

“I WILL HEAL THEIR LAND”

THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HEALING (רפא) IN 2 CHRONICLES 7:13–16

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Spiritus 4.2 (2019) 257–281

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Keywords *Healing, wholeness, repentance, blessing, restoration, land, prayer, humble*

Abstract

This article explores the meaning and significance of Yahweh’s promise to heal the land of his people in 2 Chr 7:13–16 within its immediate context and also within the book of 2 Chronicles by exploring how the text is connected linguistically and thematically with other related texts. It argues that the meaning of healing in 2 Chr 7:13–16 extends far beyond the physical healing of the land that results in agricultural blessings, and the theme of healing plays a significant role in the Chronicler’s theology of retribution, repentance, and restoration.

Introduction

Second Chronicles 7:14 is one of the most familiar and favorite verses in the book of 2 Chronicles, and Yahweh’s promise to heal (רפא) the land of his people in this verse has caught the attention of scholars, preachers, evangelists, national leaders, and lay people. Yet, it is worth noting that since there is fluidity in the use of the Hebrew word רפא in the Old

Testament,¹ a dispute has arisen regarding the meaning of the clause (“and I will heal their land”) in v. 14. While some contend that healing the land in its literary context refers to national healing, spiritual renewal, and restoring *shalom* on earth,² others assert that Yahweh’s healing in 7:14 refers “not to healing the land politically or morally,” but to “the physical healing of the land of Israel.”³ Although previous studies have examined the meaning of healing in 2 Chr 7:14 within its immediate context,⁴ further exploration needs to be given to how the healing passage in 2 Chr 7:13–16 is connected linguistically and thematically with other texts in the book of 2 Chronicles. Thus, this article will investigate the meaning and significance of 2 Chr 7:14 not only in its immediate context (chs. 6–7) but also in its larger literary context by exploring potential textual connections between the healing passage in 2 Chr 7:13–16 and other related texts within the book of 2 Chronicles.

Immediate Context of 2 Chronicles 7:13–16

Yahweh’s promise to heal the land of his people in 2 Chr 7:14 is found in the context of his appearance to Solomon (2 Chr 7:11–22). In this text, which is based on “1 Kings 9:2–9 with certain changes,”⁵ Yahweh promises Solomon that he will respond to the people’s repentance and humble prayer in the temple by forgiving them and healing their land (2 Chr 7:13–16). In vv. 17–18, Yahweh reaffirms his promise to the Davidic dynasty if Solomon remains obedient.⁶ Yahweh’s promise in v. 14 is also connected with vv. 19–22, which serves as a warning to the disobedient who are not willing to repent. Kelly’s observation is apt: “The chapter [ch. 7] then concludes in vv. 19–22 by balancing the offer of the gift of restoration in v. 14 with the threat of divine judgment and rejection for those who refuse to repent.”⁷

When 2 Chr 7:11 (“And/when Solomon finished the house of Yahweh and his house of the king”) is read in conjunction with its parallel text in 1 Kgs 7:1, where the Chronicler states that it took Solomon thirteen years to complete building his palace, it can be deduced that Yahweh’s response to Solomon’s prayer in 2 Chr 7:11–22 occurred thirteen years after the

completion of the temple (cf. 2 Chr 7:11; 1 Kgs 7:1; 9:1–10).⁸ The Chronicler’s record of Yahweh’s response to Solomon in 2 Chr 7:12 (“I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice”) suggests that 2 Chr 7:11–22 needs to be understood in relationship with Solomon’s prayer in 2 Chr 6:12–42 and the temple dedication in 2 Chr 7:1–11.⁹ The Chronicler’s use of the same vocabulary in Solomon’s prayer that uses *second person pronominal suffixes* (6:40) and in Yahweh’s response that uses *first person pronominal suffixes* (2 Chr 7:15) signifies that the two chapters (6 and 7) are linked linguistically and thematically.

<i>Solomon’s Prayer</i> (2 Chr 6:40)	<i>Yahweh’s Response</i> (2 Chr 7:15)
Now, O my God,	Now
let <i>your eyes</i> (עֵינַיִךְ) be open	<i>my eyes</i> (עֵינַי) will be open
and <i>your ears</i> (אָזְנֶיךָ) attentive	and <i>my ears</i> (אָזְנִי) attentive
to the prayer of this place	to the prayers offered in this place

The above linguistic and thematic connections suggest, therefore, that Yahweh’s response to Solomon’s dedicatory prayer in 2 Chr 7:13–16 needs to be examined within its immediate context (chs. 6–7). Furthermore, in order to understand how the text (2 Chr 7:13–16) functions within the book, we will further examine how it is connected with other related texts by observing their linguistic and thematic connections within the book.

2 Chronicles 7:13–16 within Its Larger Literary Context

The Disasters as Yahweh’s Chastisement (2 Chr 7:13)

In 2 Chr 7:13, the Chronicler identifies the three disasters (drought, locust, and pestilence) that will threaten the people’s well-being on the land as Yahweh’s tools to chastise his people (cf. 6:26–28).¹⁰

- v. 13a When I shut up (עצר) the heavens so that there is no rain (מטר)
- v. 13b and when I command the locust (חגב) to devour the land
- v. 13c and if I send pestilence (דבר) among my people

Klein contends that the Chronicler intentionally “omits the references from chap. 6 to war, defeat, or exile that were in the *Vorlage*” and mentions only three disasters that “could typically affect postexilic Judah.”¹¹ However, as Williamson has noted, the three disasters mentioned in 7:13 should be regarded as representative of all the disasters mentioned in Solomon’s prayer in ch. 6,¹² because in 7:19–22, the Chronicler picks up the theme of the exile mentioned in 6:36–39 and warns the audience that Yahweh will remove them from his land if the people forsake his commandments. In the following, we will examine how the three disasters in 2 Chr 7:13 function within its immediate context and how they can shed light on a better understanding of the concept of healing in v. 14.

Drought in 2 Chronicles 7:13a

In the Old Testament, the verb עצר, “shut up” or “retain,” is used to depict the stopping of a plague, the heavens withholding rain, and the womb being withheld from conception.¹³ The disasters (drought, locusts, and plagues) mentioned in 7:13 harken back to Solomon’s prayer in the previous chapter (ch. 6).¹⁴ When the clause (“When I shut up [עצר] the heavens so that there is no rain”) in 7:13a is read in relationship with 6:26a (“because they have sinned against you”), it is evident that Yahweh’s shutting up of the heavens that results in no rainfall in 7:13 is caused by the people’s sin against Yahweh. In the Old Testament, adequate rainfall was depicted as a sign of God’s blessing to those who obey his commandments (Lev 26:3–4; Deut 11:13–14) and the withholding of rain was “a sign of divine anger” to those who are not willing to repent or turn to Yahweh (Deut 28:23–24; Jer 3:3; 5:23–24).¹⁵ If the Israelites turn away from Yahweh, his anger will burn against them and he will shut up the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce. As a result, they will soon perish from the

good land (Deut 11:16–17) because rainfall is Yahweh’s reward for the obedient and drought is his punishment for the disobedient.¹⁶

Concerning the relationship between the Israelites’ behavior and their land in the Old Testament, Wright observes, “Israel’s behavior on the land determines Yahweh’s response to Israel in the land, and the land will respond to both. The king’s just and benevolent government, for example, would bring environmental and agricultural benefits to the land (Ps 72:2–4, 12–16). But the people’s social evil made the land mourn (Hos 4:3).”¹⁷ In 2 Chr 6:26–28, Solomon’s prayer indicates that when the people pray (פָּלַל) to Yahweh and turn (שׁוּב) away from their sin (6:26), Yahweh will forgive (סָלַח) their sins and grant rain (מָטָר) upon the land (6:27). It is worth noting that the verbs “pray,” “turn,” and “forgive,” and the noun “rain” in 6:26–27 are also used in Yahweh’s response to Solomon’s prayer in 2 Chr 7:13–14 where Yahweh says, “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain (מָטָר), . . . If my people humble themselves, and pray (פָּלַל) . . . turn (שׁוּב) from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive (סָלַח) their sin and will heal their land.” Thus, when the people’s response and Yahweh’s healing of the land in 2 Chr 7:13–14 are seen in relationship of Solomon’s prayer in 6:26–27, it is apparent that Yahweh’s promise to heal the land in 7:14 may refer, but not limited, to Yahweh’s sending of the rain that will result in an agricultural blessing to his people who humble themselves, pray to him, seek his face, and turn from their wicked ways.

Locust Devouring the Land in 2 Chronicles 7:13b

In the Old Testament, there are different Hebrew words used for “locust” or “grasshopper” (חֲסִיל, אֲרֵבָה, חָגַב etc.).¹⁸ While the Hebrew word חָגַב (“locust”) is used in 2 Chr 7:13, a different Hebrew word for “locust” (חֲסִיל) is used in 2 Chr 6:28, where some of the covenant curses in Deut 28 are listed: “famine (v. 48), pestilence (v. 21), blight and rust (v. 22) and locust (v. 38).”¹⁹ Just as the locust plague (אֲרֵבָה) is used as Yahweh’s punishment upon the land of Egypt in Exod 10:3–19, a locust plague (חֲסִיל) is also used

as Yahweh's punishment for his people who lapse into covenant disloyalty (Deut 28:38, 42).²⁰ In the same vein, in 2 Chr 7:13, the Chronicler also depicts the locust (חגב) as Yahweh's instrument to chastise his people.

In Joel 2:25, it is announced that Yahweh would repay for the years in which the locust had eaten. Yahweh promised to compensate them for their losses during the invasion of the locusts that are identified as Yahweh's army (2:11, 25).²¹ In Joel 2:26, Yahweh further promises, "And you will surely eat in plenty and be satisfied and praise the name of Yahweh your God, who has dealt with you wondrously. And my people will never be ashamed." Here, the concept of eating plenty and being satisfied in 2:26 reverses the concept of food deprivation in 1:16 because "those who had formerly suffered from a shortage of food (1:16) would eat in plenty and be satisfied" (2:26).²² Similarly, in 2 Chr 7:13–14, if Yahweh's people humble themselves and pray to him and seek his face, he promises to heal their land (v. 14), implying that Yahweh will not only compensate what the locust would have eaten in the land but also bring agricultural blessings to them (v. 13). Seen in this light, the healing of the land in 2 Chr 7:14 may refer not only to Yahweh's removal of the locus from the land but also the restoration of its agricultural blessings to its fullness.

Pestilence in 2 Chronicles 7:13c

In the Old Testament, the word דבר ("pestilence") is usually depicted as "a divinely sent punishment for disobedience" and "it can come upon the people of Israel, foreign nations (Ex. 9:15; Ezk. 28:23), groups (Jer. 42:17, 22; 44:13) or individuals (Ezek. 38:22)."²³ R. K. Harrison notes that the Hebrew word דבר in 2 Chr 7:13c may refer to "bubonic plague," which is one of antiquity's most dreaded febrile diseases, and the "prospect of bubonic plague (Lev 26:25; Num 14:12) was one of the most serious threats that God could level against disobedient Israel."²⁴ In Exod 9:3, Yahweh sent pestilence (דבר) upon the Egyptians' livestock in the fields such as horses, donkeys, camels, herds, and flocks as his punishment (cf. Ps 78:48–50). In Leviticus 26, it is stated that Yahweh would send pestilence (דבר)

among his people if they failed to do his commandments (Lev 26:14, 25). Further, in Num 14:11–12, Yahweh said to Moses that he would strike the Israelites with pestilence (דבר) as a punishment for their distrust and disobedience. In 1 Chr 21:10–12, it is also worth noting that Yahweh’s sending of pestilence (דבר) upon the land is described as one of the possible punishments as Yahweh’s chastisement for David’s folly of numbering of Israel.²⁵ Thus, seen in light of the above observations, it is evident that the pestilence (דבר) in 2 Chr 7:13 serves as Yahweh’s instrument to chastise his people who are disobedient and the pestilence would negatively affect the health and well-being of the disobedient. When Yahweh’s promise of healing in v. 14 is seen in relationship with v. 13, it stands out that Yahweh’s promise to heal the land of his people in v. 14 will reverse the situation in v. 13 by healing the physical sickness of his people and their livestock. In v. 14a, Yahweh provides a way for his people to receive forgiveness and healing from him.

Repentance and Healing in 2 Chronicles 7:14

- v. 14a If my people who are called by my name humble themselves
and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways
- v. 14b then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin
and I will heal their land

“My People Who Are Called by My Name”

In Lev 19:34, the Israelites were instructed to treat the foreigners residing among them as their native born and to love them as themselves. While the absence of the term “foreigner” (נכרי) in 2 Chr 7:14 may indicate the Chronicler’s emphasis on Yahweh’s ownership of Israel,²⁶ Solomon’s prayer in 6:32–33 indicates that Yahweh would answer the prayer of a “foreigner” (נכרי) who comes and prays toward the house of Yahweh, implying that “anyone who acknowledges God’s name and authority may pray with the same confidence of a hearing.”²⁷ This view is supported by the phrase “on whom my name is called” or “who are called by my name” in 7:14a,

signifying that “the invitation is explicitly extended to all who call upon the name of Yahweh” (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Rom 10:13; Zeph 3:9; 1 Cor 1:2).²⁸ Thus, although the phrase (עַם) “my people” in 2 Chr 7:14 refers primarily to ethnic Israel as Yahweh’s own people, the phrase “who are called by my name” signifies that the recipients of Yahweh’s response and blessings may encompass all who call upon Yahweh’s name.

In Joel 2:32a (Heb. 3:5), those who will experience Yahweh’s deliverance are identified as “all who will call on the name of the Lord.” In the Targum, it reads, “But everyone who prays in the name of Yahweh shall be delivered.”²⁹ Based on Gen 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 1 Kgs 18:24; Ps 116:17; and Zeph 3:9, Stuart interjects with a specification, however, “to call on the name of Yahweh” means “not merely to pray to him, but to worship him consistently and presumably exclusively.”³⁰ Accordingly, Crenshaw contends that in ancient usage, calling upon the name of Yahweh is synonymous with worshiping him (cf. Gen 4:26; 12:8).³¹ Similarly, in 2 Chr 7:14, the people who are called by Yahweh’s name (“on whom my name is called”) are identified as those who humble themselves, pray to Yahweh, seek his face, and turn from their wicked ways.

In Isa 56:1–8, true membership of Yahweh’s new community who will experience Yahweh’s salvation and his deliverance is not determined by race or nationality but by maintaining justice and righteousness, keeping the Sabbath, temple worship, sacrifices, and prayer as a sign of keeping Yahweh’s covenant.³² In Isa 56:6, the prophet announces that the foreigners who are loyal to Yahweh can be a part of Yahweh’s servants. Therefore, in this context, “[i]t is not genealogy but character that marks the servants of God” (Isa 56:1–8).³³ While Isaiah 40–55 frequently identifies the servant with Israel (e.g., 41:8; 44:1; 45:4), in Isaiah 56–66, the identity of the servants “become restricted to those who are obedient to YHWH’s commandments.”³⁴ In the same vein, the Chronicler, being a post-exilic writer, also views those who will experience Yahweh’s forgiveness and healing as Yahweh’s people who appropriately respond to his invitation by humbling themselves, praying to him, seeking his face, and turning away from their wicked ways (2 Chr 7:14).

When 2 Chr 7:14 is read in relationship with 2 Chronicles 36, it is worth noting that while Zedekiah and the people of Judah were Yahweh's covenant people (Israel), the Chronicler reports that "there is no healing" for them because they refused to humble themselves before Yahweh. This implies that for the Chronicler, not all Israelites but only those who humbly repent and submit to Yahweh will experience the healing promised in 2 Chr 7:14.

"Humble Themselves"

The verb כנע in its Niphal form can be translated as "be subdued," "be humbled," or "humble oneself."³⁵ In 2 Chr 7:14a, the verb "humble themselves (Niphal)" denotes a key idea of the Chronicler's theology, "humility before God" and "submission to his will."³⁶ While the verb form of כנע occurs thirty-six times in the Old Testament, fifteen instances relate to the action of a king in submission of himself and Israel to God. Whereas kings who submit themselves to Yahweh's sovereignty are exalted, severe affliction is imposed upon those who are not willing to submit to his kingship.³⁷ In 2 Chronicles 12, the same verb כנע is used to depict how Rehoboam and the princes of Judah humbled themselves before Yahweh, and as a result, Yahweh no longer destroyed them, but granted them deliverance from the hand of the king of Egypt (12:6–8). McConville interprets 2 Chr 7:14 in light of 2 Chronicles 12 and argues that in this context, "humbling implies a changed attitude with regard to oneself, a renunciation of some wrong course which had been determined upon and which involved an arrogant rejection of God."³⁸ Similarly, Hill observes that the verb "humble" means "to subdue one's pride and submit in self-denying loyalty to God and his will (cf. Lev. 26:41)."³⁹ It is worth noting that in 2 Chr 30:11, the same verb "humble" is also used in relationship to some men of the northern tribes (Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun) who humbled themselves (כנעו) and came to Jerusalem to Hezekiah's invitation to return to Yahweh and renew festival worship in the reopened Jerusalem temple (30:1–11).⁴⁰ In this context, "humbling oneself is the first step of repentance according to Solomon in 2 Chr 7:14" and the northerners' coming to

Jerusalem denotes their humbleness and willingness to return to Yahweh (30:8–11).⁴¹ Hezekiah’s prayer for the people who set their hearts on seeking God (30:19) and Yahweh’s healing of the people in 2 Chr 30:19–20 signify that Yahweh’s promise to heal the land of his people who humbly repent and seek him in 2 Chr 7:14 is fulfilled in 2 Chr 30:20.⁴² This implies that humbleness before Yahweh is a prerequisite for receiving forgiveness, spiritual restoration, and deliverance.

“Pray”

In 2 Chr 7:14, the people’s humbling themselves in repentance is closely associated with praying (פָּלַל) to Yahweh. Hill notes that “pray” (פָּלַל) in this context refers to “a shameless acknowledgment of personal sin and a plea for God’s mercy, much like that of David’s prayer of repentance (cf. Ps. 51:1–2).”⁴³ In 2 Chr 33:10–13, the Chronicler records the repentance and prayer of Manasseh and Yahweh’s restoration. When Manasseh did evil and refused to pay attention to Yahweh’s words, he brought judgment upon Manasseh and the Assyrians brought him to Babylon (vv. 10–11). In his distress, Manasseh humbled himself and prayed (פָּלַל) to Yahweh in the land of his captivity (vv. 12; cf. 7:14). The Chronicler records that when Manasseh prayed (פָּלַל) to him, Yahweh was moved by his entreaty and listened to his prayer and brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom (v. 13). In 2 Chronicles 32, the Chronicler also records how the prayer (פָּלַל) of Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah resulted in Yahweh’s deliverance from the Assyrians (32:20–23). When Hezekiah was sick, he prayed (פָּלַל) to Yahweh who responded to his prayer with a miraculous healing (32:24).⁴⁴ In 2 Chr 30:18–20, as has been noted above, Hezekiah prayed (פָּלַל) for the northerners who had not cleansed themselves and yet ate the Passover, saying, “May the good Lord (Yahweh) pardon everyone who sets his heart to seek Yahweh.” The Chronicler records that Yahweh heard Hezekiah’s prayer and healed the people (30:20). In this context, praying to and seeking Yahweh resulted in forgiveness and spiritual restoration.

“Seek My Face”

In the Old Testament, “God as the object of *bqs* [בקש “seek”] appears about 30 times,”⁴⁵ and in 2 Chr 7:14, seeking Yahweh’s face signifies “the desire to determine what precisely God requires in terms of standards and of life-direction.”⁴⁶ In 2 Chr 11:16, the Chronicler accounts “how lay Israelites followed the example of the priests and Levites by dedicating their hearts to seek (בקש) Yahweh the God of Israel and to sacrifice to Yahweh the God of their ancestors.”⁴⁷ The same word (בקש) is also used in relationship with “seeking” Yahweh during the time of Asa. In 2 Chronicles 14–15, the word בקש is used interchangeably with another Hebrew word for “seeking” (דרש). In 14:4, Asa commanded the people of Judah to seek Yahweh and to obey his laws and commands. Thompson notes that seeking God in this context “involved more than a specific act of seeking God’s help and guidance but stood for one’s whole duty toward God (v. 7; 15:2, 12–13).”⁴⁸ In 2 Chr 15:1, the Chronicler records that the spirit of God came upon Azariah and exhorted King Asa to seek (דרש) Yahweh (15:2) by recounting how the Israelites turned (שוב) to Yahweh and sought him and how he was found by them. Thus, Asa and the people sought Yahweh with all their heart (v. 12), and as a result, Yahweh gave them rest (v. 15) and there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa’s reign (v. 19). In this context, seeking Yahweh is closely linked with rest and peace in the people’s land.

“Turn from Their Wicked Ways”

The verb “turn” (שוב) frequently appears in Solomon’s prayer (6:24, 26, 37, 38). Just as 2 Chr 7:13–14 associates turning to Yahweh with prayer, which will result in Yahweh’s forgiveness and restoration, in Solomon’s prayer, turning to Yahweh is linked with prayer that will result in Yahweh’s forgiveness and deliverance of his people (Israel) from national defeat and captivity (v. 24–25, 37–39), and his provision of rain (vv. 26–27; cf. 7:13). As has been noted above, the verb שוב “turn” is associated with בקש “seek” in 2 Chronicles 15, where the Spirit-empowered prophet, Azariah, exhorted king Asa to seek Yahweh by recounting how Israel turned to and sought

Yahweh (vv. 1–4). In this context, turning or repentance (שׁוּב) signifies turning away from detestable idols and turning toward Yahweh and seeking him whole heartedly. The same verb שׁוּב is also used in Hezekiah’s exhortation to the people of Israel to turn to Yahweh by coming to the sanctuary and serving him so that he will also return to them and restore them back to the land (30:6–9). It is worth noting that the Chronicler also uses the verb שׁוּב (“turn”) in a negative context where Zedekiah hardened his heart against turning to Yahweh.⁴⁹ In this context (36:13–15), Zedekiah’s refusal to turn to Yahweh is closely linked with the priests’ and the people’s unfaithfulness, defiling the house of Yahweh, mocking his messengers, and despising his words, provoking Yahweh’s wrath, which led to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, and exile to Babylon (vv. 17–21). Here, refusing to turn to Yahweh resulted in his wrath that “rose against his people until there was no healing” (36:26). In sum, for the Chronicler, while turning toward Yahweh brings restoration and peace in the land (15:1–15), refusal to turn to Yahweh resulted in his wrath that led to disasters, destruction, and exile (36:13–21).

Yahweh’s Response in 2 Chronicles 7:14b

Concerning the relationship between 2 Chr 7:13 and 7:14, Merrill observes, “The remedy for national sin and its resultant drought, locust infestation, and plague (Heb. דָּבָר) was for God’s people” to humble themselves, pray, seek Yahweh’s face, and turn from their sin so that Yahweh will hear, forgive, and heal “both people and the ravaged land (v. 14).”⁵⁰ In the Old Testament, the verb סָלַח (“pardon,” “forgive”) is used sparingly and in all instances, the subject of the verb (“pardon,” “forgive”) is God, implying that the connotation of סָלַח is “an act of pardon by God alone.”⁵¹ In 2 Chr 7:14, the verb “forgive” (סָלַח) is closely linked with “heal” (רָפָא). In this context, forgiving and healing are described as the work of Yahweh who hears and responds to his people who humble themselves, pray, seek his face, and turn from their wicked ways. In Solomon’s prayer (6:24–25), a national defeat of war is depicted as a result of the people’s sin against

Yahweh. In this context, Yahweh's forgiveness of the sin of his people who turn and pray to him is associated with his restoration of the people from exile to their home land. Likewise, in 2 Chr 6:36–39, Solomon prays that when the people, who have been “carried away captive to a land far or near,” would repent and pray toward their land and temple, even from the land of their captivity, Yahweh would forgive his people. The clause “if they repent with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity” in 2 Chr 6:38 implies that Yahweh would respond to his people's repentance and prayer offered not only in the land of Israel or in the temple Solomon built but also in a foreign land, implying that Yahweh is sovereign over the nations. Thus, when Yahweh's promise to forgive his people in 2 Chr 7:14 is read in relationship with Solomon's prayer in 6:24–26, 36–39, it can be deduced that Yahweh's promise to heal the land in 2 Chr 7:14 may refer not only to the agricultural restoration but also to Yahweh's restoration of his people to the promised land.⁵²

“And I Will Heal Their Land” (7:14c)

It has been argued that Yahweh's promise to heal (רפא) the land in 2 Chr 7:14 refers only to “the physical healing of the land” and the restoration of agricultural blessings.⁵³ Based on Deut 11:16–17 that mentions Yahweh's wrath resulting in drought and no fruit in the land, Taylor argues that healing the land in 7:13–15 “relates specifically to the judgment of drought.”⁵⁴ Whereas Taylor correctly observes that the drought and locust will threaten the well-being of the people by causing the land to produce no fruit in v.13a and b, he fails to recognize that the pestilence (דבר) will negatively affect the health and well-being of the people and their animals. Thus, if Yahweh's promise to heal the land in v. 14 functions as his answer to v. 13 where drought, locust, and pestilence are depicted as Yahweh's punishments, then it may be deduced that healing the land in v. 14 refers not only to the restoration of agricultural blessings but also encompasses healing of the physical bodies of the people and their animals.

In 2 Chr 30:18–20, the same word רָפָא is used to depict Yahweh’s healing of the people of Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun in response to Hezekiah’s prayer. While the unclean were not allowed to celebrate the Passover (Num 9:6), the Chronicler records that Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, who had not cleansed themselves, were not excluded from eating the Passover because of Hezekiah’s intercessory prayer.⁵⁵ It is worth noting that all of the verbs (“humble themselves,” “pray,” “seek,” “turn,” “forgive”), which are used in relationship to Yahweh’s response to Solomon in 7:14, are also used in Hezekiah’s reign: “turn” (30:9), “humble themselves” (30:11), “pray,” “forgive,” (30:18, 20), “seek” (30:19), “hear,” and “heal” (30:20). This implies that Hezekiah’s Passover in 30:1–20 alludes to Solomon’s prayer in 7:14.⁵⁶ When Hezekiah invited all Israel and Judah to come to the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, some of the people humbled themselves (30:11) and returned to Yahweh (30:9), setting their hearts to seek Yahweh (30:19). Hezekiah prayed for them and God healed (רָפָא) them (30:20).⁵⁷ Selman observes that Hezekiah’s intercession signifies that “God honours prayer requests offered in the spirit of Solomon’s dedicatory prayer (6:18–42; 7:12–16) and that prayer can overcome any formal deficiency in religious practice.” Yahweh’s acceptance of Hezekiah’s prayer is evident in 2 Chr 30:22 where Yahweh healed (רָפָא) the people, “fulfilling his promise in 2 Chr 7:14.”⁵⁸ In this context, Yahweh’s healing of the people does not likely refer to healing their physical sickness, rather it “likely refers to Yahweh’s pardoning their disobedience and cultic uncleanness.”⁵⁹ Thus, Yahweh’s healing in 2 Chr 30:20 is “God’s direct answer to Hezekiah’s request for forgiveness and thus “primarily of a spiritual nature.”⁶⁰ Hill aptly observes that Yahweh’s healing “in this context should be understood as spiritual restoration and social reconciliation, as the covenant relationship with God has been renewed and elements of the northern and southern tribes are reunited in true worship.”⁶¹

There are some more references in the book of 2 Chronicles where the verb form (רָפָא) and noun form (מִרְפָּא) occur. In 2 Chr 22:6, the Niphal of

רפא is used in relationship with Jehoram (Joram) of Israel who was wounded in the battlefield (“And he turned back to be healed [Niphal] in Jezreel because of the wounds which he had received at Ramah” [2 Chr 22:6]). In this context, the verb “healing” (רפא) signifies the physical healing and restoration of Jehoram. In 2 Chronicles 36, the noun form מרפא (“healing,” “cure,” “health”) is used in relationship with Zedekiah who refused to humble himself (כנע) before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of Yahweh (36:12), and also with the leaders, the priests, and the people of Judah (36:14) who despised the words of the messengers of God (vv. 14–16). Williamson notes that in 36:16, the word healing (מרפא) is “another echo of 7:14, where the same word is translated ‘heal (their land).’”⁶² Although Yahweh promised Solomon and his people that he would heal their land if they humble themselves, pray to, seek Yahweh’s face, and turn from their wicked ways (7:14), the Chronicler records that Zedekiah and the people of Judah refused to humble themselves and listen to the messengers of God (36:12–14). Consequently, Yahweh’s wrath aroused against them and “there was no healing” (מרפא) for the people of Judah (36:16). The immediate context indicates that Yahweh’s wrath results in the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile (vv. 17–21). Selman argues that the clause “there is no healing” in v. 36 “implies the cancellation of God’s promise to heal his land and that therefore even prayer will be utterly useless (2 Ch. 7:14; c. 30:20).”⁶³ Contrary to Selman’s view, however, it is more likely that the clause “there is no healing” in 36:16 does not cancel Yahweh’s promise to heal the land in 7:14, rather it picks up the theme of healing in 7:14 and implies that even though Yahweh’s promise to heal the land in 7:14 is made to all Israel, only those who humbly repent and seek and pray to him will experience the promise of healing and restoration.

Yahweh's Affirmation of the Temple (7:15–16)

In 2 Chr 7:15, Yahweh said to Solomon, “Now my eyes (עֵינַי) will be open and my ears (אָזְנוֹ) attentive to the prayer (תְּפִלָּה) that is made in this place (הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה).” When this verse is read in relationship with Solomon’s prayer in 6:40, “Now, my God, let your eyes (עֵינַי) be open and your ears (אָזְנוֹ) attentive to the prayer of this place” (הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה), the linguistic connections between the two verses denote that Yahweh’s promise in 7:15 functions as his answer to Solomon’s prayer in 6:40. Seen in this light, the prepositional phrase “in this place” (הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה) in both references refers to the house of Yahweh, the temple that Solomon built (6:20, 21, 26; 7:12), implying that Yahweh will respond to his people’s prayer offered at Solomon’s temple.⁶⁴ This view is further supported by 7:16 where Yahweh declares, “For now I have chosen and sanctified this house that my name may be forever. My eyes (עֵינַי) and my heart (לֵב) will be there for all time.” Based on this, it has been argued that “prayer and repentance were *not a private affair*; worship was expected to take place among the people who were called by God’s name.”⁶⁵ This statement appears to be correct when 7:13–15 is read in the context of Solomon’s prayer in ch. 6.

It is worth noting, however, that when the passage is read within its larger context, it is evident that for the Chronicler, prayer and repentance are both private and corporate, and Yahweh’s response to his people’s prayer is not limited to the temple alone. This is particularly evident in the Chronicler’s depiction of Manasseh’s repentance and prayer when he was captured and brought to Babylon (33:10–13). Yahweh used the Assyrians as his instruments to chastise Manasseh, who did evil things and refused to pay attention to Yahweh’s words (2 Chr 33:1–10). The Chronicler records that when Manasseh was in distress, he humbled himself (כָּנַע) before God and prayed (פָּלַל) to him. Then God was moved by his entreaty, and heard (שָׁמַע) his plea, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom (33:12–13). As Klein has observed, Manasseh’s entreating Yahweh’s favor, humbling himself, and prayer, followed by Yahweh’s granting of his prayer in 33:12–

13, “follow closely the outline described by Yahweh in response to Solomon” in 7:14: “If my people on whom my name is called humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land.”⁶⁶ Thus, when Manasseh’s (individual) prayer, repentance, and humbling himself are seen in relationship with Yahweh’s response to Solomon’s prayer in 7:14, it stands out that for the Chronicler, prayer and repentance can/should be done not only at the temple as God’s people as a community (corporate), but also as an individual (private) in a foreign land. While Yahweh’s response to prayer and repentance is closely associated with the temple or in Jerusalem, which Yahweh has chosen in chs. 6 and 7, it is not limited to the temple or Jerusalem alone because God responded to Manasseh’s prayer in a foreign land, Babylon (33:10–13).

Conclusion and Implications

In this article, we have investigated the meaning and significance of Yahweh’s promise to heal the land of his people in 2 Chr 7:13–16 within its immediate context and also within the book of 2 Chronicles by exploring how the text is connected linguistically and thematically with other related texts. Our study leads us to the following conclusions.

First, while the Chronicler emphasizes the significance of the temple in Solomon’s prayer (ch. 6) and Yahweh’s response to Solomon (ch. 7), his record of Manasseh’s humble repentance and prayer in Babylon, the land of his captivity, in 2 Chr 33:10–13 implies that Yahweh’s ability to respond to the prayer of his people is not limited to the temple and Jerusalem. Yahweh’s chastisement of Manasseh through the Assyrians, who brought him to Babylon, and his restoration of Manasseh from Babylon to Jerusalem (33:1–13) signify Yahweh’s sovereignty over the nations and his people.

Second, and related to the first, at the book level, 2 Chr 7:13–16 functions to promote the theme that Yahweh is sovereign over creation, the nations, and his people because he has the power to use natural disasters (drought, locust, and plague; v. 13; cf. 6:26–28) and powerful nations such

as Egypt (12:1–5), Assyria (33:10–11), and Babylon (36:11–21) as his instruments to bring judgment upon his own people as a divine chastisement, and he also has the power to bring healing, deliverance, restoration, and wholeness to his people and to their land when they humbly repent, pray to, and seek him (7:14; 12:6–7; 32:20–23; 33:12–13). Thus, in the book of 2 Chronicles, the theme of healing plays a significant role in the Chronicler's theology of retribution, repentance, and restoration.

Third, whereas the promise of healing was made to Israel as Yahweh's covenant people (7:14), not all Israel, but only the penitents who humble themselves, pray to, and seek Yahweh and turn to him experienced his healing and restoration, which Yahweh promised in 7:14 (cf. 12:6–7; 15:1–15; 30:11–20; *contra* 36:11–21). Throughout the book, the Chronicler presents that humble repentance and seeking Yahweh lead to healing and restoration, but stubbornness and refusal to turn humbly to Yahweh lead to his wrath and chastisement. Therefore, within the book of 2 Chronicles, the Chronicler's description of the disasters as Yahweh's chastisement of his people in 7:13 and his promise to heal their land that is contingent on the people's response in 7:13–16 function as both a warning and exhortation to his post-exilic audience to repent humbly, pray to, seek, and do Yahweh's will in the promised land as they look forward to an era of his healing and restoration.

Lastly, our investigation of 2 Chr 7:13–16 in relationship with other related texts in the book of 2 Chronicles has implications for contemporary readers and the Spirit-empowered community.⁶⁷ As has been noted in the introductory part of this article, some past studies that have examined our text within its immediate context assert that Yahweh's promise to heal the land of his people in 2 Chr 7:14 is limited only to the physical healing of the land of Israel. On the contrary, however, our study that examines the text not only in its immediate context but also in its larger context reveals that for the Chronicler, the meaning of healing the land in 2 Chr 7:14 extends far beyond the physical healing of the land of Israel that results in agricultural blessings, and also encompasses the restoration of bodily health,

forgiveness, spiritual restoration, racial reconciliation, wholeness, and well-being in every aspect of the lives of his people in the promised land.

Likewise, in 3 John 1–3, John prays for Gaius that he may prosper and enjoy good health just as his soul prospers (v. 2) because he is walking in the truth (v. 3). In this context, walking in the truth is closely linked with healing in a holistic sense that includes physical and spiritual health as well as wholeness in every aspect of one's life. This signifies that the Chronicler's view of Yahweh's healing in 2 Chr 7:14 is in line with John's understanding of healing in a broad sense, and thus promotes a holistic understanding of healing that results from having a right relationship with God.

Just as the Chronicler exhorts his post-exilic audience, who look forward to Yahweh's era of healing and restoration, to repent and turn to Yahweh in the promised land (2 Chr 7:13–16), in the book of Acts, Peter also exhorts his Jewish audience to repent and turn to God so that their sins may be blotted out and times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19–20). In this context, repentance and turning to Yahweh are identified as “turning each of you from your wicked ways” and accepting Jesus as the Messiah (Acts 3:26; cf. 2 Chr 7:14 “Turn from their wicked ways”). Furthermore, just as the Chronicler exhorts his audience to humble themselves and to seek Yahweh's will (2 Chr 7:14), in the New Testament, believers are also exhorted to submit humbly to God's sovereignty by seeking his kingdom and righteousness (Matt 6:33), and to humble themselves under God's mighty arm (1 Pet 5:6). Thus, when 2 Chr 7:13–16 is read in relationship with some related texts in the New Testament, it is evident that although the promise in 7:14 was primarily given to the Israelites, but not to contemporary Christians, the Chronicler's message in 7:13–16 exhorts not only his post-exilic audience but also readers in all ages to repent and turn from their wicked ways, and to submit humbly to God's sovereignty and seek his will.

Our examination of 2 Chr 7:13–16 at the book level reveals further that the Chronicler portrays Solomon and Hezekiah, who prayed to God on behalf of their people, as Yahweh's agents of healing and restoration (2 Chr

6:12–7:22, 30:1–20). Likewise, Luke also depicts the disciples and the apostolic community who were empowered by the Spirit as faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ who continued the holistic healing mission of Christ (e.g., Luke 4:18–21; 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1–47; 3:1–26; 4:22; 5:12–16; 8:5–13; 9:32–35; 10:36–42; 14:8–10; 20:7–12). Therefore, our reading of the healing passage in the book of 2 Chronicles in relationship with the New Testament suggests that we, the Spirit-empowered community, are called to continue the holistic healing mission of Christ by serving as his agents of healing and wholeness to our communities and to the world.



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Notes

¹ Michael L. Brown, *Israel's Divine Healer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 30. In his study, Brown suggests that the general definition of the Hebrew word רָפָא (*rp*) is “restore, make whole,” and the word “heal” should be the first subheading of the general definition of “restore, make whole” because it is “used for the healing/making whole/restoring of body and spirit, land and water, city and nation” (29–30).

² Johannes C. de Moor, “Rapi’uma—Rephaim,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 88 (1976), 336. See also Martin J. Selman’s interpretation of 2 Chr 7:14 in his commentary, *2 Chronicles, A Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 338.

³ Jonathan Taylor, “The Application of 2 Chronicles 7:13–15,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 168 (April-June 2011), 152–54.

⁴ See, for instance, Brown’s treatment of 2 Chr 7:14 in his monograph, *Israel's Divine Healer*, 115. In his article, Taylor also examines 2 Chr 7:13–15 within its

immediate context and argues that healing the land refers to agricultural blessings (152) and 2 Chr 7:13–15 “supplies an answer to Solomon’s prayer in chapter 6, namely that God would hear the prayers offered in or directed toward the temple.” See “The Application of 2 Chronicles 7:13–15,” 156. While Taylor’s argument appears to be correct when the text is examined within its immediate context, he fails to see how Yahweh’s promise in 2 Chr 7:13–15 functions in relationship with other texts at the book level. This issue will be addressed more in detail in a section that examines 2 Chr 7:15–16 in relationship with 2 Chr 33:10–13.

⁵ Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 614.

⁶ J. G. McConville, *I & II Chronicles*, Daily Study Bible (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), 138.

⁷ Brian E. Kelly, “‘Retribution’ Revisited: Covenant, Grace and Restoration,” in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein*, eds. M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie, and Gary N. Knoppers (London: T & T Clark International, 2003), 217.

⁸ Andrew E. Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 399.

⁹ Raymond B. Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987), 56. Japhet also observes that when the Chronicler’s identification of the temple as “a house of sacrifice” in 2 Chr 7:12 is read in relationship with Isa 56:7, it is evident that for the Chronicler, sacrifice is the primary role of the Temple, and that a house of prayer is essentially a house of sacrifice.” See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 614.

¹⁰ See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 614.

¹¹ Ralph W. Klein, *2 Chronicles: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 111.

¹² H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 225.

¹³ A. H. Konkel, “עֶזְרָא ‘sr,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem VanGemeren (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 3:501.

¹⁴ Kelly, “‘Retribution’ Revisited: Covenant, Grace and Restoration,” 217.

- ¹⁵ J. A. Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 229.
- ¹⁶ Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 94.
- ¹⁷ Christopher Wright, “ארץ ’erets,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem VanGemen (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 1:523.
- ¹⁸ Robert C. Stallman, “ארבה ’arbeh,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem VanGemen (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 1:491.
- ¹⁹ Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 95.
- ²⁰ Robert C. Stallman, “ארבה ’arbeh,” 1:493.
- ²¹ James Crenshaw, *Joel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 157. Similarly, David Prior, *The Message of Joel, Micah & Habakkuk*, The Bible Speaks Today (Leister, UK: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 68, also asserts, “God, in acknowledging all the damage done to the land and to the people, promises to provide ample compensation for all they have suffered.”
- ²² Peter C. Craigie, *Twelve Prophets*, Daily Study Bible Series (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984), 1:108.
- ²³ Mainz G. Mayer, “דבר Debher,” *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 3:126.
- ²⁴ R. K. Harrison, “דבר Deber I,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem VanGemen (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 1:915.
- ²⁵ Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 294. See also Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, 230.
- ²⁶ Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 111.
- ²⁷ Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 338.
- ²⁸ Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 338.
- ²⁹ See the Targum translation of this verse: “But everyone who *prays* in the name of the Lord shall be delivered, for there shall be deliverance on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, as the Lord said. *They shall be delivered whom the Lord appoints*” [Italic his]. See Martin McNamara, ed., *The Targum of the Minor Prophets: Translated, with a Critical Introduction Apparatus, and Notes*, The

Aramaic Bible, trans. Kevin J. Cathcart and Robert P. Gordon (Edinburgh: T&T Clark LTD, 1989), 14:71.

³⁰ Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 261.

³¹ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 169.

³² Willem A. VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 281, observes that in this context, the Sabbath is emphasized “not for its own sake but as an expression of loyalty.”

³³ John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 455.

³⁴ Bradley Gregory, “The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61:1–3,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126 (Fall 2007), 495.

³⁵ See William J. Dumbrell, “כִּנֵּה *kn*’,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem VanGemeren (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 2:667.

³⁶ McKenzie, *1–2 Chronicles*, 250.

³⁷ Dumbrell, “כִּנֵּה *kn*’,” 667.

³⁸ McConville, *I & II Chronicles*, 139.

³⁹ Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 400.

⁴⁰ Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 586.

⁴¹ Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 436.

⁴² Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 340.

⁴³ Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 586.

⁴⁴ Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 596.

⁴⁵ Chitra Chhetri, “בִּקֵּשׁ *bqs*,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, Willem VanGemeren ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 1:723.

⁴⁶ McConville, *I & II Chronicles*, 139.

⁴⁷ Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 176.

⁴⁸ Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, 266.

⁴⁹ Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 111.

⁵⁰ Eugene H. Merrill, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Chronicles*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2015), 360.

⁵¹ J. P. J. Olivier, “סלח *slh*,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, Willem VanGemeren ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 3:260.

⁵² Selman views Yahweh’s healing of the land in 2 Chr 7:14 in the light of Jer 30:17 and 33:6–7 and argues that when healing is “applied to the land, as here, it can refer to bringing the exiles back to the Promised Land (Jer. 30:17; 33:6–7) or restoring the land and its people to peace and security (Jer. 33:6; Is 57:19).” Thus, he concludes that the clause “and I will heal their land” in 2 Chr 7:14 may refer to “the restoration of all God’s purposes for the people of Israel and for the Promised Land.” See Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 340.

⁵³ Taylor, “Application of 2 Chronicles,” 154.

⁵⁴ Taylor, for instance, argues that “Deuteronomy 11:16–17 underscores the point that healing the land relates specifically to the judgment of drought.” See “Application of 2 Chronicles,” 153.

⁵⁵ Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 370.

⁵⁶ Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 368.

⁵⁷ Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 587.

⁵⁸ Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 499.

⁵⁹ Merrill, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Chronicles*, 515.

⁶⁰ Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 499.

⁶¹ Hill, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 587.

⁶² Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 417.

⁶³ Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 549.

⁶⁴ Stephen S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2001), 143.

⁶⁵ Taylor, “The Application of 2 Chronicles 7:13–15,” 145. Emphasis mine.

⁶⁶ Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 482.

⁶⁷ In his Old Testament Theology book, John Walton notes that “The Old Testament was written for us but not to us.” See *Old Testament Theology for Christians: From Ancient Context to Enduring Belief* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 5. In the same vein, Kevin Vanhoozer also echoes that the

“Old Testament was written *for* if not *to* Christian disciples.” See “Toward a Theological Old Testament Theology?: A Systematic Theologian’s Take on Reading the Old Testament Theologically,” in *Interpreting the Old Testament Theologically: Essays in Honor of Willem A. VanGemeren*, Andrew T. Abernethy ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 316. Emphasis his.



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