isaiah’s reference to the Noahic covenant is in the context of promises of restoration and declarations that “your Maker is your husband” and “the Lord has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off” (Isa 54:5–6). The promise in Isaiah of the passing of the “days of Noah” and promise of marriage is followed by the permanence of “my covenant of peace” which will be an everlasting covenant performed by the steadfast, sure love of David, king of all nations (Isa 54:10; 55:3–5). The words of Isaiah serve as the canonical backdrop and link when Hosea appeals to the Noahic covenant, second exodus, new marriage, and a Davidic “head” (Hos 1:11; 2:14–23; 3:5). The reference to the Noahic covenant in Hosea is an appeal to the cessation of wrath, to blessing and fruitfulness of the people, and to the expectation of a new covenant brought about by the Davidic king.

A result of Israel’s sin was the cursing of the ground. As the land suffered in the fall of Adam and Eve, and the time of Noah, so too once again the land and its creatures suffer in the fall of God’s people (Joel 1:18; Amos 6:4; Hab 3:17). The use of the Noahic covenant in Hosea also serves as a promise and appeal to creation that creatures will no longer suffer for the sin of the people. The implication here is the removal of the curse upon creation and its restoration as brought about by the Davidic king.

**Hosea 6:7.** Hosea 6 is a passage focused on judgment. God had hewn Israel “by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth” (Hos 6:5). The people were a “city of evil doers,” even the priests were villains (Hos 6:4, 8–9). God desires “steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings” (Hos 6:6). The brief statement of Hosea 6:7 reads, “But like Adam they transgressed the

<sup>11</sup> See discussion in Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 434–45.

covenant; there they dealt faithlessly.” Hosea likens the sins of Israel to Adam’s insurrection in the garden of Eden.<sup>12</sup> The promised land was described in Edenic terms (cf. Deut 11:9). Hosea 8:1 makes clear the Mosaic covenant is in view, “they have transgressed my covenant and rebelled against my law.” The connection is that Israel’s treatment of the covenant obligations and spurring of the promises is like that of Adam’s. Adam was God’s image-bearing vice-regent meant to display and expand the glory of God and his kingdom through all creation. Yet like a cancer, Adam turned upon God and turned in upon himself, broke covenant, and plunged creation into ruin. The covenant breaking of Israel is likened then to Adam’s uprising against God. (Hos 7:15; 8:7, 12).

The contribution of Hosea 6:7 to the larger literary strategy of Hosea is the use and comparison of previous divine covenants. The use and comparison of previous covenants both explain the sins of Israel and offer the promise of hope. Just as God was faithful to uphold his end of previous covenants, in blessings and curses, Israel can be sure that he will do the same for them. Their breaking of the Mosaic covenant will be met with Deuteronomic justice. In the case of Hosea 6:7, if the sin of Adam led to his exile from the garden, then most assuredly the sin of Israel will lead to their exile from the

<sup>12</sup> Shepherd disagrees and thinks that this is a reference to mankind in general and that Israel is no different from the rest of humanity in this regard. He believes that reading a reference to Adam in the garden is unfounded due to the lack of the term “covenant” in Gen 1–3. Further, Shepherd states that “covenant theologians need such a reference in order to complete their system, unless they are willing to posit the only covenant in the Bible that is never called a covenant.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 71–72. Contrary to Shepherd, Gentry and Wellum have convincingly demonstrated the literary basis for reading Gen 1–3 as covenantal and that the Noahic covenant is an “upholding” of the creation covenant. Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 155–61. In light of their work, I believe it is exegetically correct to read Hosea 6:7 as a reference to the Adamic or creation covenant and not as an attempt to eisegete a text to conform to a theological system. Sweeney, on the other hand, understands “Adam” to be a locational reference: “Interpreters have pointed to the city of Adam mentioned in Joshua 3:16, where the people of Israel initially crossed the Jordan River into the promised land . . . . Of course this motif corresponds to the crossing of the Red Sea in the exodus from Egypt, so that the two crossings provide a narrative framework for the beginning and end of the period of wilderness wanderings . . . . Hosea’s reference to Adam as the site of the transgression of the covenant therefore employs a motif . . . to argue that Israel has transgressed the covenant from the very outset of life in the land.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 75. The link between the exodus motif, specifically the parting of Red Sea/Jordan River, and the second exodus theme in the Twelve is fascinating, but the lack of any biblical evidence of sin committed at Adam renders this position unlikely. Nogalski also sees a reference to the city of Adam in light of the context of two other locations mentioned in the same Hosea passage. The lack of any mention of the term “covenant” in the Genesis narrative removes—for Nogalski—the option of reading Hosea 6:7 as a reference to Adam. Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 99.

promised land (Hos 2:14). The fall of Israel in Hosea likened to Adam's fall also explains God's cursing of the land and links with the Noahic covenant (Hos 2:9; cf. Gen 3:18).

### **Covenant in Zechariah**

**Zechariah 9:11.** Zechariah 9 is an oracle of judgment against Israel's enemies. Zechariah 9:9–10 announces that Zion's Davidic king is coming to Jerusalem mounted on a donkey. The king arrives afflicted and to establish his reign to the ends of the earth. The arrival of the afflicted king coincides with a second exodus and global peace (Zech 9:10, 12).

Curiously, Zechariah 9:11 states, "As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit." The Lord explains that the grounds for the second exodus is because of the "blood of the covenant with you" (Zech 9:11–12). The phrase "blood of my covenant" is an intertextual link with Exodus 24:8 when Moses "took the blood and threw it on the people and said, 'Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.'" On the surface it would appear that the basis for redemption, second exodus, and restoration is the Mosaic covenant. Yet in light of passages that convey that the Mosaic covenant as broken, it cannot be the basis for Israel's salvation.

It is possible that "I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit" serves as an allusion to Joseph who was cast into a pit by his brothers (cf. Gen 37:24). This allusion may be intended to call to mind the blood spilt with regard to the Abrahamic covenant serving as the basis for Zechariah's appeal. More likely, however, this is a veiled reference to the blood of the new covenant.<sup>13</sup> Isaiah established the reality of the afflicted Davidic king who atones for the sins of his people through his self-sacrifice,

<sup>13</sup> Shepherd agrees: "This cannot be the blood of the Sinai covenant (Exod 24:8). That covenant was broken (Zech 11:10), resulting in Babylonian captivity. It must be the anticipated blood of the new covenant (Isa 42:6; 49:6; 61:8; Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 34:25; Hos 2:18; Mark 14:24)." Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 446.

enacts the second exodus, and is himself the covenant for the people (Isa 9:6–7; 11:10–12; 42:6–7; 49:3, 5–6, 8; 53:10–12; 54:10; 55:3). Jeremiah explains the new covenant will be unlike the broken Mosaic covenant ratified with the fathers (Jer 31:31–34). The Twelve carries forward and develops this understanding of both the Mosaic and new covenants, which provide a strong basis for reading Zechariah’s words as a mysterious reference to the new covenant. In short, the new everlasting covenant of peace, not the Mosaic covenant is the basis for the second exodus.<sup>14</sup>

### **Excursus on God’s Covenant Name in the Twelve**

God revealed his covenant name to Moses on Sinai as

the Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation. (Exod 34:6–7)

God’s self-disclosure to Moses subsequently becomes a major source of intertextuality in the Old Testament. Functioning like a hyperlinked text, later authors pick up elements of this passage. These later authors typically utilize a key word, phrase, or combination of select terms from this passage to link with Exodus 34:6–7 in their particular writings. A central aim in later authors alluding to this text is to recall the goodness and mercy of the covenant God. Another aim is to recall the justice and severity of God in light of his subjects breaking covenant. Sometimes the goal of an allusion is repentance brought about through threats of vengeance. Other times hope of restoration is instilled following judgment. The covenantal nature of God and his relationship with his people are also signaled by allusions to this passage. The Book of the Twelve makes frequent use of allusions and references to God’s covenant name from Exodus 34:6–7.

<sup>14</sup> Both Matt 26:28 and Mark 14:24 record Jesus’s words of lifting the cup at the Last Supper: “This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many.” Luke 22:20 reads, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”

The book of Hosea speaks of God betrothing his people to himself forever in “steadfast love and mercy” (Hos 2:19).<sup>15</sup> This betrothal is bound with a new covenant he will make with them after the second exodus. Thus, it is no surprise that elements of God’s covenant name are used. Just as God extended grace to Israel the first time, Hosea recognizes God is doing so again. Hosea 4:1 describes a controversy God has with his people namely, “there is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land.” In their covenant breaking, Israel failed to properly image God in their covenant relationships with one another. In this way, this passage shows how the people did not reflect the covenant character of God. In a similar vein, Hosea 6:6 rebukes the wayward people characterized by external ritual, “For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.” The purpose of the covenant is that the people of the covenant might reflect the God of the covenant.

Joel appeals to the people regarding the covenant nature of God, “Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster” (Joel 2:13).<sup>16</sup> The covenant character of God assures that his goodness and righteousness will rightly respond to repentance.<sup>17</sup> The context of Exodus 34:6–7 is Moses’s shock that God did not fully destroy his people in the episode of the golden calf. That God showed grace and mercy prompted Moses to ask to see God’s glory to which God responded by speaking the name of the Lord. The prophet Joel understands that God is still the same God and makes his appeal for repentance to the people on this basis.

<sup>15</sup> In addition to referencing Exod 34:6, Sweeney (*Hosea–Jonah*, 36) also notes that this describes the ideal Davidic monarch (e.g., Isa 11:3–5).

<sup>16</sup> Sweeney misses the mark, stating, “Again, the appeal identifies no sin on the part of the people . . . This in fact reflects the reality of a great deal of suffering in the world for which no cause is ever known or identified.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 165. He also misses the covenant-breaking context of Joel and God’s mercy on Sinai as the basis for an appeal to restoration with God. The suffering and plight of Israel was not blind happenstance; it was God’s faithfulness to the covenantal oaths of Deut 28.

<sup>17</sup> Shepherd agrees: “The rationale for repentance is the character of God revealed to Moses at Mount Sinai.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 125.

Jonah abhorred his commission to preach to the Ninevites. From the belly of the fish Jonah said, “those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love” (Jonah 2:8). Whatever his purpose and motive in saying these words, Jonah correctly observes that idolatry and covenant relationship with God are mutually exclusive. One cannot hope in idols and God’s covenant love at the same time. Later, with utter transparency, Jonah laments at the repentance of the Ninevites saying, this “is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster” (Jonah 4:2; cf. Joel 2:13). While the character of God moves him to stay faithful to those within the covenant, as Jonah complains, it even moves God to draw those outside of covenant to him.<sup>18</sup>

Micah closes with the prophet marveling at the grace of God. With all the certain threats of judgment, God still promises a second exodus. This prompts Micah to wonder, “who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression?” (Mic 7:18). Micah answers his question, “He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love” (Mic 7:18).<sup>19</sup> The steadfast love that God keeps for thousands, tempers his visiting iniquity to the third and fourth generation. Micah recognizes God is who he says he is and is faithful to himself, and therefore to the remnant of his people.

<sup>18</sup> The book of Jonah gives no indication that the Ninevites became proselytes who joined themselves to the Mosaic covenant; rather, it implies that the covenantal goodness of God will draw gentiles into covenant with him, as attested by the rest of the Twelve (cf. Amos 9:11–12).

<sup>19</sup> According to Shepherd:  
Micah 7:18–20 forms the first part of a compositional seam that connects the book of Micah to the following book of Nahum. The composer of the Twelve has already cited from Jeremiah 26:18 to mark the midpoint of his composition at Micah 3:12, allowing the cited material in this seam to be the language of the Lord’s revelation of himself to Moses at Sinai according to Exodus 34:6–7 (cf. Joel 2:13–14; Jonah 4:2) . . . This is a revelation of a God who not only forgives but also punishes iniquity, fitting nicely with the themes of judgment and restoration set forth in the program on the Twelve (Hos 3:4–5) and in the unfolding picture of the Day of the Lord in the Twelve (Joel 2:2, 31; Amos 5:18; Obad 15; Zeph 1:7, 15; Zech 14:1; Mal 4:5). Thus, Micah 7:18–20 focuses on the first part of this description of the Lord. . . . The text of Nahum 1:2b–3a then completes the compositional seam by inserting the final section of God’s name revealed on Sinai. (Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 283).



Interestingly, Micah grounds the gracious and forgiving action of God not in the Mosaic covenant, but with Abraham's. Micah 7:20 reads, "You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from days of old." The significance of this connection is that the character of God has not changed across the covenants.<sup>20</sup> Even though the Divine Name was revealed to Moses in the context of the Sinai covenant, God was still the same covenant God with Creation, Noah, and Abraham. God's covenant character does not change even though the details of the covenants do. This would hold true for the Davidic and new covenants as well (2 Sam 7:15; Isa 55:3). Micah's conflation of Exodus 34:6–7 with the Abrahamic covenant as passed on to Jacob demonstrates this.

Nahum opens his oracle and taunt with an appeal to the covenant character of God. Nahum warns "the Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies" (Nah 1:2). The oracle continues, "the Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty" (Nah 1:3). The oracle of Nahum is leveled against Nineveh. The covenant character of God as revealed in his self-disclosure in Exodus 34:6–7 serves as the basis for avenging himself on covenant enemies.<sup>21</sup> The people of God are to be fortified with hope knowing that God will avenge all harm perpetrated on his covenant people.

The covenant character of God in the Book of the Twelve serves as the basis and context of God's action with covenant breakers, the redeemed remnant, and hostile

<sup>20</sup> Nogalski avers, "These allusions function, though, as part of a prayer and promise to a new generation, one that found itself back in the land after it had been lost, one that saw that return as a sign of grace after its punishment for the worship of idols (Mic 1:2–9), and one that needed reassurance that the blessings of promise would continue for its own well-being." James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 592.

<sup>21</sup> According to Nogalski, "Jonah 4:2 thus uses Exodus 34:6–7 to justify Nineveh's deliverance while Nahum 1:2b–3a uses the same passage to pronounce Nineveh's judgment." Nogalski, *Micah–Malachi*, 611.

powers. God's covenant character serves as the relational context of the kingdom, indeed his interaction with all creation. Covenant with God is first and foremost about justice and righteousness, steadfast love and faithfulness before it is about rule keeping and ritual. That is to say, it is about being like God as God's children (cf. Gen 1:27). The Twelve appeal to the covenant name of God as grounds for all his interaction with humanity, especially those of the covenant.

### **Synthesis of Covenant in the Twelve**

Hosea describes Israel's persistent and unrepentant covenant breaking as harlotry. The sad result was that Israel had become "Not My People" and God no longer their God. The people were characterized as evil doers and the priests as villains. The people refused to love God with all their might and love their neighbors as themselves. They were characterized by external ritual but lacked steadfast love and knowledge of God. Therefore, the Mosaic covenant was annulled, and Israel doomed to face the consequences of judgment. Israel's bodies would sow the fields of Jezreel. Harkening to Jeremiah 31:32, where God was once their husband, there was now estrangement. Hosea utilizes the Adamic covenant to depict Israel's fall. Hosea also references the Noahic covenant in part, to depict the wrath poured out on the rebels. Hosea thus opens the Twelve from the context and perspective of the people failing the Mosaic covenant.

Yet, because of God's faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant the children of Israel will be like the sand on the seashore. A restoration following a second exodus will occur in which God binds himself to the people as husband in a new covenant. In that day there will be a new head, or Davidic king over the people in keeping with the Davidic covenant. Isaiah informs Hosea that the Davidic king will be the one to make the new covenant with the people. Hosea's reference to the Noahic covenant signals the promise that God will never again avenge himself on his people as he had done. The Noahic covenant also intimates the removal of the curse on creation.

Zechariah shows that the blood of the covenant is the basis for the salvation and liberation of the people. This reality is set in the context of the afflicted Davidic king entering Jerusalem. The connection made between the Davidic king and the blood of the covenant is influenced by the larger scope of the Twelve and the Latter Prophets as a whole. Given the larger context, the blood of the covenant is a reference to the new covenant. Further it alludes to the work of the Davidic king, namely his “affliction” will be integral to the inauguration of the new covenant.

The new covenant is not as overtly prominent in the Twelve as it is in the other Latter Prophets. The new covenant, however, is the background operating system of the Twelve and informs all covenantal references and allusions. The Twelve advances and develops the meaning and significance of the new covenant against the backdrop of the broken Mosaic covenant. The Twelve also does so by comparing, appealing, or contrasting the new covenant with the Adamic, Noahic, and Abrahamic covenants. The prominence of the Davidic king in the Twelve also calls forth the promises of the Davidic covenant. In these ways, the Book of the Twelve prepares the way for when, “the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight” (Mal 3:1).

### **The New Testament’s Use of Covenant in the Twelve**

What follows is a brief examination of the use of the Book of the Twelve in the New Testament regarding covenant. Due to the scope of this work, one key passage will be considered. Romans 9:26 will be explored attempting to discern how Paul read, interpreted, and applied Hosea 1:10.

In Romans 9 the apostle Paul explains and defends God’s sovereign election of his people. The apostle begins expressing his desire for his fellow kinsman to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ, even if it requires Paul being cursed on their behalf (Rom 9:1–5). Lest someone think God’s Word is ineffectual since not all Israel is under the new

covenant of Christ, the apostle clarifies that not all Israel is Israel (Rom 9:6). Indeed, not all are children of Abraham even though they may be biologically descended from him as evidenced by God calling Isaac, not Ishmael (Rom 9:7). It is not children of the flesh but children of the covenantal promise that are considered offspring (Rom 9:8–10). God’s purposes of election reside within himself and not the actions of human beings (Rom 9:11–13). This reality is not an expression of injustice by God, but a display of his mercy (Rom 9:14–17). God has the sovereign prerogative to have mercy as he wills and to harden as he wills (Rom 9:18). The apostle anticipates the resultant question since none can resist his will, “Why does he still find fault?” (Rom 9:19). The apostle responds that God has the sovereign right as creator of all to do as he wills that he might display his wrath, power, mercy, and the riches of his glory for those whom he has prepared for glory (Rom 9:20–23). Paul then conflates and cites two passages from Hosea, 2:23 and 1:10 respectively, to ground his teaching in Romans 9 in the consistent character and will of God. What is the significance of these passages in the Twelve? Is there a significance to the order in which Paul cites these passages and what is their function in Romans 9?

In the Book of the Twelve, Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 are part of the larger literary unit of Hosea 1–3. The central concerns of this unit are the spiritual harlotry and covenant breaking of Israel depicted in the family of Hosea. Hosea’s bride Gomer is a wife of whoredom, and his three children are symbolically named Jezreel, “No Mercy,” and “Not My People” (Hos 1:2–9). God explains the significance of “Not My People,” saying “for you are not my people and I am not your God” (Hos 1:9).<sup>22</sup> As discussed above, this language is the negation of the covenant formula, specifically with regard to the Mosaic covenant. Yet the profound promises of this unit are that the people will receive mercy,

<sup>22</sup> Mark Seifrid writes, “The divine judgment announced in Hosea reduces Israel to the same status as the nations: they, too, are ‘Not-My-People.’” Mark A. Seifrid, “Romans,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 648.

they will experience a second exodus, and they will be restored to a new covenant relationship with God in which they will call him “My Husband” (Hos 1:10–11; 2:1; 14–23; 3:5). Hosea 1–3 then, is a unit that both describes the Mosaic covenant as broken and the promise a new everlasting covenant characterized by righteousness, justice, steadfast love, mercy, and faithfulness (Hos 2:16–20). In this way God displays his sovereign grace and divine choice, grounded in his covenant name, to choose a people for himself and appears to be a significant basis for Paul’s citation (Hos 2:19). What is not clear from this unit in Hosea (taken in isolation) is that Gentiles will be part of the new covenant people.<sup>23</sup> Mention of the new covenant, however, alerts the reader to realities developed in the previous Latter Prophets namely, Gentiles will be part of the new covenant people of God (cf. Isa 9:7; 11:10–12; 19:25; 55:4). The Book of the Twelve as a whole also bears witness to the inclusion of the Gentiles (Joel 2:32; Amos 9:5; Jonah 4:2; Zeph 3:9; Zech 2:11; 8:22; 9:10; 14:9). It is plausible therefore, that Paul presumes this connection with Gentile inclusion.

The ordering and conflation of the verses from Hosea by Paul may simply be stylistic. More significant it seems is Paul’s choice to select verses that bookend the first unit in Hosea. Paul could have easily chosen Hosea 2:1 in place of 2:23 as the passages are very similar. Paul’s choice of passages from the beginning and end of the unit suggest he has the whole section in mind.<sup>24</sup> Paul’s argument in Romans 9 is that God has the good and sovereign freedom to choose a people for himself. This is the same gracious reality presented in Hosea 1–3. What is implicit in the Hosea passages Paul makes explicit in

<sup>23</sup> According to Shepherd, “There is also textual warrant for Paul’s reading. Within the larger context of the Twelve, the Gentiles are included in God’s kingdom in accordance with the program set forth in Hos 3:5 (e.g., Amos 9:12; Acts 17:17. Paul also cites Deuteronomy 32:23 and Isaiah 65:1) to make his case (Rom 10:19–20).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 43.

<sup>24</sup> After analyzing some stylistic changes Paul made in his Hosea citations, Seifrid summarizes: In doing this, Paul effectively summarizes the following context, in which Hosea is called to embody the redeeming love of the Lord in again taking to himself his adulterous wife. In this reference to the adulterous wife Paul elaborates what it means to be called God’s people: it is to be a harlot embraced and restored by God’s love. Perhaps, too, Paul recalls restoration from the wilderness and exile, since that is God’s way with his people, according to Hosea (2:14–20; cf. 11:1). (Seifrid, “Romans,” 647).

Romans, select Gentiles and Jews comprise the new covenant people of God. Further, the basis of the grace of the new covenant in Hosea is the Abrahamic covenant (Hos 1:10). Similarly, Paul's argument in Romans 9 is based on the premise that only the children of promise, not flesh, are counted as offspring per the Abrahamic covenant (Rom 9:6–13). In both passages therefore, the Abrahamic covenant serves as the basis for God's faithfulness to include the elect in the new covenant.<sup>25</sup>

The pattern of thought in Paul's argument is also similar to that of Hosea. The judgment without mercy of the people in Hosea 1:9 is followed by the grace of being regathered as new covenant children in 1:10–11. The graciousness of grace shines brightest with the backdrop of righteous judgment. Paul similarly argues, "What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory" (Rom 9:22–23). The riches of God's glory are displayed against the backdrop of his wrath and power.

Paul's typological use of Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 is similar to the typology of Romans 4:13. In Romans 4:13 the apostle develops and applies the Abrahamic land promise as not merely the land of Israel, but the whole world (cf. Gen 12:7; 22:17–18; 26:3). In similar fashion Paul develops and applies Hosea 1–3 to his argument in Romans, the new covenant people of God are the elect called from both Jews and gentiles. Both passages in Romans demonstrate typological development and escalation, from Israel to earth, and from Jews to all the peoples of the earth.

<sup>25</sup> According to Shepherd, "It is important to remember that from the very beginning the covenant relationship was intended to restore the lost blessing to all the nations through Abraham and his seed (Gen 12:1–3). It was not to make distinctions according to ethnicity but according to faith." Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 43.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE DAY OF THE LORD IN THE TWELVE

God must judge and destroy sin for it is a declaration of war against the king (cf. Rom 5:1). Sin is violence against God's restful shalom and is therefore violence against his kingdom. It is a refusal to embrace God's covenantal ways whether by breaking the covenant one has or refusing the covenantal opportunity that is made available. In this way, sin is always viewed in relation to covenant. Sin must be uprooted and eradicated for the noxious weed that it is in the garden of the Lord. Indeed, the powerful venom of sin finds its only antidote in the Lord. The day of the Lord is God's full and final revulsive response not just to sin, but sinners. It is divine warfare against all opposed to kingdom-covenant with him.

God's response to sin typologically expands and develops across the covenants. In the covenant with Creation, God's response to Adam's sin was to fundamentally change human nature to that of sin, the cursing of the cosmos, the frustration of human relationships, the entrance of physical and spiritual death, and worst of all, separation from the joyful life giving presence of God (Gen 3:14–19, 24). Yet God made a way in the very fall of humanity for salvation by grace through faith in the promise of a second Adam who would right the wrongs of his father on behalf of humanity (Gen 3:15).

The covenant with Noah demonstrated God's right wrath against sin in flooding the whole earth (Gen 6:5–7). The deluge proved God's justice and demonstrated his righteousness against sin and sinners (Gen 8:20–21). At the same time, it displayed God's grace in electing a remnant for salvation through the very judgment cast upon the earth (Gen 6:8; 9:1).

The covenant with Abraham indirectly displays God’s judgment of sin in the promise of cursing. The episode of Sodom and Gomorrah highlights God’s equity and integrity in both rescuing sinners from sin and judgment while raining fire on malefactors (Gen 18:19–21, 25; 19:15–29). God’s promise to Abraham defines his response to sin on behalf of those in covenant with him namely, to curse those who curse you (Gen 12:3).

The Mosaic covenant further explicates how God’s covenantal response to sin would work. The entire sacrificial complex around the priesthood demonstrated how God would temporarily deal with and cover ongoing human sin for those in the covenant (Lev 4:20–35; 16:29–34). It also marked off clean and unclean, in and out, thereby revealing the need for washing from defilement for acceptance (Lev 13:1–59). Conversely, God’s plagues against Egypt reveal his response to those outside the covenant, namely against those who defy him and assault his people (Exod 11:1, 7–10; 12:12).

The Davidic covenant more narrowly focuses on the kingly son, still bound to the Mosaic covenant (cf. Deut 17:18–20). Even so, on a personal level God would treat him as a son and discipline him should he sin (2 Sam 7:14). Unlike Adam, the Davidic son is a bearer of the promise that God would not take away his steadfast love for him and that his house and kingdom would be established forever (2 Sam 7:15–16).

### **What Is the “Day of the Lord”?**

The day of the Lord describes an eschatological period that includes the judgment of all people, the in-gathering of an elect remnant from all nations, and the ratification of the new covenant through the divine Davidic king.<sup>1</sup> Motifs such as exile, second exodus, covenant, and the Davidic king may at times be present in these eschatological texts, all laced with notions of divine warfare. The emphasis, however,

<sup>1</sup> Michael Shepherd writes, “But the Day of the Lord is not just about judgment. It is also a day of restoration for the true people of God (Joel 2:28–32). This is what makes the Day of the Lord theme so fitting for the composer of the Twelve whose program and message are all about final judgment and messianic restoration in the last days (Jos 3:4–5).” Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018), 120.



when there is verbal signaling to the day of the Lord, is God's judgment, vengeance, and retribution against his enemies. Verbal signaling that the eschatological period is in view includes, "in/on that day," "latter days," "the day [of . . .]," and, "the day of the Lord." Other verbal cues include cataclysmic/apocalyptic language that exceed common human experience in scope or scale including, blood, darkness, gloom, earthquakes, smoke, fire, melting mountains, and God coming to tread upon the earth. Often these cataclysmic verbal cues have literary ties with the Noahic covenant through flood like language. The literary ties may also carry allusions to the plagues upon Egypt during the Exodus period.

While the day of the Lord is first mentioned and prominent in the Latter Prophets, especially the Book of the Twelve, this eschatological period finds its unveiling in Torah. The day of the Lord begins to take shape in the Judahic king prophecy of Genesis 49:8–12 which has deep intertextual ties with the Latter Prophets (cf. Isa 63:2; Ezek 21:27; Zech 9:9). Later, the Song of Moses after the exodus uses the Creation and Noahic covenants to interpret the exodus, covenant, and future promised land. The song reads like a poetic "executive summary" of the Latter Prophets as they look to the cosmic fulfillment (Exod 15:1–18). Building on the Judahic prophecies of Genesis 49:8–12, Balaam's oracles use Edenic and kingly language, especially of a scepter rising out of Israel to crush the forehead of Edom, a prominent enemy, especially in the Twelve (Num 23:18–24; 24:3–9; 15–25). Finally, the song Moses taught to Israel on the banks of the Jordan in Deuteronomy 32 prophesies of the covenant-breaking rebellion of the nation, idol worship, and the Lord's vengeance upon his adversaries for the salvation of his people.

The Latter Prophets, especially the Book of the Twelve, are an excellent test piece and display of intertextuality and the prospective nature of typology in the Old Testament. We will observe that the author(s) of the Book of the Twelve look back to Torah as they look forward to the eschatological day. The Twelve make sense of the future by making sense of the past and they do so primarily from the epochal perspective

of the progressive covenants. The cataclysmic/apocalyptic language used by the Twelve intimates they likely do not know the specific details of how their oracles, visions, and prophecies will be fulfilled. But there is every indication from their language that fulfillment will not contravene but enhance their epochal perspective of divine warfare.

### **The “Day of the Lord” in the Twelve**

Of the Latter Prophets, the Book of the Twelve is the most concentrated with the eschatological day of the Lord. While the day of the Lord has salvific elements, which will be explored as pertinent, the focus of this chapter is upon the judging and avenging nature of that day of divine battle. The following passages will be examined: (1) Joel 1:2–20; (2) Joel 2:1–11, 30–31; (3) Joel 3:13–16; (4) Amos 1:2; (5) Amos 5:18–20; (6) Obadiah 15–21; (7) Zephaniah 1:14–18; (8) Zephaniah 2:11; (9) Malachi 4:1–5. A synthesis will follow. Finally, there will be a brief analysis of the use of Joel 2:28–32 in Acts 2:16–21.

### **The “Day of the Lord” in Joel**

**Joel 1:2–20.** Joel is the lightning strike of the rolling thunder of the day of the Lord that reverberates through the Twelve. A Deuteronomistic locust plague is coming upon the land that mirrors the eighth plague of God’s judgment upon Egypt (cf. Exod 10:12; Deut 28:33, 38, 42).<sup>2</sup> The locusts are a harbinger of doom, “Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes” (Joel 1:15).<sup>3</sup> Reminiscent of the curse upon creation due to Adam’s sin and the fifth plague upon Egypt, seeds shrivel under clods of dirt, beasts groan, drought parches, and fire devours

<sup>2</sup> Shepherd notes the sarcasm, “The destruction wrought by the locusts cannot be good news for the drunkards who depend upon the production of vineyards for their way of life (Joel 1:5; cf. Joel 4:18; Amos 9:13b).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 117.

<sup>3</sup> Per Shepherd, “The text of Joel 1:15 encourages the reader to live with sense of immediacy about the Day of the Lord so that what is said about the future actually shapes faith and life today (cf. 2 Pet 3).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 120.

(cf. Gen 3:17–18; Exod 9:3; Deut 28:22, 31; Hos 4:3).<sup>4</sup> The day of the Lord is a day of God’s faithful vengeance against covenant despising adversaries both from within and without God’s people. It is as if the world has become Egypt, through the lens of Israel, and God will strike them down so that his remnant might go free (Joel 2:12, 18–29).<sup>5</sup>

**Joel 2:1–11, 30–31.** The day of the Lord is near and coming soon (Joel 2:1). “A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness” (Joel 2:2)!<sup>6</sup> The darkness recalls the ninth plague against Egypt (cf. Exod 10:21). An army led by the Lord is coming before whose feet the land is like Eden but leaves behind a wilderness for nothing escapes them (Joel 2:3, 11). The effects of God’s judgment are cosmic in scope as “the earth quakes before them,” the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars “withdraw their shining” (Joel 2:10). This reality prompts the question, “For the day of the Lord is great and very awesome; who can endure it?” (Joel 2:11).

Yet God will surely save his elect remnant in tandem with judgment. God will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood, fire, columns of smoke and the “sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes” (Joel 2:30–31; 3:15). Such signs demand faith.<sup>7</sup> The promise, however, is that “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32). Further, “it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy . . . . In those days I will pour out my Spirit” (Joel

<sup>4</sup> Marvin Sweeney agrees: “The passage draws heavily upon the language and themes of the locust plague narrative in the Exodus traditions (Exod 10:1–20) in an effort to present the threat posed to Jerusalem and Judah as a renewed occurrence of the ancient locust plague against Egypt, except that this time Judah and Jerusalem are the victims of Yhwh’s actions.” Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 154.

<sup>5</sup> See chap. 5 (“Exile and Second Exodus in the Twelve”) of this thesis.

<sup>6</sup> Sweeney also observes this theophanic imagery: “Likewise conveys a sense of awe and power, and it appears to be replicated in the holy of holies of the Jerusalem Temple by use of incense clouds and the veil that shields out light (cf. 1 Kgs 8:1–13; Isa 6).” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 162.

<sup>7</sup> Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 133.

2:28–29).<sup>8</sup> All of God’s people, from least to greatest, will be full of God’s Word because they are full of the Spirit (cf. Jer 31:33). In this way, the day of the Lord’s vengeance becomes inseparable from the day of the Lord’s salvation. While God shows wonders in the heavens and earth with blood, fire, and smoke, he pours his Spirit out upon his new covenant people (cf. Ezek 36:27; 39:29).

**Joel 3:13–16.** At that time when God restores the fortunes of Jerusalem and Judah, he will enter into judgment with all the nations on behalf of his people bringing them into the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:1–2, 12).<sup>9</sup> The judgment upon the nations is in response to the wickedness they perpetrated against God’s covenant people (Joel 3:3–8, 21). God instructs, “put in the sickle for the harvest is ripe” and “go in, tread, for the winepress is full” (Joel 3:13). This is an allusion that picks up Isaiah 63:1–6 where the Lord himself, in blood stained garments, will tread and trample the wicked peoples, “for the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come.” Multitudes will be gathered, “for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision” (Joel 3:14).<sup>10</sup> The day of the Lord commences with the Lord roaring from Zion causing the heavens and earth to quake (Joel 3:18a). “But the Lord is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel” (Joel 3:13b).

<sup>8</sup> Shephard writes, “The future outpouring of God’s Spirit according to Joel 2:28–29 is indiscriminate—male and female, old and young, servant and free. It is difficult not to hear an echo of this in Paul’s description of the gift of salvation in Galatians 3:2.” Shepherd, *The Book of the Twelve*, 132. According to James Nogalski, “Given the patriarchal structures of the time, this promise to include women, children, and slaves, as well as men and elders, in the work of Yhwh is unparalleled in the Old Testament texts.” James D. Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. 1, *Hosea–Jonah*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011), 238.

<sup>9</sup> As Sweeney suggests, “At this point, the literal meaning of the name Jehoshaphat, ‘Yhwh will judge,’ appears to underlie the perspective of the passage.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 182.

<sup>10</sup> Nogalski argues that the “decision” is a poor translation and is better rendered “threshing.” “Consequently, one should consider the possibility that Joel 3:14 anticipates the first oracles against the nations in Amos 1:3, where Damascus is condemned for ‘threshing’ Gilead with iron sledges.” Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 249.

## The “Day of the Lord” in Amos

**Amos 1:2.** Amos brings forward the “day of the Lord” motif from Joel with the intertextual seam, “The Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem (Amos 1:2). In a geographical circuit that draws a bullseye, the roaring of the Lord pronounces judgment against Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, the Ammonites, Moab, Judah, and Israel (Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 12; 2:1; 4, 6).<sup>11</sup> The diversity of regions and peoples named not only underscores the broad and comprehensive scope of the day of the Lord, but also its specificity. None will escape the judgment of God who knows and sees the heart of every individual and will respond rightly to every nation.

**Amos 5:18–20.** In an apparent rebuke, the Lord says, “Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord” and asks, “Why would you have the day of the Lord?” (Amos 5:18). These words appear directed to those who think they are exempt from the vengeance of that day when in fact it is their due. This is a person who has broken covenant with God only to think they are still in it (Amos 5:25–27). This is the person who desires God’s vengeance on God’s enemies, all the while not realizing they themselves are God’s enemy.<sup>12</sup> The day is a day of darkness, not light (Amos 5:18c, 20). With inescapable terror, that day will be “as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him” (Amos 5:19).

From a different vantage point, the aim of the rebuke, “Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord,” may echo the reality that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked and therefore neither should his people (cf. Ezek 18:23, 32; 33:11).<sup>13</sup> The issue is

<sup>11</sup> According to Shepherd, “Damascus is in the northeast (Amos 1:3–5) and moves to Gaza in the southwest (Amos 1:6–8), then to Tyre in the northwest (Amos 1:9–10) and finally to Edom (Amos 1:11–12), Ammon (Amos 1:13–15), and Moab (Amos 2:1–3) in the east and southeast before hitting squarely on the land of the covenant.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 154.

<sup>12</sup> As Sweeney writes, “Whereas Amos’ audience would look to the ‘Day of Yhwh’ as a time when ‘light’ would emerge from ‘darkness’ or Yhwh would emerge from the ‘darkness’ to deliver the nation, Amos focuses especially upon the imagery of darkness to point to a time of punishment for the nation of Israel and not deliverance.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 239. See also Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 320.

<sup>13</sup> This does not deny the reality that God is glorified in the damnation of sinners (cf. Rom

not with the day of the Lord as if it were undeserved or God was unjust and unmeasured in his vengeance (cf. Exod 34:6–7). No, the day of the Lord is for the glory of God, retribution, and for the rejoicing of his people. The issue is not taking pleasure in what God does not take pleasure in namely, the demise and death of the wicked.

### **The “Day of the Lord” in Obadiah**

**Obadiah 15–21.** God’s recompense against Edom becomes idiomatic of all the world for “the day of the Lord is near upon all the nations” (Obad 15a). It will be a day in which deeds shall be returned on each person’s head for “as you have done, it shall be done to you” (Obad 15b). The reason and result of this recompense are stated, “for as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so all the nations shall drink continually; they shall drink and swallow and shall be as though they had never been” (Obad 16).<sup>14</sup> The imagery of drinking likely links with the motif of the “cup of God’s wrath” which the wicked will drink that runs through the Latter Prophets (Jer 25:15, 17, 28 cf. Isa 51:17, 22; Ezek 23:31–33; Hab 2:16; Zech 12:2).<sup>15</sup>

Yet the very mountain where the nations shall drink to their destruction there shall be “those who escape and it shall be holy” (Obad 17). Joel 2:32b similarly states, “For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.” In Joel, “those who escape” are those whom the verse earlier references, “and it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32a). Joel makes

9:22–24). It does, however, temper the heart to respond as God does when judgment is meted out.

<sup>14</sup> Shepherd understands the Judeans to be those who drink, not Edom. Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 213. See also Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 389. Sweeney, on the other hand, views the drinking of the cup as a covenant-making ceremony that Israel engaged in with various nations, including Edom. The nations did not come to Israel’s aid and therefore will “be no more.” Sweeney, *Hosea–Jonah*, 295.

<sup>15</sup> What is to be made of Obadiah’s strange description of the nations’ drinking until they disappear? This poetic portrait may mix the metaphor and hint at the nations being swallowed up, covered, or flooded by the very cup they drink, thereby ceasing to exist.

clear God's electing purposes wherein those whom the Lord calls are those who call upon the Lord. Obadiah's development of this passage indicates that Gentiles, not just ethnic Jews, will be included in those who escape (Obad 15, 17).<sup>16</sup>

One of the results of the day of the Lord is that God's new covenant people, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, will possess the land of God's former enemies. Mount Zion is depicted as the royal command center from which Mount Esau (and all the nations) shall be ruled (Obad 21; Zeph 2:9). In this way, "the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obad 21). The day of the Lord in Obadiah makes clear that God is finally and fully inaugurating his kingdom on earth. Zechariah 14:9 likewise states, "and the Lord will be king over all the earth" (cf. Zech 14:16–17). The day of the Lord and the establishment of the new covenant people of God signal the arrival of the kingdom of God in its fullness. The day of the Lord, therefore, is the judgment of the king on insurrectionists and reclamation of enemy occupied territory. At the same time, it is the constitution of the new covenant between the king and his cherished subjects.

### **The "Day of the Lord" in Zephaniah**

**Zephaniah 1:14–18.** Zephaniah describes the great and bitter day of the burning anger of the Lord as a day of wrath, distress, anguish, ruin, devastation, darkness, gloom, clouds, thick darkness, the trumpet blast, and battle cry (Zeph 1:14–16; 2:2–3).<sup>17</sup> The reason that God is bringing distress upon mankind is because "they have sinned against the Lord" (Zeph 1:17). Nothing will be able to deliver from God's wrath in that day (Zeph 1:18). With terrifying imagery, mankind's "blood shall be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung" (Zeph 1:17). So thorough and final will the judgment of the day

<sup>16</sup> Because of his perspective on v. 16 being a reference to Judah, Shepherd see this as a reunited kingdom of Judah and Israel. Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 213.

<sup>17</sup> Sweeney notes, "The term "destruction" (*shoah*) conveys total devastation and is now employed in modern Hebrew as the term for the Holocaust or destruction of European Jewry in World War II." Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2, *Micah–Malachi*, Berit Olam: Studies in Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 509.

of the Lord be that “in the fire of his jealousy, all the earth shall be consumed; for a full and sudden end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth” (Zeph 1:18).

**Zephaniah 2:11.** Zephaniah 2:11 adds a unique dimension to the day of the Lord saying, “The Lord will be awesome against them; for he will famish all the gods of the earth, and to him shall bow down, each in its place, all the lands of the nations.” In Exodus 12:12 God states, “For I will pass through the land of Egypt, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord.” Given that the day of the Lord has typological ties with the judgments upon Egypt, what God did to the false “gods” of Egypt on a small scale he will do on a cosmic scale to all the impotent gods of the world.<sup>18</sup> Zephaniah’s depiction of famished gods also alludes to the end of the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32.<sup>19</sup> The Song declares there is no god beside the Lord as he alone kills, makes alive, wounds, and heals, and there is none who can deliver out of his hand (Deut 32:39). The Song concludes, “Rejoice with him, O heavens, bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries” (Deut 32:43). The day of the Lord then, presents the Living God as the destroyer of the gods on a cosmic scale as he was on a local scale in Egypt in prophetic fulfillment of the Deuteronomic Song of Moses.

### **The “Day of the Lord” in Malachi**

**Malachi 4:1–5.** The Book of the Twelve closes with a final pronouncement of the day of the Lord. This day will be a day of judgment for the wicked, “For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be

<sup>18</sup> Another allusion to the exodus can be found a few verses earlier in Zeph 2:9, where the renewed people of God will plunder the nations as Israel plundered Egypt (cf. Gen 15:14; Exod 3:21; 11:3; 12:36).

<sup>19</sup> In a footnote, the ESV notes that the Masoretic Text lacks “bow down to him, all gods.”



stubble” (Mal 4:1). The vengeance of the Lord will be thorough and complete, “the day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch” (Mal 4:1).

This day will also be a day of salvation for the called, “But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings” and “you shall go out leaping like calves from the stall” (Mal 4:2).<sup>20</sup> The new covenant elect will see the result of God’s recompense on their behalf, “you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act says the Lord of hosts” (Mal 4:3).

Malachi also alerts the timing of the eschatological day, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes” (Mal 4:5).<sup>21</sup> The Lord took Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind in 2 Kings 2:11. Elijah is one of the two Old Testament saints to have not died and gone down to Sheol.<sup>22</sup> Either the prophecy of Malachi indicates that Elijah will literally and physically return from heaven for this particular mission or, more likely, the use of “Elijah” is similar to the Latter Prophets use

<sup>20</sup> Shepherd notes that some prefer to see a metaphor for salvation in the reference to “the sun of righteousness:”

There is, however, good evidence in favor of the messianic reading that is often overlooked by those who advocate for it. Already in the LXX of Numbers 24:17b is the image of a messianic star (*Tg. Onk.*: king) rising like the sun out of Jacob . . . The prophecy in the last words of David also anticipates that the messianic ruler will be like the light of the morning when the sun rises (2 Sam 23:3–4; cf. Hos 6:3a; Ps 72:5, 17). The Davidic Messiah is the great light that those who walk in darkness will see (Isa 9:1, 5, 6 [Eng., 9:2, 6, 7]), and the messianic servant of the Lord will be a light to the nations (Isa 42:6; 49:6). (Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 506).

Sweeney, on the other hand, understands this passage to convey temple imagery:

The image of the rising sun builds upon the image of the sun that rises in the east and thus illumines the entrance to the temple and its interior, thereby signifying the rebirth of creation each day (n.b., Gen 1:3–5 indicates that light is the first element of creation), and Ezek 40:6 indicates that the Temple faces east, which allows the morning sun to illumine the interior of the Temple at sunrise (cf. Ps 8; 19; Deut 33:2; Judg 5:4; Habakkuk 3, which portray Yhwh with solar imagery). (Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 749).

<sup>21</sup> Sweeney notes fitting parallels between Moses and Elijah. Both are associated with Mount Horeb in times of national apostasy. Moses’s burial site is unknown, and Elijah was up taken to heaven. “Because [Elijah] is like Moses in many respects, he is identified as the prophet who will return to Israel prior to the coming of the Messiah in Jewish tradition.” Sweeney, *Micah–Malachi*, 749.

<sup>22</sup> The other being Enoch from Gen 5:24, where the text says that God “took him.” The break from the drum beat of “and he died” in Gen 5 leads to the conclusion that Enoch was not taken by death but taken from the earth. It is also assumed that God brought Enoch to heaven rather than down to the grave.

of “David” with reference to the future Davidic son. In other words, it will be one like Elijah.<sup>23</sup>

The naming of Elijah appears to link with and indicate the unnamed “messenger” from Malachi 3:1. The unnamed messenger is associated with the Lord’s eschatological arrival to his temple “on the day of his coming” (Mal 3:2). Both Elijah and the “messenger” therefore, are linked to the eschatological “day.” The mission of the messenger is stated, “Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me . . . , and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold he is coming, says the Lord of hosts” (Mal 3:1). Elijah’s mission was to “turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction” (Mal 4:6). A stylistic play on words and names appears to be at work. Malachi means “my messenger” in English. The author Malachi had the ministry of turning the people back to one another and the Lord in covenant faithfulness which points to the ministry of the future “Elijah/messenger” (Mal 2:11, 16). The future Elijah will have a similar ministry of turning people back to one another (Mal 4:6). The “messenger” of Malachi 3:1 will have a similar ministry associated with turning people to the new covenant.

### **Synthesis of the “Day of the Lord” in the Twelve**

The prophet Joel unleashes the eschatological day of the Lord in the Book of the Twelve. Using imagery from the plagues of the exodus period, Joel typologically frames the day of the Lord as God’s plagues upon all mankind. It is a day of vengeance and doom against all who oppose the Lord and break his covenant. The day is variously described as the trembling of the heavens, darkness, earthquakes, clouds, gloom, blood,

<sup>23</sup> The New Testament indicates that John the Baptist was the fulfillment of Malachi’s Elijah prophecy (Matt 11:10–14; 17:10–13). Thus, John the Baptist was one like Elijah (John 1:21, 25).

fire, smoke. The nations will be gathered together and judged for their waywardness and wickedness. Indeed, the nations will be the grapes of God's wrath to be trampled underfoot. Joel describes the day as "great and very awesome," a roaring of the Lord, and rhetorically asks, "who can endure it?" (Joel 2:10). Yet the day of the Lord is also a day of salvation for any who call upon the name of the Lord. Those who call upon the name of the Lord will also be participants in the new covenant and those upon whom the Lord will pour out his Spirit. During that time, the Lord will be a refuge and stronghold to his people.

Amos carries forward the roaring of the Lord as he circles the nations to corral them for judgment and vengeance centered on Jerusalem. Not only will the day of the Lord be comprehensive in scope but personal in nature. It is not the nations as an unknown faceless mass that God will exact recompense upon, but each nation comprised of personally known rebels. Amos also tempers a rebuke for those who desire the day of the Lord. God does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked and neither should his people. At the same time, Israel should not console itself with safety as they are the very ones upon whom judgment is coming. The day of the Lord is necessary, upholds God's covenant justice, and he will be glorified in it. But it also seems the day of the Lord is a day of mournful worship.

Obadiah highlights the compensatory nature of the day of the Lord as a day in which God returns the deeds of rebels upon their own heads. In language that harkens to the flooding of God's enemies in the time of Noah, the day of the Lord is a day for drinking the cup of God's wrath and being taken away by it. Obadiah also indicates that the salvific aspects of the day of the Lord is not for ethnic Jews only but also Gentiles. After the crushing of God's enemies, the new covenant people of God will possess the land of their enemies. With this, "the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obad 21). This statement by Obadiah indicates that the day of the Lord is ultimately about the kingdom of God. The day is about subjugating insurrectionists, calling and converting rebels into a

Spirit-filled new covenant people, installing the eternal Davidic king, and fulfilling the promises of God across the ages.

Echoing Joel, Zephaniah describes the day of the Lord as a day of wrath, distress, anguish, ruin, devastation, darkness, gloom, clouds, thick darkness, blasting trumpets, and the battle cry. The anger of the Lord will burn against the sins of mankind. Their blood will be poured out and flesh rot like dung on the earth. Zephaniah escalates the cataclysmic nature of the day of the Lord such that “all the earth shall be consumed” (Zeph 1:18). It appears that so comprehensive and catastrophic will be the day of the Lord that a new heaven and new earth will be needed to accommodate the new covenant people of God (cf. Isa 65:17; 66:22). Zephaniah also reveals that the day of the Lord is an exhibition of the crushing of all false gods. The devotion of the nations will turn from false gods which could not deliver to the Living God who gives life.

Malachi summarizes the day of the Lord as a day like a burning oven and all those who do evil will be the stubble that fuels its fires. So hot will be that flame that none will be left living. Yet for those who fear the name of the Lord, it will be a day of healing and sunshine. It will be a day of leaping for joy. The new covenant elect will tread upon the ashes of the rebels as a symbol of equity. Malachi also establishes as a precursor to the day of the Lord, the arrival of the Elijah/messenger. This future figure will prepare the way of the Lord, will be a herald of the new covenant, arrive in association with the Lord returning to his temple, and will be associated with turning people, especially families to one another. The day of the Lord in the Book of the Twelve is a day of salvation for God’s new covenant elect through the judgment of the unrepentant wicked. The Twelve emphasize the cataclysmic and comprehensive scope of the day and brings the Latter Prophets to a close with a thunderous exclamation point.

## **The New Testament’s Use of the “Day of the Lord” in the Twelve**

What follows is a brief examination of the use of the Book of the Twelve in the New Testament regarding the day of the Lord. Due to the scope of this work, one key passage will be considered. Acts 2:16–21 will be explored attempting to discern how Luke, quoting Peter, read, interpreted, and applied Joel 2:28–32.

Acts 2 describes the account of the day of Pentecost. Ten days after Jesus had ascended, the disciples were gathered together in one place (Acts 2:1). A rushing wind filled the room and divided tongues of fire came to rest upon each one of them (Acts 2:2–3). They were filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4). Due to the feast, devout Jews from “every nation under heaven” had gathered (Acts 2:5). The sound of the rushing wind brought the large crowd together after which they heard the disciples tell the mighty works of God in his own language (Acts 2:6–11). The crowd was perplexed wondering what this strange phenomenon meant (Acts 2:12). Others simply mocked saying the disciples were drunk (Acts 2:13). This situation prompted Peter, standing with the eleven, to preach the first Christian sermon, following which about three thousand believed the gospel, and were saved. In this sermon Peter cites Joel 2:23–32, Psalm 16:8–11, and Psalm 110:1 as the biblical basis and reason for these events.<sup>24</sup>

In the Book of the Twelve, the three chapters of Joel are a sustained pronouncement of the day of the Lord. Joel 2 has four main sections. Joel 2:1–11 is the declaration that the Lord is leading his army against Zion to destroy it. Joel 2:12–17 is a call to the people of Zion to repentance. Joel 2:18–27 reveals the Lord’s pity for his people and his promises of healing, restoration, and safety to the end that “you shall

<sup>24</sup> According to Shepherd, “The form of citation of Joel 3:1–5 (Eng., 2:28–32) in Acts 2:17–21 initially favors the LXX where it differs from the MT for Joel 3:1a, 2b, 4b (Eng., 2:28a, 29:b, 31b), but the citation does not include Joel 3:5b (Eng., 2:32b), so it is impossible to determine if the text at hand included the distinctive LXX reading there. It would be incorrect to conclude that the citation is in its entirety the LXX reading . . . . Furthermore, the citation includes additions and changes that come from Peter, Luke, or another source (or some combination thereof).” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 134.

know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God and there is none else” (Joel 2:27).

Signaling again the day of the Lord, Joel 2:28a declares, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh” (Joel 2:29). The pouring out of the Spirit intertextually links with the new covenant promises of the Spirit in Ezekiel. Ezekiel promises “the nations will know that I am the Lord” when he gathers his elect from all peoples back into the land, cleanses them, gives them a new heart, a new spirit, and the Holy Spirit (Ezek 36:23–27). Joel’s prophecy that “your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream, and your young men shall see visions” also fulfills Moses’s lament that not all God’s people were filled with the Spirit and his prayer that God would make it so (Joel 2:28; cf. Num 11:29). The promise of Joel, therefore, is that at the time of the day of the Lord, God would pour out his Spirit upon all whom he calls to the new covenant (Joel 2:32).

The outpouring of the Spirit will coincide with wonders in the heavens and on the earth, namely, blood, fire, columns of smoke, a darkened sun, and blood colored moon (Joel 2:30–31). Unlike the hopeful and promising statements of the new covenant Spirit in the previous verses, these cataclysmic and apocalyptic wonders consistently describe God’s retributive justice and vengeance. Earlier in Joel 2:2 the day of the Lord is portrayed as a “day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness!” As the Lord leads his army in divine warfare, the earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining (Joel 2:10). Later in Joel 3:15, when God prepares to tread the winepress and multitudes are brought into the valley of decision, “the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.” Micah 1:4 describes the mountains melting under the Lord and valleys being split open like wax when he comes down to judge. Nahum 1:6 describes God’s wrath poured out like fire, and rocks broken into pieces by him. The day that is coming is burning like an oven and God will set all his adversaries ablaze (cf. Mal 4:1).

Interestingly, Joel 2:31 indicates these wonders will occur, “before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.” This suggests that “the day” is a period of time rather than a single event since the entire context of this larger passage is the day of the Lord. Thus, when Joel 2:30 describes wonders in the heavens and earth in relation to the outpouring of the new covenant Spirit, this is a sign of terror to God’s enemies and salvation for the elect.

Joel 2:32 offers salvation for any willing to hear saying, “and it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” The prophet explains, “for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls” (Joel 2:24). The setting for salvation is Mount Zion. The previous mention of foreign nations, war, and in this passage, those who escape and survive may broaden the scope of salvation to include Gentiles. Those whom the Lord calls, will call on the Lord and he will pour out his new covenant Spirit upon them all in tandem with vengeance upon his adversaries.

Peter’s evangelistic sermon opens with a citation from Joel 2:28–32 as an explanation to the perplexity and questioning of the crowd.<sup>25</sup> Peter uses a fulfillment formula, “But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel,” to signal a fulfillment has occurred (Acts 2:16). Through the prophet Joel, Peter states, “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh” (Acts 2:17; cf. Joel 2:28). Peter indicates that the crowd is witnessing the salvific aspect of the day of the Lord. What the prophets had promised, the outpouring of the new covenant Spirit, has now come. The day of the Lord has begun. In a reversal of the Tower of Babel, the Spirit, enables all to hear and understand the mighty works of God (cf. Gen 11:7–9). Peter ends

<sup>25</sup> I. Howard Marshall observes, “There is a dialectic here. On the one hand, the significance of a hitherto obscure prophecy (what is the prophet referring to?) is explained by seeing it fulfilled in a particular event. On the other hand, the significance of an event (what exactly is happening?) is illuminated by seeing it as the fulfillment of a prophecy. Thus the prophecy and the event shed light on one another.” I. Howard Marshall, “Acts,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 533.

his citation of Joel with the offer of salvation, “and it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21; cf. Joel 2:32).

Curiously, Peter includes Joel 2:30–31 in his fulfillment formula, “And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day” (Acts 2:19–20).<sup>26</sup> A review of the surrounding context of Acts gives no indication these specific events happened. A few options exist for discerning what Peter is communicating by citing the vengeance and judgment portions of Joel. It should first be noted the New Testament authors do not always make citations of Old Testament passages in full or always in literary order (see Rom 9:25–26; 11:3–4).<sup>27</sup> In other words, Peter had the option and prerogative to omit Joel 2:30–31 from his citation and skip right to citing Joel 2:32. The implication is that Peter is intentional, deliberate, and meaningful with his use of every word including the vengeance and judgment portion of the text.<sup>28</sup>

It could be argued that just as the disciples prophesied in known languages, and no record is given of visions and dreams, that Peter is generalizing and extrapolating that “something like the Joel prophecy” was being fulfilled. From this interpretive

<sup>26</sup> Per Shepherd, “Signs and wonders in the Bible are designed to be indicators of something and/or someone and to engender faith in that something or someone.” Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 133.

<sup>27</sup> Shepherd states:  
The NT authors quote from a wide variety of textual witnesses to the Hebrew Bible. Sometimes the source text aligns with what can be established as the original text. Sometimes a reading is cited because it offers an accurate interpretation of the original (e.g. LXX Amos 9:12; Acts 15:17). Sometimes the reading simply fits the particular argument that the author wants to make (e.g. LXX Hab 2:4; Heb 10:38). Sometimes a specific source is cited and then ignored in the exposition. For example, Hebrews 12:5–6 cites the LXX form of Proverbs 3:11–12, but the exposition actually depends upon the word ‘father’ in the MT form (Heb 12:7–11). This is like the modern preacher who shares a common English translation with his congregation but occasionally departs from it in his exposition on the basis of conviction about the original text. (Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 134n39).

<sup>28</sup> Contra Marshall, who says, “It may well be that Peter quoted these verses in the passage and did not feel that he could leave anything out. So Acts 2:19–20 may be future from Peter’s (and Luke’s, and our) point of view; a readership familiar with Luke 21:25–28 would have no difficulty making the leap.” Marshall, “Acts,” 535.



perspective, a mighty rushing wind and divided tongues of fire, loosely correspond to the showing of wonders in the heavens and earth. While plausible this perspective does not seem to make the best sense of the passage.

More likely, Peter has in mind the totality of events that characterized the birth, ministry, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and promises of Jesus Christ.<sup>29</sup> The events of Jesus's crucifixion included darkness over the land, an earthquake, and rocks splitting, (not to mention the rending of the veil in the temple and the dead coming out of the tombs after Jesus's resurrection; cf. Matt 27:45, 51–54; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). At the ascension, the clouds Jesus rose in were not a meteorological sign that warm, moist air was rising, cooling, and condensing (Acts 1:9). The clouds were a theological sign of apocalyptic glory (cf. Ezek 1:4; Dan 7:13; Nah 1:3). It seems best to understand Peter bringing together the entire complex of apocalyptic wonders described at the crucifixion, the ascension, and Pentecost as fulfillment of Joel 2:30–31.<sup>30</sup>

If Peter's interpretation and application of Joel 2 includes the wonders in the heavens and earth surrounding the crucifixion, ascension, and Pentecost, how does the day of the Lord's context of vengeance and judgment fit into the salvific elements of Acts 2? The answer, in short, is the cross of Jesus Christ.<sup>31</sup> God's judgment of sin and vengeance against sinners was laid upon the sinless one. Jesus drank the cup of God's

<sup>29</sup> From a chronological perspective, the death, burial, and, resurrection had occurred fifty days prior to Acts 2. But from a literary perspective, the death and resurrection of Jesus occurred "just a few pages ago." Literary foreshortening reduces the time and perspective of the reader to seem as if something had recently happened from a textual vantage point. From a canonical perspective, fresh on the minds of the readers (and Peter's hearers!) are all the events and circumstances of the crucifixion.

<sup>30</sup> It is possible that Peter may also have in mind Isa 4:2–5, which reads:  
In that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel. And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, and everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst . . . Then the Lord will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy (Isa 4:2–5).

<sup>31</sup> According to Shepherd, "The composer of the Twelve is every bit as interested in faith in Christ as Paul is (Hos 3:5)." Shepherd, *Commentary on the Twelve*, 133.

wrath in his people's place (cf. Isa 51:17; Obad 16; Matt 20:22; 26:39). Jesus became the sin of his people and bore the righteous retribution due them (cf. Is 53:4–6, 10–12; 2 Cor 5:21). For those who call upon the name of the Lord, they find the day of the Lord's recompense and divine warfare was diverted and satisfied in another, namely the divine Davidic king who cried out from the cross for the return of his people.

A number of developments are evident in Peter's reading, interpretation, and application of Joel 2:28–32. First, the day of the Lord was inaugurated but not consummated in the incarnated ministry of Christ.<sup>32</sup> In an unexpected way, a door of hope has remained open for nearly 2,000 years for all who call upon the name of the Jesus to be saved. Second, the judgments of the day of the Lord will most assuredly fall upon every person either in Christ Jesus, the Davidic substitute, or themselves. Divine justice allows no escape from the day of the Lord save those found in the Son. The threat of the consummation of the day of the Lord against unrepentant sinners remains. Third, Peter's application of the wonders to include theophanic features from the crucifixion, ascension and Pentecost shows development from the exclusive judgment focus in Joel to include salvific elements. These points demonstrate Peter was a skilled exegete and good biblical theologian who applied Joel from an epochal and canonical perspective developing and applying the prophet to his hearers (especially readers!).<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Narrowly, this is evidenced from the crucifixion to Pentecost. More appropriately, however, the inauguration of the day spans to Rev 19–20.

<sup>33</sup> As Marshall writes, "The prophecy foreshadows what happens later in Acts: the offer of salvation to all people (including Gentiles) and the consequent pouring out of the Spirit on all people (i.e. all who respond to the gospel), the performance of signs and wonders, the prophetic activity of women (21:9), and the experiencing of visions and dreams." Marshall, "Acts," 533.

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## ABSTRACT

### A DOOR OF HOPE: BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE

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The twelve Minor Prophets are to be read as a compositional unity known as the Book of the Twelve as demonstrated by biblical intertextuality, intertestamental literature, and church history. Reading the Twelve as a compositional unity sets the biblical-theological stage for examining how the Twelve advances the theme of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God in the Twelve is examined through the lens of four kingdom sub-themes: Davidic kingship, exile and second exodus, covenant, and the day of the Lord. After investigating each sub-theme within the Twelve, New Testament citations of the Twelve is explored, seeking to ascertain how the authors read, interpreted, and applied the kingdom of God in the Twelve to their literary context.

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