

UNIVERSIDAD DE NAVARRA  
FACULTAD DE TEOLOGÍA

Ramil COSTIBOLO NICAL

THE DEPARTURE OF THE *K<sup>E</sup>BOD* YHWH  
FROM THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM

Extracto de la Tesis Doctoral presentada en la  
Facultad de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra

PAMPLONA  
2005

Ad normam Statutorum Facultatis Theologiae Universitatis Navarrensis,  
perlegimus et adprobavimus

Pampilonae, die 27 mensis octobris anni 2004

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Coram tribunali, die 16 mensis iunii anni 2004, hanc  
dissertationem ad Lauream Candidatus palam defendit

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Excerpta e Dissertationibus in Sacra Theologia

Vol. XLVII, n. 1

## PRESENTATION

In all the world's great religions, the temple is the privilege place where the divinity is considered to make itself present to man and where man enters into a communion with the former. It is the place where the divinity receives the worship of his adorers and where they, in turn, receive favors and blessings from the divine forces they believed in. This understanding of divine-human relationship expectedly made the temple central to the socio-religious life of the people. The social conditions of fortune or blessings are, to a certain extent, determined and assured by seeking divine favors through the prescribed cultic rituals and worship in the temple.

This central role of the temple in the socio-religious life of the people is clearly evident in the book of Ezekiel, wherein the Temple of Jerusalem plays a decisive role in understanding the cause of the well being, as well as, the tragedy of the house of Israel. In fact, the book's message of judgment (first part) and restoration (second part) are composed and revolved around the imagery of the Temple. Despite many literary, textual and structural difficulties that reveal its composite character, the canonical text manifests literary coherence and unified Temple-centered theology which reflects the single mind of an original prophet. Through Temple symbolism and language, Ezekiel explained the nature of YHWH, and his relationship with Israel and the universe. For Ezekiel, the God of Israel is a sovereign of universal domain. He is transcendent and not limited to a sanctuary, a people or land. Nevertheless, by pure divine initiative, YHWH has chosen to be identified with a particular people, establish a special relationship with them and dwells in their midst. In the face of this gratuitous choice, Israel is expected to recognize YHWH's sovereignty over them and give him due worship.

The historical reality of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and its Temple and the subsequent exile of its inhabitants presented

hard questions regarding Israel's relationship with YHWH and the validity of the Temple as sign of the divine presence in their midst. Surely, at that time, serious theological questions were undoubtedly raised by the people. On the one hand, they must have wondered whether YHWH was more powerful than the Babylonian god Marduk and whether or not he was strong enough to keep them in the land (Eze 36:20). On the other hand, if the exile is sign of YHWH's power manifested in divine punishment, they must have also questioned whether what YHWH had inflicted or would inflict upon them was too heavy and whether he was just (Eze 18:25). Or that, this things happened because YHWH does not care and has already left the land (Eze 8:12)?

The pericopes presented in the excerptum provide the theological explanation and justification for the destruction of the Temple and justification of the exile. The content of the excerptum forms the second and fourth subsections of Chapter II. The second section presents the four cultic abominations (Eze 8:5-18), which constitute the rebelliousness of Israel and the cause of YHWH's anger. The fourth section depicts in graphic form the departure of the *kēbod* YHWH from the Temple due to Israel's cultic abominations (Eze 10:1-22). The schema of each discussion is as follows; (a) translations and analysis; (b) structure; (c) significance and relation to the Temple of Jerusalem; (d) summary. After the presentation of the two pericopes, short conclusions will be presented which will hopefully highlight the important theological points of the texts just studied.

The study seeks to understand the significance of the Temple of Jerusalem and, in the process, gives to the Temple theology the protagonism it has in the book of Ezekiel. It approaches the theme from the perspective of theology than from a historico-critical perspective. We preferred the synchronic approach in the study though we made use of diachronic methods when they appear to be indispensable. This means that the object of the study will be the biblical book in its present canonical state.

This study will not be possible without the cooperation of so many people. Thus, we would like to extend our gratitude to the professors of the Sacred Scripture Department of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Navarre. In a special way, our gratitude also to D. Santiago Ausín whose generous guidance and expertise made all scholarly difficulties surmountable.

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## TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

### 1. ALPHABETICAL ORDER OF BIBLICAL BOOKS

Acts	Acts of the Apostles
Am	Amos
1 Chr	1 Chronicles
2 Chr	2 Chronicles
Col	Colossians
1 Cor	1 Corinthians
2 Cor	2 Corinthians
Dan	Daniel
Deut	Deuteronomy
Ecc	Ecclesiastes
Eph	Ephesians
Est	Esther
Exo	Exodus
Eze	Ezekiel
Ezr	Ezra
Gal	Galatians
Gen	Genesis
Hab	Habakkuk
Hag	Haggai
Heb	Hebrews
Hos	Hosea
Isa	Isaiah
Jd	Jude
Jer	Jeremiah
Jgs	Judges
Jl	Joel
Jn	John
1 Jn	1 John
2 Sam	2 Samuel
Songs	Song of Songs
1 Th	1 Thessalonians

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2 Th	2 Thessalonians
1 Tim	1 Timothy
2 Tim	2 Timothy
2 Jn	2 John
3 Jn	3 John
Job	Job
Jon	Jonah
Jos	Joshua
1 Kgs	1 Kings
2 Kgs	2 Kings
Lam	Lamentations
Lev	Leviticus
Lk	Luke
Mal	Malachi
Mk	Mark
Mt	Matthew
Mic	Micah
Nah	Nahum
Neh	Nehemiah
Num	Numbers
Obd	Obadiah
1 Pet	1 Peter
2 Pet	2 Peter
Phm	Philemon
Phil	Philippians
Pro	Proverbs
Pss(s)	Psalms(s)
Rev	Revelation
Rom	Romans
Ru	Ruth
1 Sam	1 Samuel
Titus	Titus
Tob	Tobit
Wis	Wisdom
Zec	Zechariah
Zep	Zephaniah

## 2. REFERENCE WORKS, ARTICLES AND JOURNALS

AB	Anchor Bible Commentary Series
ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
AJSL	American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature

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AnBib	Analecta biblica
ANEP <sup>2</sup>	The Ancient Near East. An Anthology of Texts and Pictures (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition)
ANET <sup>3</sup>	Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (3 <sup>rd</sup> edition)
AnOr	Analecta orientalia
AOS	American Oriental Series
ASTI	Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BBR	Bulletin for Biblical Research
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BHK	Biblia Hebraica Kittel
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
Bib	Biblica
BibOr	Biblica et Orientalia
BibSac	Biblia Sacra
BJ	Biblia de Jerusalem
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Ryland Library
Btoday	Bible Today
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBI	Comentario Bíblico Internacional
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
ConBOT	Coniectanea Biblica, Old Testament
DSBS	Daily Study Bible Series
DTMAT	Diccionario teológico manual del Antiguo Testamento
ET	Expository Times
FOTL	The Forms of the Old Testament Literature
GKC	Gesenius Hebrew Grammar, E. KAUTZSCH (ed.), revised by A. E. Cowley
HAR	Hebrew Annual Review
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HKAT	Hankommentar zum Alten Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IB	The Interpreter's Bible
IBC	International Biblical Commentary
ICC	The International Critical Commentary
Int	Interpretation
ITC	International Theological Commentary
JANESCU	Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society

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JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBLMS	Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
JBQ	Jewish Biblical Quarterly
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JHNES	John Hopkins Near Eastern Studies
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JNSL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JOTS	Journal for Old Testament Studies
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
NAB	The New American Bible
NCB	New Century Bible
NIB	The New Interpreter's Bible
NICOT	The New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIVACS	The NIV Application Commentary Series
NJB	The New Jerusalem Bible
NJBC	The New Jerome Biblical Commentary
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
Or	Orientalia
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
PC	Peake's Commentary on the Bible
PEQ	Palestinian Exploration Quarterly
PTR	Princeton Theological Review
RB	Revue Biblique
RevQ	Revue de Qumran
SB	Sagrada Biblia
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monographs Series
SBLSBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SOTSMS	Society for Old Testament Study Monograph Series
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
THAT	Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WBC	World Bible Commentary
WTJ	Westminster Theological Journal
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

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### 3. OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

*A* = Aramaic; *adj* = adjective; *art* = article; *adv.* = adverb; *B.C.E.* = before the Common Era; *c(c).* = column(s); *C.E.* = Common Era; *cf.* = confer; *conj* = conjunction; *consec* = consecutive; *constr* = construct; *diss.* = doctoral dissertation; *ed(s).* = editor(s); *e.g.* = *exempli gratia* (for example); *Eng. trans.* = English translation; *fem* = feminine; *ff.* = following; *G* = Septuagint; *G<sup>B</sup>* = Codex Vaticanus; *ibid.* = *ibidem* (in the same work); *i.e.* = *id est* (that is); *imperf.* = imperfect; *K* = Kethib; *L* = Codex Leningradensis; *MS(S)* = Manuscript(s); *MSSKen* = Kennicott Manuscripts; *masc* = masculine; *OT* = Old Testament; *P* = Priestly Source; *perf* = perfect; *p(p).* = page(s); *part* = participle; *pers* = person; *plu* = plural; *Q* = Qere; *repr* = reprint; *S* = Syriac; *Span. trans.* = Spanish translation; *sing* = singular; *T* = Targum; *TM* = Textus Masoreticus; *trans* = translation; *V* = Vulgate; *Vrs.* = versions; *v(v).* = verse(s).

## DEPARTURE OF THE *K<sup>E</sup>BOD* YHWH FROM THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM

### I. THE FOUR CULTIC ABOMINATIONS (Eze 8:5-18)

In this pericope, we will discuss Ezekiel's vision of the cultic abominations which was shown to him in his first Temple tour. The pericope covers Eze 8:5-18 of the book and the narratives are centered around the prophet's vision *of* and *in* the Temple. From his place of exile, Ezekiel was brought to Jerusalem in a «divine vision» and was shown the source of YHWH's anger, namely, the cultic abominations that the house of Israel commits at the very Temple dedicated to YHWH. The four cultic abominations shown constitute the main rebellion of Israel and leads to the departure of the divine *kabod* from the Temple. In this vision, the historical tragedy of death, destruction and exile find theological explanation and justification. The scholarly assumption is that these cultic abominations somehow explain the doom of the city and the Temple<sup>1</sup>.

#### A. Translation and Analysis

##### a. *The image of jealousy (Eze 8:5-6)*

5 Then he said to me, «Son of man, raise your eyes now toward<sup>2</sup> the north». So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and behold, to the north of the altar<sup>3</sup> gate, the image of jealousy was at the entrance<sup>4</sup>.

6 He said to me, «Son of man, do you see what they are doing? The great abominations which the house of Israel<sup>5</sup> are committing here, to drive me away from my sanctuary? Yet you will see still greater abominations».

b. *Rites before pagan imagery (Eze 8:7-13)*

7 Then he brought me to the entrance of the court; and I saw and behold a hole in the wall<sup>6</sup>.

8 Then he said to me, «Son of man, dig now through the wall»<sup>7</sup> so I dug through the wall<sup>8</sup>, and behold, an entrance.

9 And he said to me, «Go in, and see the vile<sup>9</sup> abominations that they are committing here».

10 So I went in, and saw, and behold, all kinds of reptiles and abominable animals<sup>10</sup>, and all the idols of the house of Israel carved<sup>11</sup> on the wall<sup>12</sup> all around<sup>13</sup>.

11 Before them stood seventy men, of the elders of the house of Israel, and Jaazaniah son of Shaphan standing among them<sup>14</sup>. Each had his censer in his hand, and the fragrant cloud of<sup>15</sup> incense was ascending.

12 Then he said to me, «Son of man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark<sup>16</sup>, each in his chamber<sup>17</sup> of images? For they say, “The Lord does not see (us)<sup>18</sup>, the Lord has forsaken the land”».

13 And he said to me again, «You will see still greater abominations that they are committing».

c. *Worship of the Tammuz (Eze 8:14-15)*

14 Then he brought me to the entrance of the gate of the house of the Lord which was towards the north; and behold, there, sat women<sup>19</sup> weeping for the Tammuz<sup>20</sup>.

15 Then he said to me, «Do you see this, son of man? You will see still greater abominations than these».

d. *Worship of the sun (Eze 8:16-18)*

16 Then he brought me into the inner court of the house of the Lord; and behold, at the entrance of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-(five)<sup>21</sup> men, with their backs to the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east, prostrating themselves<sup>22</sup> to the sun toward the east<sup>23</sup>.

17 And he said to me, «Do you see this, son of man? Is it a light thing<sup>24</sup> for the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here? Must they fill the land with violence<sup>25</sup>, and repeatedly provoke me to anger? For behold, they are putting the branch to their nose!<sup>26</sup>

18 Therefore I will act with fury<sup>27</sup>; my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, I will not listen to them»<sup>28</sup>.

## B. Structure

Eze 8:4-18 is the narrative about the four cultic abominations committed within the Temple precinct (vv. 4-6, 7-13, 14-15, 16-17) and YHWH's response to them (v. 18). The unity between the four acts of cultic abominations is established by repeated use of literary formulas such as; location<sup>29</sup>; the repeated command to see<sup>30</sup>; (3) description of the abomination and participants introduced by יהנה<sup>31</sup>; the question as to whether the prophet sees repeatedly introduced by usual title «son of man»<sup>32</sup>; and a transitional note warning that worse is more to come<sup>33</sup>. This clearly manifest that Eze 8:1-18 is intended to be read as a unity whose principal motif is the cultic abominations committed inside the Temple precinct. The guided tour given to the prophet in the Temple of Jerusalem is meant to show in a graphic manner the source of YHWH's anger and the reason for the recent crisis.

## C. Significance and Relation to the Temple of Jerusalem

This part of Ezekiel's first Temple vision presents the four cultic abominations committed by the house of Israel against the sovereignty of YHWH. It fully clarifies the repeated description of Israel's rebelliousness in the inaugural vision and serves as the foundation why the *k<sup>ᵉ</sup>bod* YHWH intends to leave the Temple of Jerusalem. This important point can be amply seen in our discussion of the theological significance of the abominations shown to the prophet in Eze 8:5-18. To establish the relationship of this narrative with the Temple of Jerusalem, I would like to present some observations.

1. *The Symbolism of the Number «four»*. As noted in the inaugural vision, Ezekiel uses motifs to transmit his theological message. One of these is the symbolic use of the number four for the living beings (their faces, their wings, the feet, the wheels, etc.)<sup>34</sup>. In Eze 8:3-18, the prophet approached the Temple from the outer into the inner courtyard, in the direction of the eastern entrance leading into the atrium in four stages. At each of the stage he saw idolatrous practice being carried out each being considered worse than than the one which precedes it<sup>35</sup>.

Scholars have tried to disprove the veracity of these cultic abominations as occurring in the time of Ezekiel. The main argument sup-

porting this position is the claim that the narrative of Eze 8 stands in contrast with the data from Jeremiah and Lamentations and therefore its veracity seems questionable<sup>36</sup>. But, as M. Greenberg correctly observes, the point of the vision is to present vividly the cultic depravity of the sanctuary and thus predicts its doom as something irrevocable<sup>37</sup>. I. M. Duguid takes the same position, by stating that they should not be regarded as descriptions of actual events taking place in the Temple in the time of Ezekiel. This does not imply that Ezekiel's narrative was false, nor does this makes the prophet a «liar». Ezekiel's purpose was not to preserve historical data but to convict Judah of cultic sin and thus provide a theological rationale for the destruction of Jerusalem<sup>38</sup>.

Corollary to this, in the discussion of the inaugural vision, we explained that the predominance of the number four in the description of the living creatures implies totality<sup>39</sup>. If we apply the same symbolism in the incidence of four cultic abominations, the scene clearly expresses the totality of the religious and cultic corruptions of the people. Israel is corrupted through and through. This obliges YHWH, the Holy One of Israel, to abandon them to their fate and thus leaves no doubt the irrevocability of the impending destruction which the people richly deserves for their sins. In this way, Ezekiel reinterpreted the historical tragedy of Israel from a religio-cultural perspective.

2. *תועבות* (*abominations*). The evaluation of history from a cultic perspective can be clearly seen in Ezekiel's use of cultic terminologies. The transgressions of the house of Israel against YHWH are referred to as *תועבות*<sup>40</sup>, «abominations», a word which occurs forty-three times in the book. The word appears once in Isaiah, and a few times in Jeremiah while it does not occur in other pre-exilic prophetic literatures<sup>41</sup>. This statistic clearly manifests that the term is highly characteristic of Ezekiel. It appears in the Temple vision three times and is used to condemn the idolatrous practices committed in the Temple precinct<sup>42</sup>. The word *תועבות* refers to something «which is excluded by its very nature, that which seems dangerous or sinister»<sup>43</sup>. Its reference ranges from antisocial behavior to pagan worship<sup>44</sup>. In Ezekiel, it often refers to cultic offences<sup>45</sup>. Thus, the cultic offences in Eze 8:1-18 and 11:1-13 can both be understood as comprising all the abominations committed by Israel which defile the Temple and all the land<sup>46</sup>.

This term clearly marks the cultic perspective from where the narrative is seen<sup>47</sup>. The acts committed by Israel are transgressions

against YHWH enthroned in the Temple. Since the transgressions are cultic in nature expectedly all this demanded ritual cleansing<sup>48</sup>. But the cultic sins of Israel are so great (as may be intimated by the number «four») that the very Temple, the house of YHWH, is totally contaminated by it. The gravity of Israel's cultic sins and the rejection of YHWH are affirmed in the graphic description of the departure of the *kēbōd* YHWH from inside the Temple. This is in consonance with the Priestly concept that the divinity cannot reside in a totally impure sanctuary<sup>49</sup>. Since the God of Israel is no longer in the Temple, then no expiation and ritual cleansing are possible, no forgiveness will be obtained. Israel's doom is therefore sealed.

3. *The Four Cultic Abominations.* The narrative in Eze 8:5-18 describes the defilement of the Jerusalem Temple consisting of an image and cultic actions, called abominations, committed by the people at the very Temple precinct dedicated to the sole worship of the God of Israel. After giving the chronological data and circumstances surrounding the vision, Ezekiel begins the account.

a. *the image of jealousy (vv. 5-6).* When Ezekiel arrives in Jerusalem, he is first brought to the entrance to the inner court's gate (v. 3), which is known also as the altar gate because the altar of sacrifice is located just inside that gate (v. 5). As he looks northward, he sees the «image of jealousy» (הַמַּלְהוּת הַקִּינָה אֲדָה) at its entrance<sup>50</sup>. This expression is not altogether clear and therefore its identity cannot be established with certainty. Studies have been divided regarding the identity of the divinity to whom this image was dedicated to. Opinions range from an image representing Tammuz<sup>51</sup>, Asherah<sup>52</sup>, any fanciful image<sup>53</sup>, and even, YHWH himself<sup>54</sup>.

Though the identity of this statue is not clear, from the emotion of jealousy that the image evokes in YHWH (v. 3) and the title attributed to it (vv. 3, 5), it is clear that this image is not simply an ornament or a symbolic guard but a representation of a divinity that stands as a rival to the adoration intended for YHWH alone<sup>55</sup>. The normal term for «idols», from the cultic perspective is *gillulim*, which appears forty-eight times in the OT and thirty-nine of it is in Ezekiel<sup>56</sup>. The Hebrew word מַלְהוּת, translated here as «image», appears only twice in Ezekiel<sup>57</sup> and both are used to refer to this unknown statue. Though the word occurs only twice in Ezekiel, it was in general use among the Phoenicians for a statue of a god or goddess, and the form changes gender accordingly<sup>58</sup>. It is also used to denote the statue of a human being<sup>59</sup>. Thus, it seems we have here a case of an

alien cult object designated by a probably foreign term<sup>60</sup>. With the seeming confrontation between the statue and YHWH already noted in vv. 3-4, this designation strongly underlines that this cultic object is foreign and has no right to be in the Temple dedicated to «the God of Israel».

Finally, its location at the outer north gate suggests that the image probably is intended to guard or protect the city from attack. As Eze 38:6, 15 clearly state, the north is the traditional direction from which Jerusalem's enemies are believed to approach<sup>61</sup>. If so, then its location also manifests Israel's lack of confidence in YHWH's power to save his own people. Thus, they have asked the protection of foreign gods<sup>62</sup>.

b. *rites before pagan imagery (vv. 7-13)*. The heavenly guide then leads Ezekiel to the entrance of the court and there sees a hole in the wall to where he is ordered to dig through. The inside wall of the outer court of the Temple is lined with unclean creatures, «reptiles» or «creeping things» (רִמָּשׁ)<sup>63</sup>, «abominable animals» (בְּהֵמָה שֶׁקִּין)<sup>64</sup>, «and all the idols of the house of Israel» (וְכָל-גִּלְגָּלֵי בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל). The identity of these idols, again, cannot be ascertained with any certainty. One suggestion is that they are Egyptian idols that often had animal forms: «The precise nature of the elders practice is not known. Possibly it is some form of Egyptian worship, since king Zedekiah of Jerusalem is at this time making political overtures to Egypt. The adoption of Egyptian worship, with its animal gods, would have been natural»<sup>65</sup>. Thus, the ceremonies being conducted by these official representatives of Judean society are probably aimed at enlisting the support of Egyptian deities, which also implies the support of the Egyptian overlords<sup>66</sup>. In any case, the cultic action clearly manifest their loss of confidence in the God of Israel and his power to act, which may have been the meaning behind the elders justification for idolatrous act: «the Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land»<sup>67</sup>.

The specific and repeated mention of the participants as the elders of the house of Israel (vv. 11-12) should be considered as an important emphasis here<sup>68</sup>. It should be remembered that in Israelite history, a group of elders was chosen to represent the whole house of Israel. Num 11:16-30 speaks of seventy elders who were endowed with the same spirit as Moses, so as to help him carry the burden of leading the people. In Exo 24:1-11 a group of seventy elders, together with Moses, Aaron and his two sons, is mentioned as receiving the privilege of seeing God. Clearly, the group of seventy elders plays an

important role in the community as mediator between YHWH and the people. If the representatives or the people chosen to lead are idolaters and sinners, logically those whom they represent and lead must be too<sup>69</sup>. This enforces the depiction of Israel as totally corrupt and therefore deserves to be abandoned by YHWH. Judgment is then inevitable.

Finally, a note of irony can be noted in the second cultic abomination. In OT custom, the practice of offering incense has an apotropaic function, that is, to ward off dangers from demonic forces<sup>70</sup>. Considering the historico-political context of the text, the purpose of the elders cultic action is probably to seek deliverance from the impending danger that looms over Israel, namely, the threat of invasion of a new enemy, the Babylonian empire. But in seeking deliverance from this new threat, they turned and asked help from an old enemy, Egypt, who had once enslaved them in the past. Instead of turning to YHWH, who has been their deliverer, they spurned him, doubted his power and turned towards their former Egyptian masters from whom YHWH has already saved them<sup>71</sup>. The succeeding narratives will prove them wrong. Israel will see the power of YHWH in judgment, and, Egypt, to whom they have put so much trust, cannot do anything to prevent the impending destruction. Indeed, both Israel and Egypt will suffer the judgments of YHWH.

c. *worship of the Tammuz* (vv. 14-15). The prophet is then led to the northern entrance to the inner court where he sees women crying for Tammuz<sup>72</sup>. D. I. Block suggests that «the Tammuz» refers to a particular genre of lament, rather than to a foreign god. What Block pretends to prove here is that the women were not weeping for the death and departure of a foreign god, as the Tammuz ritual would imply, but they used the Tammuz ritual to grieve the departure of YHWH himself. The close proximity of this passage with the elder's assertion of YHWH's absence seems, for Block, to point towards this interpretation<sup>73</sup>. Although this interpretation serves to explain adequately the special construction *מִבְּכּוֹת אֶת־הַתַּמּוּז*, «weeping for the Tammuz» (with the sign of the direct object and the article on Tammuz), but read in the context of the abominations that precede and follow it, this interpretation seems inappropriate. It should be noted that the two prior abominations (like the fourth to follow) involve Israel's veneration of a deity other than YHWH, thus, the likely conclusion would be that this one does as well.

If this is the case, the women are weeping therefore not out of human grief but performing a sacral act associated with the Babylonian

god Tammuz. The place where the worship is located manifests their loss of faith: at the very entrance to YHWH's sacred sanctuary, they are weeping for another god. Their cultic action does not only manifest their lack of faith but also their lack of understanding of the nature of the God of Israel. The God of Israel is above all the «living God»<sup>74</sup>. To worship a dying god in the very house of the living God of Israel is a direct and double affront to YHWH's sovereignty and power over Israel and all creation. Israel have lost confidence in the power of the living God, but their substitute for him was a god whose power oscillates from life to death and then back from death to life, according to the rhythm of nature. As T. Jacobsen explains: «In the cult drama of the death of the god and lament for him, celebrated at the end of spring, the loss of the god, the waning of power for new life in nature, is counteracted by mourning and lament»<sup>75</sup>. Thus, their substitute god, supposedly restored to life aided by ritual weeping of his devotees, is clearly inferior to YHWH and could not even be considered a god in the strict sense. The succeeding chapters will amply show the folly and uselessness of their action. The god from whom they expect life and blessings will, in fact, be the cause of their death and destruction.

d. *worship of the sun (v. 16)*. The last act of abomination concerns the twenty-five sun-worshippers in the inner court, between the inner porch and the altar, with their backs to the sanctuary. The identity of these men are not given but their number invites immediate association with the twenty-five men, who appear in Eze 11:1, designated as the «princes of the people» (שְׂרֵי הָעָם). Although this identification is attractive, it cannot be confirmed by the absence of a more specific evidence<sup>76</sup>. Furthermore, their location in a place normally reserved for the priests, and thus of special sanctity<sup>77</sup>, argues against this identification. The suggestion that they are the representatives of the twenty-four priestly courses led by the high priest seems also inconclusive, since the institution came into existence later<sup>78</sup>. Despite the uncertainty of their identity, we can deduce from the text that, since they conducted the ritual in this place of special sanctity, they must be a body of official standing in Israel.

They are depicted to be bowing to the sun in worship. This solar rite is not new to the Temple precinct for 2 Kgs 23:11 narrates that during Josiah's reform, the king did away with the horses and burned the chariots dedicated to the sun-god, Shemesh<sup>79</sup>. Whether they are worshipping the sun as such, or whether they worshipped the sun as a symbol of God<sup>80</sup>, it cannot be known for certain; if it was the latter,

they were breaking the second commandment, believing that a part of the created order could be an image of the true God. The worship of the rising sun entails turning one's back on the Temple structure, which itself faces east. The eastward orientation of the worshipers here is in contrast with what seems to be prescribed in later writings, where the worshiper must face the Temple<sup>81</sup>. Much more, in view of Eze 43:17 where the steps of the altar is constructed in such a way that the priest who offers the sacrifice will be facing the sanctuary, the specific mention that «their backs was to the Temple of the Lord» (v. 16) must mean something more. In OT writings, turning one's back on YHWH is found used a metaphor for apostasy<sup>82</sup>. Since the Temple is considered to be the dwelling place of YHWH, where his holy presence is enthroned, the men's turning their back to the Temple must also mean turning their back to YHWH. In the fourth abomination, the phrase is therefore used literally and, at the same time, it also retains the sense of the metaphor<sup>83</sup>. Much more their act of prostration before the sun was an act that is reserved for YHWH alone, as the divine sovereign. The verb *נִשְׁתַּחֲוּיָתָם* «prostrating» is a court language which «denotes the physical gesture of prostration before a superior»<sup>84</sup>. Thus, the cult rendered by these men to the sun does not only constitute an apostasy but also an act of rebellion against the sovereignty of YHWH over Israel. This case of double offense may have contributed to its evaluation as being the worst of all the abominations of Israel.

4. *The Concept of the «sacred/holy»*. The discussions above will be further enriched if we take in consideration the biblical concept of the «sacred/holy». In the opinion of most scholars, the Hebrew root *קדש* has the basic meaning of «separation» or «withdrawal»<sup>85</sup>. But as H.-P. Muller opines this meaning is not basic to the word but is derived, that is, the separation is established for mutual protection for both the sacred and the profane<sup>86</sup>, stemming from the idea that illicit contact with the «numinous» or the deity is dangerous<sup>87</sup>. The word, as properly understood, signifies that which is proper to the nature of the divinity, his essence and not merely one of his divine attributes<sup>88</sup>. Rudolf Otto's analysis of the nature of holiness is widely accepted and casts light on the biblical concept. Otto identifies the holy with the «numinous», the mysterious quality of the divine, which he describes as «wholly other»; that which strikes man in the presence of the divine and the created. The effect of the numinous is twofold and paradoxical: it is «tremendous», fearful, and so repels, but, at the same time, it is «fascinating» and attracts man<sup>89</sup>.

In the OT, the holiness of God as his proper nature is seen in the passages where YHWH «has sworn by his holiness»<sup>90</sup> and where he affirms that he is «God and not man, the holy one present among»<sup>91</sup> his people. It is therefore a quality unique to YHWH for, «there is no Holy One like the Lord»<sup>92</sup>. When YHWH shows himself to be holy, he demonstrates his divinity<sup>93</sup>. This is always a demonstration of power directed to some purpose worthy of his divinity. He shows his holiness in his protection and deliverance<sup>94</sup>, which is the great work of his justice<sup>95</sup> and his faithfulness<sup>96</sup>. Thus his holiness is often mentioned in contexts where the restoration of Israel occurs; for this restoration is the establishment of an order in which his moral will is supreme and his power over the forces of evil is asserted<sup>97</sup>. It is in the holiness of YHWH where the trust in the salvation of Israel and promises of restoration are founded<sup>98</sup>.

Persons or objects which are said to be holy derive their holiness in relation to YHWH. The Temple, its personnel and the furniture of the cult belong to YHWH, for, in some way or another, they contain and manifest the presence and power of the numinous. The holiness of persons or objects is therefore not part of their essence nor an attribute but an effect of their relation (or contact) with the divine<sup>99</sup>. Most occurrences of the word are found in liturgical contexts<sup>100</sup>. It is not surprising therefore that in the statistics provided by Muller, among the OT books which contains the word קדש and its derivatives, Leviticus comes first with a hundred fifty-two (152), followed by Ezekiel with a hundred and five (105)<sup>101</sup>. The fact that these two books are written within the context of the cult developed in the Temple of Jerusalem affirms the term's association with the cult and also suggests the perspective from where it shall be best understood.

The basic Priestly conviction here is that the «wholly other» desires to have fellowship with sinful humanity. Since God cannot become less holy in order to establish this fellowship, man must therefore become more holy («sanctified»)<sup>102</sup>; once gained, holiness may be lessened or contaminated by contact with various proscribed substances and by feeling, thinking, or acting in ways that God has forbidden (impurity)<sup>103</sup>. Once the sphere of the holy is infringed by the impure, the fellowship established between man and YHWH deity is in peril and disastrous consequences can be expected. In the Priestly cosmogony, impurity is a dynamic and malefic force which attacks the sphere of the holy not just by direct contact but from a distance<sup>104</sup>. In this conception, the «impure» acquires the malefic power

once attributed by Israel's neighboring nations to demons<sup>105</sup>. Israel thoroughly overhauled this concept of impurity in adapting it to its monotheistic system<sup>106</sup>. The demons, which has no place in a monotheistic cosmogony, have been excised from the world but man has taken their place. Though man is not identified as demonic, he is capable of the demonic. He alone has the power to break the fellowship God has established with man. He alone can contaminate the sanctuary and force God out<sup>107</sup>. Thus, there is a constant need in the Priestly circle to continually and constantly purge the sanctuary from all impurities that will threaten the holy presence within it<sup>108</sup>. Holiness is also maintained not only by cultic ritual but by meeting the demands of the moral will of YHWH; Israel should be holy because YHWH is holy<sup>109</sup>. This principle introduces a series of moral precepts, as reflected in Lev 19:3, 9-18.

From the above discussion on the biblical concept of holiness, it is clear that the Temple, being the dwelling place of YHWH, is of utmost holiness. YHWH's permanent presence in it has far-reaching consequences for the cultic and moral life of Israel, for it creates all around it a sphere of supreme sanctity<sup>110</sup>. This sanctity extends throughout the land in decreasing scale<sup>111</sup>. The most sacred area is the Holy of Holies, the cultic center and the place where the sacred presence is encountered. The further one is from the Temple the lesser is the degree of holiness<sup>112</sup>. D.P. Wright has proven that within the Temple of Jerusalem and precincts this gradation of holiness also exists<sup>113</sup>. The terminology used to call the different parts of the Temple manifest this. The entire area of the Temple (Solomon's), including the courts, is called in Hebrew מִקְדָּשׁ הַיְהוָה, «holy/sanctuary area»<sup>114</sup>. The Temple structure is divided into three parts. The innermost part where the *kĕbod* YHWH sits enthroned above the cherubim throne is called in Hebrew קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, «Holy of Holies»<sup>115</sup>. The middle part of the shrine is called the קֹדֶשׁ, «holy place»<sup>116</sup>. The front part is called the אֹרֶן לְבַיִת, «vestibule/porch»<sup>117</sup>. The materials used to decorate these parts of the Temple, the cultic furnitures placed in them, and the frequency of access permitted into them, also express the varying degree of holiness accorded to each of them<sup>118</sup>. The Holy of Holies is overlaid with gold and it contains the ark underneath the wings of gold covered cherubim<sup>119</sup>; the holy place is also overlaid with gold and it contains a gold incense altar, a gold bread table, and gold lampstands<sup>120</sup>; outside the Temple, in its court is found the copper altar, a large copper laver, and ten small copper lavers<sup>121</sup>. The two pillars standing in front of the Temple are of copper<sup>122</sup>. No Levites<sup>123</sup> or any

laypersons<sup>124</sup> are allowed to enter the Temple building. This right is reserved only to the priests<sup>125</sup>. Yet even the high priest, the holiest of the Israelites, is only allowed to enter the Holy of Holies once a year at the Day of Atonement. It is in the holy place (the central part of the Temple) that the high priest aided by regular priests can perform daily and weekly rites; while the Levites and Israelites are permitted access only to the Temple court<sup>126</sup>.

The recognition that there is a graded scale of holiness would help explain the otherwise puzzling remark of YHWH to Ezekiel at the conclusion of every cultic abomination; «you will see still greater abominations than this»<sup>127</sup>. The idolatrous practices Ezekiel saw in his tour of the Temple are apparently more or less interchangeable acts of idolatry. There is no indication that each act in itself is far worse than the other. Equally, the gravity of the cultic crime cannot be clearly established in terms of the persons involved, that is, the women crying for Tammuz should be considered as more significant personages than the seventy *ʿqenim*. This is difficult to justify as reason for the gravity of the idolatry. The most probable aggravating factor lies solely in the location of the offence, not in the specific acts themselves, nor the people performing them<sup>128</sup>. For, in a graded scheme of holiness, the closer one approaches to the source of holiness the stricter is the control of access so as to safeguard the holy presence from illegitimate incursions (i.e., impure objects, persons, etc.). In the same manner, the closer the cultic abomination infringes on the sacred sphere the graver is the offense committed and the more contaminating is the pollution it brings to the realm of the sacred. Thus, one will perfectly understand why each successive act of idolatry that the prophet saw as he advanced into the Temple court was considered a greater abomination than the previous one<sup>129</sup>. Probably one of the reasons why Ezekiel was guided gradually towards the Temple is to show how the whole Temple had been defiled from its outer parts to the inner court, by the sins of the people. This point is expressed explicitly in Eze 5:11: «you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations. This without doubt shows the extent of the depravity of the house of Israel who are audacious or irreverent enough to commit their impure practices, their abominations, at the very house of YHWH, the source and domain of all that is holy and pure»<sup>130</sup>.

5. *Israel's sins were not only cultic but also social.* The total corruptness of the people is further enforced by Ezekiel when he did not

limit their sins to cultic offenses but that they also «fill the land with violence»<sup>131</sup>. The phrase used here is: *כִּי־מָלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ חַמָּס*. This recalls the same phrase used in Gen 6:11 to describe the violence that provoked the cleansing of the land with a flood during the time of Noah: *כִּי מָלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ חַמָּס*. This phrase may have been used precisely to recall the event of the Flood and warn them of the gravity of their sins which now reach the level where total destruction was the only option. The term *חַמָּס* («treat or act violently»), in the context of the verse and its usual usage, suggests ethical sins. But it does not simply mean oppression against one's fellow, for, in a more theological sense, it could mean that which constitutes a direct violation of the order established by God<sup>132</sup>. It is therefore a term endowed with a deeper religious sense than merely socio-ethical violations. Thus, although the condemnation now directly addresses the relationship between Israelites (i.e., social in nature), it is still expressed in a priestly religious language. This theological perspective is consonant with what we have already noted in the four cultic abominations, that is, not to narrate the historical sins of Israel but to show their theological depravity before YHWH. For Ezekiel, then, the sins of Israel are not only against their covenant relationship with YHWH but against the order established by God for them. The violation of this established order may be expressed in many forms, ranging from the ethical (e.g., extreme wickedness, malicious witness/judicial murder, institutional injustice, injurious language, etc.) to the physical (e.g., physical murder, apportionation of other people's land, etc.).

6. *Israel, a rebellious people.* The inaugural vision describes Israel clearly as a house in revolt, a rebellious nation<sup>133</sup>. Two special terms are used to express rotundly this quality, namely, *marad* (מָרַד), which occurred three times in Eze 2:3, and *pesa'* (פִּשְׁעַ). Both terms have political as well as theological sense although the latter is clearly the emphasis. The rebelliousness of Israel is further qualified as already present since their forefathers and enduring till the very time of Ezekiel's call<sup>134</sup>. As to what type or in what manner this rebellion is expressed, the prophetic commissioning does not specify. The inaugural vision describes this rebelliousness of the house of Israel in general terms, such as «brazen-faced and hard-hearted»<sup>135</sup>, they will refuse to listen to Ezekiel for they refuse to listen to YHWH<sup>136</sup>.

The Temple vision, on the other hand, clearly presents the acts of rebellion committed by the house of Israel. It is cultic idolatry, an act of rebellion against YHWH himself<sup>137</sup>, and violence against their fel-

low Israelites<sup>138</sup>. The narratives of Eze 8:5-18 thus describe the rebelliousness of Israel. The elements used in this narratives further qualify their rebellion as total. All these rebellious acts against YHWH, their sovereign God will surely not go unpunished.

7. *Inevitability of Judgment.* In Chapter I of this paper, we affirmed that the dumbness of Ezekiel was a sign that he could not intercede for his fellow Israelites nor can he reprove them so that they may change their ways and be saved<sup>139</sup>. It is interesting to note that if in the inaugural vision, the impediment (dumbness) was on the part of Ezekiel, in the Temple vision, the impediment (deafness) now occurs with YHWH<sup>140</sup>. One may notice that both impediments are related to communication process and both impediments clearly block the change of course of events. Ezekiel, as a prophet and a priest, cannot reprove Israel so that they can change their ways and be save. YHWH, as sovereign power, cannot hear the people's cry for mercy so that he will stop the destruction. Both impediments clearly show the inevitability of the events that are about to occur.

The additional condemnation that the house of Judah has «filled the land with violence» (v. 17), recalls the description of the land in the time of Noah before the flood. It was the same reason that made God regret that he made man and moved him to destroy them<sup>141</sup>. This expectedly suggests the idea that just as YHWH destroyed humanity through the flood (except for Noah), he will also destroy all Israel (except for a remnant)<sup>142</sup>.

In this vision, Ezekiel witnesses four cultic abominations committed in the immediate vicinity of the YHWH's own Temple (chap. 8). These accounts –vivid illustrations of the depravity of Jerusalem's inhabitants, including its leaders– justify the following mass execution (chap. 9)<sup>143</sup>. Several motifs, such as: the symbolic number of the abominations, the specific mention of the participants of the abominations (which somehow represents Israel), the added referrance to ethical sins (which recalls the social conditions before the Flood), and the clear effort to place these cultic abominations within the very Temple, all add up to the picture of Israel's grave and total corruption. In the words of P. J. Harland: «Wholesale corruption leads to total destruction; that is the only way in which the city can be treated»<sup>144</sup>. The corruption of the people had led to their own demise. Thus, the coming destruction and divine abandonment of Israel is explained and justified.

Judgment has been passed and acted upon in the divine sphere. All that is left is its fulfillment in the earthly sphere, which in light of

its divine consumation, is now inevitable. The link between these two spheres is the vision of the *kēbōd* YHWH's abandonment of the Temple of Jerusalem. Since the protective divine presence has left the Temple and, thus, the city and the land, the physical destruction of the city, Temple and its inhabitants is but a matter of time. The prophet's intercession will not detain the course of punishment that Israel deserves<sup>145</sup>. What is left for Ezekiel to do is return to his fellow exiles in Babylon and tell them all that he has seen.

#### D. Summary

To sum up all that we have discussed; Ezekiel's first Temple vision, which occurred fourteen months later after the inaugural vision, narrates the prophet's first vision *of* and *in* the Temple. It reveals the relationship between Israel and YHWH. The indwelling of YHWH in the Temple is totally gratuitous. In the face of this gratuitous choice, Israel is expected to recognize YHWH's sovereignty over them and give him due worship. But, as the vision of the cultic transgressions suggests, the house of Israel has refused to fulfill this perennial obligation and thus caused the break in their relationship with YHWH. Thus, the failure of Israel to give proper worship was the cause of the *kabod's* departure and the historical tragedy of exile.

The fact that the vision started with these four cultic transgressions is suggestive of the theological message of the first Temple vision. For Ezekiel, the historical tragedy of Israel is not due to any outside heavenly or earthly powers (no mention of other gods or invading forces is made in the vision) but from a more malefic power which comes from the people themselves. Thus he repeatedly called them תועבות (abominations), a cultic term which defines those which are, by its very nature, against the holiness of YHWH. Since the transgressions are cultic in nature, expectedly, all this demanded ritual cleansing. But, as intimated by the number «four» (the i.e., symbol for fullness), the cultic depravity of Israel are so grave and total that no expiation and ritual cleansing seem possible.

## II. DEPARTURE OF THE *kēbōd* YHWH (EZE 10:1-22)

The pericope studies the narrative on the departure of the *kēbōd* YHWH from the Temple. The continuous reading of the vision nar-

ratives will show that the this pericope theologically follows the affirmations of the previous pericopes, namely, that Israel's religious deprivations are so grave and severe that YHWH is forced to leave his dwelling place. The pericope is the central theme to which all the narratives of the first Temple vision lead to. The vision of YHWH's departure affirms the gravity of Israel cultic transgressions and the break in relationship between them and YHWH. The vision thus culminates YHWH's judgment against his rebellious people. It also serves as a sign of the certainty of judgment and punishment for Israel in the historical level.

#### A. Translation and Analysis

1 Then I looked, and behold, on the firmament that was above the heads of the cherubim like sapphire-stone, with the appearance of<sup>146</sup> the likeness of a throne visible<sup>147</sup> above them<sup>148</sup>.

2 And he said to the man clothed in linen, and said<sup>149</sup>, «Enter between the wheels beneath the cherub<sup>150</sup>; and fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city». He went in as I looked on.

3 Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the Temple when the man entered; and the cloud filled the inner court.

4 Then the glory of the Lord rose up from the cherub to the threshold of the Temple; the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the glory of the Lord.

5 And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.

6 And it came to pass, when he commanded the man clothed in linen<sup>151</sup>, «Take fire from within the wheels, between the cherubim», then he entered and stood beside a wheel.

7 Then the cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim<sup>152</sup> to the fire that was between the cherubim, took and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen<sup>153</sup>, who took it and went out.

8 And there appeared<sup>154</sup> in the cherubim the form of hand of a man under their wings.

9 Then I looked, and behold four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside each cherub; and the appearance of the wheels was like the sparkle of beryl stone.

10 And as their appearance, the four had one<sup>155</sup> likeness, something like a wheel within a wheel.

11 When they moved, they moved in any of their four directions<sup>156</sup> without turning as they moved; but to the place the head looked, they followed it<sup>157</sup> without turning as they moved.

12 And their entire body<sup>158</sup>, their backs<sup>159</sup>, their hands, their wings, and the wheels<sup>160</sup>, were full of eyes all around, so the wheels of the four of them.

13 As for their wheels, they were called in my hearing «the wheel-work».

14 Each one had four faces: the first face<sup>161</sup> was that of the cherub, the second face<sup>162</sup> was the face of a man, the third<sup>163</sup> the face of a lion, and the fourth<sup>164</sup> the face of an eagle<sup>165</sup>.

15 Then the cherubim rose up. This are the living creatures that I saw by the canal<sup>166</sup> Chebar.

16 When the cherubim moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the cherubim extended up their wings to rise above the earth, the wheels also turned not from beside them.

17 When they stopped, the others stopped; and when they rose up, the others rose up with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in them.

18 Then the glory of the Lord went out from the threshold<sup>167</sup> of the Temple and stopped above the cherubim.

19 And the cherubim extended up their wings and rose up from the earth before my eyes as they went out with the wheels beside them. They stopped at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the Lord; and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them.

20 These were the living creatures<sup>168</sup> that I saw underneath the God of Israel by the canal Chebar<sup>169</sup>; and I knew that they were cherubim.

21 Each one of the four<sup>170</sup> had four faces, each one had four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man underneath their wings.

22 And the appearance of their faces was the same faces which I saw near the river Chebar, their appearance and themselves<sup>171</sup>: each one moved straight ahead.

## B. Structure

The third part of the Temple vision narrative<sup>172</sup> narrates the burning of Jerusalem<sup>173</sup>, the departure of the *k<sup>e</sup>bod* YHWH<sup>174</sup>, and the description of the cherubim and wheels<sup>175</sup>. The transition in the narrative is signalled by the phrase, «I looked and behold» (וַיִּרְאֶה וַיִּהְיֶה)<sup>176</sup>. The presence of this phrase in Eze 10:1, 9, on the one hand, signals the presence of transition in the continuity of the narratives found in chapter 8-9, and, on the other, it effectively divides chapter 10 into

two sections, namely: Eze 10:1-8, which speaks of the burning of Jerusalem and the departure of the *kēbod* YHWH from the cherubim throne in the Holy of Holies to the threshold of the Temple; and Eze 10:9-22, which contains the description of the chariot-throne and the departure of the *kēbod* YHWH from the threshold of the Temple to the cherubim.

The transitional phrase therefore manifests the composite nature of the narratives contained therein. The mixture of these different themes in this chapter is often regarded as due to editorial work<sup>177</sup>. Modern critics who assert not only the essential unity of chaps. 8-9, but also the integrity of the juxtaposition, perceive in chap. 10 problems of a more serious sort<sup>178</sup>. W. Zimmerli, for example, considers almost all of the second section<sup>179</sup> as the result of multiple levels of ongoing editorial expansion thus secondary and not part of the original work of the prophet<sup>180</sup>. Since, it is not our goal here to provide explanation for the history of its literary composition, it would be enough to indicate that the composite structure of Eze 10 has made scholars seriously question its presence in the original Temple narrative.

The suggestion that the presence of Eze 10 in the Temple vision narrative is due to editorial hand receives a greater impulse when one examines the content of the chapter. The two sections of the chapter contain descriptions of the *kēbod* YHWH and its bearers that strongly recall and complements the descriptions contained in the inaugural vision. The similarity, as well as the differences, of descriptions contained in both visions has made scholars question the exact relationship between these visions. M. Dijkstra, for example, after examining the editorial glosses in Eze 10 concludes that: «originally, the text of ch. 10 was a visionary report independent from ch. 1. It is not those elements, which makes ch. 10 differ from ch. 1, which have to be excised as later additions to the text. On the contrary, the additions are those elements which harmonize the text of ch. 10 according to ch. 1... The vision of the cherubim and not, as textual tradition gradually wanted to reshape it, the vision of the [chariot throne] in ch. 1»<sup>181</sup>.

Whatever the exact literary development and relation of Eze 10 with the inaugural vision, we can safely deduce the existence of literary affinities between the two visions. This literary connection, editorial or otherwise, encourages any reader of the canonical book of Ezekiel to regard the two visions as closely connected and related<sup>182</sup>. Much more, in the observation of D.I. Block, the descriptions in Eze

10 are not simply repetitions or borrowed from the elements of the inaugural vision but serve to clarify, explain and deepen the significance of the former<sup>183</sup>. Such literary modifications can only be adequately explained if we admit the presence of editorial hands that compiled and gave the structure to the present text we have<sup>184</sup>.

Another difficulty posed by Eze 10 is the departure of the *k<sup>e</sup>bod* YHWH from the Temple of Jerusalem which has become quite problematic as it appears in the present canonical text. In the appearance of the *k<sup>e</sup>bod* YHWH in 8:4, its specific position is vaguely indicated as «there». Some situates the *kabod* in the Temple court and thus in effect identifying the cherubim where it occupied in 9:3 as the divine vehicle<sup>185</sup>. From where did the *kabod* and the cherubim throne come? From heaven, according to chap. 1, which describes the vision seen in Babylon; but here the prophet has been transported to Jerusalem; and we may well imagine, with the Targum and the Jewish commentators on this verse, that the *kabod* came from the inner sanctuary of the Temple, where it had always been since the ark was first brought in under the wings of the cherubim<sup>186</sup>. They would omit 10:4 as a doublet of 9:3 (that is, if we consider 9:3 as part of the original narrative), otherwise they follow the text: YHWH moves to the threshold (9:3), while the cherubim with the vacant throne wait at the south side of the Temple (10:3) until the *k<sup>e</sup>bod* YHWH remounts and departs (10:18). As a rationale of the situation this is intelligible<sup>187</sup>.

As we now read the present structure of the narrative, YHWH's departure takes place in two stages: first, the *k<sup>e</sup>bod* YHWH moves to the east gate and stands there (10:19); then the *kabod* ascends from "the midst of the city", and, later in the narrative, stands on the east hill outside (11:22). But when 10:18-19 are compared with 11:22-23, it will be seen that they describe the same thing; so that what probably lies behind the present text is not two acts of departure but one. Originally, we may suppose, it took place at this point: the *kabod* stood upon the cherubim (10:18); the cherubim lifted up their wings, and the wheels beside them (10:19a); the *kabod* ascended from the city, and, after a pause on the east hill, vanished out of sight (11:23). The two and a half verses preserve all the fragments that remain of the original narrative. The latter, however, received the addition of 11:1-21, and, according to 11:1, the incident occurred at the east gate of the the Temple; so the moving throne was made to pause there (10:19b), and thus allow 11:1-21 to be included in the vision. Then the narrative had to be resumed (11:22) from the point where

it had been interrupted (10:19a); hence arose the present form of the text, which gives the impression that the departure took place in two stages. In other words, 10:19b and 11:22 are secondary, and are due to the insertion of 11:1-21<sup>188</sup>. Eze 11:22-25 should have followed 10:19 if not for the insertion of 11:1-21.

### C. Significance and Relation to the Temple of Jerusalem

The following observations should help us understand the significance of this part of the vision narrative and its relation to the Temple of Jerusalem.

1. *Connections with the Inaugural Vision.* It is clear from the attentive reading of the narratives on the Temple vision that an effort to establish the connection between the inaugural vision and the Temple vision can be found in the different chapters that constitute the first Temple vision. This intentionality is manifested in the repetition of motifs that were present in the inaugural vision. This can be seen in the similarity of description of the fiery figure between the two visions<sup>189</sup>. Also, Ezekiel's prophetic ministry is continually patterned according to that of Elijah and Elisha, important personages in Israel's prophetic tradition<sup>190</sup>. K.P. Darr clearly states its purpose, «Such links roots him deeply in Israel's prophetic movement; in this case, the association both provides Ezekiel's claims with a traditional precedent and imparts to him some of the authority of his predecessors»<sup>191</sup>.

In Eze 10 that intentionality to connect the two visions is also clearly noticeable. These connections can be noted in the description of the sapphire throne above the firmament carried by the cherubim in Eze 10:1 which recalls a similar description in Eze 1:26; the description of the chariot wheels in 10:9-17 which reminds us of the descriptions found in Eze 1:5-26. The comparison of the sound of the wings of the cherubim as the voice of the Almighty<sup>192</sup>, the explicit and repeated identification of the cherubim in the present vision as the same living creatures he saw at the Chebar canal<sup>193</sup>, helped enforce the connection between the two visions. These and other similarities between the two visions invite the reader to interpret both visions from the same theological perspective.

The reason why a detailed description of the *k'bod* YHWH should appear late in the vision narrative remains unclear. These de-

scriptions, normally, should have been presented at the outset of the present vision<sup>194</sup>, which in this vision contains minimal descriptions of the *kēbod* YHWH<sup>195</sup>. Nevertheless, as repeatedly affirmed above, the chapter (i.e., Eze 10) manifests clearly the intention that the present vision should be regarded as a continuation with the former one. Thus, this chapter may have been a belated effort to strengthen the literary affinities and connections between the two visions. The finality of establishing such connection may have been: first, to suggest that any theological understanding on the present vision must take into consideration the theological apportations of the former; second, it may also constitute an implicit claim for validity of the present vision, just as the detailed descriptions of the *kēbod* YHWH did in the former vision; finally, it may have been intended to emphasize the idea that the *kēbod* YHWH who appeared to Ezekiel in Babylon is the same *kēbod* YHWH who resides in the Temple of Jerusalem. He first appeared to Ezekiel to sent him as a prophet so that the house of Israel will know how they have badly offended YHWH<sup>196</sup>.

2. *Temple, the location of the vision.* If in the inaugural vision the Temple was at the periphery and any connection with it can only be established by implications; in the present vision, the Temple of Jerusalem is at the very center of the prophetic message. The theological explanation for Israel's historical woe, as a people and as a nation, turns out to be something connected with the Temple of Jerusalem. It is the location wherein in the vision narrative develops and progresses. The cultic abominations and their punishments were all narrated to occur and develops from the Temple. The present pericope, which deals with YHWH's command for the linen clothed man to scatter fire over the city is also placed within the Temple precincts.

The Temple of Jerusalem plays therefore a determinant role in the divine message that YHWH, through the prophet, wants to impart to the rebellious house of Israel. It will only be from the perspective of the Temple of Jerusalem, in its significance for the Israelite faith that one can rightly perceive and understand the second vision and even the whole book of Ezekiel. Thus to understand Eze 8-11 one has to take into consideration the deeper significance of the Temple<sup>197</sup>.

3. *Temple, the dwelling place of YHWH.* A basic theological affirmation of Israelite faith is the conviction that YHWH has chosen to dwell in their midst. From their earliest encounter with him as a people at Sinai, YHWH has revealed his divine will to be with his peo-

ple. He travelled with them in the wilderness first as a pillar of cloud. Then with the construction of the Tabernacle, the cloud descended and took possession of it as his preferred place of encounter with Moses and thus a tangible sign of his presence in their midst. Finally, when Israel took possession of the land and was formed as a monarchy, the *k'bod* YHWH, the divine manifestation through a cloud dwelt in their midst in the Temple of Jerusalem. Though YHWH has his heavenly dwelling place, his presence in Israel's midst is manifested through the *k'bod* YHWH (Priestly tradition and Ezekiel) which resides in the Temple of Jerusalem. Thus, the Temple is considered first and foremost as YHWH's house<sup>198</sup>. Terms such as «threshold», «doorposts», or «a wall between me and them» underline the understanding of the Temple in Ezekiel as the home of YHWH<sup>199</sup>. This divine indwelling in the Temple is further emphasized by expressions such as «where I shall dwell among the sons of Israel forever»<sup>200</sup> and «I will dwell among them forever»<sup>201</sup>, both using the Hebrew root שָׁכַן, «to dwell». F.M. Cross shows that this verb is generally used in the OT to denote an impermanent presence<sup>202</sup>, but Ezekiel understood this divine indwelling as permanent. What Ezekiel did was inject the element of permanence by adding the adverb לָעֲלָמִים, «forever»<sup>203</sup>.

This conviction of YHWH's presence in the Temple implies that he is a God not far away from his chosen people but dwells and reigns in the midst of them. The repetitive descriptions of the *k'bod* YHWH in Eze 10 and Ezekiel's mention that the divine manifestation is within the Temple affirm without doubt this most cherished Israelite belief that YHWH indeed dwells in their midst. Though the descriptions affirm YHWH's presence in his dwelling place, they also serve to highlight the impending tragedy that awaits the house of Israel. YHWH is in his Temple but he is ready to abandon it because of the grave impurity that is driving him away from his dwelling place. When YHWH finally departs from their midst, all hopes of protection and salvation will also be gone.

4. זָרַק (*scatter*). Eze 10:2 mentions again the man clothed in linen who was commanded by YHWH to get burning coals from between the cherubim and scatter them over the city. The verb זָרַק («to scatter, sprinkle»), occurs basically in two contexts, when used with a priest. The first is the sprinkling of blood against the sides of the altar in a sacrifice<sup>204</sup>. This action, according to J. Milgrom, is performed with the intention of purifying the altar, a sort of ritual detergent<sup>205</sup>. The second is the sprinkling of the water of purgation on objects or

persons who are corpse-contaminated<sup>206</sup>. Again, the action concerns purification.

The verb זרק occurs three times in Ezekiel<sup>207</sup>. Eze 10:2 speaks of the command of YHWH to the linen clothed man to scatter (זרק) burning coals over the city. In 36:25, it speaks of God sprinkling (זרק) clean water on the people to cleanse them, and 43:18 speaks of dashing (זרק) blood against the altar to offer holocaust. It appears that the use of the verb (זרק) in Ezekiel 36:25 and 43:18 is to signify purification and sacrifice. Both purposes are closely connected with the cultic functions of the priests. This made us suspect that the use of the verb in Eze 10:2 is also in a cultic sense. Whatever the real purpose of scattering burning coals over the city, what can be clearly affirmed here is that Ezekiel is using terminologies with clear ritual/cultic meaning whose origin can be traced to the Temple itself.

5. *Fire, as instrument of purgation.* Many scholars understand both the slaughter in Eze 9 and the burning of the city in Eze 10 as punishments for the cultic offences in Eze 8 and an actualization of the threat in Eze 8:18<sup>208</sup>. Without negating the scholarly understanding that the action in Eze 10 is an act of punishment, it is also possible to interpret it from a cultic perspective, that is, as an act of purgation<sup>209</sup>. Even if in the OT fire is often used as an agent of punishment this does not necessarily mean that it should be solely understood as such<sup>210</sup>. In Eze 10:2, 6-7, the linen clothed man, who seems to function as a priestly figure<sup>211</sup>, is commanded by YHWH to scatter fire (אש) over the city. As stated in the earlier discussion, the act of scattering (זרק) may be done for the purpose of purgation or offering of sacrifice, which are both priestly functions. The combination of the cultic undertone of the verb זרק, the fire, and the priestly linen clothing of the man results in the possible interpretation that the action in Eze 10 is the fulfillment of a priestly function<sup>212</sup>.

Another datum concerning fire should also be considered. In Eze 22 and 24, Jerusalem is compared to a pot to which fire is applied to cleanse it of its impurity caused by idolatry and bloodshed<sup>213</sup>, the exact sins described in the Temple vision. The comparison of Jerusalem to a pot is precisely found in the immediate context of Eze 10, that is, in Eze 11:1-3. In fact, the former seems to act as an elucidation, a deeper discussion of the pot allegory in Eze 11:1-3<sup>214</sup>. The presence of these elements (fire and pot) in narratives considered as a composite whole opens the possibility of interpreting them as; Jerusalem is the pot (Eze 11) where burning coals/fire is to be applied (Eze 10) so

that it could be cleansed/purged of all its impurities caused by idolatry (Eze 8) and bloodshed (Eze 11)<sup>215</sup>. This interpretation, as will be easily noticed, is completely in accord with Eze 24:11. Thus, affirming our interpretation here that the action of scattering fire over the city is a priestly act of purgation and cleansing.

6. *Man Dressed in Linen.* This interpretation of the act in Eze 10 as a purgation allows us to establish a coherence in the actions performed by the linen clothed man<sup>216</sup>. In the same manner that we can interpret the action of marking in Eze 9 as a priestly act of distinguishing the pure from the impure, the action of scattering fire over the city in Eze 10 can also be understood as the priestly act of purification for the city already considered impure. The element that calls attracts attention in the unidentified man is his distinctive linen clothing, which in Ezekiel is the normal clothing for the priest. The conglomeration of these priestly elements force us to posit the idea that he, by his clothing and actions performed, is fulfilling priestly and cultic functions in the vision. If we accept the priestly identity of the linen clothed man, then his connection with the Temple can possibly be established. For we have to remember that the only possible origin of this priestly imagery can only be from the Temple priesthood to which Ezekiel was born and formed to be. Thus affirming that Temple theology and symbolism plays a central role in the manner Ezekiel presented his second vision of the *kēbod* YHWH.

7. *Cultic Representation.* If in the earlier discussion we pointed out the terminologies with clear cultic undertones used by Ezekiel in his narration of the Temple vision, it is also possible to point out certain elements that can be considered as derived or part of the Temple symbolism. We affirmed earlier that elements of the inaugural vision, like the cherubim, sapphire throne and the sound of the wings like the sound of the God of Almighty, etc., are elements can all be traced back to cultic representations found in the Temple of Jerusalem<sup>217</sup>. Since these same elements are found in Eze 10, they, like in the inaugural vision, prove the influence of the Temple theology and symbolism in the second great vision of Ezekiel.

#### D. Summary

The impression of literary unity and integrity of the Temple vision in Eze 8-9 is suddenly broken when the Temple vision narrative

reached Eze 10. The presence of two transitional phrases at the beginning and middle of the chapter manifest the composite nature of the narratives contained therein. Nevertheless, the two sections of the chapter contain descriptions of the *k<sup>ē</sup>bod* YHWH and its bearers that strongly recall and complements the descriptions contained in the inaugural vision. This literary connection, editorial or otherwise, encourages any reader of the canonical book of Ezekiel to consider the pericope as part of the Temple vision and as necessarily connected with the inaugural vision.

Like the preceding two pericopes (i.e., cultic abominations and their punishments) studied, the present pericope, which deals with YHWH's command for the linen clothed man to scatter fire over the city is also placed within the Temple precincts. If, death and destruction was YHWH's reponse to Israel's cultic abominations; the present pericope serves as the cultic counterpart of purification to the defilement YHWH ordered in Eze 9. This interpretation seems to be behind the act of scattering (זרק) fire over the city, in which both elements have cultic implications. Interpreting this action as cultic in nature is further strengthened by the linen cloth, normally worn by priests in the book of Ezekiel, that the man wears. Thus, Ezekiel's interpretation of history is markedly Temple centered, that is, from the cultic perspective.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the two pericopes presented the following conclusions can be posited:

1. From the point of view of literary-critical study, the Temple symbolisms and terminologies were the medium through which Ezekiel expressed his theology, the Temple of Jerusalem was central towards understanding his theology. Foremost among these symbolisms is the explicit identification of the divine manifestation that appeared to Ezekiel as the *kabod* YHWH, which according to the Priestly tradition is enthroned in the Temple of Jerusalem. The repeated mention and similar descriptions of elements of the vision, such as, the cherubim, throne, fire, brilliance, etc., which all have cultic representations in the Temple affirm the use of these symbolisms. Ezekiel also interpreted history from a Temple perspective using cultic terminology. Thus, Israel's sins were called abominations

(תועבות). This use of cultic terminology and Temple imagery is in accordance with the priestly identity of the prophet.

2. The Temple is where the identity of man is revealed. Other prophets frequently used the imagery of the people of God (i.e., a community or society united under a human leader who acts and governs in behalf of YHWH). On the other hand, Ezekiel gave more emphasis on the concept of the individual. Thus, in the first Temple tour, the cultic sins presented were described to be committed by specific groups and individuals (e.g., seventy elders with Jaazaniah, son of Shaphan; women weeping; twenty-five men between the porch and altar; twenty-five men at the door of the gateway, among them Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah). This theologically implies that the punishment of exile is due to the rebellion of the present generation and not because of the sins of their forefathers. Thus, Ezekiel expressly denied the validity of the axiom: «The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on the edge» (Eze 18:2).

3. The Temple also reveals the relationship between Israel and YHWH. YHWH's choice to dwell in the Temple is totally gratuitous. In the face of this gratuitous choice, Israel is expected to recognize YHWH's sovereignty over them and give him due worship. If the presence of the *kabod* YHWH in Babylon (as narrated in the inaugural vision) imply a break in relationship, the first Temple vision shows that this break in relationship was caused by Israel's cultic abominations in the Temple. The failure of Israel to give proper worship was the cause of the *kabod's* departure and the historical tragedy of exile.

Thus, in this vision of the *kabod* YHWH, the Temple of Jerusalem appears not just part or one among his many theologies. In fact, it could be rightly said that it is the perspective from where Ezekiel's interpretation of history is developed and expressed. In this vision, the historical tragedy of death, destruction and exile find theological explanation and justification.

## NOTES

1. This vision *of* and *in* the Temple affirms that there was indeed a breach in the covenant relationship between YHWH and the house of Israel. The rebelliousness of Israel, YHWH's general accusation in the inaugural vision, is now clarified and further specified. It was from this perspective that the graphic descriptions of Israel's cultic sins and their corresponding punishment can be best understood. They serve to manifest, explain and justify why Jerusalem and the Temple have to be destroyed and its people be driven to exile. All these points are gathered together in one theological imagery, that is, the departure of the *kēbod* YHWH from the Temple of Jerusalem.
2. Ezekiel uses *הַרְרָה* as a preposition especially in chaps. 40-48.
3. Rather than «altar», *G L<sup>P</sup> S* has *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ רָחַק*, «east». But, in our opinion, the reading of *TM* is valid.
4. Is not found in *G*. BHK suggests that the phrase should probably be read *בְּמִצְבְּאוֹ הַיָּהוָה*. Eze 8:5b should be better translated as, «So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and behold to the north of the altar gate, the image of jealousy was at the entrance».
5. Is omitted in *G* possibly because it is considered as a gloss from the margin. Cf. G.A. COOKE, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*, in S.R. DRIVER, A. PLUMMER (eds.), *The International Critical Commentary*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh 1965, p. 92 (onwards will be cited as G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC).
6. *G* depicts the scene less extraordinary by omitting this phrase (v. 7b) and through the wall twice in v. 8. Cf. G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC, p. 93.
7. Is omitted in *G L<sup>P</sup>*. Cf. G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC, p. 93.
8. Is omitted in *G*.
9. Is not found in *G<sup>B</sup> L<sup>D</sup>* manuscripts. This adjective is superfluous and may have come from the margin and is not found in v. 17. Cf. G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC, p. 94.
10. Is not found in *G*. Freedy regards the phrase as an explicative gloss based on Deut 4:16-18. Cf. K. S. FREEDY, *The Glosses in Ezekiel I-XXIV*, VT 20 (1970) 150 (onwards will be cited as K. S. FREEDY, «Glosses in Ezekiel»).
11. The word used here is *מִחֲקָה* (pual participle masc sing, from the verb *חָקַה* verb). This word is better rendered in English as carved rather than portrayed or painted. This word may be intentionally used to capture the gravity of Israel's idolatry. It is not just «superficial», as the terms «portrayed» or «painted» may suggest, but something deeper and more permanent, as the term carved implies.
12. *G* instead translates *עַל לִי*, «on it» (*עַל* preposition suffix: 3rd pers masc sing).

13. The translation «all around» is achieved from the repetition of the same adverb סָבִיב סָבִיב . But *G* omits the first סָבִיב , rendering simply «around».
14. Since this clause disrupts the flow of thought, separating 'omedim from its subject, it is often deleted as a gloss. BHS suggests that it should be deleted like *G*.
15. This is not found in *G* L<sup>D</sup>, though this recalls the cloud of incense in Lev 16:13 which protects the High Priest Aron at the altar before the presence of the Lord.
16. *G*<sup>A</sup> translates not בְּחֹשֶׁךְ , «in the dark» but פֹּה , «there» (adverb). *G* renders it κρυπτός, «secret, hidden, private; inward, inmost». Thus, it seems that the main idea is not about literal darkness but something done in secret or hidden. On the other hand, *G*<sup>B</sup> omits the word altogether. Eichrodt replaces *bahosek* with *poh*, after the pattern of vv. 6, 9, 17. Cf. W. EICHRODT, *Ezekiel. A Commentary*, Westminster, Philadelphia 1970, p. 106 (onwards will be cited as W. EICHRODT, *Ezekiel*).
17. It should be better read as בְּחֶרֶר , «chamber» (common noun masc sing) like *G* S T V. TM has בְּחֶרְרִי , «chambers» (common noun masc plu constr).
18. Is not found in *G*. This agrees well with the phrase found in Eze 9:9: «The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see!».
19. In distinction with TM, *G* dropped the article הַ to the common noun plural נָשִׁים , «women».
20. The phrase is מְבַכּוֹת אֶת־הַתַּמּוּזִים , with the sign of the direct object and the article on the Tammuz. Thus literally should be translated as, «weeping for the tammuz». This opened up a lot of possible interpretations. For Block, the «Tammuz» mentioned here denoted a special genre of lament rather than the deity himself. He proved this by mentioning the preceding verse whose main idea was the affirmation that YHWH has abandoned the land and consequently, the women either equated YHWH with Tammuz or are expressing their grief at YHWH's departure through a Tammuz ritual. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1-24*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1997, p. 295 (onwards will be cited as D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT). Though the interpretation was attractive and logical, the connection between the two scenes of idolatry (or the whole series of abominations that occurred in this chapter) was far from established. Another thing, the attachment of the article «the» may be an effort to trivialize the pagan deity and the practices attached to his worship. Thus, the phrase «weeping for the tammuz», was intended to reduce him to just a fetish, rather than a god. Nevertheless, the majority of translations have «weeping for Tammuz», maintaining the reference to the Sumerian deity. Cf. B. PRITCHARD (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, Princeton University, Princeton 1969. pp. 265-66 (onwards will be cited as B. PRITCHARD, *ANET*<sup>3</sup>). For a critical rendering of the text see T. JACOBSEN, *The Sumerian King List*, Oriental Institute Assyriological Studies 11, University Press, Chicago 1939. On the biblical evidence for Tammuz, see E. M. YAMAUCHI, «Tammuz and the Bible», *JBL* 84 (1965) 283-290. On Tammuz and his cult in Mesopotamia, see T. JACOBSEN, «Toward the Image of Tammuz», in W.L. MORAN (ed.), *Toward the Image of Tammuz and Other Essays on Mesopotamian History and Culture*, Cambridge University, Cambridge 1970.
21. This is not found in two Hebrew manuscripts and in *G*<sup>B</sup>. In effect, they only present twenty men facing towards the sun in the east. Other translators follow the *G* reading of «twenty», arguing that this represents a better approximation than «twenty-five». Cf. G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC, p. 99; W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel I*, p. 221. But Greenberg claims that «twenty-five» is a favored number in Ezekiel (e.g.,

- 40:1, 13, 29, 45). Cf. M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, in W.-F. ALBRIGHT, D.N. FREEDMAN (eds.), *Anchor Bible 22*, Doubleday, New York 1983, p. 172 (onwards will be cited as M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*).
22. TM has מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיִּים, but BHK suggests that the correct reading should be מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיִּים (hitpacl part masc plu) like 15 MSS.
  23. This phrase is the second mention of the east in these verse and is thus redundant and superfluous. This is probably why it is deleted in *G*<sup>B</sup>.
  24. In modern English means «trivial».
  25. The critical apparatus of BHS and BHK opine that this is probably a later addition.
  26. Jewish tradition regards the suffix of 'appam «their nose» as a euphemism (*tiqqun sop'rim*) for 'appi «my nose». A later scribe may have intentionally modified this to remove an objectionable anthropomorphism and thus protect the dignity and honor of YHWH. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 297. For a discussion on such intentional alterations, see E. WURTHWEIN, *The Text of the Old Testament*, Eng. trans. by E. F. Rhodes, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1979, pp. 18-19. Thus this phrase, if literally read, should be to «my nose». Its exact meaning is obscure though in a general sense could be understood as «goad to fury». Greenberg opines that this obscure expression, «putting the branch to their noses», is not connected with temple abominations but with social wrongdoings. Cf. M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, AB, pp. 172-73. Efforts to find meaning through comparisons with ancient Near East cultic gestures (taking the gesture as an idolatrous rite) have proven fruitless and unsatisfactory. But such gesture is known among agrico-pastoral societies, as a gesture to make fun of, irritate and even goad animals to fury. Probably the gesture has its origin in this agrico-pastoral settings.
  27. *G* adds בָּהֶם, «hot».
  28. This half of the verse is deleted in *G*. This is often deleted as a premature anticipation of 9:1. Cf. W. EICHRODT, *Ezekiel. A Commentary*, Westminster, Philadelphia 1970, p. 108 (onwards will be cited as W. EICHRODT, *Ezekiel*).
  29. Cf. Eze 8:3b, 7a, 14a, 16aα.
  30. Cf. Eze 8:5a, 9.
  31. Cf. Eze 8: 5b, 10-11, 14b, 16aβb.
  32. Cf. Eze 8: 6a, 12, 15a, 17a.
  33. Cf. Eze 8:6bβ, 13b, 15b. For further discussion, see KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution in the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 87, Brill, Leiden 2001, p. 158.
  34. Cf. Eze 1:15-17.
  35. Contrary to efforts which try to integrate them into one cultic act with successive phases, J. Blenkinsopp suggests that they should be regarded separately and take them «as examples of the disintegration of the cultic and religious life of Judah during the last quarter of a century of its independent existence». J. BLENKINSOPP, *Ezekiel*, p. 54.
  36. C. C. Torrey is the first one to suggest that the depicted cultic abuses in chapters 8-11 do not refer to the time of Ezekiel but is more appropriate to the reign of Manasseh, since such deplorable state of affairs was not mentioned by Jeremiah and Kings. Cf. C. C. TORREY, *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy*, Yale University, New Haven 1930; Ktav, New York 1970 (repr.), p. 48 (onwards will be cited as C. C. TORREY, *Pseudo-Ezekiel*). A similar motivation led R. S. Foster to locate a *sitz im leben* for these abominations in the pre-Nehemiah period, i.e., mid 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Cf. R. S. FOSTER, *The Restoration of Israel. A Study in Exile and Return*, London 1970, p. 181f.
  37. Cf. M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, AB, pp. 201-2.

38. Cf. I.M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, VTSup 61, Brill, London 1994, pp. 67-68 (onwards will be cited as I. M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*); also, K. P. DARR, *Ezekiel*, NIB, p. 1172. The theological purpose of the account thus far outweighed the factual veracity of the account. We have to remember that Ezekiel was trying to give an explanation of the recent historical events from the priestly perspective, which was expectedly theological. The main purpose in his interpretation of history was to save the sovereignty of YHWH, the faith of Israel *vis a vis* its identity as a people of God. To achieve this, Ezekiel reinterpreted history using the resources in his hand, that is, the priestly tradition and delivering them through prophetic form. Whether this reflected reality, this was beside the point.
39. This understanding of the number four as signifying totality may come from the understanding that four represents the number of the cardinal points. Cf. J. ASURMENDI RUIZ, *Ezequiel*, in W.R. FARMER (ed.), *Comentario Bíblico Internacional. Comentario católico y ecuménico para el siglo XXI*, Verbo Divino, Estella 1999, p. 965 (onwards will be cited as J. ASURMENDI RUIZ, *Ezequiel*, CBI); W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel I*, p. 120.
40. *חַיֵּי בָהּ*. The word can be translated as a noun: «disgusting thing» or «abomination»; or, as an adjective: «abominable». Thus, understood in a ritual sense, the term may refer to unclean food, idols and mixed marriages; if taken in ethical sense, this could refer to any act of wickedness and social injustice. The term is basically used in the OT to designate those who by its very nature was excluded as dangerous. Since its nature is incompatible with the nature of YHWH, they are rejected by him. When Israel commits them or allows them to exist in their midst, the relationship between Israel and YHWH was placed in jeopardy. It was not only in the theological aspect that such danger was perceived, abominations (in the ethical/moral sense) also destroyed the unity of the community. Cf. E. GERSTENBERGER, «חַיֵּי», in E. JENNI, C. WESTERMANN (eds.), *DTMAT*, II, Cristiandad, Madrid 1985, cc. 1316-22 (onwards will be cited as E. GERSTENBERGER, «חַיֵּי», *DTMAT*).
41. In the opinion of E. Gerstenberger, the term is more frequent in exilic texts which has the theological preoccupation of presenting certain acts as taboo to be avoided by the community. Cf. E. GERSTENBERGER, «חַיֵּי», *DTMAT*, cc. 1317-18.
42. Cf. Eze 8:6 (2x), 9, 13, 15, 17; 9:4.
43. E. GERSTENBERGER, «חַיֵּי», *DTMAT*, c. 1429.
44. The idea is from M.A. GRISANTI, «חַיֵּי», *New International Dictionary of Old Testament and Exegesis*, IV, pp. 314-18, and is adapted by KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 141.
45. Cf. W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel I*, p. 190.
46. The connection between abominable acts and their defiling power echoes the Priestly texts. In particular, Lev 20:3 related the Molech cult to the defilement of the sanctuary. Another reference is 2 Chr 36:14 where performing the abominable acts of the nations will result in defiling God's Temple. Cf. KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 141.
47. In fact, these evaluation of the sins of Israel, seen and expressed from the cultic perspective, covers the whole book. H.G. McKeating rightly observes that the condemnation of the people are all cultic related. They are condemned for profaning the sabbath (לֵיל 22:8), the sanctuary (23:39), and thereby profaning the name of God (36:20-23). Cf. H. MCKEATING, *Ezekiel*, in R.N. Whybray (ed.), *Old Testament Guides*, Sheffield Academic, Sheffield 1995, p. 88ff. (onwards will be cited as H. MCKEATING, *Ezekiel*, OTG).

48. The land has become detestable because of the pollution (Eze 36:25, 33). The land which should have shown purity was unclean and this was caused in a large part by the shedding of blood (Eze 33:25). The land should have been treated with reverence because that was where God had chosen to dwell. Instead the place had become an object of loathing because of the sin of the people. Such concepts of purity were fundamental to the life of Israel, and the priesthood, of which Ezekiel was a member, was entrusted with the task of maintaining the cleanliness of the land. The corruption of Israel was so grave that the people had to be destroyed and sent into exile. It was this state of uncleanness which was the cause of the exile (Eze 36:17ff.). the profanation of the sanctuary was an insult to God, a privation of the reverence due to him. Cf. P.J. HARLAND, *A Land Full of Violence: The Value of Human Life in the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, VTSup 77 (1999) 119 (onwards will be cited as P.J. HARLAND, «A Land full of Violence»).
49. Cf. J. MILGROM, *Israel's Sanctuary: The Priestly Picture of «Dorian Gray»*, RB 83 (1976) 397 (onwards will be cited as J. MILGROM, *The Priestly Picture of «Dorian Gray»*).
50. הַקֵּץ אֵשֶׁר here can be rendered as «outrage». But since in the context of the passage it expresses YHWH's passionate resentment at seeing what is his being given to another, it is more appropriately rendered as «jealousy». So also, M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, AB, p. 168. For further discussion, see G. SAUER, «הַקֵּץ אֵשֶׁר», in E. JENNI, C. WESTERMANN (eds.), *Diccionario teológico manual del Antiguo Testamento*, II, Span. trans. by R. Godoy, Cristiandad, Madrid 1985, cc. 815-819 (onwards will be cited as G. SAUER, «הַקֵּץ אֵשֶׁר», DTMAT).
51. Cf. H.G. MAY, *Ezekiel*, IB, p. 106.
52. Cf. K.P. DARR, *Ezekiel*, NIB, p. 1175. Many scholars interpret it as Asherah, in virtue of 2 Kgs 21:7 mention of a sculptured image (*pesel*) of Asherah that King Manasseh set up in the Jerusalem Temple; which in 2 Chr 33:7, 15, this very image is called (*pesel has*) *semel*- apparently reflecting our Ezekiel passage, and identifying «the statue of outrage» with Manasseh's image of the Canaanite goddess, Asherah. The goddess seemed to have been popular among the Israelites for Josiah also had had to remove it in his reformation (2 Kings 23:6). Jeremiah's denunciation of the worship of the Queen of Heaven may also be related to this image (Jer 7:18; 44:17-30). The fact that the image's identity seems to be assumed in the context seems to favor this identification. P.C. Craigie, on the other hand, proves the same identification but from a different perspective. He states that any image can be the cause of divine jealousy. But if the expression can be translated to «image of lust» rather than «image of jealousy», then this would certainly, he claimed, to refer to Asherah, the Cananite goddess of love. Cf. P.C. CRAIGIE, *Ezekiel*, DSBS, p. 57. This opinion is also shared by J. BLENKINSOPP, *Ezekiel*, p. 54.
53. M. Haran rejects outright the identification of the image as that of Asherah. He argues that Ezekiel's *semel* has nothing to do with Manasseh's Asherah but is merely a fanciful statue, in keeping with the essentially fictitious nature of the entire portrayal of the situation in Jerusalem. Cf. M. HARAN, *Temple and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into Biblical Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School*, Clarendon, Oxford 1978, p. 283 (onwards will be cited as M. HARAN, *Temple and Temple-Service*).
54. Cf. A. SPATAFORA, *From the «Temple of God» to God as the Temple. A Biblical Theological Study of the Temple in the Book of Revelation*, diss., Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Roma 1997, p. 35 (onwards will be cited as A. SPATAFORA, *From the «Temple of God» to God as the Temple*).

55. This idol provokes the Lord to jealousy, for he had declared to Israel that he alone is their God (Exod 20:1-3) and that all forms of idolatry is forbidden (Deut 4:16; 32:16, 21; 1 Kings 14:22; Ps 78:58).
56. For example, Eze 14:6; 16:36; 18:12. Cf. E. GERSTENBERGER, «גזע», DTMAT, c. 1318.
57. Cf. Eze 8:3, 5.
58. Cf. G.A. COOKE, *North Semitic Inscriptions*, nos. 13, 23, 25, 27.
59. Cf. C. F. JEAN and J. HOFTIJZER, «sml», *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest*, Brill, Leiden 1965.
60. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 281.
61. Cf. also Eze 39:2. In the Gog-Magog unit of narratives (Eze 38-39), the invader was described as coming from the north. This belief is somehow echoed Jer 1:14 wherein YHWH said: «from the north evil will be poured out on all who live in the land».
62. The subsequent abominations would fortify the presence of Israel's conviction in YHWH's impotence. Nevertheless, Eze 9:1-11 would show how badly mistaken they are. It is Israel's idols that are powerless to prevent the destruction of the city from YHWH's agents of destruction. Cf. I.M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel*, in T. Muck (ed.), *The NIV Application Commentary Series*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids 1999, p. 131 (onwards will be cited as I.M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel*, NIVACS).
63. In the OT, the term is often found in Genesis where it is clearly emphasized that creeping things are created (Gen 1:27) and that YHWH has control life or death over them (Gen 6:7, 20; 7:8, 23; 9:3). Thus, YHWH strongly prohibits any representation of these created things as divinities (Deut 4:18).
64. The term used was תְּרָפִים, «detestable things», a term which belongs to the priestly arena. It was usually found in the book of Leviticus, where the prohibition for unclean foods are stated. Cf. Lev. 7:21; 11:10, 12, 13, 20, 23, 41, 42.
65. K.W. CARLEY, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, in *Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible*, Cambridge University, Cambridge 1974, p. 55 (onwards will be cited as KW. CARLEY, *Ezekiel*, CBC). Albright also holds the same opinion that this abomination is of Egyptian influence, recalling the serpent and animal figures in the Book of the Dead and late magical representations. Cf. W. F. ALBRIGHT, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, p. 166. He is followed by J. Blenkinsopp who sees the scene as reminiscent of Egyptian burial chambers, the walls of which are covered with brilliantly painted images of deities in animal form, including Anubis, the jackal-headed god who weighed the souls of the dead. Cf. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Ezekiel*, p. 55. For a dissenting opinion, see G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC, p. 94.
66. Cf. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Ezekiel*, p. 55.
67. Cf. Eze 8:12.
68. One of them is expressly identified as Jaazaniah, who was designated the son of Shaphan. The designation possibly associates him with the family that was prominent in the reforms of Josiah in 2 Kgs 22:3-14. If this is the case, his presence among the idolaters may point out to the extent of Israel religious and cultic degradation that even those who were believed to be champions of YHWH's orthodoxy are now part of the new abominations occurring in the Temple precincts.
69. For further discussions, see I.M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, pp. 113-14.
70. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 293. For example, in Num 16:12-13 incense is used to ward off the plague which was killing the Israelites in the desert. This

apotropaic function may also be behind the cultic instruction that Aaron should put incense on the fire before the Lord so as to cover the mercy seat or else he will die (Lev 16:12-13). It should be noted though that in Ps 141:2 incense is treated as a symbol of prayer, probably because of the upward movement of the smoke.

71. For further discussions, see P.C. CRAIGIE, *Ezekiel*, DSBS, p. 61.
72. Tammuz is of Babylonian origin (Duzu or Dumuzi) linked with the seasonal cycle of death and rebirth: «Essentially representing the cycle of the season, this vegetation deity was held to have been betrayed and killed in the summer, when the land became parched and plant life dies away. But his sister Ishtar freed him from the underworld and they married, giving rise to the new growth of the vegetation in spring. At the time of his death each year women mourned in a customary display of grief, but that was in the month called “Tammuz” (June-July) and not, as here in the vision, two months later. Tammuz is an Assyrian name (the equivalent of Baal in Syria and Dumuzi in Babylon) and the worship associated with him was introduced to Israel during the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. It also involved sexual rites promoting the fertility of fields and herds, and it stands in stark contrast to the worship of Israel’s “living God”, whose control of nature was quite independent of a heavenly consort and of stimulation by the sexual activity of his people». K.W. CARLEY, *Ezekiel*, CBC, p. 56.
73. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, pp. 294-96.
74. Cf. Pss 42:3; 84:3.
75. Cf. T. JACOBSEN, *Toward the Image of Tammuz*, pp. 73-103, esp., p. 100.
76. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 297.
77. Cf. M. GREEBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, AB, p. 171. The place is the open space in the court between the Temple porch and the altar of burnt offering, with which Ahaz replaced the old, smaller bronze altar (2 Kgs 16:10-16). This location is invested with special sanctity for it is the site of the priest’s lamentation at a public ceremony of repentance (Jl 2:17).
78. Cf. J. BLENKISOPP, *Ezekiel*, p. 56.
79. For a discussion, see H.G. MAY, *Some Aspects of Solar Worship at Jerusalem*, ZAW 55 (1937) 269-81 (onwards will be cited as H. G. MAY, *Solar Worship*).
80. Zimmerli raised the possibility that the participants may have intended their sun-worship as a legitimate extension of their traditional faith. Cf. W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel I*, pp. 243-44.
81. Cf. 1 Kgs 8:29, 35; Dan 6:10.
82. Cf. Jer 2:27; 32:33; also 2 Chr 29:6.
83. Cf. L. C. ALLEN, *Ezekiel 1-19*, WBC, p. 145.
84. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 297.
85. Cf. J. DE VAUX, *Santo*, in X. LÉON-DUFOUR (ed.), *Vocabulario de teología bíblica*, Herder, Barcelona 1966, pp. 740-44; J.L. MCKENZIE, «Holy», *Dictionary of the Bible*, Simon & Schuster, New York 1995 (1st Touchstone edition), pp. 365-67; T.P. JENNEY, *Holiness, Holy*, in D. FREEDMAN et al. (eds.), *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 2000, pp. 598-99 (onwards will be cited as T.P. JENNEY, *Holiness, Holy*). The character of «apartness» of the holy should be further qualified as «set apart from common use to the divine purpose». W.T. SMITH, W.J. HARRELSON, *Holiness*, in J. HASTING (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York 1963, p. 387. In OT, it is this positive connotation of apartness upon which the stress is laid. For further treatment on the topic of holiness, see also J.C. LAMBERT, *Holiness*, in J. ORR et al. (eds.), *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, III, Hendrickson, Peabody 1994, pp. 1403-4.

86. Cf. H.-P. MULLER, «קדש», in JENNI, E., WESTERMANN, C. (eds.), *Diccionario teológico manual del Antiguo Testamento*, II, Span. trans. by R. Godoy, Cristianidad, Madrid 1985, c. 742 (onwards will be cited as H.-P. MULLER, «קדש», DT-MAT).
87. Cf. Jgs 6:22; 13:22.
88. KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 124.
89. Cf. R. OTTO, *The Idea of the Holy. An Inquiry into the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and its relation to the rational*, Eng. trans. by J. W. Harvey, Oxford University, New York 1958, pp. 5-31. In the OT, holiness is primarily neither a physical nor a moral quality but an attribute which combines both; it affects man now in one order and now in the other.
90. Am 4:2.
91. Hos 11:9.
92. 1 Sam 2:2.
93. The nifal of the verb «קדש» means, «to prove oneself holy». Thus, we find this passage: «These are the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites contended against the Lord, and where he revealed his sanctity (יִקְדָּשׁ) among them» (Num 20:13). A similar use of the word also occurred in Eze 39:27, wher YHWH promised the future restoration of Israel: «When I... prove my holiness (יִקְדָּשׁתי) through them in the sight of many nations». The hithpael reflexive form of the verb «קדש» also has the same meaning. Thus, Eze 38:23 is translated: «I will prove my greatness and holiness (הִתְקַדְּשֵׁתי) and make myself known in the sight of many nations; thus they shall know that I am the Lord». Cf. H.-P. MULLER, «קדש», DTMAT, c. 745.
94. Cf. Eze 28:25.
95. Cf. Isa 5:16.
96. Cf. Pss 33:4; 40:10; 54:5; 89:24; 91:4.
97. Cf. Isa 29:23; 41:14; 43:3; Eze 20:41; 36:23; 39:27.
98. Cf. Ps 33:21. In Isa 37:23, the blasphemy of Sennacherib against the Holy One of Israel is the cause of his defeat and the deliverance of Israel. According to Eze 28:22-26, YHWH will manifest his holiness when he inflicts punishments on Sidon and the rest of other nations who despise his people Israel. Thus by YHWH's salvific action in behalf of his people, YHWH will be glorified and sanctified.
99. Cf. KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 124. The following are considered holy in the Bible: the heavens (Deut 26:15), the places where YHWH manifest himself: to Moses in a bush (Exo 3:5), to Joshua near Jericho (Jos 5:15), Canaan (Pss 78:54; Zec 2:16), Jerusalem (Pss 46:5; Isa 48:2; 52:1), Zion, the Temple hill (Isa 27:13; Jer 31:22), the Tent of Meeting (Exo 28:43), Temple (Ps 5:8), the priests (Exo 28:41), the altar (Exo 29:37). The sacred seasons are times holy to YHWH (jubilee, Lev 25:12; Sabbath, Gen 2:3; Exo 20:8; Jer 17:22). Sacrificial victims and all gifts to YHWH become holy by the offering. The vestments of the priest are holy (Lev 16:4).
100. Cf. J.L. MCKENZIE, «Holy», p. 366.
101. Cf. H.-P. MULLER, «קדש», DTMAT, c. 748.
102. Israel is considered holy because YHWH has chosen her among the nations to become his own people and thus has been admitted to the sphere of divinity; it belongs to him by election and his covenant (Exo 19:6; Lev 20:8; Deut 7:6; Jer 2:3; Eze 37:28). The new status of Israel as a «holy nation» to the Lord facilitated this fellowship between her and YHWH.
103. Cf. T.P. JENNEY, «Holiness, Holy», p. 598.

104. Cf. J. MILGROM, *The Priestly Picture of «Dorian Gray»*, 394. This can be seen by the belief that the outer altar was polluted though the laity may not even enter it and finally, the Holy of Holies was polluted though no one, not even the high priest, may enter.
105. The idea that the sacred (i.e., the gods themselves and especially their temples) is always under constant threat from malefic forces may explain the presence protector gods set before temple entrances (e.g., the *sedu* and *lamassu* in Mesopotamia and the lion-gargoyles in Egypt) and, above all, the elaborate cathartic and apotropaic rites to rid buildings of demons and prevent their return. Cf. *ANET*<sup>3</sup>, pp. 325, 329-30.
106. But the notion of its dynamic and malefic power, especially in regard to the sancta, was not completely expunged from the Priestly Code. Cf. Lev 20:3; Lev 15:31; Num 19:20. It is clear that these texts are grounded in the axiom, common to all ancient Near Eastern cultures, that impurity is the implacable foe of holiness wherever it exists; it assaults the sacred realm even from afar.
107. Israel and the neighboring nations held in common that the impure and the holy are mutually antagonistic and irreconcilable. Thus the sanctuary needs constant purification lest the resident god abandons it together with his devotees. On one basic issue they differ: the pagan world was suffused with demonic impurity whereas Israel has eviscerated impurity of its magical power. Only in its nexus with the *sancta* does it spring to life. However, this malefic impurity does not inhere in nature; it is the creation of man. Only man can evict God from his earthly abode and destroy himself. Cf. J. MILGROM, *The Priestly Picture of «Dorian Gray»*, 397-99.
108. Cf. D.P. WRIGHT, *Unclean and Clean (OT)*, in D.N. FREEDMAN (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, IV, Doubleday, New York 1992, p. 735 (onwards will be cited as D.P. WRIGHT, *Unclean and Clean (OT) ABD*). This can be seen in P's prescription to remove corpses from the sanctuary area, keeping certain impurities from sacred persons, cleansing the sanctuary with *hattat* sacrifices, and requirements of excluding severely impure persons from the habitation (Num 5:2-3). In addition, P listed general prohibitions about bringing what is impure in contact with what is holy (Lev 7:19-21; 22:3-7; Num 18:11, 13). It is one of the duties of the priests to teach the distinction between pure and impure and the holy and the profane so that improper contact of the spheres would be avoided (Lev 10:10; 11:47; Eze 22:26; 44:23).
109. Cf. Lev 19:2.
110. This explains why in his vision of the restored Israel, Ezekiel does not allow everyone access to the various part of the Temple. This may also be the reason for the disappearance—or, rather the abolition—of the High Priesthood in Ezekiel's Temple and the disregard for the rituals performed within the Temple itself. Cf. Eze 40-48.
111. According to E. Regev: «The Priestly tendency of grading, derives from the perception of dynamic holiness: by grading, holiness is measured and evaluated. If holiness was not dynamic, there would be no reason or possibility to grade it, since in static holiness there are only two polar categories—sacred and non-sacred». E. REGEV, *Priestly Dynamic Holiness and Deuteronomic Static Holiness*, VT 51 (2001) 257 (onwards will be cited as E. REGEV, «Dynamic and Static Holiness»).
112. Cf. T.P. JENNEY, «Holiness, Holy», p. 599.
113. For discussion, see D.P. WRIGHT, «Holiness (OT)», in D.N. FREEDMAN (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, III, Doubleday, New York 1992, pp. 237-49 (onwards will be cited as D.P. WRIGHT, «Holiness», ABD).

114. Cf. Eze 9:6; 23:39; see also 5:11; 8:6; 23:38; 24:21.
115. Cf. Exo 26:33, 34; 1 Kgs 6:16; 7:50; 8:6; 2 Chr 3:8, 10; 2 Chr 3:8, 10; 4:22; 5:7; Eze 41:4; 42:13; 44:13. In other biblical books the preferred term is קֹדֶשׁ. The preference for קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, may imply the emphasis of Ezekiel which was the holiness of God.
116. 1 Kgs 8:8, 10; 2 Chr 5:11.
117. Cf. 1 Kgs 7:6; 2 Chr 15:8; Eze 40:7; 46:2, 8. Its lack of any religious connotation and cultic objects or furnitures, reflect its purpose as just an entrance structure to the Temple.
118. «The distribution of furniture, the extent of access to the different parts of the sanctuary, the materials used in the tabernacle, the anointing rites also display the structure's graded holiness». D.P. WRIGHT, «Holiness», ABD, p. 242.
119. Cf. 1 Kgs 6:20, 27-28, 31-32; 8:6-9.
120. Cf. 1 Kgs 6:21-22, 30, 33-35; 7:48-50.
121. Cf. 1 Kgs 7:27-39, 43-45; 8:64.
122. Cf. 1 Kgs 7:13-22.
123. Cf. 2 Chr 29:16.
124. Cf. 2 Chr 26:16-21.
125. Cf. 1 Kgs 8:6, 10-11.
126. Cf. D.P. WRIGHT, «Holiness», ABD, p. 242.
127. Cf. Eze 8:6, 13, 15.
128. Cf. I.M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, p. 113.
129. On the basis of Lev 4 and 16, Milgrom distinguishes three grades of impurities. First, the individual's severe physical impurity and inadvertent offences defile the sacrificial altar (in the courtyard) which is cleansed by daubing blood on its horns (Lev 4:25, 30; 9:9). Second, the inadvertent offences of the high priest or the whole congregation pollute the shrine which is then cleansed by sprinkling blood seven times in front of the curtain and putting blood on the horns of the incense altar (Lev 4:5-7, 16-18). Third, unrepented sins are able to pollute not just the sacrificial altar and the shrine, but also the Holy of Holies. The cleansing has to wait until the Day of Atonement (or Purgation). It consisted of two steps: the cleansing of the Holy of Holies of the wanton sins, and the cleansing of the shrine and sacrificial altar. Thus, «the graded purgations of the sanctuary lead to the conclusion that the severity of the sin or impurity varies in direct relation to the depth of penetration into the sanctuary». J. MILGROM, *Leviticus 1-16*, AB, p. 257. For J. Milgrom the importance of purging the sanctuary lay in the postulate that «the God of Israel will not abide in a polluted sanctuary». *Ibid.*, p. 258. God will tolerate only a certain degree of impurity. The impurity can build up to such a point that God will leave the sanctuary, leaving the people to their doom. This, claims Milgrom, is depicted in Eze 8-11. The importance of the purification offering is not for the atonement of the offerer, but for the purgation of the sanctuary so that God will remain in it. Cf. also, KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 163.
130. It is interesting to note in this connection that the defilement went no further than the inner courtyard: it never entered the Temple building itself. Similarly in the vision of reconstruction the activities are all restricted to the inner and outer courts. Is the building itself too holy to be entered?
131. Cf. Eze 8:17.
132. Cf. H.J. STOEBE, «קֹדֶשׁ», in E. JENNI, C. WESTERMANN (eds.), *Diccionario teológico manual del Antiguo Testamento*, I, Span. trans. by J.A. Mugica, Cristiandad, Madrid 1978, c. 811 (onwards will be cited as H.J. STOEBE, «קֹדֶשׁ», DTMAT); see also,

H. HAAG, «חַמַּס», in G.J. BOTTERWECK, H. RINGGREN (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, IV, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1980, pp. 478-87 (onwards will be cited as H. HAAG, «חַמַּס», TDOT). The Hebrew concept of violence («חַמַּס») concerns ethical and physical wrongs which submits the innocent to suffering due to man's greed or hatred. According to Kirk-Duggan: «Ancient people desired stability, intimately related to YHWH, which grounded the sacrificial system. The covenants provided divine assurance that life could continue. Disturbances to such order involved evil, suffering and death». C.A. KIRK-DUGGAN, *Violence*, in D. FREEDMAN et al. (eds.), *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 2000, 1357-58 (onwards will be cited as C.A. KIRK-DUGGAN, *Violence*).

133. Cf. Eze 1:28b-3:15.
134. Cf. Eze 2:3.
135. Cf. Eze 2:4.
136. Cf. Eze 2:4, 7; 3:7, 11.
137. Cf. Eze 8:1-16.
138. Cf. Eze 8:17; 11:1-12.
139. Cf. Eze 3:22-27. His role as a reprover can be understood in two ways. As a prophet, he is expected to denounce the wrongdoings of his fellow Israelites (specially on the area of social injustices and political pretensions of the leaders), and as a priest, he is expected to admonish and denounce the idolatrous practices of the people and the leaders of Israel who represent them before YHWH. The dumbness of Ezekiel effectively impedes him to be «a man who reproves them» (Eze 3:26). The impediment therefore contribute to the irrevocability of Israel's tragic fate.
140. Cf. Eze 8:17.
141. Cf. Gen 6:13.
142. Cf. Eze 11:14-21.
143. Cf. K.P. DARR, *Ezekiel*, NIB, p. 1172. In Eze 10, God commands a linen-clothed man to set the city afire, even as YHWH's glory prepared to abandon the city aboard a chariot throne borne aloft by four cherubim. Ezekiel 11 further castigates Jerusalem's leaders and took to task those who arrogantly assumed a privileged position vis-a-vis the exiles. Their sins will redound upon them; the exilic community, by contrast, will be restored and transformed by God's grace. The forward movement of the narrative culminated in Ezekiel's vision of the *k'bod* YHWH's abandonment of the Temple of Jerusalem. The judgment was already passed and executed in the heavenly sphere. The linen-clothed man's report that he has done everything as YHWH has ordered added to the sense of inevitability of the foregoing acts of judgment. Cf. Eze 9:11.
144. P.J. HARLAND, *A Land Full of Violence*, 116.
145. Cf. Eze 9:8; 11:13.
146. This is not found in *G*, possibly deleted by accident. This is characteristic of the description of the *k'bod* YHWH.
147. This is not found in *G*.
148. Instead of TM's עָלֶיהָם (prep + suffix: 3rd per masc plu), *G* translates עָלָיו (prep + suffix: 3rd per masc sing).
149. This is not found in *G* and is probably an erroneous addition.
150. Is plural, «cherubim», in *G S V T*.
151. *G* adds τῆν ἁγίαν, interpreting the man as a holy person.
152. This is not found in *G*. BHK states that there is a question to its being an addition to the verse.

153. Is also questioned and is considered as a possible addition to the verse.
154. TM has וַיִּרְאֵהוּ (conj + nifal imperf waw consec 3rd per masc) while וַיִּרְאֵהוּ (conj + qal imperf waw consec 1st per common) is the one translated by *G<sup>B</sup>* S. This changes the perspective of the verse from the third person to the first person.
155. TM has חַדָּה (adj masc sing). It should be read as אַחַת (adj fem sing) because the word it modifies, רַמְיֹת, is a common noun fem sing.
156. BHK suggests that the term should rather be read as עַבְרֵיהֶם (noun masc plu const + suffix: 3rd per masc plu), «their sides».
157. TM has אַחַר רֵי (adv + suffix: 3rd per fem sing), «followed it». But *G* translates אֶחָד (art + adj masc sing), «the one».
158. BHK opines that this phrase should probably be deleted as in *G L<sup>P</sup>*. *G* omits *wekol-besaram*, literally «all their flesh», perhaps because it is unsuitable for cherubim. Cf. M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, AB, p. 182.
159. BHK states that this should be read as וְגַב־חַמָּם (conj + common noun masc plu const suffix: 3rd per masc plu), «and their backs». Rather than TM's וְגַב־הֶם. In Eze 1:18 the word is translated into «their rims» (which other translators did the same in this verse), but because of the context which puts «their entire body» as the subject of the verse, translating it as «their backs», coincides and makes better sense.
160. There is a possibility that these are additions to the verse. Though this is still a question.
161. Is not found in S, is rather substituted by «one».
162. «Another» in S.
163. «Another» in S.
164. «Another» in S.
165. The whole verse is not found in *G<sup>B</sup>*. This verse is missing probably due to its difficulty and discrepancies with 1:10. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 323. Halperin interprets this absence in *G* and the transformation of wheels into angelic beings as a sign of lateness. Cf. D. J. HALPERIN, *The Exegetical Character of Ezek. X 9-17*, VT 26 (1976) 138-40 (onwards will be cited as D. J. HALPERIN, *The Exegetical Character of Ezek.*).
166. The preposition עַל should be placed before נְהַר. Thus reading like in Eze 10:22, עַל־נְהַר־כְּ, «near the canal Chebar». Cf. also Eze 1:1, 3.
167. This phrase is not found in *G* rather the preposition מִן, «from», occupies its place.
168. TM has the singular, but this is intended to be understood collectively.
169. For consistency, this phrase should be read as, עַל־נְהַר־כְּ, «near the canal Chebar».
170. Looks like a dittography and should probably be deleted as in *G* and V.
171. Is not found in *G* which simplifies the difficult reading of TM's מִן־אֵימָתָם וְאֵזָרוּ־הֶם by translating only אֵמָתָם.
172. Cf. Eze 10:1-22.
173. Cf. Eze 10:1-3, 6-7.
174. Cf. Eze 10:4. The mention of the departure of the *kabod* from its enthronement in the Temple first appeared in essentially the same form in 9:3a, then continues in 10:18-19 and culminates in 11:22-23.
175. Cf. Eze 10:5, 8-17, 20-22.
176. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 318.
177. Cf. KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 159.
178. Cf. K. P. DARR, *Ezekiel*, NIB, p. 1182.
179. Cf. Eze 10:8-22.
180. Cf. W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel I*, pp. 231-32.

181. M. DIJKSTRA, *The Glosses in Ezekiel Reconsidered: Aspects of Textual Transmission in Ezekiel 10*, in J. LUST (ed.), *Ezekiel and his Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, Leuven University, Leuven 1986, p. 77 (onwards will be cited as M. DIJKSTRA, *The Glosses in Ezekiel Reconsidered*). Parunak opines that the chariot vision is the central motif in both visions though the use of the motif is completely different. Cf. H. VAN DYKE PARUNAK, *Ezekiel's Mar'ot 'Elohim*, 61, 66. D. I. Block, on the other hand, understands Eze 10:9-22 as one of «the most obvious illustrations of echo literary strategy in Scripture». Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Text and Emotion: A study in the «Corruptions» in Ezekiel's Inaugural Vision (Ezekiel 1:4-28)*, CBQ 50 (1988) 440-42. In his later two-volume commentary, Block will call this «resumptive exposition». He defines this literary style as the employment of preexistent accounts or segments thereof to shape the recounting of a new event. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, pp. 24-25.
182. In fact, reading the Temple vision (8-11) right after the inaugural vision (1-3) facilitates a better understanding of the message of both visions. The Temple vision clarifies what was vague and elaborates what was mentioned only in passing in the inaugural vision. Surely, such a considerable editorial reworking must have been done for a reason. The most obvious reason is the intention to have both visions be read and understood as related to one another either as a continuous narrative or that the message of each vision should be viewed from the same perspective and importance.
183. As properly noted by D.I. Block, it is not a simple case of borrowing and repetitions for the description of the chariot wheels in the second vision is improved, and the ambiguities of the inaugural vision are clarified. Even grammatical difficulties that were abundant in chapter 1 is smoothed out. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, pp. 316-17.
184. It is fitting to remind us here that the term «editorial hand» is used loosely in this paper. It may refer and apply to the subsequent reworking and addition to the original text either by the «school» of Ezekiel (disciples), later editors and even from the original prophet himself. This is the understanding that the present scholarship on Ezekiel attributes to the term (e.g., W. Zimmerli, M. Greenberg, D. I. Block, etc.).
185. For example, G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC, p. 105.
186. Cf. 1 Kgs 8:6-7.
187. Cf. G.A. COOKE, *Ezekiel*, ICC, p. 105.
188. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 118.
189. Compare Eze 8:2 and 1:26b-27. The description of the being in v. 2 resembles in a significant ways the depiction of *k'bod* YHWH in 1:26-27. Though he speaks in the name of YHWH, his function precludes identification with YHWH himself (8:17-18). Cf. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Ezekiel*, pp. 52-53. What can safely be assumed is that this mysterious being is somehow related to YHWH, probably a messenger of some sort. As a consequence, the reader might assume that the prophet is again in called into YHWH's presence and any message that he receives will come from YHWH.
190. This prophetic motif was seen: (a) first, the setting of the vision mentioned Ezekiel as sitting in his house with the elders before him (Eze 8:1). This recalls Elisha which also was depicted as sitting in his house with the elders of Israel (2 Kgs 4:38; 6:32); (b) second, in the manner reminiscent of Eze 1:3, Eze 8:1 described the coming of the vision with a reference to the hand of YHWH (similar with the onset of prophetic vision to Elijah in 1 Kgs 18:46 and Elisha in 2 Kgs 2:15); (c) finally, he is carried from Babylon to the Temple of Jerusalem by the lock of his hair (like Elijah in 1 Kgs 18:12; 2 Kgs 2:1-12, 16-18). The clear similarity wherein a person is car-

- ried by the lock of his hair is found in the apocryphal account on Habakkuk where he is also carried by the lock of his hair to Babylon to bring Daniel some food. The similarity can be explained though by the scholarly opinion that this apocryphal account may be an offshot of the influence of Ezekiel. Cf. M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, AB, pp. 167-68; also, D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, p. 280.
191. K. P. DARR, *Ezekiel*, NIB, p. 1175.
  192. Cf. Eze 10:5; also, Eze 1:24.
  193. Cf. Eze 10:15, 20, 22.
  194. Cf. Eze 8:2, 4.
  195. Whether this chapter is inserted by Ezekiel's disciples and editors; or whether it is integral to the vision, is a question that has remained unresolved. Cf. P.C. CRAIGIE, *Ezekiel*, DSBS, p. 69. The study of Parunak on the structures of the three visions is very enlightening for it shows in a detailed manner the existing literary affinities between the three visions, with special emphasis on the «divine visions». H. VAN DYKE PARUNAK, *Ezekiel's Mar'ot 'Elohim*, 61-74.
  196. The historical crisis that the house of Israel found itself in is not because their God has not fulfilled the covenant promises but they are the ones who have failed to fulfill the covenant obligations. Nor is the crisis the proof that YHWH is a weak God. It is precisely because of YHWH's power that the catastrophe has occurred. This theological explanation is precisely the purpose of the Temple vision.
  197. Its religious condition reflects the religious condition of Israel, for the Temple represents the whole population who is to be judged. It is the religious depravity committed by Israel which offended YHWH and justifies the judgment passed against whole Israel (Eze 7:8 ff.). Cf. M.E. MILLS, *Images of God in the Old Testament*, Cassell, London 1998, p. 85 (onwards will be cited as M.E. MILLS, *Images of God*).
  198. R. KASHER, *Anthropomorphism, Holiness and Cult: A New Look at Ezekiel 40-48*, ZAW 110 (1998) 192-208 (onwards will be cited as R. KASHER, *Anthropomorphism, Holiness and Cult*).
  199. The expression, «the place of my throne and the place for the soles of My feet», delivers the same message: the Temple was not only God's «footstool» but also his seat, His dwelling place. Cf. Isa 66:1.
  200. Eze 43:7.
  201. Eze 43:9.
  202. Cf. F.M. CROSS, *The Priestly Tabernacle*, BA 10 (1947) 65-68.
  203. The idea of permanent presence of God in the Temple is the only adequate explanation why when the *k'bod* YHWH left the Temple of Jerusalem he did not ascend to heaven but remain standing on the mount east of Jerusalem: «And the glory of the Lord ascended from the middle of the city, and stopped on the mountain which (is) east of the city» (11:23). In fact, according to Eze 35:10, God was present in Israel's midst, on earth, at the time of the destruction. Was this because YHWH, having abandoned his home, was awaiting the reconstruction of another Temple, his new home? This would explain why he returned to the Temple of Jerusalem from the east, the same direction he left and was located when he left it (Eze 43:1ff.; 44:1-2). I would say that only the view of God as inhabiting a terrestrial abode may explain why He does not leave the Temple and ascend to heaven, but instead remain standing on the mount east of Jerusalem. Cf. R. KASHER, *Anthropomorphism, Holiness and Cult*, p. 95.
  204. Cf. Lev 1:5, 11; 3:2, 8, 13; 7:2, 14; 2 Kgs 16:15; 2 Chr 29:22; 30:16. A. van den Born claims that *זרק* in P and Ugarit is a technical term for the splashing of blood on the altar. Cf. A. VAN DEN BORN, *Ezechiel*, BOT, Romen & Zonen, Roermond 1954, p. 69 (onwards will be cited as A. VAN DEN BORN, *Ezechiel*).

205. Cf. J. MILGROM, *The Priestly «Picture of Dorian Gray»*, 391.
206. Cf. Num 19:13, 20; also, Num 19:18; 31:23.
207. Cf. Eze 10:2; 36:25; 43:18.
208. Cf. W. EICHRODT, *Ezekiel*, p. 134; K.W. CARLEY, *Ezekiel*, CBC, p. 61; W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel I*, p. 251; M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1-20*, AB, p. 181.
209. According to Ka Leung Wong: «The purifying power of fire lies in its ability to destroy impurities». KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 174.
210. In the OT, fire is often used by God as a means of punishment. The most famous example is the fire and brimstone that rained upon the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen 19:24-25. God uses fire to punish and destroy the sinful inhabitants of these cities. Another example is found in Lev 10:1-2 wherein Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, are said consumed by fire coming from God's presence as punishment for offering illegitimate fire before his presence. The third example is found in Num 11:1 which narrates of some complaining Israelites who are consumed by fire sent by YHWH. But aside from being an instrument of punishment, fire is also used as an agent of purification in the OT. It is used in metallurgical description as means of purification (e.g., Jer 6:27-30; Eze 22:17-22; 24:3-14). It is also used as means of purification for vessels contaminated by corpses (e.g., Num 31:21-24).
211. Cf. I.M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, p. 124.
212. According to C. B. Houk, the combination of a priestly figure together with the action of scattering or sprinkling gives a picture of purification. Cf. C.B. HOUK, *The Final Redaction of Ezekiel 10*, JBL 90 (1971) 53. This understanding is further enforced by the use of קָרַח elsewhere in Ezekiel.
213. Cf. Eze 24:11.
214. One of the literary problems of the book of Ezekiel is the seeming repetitiveness and sometimes seeming displacement of many of its accounts, that is, similar subjects are not all dealt with in the same place or a subject is briefly introduced in the earlier text, then dropped and later resumed and developed further. The concrete example is the text that we have at present (i.e., the allegory of the pot). D. I. Block seems to provide the best answer to this problem. Following the «holistic approach» of Greenberg, Block credits Ezekiel with the authorship of the majority of the book and argues that these literary displacements and repetitions are not conclusive arguments for denying their Ezekielian authorship. Taking inspiration from the work of M. Fishbane, he claims that there is a tendency for biblical authors to take an earlier text, interpreting and applying them to new situations. He later calls this «inner-compositional exegesis» as resumptive exposition. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *Ezekiel 1-24*, NICOT, pp. 24-25; see also M. FISHBANE, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, Clarendon, Oxford 1985. Further discussions on this topic can be seen in ft. nt. 403.
215. Cf. KA LEUNG WONG, *The Idea of Retribution*, p. 177.
216. Contrary to the opinion of K.P. Darr that the function of the linen clothed man has changed from that of salvation in Eze 9 to that of destruction in Eze 10. Cf. K.P. DARR, *Ezekiel*, NIB, pp. 1182-83.
217. Though we have also to remember that the cultic representations found in the Temple are the concrete expressions of how YHWH manifested himself to his people. YHWH is enthroned over the cherubim, seated above a glorious throne just as he is believed to be enthroned in the heavens. The cultic representations found in the Temple are the cultic approximation of the divine realities. Thus, these elements are seen and included in Ezekiel's descriptions of his visions of the *ḵēbōd* YHWH.

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