

B-11.-d-61

SBL

Society of Biblical Literature



Symposium Series

Christopher R. Matthews, Editor

Number 31

EZEKIEL'S HIERARCHICAL WORLD

Wrestling with a
Tiered Reality

edited by
Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton

EZEKIEL'S HIERARCHICAL WORLD

Wrestling with a
Tiered Reality

edited by
Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton



Brill
Leiden • Boston
2004

EZEKIEL'S HIERARCHICAL WORLD

Wrestling with a
Tiered Reality

Copyright © 2004 by the Society of Biblical Literature
This edition published under license from the Society of Biblical Literature
by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands
All rights reserved

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by means of any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted by the 1976 Copyright Act or in writing from the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to the Rights and Permissions Office, Society of Biblical Literature, 825 Houston Mill Road, Atlanta, GA 30333-0399, USA.

Cover photo of Peshet Habakkuk, Qumran, courtesy of the D. Samuel and Jeane H. Gottesman Center for Biblical Manuscripts, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ezekiel's hierarchical world: wrestling with a tiered reality / edited by Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton.

p. cm.—(Society of Biblical Literature symposium series ; no. 31)

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 90-04-13083-7 (cloth binding : alk. paper)

1. Bible. O.T. Ezekiel—Criticism, interpretation, etc. 2. Social stratification—Biblical teaching. 3. Hierarchies—Biblical teaching. 4. Priests, Jewish. I. Cook, Stephen L., 1962—II. Patton, Corrine, 1958— III. Title. IV. Series: Symposium Series (Society of Biblical Literature) ; no. 31.

BS1545.6.S59E94 2004

224'.406—dc22

2004020832

ISSN 1569-3627

Printed in the Netherlands on acid-free paper

UB03741911

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Contributors	ix
Abbreviations	xi
Introduction: Hierarchical Thinking and Theology in Ezekiel's Book <i>Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton</i>	1
ESSAYS	
Priesthood in Exile according to the Book of Ezekiel <i>Friedrich Fechter</i>	27
Putting Priests in Their Place: Ezekiel's Contribution to the History of the Old Testament Priesthood <i>Iain M. Duguid</i>	43
A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel's Role in the History of the Israelite Priesthood <i>Baruch J. Schwartz</i>	61
Priest, Prophet, and Exile: Ezekiel as a Literary Construct <i>Corrine L. Patton</i>	73
God's Land and Mine: Creation as Property in the Book of Ezekiel <i>Julie Galambush</i>	91
From Harshness to Hope: The Implications for Earth of Hierarchy in Ezekiel <i>Keith Carley</i>	109

The Silence of the Lands: The Ecojustice Implications of Ezekiel's Judgment Oracles <i>Norman Habel</i>	127
Ezekiel in Abu Ghraib: Rereading Ezekiel 16:37-39 in the Context of Imperial Conquest <i>Daniel L. Smith-Christopher</i>	141
'With a Mighty Hand and an Outstretched Arm': The Prophet and the Torah in Ezekiel 20 <i>Risa Levitt Kohn</i>	159
Creation and Hierarchy in Ezekiel: Methodological Perspectives and Theological Prospects <i>David L. Petersen</i>	169
Cosmos, <i>Kabod</i> , and Cherub: Ontological and Epistemological Hierarchy in Ezekiel <i>Stephen L. Cook</i>	179
Proverb Performance and Transgenerational Retribution in Ezekiel 18 <i>Katheryn Pfisterer Darr</i>	199
RESPONSES	
In Search of Theological Meaning: Ezekiel Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium <i>Daniel I. Block</i>	227
Contemporary Studies of Ezekiel: A New Tide Rising <i>Steven Shawn Tuell</i>	241
Selected Bibliography	255
Index of Modern Authors	261
Index of Primary Sources	267
Subject Index	283

PREFACE

This book bears witness to the current vitality of Ezekiel studies, particularly as evinced in the continuing work of the Seminar on Theological Perspectives on the Book of Ezekiel, which meets at each SBL Annual Meeting. Corrine L. Patton and Dexter E. Callender Jr. currently chair the seminar, which has continued to be a place of innovation and discovery, lively scholarly interchange, and warm collegiality since it arose out of the Ezekiel Consultation of the SBL chaired by Katheryn Pfisterer Darr from 1993 to 1995. The editors express their gratitude to the seminar for entrusting them with the honor and responsibility of preparing this volume.

This focus of the volume, Ezekiel's hierarchical thinking, almost forced itself upon us. Even as the chosen topics of our seminar shifted in recent sessions from creation, to priesthood, to land, a consistent, vocal concern has been Ezekiel's unusually pronounced hierarchical dimensions. Many contemporary readers experience these dimensions as oppressive, and some have suggested that Ezekiel no longer be read (presumably as a canonical book, authoritative for religious communities). The need is pressing, we realized through this repeat experience, to address the meaning and import of Ezekiel's hierarchical theology in a probing, wide-ranging, and balanced manner. This is the challenge that the editors posed to those we invited to contribute to this collection.

Twelve essayists and two respondents accepted the challenge of participating in this project. The considerable diversity of backgrounds, stances, methods, and perspectives they represent means that this volume has no single thesis or pointed argument. What it offers, rather, is a powerful contemporary sampling of energetic, skillful studies of Ezekiel that directly or indirectly illuminate the ancient and modern meanings and implications of hierarchy in that difficult and engrossing book of Scripture.

Many people provided us with assistance and support as we labored over several years to produce this volume. Chris Matthews, series editor, provided solid advice and feedback as we first conceived this collection and unstinting support as we forged it into a book. Bob Buller, Editorial Director at the SBL, worked tirelessly with us, shepherding the project through its multiple stages of production.

Stephen would like gratefully to acknowledge the support of his institution, Virginia Theological Seminary, and especially the help during his recent sabbatical