



THE DAVIDIC COVENANT IN EZEKIEL 37:15–28 AND 2 SAMUEL 7:11–16: AN INTERTEXTUAL READINGⁱⁱⁱ

Victor Lonu Budhaⁱⁱⁱ

Africa International University,
Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract:

Reading Ezekiel 37:15–28 and 2 Samuel 7:1–16 from an intertextual perspective establishes that the text of Samuel 7:1–16, which is prior to that of Ezekiel, might have a certain influence. The first part of Ezekiel 37 (verses 1 to 14) describes the miserable condition of the Jewish people in the Babylonian exile. The text indicates that only YHWH is able to restore the people. In the second part (verse 15 to 28) the text presents the promise of God to fully restore his people and put them under a new leadership based on the Davidic Covenant that appears for the first time 2 Samuel 7:1–16. The two texts have many connections. The emphasis in the text of Ezekiel is on the promise of restoration that will come to realization under the leadership of the future Davidic Prince. The connections between Ezekiel 37:15–28 and 2 Samuel 7:1–16 are clear to the point that, cumulatively, we might suggest that the text of 2 Samuel 7:1–16 had influence on the text of Ezekiel 34:15–28.

Keywords: Davidic Covenant, Ezekiel, Samuel, influence, king, prince

Résumé :

La relecture d'Ézéchiel 37:15-28 et 2 Samuel 7:1-16 d'un point de vue intertextuel établit que le texte de 2 Samuel 7:1-16, qui est antérieur à celui d'Ézéchiel, pourrait avoir une certaine influence sur celui d'Ézéchiel. La première partie d'Ézéchiel 37 (versets 1 à 14) décrit la condition misérable du peuple juif dans l'exil babylonien. Le texte indique que seul YHWH est capable de restaurer son peuple. Dans la deuxième partie (verset 15 à 28), le texte présente la promesse de Dieu de restaurer pleinement son peuple et de le mettre sous un nouveau leadership basé sur l'Alliance Davidique qui apparaît pour la première fois dans 2 Samuel 7:1-16. Les deux textes ont de nombreuses connexions et similarités. Dans le texte d'Ézéchiel l'accent est placé sur la promesse d'une restauration qui se réalisera sous la direction du futur Prince Davidique. Les connexions entre Ézéchiel 37:15-28 et 2 Samuel 7:1-16 sont claires au point que, cumulativement, nous

ⁱ This article is from one of the sections in my dissertation under the topic "*An Intertextual Study of the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:1–16//Ezekiel 34:23–31 and 37:15–28)*".

ⁱⁱ L'ALLIANCE DAVIDIQUE DANS EZECHIEL 37:15–28 ET 2 SAMUEL 7:11–16: UNE RELECTURE INTERTEXTUELLE

ⁱⁱⁱ Correspondence: email lonubudha@gmail.com

pourrions suggérer que le texte de 2 Samuel 7:1-16 a eu une influence sur le texte d'Ézéchiel 34:15-28.

Mont clés : Alliance Davidique, Ézéchiel, Samuel, influence, roi, prince

1. Introduction

The pericope of Ezekiel 37:15–28 that contains YHWH's promise to his people goes further to mention David as a promised ruler in a restored Israel. Mentioning David who was no more alive gives room for speculation about the identity of David; will the king David come to life to lead for a second time the Jewish people? Looking at this text from the literary perspective, it appears that the mention of David is in connection to the covenant that YHWH made with David in 2 Samuel 7:1–16, prompting the idea that the text of Samuel might have influenced that of Ezekiel.

The aim of this chapter is to establish the influence of 2 Samuel 7 on Ezekiel 37, particularly verses 15–28. The focus of this paper will be on the exegetical study of Ezekiel 37:15–28 and the influence of 2 Samuel 7. This paper will cover the following: the place and significance of the section, the structure of Ezekiel 37:1–16, exegesis, the influence of 2 Samuel 7, and a conclusion.

2. Methodology

Generally, there are always connections between one text and others. The connections existing between the text does not mean absence of originality. While one text can allude to or echo others, the dependency of the latter text on the prior helps to understand better a text under study. An intertextual method stands to be appropriate when it comes to establish possible textual connections between texts. Specifically, in the quest of establishing the influence of 2 Samuel 7:1–16 on Ezekiel 37:15–28 I will use the diachronic approach.

The diachronic approach focuses on *“identifying the specific connections that the author wants the reader to perceive, as well as determining which texts predate the others, and consequently, have influenced the others”* (Miller 2011:284). This approach helps to identify the repetition that occurs in a latter text from a former one or *“from a discourse distant in time”* (Tannen 2007:102).

3. Place and Significance of the Section in the Book of Ezekiel

Chapters 35 and 36 of the book of Ezekiel help us to understand Ezekiel 37. The two chapters mentioned concern the restoration of the Jewish people. They suggest that the restoration of the people is not complete without the restoration and the reform of the land. The process includes YHWH's punishment of the enemies of his people and the divine promise of salvation of the people. In Ezekiel 34 we see a radical transformation that the Judeans will experience, especially under the leadership of the promised ruler, David. In Ezekiel 35 and 36 we have the continuity of that transformation in two aspects: people and land. The use of a prophetic word formula in 35:1 — *וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר* (The word of the LORD came to me)— indicates that with 35:1–36:15 another phase of transformation comes into focus. It is not only the people, and particularly their

leadership, that need to be transformed, but also their land. A twofold prophecy first announces devastation of the land of the oppressors (35:1–15), then deals with the land itself, which is vindicated against those who have taken possession of it (36:1–7) and prepared—the land—to receive back returning Israel (36:8–12). A short disputation oracle in 36:13–15 affirms that it will no longer be said of the land of Israel that it consumes its people (Renz 2002:108).

In the restoration program, the issue of land, as it appears, should first be resolved before the returning of the exiles. Ezekiel 36:16–38 is a collection statement about what the house of Israel did, the punishment that YHWH inflicted upon them, and the divine promises. Renz portrays the section as having features of an anthology (Renz 2002:110, 113). Considering the arrangement of the chapters in the book of Ezekiel, as we have it now, Ezekiel 36:16–38 prepares the reader to understand Chapter 37 in light of the previous section. The point in Chapter 37 remains that of transformation. It describes the action of the Spirit of YHWH in the process of transformation and the implications of the political restoration.

For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the second part with emphasis on the relation to the Davidic Covenant. Ezekiel 37 is in the second part of the book of Ezekiel which concerns the restoration of Israel. The relevance of this chapter resides in the fact that it continues with the theme of restoration repeating what has been already said in Chapters 34 and 36 and adding new elements. Hence, it strengthens the theme of restoration in the section and emphasizes the plan that YHWH has for his people. According to Zimmerli, Ezekiel 37:15–28 recount[s] how Yahweh summons the prophet to a sign-action. This has its theme, briefly summarized, “Repurification of the two parts of Israel”. Subsequently the section ends in a much more broadly conceived promise of salvation to Israel in which the various themes of the proclamation of salvation in chapters 34, 36f (shepherd, new covenant, purification of Israel etc.) are taken up afresh (Zimmerli 1983:271).

The immediately preceding context to the section under study is Ezekiel 37:1–14 where the situation of the Judeans is presented as “*dry bones*”. It depicts how desperate the people were. Reading this section signals the hardship of what the Jewish people went through in Babylon. To emphasize the situation of the exiles as presented in the form of “*dry bones*”, Biwul observes that “*The emotive picture that the reader visualises of the intensity/degree of the dryness of the bones, is to the effect that they would not even attract a dog sniffing them*” (Biwul 2019:5). The political as well as the religious conditions of the exiles were extremely dry to the point that their condition seemed both hopeless and irreparable (Zimmerli 1983:271).

At the same time, this passage describes the restoration that the Jewish people will experience. It is remarkable that it is YHWH who will change the miserable condition of his people. Taylor explains the condition of the Judeans in the exile in these terms: “*The bones represent the Israelites in exile. They have been there for more than ten years now, and what glimmerings of hope they had when first they arrived have now been altogether extinguished. Their hope was lost: as bones, they were dry*” (Taylor 1969:228). Fortunately, “*Israel’s only hope rests in her God, who is at the same time the sovereign Lord of history and the source of life. The restoration of his people will be his climactic moment of self-revelation*” (Block 1997:383). Obinwa summarizes the message of restoration found in the vision of the dry bones as follows:

“The vision of the dry bones presents YHWH’s promise to open (פתח) the graves of his people and to bring (עלה) them out from the graves and lead them back to the land of Israel (37:12). Their graves are symbolic of their exilic bondage while the acts of opening the graves and bringing the people out of them are expressive of deliverance or breaking the bars of their yoke (cf. 34:27). So Ezek 37:1–14 simply states that YHWH will rescue his people from the land of their captivity and lead them back to their own land (cf. 34:13)” (Obinwa 2012:412–13).

Knowing that only YHWH is able to restore his people, we are prepared to understand the next section of Ezekiel 37. We see that YHWH has the capacity to fulfil what seemed impossible. If he brought to life the dry bones, he is able to put his people under a new leadership that will submit to him and bless them.

4. Structure of Ezekiel 37:15–28

Ezekiel 37:15–28, which is the second main part of Ezekiel 37, is divided in two parts. Verses 15 to 23 are about the sign-act of the two wood sticks. The prophet was directed to take the two pieces of wood sticks to communicate the message of YHWH in relation to the unity of his people. The structure of the section is as follows:

- Ezekiel 37:15 Introduction to the section
- Ezekiel 37:16–17 Sign-act of the two sticks
- Ezekiel 37:18–19 Explanation of the sign-act
- Ezekiel 37:20–23 Promise of restoration
- Ezekiel 37:24–28 The Davidic king and blessings.

5. Ezekiel 37:15–23 Unity and Salvation of the Jewish People

The text of Ezekiel refers here to a crucial element in the program of the restoration of the Jewish people: unity. The communication is expressed in the form of a sign-act. The importance of unity will appear later in the text. The confirmation that there is division among the Jewish people is established by the two sticks that the prophet is asked to use. In verse 16 the text mentions Judah and Israel as two different nations represented in the sign-act by the two sticks of wood. The allusion to Judah and Israel recalls the division that Israel went through after the death of Solomon. The sign-act directs the prophet to join the two pieces of wood together.

Scholars mainly see the Northern and the Southern in the two sticks of wood used in the sign-act. Taylor (Taylor 1969:232) views in the two sticks the two kingdoms after the northern kingdom lost its identity. In reference to the division that Israel experienced resulting in the Northern and the Southern kingdoms, the two sticks of wood represent Judah and Joseph (Ephraim) to whom all the Israelites are associated (Ezek 37:16). At a glance, one may think that the sign-act is about the two kingdoms of Israel (the northern and the southern). Merrill F. Unger (Unger n.d.:54) takes this view when he points out that the symbolic action “symbolizes the end God will make of that sad division which has harassed Jacob’s posterity since the fateful schism of 922 B.C.” Greenberg (Greenberg 1997:754) has the same opinion, pointing out to the aspect of rivalry.

Considering the unification proposed in Ezekiel 37:16 Judah and Joseph both refer to the Israelites taking into account their origin—descendants of Jacob. It suggests that YHWH will not discriminate among his people as far as the process of restoration is concerned. His plan to reinstate his people includes all the Jews, no matter where they are as a result of division. The sign-act concerns the unity of the restored nation under one king (Cooper 1994:326). It refers to the restoration of Israel's integrity, which includes ethnic, territorial as well as spiritual integrity (Block 1997:14). It focuses on the reunification of the Jews as a people, as well as the reunification of the two kingdoms, Judah and Israel.

While such a reunification should be desired, it seems that at the point where the two kingdoms have reached, it is no longer possible. I here agree with Zimmerli who observes that *“there is no longer expected the “reunification” of the two kingdoms, both of which have now disappeared, but rather the gracious divine protecting of the newly gathered people from a new schism. It is in this sense that emphasis is laid on “one nation, one king”* (Zimmerli 1983:276). The point here is that while ethnically, all twelve tribes will not ever be joined together again, symbolically there will be one kingdom under God's leadership. Furthermore, *“Ezekiel offers a broad vision of future restoration that includes all those survivors and refugees that have been scattered and disconnected through the traumas of destruction and deportation”* (Kelle 2013:302). Kelle gives a balanced view and sees the big picture of the program of restoration. In reference to the suggested unity in the text, Kelle sheds more light and states, *“While the language of one kingdom here does not necessarily assume the existence of a previously unified state, it envisions a future that will not reflect the old political arrangements that led the people into rebellion and defilement and generated Yahweh's judgment of destruction and exile”* (Kelle 2013:302). The understanding that we have is that the sign-act is beyond bringing together the 12 tribes; it concerns the restoration of people as a whole and the capacity of YHWH doing what looks impossible. Block indicates that *“If Yahweh is able to perform such an incredible feat, there is reason to hope that the other elements involved in their own (the Judean exiles') restoration—their survival, regathering and return to the land, the restoration of the Davidic monarchy, the renewal of the covenant, and Yahweh's reestablishment of his residence in their midst—could also be fulfilled”* (Block 1997:395).

It is certain that with the exile the Jewish people were no longer together in their nation. While there was a remnant of the Judeans in Judah, there were thousands of them scattered in different nations. The important element in the promise is the word 'one'. The Hebrew word אֶחָד (one) is used 11 times in Ezekiel 37:15–28 (verses 16 [2 times], 17 [3 times], 19 [2 times], 22 [2 times], and 24 [2 times]) to describe the restoration of Israel. The various nouns that it modifies are stick (עֵצִי אֶחָד), nation (לְגִי אֶחָד), king (מֶלֶךְ אֶחָד), and shepherd (רֹעֵה אֶחָד). Its many appearances in Ezekiel 37 is indicative of the need of unity among the people. The promise that they will be one nation under one king (Ezek 37:22) means that they will no longer suffer division. Such a promise would have raised hope in them and stands here as one of the main characteristics of restoration. The relationship that Israel will have with YHWH (37:23b) is also an indication of Israel as a united nation.

YHWH promises that *“there will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms”* (Ezek 27:22). There are two important things that attract attention in the process of the divine restoration: one king and the emphasis on unity. As regards the focus of this study, the emphasis on unity is important when it comes to covenant. As already

discussed, since we do not see the possibility of bringing the twelve tribes of Israel together again as one ethnic unit under one king, “one king” indicates the process of healing of what Israel went through as the result of division (Taylor 1969:233) which led to the Babylonian exile. The assumption is that such a promise could definitely give hope to the exiles. This promise becomes clearer in v. 24 where David is mentioned as the future ruler.

In addition to “one king”, the emphasis is put on unity. This unity is to be understood in the light of covenant as it prepares the reader to comprehend what will be said in v. 24 in relation to David, recalling the covenant that YHWH made with him. Hence, unity stands for a crucial component of the covenant. The suggestion is that there cannot be an effective covenant without unity among the beneficiaries. The promise “assures the exiles that full-fledged and unitary nationhood is included in Yahweh’s plan for Israel” (Block 1997:414). YHWH’s promise, at the end of v. 23, ends with the covenant formula — *וְהָיִינוּ לְךָ לְעַם וְאַתָּה לַיהוָה לְאֱלֹהִים* (They will be my people, and I will be their God).

Gentry and Wellum point out that the covenant formula occurs for the first time in Genesis 17:7b, 8b: “to be God to you and your offspring after you ... and I will be their God. ESV” (Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum 2018:307). While in these verses the formula appears in its first half, the full formula occurs for the first instance in Exodus 6:7 that reads: “I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians” (NIV). The idea of ‘half’ and ‘full’ covenant formula comes from Rolf Rendtorff indicating that “We encounter the formula in three versions (with variants): (1) ‘I will be God for you’; (2) ‘You shall be a people for me’; (3) where the two statements are combined in a single formula, though here the sequence of the two elements changes” (Rendtorff 1998:13). In a simple way we have, Formula A: I will be your God; Formula B: You will be my people; Formula C: I will be your God, and you will be my people (=A + B) (Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum 2018:307). In the text of Ezekiel, we have Formula C. The usage of the formula in the prophetic books is critical. It serves to seal the relationship of belonging between God and his people and plays an important theological role. Specifically,

“In the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the covenant formula appears at salient points, and for the most part in salvation sayings, i.e. in the realm of expectation of the future ... In the context of the prophetic books as a whole, the texts in which we encounter the covenant formula constitute no more than a limited part. But this part includes highly important theological statements, which are especially relevant to what talk about the ‘covenant’ means.” (Rendtorff 1998:55–56).

In Jeremiah 32:38 the formula *וְהָיִינוּ לְךָ לְעַם וְאַתָּה לַיהוָה לְאֱלֹהִים* (They will be my people, and I will be their God) occurs at the point where YHWH gives assurance of his people’s return from exile to their country. In Jeremiah 31:33 the form *וְהָיִינוּ לְךָ לְעַם וְאַתָּה לַיהוָה לְאֱלֹהִים* (I will be their God, and they will be my people) occurs at a critical point as YHWH is making a New Covenant with his people. The formula at the end of Ezekiel 37:23 emphasizes the ability of YHWH to possess his people (Martens and Martens 1994:221) while the Judeans, being the people of God, are “meant to have a single loyalty to Yahweh” (Martens and Martens 1994:224).

The restoration that YHWH envisages for the Jewish people is social, political, and spiritual. Without a spiritual relationship with YHWH, any restoration that the people would

have would be incomplete. After the promise of YHWH to unite his people, in Ezekiel 37:23 we have the spiritual component of the restoration. The promise emphasizes the spiritual salvation of the Jewish people.^{iv} The essential fact in that salvation is threefold: 1) The Jewish people will no longer defile themselves; 2) YHWH will save them, and 3) YHWH will cleanse them.

The Hebrew verb that describes the action of the people is preceded by a negative particle—**לֹא יִטְמְאוּ**. The verb that follows **לֹא** comes from the root **טמא**, which in Hithpael means, “defile oneself” (Brown 2003:379). The text mentions three ways in which the people were defiling themselves: 1) worshiping idols, 2) using detested things, and 3) committing offenses. Hence, the people made themselves unclean by what they were doing. It is clear, from the text—we do not have details in the text on the involvement of the people in those practices—that the people compromised their faith in YHWH. The use of **לֹא יִטְמְאוּ** confirms that there were members of the Jewish community that were unfaithful to YHWH and engaged in worshiping idols.

The salvation of the Jewish people will give them the ability to get rid of defilement characterized by idolatry and other uncleanness. The emphasis on spiritual renewal underscores the truth of the Babylonian exile to be foremost the consequence of sin and not mainly a politico-social development. It is evident that from the involvement in worshiping idols, the relationship of the exiles with YHWH was corrupted. The starting point of restoration is spiritual and indicates that there cannot be a complete restoration without the people having a good relationship with YHWH. The Lord promises that he will save them—**וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי אֹתָם**—and he will cleanse them—**וְטַהַרְתִּי אֹתָם**. The two actions of YHWH deserve a proper consideration.

The root **ישע** in Hiphil means to “help, deliver, come to one’s aid, bring victory” (Robert L. Hubbard Jr., “ישע,” *NIDOTTE* 2: 556). In the context of Ezekiel 37:23, YHWH promises to help his people to not sin against him. He is the one who will come to their aid to overcome sin. YHWH is the one who will make his people free and give them victory over their sinful practices. The sin in which the people were living made them captive. Their help will come from YHWH who will deliver them from their sin. This verb in Ezekiel 37:23 envisages the sin of the people of God as the enslaving power from which they needed deliverance (Block 1997:414). The initiative of YHWH to save his people targets their “inner renewal” (Zimmerli 1983:275). This is a clear indication that the people were not able, by themselves, to put an end to their wrong doing.

YHWH’s action to save his people is strengthened by the Piel of **טהר** which in this stem means “cleanse, purify, pro-cleanse oneself” (Richard E. Averbeck, “טהר,” *NIDOTTE* 2: 338). Specifically, this word refers to purification of idolatry implying forgiveness of sins (H. Ringgren, “טהר,” *TDOT* 5:295). Ezekiel 36:33 mentions the involvement of the Jewish people in idolatry (cf. Lev 16:30; Jer 33:8; Ezek 24:19; 36:25; Mal 3:3). This verse clearly shows that the people will not experience transformation until YHWH cleanses them and is indicative that the practice of idolatry was taking place among the people. If such a practice did not exist, there could not be reason for cleansing.

^{iv} Ezekiel 37:26 mentions the presence of YHWH’s temple among his people. The understanding is that once the temple is reinstated, any function and rites related to it will be re-established. Before the exile, the temple in Jerusalem was crucial for the spiritual life of the Judeans and had all the needed people to perform different services. Thus, the spiritual salvation that the people will experience will entail putting in place the necessary functions and rites, including those who will work in the temple.

The Piel form of טהר is privative in that YHWH will cleanse his people from sins—YHWH will remove sins. The implication of YHWH's action will certainly be that his people will not be condemned since the sin that was hindering them to experience YHWH's intervention will have been removed. Hence, YHWH will pronounce his people clean (Ludwig Kohler and Walter Baumgartner, "טהר," HALOT 1:369-70). It is clear that the main problem of the Jewish people resided in their disobedience to God. Because of worshiping idols, their relationship with their God was completely ruined. As a consequence, they became exiles in Babylon (Block 1997:414).

6. Salvation of the Jewish People: Ezekiel 37:24–28

6.1. Davidic King

As previously discussed, it is after the promise of salvation and cleansing that the promise of the future ruler is made. The promise regarding the future leader in 37:24a is almost the same as in 34:23a. The reading in 37:24a is *וְעַבְדִּי דָוִד מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם וְרוּעֵה אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכָל־ם* (My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd) and in 34:23a we have *וְהִקְמַתִּי עֲלֵיהֶם רֹעֵה אֶחָד וְרֹעֵה אֶת עַבְדִּי דָוִד* (I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David). In the two verses he is described as the servant of YHWH and the "one" shepherd. In a specific way, David, the servant of YHWH, will be the king over the people of YHWH. As servant, there is an assumption that David will submit to his master, YHWH, as he serves the people. On the other hand, as king, he will have the people submitting to him.

Unlike Ezekiel 34:24, which uses *נָשִׂיא* for David as the future leader, the author uses *מֶלֶךְ* in Ezekiel 37:22, 24. Blenkinsopp recognizes that generally Ezekiel uses the term *מֶלֶךְ* for foreign and current or recent rulers (Blenkinsopp 1990:176). Just to mention a few examples, the word *מֶלֶךְ* occurs in Ezekiel 1:2 for King Jehoiachin; 17:12; 19:9; 21:24, 26; 24:2 for Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon; 28:12 for King of Tyre; 29:2, 3 for Pharaoh King of Egypt. Among the current or recent leaders, it is Jehoiachin and Zedekiah who are designed both as *מֶלֶךְ* and *נָשִׂיא* (Ezek 1:2; 12:10, 12; 17:16; 19:1; 21:25) (Blenkinsopp 1990:176). According to him, the reason that justifies the use of *מֶלֶךְ* is the emphasis put on the role of political office that fits for Israel, based on the ideology and the political theory found in Deuteronomy (see Deut. 17:14–20) (Blenkinsopp 1990:176). Block shares the same view with Blenkinsopp and sheds more light. He states,

"If the reference to "one king" symbolizes the nation's new unity, the present choice of melek highlights the restoration of Israel to full nationhood. To the prophet's audience, the use of nāšî', would have signified less than complete restoration...By naming the melek, Yahweh not only affirms the eternity of his original promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16) but also discredits all past rulers who have claimed the title "king of Israel," particularly the Josephite/Ephraimite rulers of the northern kingdom." (Block 1997:415)

It is likely that Ezekiel uses the term *מֶלֶךְ* to describe David because the realization of the divine promises will take place under his leadership as the current leader.

6.2. Obeying YHWH's Laws

While the plan that YHWH has for his people clearly appears in the text, the people also have their role to play (37:24b). Under the new ruler, the Jewish people will have to follow the laws of YHWH—*וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֵי יְלֹכֹוּ וְהִקְהִי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אוֹתָם* (They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees). Following and keeping the laws of YHWH implicate the people of YHWH to live as YHWH intends for them, in complete obedience. With this promise, there is an indication that the previous leadership has completely ended. As pointed out by Greenberg, “*There is just a suggestion that as the past misleaders are held responsible for the apostasy of the people, so the future good shepherd will be credited with the people’s obedience to God’s law*” (Greenberg 1997:757).

Under the new leadership, it is expected that *וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֵי יְלֹכֹוּ* (they will follow my laws) and *וְהִקְהִי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אוֹתָם* (and be careful to keep my decrees). There are three verbs describing what the Jewish people will do in regard to the laws of YHWH. The roots of the three verbs are: (1) *הלך* (to walk), (2) *שמר* (to keep) and (3) *עשה* (to do, to make). For a more literal rendering, the translation of *וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֵי יְלֹכֹוּ וְהִקְהִי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אוֹתָם* is “*they will walk in my laws, and they will keep and they will do my ordinances.*”

As the outcome of a new leadership, the focus is on the laws of YHWH in which the people ‘will walk’—*וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֵי יְלֹכֹוּ*. Appearing in its plural construct form here, the term *משפט* designates “*which has been established*” (B. Johnson, “*משפט*,” TDOT 9:94), referring here to laws or judgments. In other words, that “*which has been established*” is none other than the laws of YHWH in which the people will walk. There is the assurance that the people will follow the laws of YHWH. The root *הלך* generally expresses the movement of people (Llyod G. Carr, “*הלך*,” TWOT 1:496). Its usage here denotes the commitment that the people will have in regard to the laws of God, based on the fact that “*to “follow” or “to walk after” is to suggest commitment of life and purpose* (cf. also Judg 2:19; Ruth 3:10; 1 Kgs 11:10; 21:26; 2 Kgs 23:3; Jer 7:9). A similar idea is expressed by the preposition *b + hlk*” (Eugene H. Merrill, “*הלך*,” NIDOTTE 1:1035). In Ezekiel 37:24 there is no mention of particular laws of God that the people will follow supporting the idea that the laws of YHWH can be “*the individual commandments as well as the summary of the entire law*” (Eugene H. Merrill, “*הלך*,” NIDOTTE 1:1035).

To emphasize the commitment of the Jewish people—in addition to following the laws—they will keep and do YHWH’s ordinances or decrees. The root *שמר* used in Ezekiel 37:24b “*expresses the careful attention to be paid to the obligations of a covenant, to laws, statutes, etc.*” (J. Herman Austel, “*שמר*,” TWOT 2:939). The relevance of keeping the decrees of YHWH is intensified by a second verb from the root *עשה*. J. Herman Austel adds an important point regarding the use of *שמר* with *עשה* explaining that, “*It should be noted that the observance of God’s laws was not to be a matter of theory only or of perfunctory compliance. The expression “to do them” is frequently appended such as in Ezek 37:24*” (J. Herman Austel, “*שמר*,” TWOT 2:939) (cf. Lev 19:37; 20:22; Deut 6:1; 11:32; 27:10; Ezek 11:20; 20:19; 36:27; 43:11; etc.). It means that the people of God will intentionally commit themselves to obey the laws of God.

Block says, “*the nation will have a new commitment to the will of Yahweh, the divine patron. The triad of expressions, follow my laws (hālāk bēmišpāṭay), observe my decrees (šāmar ḥuqqōṭay), and put them into practice (’āšâ ’ōtām), captures the essence of the response of faith to the privilege of being Yahweh’s people*” (J. Herman Austel, “*שמר*,” TWOT 2:939). The three phrases express the same idea

and stress the importance of YHWH's laws and the obligations of the people to comply with them.

These expressions are deuteronomic in nature and can be summarized in *"obeying the law of God"* (Deut 8:20; 13:18; 15:5; 27:10; 28:15, 45, 62; 30:8, 10). Theologically, there are connections between the deuteronomic language and Samuel (1 Sam 12:15; 15:19, 20; 28:18). While the text of Deuteronomy is about people obeying God or not, in Samuel the concern is for both the people and Saul as an individual. Obeying God is none other than to follow, to observe and to do the laws of God.

Regarding the theology of Ezekiel 37:24b, there is a guarantee that the people will be in a position to obey YHWH's laws. This guarantee resides in the fact that it is under the new ruler, David, that the people will be able to put into practice the laws of YHWH. In part, the people were disobedient to the divine laws because of the bad shepherds (cf. Ezek 34). Another indication is that under David there will be a theological reformation making it possible for the people to obey the laws of God. This idea is also expressed by Block. He says, *"V. 24b represents a shorthand announcement of the inner transformation to be experienced by the Israelites, resolving forever the issue of the rebellion that had originally brought on their judgment and deportation"* (Block 1997:417). If the inner transformation can resolve the problem of past rebellion, it will also enable the people to obey to YHWH.

6.3. Returning to the Land and Davidic Prince

Another outcome of the spiritual salvation resides in the return of the Jewish people to their land (37:25). The people have the guarantee of living again in their land and never leave it again. The assurance of living in the land after the return is indicated by עַד-עוֹלָם which has been discussed in the previous chapter. Once again, the promised ruler, David, will lead them לְעוֹלָם. The use of עוֹלָם twice in 25b is relevant and stands to be a firm assurance in the promise that YHWH gives to his people, suggesting that there will be no more exile. In this regard, Zimmerli (Zimmerli 1983:276) correctly comments that the word עוֹלָם serves as the *"designation of the definitive nature of the coming salvation."* That promise is expressed in four different ways: 1) The people will acquire a lasting dwelling place in the land. They will live there till their children's children, *"for ever."* That is God's definitive rejection of a renewed threat of exile. 2) David's rule will last *"for ever."*

As indicated in this quote, עוֹלָם serves as the signature of the promise that YHWH makes to his people. The word עוֹלָם is used at the end of verse 25 to describe the role that David will play. In that verse David is described by YHWH as קָנִי עַבְדִּי (David my servant) who will be נֶשֶׂיאָה. Zimmerli observes a word play that he attributes to the redaction process of the book of Ezekiel (Zimmerli 1983:276).

While the remark that Zimmerli makes about the word order is relevant when it comes to the composition of the text, here קָנִי comes before עַבְדִּי for emphasis. It is first about David, but not about him being YHWH's servant, which already appears in verse 24. In addition, the attention of the reader is directed to the role of נֶשֶׂיאָה that David will play forever. Summarizing the role of David as מַלְכָּה and נֶשֶׂיאָה Block views the preference of the word נֶשֶׂיאָה to מַלְכָּה, which word defines the spiritual role of David as the servant of YHWH (Block 1997:418).

Considering what David, as **נָשִׂיא**, will do, he is both a political as well as a religious leader. The striking aspect is that the promised ruler will be under the leadership of YHWH. In the rest of the section the term **עוֹלָם** appears to be relevant due to its multiple use. As we will see, the promise in verse 26 is sanctioned twice by the word **עוֹלָם**.

It is interesting that David appears twice in Ezekiel 37 (vv. 24 and 25). Why is he mentioned twice? Was the information in v. 24a not sufficient about him? The first thing that we observe is that in v. 24a David is mentioned in relation to the role that he will play; he will be king over the Judeans. As already mentioned, it is under the leadership of David, the promised ruler, that the religious transformation will take place. The second aspect stresses on the fact that David will be the prince of the people (in the two verses David is described as the servant of YHWH). As previously indicated, the term **נָשִׂיא** concerns the relation of David with the people and his function under YHWH. Looking together to David as king and prince suggests that YHWH's promises will be fulfilled under David's leadership, who at that time will be the reigning king, and under David who will be devoted to serving the people as YHWH's vice. As a king, David will play his political role as well as his religious role as prince. It also indicates the ability of David to play the two roles at the same time. From the literary perspective it appears that the term **נָשִׂיא** has replaced **מַלְכָּךְ** that no longer occurs in the rest of the book. As per the discussion above, it may serve to emphasize a religious rather than political angle.

6.4. Obedience and Land

In addition, there are two other aspects in v. 25 which relate to David: obedience and land. How does David relate to obedience and a return to the land? Could it be that since mention of David encloses these two ideas that Ezekiel's point is that David is very much related to these two things? In an attempt to answer to these questions, it is during the future David that the people will obey the laws of YHWH.

The promise of land points to the return of the Jewish people to their historical land that they left because of the exile. The promise indicates that "*the people-land divorce effected by the exile will be reversed*" (Block 1997:418). But the important element is that this will only happen under the leadership of David, putting him as the agent at the center of the transformation. It is during the time of the promised leader David that the Jewish people will experience spiritual as well as social transformation.

6.5. Covenant of Peace

Another blessing that the Jewish people will obtain under the new leadership is that of YHWH making a covenant of peace with them (37:26). Rightfully, there is a connection between the Davidic leadership and the covenant of peace. Having in view that the Davidic leadership in Ezekiel is an echo of the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7, it can be confirmed that the covenant of peace constitutes an outcome of YHWH's covenant to David.

There is a clear progression in the restoration plan that YHWH has for his people. From saving them from their sins, giving them a new leader and assuring the people of living in their land forever after their return, the oracle climaxes with YHWH's covenant of peace with them. This is YHWH's direct announcement—**וְקָרַתִּילְכֶם בְּרִית שְׁלוֹם בְּרִית עוֹלָם**—(I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant). As explained in the previous chapter, the

—*בְּרִית שְׁלוֹם* (the covenant of peace)—is a promise that offers to the people of YHWH a true security. The guarantee of that security exists in the fact that it is a divine covenant. It is a covenant that encompasses many blessings. Even though there are no prior elements in the text under study that describe restoration as part of the covenant of peace, the restoration leads to an everlasting covenant of peace. In relation to *עוֹלָם*, Jamie Viands summarizes its usage in Ezekiel 37:24b–28 and Israel’s blessings, as follows:

“This final unit in Ezek 37 stresses the perpetuity of the new ideal conditions. “Forever” (לְעוֹלָם) serves as a Leitwort in the verses, occurring five times in vv. 24-28, but only four times elsewhere in the book in restoration contexts (16:60; 43:7, 9; 46:14). Four of Israel’s most cherished blessings from Yahweh will endure לְעוֹלָם: possession of the land (v. 25), Davidic rule (v. 25), the covenant (v. 26), and Yahweh’s presence among his people in the land.” (vv. 26, 28) (Viands 2014:222)

In Ezekiel 37:26b we find three important things that YHWH will do to his people as an outcome of the covenant of peace: 1) YHWH will establish them; 2) YHWH will multiply them — YHWH will increase the number of his people; 3) YHWH will put his sanctuary among his people forever — *וְנִתְּתִים וְהָרַבִּיתִּים אוֹתָם וְנִתְּתִי אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם לְעוֹלָם*. The root *נָתַן* translated by establish and put, considered broadly means “give,” “put,” or “set” (Milton C. Fisher, “נָתַן,” TWOT 2:608). The text is not clear about what YHWH will give to his people or where he will put them. Allen attributes the lack of precision to “a principle of filling the gaps” (Allen Leslie C 1990:194). Referring to Eichrodt, Viands indicates that the phrase *וְנִתְּתִים וְהָרַבִּיתִּים אוֹתָם* does not appear in the LXX (Viands 2014:223). The understanding here is that the MT inserted what was missing in the LXX. However, Greenberg (Greenberg 1997:757) gives a clue that “Kara and Ehrlich [Hebrew] guessed that it is the start of some such an expression as “set them supreme over all nations” (cf. Deut 26:19).”. While this is not mentioned in the text, the promise of a divine restoration in Ezekiel 34 and 37, the punishment of the nations in Ezekiel 35 and 36, and the elements from Leviticus 26 in Ezekiel may support the idea. It is in such a condition that YHWH will make the people to grow in number in their own land.

The most captivating component of the promise is that God will put his sanctuary in the midst of his people. The Hebrew word for sanctuary is *מִקְדָּשׁ* and evokes the temple that the Jewish people used to have in Jerusalem before the Babylonian exile. While the idea of a physical temple comes in mind, the promise is beyond the structure; it focuses on the presence of YHWH among his people. This idea is extended in verse 27 stating that because of the presence of God in the midst of the people, he will be their God and they will be his people. The prepositional word *לְעוֹלָם* modifies the relationship between YHWH and his people.

While Greenberg (1997:757) refers to *מִקְדָּשׁ* as a spiritualization of the antique term for the Tabernacle in the desert, unquestionably, both the promise of *מִקְדָּשׁ* and *מִשְׁכָּן* recalls the idea of the destroyed temple in Jerusalem. As Greenberg (1997:757) connects *מִקְדָּשׁ* to the desert Tabernacle, he views *מִשְׁכָּן* as an updated version of *מִקְדָּשׁ*. He explains that “the antique term was freed for a new meaning. Now the tent-sanctuary of the priestly writings was closely associated with the divine cloud that covered it by day, appearing as fire by night (Exod 40:34–38, abbreviated from Num 9:15–23).” The understanding is that *מִקְדָּשׁ* and *מִשְׁכָּן* concerns the presence of YHWH among his people, which presence was later expressed in the temple. Joyce (2009:211) admits that the term *מִשְׁכָּן* is here

“associated with the “tent of meeting” in the Priestly account of the wilderness wanderings.” Using the priestly term in the text of Ezekiel may not be questionable since it is linked to the background of Ezekiel as a priest. This idea is supported and explained by Block (1997:421) when he indicates that

Yahweh’s residence is identified by two expressions, which reflect opposite dimensions of the divine character *miqdāš*, Ezekiel’s favorite designation for the *sanctuary* (5:11; 8:6; 9:6), from *qdš*, “to be holy”, highlights the holiness of the residence and reflects the transcendent nature of the one who dwells within. *miškān*, *residence* from *šākan*, “to reside, dwell”, occurs only here in the book with reference to the house of God (cf. 25:4, used of human dwellings). This expression reflects the immanence, the condescending presence, of God. In Exodus it is often associated with the *’ōhel mō’ēd*, “tent of appointment”, which symbolized Yahweh’s desire for regular contact with his people.

In relation to the presence of God among his people, undeniably, the exiles in Babylon could have a better remembrance of the temple than that of the desert tabernacle considering the proximity of the period of the temple to their exilic experience. Taking into account the place of the temple in the life of the Jewish people, its destruction was a tremendous loss to the nation of Judah. With the promise of restoration, the people could have developed hope for the future under the direction of a new ruler. The promise ends with a covenant formula. This is the same formula as in v. 23. The only difference is that in v. 27 God comes first. The formula reads *וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לְאֱלֹהִים וְהָיְיָ לִי לֵאלֹהִים* (and I will be their God, and they shall be my people). In the covenant formula here, God comes first due to the promise of his presence among his people. The focus is no longer on the spiritual restoration of the people as it is in v. 23, but as the result of restoration. It puts God as the initiator and the executor of the restoration culminating with his presence among his people.

6.6. Knowledge of YHWH

The oracle in Ezekiel 37:28 ends with a significant indication that the knowledge of YHWH will extend beyond the Jewish people. What YHWH will do to his people will go beyond the territory of the Promised Land and will achieve a greater goal. The text states that even the nations—Babylon included—will be aware of what God will be doing in the midst of his people. The presence of God’s sanctuary among his people will serve to make Israel holy. The nations will observe a shift regarding the relationship between God and his people. History may suggest to the nations a possible abandonment of the Jewish people by their God. However, “the nations will recognize the Godhead of Jahveh by the effects of his special providence over Israel” (G. A. Cooke 1970:404) Block observes that the presence of God’s sanctuary among his people will be the critical demonstration of his commitment to them and his sanctification of Israel as the final proof to confirm his election of Israel as a holy nation (Block 1997:421). The concluding words in Ezekiel 37:28 indicate that the knowledge of YHWH and what he will do, give avenue for a complete restoration of his people (Zimmerli 1983:280).

The covenant of peace will deeply contribute to restore the people. It will play a crucial role in the healing process of the exiles. In addition, the covenant will give them a new perspective; one which will help deportees confront the realities of exilic life with courage. The glorious future promised to the Jewish people is strongly based on the covenant that YHWH

made to King David in 2 Samuel 7. The closeness of the divine promise in Ezekiel 37:24–28 indicates the influence of the text of 2 Samuel 7 on the section of the text of Ezekiel 37. The claim that there is influence of 2 Samuel 7 on Ezekiel 37 needs to be considered.

7. Influence of 2 Samuel 7

In this section, the discussion will focus on the influence of the text of 2 Samuel 7:1–16 on that of Ezekiel 37. The point of view is that “the core of the vision in Ezek 37 is clearly shaped by alluding to existing Old Testament motifs and metaphors that are referred to and transferred into concrete imagery” (Klein 2010:575). In the effort of establishing any influence of the text of 2 Samuel 7 on that of Ezekiel 37, the points of discussion will consider the three following areas: 1) Literary influence; 2) Theological influence; and 3) Conceptual influence.

7.1. Literary Influence

There is similarity between 2 Samuel 7:4 and Ezekiel 37:15.

<p>2Sam. 7:4 וַיְהִי בַלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־נָתָן לֵאמֹר: That night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying</p>	<p>Ezek. 37:15 וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: The word of the Lord came to me:</p>
--	--

The expression **וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־נָתָן לֵאמֹר** (The word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying) appears in 2 Samuel 7:4. A similar expression also appears in Ezekiel 37:15 as **וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר** (The word of the Lord came to me). The difference in the two texts resides in the fact that in the text of 2 Samuel there is mention of **נָתָן** while in the text of Ezekiel the name of the prophet is replaced by the pronoun **אֵלַי** and the verb **וַיְהִי** at the beginning. The expression used in 2 Samuel and in Ezekiel is known as the messenger formula.

This messenger formula introduces in the two texts what the prophets—Nathan and Ezekiel—received from YHWH and had to communicate to their respective receivers. Nathan and Ezekiel are here the messengers of YHWH. As messengers of YHWH, their prophetic speech “is not then a form of revelation that is valid everywhere and for all times, but is one that would have been considered necessary for this period of time, within these limits” (Westermann 1991:99). However, this similar phrase in the two texts does not necessarily imply dependence of Ezekiel 37 on 2 Samuel 7 since the phrase is very common. Rather, this similarity establishes that the prophetic word contexts are the same in both cases. The messenger formula directs that the task of the two prophets will be to repeat the same message they received from YHWH. The message, at the time of its proclamation, will still be “the word of the sender, corresponding, therefore, to the signature in our letter form” (1991:100). Nathan is sent to communicate to David the message that he received from God, while Ezekiel directly received his message from God. Considering the source of the message underscores its authenticity and the veracity of the message.

<p>2Sam. 7:5 לך ואמרת אל־עבדי אֶל־דָּוִד כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הֲאֵתָהּ תִּבְנֶה לִּי בַיִת לְשִׁבְתִּי:</p> <p>“Go and tell my servant David, “This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?...”</p>	<p>Ezek. 37:24 וְעַבְדִּי דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם וְרוּעֵה אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכָלֶם וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֵי יִלְכוּ וְחֻקֹּתַי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אֹתָם:</p> <p>My servant David will be king over them, and they will have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees.</p> <p>Ezek. 37:25 וַיָּשְׁבוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְעַבְדִּי לְיַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר יָשְׁבוּ־בָהּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וַיָּשְׁבוּ עֲלֵיהָ הֵמָּה וּבְנֵיהֶם וּבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם עַד־עוֹלָם וְדָוִד עַבְדִּי נָשִׂיא לָהֶם לְעוֹלָם:</p> <p>They will live in the land I gave my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children’s children will live there for ever, and David my servant will be their prince for ever.</p>
--	--

David is identified as servant of YHWH in the two texts. The identification of David as servant of YHWH appears as well as in 2 Samuel 3:18 and Ezekiel 34:23 (cf. 1 Kgs 11:13, 34, 38; 2 Kgs 19:34; 20:6; 1 Chr 17:7; 19; Isa 37:35; Jer 33:21, 22). In these references, identifying David as servant of YHWH indicates the relationship that existed between David and YHWH. In general, where David is called “*servant of YHWH*”, God specifies what he will do. The text of 2 Samuel 3:18 reads, “*Now, do it! For the Lord promised David, ‘By my servant David I will rescue my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.’*” In Isaiah 37:35, for example, the defense of the city by YHWH is based on his relationship with David — “*I will defend this city and save it, for my sake and for the sake of my servant David.*” Being servant of YHWH, David is the instrument by which YHWH will fulfill his promise to his people. Identifying David as servant of YHWH in 2 Samuel 7:5 and Ezekiel 37:24, 25 underlines the connection between the two texts and, possibly, the influence of the text of Samuel on that of Ezekiel.

The ‘servant language’ in 2 Samuel 7 plays a pivotal role in our understanding of David as God’s servant. It underscores the relationship between God and David. Twice in 2 Samuel 7 (vv. 5 and 8), YHWH refers to David as his servant. YHWH chooses to address David from the relationship point of view and not from his role as king. While this language of David as servant of YHWH is not unique to 2 Samuel 7, its use in this text is quite significant considering the context. 2 Samuel 7 centers on YHWH’s covenant with David and marks the manifestation of the relationship between him and David. YHWH addressing David as his servant shows that the nature of the relationship is rooted in 2 Samuel 7 to the point that one could say that in some sense all of the references to David as “servant” in the text of Ezekiel are dependent on 2 Samuel 7. As support to the claim, Block confirms that “*the language obviously depends on 2 Sam 7, where David is twice identified by Yahweh as ... “my servant” (vv. 5, 8), and where he acknowledges this role no fewer than ten times. This link is strengthened by the description of the new David’s tenure as forever ..., a word that occurs eight times in 2 Sam. 7*” (Block 1997:418).

In 2 Samuel 7:13 the phrase **עַד־עוֹלָם** is used for the duration of the throne of the kingdom of David’s descendant; in v. 16 it occurs twice to describe the house and the kingdom, and the throne; in v. 24 it is used in relation to the people of Israel; in v. 25 it is about the promise that YHWH made; in v. 26 it is in connection to the name; and in v. 29 **לְעוֹלָם** appears twice for the

house of David. In sum, the term is used to confirm the perpetuity of each one of the divine promises.

<p>2Sam. 7:6 כִּי לֹא יָשַׁבְתִּי בְּבַיִת לְמִיּוֹם הָעָלֹתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם וְעַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נֹאֲהָיִה מִתְּהַלֵּךְ בְּאֶהָל וּבְמִשְׁכָּן: I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling.</p>	<p>Ezek. 37:21 וְדַבַּר אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבְּיַן הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הִלְכוּ־שָׁם וְקִבַּעְתִּי אֹתָם מִסָּבִיב וְהִבֵּאתִי אוֹתָם אֶל־ הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הִלְכוּ־שָׁם אֲדַמְתֶּם: And say to them, “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take the Israelites out of nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around from all around and bring them back into their own land.</p> <p>Ezek. 37:28 וְיָדְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מַקְדִּישׁ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהִיּוֹת מִקְדָּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם לְעוֹלָם: ס Then the nations will know that I the Lord make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them for ever.</p>
--	--

The two texts use “the sons of Israel” and “Israel” for the people of God. However, the usage of “the sons of Israel” does not necessarily establish dependence of the text of Ezekiel on that of 2 Samuel, but demonstrates that the subject matter is the same.

<p>2Sam. 7:8 וְעַתָּה כֹּה־תֹאמַר לְעַבְדִּי דָוִד כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲנִי לֹקְחֶיךָ מִן־הַבָּשָׂה מֵאַחַר הַצֹּאן לְהִיּוֹת נָגִיד עַל־עַמִּי עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: Now then, tell my servant David, “This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel.</p>	<p>Ezek. 37:19 דַּבַּר אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת־עֵצֵי יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר בְּיַד־אֶפְרַיִם וְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל [כ= תְּבָרִו] [ק= תְּבָרִיו] וְגַמְתִּי אוֹתָם עָלָיו אֶת־עֵצֵי יְהוּדָה וְעָשִׂיתֶם לָעֵץ אֶתְד וְהָיוּ אֶתְד בְּיָדִי: say to them, “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph—which is in Ephraim’s hand—and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah’s stick making them a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand.’</p> <p>Ezek. 37:21 וְדַבַּר אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבְּיַן הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הִלְכוּ־שָׁם וְקִבַּעְתִּי אֹתָם מִסָּבִיב וְהִבֵּאתִי אוֹתָם אֶל־ הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הִלְכוּ־שָׁם אֲדַמְתֶּם: And say to them, “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back to their own land.</p>
---	---

The formula *כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* (this is what the Lord Almighty says) appears in 2 Samuel 7:8 and in Ezekiel 37:19, 21 we have *כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה* (this is what the Sovereign Lord says). The only difference is the attribute *צְבָאוֹת* (in Samuel) and *אֲדֹנָי* (in Ezekiel) used to describe YHWH. Being also a messenger formula, its “purpose was to legitimize the speaker and to compel the hearer to accept the message which followed as indeed coming from the sender of the message. This messenger formula has been replaced by the official seal of times past” (Greene 1989:86). In the text of 2 Samuel 7 as well as that

of Ezekiel 37, the two formulas introduce the message that Nathan and Ezekiel received from YHWH. Yet, the messages and the receivers are not the same.

The formula *פֶּה-תֹאמַר אֲלַי יְהוָה* is extensively used in the book of Ezekiel (cf. Ezek. 5:7, 8; 6:3; 7:2; 11:5, 7, 16, 17; 12:10, 23; 13:18; 14:6; 16:3, 59; 17:3; 20:39; 21:8, 29; 33; 22:3, 19, 28; 23:28, 35, 46; 24:3, 6, 9; 25:6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16; 26:3, 7, 15; 27:3; etc). The parallel with the text of 2 Samuel 7 does not signify influence, but underlines a shared prophetic context between the two texts. Nevertheless, the connection of the formula to David in 2 Samuel 7 is crucial. As a messenger, Nathan was sent to give a message from YHWH to his servant David — *פֶּה-תֹאמַר לְעַבְדִּי דָוִד* (tell my servant David).

<p>2Sam. 7:10 <i>וְשִׁמְתִי מְקוֹם לְעַמִּי לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִטְעַמְתִּיו וְשָׁכַן תִּחְתָּיו וְלֹא יִרְגַז עוֹד וְלֹא יִסְיִפוּ בְּגִי-עוֹלָה לְעוֹזְרוֹתוֹ כִּפְאֲשֶׁר בְּרֵאשִׁיתוֹ: And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning.</i></p>	<p>Ezek. 37:23 <i>וְלֹא יִטְמְאוּ עוֹד בְּגִלּוּלֵיהֶם וּבְשִׁקּוּעֵיהֶם וּבְכָל פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי אֹתָם מִכָּל מוֹשַׁבְתֵּיהֶם אֲשֶׁר חָטְאוּ בָהֶם וְטַהַרְתִּי אוֹתָם וְהִי-לִי לְעַם וְאָנֹכִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים: They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God.</i></p>
---	---

The expression *עוֹד ... וְלֹא* (no longer) used in 2 Samuel 7:10 also appears in Ezekiel 37:23. In 2 Samuel 7:10, the people “*will no longer be disturbed*— *וְלֹא יִרְגַז עוֹד*” while in Ezekiel 37:23 the people “*will no longer defile themselves*— *וְלֹא יִטְמְאוּ עוֹד*.” The words *עוֹד ... וְלֹא* in the text of Samuel are used to describe what the people will experience. According to Anderson, “*the people will dwell securely and unmolested in contrast with the earlier oppressions during the period of the Judges*” (Anderson 1989:121). The promise states that the people of YHWH will cease to be disturbed. While the expression *עוֹד ... וְלֹא* is a common phrase found in many texts throughout the OT, the actions that it describes express the idea to stop experiencing and doing what is wrong. Both disturbance and defilement are negative. In the two cases, the two actions will come to an end.

<p>2Sam. 7:13 <i>הוּא יִבְנֶה-בַּיִת לְשְׁמִי וְכִנְנֹתִי אֶת-כִּסֵּא מַמְלַכְתּוֹ עַד-עוֹלָם: He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.</i></p>	<p>Ezek. 37:25 <i>וַיָּשׁוּבוּ עַל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְעַבְדִּי לְיַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר יָשְׁבוּ-בָהּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וַיָּשׁוּבוּ עָלֶיהָ הַמָּה וּבְנֵיהֶם וּבְנֵיהֶם עַד-עוֹלָם וְדָוִד עַבְדִּי נָשִׂיא לָהֶם לְעוֹלָם: They will live in the land I gave my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children’s children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince for ever.</i></p> <p>Ezek. 37:26 <i>וְקָרַתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית שְׁלוֹם בְּרִית עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אֹתָם וְנִתְמַתִּים וְהָיָה בֵּיתִי אֹתָם וְנִתְמַתִּי אֶת-מִקְדָּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם לְעוֹלָם: I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them for ever.</i></p>
--	--

	<p>Ezek. 37:28 וַיֵּדְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מַקְדֵּשׁ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהִיּוֹת מִקְדָּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם לְעוֹלָם: ־ ס Then the nations will know that I the Lord make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them for ever.</p>
--	---

The term **עולם**, preceded by the particle **עד**, is used three times in 2 Samuel 7 (vv. 13 and 16). The same word occurs five times in Ezekiel 37. It is preceded once by the particle **עד** (v. 25), three times by the preposition **לְ** (vv. 25, 26, and 28), and once alone (v. 26). In the text of 2 Samuel 7 the expression is linked to the throne (v. 13), to the house and the kingdom of David (v. 16). This word is connected to some important aspects of the Jewish people's life. In Ezekiel, upon return to their land, they will live "forever" (v. 25) and David will be their prince "forever" (v. 25). In 2 Samuel 7:13 **עולם** is used to determine the duration of David's throne. In a particular way, the same word pertains to the throne of David in Ezekiel 37:25, suggesting the use of the text of Samuel in that of Ezekiel. Additionally, the covenant of peace that YHWH will make with them will be an "everlasting covenant" — **בְּרִית עוֹלָם** (v. 26). Although the two texts are different in content, they both relate to covenants (with David and covenant of peace).

In 2 Samuel 7:13 the word **עולם** specifies the length of the reign of David's descendent. The same word pertains to David on the throne in Ezekiel 37:26. The important aspect to note here is not the occurrence of **עולם** in the two texts, but its connection to the Davidic reign. The use of **עולם** in relation to the throne of David in the text of Ezekiel is indicative of the influence of the text of 2 Samuel. We do not find other texts that talk about David's throne "forever". The prophecy in Isaiah 9:7 mentions the child who will reign on the throne of David, without specifying if that throne will be there "forever". In Jeremiah 23:5 and 30:9 we have the promise of a future leader in the person of David; but the throne is not explicitly described as "forever". The occurrence of David's throne in these prophecies depends on the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7. Apart from the many uses of **לְעוֹלָם** in the refrain of Psalm 136—more than in any other text in the OT—its use many times in a short span of verses in Ezekiel 37 attracts attention and is significant. (Viands 2014:222)

7.2 Theological Influence

In relation to the Davidic Covenant, the dominant theocentric aspect of the promise in Ezekiel 37 is based, at some point, on 2 Samuel 7. YHWH takes the initiative to give a perpetual reign to David's descendants and bless his people. Again, YHWH will fulfill his promise. The agent through whom he will realize his promise is **עַבְדִּי דָוִד**. In the same way, the divine promise in Ezekiel 37 expresses the faithfulness of YHWH and his grace to his people. In relation to 2 Samuel 7, the covenant that YHWH made with David was also characterized by his faithfulness and his grace.

Theologically, the elements of influence of the text of 2 Samuel 7:1–16 on that of Ezekiel 37:15–28 are perceptible. Considering the theological aspects in Ezekiel 37, the reader can easily connect them to 2 Samuel 7. The key components of YHWH's promises in Ezekiel 37 feature as well as in 2 Samuel 7. As indicated by Block, "YHWH's promises are eternal: (i) Israel is his covenant people forever; (ii) the land of Canaan has been given to them as their territorial homeland forever; (iii)

YHWH will dwell in the midst of his people forever; (iv) YHWH's commitment to his servant David endures forever. He will not go back on his word" (Block 2013:38).

7.3. Conceptual Influence

Reading together 2 Samuel 7 and Ezekiel 37, there are similar ideas or concepts that occur in the two texts. The text of 2 Samuel 7 seems to have offered a point of reference for that of Ezekiel 37. I divide the different areas of influence in five points: (1) Concept of leadership; (2) Concept of territory; (3) Concept of peace; (4) Concept of house; and (5) Concept of temple.

7.3.1 Concept of leadership

In reference to the background of David and his rise to power, the text in 2 Samuel 7:8 reads *אני לקחתך מן-הנגד מאחר העצאן להיות נגיד על-עמי על-ישראל* (I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel). The reference demonstrates that David was a shepherd before becoming king. In Ezekiel 37:24, in the program of restoration, David, who will be made king, will play the role of shepherd — *ועבדי דוד מלך עליהם ורועה אחד יהיה לכלם ובמשפטי ילכו וחקתי* (My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd). The difference between David being a shepherd before becoming a ruler (2 Sam 7:8) and David as king and shepherd in a restored nation (Ezek 37:24) resides in the fact that the text of Ezekiel uses shepherd in a metaphorical way, while the text of 2 Samuel 7 reminds us of the choice of David as Saul's replacement in 1 Samuel 16. The notion of leaders as "shepherds" appears elsewhere in Ezekiel (as in chapter 34).

Whereas the text of 2 Samuel describes from where David was taken — *מאחר עצאן* — and who he became — *נגיד על-עמי על-ישראל* — the text of Ezekiel uses specific words to describe the role that the promised ruler — *מלך* — will play as a *רועה* over the people of YHWH. In the text of Ezekiel as in that of Samuel, David is ruling over the same group: a united nation of 12 tribes of Israel as suggested in Ezekiel 37:15–23.

The promise in Ezekiel 37:24 that the Jewish people will have one shepherd to lead them has traits of the description of the background of David in 2 Samuel 7:8. David who became king was once a shepherd (I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel). The ruler identified as shepherd in the text of Ezekiel is none other than David, the servant of YHWH — *ועבדי דוד*. Describing David, both in 2 Samuel 7:8 and Ezekiel 37:24, 25, as "servant of YHWH" means that his function was to serve the people of God. According to Blenkinsopp, the word used to designate David "is an honorific title, but it also implies the view that public office has to be seen in term of service rather than self-advancement or domination" (Blenkinsopp 1990:176).

There is connection between the concept of *מלך* in the text of Ezekiel and that of *נגיד* in the text of 2 Samuel. The two terms, however, display some difference. Blenkinsopp (1990:176) gives a good explanation as he tries to differentiate between the use of *נגיד* and *מלך* in Ezekiel — specifically in Ezekiel 37:22, 24. He states that the reason for using *מלך* "is to emphasize the quite different role of political office conformable to the kind of community Israel is called to be." Nevertheless, the use of *מלך* should not be limited to his political role; it encompasses as well a religious role in that "the king represents both the people in their unity and the rule of Yahweh ..., as the earthly guardian of the people's worship and way of life" (Leslie C. Allen 1990:193). The word *נגיד* is used for leaders

in general. They can be military or religious leaders (Anderson 1989:120). Hence, the preference of מלך for the future leader in Ezekiel highlights his specific function as a political and religious ruler. This function is well described by Allen (1990:193), who states, “As *“servant” or vassal of an overlord, he would be committed to Yahweh’s will. His designation as “David” characterizes him not only as a scion of Davidic lineage but as an upholder of the united kingdom, such as David himself was a nominee of all tribes of Israel (2 Sam 5:1–4; cf. 1 Kgs 3:28).*” While the words used in 2 Samuel and Ezekiel are different, the connection between the two texts is obvious. This connection is not only based on words, but also the key character to whom they are linked – David.

7.3.2 Concept of territory

When YHWH promises to provide a place—מקום—(2 Sam 7:10) for his people, it is the same as promising his people the land—הארץ—where they will live (Ezek 37:25). In the Promised Land, the people of YHWH will experience peace. YHWH, in 2 Samuel 7:10 promises to provide a place for his people—*ושמתי מקום לעמי לישראל* (And I will provide a place for my people Israel). Similar language appears in Ezekiel 37:22 where YHWH promises to make the Jewish people to be “one nation” — *ועשיתי אתם לגוי אחד בארץ* (I will make them one nation in the land). The Hebrew verb used in the text of 2 Samuel is שים. The verb שים has the idea of “put, place, set, appoint, make” (Cohen, “שים,” TWOT 2: 872). Concerning this range of meaning, it still makes sense if one says that YHWH “will make a place for his people”. Instead of the root שים, in Ezekiel 37:22 we have the root עשה which generally means “to make”. Although the roots of the two verbs are different, the concept that they display is the same. While YHWH will provide a place for his people (2 Sam 7:10), he will make his people to be one nation in a specific land (place).

In addition, in the two promises the concern is the people of YHWH. A people cannot be one if they are not in one place. Hence, the idea of the Jewish people to be one comes from them to be put in one place. Despite the fact that the words and statements in the text of Ezekiel are not the same as in the text of 2 Samuel, it is possible there is influence of the text of 2 Samuel 7:10 on that of Ezekiel 37:22.

7.3.3 Concept of peace

Whereas the text of Ezekiel 37:26 makes mention of ברית שלום (covenant of peace), the idea, however, is contained in 2 Samuel 7:10 that reads *ולא יסיפו בני-עולה לענותו כאשר קראשונה* (Wicked people shall not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning). Technically, “peace” here modifies “covenant”. The peace that the Judeans will have is connected to the land where they will be. In a specific way, it is in their land that they will experience peace, which will be accompanied with an increasing population and the presence of YHWH’s sanctuary in their midst. The lack of oppression in the covenant in 2 Samuel 7:10 appears as the prosperity of the people in Ezekiel 37:26 which is the result of the covenant of peace that God will make with his people.

The covenant of peace is detailed in Ezekiel 34:25–30 (Batto 1987:188–89). This covenant consists of YHWH giving his people safety, security, and blessing. The covenant of peace here is the reflection of already existing covenants as per its content. In his discussion on this covenant, Viands indicates that

“Furthermore, it is clear that the content of the covenant of peace is continuous with the blessings of the Sinai covenant since they correspond to Lev. 26. Therefore, vv. 24–28 probably allude to the original promise of the patriarchs, mediated through the blessings of the Sinai covenant, and now permanently enacted for the sake of Yahweh’s name. Thus, the covenant of peace is both new and not new. Yahweh’s previous covenants made with Abraham, Israel, and David are all affirmed and realized in the context of this final covenant.” (Viands 2014:227–28).

The mention of the word covenant in Ezekiel 37:26 with its outcomes ascertains the influence of the text of 2 Samuel 7 where we have the Davidic Covenant. Even though the word covenant does not appear in 2 Samuel 7, it is made clear in Ezekiel 37:26 that the divine promise is based on the covenant that YHWH made to David.

4.6.3.4 Concept of multiplication

The promises of God to David are characterized by stability and perpetuity. Specifically, in the covenant to David in 2 Samuel 7:11, 12, and 16 YHWH confirms that he will establish a house for David—*הֲנֵה כִּי־בַיִת יַבְנֶה־לְךָ יְהוָה* (YHWH will make a house) and he will establish the kingdom of David’s offspring—*וְהָקִימְתִי אֶת־מַמְלַכְתּוֹ*. There will be continuity in the line of David in the matter of kingship. The idea of a continual line in the offspring suggests a vertical multiplication. On the other side, the idea of establishing (making) and multiplying appears also in the text of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 37:26 YHWH promises to establish/set and bless his people—*וַיְנַתְּמֵם וְהָרַךְ בֵּיתִי אִוְתָם*—and his sanctuary among them—*וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי בְתוֹכָם*. The text clearly indicates that YHWH will increase the number of the people. This is a horizontal multiplication since it concerns the whole nation.

The picture that we are getting here is that *“at the very least, the people will probably be as numerous as they were in the days of David and Solomon. Perhaps they will even transcend these proportions since the covenant is inviolable and perpetual and therefore this blessing will never cease.”* (Viands 2014:225) Explicitly, the promise of horizontal multiplication in Ezekiel is constructed on the Davidic Covenant in Samuel where we find the vertical multiplication. The presence of God’s sanctuary among the people who will have increased by then will be another blessing.

4.6.3.5 Concept of temple

Even though the text of Ezekiel uses a different root verb—*נָתַן*—from that of 2 Samuel—*עָשָׂה* and *בָּן*, the idea that it expresses turns around the same themes that we find in 2 Samuel: house and kingdom. The promise of YHWH consists in YHWH establishing a house for the offspring of David (2 Sam 7:11) and his kingdom (2 Sam 7:12, 13). David already had his house (2 Sam 7:1) and God did not intend to build another physical house for him. The house that YHWH will establish from David’s descendant is not physical rather it is his dynasty. Looking at the house as dynasty, there is connection with throne and kingdom. The promise in Ezekiel 37:26, 28 follows the same pattern where YHWH will bless and set his sanctuary among his people. In this text, sanctuary replaces house (temple), which here is not a dynasty, but a place for worshipping YHWH. In addition, this place of worship is what David had in mind. Hence, the sanctuary of YHWH and his house reflect almost the same idea.

Initially, the intention of David, in 2 Samuel 7:2, was to build a house for YHWH. YHWH turned this intention aside, saying that it is not David, but his offspring who will build the intended house (2 Sam 7:13). The intention of David became a covenant (2 Sam 7:13).^v In the Davidic Covenant, build a house for YHWH is one of the important elements. The desire that David had to build a house for YHWH was assigned by YHWH to David's offspring (2 Sam 7:13). In the promise to the exiles in Ezekiel 37:26, 27, and 28 YHWH will establish his sanctuary — *בְּתֵּי* *יְהוָה* — and his dwelling place — *בְּתֵּי מִשְׁכְּנֵי* — among his people. The words sanctuary and dwelling place recall the idea of house that appears in 2 Samuel 7. Moreover, the exiles could understand the promise as referring to the temple which, before their deportation, expressed the presence of YHWH among them. It is in the temple that YHWH “*caused his name to dwell*”, (Deut 12:11; 2 Kgs 21:4), the cultic center of his religion, where sacrifice was offered and where “*the tribes go up ... to give thanks to the name of YHWH*” (Ps 122:4)” (Nickelsburg 2005:9).

8. Conclusion: Any influence?

In this paper, the task was to establish any influence of the text of 2 Samuel 7:1-16 on that of Ezekiel 37:15-28. Considering the literary, theological, and conceptual aspects, I focused on the similarities between the two texts to determine if, in any case, there is influence. No single piece of evidence on its own argues strongly for Ezekiel's dependence on 2 Samuel 7. However, cumulatively, the study shows that the text of Ezekiel 37 depends on that of 2 Samuel 7 at a certain level.

The fact that the text of 2 Samuel 7:1–16 has influenced, in one way or another, the text of Ezekiel 37:15–28, does not mean that the text of Ezekiel lacks originality. However, from the literary, theological, and conceptual perspective the influence of 2 Samuel 7:1–16 on Ezekiel 37:15–28 is obvious.

Conflict of interest statement

I declare that I have no financial or personal relationships which may have inappropriately influenced me in this research.

About the author

From the Democratic Republic of Congo, I have completed my PhD studies in Theology/ Biblical Studies at Africa International University in Nairobi, Kenya. The topic of my dissertation is: *An Intertextual Study of the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:1–16//Ezekiel 34:23–31 and 37:15–28)*. My interest is mainly in the Old Testament. I am affiliated to the Institute for Biblical Scholarship in Africa (IBSA), which is member of the Society of New Testament Studies (SNTS) – Africa Liaison.

^v YHWH refused to allow David to build him a house because it was not an urgent need (cf. 2 Sam 7:6), YHWH never ordered any ruler in Israel to build a house for him (2 Sam 7:7), and David was not qualified to build a house for YHWH because he shed a lot of blood (cf. 2 Sam 7:5; 1 Chr 22:8; 28:3).

References

- Allen Leslie C. 1990. *Ezekiel 20 - 48*. Dallas, Texas: Word Books Publisher, Da.
- Anderson, A. A. 1989. *2 Samuel*. Vol. 11. edited by D. A. Hubbard, G. W. Barker, B. M. Metzger, and A. A. Anderson. Waco, Tex: Word Books, Publ.
- Batto, Bernard F. 1987. "The Covenant of Peace: A Neglected Ancient Near Eastern Motif." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49:187–211.
- Biwul, Joel Kamsen Tihitshak. 2019. "The Restoration of the 'Dry Bones' in Ezekiel 37:1-14: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis." *Scriptura* 118(1). doi: 10.7833/118-1-1528.
- Blenkinsopp, Joseph. 1990. *Ezekiel*. Louisville, Ky: J. Knox Press.
- Block, Daniel Isaac. 1997. *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48*. Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans.
- Block, Daniel Isaac. 2013. *By the River Chebar: Historical, Literary, and Theological Studies in the Book of Ezekiel*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books.
- Brown, Francis. 2003. *The Brown - Driver - Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers.
- Cooper, Lamar Eugene. 1994. *Ezekiel*. Nashville, Tenn: Broadman and Holman Publishers.
- G. A. Cooke. 1970. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd.
- Gentry, Peter John, and Stephen J. Wellum. 2018. *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*. Second edition. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway.
- Greenberg, Moshe. 1997. *Ezekiel 21-37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday.
- Greene, John T. 1989. *The Role of the Messenger and Message in the Ancient Near East: Oral and Written Communication in the Ancient Near East and in the Hebrew Scriptures: Communicators and Communiqués in Context*. Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press.
- Joyce, Paul. 2009. *Ezekiel: A Commentary*. New York: T & T Clark.
- Kelle, Brad E. 2013. *Ezekiel: A Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Kansas City [Mo.]: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City.
- Klein, Anja. 2010. "Prophecy Continued: Reflections on Innerbiblical Exegesis in the Book of Ezekiel." *Vetus Testamentum* 60(4):571–82. doi: 10.1163/156853310X530460.
- Leslie C. Allen. 1990. *Ezekiel 20 - 48*. Vol. 29. edited by David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker, John D. W. Watts, and Ralph P. Martin. Dallas, Texas: Word Books.
- Martens, E. A., and E. A. Martens. 1994. *God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, Mich. : Leicester, UK: Baker Books ; Apollos.
- Miller, Geoffrey D. 2011. "Intertextuality in Old Testament Research." *Currents in Biblical Research* 9(3):283–309. doi: 10.1177/1476993X09359455.
- Nickelsburg, George W. E. 2005. *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Obinwa, Ignatius M. C. 2012. "I Shall Feed Them with Good Pasture" (Ezek 34:14): *The Shepherd Motif in Ezekiel 34: Its Theological Import and Socio-Political Implications*. Würzburg: Echter.
- Rendtorff, Rolf. 1998. *The Covenant Formula: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation*. Edinburgh: Clark.

- Renz, Thomas. 2002. *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel*. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers.
- Tannen, Deborah. 2007. *Talking Voices: Repetition, Dialogue, and Imagery in Conversational Discourse*. Leiden: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, John Bernard. 1969. *Ezekiel: An Introduction and Commentary*. London: Tyndale P.
- Unger, Merrill F. n.d. "Ezekiel's Vision of Israel's Restoration Part 3." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 106:311–324.
- Viands, Jamie. 2014. *I Will Surely Multiply Your Offspring: An Old Testament Theology of the Blessing of Progeny with Special Attention to the Latter Prophets*. Eugene, Or: Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Westermann, Claus. 1991. *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*. Cambridge [England] ; Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press.
- Zimmerli, Walther. 1983. *Ezekiel: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). and European Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistics Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).