

The Election and Divine Choice of Zion/Jerusalem

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This essay examines the fourteen passages in the Old Testament that mention that the Lord chose (בחר) Zion or Jerusalem. After briefly discussing the ideas of Zion/Jerusalem's election throughout the Old Testament, this essay discusses each of the fourteen passages to determine the semantics and nuances. This essay concludes that these fourteen passages constitute a distinct ideological thread within the larger idea of Zion/Jerusalem's election. Thus, scholars should exhibit more precision when invoking the passages of the Lord's choice in discussions of Zion/Jerusalem's election. In the second half, this essay discusses the historical-critical issues that surround each occurrence. Ultimately, this essay suggests that the demise of the ideology of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem may be linked to the dissolution of the Davidic dynasty as a viable political option. This essay closes with a few thoughts on how this phenomenon testifies to the progressive nature of God's revelation.

KEYWORDS: *choice, election, Davidic dynasty, Zerubbabel, centralization*

INTRODUCTION

Fourteen passages in the Old Testament address Zion/Jerusalem's election through the verb בחר ("to choose"). Some scholars employ these passages reciprocally with other passages when discussing Zion/Jerusalem's election.¹ Others uncritically interchange statements of

1. For example, C. L. Seow cites Pss 132:13 and 78:68 in conjunction with Ps 68: 16–19a in his discussion of the election of Zion (*Myth, Drama, and the Politics of David's Dance* [HSM 46; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989], 184–5).

“Zion/Jerusalem’s election” with statements of “Zion/Jerusalem’s choice.”² The legitimacy of such approaches deserves investigation. Given that a theology of election should arise from a wide variety of considerations, particularly a wide range of verbs,³ it is worth investigating if the בחר (“to choose”) passages contribute particular nuances. If so, it is also worth determining 1) if the בחר (“to choose”) passages should be used reciprocally with other passages when discussing the theology of Zion/Jerusalem’s election and 2) if statements of “the election of Zion/Jerusalem” should be interchanged with statements of “the Lord’s choice of Zion/Jerusalem.”

This essay begins with a few methodological comments regarding the ideas of Zion/Jerusalem’s election throughout the Old Testament. Subsequently, this essay investigates the fourteen passages that voice the Lord’s *choice* (via בחר) of Zion/Jerusalem to determine the semantics and the nuances of these passages. This essay proposes that the Lord’s choice of Zion/Jerusalem represents a distinct idea that informs the larger idea of Zion/Jerusalem’s election. Thus, there is a need for more precision when discussing the idea of the Lord’s choice of Zion/Jerusalem, namely that it conjures up specific nuances. Manifesting two fundamental connotations, the divine choice of Zion/Jerusalem is linked to that location’s cultic prestige and association with the Davidic dynasty. At times one connotation is emphasized over the other, which is indicative of the idea’s history of development. This idea was employed for only approximately two centuries, and its demise may be linked to the disappearance of the Davidic line as a viable political option for the community.

2. For example, J. J. M. Roberts, “The Davidic Origin of the Zion Tradition,” *JBL* 92 (1973) 329–44; J. J. M. Roberts, “Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire,” in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1982), 93–108.

3. Joel N. Lohr, *Chosen and Unchosen: Conceptions of Election in the Pentateuch and Jewish-Christian Interpretation* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 3–30; Horst Dietrich Preuss, *Old Testament Theology* (trans. Leo G. Perdue; 2 vols.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 1:31–32. To this I would suggest that statements that imply divine action are also valuable. For example, Ps 2:6 reads, “I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.” The debate surrounding the form נִסְכַּחִי (“I have installed”) notwithstanding, the psalmist is unequivocal that Zion is the location of the royal institution’s divinely sanctioned rule. While divine election is not explicitly stated, הַר־קֹדֶשׁ (“my holy mountain”) assumes it. Consequently, when constructing a theology of Zion/Jerusalem’s election, the critical issue is divine responsibility, whether it is implicit or explicitly stated.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Election is the theological concept defined as divine selection for a particular purpose. With respect to Zion/Jerusalem, election communicates the conviction that the Lord singled out that locale within the confines of history to nourish his relationship with his people and by extension the world.⁴ As such, the election of Zion/Jerusalem according to the Old Testament is fundamentally either positive or negative. Negatively, Zion/Jerusalem was elected for judgment, functioning as a testimony for the effects of sin and overt rebellion.⁵ Positively, Zion/Jerusalem was elected to be the locus of the divine presence,⁶ the hub of the Lord's eschatological endeavors,⁷ and a source of blessing.⁸

4. This definition is influenced heavily by Preuss's study. It is able to encompass the wide range of considerations necessary to constructing a theology of Zion/Jerusalem's election (see below). Moreover, a historically grounded definition accommodates a particular reality of the Old Testament's testimony, namely divine revelation through real space and time (Preuss, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:37).

5. Second Kings 23:26–27 best illustrates this. The Lord declares that he is the orchestrator of the events that will ultimately result in Judah's exile. Particularly important for the purposes of this essay is the juxtaposition of the verbs מאס ("to reject") and בחר ("to choose"). Rejection now trumps choice, and just as Israel's exile testified to the cost of covenantal disobedience, so too will Judah's exile. Ezekiel 5 also attests to these theological principles. There, the Lord reminisces about Jerusalem's election while declaring imminent judgment in light of their covenantal disobedience.

6. This is communicated most often, but not exclusively, by the verb שכן ("to dwell"). For example, 1 Chr 23:25 states of the Lord, "He dwelt (וישכן) in Jerusalem forever." According to Ps 135:21, the Lord is the dweller of Jerusalem (שכן ירושלים), and this is echoed in Ps 9:21 (ישב ציון).

7. According to Joel 4, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which appears to be the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem, will be the location of God's final judgment upon the enemies of his people (4:1–16) and the place where his people will enjoy his perpetual presence (4:17–18). On the Valley of Jehoshaphat, see W. Harold Mare, "Valley of Jehoshaphat," *ABD*, 6:368–9. Micah 4 and Isa 2 envision Jerusalem as the goal of a global pilgrimage and the source of divine instruction. According to Isa 65, Jerusalem will be the focal point of the new heavens and the new earth (Isa 65:17–25), which also has implications for the restoration of the Davidic line (Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 538–9; John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah* (NICOT; 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986–1998), 2:662). Jeremiah testifies to the messianic implications of Zion/Jerusalem's election. In particular, Jer 33:15 anticipates the Righteous Branch (צמח צדקה) who will rule from Jerusalem and perform justice and righteous.

8. According to Pss 128:5 and 134:3, the Lord's blessing proceeds from Zion (יברכך יהוה מציון), and this truth has particular implications for the royal institution. According to Pss 20:3 and 110:2, both of which are traditionally classified as Royal Psalms, the Lord's strength (מטה-עוזר) and salvation (עוזר) proceed from Zion (מציון). On the syntax of Ps

Other passages testify that the election of Zion/Jerusalem is a manifestation of the Lord's commitment and emotional attachment to the city, which in turn garners the awe and praise of Gentiles.⁹ Consequently, the election of Zion/Jerusalem encompasses a wide range of ideas, images, and nuances. More importantly, this variety contrasts the lexical, syntactical, and thematic uniformity exhibited by the passages that voice the belief in Zion/Jerusalem's election via the verb בחר ("to choose").

THE ELECTION OF ZION/JERUSALEM VIA בחר ("TO CHOOSE")

The fourteen passages that speak to the election of Zion/Jerusalem via בחר ("to choose") are demarcated by the *explicit* use of the verb בחר ("to choose") and the use of Zion or Jerusalem as the direct object.¹⁰ These passages are: 1 Kgs 11:13, 32, 36; 14:21; 2 Kgs 21:7; 23:27; 2 Chr 6:6; 12:13; 33:7; Pss 78:68; 132:13; Zech 1:17; 2:16; 3:2.

20:3, see Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (trans. Takamitsu Muraoka; 2 vols.; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991; repr., 2005), §129h.

9. For example, Ps 87 declares that the Lord "loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob" (87:2), that the Most High "establishes" that city (87:5), and that such a sanction enhances the social status of Zion's inhabitants (87:4, 6), which engenders acclaim from Israel's neighbors.

10. Consequently, I exclude the Deuteronomic passages that refer to the central cult site. Indeed, such a position conflicts with the consensus, which understands the Deuteronomic passages and the בחר ("to choose") passages to be interchangeable. For example, Preuss, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:45. However, as J. G. McConville emphasizes, to assume that Jerusalem must be the referent of these Deuteronomic passages is fallacious (*Deuteronomy* [AOTC 5; Leicester: Apollos, 2002], 217). Furthermore, Sandra Richter has demonstrated the antiquity of Deuteronomy's Name Formula, a critical component to these Deuteronomic passages, and the possibility that the original referent of these passages was not Jerusalem (*The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology* [BZAW 318; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002]; idem, "The Place of the Name in Deuteronomy," *VT* 57 [2007]: 342–66. Finally, not every passage that speaks to the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem incorporates the Deuteronomic idea of centralization. On the legitimacy for understanding Zion and Jerusalem as mutually referential, see Jon D. Levenson ("Zion Traditions," *ABD*, 6:1098–99). In the context of this discussion, "Zion" is used only twice (Pss 78:68; 132:13) and there is insufficient warrant to conclude that a specific location inside the city of Jerusalem is in view. Thus, "Zion" appears to be a stylistic way of referring to the city at large.

*Kings/Chronicles*¹¹

First Kings 11:13 functions with vv. 11–12 to conclude a segment devoted to articulating Solomon’s iniquity (vv. 1–11). Here, both the accusation against Solomon and the pronouncement of judgment are clear. Because of Solomon’s disobedience, judgment will fall in the form of the forfeiture of the kingdom. Yet, via two restrictive clauses, the text discloses that the forfeiture will not occur in Solomon’s lifetime nor will it be a total loss. The rationale for this is rooted equally in David’s piety and Jerusalem as the chosen city.¹² That there is no explicit declaration of function regarding the choice of Jerusalem leaves the reader pondering, at least in part, if Jerusalem was chosen to ensure that the Davidic dynasty would survive with a territory to govern.

The idea of the Lord’s choice of Jerusalem in 1 Kgs 11:29–39 is on the one hand similar to 1 Kgs 11:13 as the idea of the Lord’s choice of Jerusalem explains the preservation of one tribe for the Davidic dynasty (1 Kgs 11:32; 36).¹³ However, there are differences between these two pericopes. First, 1 Kgs 11:29–39 discloses other reasons why one tribe remained for the dynasty, including David’s piety (v. 34), Solomon’s status as a נשיא (“prince”; v. 34), and the ניר (“dominion”) promised to David (v. 36).¹⁴ Second, both occurrences of the Lord’s choice incorporate the phrases מכל שבטי ישראל (“from all the tribes of Israel”) and לשום שמי שם (“to put my name there”) respectively, both of which

11. In light of the source connection between the books of Kings and Chronicles, the occurrences of the בחר (“to choose”) passages within these two corpora will be discussed in tandem. However, I acknowledge that the debate regarding the sources of Chronicles is more nuanced. While these nuances are not germane to this discussion, Graeme Auld’s theories on this topic offer a provocative explanation of the continuity and discontinuity between Chronicles and Samuel/Kings (*I & II Samuel* [OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011], 9–14; idem, “Samuel, Sources, and Historiography” in *Israel in Transition 2* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 15–24.

12. This is communicated by the prepositional phrases למען דוד עבדי ולמען ירושלם אשר בחרתי (“for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem which I chose”).

13. In particular, the statement of the Lord’s choice occurs in a relative clause, subordinate to a prepositional phrase governed by למען (“for the sake of”) that substantiates why “one tribe” remains under Davidic control.

14. On the meaning of ניר (“dominion”), see Paul D. Hanson (“The Song of Heshbon and David’s NĪR,” *HTR* 61 [1968]: 297–320; Ehud Ben Zvi, “Once The Lamp Has Been Kindled . . .” *ABR* 39 [1991]: 19–30). While methodologically different, the conclusions are very similar. For its importance in this discussion, see below. Also, see David B. Schreiner, “‘For the Sake of Jerusalem, The City Which I Have Chosen’: On the Lord’s Choice of Zion/Jerusalem and Its Development in the Old Testament” (Ph.D. diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2012), 119–43.

recall Deuteronomy's centralization ideology¹⁵ and communicate that Jerusalem was chosen to be the socio-religious epicenter of the community.¹⁶ Third, the belief in the Lord's choice of Jerusalem in v. 36 appears syntactically subordinate to another reason for the preservation of Jerusalem/Judah. It appears in a relative clause that modifies העיר ("the city"), which in turn appositionally modifies ירושלים ("Jerusalem"). According to v. 36, Jerusalem is the location of the נִיר ("dominion"), the dominion, promised to David (בִּירוּשָׁלַם; "in Jerusalem"). In this case therefore, the Lord's choice of Jerusalem is not the primary substantiation for Judah's preservation.¹⁷

In 1 Kgs 14:21 the idea of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem again appears in a syntactically subordinate position, but here the more important issue is its semantic subordination. In particular, העיר אשר בחר יהוה ("the city which the Lord chose") informs the more salient issue of the Lord's indignation and judgment in the form of Shishak's raid in light of the nation's sin.¹⁸ Syntactically, "the city which the Lord chose" appositionally modifies the prepositional phrase "in Jerusalem" and is complemented by the deuteronomic phrases מכל שבטי ישראל ("from all the tribes of Israel") and לשום שמי שם ("to put his name there"). Furthermore, both Deuteronomic phrases are asyndetically juxtaposed. Thus, the Lord chose Jerusalem both "from all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there." The choice of Jerusalem is again associated with its function as the central cult site. Interestingly, whereas the idea of the Lord's choice mitigated judgment in 1 Kgs 11, here it appears not to sway the effects of judgment.

Second Chronicles 12:13 is the parallel account of 1 Kgs 14:21 and is virtually identical. The most significant deviation is that the regal evaluation of Rehoboam does not introduce the Shishak episode. Whereas the idea of divine choice in 1 Kgs 14 illuminates the theological

15. Lohfink characterizes these phrases as expansionary ("Zur deuteronomischen Zentralisationsformel," *Bib* 65 [1984]: 297–8).

16. Such a function is mandated by the Deuteronomic legal code. The central cult site was to be the place of adjudication, offering, celebration, and pilgrimage, all of which have implications for the political prominence of the Davidic dynasty. See W. Eugene Claburn, "The Fiscal Basis of Josiah's Reforms," *JBL* 92 (1973): 11–22.

17. Provan also notes the nuances of this syntax (*Hezekiah and the Books of Kings* [BZAW 172; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988], 101).

18. According to John Cook, the *wayyiqtol* form functions pragmatically to foreground the more salient components of a discourse ("The Semantics of Verbal Pragmatics: Clarifying the Roles of *Wayyiqtol* and *Weqatal* in Biblical Hebrew Prose," *JSS* 49.2 [2004]: 264). As such, the circumstantial clauses of v. 21 disclose the necessary background information to the issue of focus, Judah's iniquity (ויעש יהודה).

importance of the Shishak event, here the idea of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem essentially functions as a passing comment.

In 2 Kgs 21:7 another statement of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem appears, amidst the overwhelmingly negative regal evaluation of Manasseh. As with the previous occurrences in Kings, this statement of the Lord's choice occurs in a relative clause that modifies the prepositional phrase "in Jerusalem." Yet the syntactical nuances of this verse are provocative. First, בִּירוּשָׁלַם ("in Jerusalem") parallels בְּבַיִת הַזֶּה ("in the temple of the Lord"), and both phrases disclose the location where the Lord "put his name." Thus, the Lord sought to put his name in Jerusalem and the temple. Second, the phrases מִכָּל שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ("from all the tribes of Israel") and a variation of לְשׂוּם שְׁמִי שָׁם ("to put my name there"), אֲשִׁים אֶת־שְׁמִי לְעוֹלָם ("I will put my name forever"), operate on different syntactical planes. The phrase "from all the tribes of Israel" modifies בָּחַרְתִּי ("I chose"), which is the predicate of a relative clause that modifies Jerusalem. אֲשִׁים אֶת־שְׁמִי לְעוֹלָם ("I will put my name forever") exists as direct discourse, disclosing the words of the Lord. Thus, not only is the Lord's choice of Jerusalem subordinate to the idea that Jerusalem is the place of the Lord's name, but the gravity of Manasseh's sin is realized most clearly by the reality that he profaned the place of the Lord's name. As for the parallel account, 2 Chr 33:7, its deviations do not significantly alter the passage's semantics.¹⁹

The final occurrence of the idea of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem appears in 2 Kgs 23:27. Functioning with v. 26, these verses disrupt an otherwise positive context to declare the imminent judgment. Again, the idea of the Lord's choice is manifested in a relative clause, and here it modifies אֶת־הָעִיר הַזֹּאת ("this city"), which refers to Jerusalem²⁰ and is the direct object of the Lord's rejection (וּמֵאַסְתִּי). Furthermore, אֶת־הָעִיר הַזֹּאת ("this city") parallels אֶת־הַבַּיִת ("the temple"), the place where the Lord stated that he would put his name. Thus, both the city and the temple are distinct entities and will be objects of the Lord's rejection. Interesting to this context is 1) the separation of the statement of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem from יִהְיֶה שְׁמִי שָׁם ("my name will be there"), a variation of the Deuteronomic phrase לְשֹׁכֵן שְׁמִי שָׁם ("for my name to dwell there"; see below) and 2) the absence of מִכָּל שְׁבֵטֵי

19. The deviations include the Chronicler's interchange of פְּסִל־הַסֵּמֶל ("the carved image of the statue") with פְּסִל־הָאֲשֵׁרָה ("the carved image of Asherah"), אֱלֹהִים ("God") with יְהוָה ("Yahweh"), and בְּבַיִת הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר ("in the temple which God") with בְּבַיִת אֲשֶׁר ("in the temple which").

20. The phrase אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם ("Jerusalem") is appositional, albeit displaced, to אֶת־הָעִיר הַזֹּאת ("this city").

ישראל (“from all the tribes of Israel”). Also, a powerful theological statement is made. What the Lord chose will now be rejected.

Second Chronicles 6:6 contains the final passage in the historical corpora. Here the choice of Jerusalem is paralleled with the choice of David. Moreover, the immediate context discusses these phenomena in a manner that highlights them as the result of a historical process, which, according to 2 Chr 6:6, ultimately resulted in the choice of Jerusalem as the place of the Lord’s name.²¹

Psalms

The idea of the Lord’s choice of Zion/Jerusalem appears at the conclusion of Ps 78. This didactic psalm²² recounts Israel’s wilderness wandering, the plagues of Egypt, the possession of the Promised Land, and the people’s rebellion while testifying to the Lord’s faithfulness. Verses 67–72 constitute the psalm’s climax. In v. 68 the psalmist declares of the Lord, “He chose²³ the tribe of Judah, Mt. Zion, which he loves.” Thus, the choice of Judah and Zion are connected. Furthermore, the consequence of this choice is the construction of the temple (v. 69).²⁴ Yet there is a significant nuance here. The belief in the Lord’s choice of Zion does not enjoy a privileged position in the closing verses of the psalm, syntactically and thematically. On the one hand, שבט יהודה (“the tribe of Judah”) is fronted in v. 68. On the other hand, the Lord’s choice of David and Judah is the psalm’s main point of emphasis. As a theological interpretation of Israel’s history, this psalm understands Judah and the Davidic dynasty to be the apex of Israel’s history.²⁵ Thus,

21. The syntax and parallelism of 2 Chr 6:5–6 is intricate. The negativity of v. 5 is inverted in v. 6. Whereas v. 5 reminisces how the Lord initially did not choose, v. 6 recounts how the Lord chose. In other words, there is a logical and aesthetic connection between verses. As such, one can assume לבנות בית (“to build a house”) and נגיד (“to establish”) in v. 6. Where the Lord previously did not choose a city to build a temple (v. 5), he now chose Jerusalem (to build a temple) so that his name might be put there (v. 6).

22. R. P. Carroll, “Psalm LXXVIII: Vestiges of a Tribal Polemic,” *VT* 21 (1971): 133.

23. In v. 68, בחר (“to choose”) is gapped, functioning as the predicate for both object clauses.

24. I am reading the form ויבן (“so he built”) as a consequential *wayyiqtol*. Similarly, Antony F. Campbell, “Psalm 78: A Contribution to the Theology of Tenth Century Israel,” *CBQ* 41 (1979): 58.

25. Campbell, “Psalm 78,” 77. The most elementary of observations demonstrates this, namely the flow of the psalm and the election of David being the focus of the final three verses.

the conviction of the Lord's choice of Mt. Zion bolsters this socio-political point. Stated otherwise, the idea of the Lord's choice is subordinate to the more salient issue of the Lord's choice of Judah and David.

Psalm 132 is similar to Ps 78 in its statement that the Lord's choice of Zion is associated with his affection for that place. According to Ps 132:13, "The Lord chose Zion; he desired it as a dwelling for himself." However, there is an important difference between psalms in their use of the belief that the Lord chose Zion. Given that the focus of Ps 132 shifts from David, his exploits, and their implications to Jerusalem and the glories that can be experienced there,²⁶ the psalm manifests an inversion of the ideological hierarchy of Ps 78. That is, the cultic implications of the Lord's choice of Zion are the focus rather than the socio-political implications.

Zechariah

In Zech 1:17 and 2:16 (MT), the use of the idea of the Lord's choice is peculiar. The form is *וּבָחַר* ("that he may choose"), an *irreal* perfect.²⁷ In 3:2, the form is a Qal participle and functions as an epitaph of the Lord. The chronological context of each passage is also peculiar, each dated to the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month of the second year of Darius' reign (1:7). As for the literary context²⁸ of each passage, they are situated in the second major section of Zech 1–8. Here, the seven night visions of Zechariah and Joshua's confirmation scene are disclosed in concentric circles, and they cooperate to emphasize the importance of the temple and its leadership.

26. The shift takes place with v. 13 and the recurrence of the locative adverbs (פה "here"; שם "there") as well as the recurring pronominal suffixes that have Jerusalem as the antecedent (אֶתֶּיהָ "I desired it"; צִידָהּ "its food"; אֶבְיוֹנֶיהָ "its poor"; וְכֹהֲנֶיהָ "and its priest"; וְחַסְדֵיהֶם "its faithful ones") corroborate this most clearly.

27. For this terminology, see John Cook, "The Hebrew Verb: A Grammaticalization Approach," *ZAH* 14.2 (2001): 126–7.

28. On the structure of Zech 1–8, this work relies heavily upon Eric M. Meyers and Carol L. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8* (AB 25B; Garden City, NJ: Double Day, 1987), liii–lx. Incidentally, Mike Butterworth bolsters the work of Meyers and Meyers, for he arrives at a very similar conclusion through an analysis that considers the repetition and context of key lexemes (*Structure and the Book of Zechariah* [JSOTSupp 130; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992], 299–300).

Zechariah 1:17 appears in a distinct pericope (1:14b–17) that expounds the first vision,²⁹ which anticipates the Lord’s redemptive action on behalf of his people. Syntactically, v. 17 is linked to v. 16, where the leading verb is שָׁבַתִּי (“I returned”). Furthermore, the Lord’s return to Jerusalem is associated with the temple’s reconstruction, the extension of the measuring line, and the prosperity of the city, each of which is either ongoing or in the foreseeable future.³⁰ As for וַבְּחַר (“that he may choose”), it functions with וַנְּחַם (“that he may comfort”) as the climatic pronouncement of vv. 14–17. The Lord has returned, the temple is being rebuilt, the measuring line is being extended, and the cities will overflow *so that*³¹ the Lord may have compassion and again choose Jerusalem. Thus, the full maturation of Jerusalem’s (re)choice³² is yet to occur. It is contingent upon the reconstruction and revitalization of Jerusalem and its immediate environs.

This contingency is mirrored in Zech 2:16. Similar to 1:17, 2:16 also functions climactically in its immediate context, which declares that the Lord’s judgment upon the nations simultaneously functions missionally.³³ In light of this, Judah is called to rejoice, particularly since the Lord’s dwelling in Zion is associated with this (vv. 14–15). As for the Lord’s choice of Jerusalem, the verbal syntax of vv. 14–16 communicates that the full maturation of the Lord’s (re)choice exists on the horizon, as it is contingent upon the global assemblage that will occur.³⁴ Again, the full maturation of the Lord’s (re)choice is yet to be obtained.

29. Mark J. Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 199; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 132.

30. Hence the imperfect forms יבנה, ינטה, and תפוצינה.

31. Thus, וַבְּחַר (“that he may choose”) communicates contingent modality. Cook, “The Hebrew Verb,” 134–35.

32. The adverb עוד (“again”) is strategically present in 1:17 and 2:16. According to Meyers and Meyers, this points to the prophet’s awareness of the continuity between the pre and post-exilic communities. Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 124.

33. In particular, the *irreal* form וידעתם (“so that you may know”) of v. 13 demonstrates this. The Lord is raising his hand in judgment *so that* they may know the sovereignty and power of the Lord.

34. כי הנני בא ושכנתי . . . ונלוו . . . ביום ההוא והיו . . . ושכנתי . . . וידעת . . . ונחל . . . ובחר . . . “For I am now coming so that I may dwell . . . When (the nations) are joined . . . at that time, they will be . . . and I will dwell . . . that you may know . . . that (the Lord) may inherit . . . and that he may (again) choose . . .”

The final passage appears in Zech 3:2, in a chapter that details Satan's accusations against Joshua the High Priest. Initially, the idea that the Lord is "the one who chooses Jerusalem" appears to be a passing comment. However, Meyers and Meyers have suggested that this epitaph informs this confrontation.³⁵ The one who chooses Jerusalem is defending the High Priest, which implies that the cultic legitimacy of Jerusalem is not compromised.

Conclusions

In light of this discussion, the following points are emphasized.

1. The passages that speak of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem only sometimes incorporate the deuteronomic idea of centralization, communicating that Zion/Jerusalem was elected to be the socio-religious epicenter of the community. These passages are: 1 Kgs 11:32, 36; 14:21; 2 Kgs 21:7; 23:27; 2 Chr 6:6; 12:13; 33:7. Furthermore, these passages are isolated to Kings and Chronicles, and there is variation in the usage of the centralization ideology.
2. The Zecharian usage of the ideology of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem is peculiar. Two of its three usages speak of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem in inchoate terms. According to Zechariah, the (re)choice of Jerusalem is contingent upon other realities.
3. The Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem is linked to that location's cultic prestige and its association with the Davidic dynasty. One association may be emphasized over the other, but both associations are always present. The usage of the idea of the Lord's choice in Pss 78 and 132 exemplifies this reality most clearly. The context where this dual foundation is not obviously clear is in Zechariah. However, in light of the historical, theological, and perhaps compositional relationship between Haggai and Zech 1–8,³⁶ the status of the Davidic line appears to

35. Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 187.

36. The theological continuity between Hag and Zech 1–8, which can be characterized generically as a temple-centric proclamation, is undeniable. It is debated how this theological continuity came to fruition. Was it the result of a single minded compositional/compilation effort shortly after the ministries of the prophets? Or, was it the result of a lengthy redactional process that lasted well into the Persian period? One's

influence Zechariah's peculiar usage of the idea of the Lord's choice (see below).

Consequently, these observations permit an important conclusion. Because these passages conjure up specific nuances in a relatively uniform manner, the passages that address the Lord's election of Zion/Jerusalem through the verb בחר ("to choose") constitute a distinct thematic thread that informs the larger belief in Zion/Jerusalem's election. To speak of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem is to address that location's election. However, to speak of Zion/Jerusalem's election is not necessarily tantamount to speaking of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem. Therefore, the approach of scholars to interchange statements of Zion/Jerusalem's choice uncritically with those of Zion/Jerusalem's election and to cite all passages reciprocally when discussing Zion/Jerusalem's election appears to be imprecise. The observable distinction is indicative of a difference that should be acknowledged and respected. To say that the Lord chose Zion/Jerusalem is to say something specific, so specific that it precludes a one to one correspondence with other statements of the Lord's election.

In turn, historical-critical questions move to the forefront. What gave rise to this specific idea? Moreover, in light of the phenomenon where some passages emphasize the Davidic association over the cultic one, and vice versa, is there an explanation? Is there warrant for postulating a development within this thematic thread? To answer these questions, I now discuss pertinent historical-critical issues.

A HISTORICAL-CRITICAL DISCUSSION

There are at least three historical-critical issues worthy of discussion: 1) the redactional history of Kings, 2) the context of composition for Pss 78 and 132, and 3) Zerubbabel's status for the Second Temple community. These issues illuminate the phenomena surrounding the usage of the theme of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem.

Redaction of Kings

The vast majority of scholars recognize a significant redactional process behind the canonical form of Kings. Furthermore, many scholars

conclusions have implications for one's understanding of the dating formula throughout Hag-Zech 8. I remain unconvinced by those who argue for a lengthy compositional process that lasted well into the Persian period. Such schemes atomize the text and often undermine the legitimacy of the dating formula.

recognize that the redaction of Kings was associated with the composition/redaction of a national history that transcended the boundaries of 1 and 2 Kings. While the intricacies of the debate cannot be discussed in detail here, the most logical model is one that recognizes two pre-exilic editions that were associated with Hezekian and Josianic literary endeavors and one post-exilic edition.³⁷ Importantly, the passages in Kings that attest to the Lord's choice of Jerusalem can be aligned with each of these three phases.

Provan has correctly contextualized the composition of the Davidic נִיר ("dominion") passages in a Hezekian history.³⁸ Thus, the occurrence of the idea of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem in 1 Kgs 11:36 initially appears to be Hezekian. However, 1 Kgs 11:36 also exhibits לְשׁוֹם שְׁמִי שָׁם ("to put my name there"), which is associated with the Josianic edition of Kings. To rectify this conundrum, first note that many scholars recognize a complicated redactional process behind the canonical form of 1 Kgs 11:29–39.³⁹ Second, recall that נִיר ("dominion") occupies a place of syntactical prominence in 1 Kgs 11:36. Thus, one can theorize that 1 Kgs 11:29–39 existed in a Hezekian form and was adapted during a Josianic literary endeavor, and the Josianic historian incorporated the deuteronomic centralization ideology as another reason

37. Such a position is fundamentally at odds with a Göttingen model, which positions the composition and redaction of Kings almost exclusively in the exilic/post-exilic period. There are numerous reasons for the rejection of such a model, but the most important are as follows. First, as Thomas Römer mentions, such a model fails to adequately deal with the royal ideology/propaganda that permeates Kings, Samuel, and other related books (Thomas Römer, *The So-called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical, and Literary Introduction* [New York: T & T Clark, 2005], 41–43). Also, William Schniedewind has argued for large scale literary development beginning at the conclusion of the eighth century B.C.E. (*How the Bible Became a Book* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 64–90). Thus, large-scale literary complexes need not be post-exilic. Furthermore, Richter's linguistic analysis of the deuteronomic phrase לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם ("to put his name there") links its calque לְשׁוֹם שְׁמִי שָׁם ("to put his name there") to Josiah (*Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology*, 207). Bernard Levinson also links this phrase to Josianic literary endeavors (*Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998]). For a recent monograph that recognizes this three-fold model, see Thomas Mann (*The Book of the Former Prophets* [Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011]).

38. Provan, *Hezekiah*, 131. Contra Halpern and Nelson who contextualize these passages in a Josianic context (Baruch Halpern, *The First Historians: The Hebrew Bible and History* [University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1988], 144–80; Richard D. Nelson, *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History* [Sheffield: JSOT, 1981], 116–18).

39. For example, A. D. H. Mayes, *The Story of Israel Between Settlement and Exile: A Redactional Study of the Deuteronomistic History* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 117; Provan, *Hezekiah*, 100.

for Judah/Jerusalem's preservation. As for the ideology of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem in this scheme, one can theorize that it existed in the pericope's Hezekian form, particularly since the phrase לשׁוֹם שְׁמִי שָׁם ("to put my name there") appears here uniquely.⁴⁰ As for the exilic usage of the belief in the Lord's choice of Jerusalem, Richter has argued that the phrase שָׁם שְׁמוֹ + הִיא ("to be" + "his name there") is a periphrastic reflex of the Deuteronomic idiom לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם ("to put his name there"). Originating in 1 Kgs 8, this reflex becomes used in post-exilic texts and is a product of an ideological movement that perceived the temple as the quintessential symbol of Israelite religion.⁴¹ The usage of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem appears in 2 Kgs 23:27 alongside the הִיא ("to be") reflex.

Consequently, the passages that clearly demonstrate the association of the ideology of the Lord's choice with each of the major phases of Kings and its larger literary context are:⁴²

- (Pre-canonical form of) 1 Kgs 11:36 → Hezekian
- 1 Kgs 11:32; (Canonical form of) 1 Kgs 11:36;
1 Kgs 14:21; 2 Kgs 21:7 → Josianic
- 2 Kgs 23:27 → Exilic

A Date of Composition for Psalms 78 and 132

Determining a psalm's context of composition is notoriously difficult. With respect to Pss 78 and 132, arguments for all points on the chronological spectrum can be made. Nevertheless, I espouse the likelihood of a Hezekian milieu for the composition of Ps 78.⁴³ The literary flow of the psalm progresses climactically to emphasize the conviction that the Davidic line is critical for the endurance of the

40. Of all the occurrences of the phrase לשׁוֹם שְׁמִי (ו) שָׁם ("to put my [his] name there"), only here does it immediately after a reflexive pronoun (לִי; "for myself").

41. Richter, *Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology*, 90, 95.

42. I have omitted 1 Kgs 11:13, for there is no element that distinctly identifies its redactional context.

43. Most systematically, Philip Stern, "The Eighth Century Dating of Psalm 78 Re-argued," *HUCA* 66 (1995): 41–65. Also, Archie C. C. Lee, "The Context and Function of the Plagues Tradition in Psalm 78," *JSOT* 48 (1990): 83–9; William M. Schniedewind, *Society and the Promise to David: The Reception History of 2 Sam 7:1–17* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 66–9.

community. Such an ideological stance corresponds nicely to the socio-historical context of the end of the eighth century B.C.E.

As for Ps 132, the issue is more complex. First, recall the observation above that a shift in the psalm's focus occurs with v. 13. Second, the data traditionally cited for an early date of composition almost exclusively occurs in vv. 1–12.⁴⁴ Third, the pro-Jerusalem posture of vv. 13–18 fits nicely against the post-exilic socio-historical context of Yehud.⁴⁵ Fourth, the double entendre of v. 17 assimilates the נִר (“dominion”) ideology with the David-as-lamp metaphor,⁴⁶ which can be interpreted as disguised verbal resistance against the Persian Empire.⁴⁷ Thus, vv. 13–18 can be understood as a post-exilic expansion of a pre-exilic psalm.

Zerubbabel's Role for the Second Temple Community

I suggested above that understanding the socio-political role of Zerubbabel may illuminate Zechariah's peculiar usage of the idea of the

44. Frank Moore Cross's analysis still functions as the base line for such argumentation (*Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973], 97). Cross cites מִיֹּשֵׁב (“seat”) in v. 13 as evidence for an early date of composition, but this form appears in Ezek 28:2, thereby undermining its relevance.

45. For example, Loren D. Crow, *The Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120–134): Their Place in Israelite History and Religion* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1996), 169–74.

46. One only needs to repoint *nēr* to *nīr* in v. 17, “There I will make a horn sprout for David. I have set up dominion for my anointed.” As such, the psalmist communicates that Jerusalem, which is emphasized not only in v. 17 but throughout vv. 13–18, is the location of the anointed's dominion. This recalls one of the fundamental pillars of the נִר (“dominion”) ideology, dominion in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem promised to the Davidic dynasty (cf. 1 Kgs 11:36; 15:4; 2 Kgs 8:19). Bolstering this, v. 17b echoes 2 Sam 23:1–7 by the use of the verb עָרַךְ (“to set in order”) and the noun מְשִׁיחַ (“anointed one”), the only places where these two terms appear in the immediate context of each other to discuss the implications of the Davidic covenant. In this Samuel passage, David's “eternal covenant” is considered, particularly the reality that it has been “properly set out and ordered in every respect” (*HALOT*, 1:885.). Since the expectations of the Davidic covenant assume a corresponding territorial dominion, when Ps 132:17 anticipates the preservation of the Davidic line there would also be the expectations of corresponding territorial dominion.

47. Given the Persian administrative method of using indigenous dynasties in high ranking positions, such a covert message can be interpreted as what James Scott has referred to as “disguised verbal resistance.” See André Lemaire, “Zorobabel Et La Judée À La Lumière De L'Épigraphie (Fin Du VIe S. AV. J.-C.),” *RB* 103.1 (1996): 48–57; James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

Lord's choice of Jerusalem. Thus, Hag 2:20–23 becomes foundational. The range of scholarly discourse on this pericope notwithstanding, focus falls upon v. 23.

It is widely accepted that the clause ושמתיך כחותם (“and I will make you as a signet ring”) recalls Jer 22:24–30,⁴⁸ and therefore Haggai's oracle envisions the reestablishment of the Davidic line. Often scholars understand this anticipation in eschatological or political terms. That is, some scholars interpret Haggai's oracle as a call for insurrection, but others interpret it as a call to wait on the fruition of the Lord's eschatological plans. However, there is a third option, which considers elements of both of the categories just mentioned. The strategic use of the כ (“as”) preposition can signal typological exegesis.⁴⁹ Thus, when the כ (“as”) preposition is considered alongside the oracle's association with the Jeremianic tradition and the Persian method of administration that utilized indigenous dynasties, one can understand this oracle as prophetic exegesis. More specifically, one can characterize it as a manto-typological interpretation of the Jeremianic tradition.

On the one hand, Haggai is declaring to Zerubbabel that his role for the Second Temple community can be correlated to his grandfather's role as king. Yet given the Persian context, its current role was not to be tantamount to its previous role. Such a proclamation would have answered the questions that would have surfaced within the community over the role of the Davidic line. Thus, on the other hand, this oracle clarified the dissonance created by the Jeremianic tradition in light of the realities of history. Hence the mantological character of the exegesis. Simply, Haggai discloses that the Davidic line is still a viable political option, just not as king.⁵⁰

I propose that this transitional role illuminates Zechariah's use of the idea of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem. Indeed, the temple's ongoing construction is a contributing factor to the prophet's discussion of the

48. Contra Wolter H. Rose, *Zemah and Zerubbabel: Messianic Expectations in the Early Postexilic Period* (JSOTSup 304; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000).

49. Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 352.

50. In a provocative article, John Kessler offers a similar conclusion. In short, Kessler interprets Haggai's final oracle as one that encourages the community and the Davidic line to accept their present socio-political situation as being in accord with divine providence (“Haggai, Zerubbabel, and the Political Status of Yehud: The Signet Ring in Haggai 2:23,” in *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* [LBHOTS 427; New York: T & T Clark, 2006], 102–19. The proposal here differs in its consideration of inner-biblical exegesis.

Lord's choice of Jerusalem in inchoate terms.⁵¹ However, the temple's status constitutes only half of the equation. Every other passage that speaks to the Lord's choice of Jerusalem draws upon Jerusalem's cultic prestige and Davidic association, and the evidence of Haggai and Zechariah need not suggest that Zechariah abandoned this procedure. Rather, Zechariah communicates the community's struggle in grasping the implications of a functioning temple and a Davidic descendent in a hegemonic context. The absence of the idea of the Lord's choice from Zech 8 and the historical reality that the Davidic line ceased occupying the gubernatorial seat approximately ten years after the appointment of Zerubbabel lends credence to this.⁵²

Conclusions

From this historical-critical discussion, the following points are emphasized.

1. The use of the ideology of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem in Kings has points of contact with the three major editions of Kings and thus Israel's national history. In the Hezekian history, the ideology was utilized to augment the נִר ("dominion") ideology, a pro-Davidic ideology. The Josianic history used the ideology in conjunction with the deuteronomic centralization ideology. The exilic history used the ideology in conjunction with the הִיהָ ("to be") reflex of the deuteronomic idiom לִשְׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ ("to put his name there"), which first appears in 1 Kgs 8 and is a product of a Temple-centric ideological development.
2. The composition of Ps 78 can be dated reasonably to the Hezekian milieu, and the psalm's usage of the idea of the Lord's choice occurs in a manner that emphasizes the socio-political

51. So Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 132–34.

52. Zechariah 8, which fundamentally assumes the conviction in the Lord's election of Jerusalem, does not employ the idea that the Lord chose Jerusalem. This contrasts with previous chapters, which utilized the belief in the Lord's choice on multiple occasions. Important are two issues. First, ch. 8 occurs at least two years *after* the previous oracles. Second, within ten years of Zerubbabel the Davidic line ceased occupying Yehud's gubernatorial seat (Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 14). Could it be that the prophet ceased using the ideology of the Lord's choice of Jerusalem in light of the historical reality that the Davidic line was no longer a viable political option for the community?

importance of the Davidic line. Such a *Tendenz* recalls the usage of the idea in the Hezekian history.

3. The usage of the idea of the Lord's choice of Zion in Ps 132 appears in a distinct section of the psalm (vv. 13–18) that can be characterized as a post-exilic expansion of a pre-exilic psalm. In this section, the focus is upon the location of Jerusalem and the glories that can be experienced there, of which many are cultic in nature. Such a pro-temple context of usage for the idea of the Lord's choice of Zion is similar to the use of the idea in the exilic edition of Kings and 2 Chr 6:6.
4. Haggai 2:20–23 communicates that the Davidic line still enjoys a high profile socio-political role for the Second Temple community. Yet it will not be identical to its previous role as king. Assuming the close historical, theological, and perhaps compositional connection between Haggai and Zech 1–8, this reality may inform Zechariah's peculiar usage of the idea that the Lord chose Jerusalem.

By implication, one can identify a three-phase history of development for the ideology of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem. Phase one was pro-Davidic in its posture. That is, the idea that the Lord chose Zion/Jerusalem augmented other ideological elements of the Davidic tradition (Ps 78:68; the pre-canonical form of 1 Kgs 11:36). Phase two incorporated the Deuteronomic ideology of centralization, and this association was the innovation of a Josianic literary endeavor (1 Kgs 11:32; canonical form of 1 Kgs 11:36; 14:21; 2 Kgs 21:7). Phase three was an exilic innovation, and it inverts phase one. The idea of the Lord's choice of Zion/Jerusalem augmented ideas of Jerusalem's cultic prestige.

As for the time span of usage for the idea of the Lord's choice, it was rather short. It probably spanned from the conclusion of the eighth century to the end of the sixth century B.C.E. Its inception was probably linked to the literary endeavors that came to fruition in light of the events of 701 B.C.E.,⁵³ and ostensibly when the Davidic dynasty ceased to be a viable political option, the usage of the ideology was no longer legitimate.

53. In addressing the same passages in this essay, Sara Japhet characterizes them as evidence for a "new theology of election" ("From King's Sanctuary to the Chosen City," *Jud* 46 [1997]: 135).

FINAL REFLECTIONS

In closing, it is worth noting that there is no trace in the New Testament of the ideology that the Lord chose Zion/Jerusalem. When speaking of divine action preformed with Zion/Jerusalem as the recipient, nowhere are the verbs ἐκλέγῳ (“to elect”) or αἰρετίζῳ (“to choose”) used.⁵⁴ Nor is Jerusalem/Zion described as the chosen city. Indeed, the New Testament espouses the belief that Zion/Jerusalem enjoys divine election, but, as I have argued, election and choice are not tantamount to each other.

Overwhelmingly, Jerusalem is used geo-politically. However, there are instances where Jerusalem operates as a motif through which authors communicate certain realities about Jesus’s life, ministry, death, and resurrection. Luke/Acts manifests this *Tendenz* most clearly. As summarized by Fitzmeyer, Jerusalem is “the city of destiny for Jesus and the pivot point for the salvation of mankind.”⁵⁵ In terms of this essay therefore, the corpus of Luke/Acts communicates that Jerusalem was elected because of the implications of the Christ event—the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Jerusalem was the goal of Jesus’s ministry. It was where Christ died on the cross to fulfill the Scriptures and atone for sin. It was where Christ was resurrected to initiate the global advancement of the Kingdom of God. Jesus’s actions in Jerusalem were the catalyst for the next phase in God’s revelation. In short, Jerusalem was elected to be the locus where a new dispensation in salvation history would commence.

Consequently, the ideology of the Lord’s choice of Zion/Jerusalem sheds light on the progressive nature of God’s revelation. The idea that the Lord chose Zion/Jerusalem bolstered perceptions of Zion/Jerusalem and undoubtedly informed messianic and religious expectations.⁵⁶ Yet these expectations were dramatically sharpened in light of Christ. Thus, Irenaeus’ belief that the economies of God are brought into focus with the Economy of God is correct in this instance.⁵⁷

54. The LXX renders בחר (“to choose”) with these two verbs.

55. Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB 28–28A; 2 vols.; Garden City, NJ: DoubleDay, 1981–85), 1:164.

56. Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An Investigation into the Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period* (trans. F. H. Cave and C. H. Cave; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 73–7. Addressing messianic movements of first century Palestine, Jeremias states that they “aspired towards Jerusalem” (p. 75).

57. Rowan A. Greer, “The Christian Bible and Its Interpretation,” in *Early Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 166.

