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***Echoes of a Prophet: The Use of Ezekiel in the Gospel of John
and in Literature of the Second Temple Period***

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This monograph is a revision of Gary T. Manning Jr.'s doctoral dissertation, which he completed in 2003 under the supervision of Marianne Meye Thompson and David Scholer at Fuller Theological Seminary. Manning's thorough investigation of the use of Ezekiel in John's Gospel and in Second Temple literature not only alludes to the title of Richard B. Hays's excellent *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (Yale, 1989), but it also builds on two of Hays's central observations about Paul's use of Scripture. Hays in *Echoes of Scripture* demonstrated that Paul frequently invoked the wider contexts of passages he cited; Manning in *Echoes of a Prophet* argues that allusions to Ezekiel in John and Second Temple writers are normally "intended to recall the entire passage from which the allusion is drawn." Like Hays, Manning seeks to show that attention to this wider context will shed light on the writings of those who allude to Ezekiel. While Hays argued that Paul's use of Scripture was more "ecclesiocentric" than "christocentric," Manning maintains that both concerns are common to John and several Second Temple Jewish readers of Ezekiel.

Echoes of a Prophet begins with a helpful discussion of recent research on the New Testament use of the Old Testament and a well-articulated statement of methodology for identifying allusions: the probability of an allusion is strengthened by verbal parallels—especially those that are used in corresponding ways and that appear uniquely in the two passages under discussion. In the case of passages that allude to several biblical texts at once, Manning argues that it is possible in some cases, at least, to disentangle these "combined allusions" and identify their sources. Supporting evidence for allusions includes structural parallels between two texts, additional allusions to the same subtext by

the same author, and, perhaps most important, “resonance” within the wider contexts of two texts—that is, when two texts “deal with similar themes and ideas.” Once the presence of an allusion has been established, its function must be determined by asking how it “advance[s] the narrative or theology of the passage” and by analyzing how the alluding phrase or image is reconfigured in its new context. Despite Manning’s (problematic) claim to focus “on meaning as resident in the text itself” rather than on authorial intention, it becomes apparent as the study gets underway that, for Manning, probable allusions are those that are likely to have been intended by the author.

Manning’s lengthy chapter on the use of Ezekiel in the Dead Sea Scrolls (ch. 2) and his shorter treatment of the use of Ezekiel in other Second Temple literature (ch. 3) serve as a comparative background against which unique elements in John’s use of Ezekiel may be identified. Yet because Manning interacts closely with the relevant primary sources, these chapters may be read with profit even by those concerned primarily with Second Temple literature. Unfortunately, Manning’s study of the primary sources is completed without significant interaction with important secondary literature on issues such as realized eschatology at Qumran or connections between the Teacher of Righteousness and the *Hodayot*, about which Manning forms conclusions in his study. Also troubling is Manning’s discussion of the Greek text of Ben Sira 49 because the Hebrew is “now mostly lost except for a few fragments among the DSS.” Most of Ben Sira is, in fact, extant in Hebrew—including Ben Sira 49!

Manning finds that the Dead Sea Scrolls consistently take Ezekiel’s wider context into account and distinguish between statements in Ezekiel that refer to events in the past and statements still awaiting fulfillment. Thus the epithet “builders of the wall” typologically applies a passage about false prophets in Ezekiel’s day to the Pharisees (Ezek 13:10; CD iv 19, viii 12); the 390 years of *Damascus Document* i 5–6 is also a typological reapplication of the 390 days of Ezek 4:4–5 that signifies not the continuation of exile, but a new exile experienced by the community. In a similar way, the liturgical use of imagery from Ezekiel’s throne vision in *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* 12 (4Q405 20 ii 1–14) betrays the community’s conviction that God had once again abandoned the Jerusalem temple and that his presence dwelt in their midst instead. Allusions to the restoration oracle of Ezek 36 within the *Hodayot* express a realized eschatology, but the fact that the speaker of 1QH xxi 10–11 refers to a “heart of stone” without mentioning a new heart of flesh suggests that the new covenant was not fully realized.

Manning discovers fewer noteworthy allusions to Ezekiel in other Second Temple literature: some texts allude to Ezekiel’s throne vision; a few mention Ezekiel’s vision of dry bones; and Manning suggests that the imagery of the shepherds in Ezek 37 is taken

up in the vision of *1 En.* 85–90. Still, Manning maintains that these texts “tend to use allusions with sensitivity to their meaning and context.”

Chapter 4 focuses on allusions to Ezekiel associated with John’s good shepherd (John 10) and true vine (John 15) discourses. As the good shepherd of John 10:14 and the “one shepherd” of 10:16, Jesus is linked to the *divine* good shepherd of Ezek 34. But since both Ezek 34:24 and 37:24 also present David as Israel’s one shepherd, the allusion constitutes an implicit presentation of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah. Theological development becomes apparent as John applies Ezekiel’s prediction of the regathering of the flock of Israel to the reconstitution of Israel around the community of Jesus’ followers—including Gentiles (cf. John 10:16; Ezek 37:21–24). Manning acknowledges that John’s vine imagery is indebted to other biblical passages as well, but verbal and thematic parallels convince Manning that Ezekiel’s vine parables form the most prominent biblical subtext of John 15:1–17. Branches that do not bear fruit (John 15:6)—such as Judas—correspond to the unfaithful vine of Israel that will be burned (Ezek 15:1–8). Jesus, on the other hand, is the Messianic cedar-vine of Ezek 17:22–24, and his fruit-bearing branches consist of his messianic community of followers.

A second chapter on John investigates minor allusions to Ezekiel. On Manning’s reading, the mention of “heaven opened” in John 1:51 does not merely echo Ezek 1:1 but implies that John believed Ezekiel saw the preexistent Christ as the glory of God. An allusion to Ezek 37 in John 5:25–28 suggests that John understood Ezekiel’s vision of dry bones messianically as a symbol of national restoration provided by Jesus’ gift of life in the present, as well as a statement about final resurrection. The present fulfillment of Ezekiel’s vision will include the coming of the Spirit if, as Manning argues, Jesus’ breathing on his disciples (John 20:22) alludes a second time to Ezek 37 (verse 9). In addition, the “rivers of living water” that flow “out of his belly” (John 7:38) alludes, in part, to the cleansing water that flows from the temple (Ezek 47:1), and birth by water and Spirit (John 3:5) echoes Ezekiel’s reference to sprinkling clean water and the gift of a new spirit (Ezek 36:25–27). Finally, building on a proposal by George Brooke, Manning suggests that the 153 fish in John 21:11 may refer to the many fish swimming in the clean water flowing from the temple (Ezek 47:10). If some of these proposed echoes seem far-fetched, it is at least in part because space does not permit a summary of the often intriguing evidence adduced in their favor.

In a concluding chapter Manning observes that John and Second Temple writers share several common tendencies in their use of Ezekiel. They often combine allusions to Ezekiel with related allusions to other passages; repeated references to the same oracle (though not necessarily to the same verse) are frequent; it is also common for the language of the source passage to be modified as it is reapplied in its new context.

Manning notes that the contexts of source passages in Ezekiel tend to share “thematic similarities” with the wider contexts of passages from which an allusion is made and argues that Paul’s ecclesiocentric reading of Scripture was not distinctive to the apostle or even distinctively Christian, for John “as well as *1 Enoch*, *Psalm of Solomon* 17, and the *Hodayot*, are all interested in both the Messiah and his community.” John’s reading of Ezekiel around the motifs of life and the Spirit is distinctive, however. John also alludes to a wider variety of oracles in Ezekiel than most Second Temple writers. Indeed, John himself “does not use any other OT source so comprehensively.”

Studies that explore intertextual echoes frequently combine new insights with a nagging sense that arguments for the proposed echoes have been taken too far. Manning’s contribution is no exception. Sometimes Manning discerns a conscious echo when common language is more likely. To take one example, the opening of heaven first appears in a visionary context in Ezek 1:1, but references to an open heaven in the New Testament indicate that the term had become a common way of introducing visions (cf. Acts 10:11; Rev 4:1, 19:11); a deeper meaning derived from the context of Ezek 1 should not be read into John 1:51. In other instances where later writers do draw on language or imagery from Ezekiel, the significance that Manning finds in the allusions remains speculative. For example, because the phrase *מדבר העמים* (“wilderness of the people”) occurs in *War Scroll* i 3 and in no other passage in the MT aside from Ezek 20:35, Manning suggests that the community believed the prediction of Ezek 20:35 had been fulfilled at its founding. Similarly, Manning argues first that the imagery in *1 En.* 89–90 recalls Ezek 34 and then claims that *1 Enoch*’s presentation of Judas as a ram represents a messianic interpretation of Ezek 34. While I am sympathetic to the idea that early Jews and Christians interpreted Scripture in context rather than atomistically, it is not enough simply to suggest how a writer *might* have understood the wider context of Ezekiel. Since the relationship between two different passages may often be plausibly construed in different ways, more evidence is required if one wishes to demonstrate that a writer is not simply employing biblical language without regard for its context.

These reservations aside, Manning’s work remains a valuable contribution to scholarship on intertextuality in early Judaism and early Christianity. I, at least, found many of his suggestions about the use of Ezekiel in John and Second Temple literature illuminating. Although not all his proposals are equally compelling, in the end this book does for careful readers what it should by driving them back to the primary sources equipped with new questions and with an eye for details that they might otherwise overlook.