Yhwh's Cultic Statue after 597/586 B.C.E.: A Linguistic and Theological Reinterpretation of Ezekiel 28:12

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SCHOLARS HAVE LONG NOTED that the Book of Ezekiel as a whole presents particularly puzzling exegetical difficulties. The manuscript witnesses differ at many points and the meanings are often ambiguous.[1] In 1954, in a major article in which he attempted to solve several of these textual and semantic difficulties in the book, G. R. Driver contended that the original of Ezek 28:12 contained the phrase חוֹתֵם תַּכְנִית ("seal of perfection").[2] The manuscript tradition of the phrase offers

[1] For issues concerning the unity and coherence of the book, see especially Walter Zimmerli, "The Special Form- and Traditio-Historical Character of Ezekiel's Prophecy," *VT* 15 (1965) 515-27; Moshe Greenberg, "What Are Valid Criteria for Determining Inauthentic Matter in Ezekiel?" in *Ezekiel and His Book* (ed. J. Lust; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1986) 123-35; idem, *Ezekiel: A new translation with introduction and commentary* (2 vols.; AB 22, 23; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983, 1997); Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel* (2 vols.; NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, 1998) 1. 17-23; John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth. Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000) 5-9. In this article I concentrate on phrases that are generally believed to belong to the original stratum of chap. 28. For the coherence of chap. 28, see especially Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 87-90; Greenberg, *Ezekiel,* 2. 577, 589, 593; Robert R. Wilson, "The Death of the King of Tyre: The Editorial History of Ezekiel 28," in *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East* (Guilford, CT: Four Quarters, 1987) 211-18, here 217-18.

[2] G. R. Driver, "Ezekiel: Linguistic and Textual Problems," *Bib* 35 (1954) 145-59, 299-312, here 158-59.

two main versions.[3] The MT describes the subject of the phrase, namely, the king of Tyre, as "sealer of perfection" or "sealing perfection," assuming a form חותם and vocalizing it as a qal active participle with ṣērê, as opposed to the furtive pataḥ required by the construct form of the noun חותם. The LXX preserves a significantly different reading, namely, ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως ("imprint of likeness"). Driver approaches the two versions as divergent and concludes that neither version is fully truthful to the original. According to him, on one hand, the MT departs from the original by vocalizing a noun, חותם, as an active participle, and, on the other hand, the LXX version is the product of the misreading of תכנית ("perfection or careful preparation"), as תבנית ("pattern, likeness").[4]

Driver's arguments have been followed strictly by subsequent analyses and translations of Ezek 28:12.[5] My primary purpose in this article is to address critically Driver's conclusions. Although Driver's proposal appears linguistically viable and exegetically attractive, it is methodologically flawed. Driver did not address several basic hermeneutical questions in regard to the divergence between the LXX and the MT versions. First, the possibility that the original text lies not behind the divergence between the two versions but behind their congruence is not even considered. Second, Driver did not supply the original text that he reconstructs with a context and a meaning. A close analysis of textual testimonies about exilic and early postexilic sociopolitical realities and concurrent theological concerns will evince an ideological context that coincides with the LXX version. Textual evidence suggests that the destruction of the statue of Yhwh in the First Temple and

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[3] Ezekiel 28 as a whole has received extensive attention in modern scholarship. To cite only a few studies: Dale Launderville, O.S.B., "Ezekiel's Cherub: A Promising Symbol or a Dangerous Idol?" *CBQ* 65 (2004) 165-83; James E. Miller, "The Maelaek of Tyre (Ezekiel 28, 11-19)," *ZAW* 105 (1994) 497-501; Wilson, "Death of the King of Tyre"; Norman C. Habel, "Ezekiel 28 and the Fall of the First Man," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 38 (1967) 516-24; Kalmon Yaron, "The Dirge over the King of Tyre," *ASTI* 3 (1964) 28-57; Herbert G. May, "The King in the Garden of Eden: A Study of Ezekiel 28:12-19," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (ed. Bernhard Anderson and Walter Harrelson; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962) 166-76; A. J. Williams, "The Mythological Background of Ezekiel 28:12-19?" *BTB* 6 (1976) 49-61; K. Jeppesen, "You Are a Cherub, but No God!" *SJOT* 1 (1991) 83-94; Oswald Loretz, "Der Sturz des Fürsten von Tyrus (Ez 28,1-19)," *UF* 8 (1976) 455-58; James Barr, "'Thou Art the Cherub': Ezekiel 28.14 and the Postexilic Understanding of Genesis 2–3," in *Priests, Prophets and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp* (ed. Eugene Ulrich et al.; JSOTSup 149; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 213-23.

[4] Driver, "Ezekiel," 158-59.

[5] One notable exception is Dexter E. Callender, Jr.; see his arguments in "The Primal Human in Ezekiel and the Image of God," in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives* (ed. Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong; SBLSymS 9; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) 175-93; idem, *Adam in Myth and History* (HSS 48; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000) 91-93. For several interpretations before Driver's influential study, see Callender's short survey in *Adam in Myth and History,* 91 n. 187; and idem, "Primal Human," 176-77.

of the temple itself necessitated a reformulation of the presence of Yhwh and of the sacred space. A mentality profoundly liturgical, presumably promoted by priestly circles and shared by Ezekiel, thus proposed a new numinous concept and anthropomorphic presence, כבוד, and a new statue or theomorphism, Adam. I argue that the LXX version of Ezek 28:12 reflects this shift in exilic Judahite ideology.

I. Text

Ezekiel 28 describes an Adamic figure, namely, the king of Tyre, as חוֹתֵם תָּכְנִית, according to the MT, or as ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως, according to the LXX. The MT reading is partially supported by Aquila (σφραγὶς ἑτοιμασιῶν) and Theodotion (σφραγὶς ἑτοιμασίας).

Driver, in his influential publication in 1954, solves the difference between the two readings in favor of a revised MT version, a decision uncontested by much of the ensuing scholarship. First, Driver deduces from the parallelism of חותם with כליל and from the descriptive value of תכנית that the former must have, in the original, been the noun חותם, ("seal").[6]

He does not consider the possibility that what he deems a radical divergence in need of being solved one way or the other—namely, the difference between rendering the first term of the expression with a noun (LXX) or a participle (MT)—could reflect an original form that could have equally generated both readings. Driver notes that the masoretes read חותם of Ezek 28:12 as the qal active participle form of חתם (i.e., "sealing" or "sealer"). Contrary to Driver's assumption, the LXX ἀποσφράγισμα, although a noun, could also reproduce an original participial form. Moreover, ἀποσφράγισμα could not aptly translate the noun חותם. Driver remarks that חותם denotes "the seal which makes the imprint, not the imprint made by the seal."[7] חותם is generally translated in the LXX by σφραγίς (e.g., Exod 28:11, 28, 36; 1 Kgs 21:8; Hag 2:23; Cant 8:6; Sir 42:6), but in one instance it is rendered by δακτύλιος (Gen 38:18). The term ἀποσφράγισμα, however, denotes just the contrary, namely, the imprint made by a seal, not the seal that makes the impression.[8] It therefore corresponds semantically to the Hebrew qal passive participle, which denotes the result or the completed state of an action. Moreover, Hebrew participles have both a verbal and a nominal value. The nominal value of a passive participle is augmented in a construction with a noun in *genitivus auctoris.* Such constructions of passive participles could be translated into Greek in two ways:

[6] Driver, "Ezekiel," 159.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Callender unnecessarily blurs this semantic difference between חותם, "signet," and ἀποσφράγισμα by asserting that "a seal impression is best taken as *evidence* of the seal" (*Adam in Myth and History,* 92-93 n. 192).

1. They could be translated with a passive participle with *dativus auctoris,* since in Greek the complemental agentive case is the instrumental dative, not the genitive.[9] In the LXX, Deut 32:24, מזי רעב ולחמי רשף, is translated with passive participle and *dativus auctoris,* τηκόμενοι λιμῷ καὶ βρώσει. These constructions, however, are rarely employed, and only with impersonal agentives. The more common option would be to introduce an agentive noun analytically. In Isa 62:12, גאולי יהוה is translated λελυτρωμένον ὑπὸ κυρίου. In Sir 45:1, יהוב אלהים ואנשׁים is translated ἠγαπημένον ὑπὸ θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων. ברוך יהוה of Gen 26:29 is also translated with εὐλογητὸς ὑπὸ κυρίου, although verbal adjectives in -τὸς and -τέος generally require *dativus auctoris.* Most Hebrew passive participle constructions, however, are simply avoided (Gen 41:6 Exod 28:11; Isa 53:4). שׂרפות אשׁ of Isa 1:7 is conveniently translated with πυρίκαυστοι. A second occurrence of ברוך יהוה, in Gen 24:31, is misread as εὐλογητὸς κύριος.

2. The other option would be the nominalization of the participle in a construction with a noun in *genitivus subiectivus.* In two instances in the LXX a Hebrew passive participle in construction with a *genitivus auctoris* is rendered with a noun: חרפת אדם ובזוי עם in Ps 22:7 (LXX 21:7) becomes ὄνειδος ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἐξουδένημα λαοῦ.[10]

Therefore, the congruence between the MT and LXX versions of Ezek 28:12, the translatability into Greek of Hebrew constructions of passive participles with agentive nouns, and the testimony of Ps 22:7 suggest that ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως translates a Hebrew passive participle (חָתוּם) with a noun in *genitivus auctoris* and not a nominal construction (חוֹתַם תַּכְנִית), as Driver suggests.[11] It remains to be explained how a passive participle in the original text of Ezek 28:12 could have been read as an active participle in the MT.

A passive qal participle could have been rendered in the original in *scriptio plena* or defectively.[12] It is, however, more probable that in the original text of Ezek 28:12 the passive participle was rendered defectively. First, the defective

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[9] Passive participles with *genitivus auctoris* are not idiomatic in Greek. The only occurrences in the NT (Matt 25:34, οἱ εὐλογημένοι τοῦ πατρός σου; Luke 2:27, τὸ εἰθισμένον τοῦ νόμου) seem to constitute Aramaisms.

[10] It is also evident that the first term of the phrase γεννητὸς/γεννητοὶ γυναικός/γυναικῶν (LXX Job 14:1; 15:14; 25:4; Matt 11:11; Luke 7:28) functions as a noun. The construction exhibits Semitic influences. In idiomatic Greek, the second term of the phrase should be in *dativus auctoris.*

[11] ἀποσφράγισμα translates a form חותם in a second instance, Jer 22:24, which, however, seems to refer to a ring on the right hand of Yhwh and ἀποσφράγισμα is an inapt translation.

[12] The primitive forms of the active and passive participles were *qātil* (whence *qōtēl*) and respectively *qatūl* (Hans Bauer and Pontus Leander, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des alten Testamentes* [Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1962] 317-18; and Paul Joüon, S.J., and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* [Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1996] 147).

spelling is generally regarded as earlier and thus more likely for an autograph of the early sixth century B.C.E.[13] Second, the plene spelling of $\bar{u}$ in interior positions would still be uncommon in the exilic period.[14] Third, statistics suggest that in qal passive participles the $\bar{u}$ in unstressed positions and in proclitics and constructs, as would be the case with the phrase in Ezek 28:12, manifested the greatest resistance to plene spelling (212 defective versus 340 plene spellings in such cases and respectively 32 defective versus 85 plene in all other cases; 38 percent versus 27 percent defective spellings).[15] Fourth, the MT still retains defective spellings of passive participles in the text of Ezekiel, although haphazardly (e.g., Ezek 9:2, 3).[16]

The defective forms of passive participles are identical to the regular defective spellings of active participles. The increasingly plene rendering of passive participles at later times reflects an attempt to distinguish them from the active participles.[17] In this process, the rendering of an originally defective passive participle as a plene active participle could very well constitute a scribal error. Scribes often updated a succinct consonantal text to the increasingly fuller spelling and were prone to (mis)vocalize in the process a consonantal text to a reading that was the most meaningful or clear/uncomplicated to them.[18] The process constituted ultimately a constant interpretation (unintentional and subconscious or not), not solely on ideological grounds but often for reasons simply grammatical or semantic.

[13] For the historical primacy of the defective spelling, see Francis I. Andersen and A. Dean Forbes, *Spelling in the Hebrew Bible* (Dahood Memorial Lecture; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1986); James Barr, *The Variable Spelling of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Werner Weinberg, "The History of Hebrew Plene Spelling," *HUCA* 46 (1975) 457-87; Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 46-50. For the relevance of the Qumran testimonies to this trend, see Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (HSS 29; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986) 17-18. The MT still retains 271 instances of defective spellings of passive qal participles (Andersen and Forbes, *Spelling,* 202; Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 148).

[14] On the plene writing of word-medial $\bar{u}$, see Andersen and Forbes, *Spelling,* 57–67. It is apparently the extension of an original plene spelling of a word-final $\bar{u}$. Influential in this transfer seems to have been the pronunciation of proper names, which are spelled with an interior plene $\bar{u}$ by the seventh century B.C.E. The first attestation of plene $\bar{u}$ in interior position in a common word is ארור in the Silwan Epitaph of late eighth or early seventh century. The plene spelling of interior $\bar{u}$, however, has normalized at a slow pace. By the beginning of the exile, the plene spelling of medial $\bar{u}$ was "in train, but not on a large scale" (p. 67).

[15] Andersen and Forbes, *Spelling,* 202.

[16] Barr, *Variable Spelling,* 113.

[17] The active participle has 1,040 plene spellings versus 4,269 defective. For statistics, see Andersen and Forbes, *Spelling,* 129; Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 49, 148. The discrepancy between the predominantly plene spelling of passive participles and the predominantly defective spelling of active participles is most probably the product of a late postexilic attempt to normalize the two spellings in dissimilar manners, in order to facilitate distinction or recognition.

[18] See P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 53-54, 57.

In this interpretative process a defective passive participle could be readily updated to a plene form of an active participle. Several linguistic and semantic considerations could have prompted such an update in the case of Ezek 28:12. First, passive participles are statistically much less frequent in biblical texts than active participles (1,089 passive forms versus 5,309 active forms). Second, only very rarely do passive participles form constructions with agentive nouns. Active relative clauses are generally preferred to passive participles with agents. Paul Joüon notes that in Hebrew "en principe une forme proprement passive ne s'emploie que si l'auteur de l'action (l'agent) n'est pas nommé. Ainsi une phrase telle que 'le sang innocent versé par Joab' doit normalement devenir en hébreu 'le sang innocent qu'a versé Joab.'"[19] Third, in cases in which passive participles do form constructions with agentive nouns, the nouns generally stand in analytical constructions with מן (originally derivative), ב (originally instrumental), and ל (originally relational).[20] The MT contains only nine constructions (including Isa 53:4) of passive participles with synthetic nouns in *genitivus auctoris,* not counting the most probable occurrence in the original of Ezek 28:12.[21] The vast majority of participial constructions are active participles and nouns in the accusative, as the MT actually reads the construction in Ezek 28:12.[22] Ezekiel, however, seems to have been fond of constructions with passive participles; several constructions of passive participles of *verba inuendi vel exuendi* with nouns in the accusative are still extant in the MT (Ezek 9:2, 3, 11; 23:6, 12; 38:4).

Therefore, given the evident general tendency toward active relative clauses and analytical constructions, the increasingly rare synthetic constructions of passive participles and agentive nouns would have appeared antiquated and would have constituted good candidates for an update.[23] The vocalization of the conso-

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[19] Paul Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1923) 400-401. See also Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 482-83; Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Scribner, 1971) 158; Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 616-17.

[20] For the preponderance of these analytical constructions in the MT, see Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 482-84. For the preponderance of analytical constructions at Qumran, see Jean Carmignac, "Le Complément d'Agent après un Verbe Passif dans l'Hebreu et l'Araméen de Qumrân," *RevQ* 35 (1978) 409-27.

[21] To the list of Joüon and Muraoka (*Grammar,* 417) one might add also Isa 62:12 and Eccl 45:1. Isaiah 54:13 could contain another passive participle, although the MT vocalizes למודי as a noun. Passive participles with nouns in the accusative are limited to *verba inuendi vel exuendi.* It is still disputed whether passive participles function as active in such constructions.

[22] See Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 415-16. Active participles with genitives are rare and generally limited to verbs of motion; see Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 416.

[23] For vestiges of genitival constructions at Qumran, see Carmignac, "Le Complément d'Agent," 420-21. For the extensive phenomenon of modernization of archaic expressions, see McCarter, *Textual Criticism,* 51-56.

nantal passive participle חתם as an active participle חותם could have been prompted by the semantic peculiarity of an uncommon construction.[24]

The common MT reading of the second term of the phrase in Ezek 28:12 is תָּכְנִית. Driver contends that the term is a misvocalization of תַּכְנִית ("careful preparation, perfection"). The LXX reading ὁμοίωσις, however, suggests תבנית ("pattern"). This reading is supported also by a marginal MT textual tradition, the Vg (*similitudo*), the Peshitta (*dmwtʾ*), and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (צורתא). תבנית, derived from בנה ("to build") with the preformative ת, most probably denoted originally an architectural plan (cf. Exod 25:9, 40; Josh 22:28; 2 Kgs 16:10). This archaic meaning placed it in semantic proximity to likeness, דמות, as the MT version of 2 Kgs 16:10 suggests.[25] In Hos 13:2 it denotes divine images, as *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* interprets it in Ezek 28:12. In several exilic and postexilic texts it derives the meaning of pattern or form, often in specific connection to divine images. In Deut 4:16-18, תבנית is the form (תמונה) of a פסל. According to Isa 44:13, a divine image bears the human תבנית. In Ps 106:20 it is contended that idolaters "exchange the כבוד of Yhwh for the תבנית." A similar iconic meaning is attested in Ezekiel. In Ezek 8:10 תבנית denotes the zoomorphic painted images of the First Temple.[26] In Ezek 8:3 and 10:8 the hand of the כבוד is precisely the תבנית (LXX ὁμοίωμα; Peshitta *dmwtʾ*) of a hand, language reminiscent of the depiction of the כבוד as a דמות in Ezek 1:26, 28. Its iconic connotation makes תבנית a more likely agentive noun of a passive participle of חתם. תכנית of the MT would easily be a graphic misreading of תבנית, given the fact that other readings of ב as כ are attested in the MT.[27]

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[24] Moreover, even a plene spelling of the regular type *qātūl* could have been subjected to a metathesis of *waw* prompted by a similar quest for clarity and meaning. See the succinct discussion of this phenomenon in McCarter, *Textual Criticism,* 50-51. Several scholars have also postulated the existence in Hebrew of an ancient passive qal participle of the type *qutal,* to which they have attributed several forms that appear to be in pual (e.g., אֻכָּל of Exod 3:2; מֻכָּה of Isa 53:4; see Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 167-68). The practice of spelling these supposed *qutal* participial forms in *scriptio plena* is attested in MT Judg 13:8, יוּלָד (for יֻלָּד). This type of ancient passive participle is attested also in a constructive state with a *genitivus auctoris* in Isa 53:4 (the LXX translators avoid the construction, which was probably viewed as either ambiguous or awkward). Its plene form is identical and prone to be confused with the plene spelling of an active qal participle.

[25] Several Qumranic fragments also attest to the semantic proximity between תבנית and דמות. 4Q403 1 ii.3 refers to מראי תבנית כבוד, probably an allusion to the depiction of the כבוד in Ezek 1:28 as תבנית אדם. 1Q33 10.14 refers to מראה דמות כבוד יהוה.

[26] The *NRSV* translates כל תבנית as "all kinds," considering תבנית to be a generic term without an explicit iconic connotation. The phrase is in evident parallelism with כל גלולי. It should rather be translated as "forms" or "images." The LXX omits the whole phrase.

[27] See McCarter, *Textual Criticism,* 44. Callender (*Adam in Myth and History,* 92) deducts the meaning of "likeness" without even attempting to substitute תבנית for תכנית. He contends: "'pattern,' 'model,' 'regulate,' 'measure,' and 'estimate' [meanings he finds for תכנית] are words within the semantic sphere of conformance to an ideal." See also Callender, "Primal Human," 187-88.

In conclusion, Ezek 28:12 should most probably be read as חֹתֵם תַּבְנִית, "imprinted of (by) the pattern." The reading of the original passive participle as an active form in the MT could have originated in its morphological ambiguity and archaic constructive position. The reading of the LXX readily translates the uncommon Hebrew construction, although it renders the passive participle with a noun.[28]

II. Ideological Context: Divine Presence and Absence after 597/586 B.C.E.

Driver did not attach a meaning to his proposal for the original text of Ezek 28:12 and subsequent scholarship has not yet reached a consensus in this regard; explanations for the comparison of the king of Tyre/Adam to a "signet of perfection" range from rhetorical question, to deputyship, to perfection of design.[29] The investigation of the histories of חתם and תבנית, however, evinces the fact that both terms have iconic connotations. These connotations require further investigation in regard to the extent to which Ezek 28:12 might employ the vocabulary of ongoing iconic concerns and speculations.

Biblical scholars have increasingly acknowledged that monarchic Israel and Judah were not aniconic. Although current opinion still favors the concept of "empty space aniconism," it allows more and more for the probability that ancient Judah was not devoid of cultic images and that it worshiped a cultic statue of Yhwh in the First Temple.[30] The existence of such a statue could have only exacerbated

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[28] The interpretative life of the passage evinces similar readings in Christian and Jewish antiquity. Greenberg (*Ezekiel,* 2. 581) notes that a tannaitic wedding blessing mentions the fashioning of Adam "in His [God's] image, likeness, and pattern" (בצלם דמות תבניתו). He also remarks that an iconic reading of Ezek 28:12 is witnessed in the sixteenth century interpretation of Abarbanel. In *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 16.19, written sometime at the beginning of the third century C.E., the human body (σῶμα) is defined as "imprinted with the greatest seal" (σφραγῖδι μεγίστη διατετυπωμένον), an impression by which it acquires "the form of god" (θεοῦ μορφή). God's body functions like a seal (σφραγίς) impressed on the human body. Humanity is God's εἰκών, or imprint. It is further emphasized, in vocabulary and ideology reminiscent of Ezekiel, that there is a fundamental quality-of-life distinction between "the seal" (σφραγίς) or "he who seals" (ὁ σφραγίσας), who is God, and "the sealed body" (τὸ σφραγισθὲν σῶμα) or "that which is sealed" (τὸ σφραγισθέν), which is the human corporeality. David H. Aaron ("Shedding Light on God's Body in Rabbinic Midrashim: Reflections on the Theory of a Luminous Adam," *HTR* 90 [1997] 299-314, here 309–10) notes the connection of this text with the rabbinic tradition attested in *Eccl. Rab.* 8:2, which develops a speculation about the luminosity of Adam based on Ezek 28:12.

[29] For an interpretation of the phrase as a rhetorical question, see Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel* (2 vols.; WBC 28, 29; Dallas: Word, 1990, 1994) 2. 92. For deputyship, see Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 104. For design perfection, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel,* 2. 580.

[30] For the concept of "empty space aniconism" and on the issue of a statue of Yhwh in the First Temple, see A. H. J. Gunneweg, "Bildlosigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament," *Henoch* 6 (1984) 257-

the major crisis that the destruction of the temple posed to ideologies concerning the divine presence.

The destruction of the temple and its statue was not only a major political and military catastrophe but also an ideological cataclysm. The throne and the statue of Yhwh could have not survived the aggression.[31] This marked the end not simply of a religious symbol, but the end of the earthly abode of Yhwh. Judah was forced to reassess its ideology of divine presence/absence.[32] The preexilic divine presence/absence ideology was therefore revised and adapted to the new sociopolitical reality.[33]

Textual testimonies reflect a shift in the Judahite definition of the temple, a shift often applied retroactively to preexilic documents. The Book of Jeremiah, a collection conceived as an immediate response to the whole cataclysm (cf. Jer 52:17-23), opposes an ideology that depicts the deity as physically enthroned in the

70; Bob Becking, "Assyrian Evidence for Iconic Polytheism in Ancient Israel?" in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. K. van der Toorn; Leuven: Peters, 1997) 157-71; Herbert Niehr, "In Search of YHWH's Cult Statue in the First Temple," in *Image and the Book,* 73-96; Christoph Uehlinger, "Anthropomorphic Cult Statuary in Iron Age Palestine and the Search for Yahweh's Cult Images," in *Image and the Book,* 97-155; idem, "Israelite Aniconism in Context," *Bib* 77 (1996) 540-49; Angelika Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder: Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik* (OBO 162; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, *"Jahwe und seine Aschera": Anthropomorphes Kultbild in Mesopotamien, Ugarit und Israel; Das biblische Bilderverbot* (Ugaritisch-biblische Literatur 9; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1992); B. B. Schmidt, "The Aniconic Tradition: On Reading Images and Viewing Texts," in *The Triumph of Elohim; From Yahwisms to Judaisms* (ed. D. V. Edelman; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 75-105; Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *No Graven Image? Israelite Aniconism in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context* (ConBOT 42; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995).

[31] Niehr ("YHWH's Cult Statue," 91) suggests that the destruction of the cultic image may be reflected in the report of 2 Kgs 24:13 about the stripping (קצץ) of the cultic objects in the temple. This would imply, if one relies on the chronology of the account, that the destruction of the image occurred in 597 B.C.E., at the end of Jehoiachin's reign. Mettinger (*The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* [ConBOT 18; Lund: Gleerup, 1982] 61) also notes that the biblical account seems to suggest that "the throne was stripped of its gold plate already in 597." Psalm 74:6-7, which mentions the breaking of the "carved work" (פתוח) and the burning of the sanctuary, might also allude to this disastrous event.

[32] For the issue of the presence/absence of Yhwh, central to exilic and postexilic ideologies, see especially Joseph Blenkinsopp, *History and Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983) 197; Gary A. Anderson, *Sacrifices and Offerings in Ancient Israel: Studies in Their Social and Political Importance* (HSM 41; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 93; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth.*

[33] The probability that the ideology centered in the presence of Yhwh in a cultic statue survived the events of 597/585 B.C.E. is supported by textual evidence, such as Ps 115:2-8; Ezek 20:32; Isa 40:18-19 (= Isa 46:5-6); 42:8-9; Jer 2:26-27; 10:14-16.

temple (Jer 3:16-17; 23:24). In the Book of Jeremiah, the abode of Yhwh is relocated from the temple, no longer extant, to an increasingly reclusive heaven. Heaven, identified in preexilic mentalities with the temple, is itself secluded to accommodate the new transcendent deity.[34] Similarly for Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah, heaven, equally reclusive, is Yhwh's habitation (e.g., Isa 63:15; 66:1). The only immanent side of the divinity is the divine voice (e.g., Isa 40:25). Yhwh's heavenly abode becomes a place of hiding (e.g., Isa 45:15).

Biblical scholars have noted in the past that two main emerging ideologies reassess the preexilic theology concerning the physical presence of Yhwh in the temple, in his statue, and introduce two important new concepts, שׁם and כבוד.[35] Both ideologies avoid one of the main titles of Yhwh in the First Temple, יהוה צבאות ישׁב הכרבים, a title impregnated with iconic connotations and most probably associated specifically with Yhwh's statue.[36]

The Deuteronomistic circles substitute a שׁם theology for the preexilic ideology that was no longer viable.[37] The place of worship becomes a dwelling only for the ultimately unconfined and immaterial name of God (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:16-20, 29, 44, 48; 2 Sam 7:13).[38] Moshe Weinfeld, one of the main analysts of the שׁם ideol-

[34] In preexilic ideologies the temple and heaven share a unique identity. With Yhwh dwelling literally in the temple, the temple is heaven (cf. Ps 14:2, 7; 20:3, 7; 76:3, 9). See also Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, "Yahweh Zebaoth," *DDD,* 2nd ed., 920-24, here 923; idem, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 29-32; M. Metzger, "Himmlische und irdische Wohnstatt Jahwes," *UF* 2 (1970) 139-58; Othmar Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst: Eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und Sach 4* (SBS 84, 85; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1977) 51-53; idem, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* (New York: Seabury, 1978) 172-73. An "identity" conception of the sanctuary as heaven is attested also in Egypt (Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 30 n. 40; Keel, *Symbolism of the Biblical World,* 172), in Canaan (Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 30 n. 41; Keel, *Symbolism of the Biblical World,* 172), and Mesopotamia (Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 29-30; Keel, *Symbolism of the Biblical World,* 172-73). A heaven distinct from the temple does not become Yhwh's habitation until exilic and postexilic times, when the temple and its statue are no longer extant. For this development, see Herbert Niehr, "God of Heaven," *DDD,* 2nd ed., 370-72; idem, "Host of Heaven," ibid., 428-30.

[35] For the emergence of these new theologies, see especially Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 59-66.

[36] On this avoidance, see Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 19-37, 59-66, 111-14; idem, "Yahweh Zebaoth"; Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (2 vols.; Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1962, 1965) 1. 238-39.

[37] A short survey of pre-1982 opinions on the date of D is provided in Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 38 n. 1. Mettinger dates the emergence of the שׁם theology to 597, when he places the destruction of the cherubim throne (*Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 38 n. 1, and esp. 59-66).

[38] This is also the opinion of Gerhard von Rad (*Studies in Deuteronomy* [London, 1953] 38-39), Moshe Weinfeld (*Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972] 193), George Ernest Wright ("The Temple in Palestine-Syria," *BAR* 1 [1961] 169-84,

ogy, summarizes: "The deuteronomic school used this phraseology in a very consistent manner and never made the slightest digression from it. There is not one example in the deuteronomic literature of *God' dwelling* in the temple or the building of a house *for God.* The temple is always the *dwelling of his name,* and the house was built *for his name.*"[39] For the Deuteronomic circles God dwells physically in the secluded heaven (1 Kgs 8:27-49; Deut 26:15; 33:26). Yhwh's presence on earth is exclusively mediated through his name. The Sinai event is revised and purged of any reference to the form or bodily appearance of Yhwh (Deut 4:12). Yhwh spoke from heaven and not from the top of the mountain, and the contact with Yhwh was not visual but auditory (cf. Deut 4:12, 32, 36; 5:4, 22-23).

The alternative כבוד theology of the priestly circles exhibits the same marks of an ideological revision based on the events of 597/586 B.C.E. as the Deuteronomistic ideology. In contrast to the ideology of the Deuteronomistic circles, which centered on the divine שׁם, the Priestly source does not remove Yhwh completely from his abode. It instead proposes a presence of Yhwh in his כבוד, a mobile presence, yet physical or concrete.[40] The divine כבוד, as opposed to שׁם, still possesses and reflects the concreteness of the presence of Yhwh in the temple, although it adds to it more mobility. The כבוד, in the concrete form of fire enveloped by cloud, dwells in the tabernacle (see Exod 13:21-22; 14:24; 24:16-17; 40:34-38; Num 9:15) and the First Temple (see 1 Kgs 8:10-11, which exhibits priestly traits).

Modern scholarship has long noted affinities between the Book of Ezekiel and the ideology of the Priestly sources.[41] In the Book of Ezekiel, as well as in the Priestly source, Yhwh's presence in the sacred space (temple/tabernacle) is materialized in the כבוד. Although Ezekiel's depiction of the כבוד retains the central features of its depictions in the Priestly source, namely, fire and cloud (see 1:4, 27-28), it also attributes to the divine presence an evident anthropomorphism (1:1–3:15; 8:1–11:25). Moreover, Ezekiel reintroduces in the exilic revisionist ideologies the concept of the throne upon which the divine presence is seated (chaps. 1; 10).[42] The throne of Yhwh becomes the throne of the כבוד (cf. the expression כסא כבוד in Jer 17:12).

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here 181), Ronald E. Clements (*God and Temple* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965] 79-99), Metzger ("Himmlische und irdische Wohnstatt Jahwes," 149-51), and Mettinger (*Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 38-79, esp. 78-79). For diverging views, see Mettinger's survey in *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 42-45.

[39] Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School,* 193.

[40] For the physicality and mobility of כבוד, see especially Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 79-93; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School,* 200-206; idem, "כבוד," *TDOT,* 7. 22-38.

[41] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel,* 1. 46-52; Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel* (Paris: Gabalda, 1982); Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 11-13.

[42] Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth,* 103-6; for the lack of the throne in P, see pp. 87-88.

The option of P and Ezekiel for כבוד in the definition of Yhwh's presence in the sacred space is not inadvertent. The concept was being widely used in reference to the numinous character of the cultic statues of gods. Psalm 63:3 refers to beholding Yhwh's כבוד in a manner that recalls the language of seeing Yhwh in the temple setting, language that bears evident iconic connotations.[43] In Ps 106:20 Yhwh's כבוד stands in contrast to idols. כבוד apparently refers to the numinous essence of divine cultic statues (see also Isa 42:8; 48:11; Jer 2:11). The meaning is further supported by the connection between כבוד and the Mesopotamian concepts *puluḫtu, rašubbatu, namurratu,* and *melammu.*[44] The terms indicate divine (and royal) majesty and luminosity as concretely envisioned in the cultic statues of the gods, predominantly in their crowns and garments.

Scholars have also long noted a correspondence between the iconic כבוד of Ezekiel and the protoplast of the Priestly source. Adam is defined in the Priestly source in terms reminiscent of the iconic function of the כבוד in Ezekiel. First, the Priestly source defines Adam's special connection to the deity by means of צלם and דמות (Gen 1:26), terms generally used to denote statues of gods (e.g., Num 33:52; 1 Sam 6:5; 2 Kgs 11:18; Ezek 7:20; 16:17; 23:24; Amos 5:26; see also Isa 40:18-19a and 46:5-6).[45] Numerous scholars have thus concluded that the priestly ideology treats Adam as the equivalent of a pagan cult statue or idol.[46] To the question of Isa 40:18-19, the priestly ideology answered "Adam."

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[43] Niehr ("YHWH's Cult Statue," 83-85) notes that the most plausible meaning of the expression of "seeing Yhwh" within the temple is in reference to a cultic image. The Israelite language of "seeing Yhwh" corresponds to the ancient Near Eastern conception that to see a god means to behold the divine image. C. L. Seow ("Face," *DDD,* 2nd ed., 322-24, here 323) notes that "the Akkadian idiom 'to see the face (of the deity)' probably had its origin in the confrontation of the cult image in the sanctuary; those who went to the temple literally 'saw' a representation of the deity." Several texts suggest a similar conception among ancient Israelites. In Ps 11:7 the righteous are promised visions of Yhwh's פנים. In Ps 42:3 the pilgrimage to the temple ultimately aspires to visions of Yhwh's פנים. Psalm 17:15 explicitly correlates the vision of the divine פנים with seeing the "form" (תמונה) of Yhwh, a word choice highly suggestive, given the physical connotation of תמונה and its association with cultic images (e.g., Exod 20:4; Deut 4:16, 23, 25; 5:8).

[44] See also *CAD* M/2 9-12; A. Leo Oppenheim, "Akkadian *puluḫtu* and *melammu,*" *JAOS* 63 (1943) 31-34; idem, *Ancient Mesopotamia* (2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977) 98; Weinfeld, "כבוד," 26, 28-31; Menahem Haran, "The Shining of Moses' Face: A Case Study in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Iconography," in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (ed. W. Boyd Barrick and John R. Spencer; JSOTSup 31; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984) 159-73, here 167-68, also nn. 18-21.

[45] In Mesopotamia *ṣalmu* designates a divine cultic statue. Mark S. Smith notes that דמות in several ancient Near Eastern texts refers to the resemblance between a statue and its prototype, while צלם refers to the statue itself, or "to the material medium in which the *dĕmût* is made" (Mark S. Smith, "Divine Form and Size in Ugaritic and Preexilic Israelite Religion," *ZAW* 100 [1988] 424-27, here 426 n. 13).

[46] See especially Erich Zenger, *Gottes Bogen in den Wolken: Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Theologie der priesterschriftlichen Urgeschichte* (SBS 112; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk,

Second, the Priestly source also reinterprets and revises ancient creation myths in accordance with its liturgical ideology. Within its ideological parameters, the creation and the structure of the world mirror the construction and the function of the temple.[47] According to this creation/temple parallelism, Adam, who is introduced at the culmination of the creation in the world's innermost and most sacrosant space (Eden), corresponds to the preexilic statue of Yhwh, which would have been placed in the innermost and most sacred chamber of the temple, the holy of holies, in an act that would have signified the completion of the temple. In the Priestly source, Adam functions as the representation of Yhwh, or the physical replacement of the statue no longer extant.

Third, Adam's depiction as the צלם and דמות (LXX εἰκών and ὁμοίωσις) of Yhwh in Gen 1:26 closely corresponds to the description of the divine כבוד as דמות כמראה אדם (LXX ὁμοίωμα ὡς εἶδος ἀνθρώπου) in Ezek 1:26-28. Gerhard von Rad has defined the expression in Ezek 1:26 as "the prelude to Gen 1:26."[48] As Mark S. Smith notes, "whereas Ez 1,26 conveys the prophet's vision of God in the likeness of the human person, the P writer's vision of the human person is in the likeness of God."[49] John F. Kutsko further argues that "fundamentally P and Ezekiel are dealing with the same answer, approached from different angles: man is like God, God is like man. In this answer both P and Ezekiel remove other gods from

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1983) 84-96; A. Angerstorfer, "Hebräisch *dmwt* und aramäisch *dmw(t)*," *BN* 24 (1984) 30-43; Smith, "Divine Form and Size," 426-27; Corrine L. Patton, "Adam as the Image of God: An Exploration of the Fall of Satan in the *Life of Adam and Eve*," in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1994* (SBLSP 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994) 294-300; Thomas Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs: Untersuchungen zur Gestatthaftigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umwelt* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996) 252-59; Niehr, "YHWH's Cult Statue," 93-94; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 65-76. See also Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis. A Commentary* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) 57-58; Johannes C. de Moor, "The Duality in God and Man: Gen 1:26-27 as P's Interpretation of the Yahwistic Creation Account," in *Intertextuality in Ugarit and Israel* (OTS 40; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 112-25, esp. 115.

[47] For the parallelism between temple and creation, see P. J. Kerney, "Creation and Liturgy: The P Redaction of Exodus 25–40," *ZAW* 89 (1977) 375-87; Moshe Weinfeld, "Sabbath, Temple and the Enthronement of the Lord: The Problem of the *Sitz-im-Leben* of Gen 1:1–2:3," in *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles* (ed. A. Caquot and M. Delcor; AOAT 212; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981) 501-11; Jon D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988) 78-99; M. Vervenne, "Genesis 1,1–2,4. The Compositional Texture of the Priestly Overture to the Pentateuch," in *Studies in the Book of Genesis* (ed. A. Wénin; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001) 35-79.

[48] Von Rad, *Genesis,* 59.

[49] Smith, "Divine Form and Size," 427; see also idem, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Ksrael's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) 90.

the equation."[50] In the priestly ideology that stands behind both the Priestly source and Ezekiel, Adam functions as the iconic counterpart of the כבוד. The priestly ideology proposes a prolongation of the numinous value of the cultic statue of Yhwh in the concept of כבוד.[51] The כבוד, however, is mobile and escapes constant human access; it does not function fully (or socially, liturgically) like a statue. Nevertheless, it is not imageless. Both P and Ezekiel remain ultimately dedicated to an ideology that is strictly monotheistic but not aniconic. In both P and Ezekiel, humanity (see Gen 5:1-2) functions as the image of Yhwh, as the continuation of the cultic statue of Yhwh in the First Temple.

The proposed reconstruction of Ezek 28:12, חֹתֵם תַּבְנִית/ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως, a depiction of a royal figure associated with primeval humanity, coincides with these ongoing speculations about the iconic function of Adamic humanity (Gen 1:26 and Ezek 1:28). The textual traditions of the LXX, the Peshitta, and the Vg read Ezek 28:12 in this context. The preference of the LXX translator(s) to render תבנית with ὁμοίωσις is peculiar and meaningful. Other words would have constituted better candidates and were commonly employed in translations of תבנית: παράδειγμα in Exod 25:9; 1 Chr 28:11-12, 18-19; τύπος in Exod 25:40; ὁμοίωμα in Deut 4:16-18; 2 Kgs 16:10; Ps 144:12, and Josh 22:28; μορφή in Isa 44:13. The peculiar choice for ὁμοίωσις reflects an association between חֹתֵם תַּבְנִית and the ideology behind Gen 1:26, in which humanity's iconic value is expressed by means of ὁμοίωσις.[52] The same association is evident in the Peshitta, which translates תבנית with *dmwtʾ*, and in the Vg, which opts for *similitudo.* The association seems to have been mediated by the semantic proximity of תבנית with דמות (e.g., 2 Kgs 16:20).

III. Context

Several other passages from Ezekiel 28 suggest that the phrase חֹתֵם תַּבְנִית and the imagery of the whole chapter originate in ongoing speculations about the iconic function and value of primeval humanity. Immediately after חֹתֵם תַּבְנִית/ ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως follows another apparent disagreement between the MT and the LXX. The LXX concretizes the Hebrew כְּלִיל יֹפִי with στέφανος κάλλους,

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[50] Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 68. For a connection between Ezek 1:26-28 and Gen 1:26, see also von Rad, *Old Testament Theology,* 1.146; J. M. Miller, "In the 'Image' and 'Likeness' of God," *JBL* 91 (1972) 289-304, here 302-3; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 65-70; Block, *Ezekiel,* 1.107.

[51] See also Niehr, "YHWH's Cult Statue," 92.

[52] This converges with Callender's finding in *Adam in Myth and History,* 96; idem, "Primal Human."

"crown of beauty," as does the Peshitta, "crown of splendor" (*klylᵓ šwbḥᵓ*). כליל generally denotes perfection in the Hebrew Bible, but it also parallels the Akkadian *kilīlu,* which denotes a gold crown often adorned with precious stones.[53] Driver agrees that the term should be considered a noun, in agreement with the LXX στέφανος κάλλους.[54] The reference to a "crown of beauty" has itself iconic connotations.

Crowns are commonly associated with divine statues and the divine כבוד. Weinfeld notes that "in the ancient Near East the divine glory was embodied in the crown of the deity or hero; this holds true of Heb. *kābôd* as well."[55] Weinfeld's references are Job 19:9 ("he has stripped me from my כבוד and taken the crown from my head") and Ps 8:6 ("You have made him a little less than God, and crowned him with כבוד and honor"). Psalm 8:6 is particularly relevant as it refers to primeval humanity. It must further be recalled that כבוד also refers to the divine majesty of the cultic statues of gods (see Ps 106:20; Isa 42:8; 48:11; Jer 2:11). Crowns are central paraphernalia of the cultic statues of ancient Near Eastern gods.

The mention of beauty (יפי) further supports the association of the phrase with the statue of Yhwh. יפי, derived from יפה ("to be beautiful") refers to physical appearance, as the common association of the root with תאר and מראה evinces.[56] Therefore, the depiction in Ps 50:2 of Zion, from which Yhwh shines forth (יפע), as כלל יפי ("the perfection of beauty," but cf. the LXX ἡ εὐπρέπεια τῆς ὡραιότητος [Ps 49:2]) could hardly have referred to anything other than Yhwh's cultic statue.[57] The divine beauty was specifically embodied in divine images. Lamentations 2:15 also employs כלילת יפי as a title of Zion. The LXX associates the phrase with כבוד and translates στέφανος δόξης. Ezekiel 16:14 explains Jerusalem's perfection (כליל) in beauty (יפי) as the presence of Yhwh's splendor (הדר). Both Ezek 16:14 and Ps 50:2 associate Zion's beauty with the radiant presence of Yhwh in the temple. The deity that shines forth is the one ישב הכרבים. In 1985, Oswald Loretz argued in a monograph dedicated to the Canaanite background of Psalm 27 that the expression "to behold the fairness of YHWH and enquire in his palace" in Ps 27:4 most probably refers to the vision and the worship of Yhwh's cultic statue.[58] Psalm 80:1-3 associates the shining of Yhwh from

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[53] Driver, "Ezekiel," 159; Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 105.

[54] Driver, "Ezekiel," 159.

[55] Weinfeld, "כבוד," 27, 29.

[56] See Helmer Ringgren, "יפה," *TDOT,* 6. 218-20, here 218-19. Very rarely does יפי denote a moral purity (e.g., Eccl 3:11). For Ugaritic precedence to this rare meaning, see Johannes C. de Moor, "Ugaritic Lexigraphical Notes," *UF* 18 (1986) 260.

[57] In *Lev. Rab.* 20:4 and *Num. Rab.* 4:13, Ps 50:2 is associated with Yhwh's enthroned presence in the holy.

[58] Oswald Loretz, *Leberschau, Sündenbock, Asasel in Ugarit und Israel: Leberschau und Jahwestatue in Psalm 27, Leberschau in Psalm 74* (Ugaritisch-biblisch Literatur 3; Altenberge: CIS, 1985).

the temple with the deity's face (פנים).

Therefore, the expression כליל יפי seems to be rooted in the preexilic termi-nology associated with the divine statue. The transfer of the title to Zion and Jerusalem could very well be an exilic manner of dealing with the destruction of the temple, while avoiding any iconic references. A precedent for this transfer is the Mesopotamian concept that the splendor of divine images is reflected in their entire cities.[59] The use of the phrase כליל יפי in Ezek 28:12 in reference to the king of Tyre/Adam reflects a transfer of the iconic presence of Yhwh, of Yhwh's "radi-ant beauty," to primordial humanity. In Ezek 28:17 יפי is further paralleled by the radiance (יפעה) on account of which the king of Tyre/Adam claims divinity. Ezekiel coins this new term, יפעה, from the root יפע. The intention to construct in v. 17 a wordplay יפעה/יפי, concepts linked also in Ps 50:2, is probable. The LXX does not even distinguish between יפי and יפעה in Ezek 28:7 and 17, and translates both with τὸ κάλλος. Both words, יפי and יפעה, as well as כבוד, are within the seman-tic proximity of the Mesopotamian terms *puluḫtu, rašubbatu, namurratu,* and *melammu.* As mentioned above, the terms indicate the majesty and luminosity of the cultic statues of the gods (and kings). *Melammu* in particular resides in the gods' crowns and can be transferred to the crown of the earthly king. The specific association of divine radiance with crowns seems to have prompted Ezekiel's choice of the newly coined יפעה.[60] The identification of the king of Tyre/Adam with כליל יפי constitutes a subtle transfer of the iconic presence of Yhwh in the First Temple, his radiant beauty in the terms of Ps 50:2, to humanity.

Most scholars consider the list of precious stones in Ezek 28:13 a later addi-tion. Few, however, dispute that אבן יקרה מסכתך and זהב מלאכת תפיך belong to the original stratum of chap. 28. מסכתך, a *hapax legomenon,* should most probably be associated with סכך ("to block, to screen out"). The LXX interprets it in reference to garments (ἐνδέδεσαι).[61] Daniel I. Block notes that the verb refers to clothes or

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[59] Karel van der Toorn, "The Iconic Book Analogies between the Babylonian Cult of Images and the Veneration of the Torah," in *Image and the Book* (ed. van der Toorn)*, 229-48, here 234.

[60] For the proximity between *melammu* and יפעה, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel,* 2. 575; Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 98 n. 41. My iconic reading, however, diverges from theirs. For the radiant crowns of deities, see, e.g., *Erra* I 127-28. The connection between the Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra has been evinced extensively in modern scholarship (see especially the thorough analysis of Daniel Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra* [OBO 104; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttin-gen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991]). In *Erra* I 127-28 Erra persuades Marduk to leave his tem-ple in Babylon. The text mentions in this context that Marduk's statue is in disrepair, and that his "crown, which used to light up Ehalanki like Etemenanki, is dimmed" (trans. from Bodi, *Ezekiel,* 192). In *Enuma Elish* IV 58 Marduk's *melammu* literally "crowns" his head. For the association of crowns with *melammu,* see also *Enuma Elish* I 67-68.

[61] For interpretative issues concerning מסכתך, see Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 106 n. 96; H. J. van Dijk, *Ezekiel's Prophecy on Tyre (Ez. 26,1–28,19): A New Approach* (BibOr; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1968) 116-18. It is possible that the list of precious stones attests to further associations between pri-

garments in Isa 23:18; 2 Sam 17:19; and possibly Ezek 27:7.[62] The root also produces the name of the screen of the door of the tabernacle, namely, מסך, which is a needlework made of linen (see Exod 26:36; 27:16; 35:15, 17; 36:37; 39:38; 40:5, 8, 28; see also Isa 22:8).[63]

There is an evident connection between וזהב מלאכת and כל אבן יקרה מסכתך תפיך.[64] מלאכת, a derivative of מלאכה, describes generically crafting in gold, or, as Block defines it, "the special craftsmanship of a goldsmith."[65] תפיך most probably derives from יפי.[66] Therefore, the phrases וזהב מלאכת תפיך and כל אבן יקרה מסכתך should most probably be read as "every precious stone was your covering/garment" and "gold was the craftsmanship of your beauty," a depiction of Adam as a statue of presumably wooden core overlaid with gold sheets and dressed with garments adorned with precious stones.[67] This meaning coincides with the subsequent phrase, ונקביך בך. נקבים most probably derives from נקב and refers to perforations (as the Vg. *foramina* interprets), which in this case could denote perforations made in the core of divine statues for the attachment of the gold sheets.[68]

The king/Adam is further associated with a cherub in Ezek 28:14. Once again

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mordial humanity and divine statues. The list of precious stones adorning Adam's garment is admittedly reminiscent of the stones on the high priest's breastpiece (Exod 28:17-20; 39:10-13), but the high priest's vestments could also be expected to reflect some of the majesty of the garments of Yhwh, garments adorning Yhwh's cultic statue. The patterning of the high priest's garments after Yhwh's appears in rabbinic traditions (e.g., *Exod. Rab.* 38:8).

[62] Block, *Ezekiel,* 2.106 n. 96.

[63] Moreover, the term presents an interesting double entendre. It is also in the semantic proximity of נסך, a by-form of סכך (on נסך, see C. Dohmen, "נסך," *TDOT,* 9. 455-60; idem, "מסכה," *TDOT,* 8. 431-37; Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder,* 306-7). The verb produces מסכה, which refers to metal plating and often to statues of gods crafted in this manner (Dohmen, "נסך," 456-57; idem, "מסכה," 431-32). Moreover, מסכה is often directly associated with זהב (Dohmen, "מסכה," 434, 436).

[64] The phrase וזהב מלאכת תפיך is of special difficulty. According to the masoretic punctuation, זהב concludes the list of gemstones. The LXX and the Peshitta connect the term to the subsequent phrase. This is most probably accurate, given the fact that gold is not a gemstone.

[65] Block, *Ezekiel,* 2.109. מלאכה is extensively used in narratives about the tabernacle and the temple, in reference to their crafting (Exod 31:3, 5; 35:29-35; 38:24; 39:43; 1 Kgs 7:14; 1 Chr 22:15; 28:21; 29:5).

[66] See Block, *Ezekiel,* 2.100, 109-10, also 100 n. 52. This is also the reading of several ancient versions: the Vg. has *aurum opus decoris tui;* Aquila and Theodotion have ἔργον τοῦ κάλλους σου.

[67] For the garments of divine statues in Mesopotamia, see A. Leo Oppenheim, "The Golden Garments of the Gods," *JNES* 8 (1949) 172-93; and, more recently, Eiko Matsushima, "Divine Statues in Ancient Mesopotamia: Their Fashioning and Clothing and Their Interaction with the Society," in *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East* (ed. Eiko Matsushima; Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag, 1993) 209-19.

[68] See Zimmerli, *Ezekiel,* 2. 85; Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 110.

[69] See Barr, "'Thou Art the Cherub,'" 213-17; Greenberg, *Ezekiel,* 2. 579, 583; Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 112-13.

the LXX preserves a variant quite different from the MT. The MT reads את כרוב, "you are a cherub," a variant that is considered in the prevailing consensus to be a better reflection of the original reading.[69] את could be a defective form of the masculine pronoun אתה, and it occurs as such in Num 11:15 and Deut 5:24. The Targum of Ezekiel corrects the form to אתה. The Vg adheres to this reading and translates *tu cherub.* The LXX and the Peshitta read את as a preposition and translate μετὰ τοῦ χερουβ ἔθηκα. This difference in readings resurfaces in v. 16. The MT reads כרוב הסכך ואבדך. The LXX has ἤγαγέν σε τὸ χερουβ. In light of the probability that the text associates Adam with Yhwh's cultic statue, the protoplast's identification with a cherub is implausible. The attributes of the cherub in the MT, ממשח הסוכך, further suggest that the cherub is not identified with Adam but rather is associated with Adam in the protoplast's role as the statue of Yhwh. Theomorphic humanity would be appropriately placed in the temple with the cherubim. I noted above that, within the framework of the priestly parallelism between the temple and the world, Eden corresponds to the holy of holies. Modern scholars have also noted that in Ezek 28:11-19 Eden reflects the sanctuary of Jerusalem.[70] In Ezek 28:16 the king/Adam resides among "stones of fire" (אבני אש), a phrase that recalls the "stones" of fire—that is, the blazing coals of the altar from among the cherubim (cf. גחלי אש, Ezek 1:13; 10:2, 6-7; also Ps 18:13, 16/2 Sam 22:13; Lev 16:12).[71]

Through his incorporation of iconic terminology and imagery, Ezekiel conveys in a succinct, poetic manner an important anthropological statement. Ezekiel 28:1-19 (as well as the other oracles of 28:20–32:32) addresses a humanity that claims divinity,[72] according to a dominant monarchical ideology in the ancient Near East.[73] In vv. 2, 9, the king of Tyre purports to be a "god" (אל and אלהים/θεός); subsequent swift divine correction reminds the king that he is but a human being (אדם/ἄνθρωπος). The corrective completes Ezekiel's iconic anthropology. Modern commentators have observed that the exilic concept of humanity as representation of the divine, as the צלם and דמות of Yhwh (Gen 1:26), was most probably influenced by ancient Near Eastern ideologies regarding the function of

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[70] Callender, *Adam in Myth and History,* 41; Yaron, "Dirge over the King of Tyre," 40-41; Launderville, "Ezekiel's Cherub," 175; Wilson, "Death of the King of Tyre," 215.

[71] For this interpretation of the "stones of fire," see also Launderville, "Ezekiel's Cherub," 173, 179; Yaron, "Dirge over the King of Tyre," 38-40; Wilson, "Death of the King of Tyre," 216.

[72] It is possible that Ezek 28:1-19 contains two units originally distinct and conjoined editorially, namely, vv. 1-10 and 11-19. It has been contended that form and topic differentiate the two units (see the discussion in Wilson, "Death of the King of Tyre," 211-12). Nevertheless, in their final form the two units coalesce in a unitary composition. The whole of vv. 1-19 has the same addressee (the king of Tyre), the same general theme, and the same vocabulary.

[73] Most probably the direct reference of Ezekiel's oracles is the Egyptian monarchical ideology (Launderville, "Ezekiel's Cherub," 170).

royalty as imaging the divine.[74] Within these ideologies iconic language served to express the monarch's divine status. Ezekiel employs iconic language to define an iconism of likeness but not of identity and an anthropology of theomorphism but not of full equality with the divine. For Ezekiel, humanity is the image of Yhwh. Nevertheless, humanity is not fully divine. Adam is a divine statue, but no god. Yhwh's new statue is not Yhwh himself.

The human/divine distinction is conveyed by means of a language of similar iconic connotations. The punishment of the king of Tyre reflects the destruction of divine images.[75] His violent death is depicted as the slaying[76] of his radiance (יפעה/τὸ κάλλος) (Ezek 28:7), which can hardly connote anything except the destruction of the king's divine resemblance. In v. 16 the king is removed from his abode "from among the stones of fire" (מתוך אבני אש), that is, from the holy of holies. In v. 17 he is cast to the ground (שלך) and exposed (נתן) before scorning eyes. In v. 18 he is consumed (כלה) by fire and turned into ashes (לאפר) on the ground. Extant accounts in the ancient Near East of the destruction of captured divine images are admittedly scarce.[77] In the Hebrew Bible, the process is more or less homogenized and often referred to as killing a divine resemblance (cf. Isa 37:19 = 2 Kgs 19:18) and it most often entails casting to the ground (see 1 Sam 5:3), smashing (see Exod 23:24; Lev 26:30; Deut 7:5; 12:3; 1 Sam 5:4;[78] 1 Kgs 15:13; 2 Kgs 23:12; Isa 21:9; Mic 1:7),[79] and the burning and scattering of the ashes of the divine images (cf. 2 Kgs 23:6, 11; Exod 32:20; Deut 7:5; 12:3; 1 Kgs 15:13; Mic 1:7; Isa 37:19 = 2 Kgs 19:18).[80] The mutilation and destruction of the

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[74] For these influences, see H. Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes Gen 1:26-30," *TZ* 21 (1965) 245-59, 481-501; Edward M. Curtis, "Man as the Image of God in Genesis in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Parallels" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984) esp. 80-102, 113-19, 155-72; Phyllis Bird, "'Male and Female He Created Them': Gen 1:27b in the Context of the Priestly Account of Creation," *HTR* 74 (1981) 129-59; Miller, "In the 'Image' and 'Likeness' of God," 289-304; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 60-63.

[75] See also the observations in Block, *Ezekiel,* 2. 98, 117; Launderville, "Ezekiel's Cherub," 173-74.

[76] The MT vocalizes in v. 7 as חלל, "to desecrate," namely, וחללו, but should read חלל, "to slay." The LXX (στρώσουσιν εἰς ἀπώλειαν), *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* ("injure"), and the Peshitta ("kill") suggest that the original contained ותחלל ("you were slain"), which coincides with the reference in vv. 9-10 to the death (מות) of the king of Tyre. In v. 16, however, the original seems to have been חלל, "to desecrate."

[77] See especially Th. Baran, "Leben und Tod der Bilder," in *Ad bene et fideliter seminandum: Festgabe für Karlheinz Deller zum 21. Februar 1987* (ed. G. Mauer and U. Magen; AOAT 220; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988) 55-60; M. A. Brandes, "Destruction et mutilation de statues en Mésopotamie," *Akkadica* 16 (1980) 28-41.

[78] For the probable allusion to this motif in 1 Sam 5:3-4, see W. Zwickel, "Dagons abgeschlagener Koft (1 Sam V 3-4)," *VT* 44 (1994) 239-49.

[79] E.g., *Rassam Cylinder* v.119-20; translation in *ARAB,* 2. 308.

[80] E.g., *Rassam Cylinder* vi.62-64; translation in *ARAB,* 2. 310.

resemblance and of the divine paraphernalia of statues were perceived as the end of their numinous character, of the presence of the gods within them. The punishment of the king of Tyre recalls this practice. Ezekiel 6:3-6 describes a similar treatment of the idolatrous Israel, who also functions in Ezekiel as a divine image.[81] Israel is slain with a sword (vv. 3-4), his bones exposed and scattered on the ground (v. 4), his idols broken and smashed (v. 6).

IV. Conclusions

The congruence between the MT and LXX versions of Ezek 28:12 and several considerations of translation suggest that ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιώσεως renders not a nominal construction but a passive participle and a noun in *genitivus auctoris,* namely, חֲתֻם תַּבְנִית, "imprinted of (by) the pattern." The cumulative evidence leads to the tentative conclusion that Ezekiel 28 constructs a new iconism and a redefined anthropology, within which primeval humanity is defined as imprinted with the form of Yhwh and functioning as Yhwh's statue. The ideological purpose that emerges from Ezekiel is the redefinition (within the novel exilic context) of the legitimate and illegitimate fusions of the divine and the human, a concern most probably due to Ezekiel's priestly background.[82] Ezekiel deconstructs the common ancient Near Eastern conception of the monarch as theomorphic and isotheic and, employing its vestigial expressions, redefines humanity instead as theomorphic, but also introduces a major qualification: humanity is not isotheic. In an evident polemical engagement, Ezekiel chooses an ancient Near Eastern king to exemplify his point.

Most probably owing to exilic polemics regarding idols and the resulting intrinsic redefinition of divine statues, for Ezekiel, Yhwh's new statue ceases to be Yhwh himself or to be a fully divine being. Although the statue possesses divine form and iconic value, the quality of life attached to it is not divine. Adam is therefore *not* the complete equivalent of a divine statue. In a period when divine statues/"idols" cease themselves to be conceived as numinous, Yhwh's statue is emphatically destroyed for claiming divinity. In Ezekiel's anti-idolatry iconism and theomorphic anthropology, Adam is not Yhwh in the way that idols are conceived as actual gods, real incarnations of their subjects. Nevertheless, Adam possesses an idol's theomorphism and cultic function. Placed by Ezekiel in the holy of holies, where the preexilic statue of Yhwh stood, the iconic humanity retains the

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[81] See Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth,* 124-49.

[82] For the priestly character of this concern, see Launderville, "Ezekiel's Cherub," 172-75; Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16:* A new translation with introduction and commentary (AB 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991) 256-61; David P. Right, "Unclean and Clean (Old Testament)," *ABD,* 6. 739-40.

statue's resemblance to Yhwh and its cultic function. It becomes the (only) legiti-mate channel for the iconic worship of Yhwh. It bears the bodily image of Yhwh and is ultimately meant to direct to and to serve Yhwh. Adam's claim to constitute the ultimate object of worship, independently from Yhwh, is appropriately repri-manded with the destruction of its divine resemblance and iconicity.

This theomorphic and iconic anthropology converges with the message of the reconstructed myths of creation in the priestly agenda, which subtly bestows on humanity in Genesis 1 divine form and iconic function and refuses it divine ontol-ogy throughout the rest of Genesis 2–11 (see also Num 23:19).