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## *Intertextual Links between Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes as a Pointer to Qohelet's Positive Message*

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*Intertextual links between Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes have begun only recently to garner interest as a possible literary source for Qohelet. In examining these proposed links, Deuteronomy proves, in fact, to be the sole literary precursor from which Qohelet draws by all three rhetorical modes: citation, allusion, and echo. In addition, Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes share several important discourse concepts, including eating as the joyful response to God's provision, remembrance as an antidote against spiritual apostasy, and divine kingship as the source for wisdom. These cumulative links form a chain of evidence suggesting that Deuteronomy's positive message of enjoying the blessings of life as grateful and obedient recipients of divine grace is perhaps more influential upon Qohelet than realized. The literary connections suggest furthermore that Qohelet should be read in a more positive light than interpreters have been accustomed to do.*

KEYWORDS: *Intertextuality, Qohelet, Ecclesiastes, Deuteronomy, wisdom, joy, fear, torah*

### INTRODUCTION

Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes share a key literary relationship that has begun to be explored only recently.<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy is, in fact, the only

1. See Richard Schultz, "'Fear God and Keep His Commandments' (Ecc 12:13): An Examination of Some Intertextual Relationships between Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes," in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy*

biblical writing that Qohelet evokes by all three categories of allusive mode— literary citation, allusion, and echo.<sup>2</sup> This correspondence in terminology and themes points to Deuteronomy as a primary literary backdrop for Ecclesiastes, perhaps the most important source outside Genesis. Such a link should come as no surprise, as scholars of biblical wisdom have long recognized correlations between Deuteronomy and the biblical wisdom corpus.<sup>3</sup>

Deuteronomy's wisdom emphasis emerges in its introduction, where conformity to its legal code is lauded as the means to superior wisdom: "Keep them and do them, for that will be your *wisdom* (חכמה) and your *understanding* (בינה) in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a *wise and understanding* people'" (Deut 4:6).<sup>4</sup> Deuteronomy elsewhere grounds its wisdom in the fear of Yhwh, as within the biblical wisdom tradition: "The LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to *fear* (ירא) the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as we are this day" (Deut 6:24). As a vital source of authoritative wisdom affirming life and goodness for Israel, Qohelet evokes Deuteronomy through several verbal links as well as through a number of shared semantic fields and discourse concepts. Both Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes commend to their readers

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*in Honor of Daniel I. Block*, ed. Jason S. DeRouchie, Jason Gile, and Kenneth Turner, 327–43 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013); Bernard M. Levinson, "Better That You Should Not Vow Than That You Vow and Not Fulfill': Qoheleth's Use of Textual Allusion and the Transformation of Deuteronomy's Law of Vows," in *Reading Ecclesiastes Intertextually*, ed. Katharine Dell and Will Kynes, 28–41 (New York: Bloomsbury T-&T Clark, 2014); Craig G. Bartholomew, *Ecclesiastes*, BCOTWP (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 368n45.

2. For a definition of these literary categories, see below. On the nature of these allusive modes, see John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 64; Katharine Dell, "Exploring Intertextual Links between Ecclesiastes and Genesis 1–11," in *Reading Ecclesiastes Intertextually*, ed. Katharine Dell and Will Kynes (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 5; Fernando Milán, "Biblia e intertextualidad: una aproximación," *ScrTh* 48 (2016): 367–68.

3. Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1972), 244–319; R. N. Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition of the Old Testament*, BZAW 135 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974), 87–89, 150–51; Gerald Wilson, "'The Words of the Wise': The Intent and Significance of Qohelet 12:9–14," *JBL* 103 (1984): 175–92.

4. All Scripture translations, unless otherwise noted, are from the English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).

a life of joy in celebrating the daily provisions of food and drink, spouse, and the capacity to enjoy life itself.<sup>5</sup> These connections reinforce positive aspects of Qohelet's message that many interpreters reject or downplay in preference for a pessimistic reading of the book.<sup>6</sup> While Qohelet commends obedience and joy like Deuteronomy, he does so not merely as a means of obtaining superior wisdom. Rather, obedience and joy serve as an antidote to the pain and suffering endemic to a fallen world. These clear verbal links establish a similar trajectory of theme and message to which we now turn.

#### LITERARY CITATION (DEUT 23:22–23 IN ECCL 5:3–4)

The clearest literary link between Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes occurs in Qohelet's discussion of proper oath-taking in Eccl 5:3–4.<sup>7</sup> Before turning to examine the literary citation, we will define briefly the category. Literary citation is the formal or informal rhetorical use of an earlier text by a later author such that the author preserves explicit literary markers from that text.<sup>8</sup> The citation is intentional and objective (i.e., with a definable repetition of collocated terms).<sup>9</sup> It functions

5. Schultz, "Fear God and Keep His Commandments," 342–43.

6. A negative reading of Ecclesiastes remains the majority view. See, e.g., James L. Crenshaw, *Ecclesiastes*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 28; Tremper Longman III, *The Book of Ecclesiastes*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 31–32; Michael V. Fox, *A Time to Tear Down & a Time to Build Up* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 30–33; Shannon Burkes, *Death in Qoheleth and Egyptian Biographies of the Late Period*, SBL Dissertation Series 170 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 48–80; Peter Enns, *Ecclesiastes*, THOTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 5, 31, 43.

7. Verse numbers follow the Hebrew text which differs from the English versions of both books.

8. Ziva Ben-Porat first identified literary links between texts as "markers" which serve to signify "the simultaneous activation of two texts." She notes the integral connectivity between markers in the evoking text and the larger, independent component or system of the evoked text: "In its manifest belonging to a larger independent system (i.e., the evoked text) the marker maintains the metonymic structure of the relationship of the sign-referent which characterizes all allusions" ("The Poetics of Literary Allusion," *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 [1976]: 108.

9. Christopher A. Beetham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 15–17. Beetham posits that a quotation must entail six or more words. Although this test provides a helpful benchmark, it is rather arbitrary. B. Abasciano is on firmer ground in declining to specify a minimum number of words

to signal the author's in-groupness or fluency, to persuade or motivate the audience, or to organize the discourse.<sup>10</sup> A formal literary citation includes a quotation formula (e.g., "it is written"), while an informal citation lacks an introductory marker.

In the context of the appropriate handling of vows and dreams, Qohelet invokes the legal stipulations of Deut 23:22–23 to bolster his admonitions about correct worship practices. In a more general sense, the pericope of Eccl 4:17–5:6, with its successive instructions on a circumspect approach to the cult, is the most unique rhetorical unit within the book and provides the most fruitful source for drawing intertextual links.<sup>11</sup> Although not all proposed intertexts have proved equally persuasive,<sup>12</sup> Qohelet adapts here a near-verbatim excerpt from Deut 23:22.

Verbal Correspondences in the "Law of Vows"			
Deut 23:22–23	Translation	Eccl 5:3–4	Translation
כִּי־תִדְרַךְ נֹדֵר לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תֵאָחֵר לְשַׁלְּמוֹ כִּי־דַרְשׁ יִדְרֹשׁנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מֵעַמְדָּךְ וְהָיָה בְּךָ חַטָּא: וְכִי תִחְדַּל לְנֹדֵר לֹא־ יְהִי בְּךָ חַטָּא:	If <b>you make a vow to</b> Yhwh your <b>God</b> , you <b>shall not delay in fulfill-</b> <b>ing it</b> , for certainly Yhwh your God shall require it from you and it will be sin for you. And if you refrain from vowing, it will not be sin for you.	כַּאֲשֶׁר תִּדְרֹךְ נֹדֵר לְאֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֶיךָ־ תֵּאָחֵר לְשַׁלְּמוֹ כִּי אֵין חֶפֶץ בְּכַסְיִים אֶת אֲשֶׁר־תִּדְרֹךְ שָׁלֵם: טוֹב אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִדְרֹךְ מִשְׁתַּדּוֹר וְלֹא תִשְׁלֵם	When <b>you make a</b> <b>vow to God</b> , <b>do not</b> <b>delay in fulfilling it</b> , <b>for</b> he takes no plea- sure in fools. Fulfill what you vow! It is better that you not vow than that you vow and not fulfill it.

(*Paul's Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9:1–9: An Intertextual and Theological Exegesis* [London: T&T Clark, 2005], 16).

10. Alison Wray, *Formulaic Language and the Lexicon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 16, 93.

11. Hubert Tita, "Ist die thematische Einheit Koh 4,17–5,6 eine Anspielung auf die Salomoerzählung?" *BN* 84 (1996): 87–102; Antoon Schoors, "(Mis)Use of Intertextuality in Qoheleth Exegesis," in *Congress Volume Oslo 1998*, ed. A. Lemaire and M. Sæbø, 45–59 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 48–57; Jean-Jacques Lavoie, "Critique culturelle et doute existential: étude de Qo 4,17–5,6," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 26 (1997): 147–67.

12. For example, Ruth Fidler proposes an intertext between this unit and the Jacob narrative in Genesis 28 and 35 ("Qoheleth in the 'House of God': Text and Intertext in Qoh 4:17–5:6 (Eng. 5:1–7)," *HS* 47 [2006]: 7–21). The comparison is not compelling, however, as she overloads the semantics of "dream" with too much weight from the Jacob narrative, leading her to impose this context upon Qohelet's admonition.

The Hebrew texts of the passages share six words in nearly identical sequence. The preferable classification for this textual link is literary citation with an informal citation marker.<sup>13</sup> Qohelet modifies the apodictic legal prohibition against frivolous vows to a more practical warning about proper oath-taking in worship. He modifies four elements of the Deuteronomy text.

- (1) Deuteronomy's clause-initial protasis particle **כִּי** ("if" or possibly "when") Qohelet alters to his preferred discourse marker **כַּאֲשֶׁר** ("just as, when"). This alteration serves at least two purposes. First, it underscores the reality and immediacy of the depicted vow. The vow is envisioned not merely as to its potentiality but as to its likelihood in the worshipper's observance of the cult ("when you make a vow"). Second, the discourse marker **כַּאֲשֶׁר** hints to Qohelet's use of source material in the formulation of this injunction, as the lexeme functions uniquely in Ecclesiastes as a discourse marker introducing adapted literary material.<sup>14</sup>
- (2) The divine covenant name **יהוה אלהיך** ("Yhwh your God") Qohelet abbreviates, in keeping with his omission of the divine name, to the more general nomenclature of **אלהים** ("God"). This again turns the covenantal legal stipulation into generic wisdom instruction. (3) The enduring status of Deuteronomy's legal prohibition, marked by the negative particle **לֹא**, Qohelet shifts to a more specific and immediate prohibition marked by the vetitive **אַל**. Dallaire shows that the negative particle **לֹא** marks prohibitions related to a lasting future lifestyle in which a person of greater rank addresses someone of lower rank, while the vetitive **אַל** marks a one-time, specific prohibition in which social and class dynamics have no bearing.<sup>15</sup>

13. Schultz identifies this as an explicit quotation (*NDBT*, s.v. "Ecclesiastes," by R. Schultz, 214).

14. Qohelet uses the hybrid term **כַּאֲשֶׁר + כִּי** eight times in Ecclesiastes (4:17; 5:3, 14; 8:7, 16; 9:2 [2x]; 11:5). Of these, five appear at the head of a syntactical clause in the discourse (5:3, 14; 8:7, 16; 11:5). In at least four of these occurrences, Qohelet uses **כַּאֲשֶׁר** to introduce a citation or allusion to another literary source or to his own earlier material (Eccl 5:3 cites Deut 23:22; Eccl 5:13 alludes to Job 1:21; Eccl 8:7 alludes to Gen 3:11; and Eccl 8:16 alludes to Eccl 1:17).

15. Hélène Dallaire, *The Syntax of Volitives in Biblical Hebrew and Amarna Canaanite Prose*, LSAWS 9 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 105.

Hence Qohelet's modification is consistent with his instructional genre and implied audience.

- (4) Qohelet refashions Deuteronomy's motive clause asserting that Yhwh will recompense the sin and punish the offender to the common rhetorical wisdom form of the "better-than" proverb. Ogden has observed that Qohelet utilizes this literary device "to express conclusions drawn from the observations recorded in the pericope."<sup>16</sup> Often these conclusions highlight the most significant warnings or affirmations within the unit.<sup>17</sup> Here Qohelet concludes with a significant warning that disobedience to torah constitutes a breach of wisdom norms, leading to divine disapproval and the possible thwarting of the violator's ability to enjoy God's gifts. Qohelet modifies Deuteronomy's identification of the oath breaking as sin (חטא) to classifying it first as folly (בטיל, "the fool") (v. 4) and later as "sin" (חטא) (v. 6). He transforms the legal notion of divine recompense to a more wisdom-oriented outcome of divine displeasure. He concludes with an imperative stressing the need to fulfill the vow and reiterates the harm that overtakes the fool who approaches vows flippantly.

These changes are in keeping with the suggestion that Qohelet consistently connects the concept of folly with sin in his wisdom instruction. Conversely, he designates wisdom as a desirable attribute that God bestows to the person who pleases him (cf. Eccl 2:26; 7:11, 25; 8:1; 9:18). This means that Qohelet has *not* "detheologized" and "relativized" the Pentateuchal formula from a stark prohibition to "a lesser transgression of wisdom and good sense."<sup>18</sup> Rather, Qohelet diagnoses the violation of torah as a rash and devastating replication of the folly of original sin. The fool who cavalierly disregards torah repeats the conceit of the original fools and sins audaciously as they did. Qohelet is not minimizing the legal prescription of Deuteronomy but merely pointing out the madness of flouting it.

16. G. Ogden, "The 'Better'-Proverb (Tôb-Spruch), Rhetorical Criticism, and Qoheleth," *JBL* 96 (1977): 497.

17. *Ibid.*, 504–5.

18. Levinson, "Better That You Should Not Vow," 32, 38.



## LITERARY ALLUSION (DEUT 13:4 IN ECCL 12:13)

In addition to the citation, Ecclesiastes includes at least one literary allusion to Deuteronomy. This category is slightly more difficult to discern. Literary allusion is the freer rhetorical adaptation of an earlier text by a later author in a way that is intentional and recognizable by the audience.<sup>19</sup> For rhetorical effectiveness the evoked source must be traceable and the allusion sufficiently clear to stand out in its new context.<sup>20</sup>

The epilogue concludes with its well-known directive to “fear God and keep his commandments” (Eccl 12:13). This language resonates closely with a frequent injunction in Deuteronomy to fear and obey Yhwh.<sup>21</sup> In eight passages Deuteronomy combines the concepts of revering God with keeping his decrees, with the verbs ירא (“fear”) and שמר (“keep”) (Deut 5:29; 6:2; 8:6; 10:12–13; 13:4; 17:19; 28:58; 31:12). Four of these passages include the additional keyword מצוה (“commandment”): Deut 5:29; 6:2; 8:6; 13:4. Of these possible literary precursors, the texts that share most extensively the vocabulary and sequence of the epilogue are Deut 5:29 and 13:4.<sup>22</sup> In Deut 5:29 Yahweh expresses his desire that the people of Israel would always have the inner disposition “to *fear* me and to *keep* all my commandments.” Although the terms ירא (“fear”), שמר (“keep”), and מצוה (“commandments”) occur in proximity as in Eccl 12:13, there are a few key differences. In Deut 5:29 Yahweh speaks to Moses, and only indirectly to his

19. Beetham defines allusion as “a literary device intentionally employed by an author to point a reader back to a single identifiable source, of which one or more components must be remembered and brought forward into the new context” (*Echoes of Scripture*, 20).

20. The criterion that the allusion must have a single identifiable source does not preclude the combination of sources within a given passage; it simply means that each portion of the allusion should be clearly traceable to its source text.

21. Only ten texts in the OT collocate the key terms ירא (“fear”), שמר (“keep”), and מצוה (“commandment”) in the same verse (Deut 5:29; 6:2; 8:6; 13:4; 2 Kgs 17:37; Neh 1:5; Eccl 12:13; Dan 9:4). Of these texts, four are found in Deuteronomy, one is a clear allusion to Deuteronomy (2 Kgs 17:37), and two appear in postexilic prayers of confession that likely reflect Deuteronomy (Dan 9:4; Neh 1:5). This correspondence strengthens the likelihood that Deuteronomy functions as a literary precursor to Eccl 12:13. Cf. also Wilson, “The Words of the Wise,” 189.

22. Deut 6:2 and 8:6 differ from Eccl 12:13 by interposing several additional terms and phrases or by altering the sequence of the directive.

people. The rhetorical mode is hence more relaxed, and the conjugation of the verbs is non-finite (Qal infinitive construct) rather than volitional (Qal imperative). Yahweh urges the solicited fear and obedience toward himself by use of the first-person singular pronominal suffixes. In Eccl 12:13 God is more distant rhetorically as indicated by the third-person pronominal suffix. In addition, Deut 5:29 characterizes the desired obedience as comprehensive in entailing “all” God’s commands (כל), while Eccl 12:13 omits this.

In view of these differences, Deut 13:4 offers several clues as the potential literary source for Eccl 12:13. First, similarity in linguistic structure suggests that Deuteronomy has influenced Ecclesiastes. Both texts front their accusatives in the preverbal field to highlight God as the object of fear and obedience by making him the focus of the utterance.<sup>23</sup> The larger context of Deuteronomy 13 includes instructions on how to ferret out false dreamers and false prophets. Moses charges his audience, as an antidote to prophetic deception, that they fear the Lord and obey his commands: “You shall fear *him* and keep *his commandments*” (ואתו תיראו ואת-מצותיו תשמרו). The accusatives אתו (“him”) and את- (“his commandments”) precede their respective verbs to stress Yhwh’s personal and exclusive prerogative as the sovereign recipient of Israel’s reverence and obedience. Likewise, the author of Eccl 12:13 fronts the accusatives to stress the exclusivity of God and his authority: “Fear *God* and keep *his commandments*” (את-האלהים ירא ואת-מצותיו תשמרו). Second, Deut 13:4 carries the closest resemblance of any OT text to Eccl 12:13 in its verbal mood, syntax, and sequence. Although Qohelet adapts the Deuteronomy text in marginal ways by shifting from the *yiqtol* to the imperative mood and by adding the proper noun האלהים (“God”) in place of the pronoun אתו (“him”), these are minor changes. The *yiqtol* conjugation in Deut 13:4 is likely the injunctive imperfect, constituting a command that carries a meaning close to the imperatival conjugation.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, in syntactical arrangement Deut 13:4 and Eccl 12:13 align more closely than any other biblical texts,

23. On the terminology and significance of “fronting” as identifying the focus of the utterance, see Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 337–38, 346–47.

24. Williams, *Williams’ Hebrew Syntax*, 72; Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 148–49; Waltke and O’Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 509.

carrying the same linguistic structure: (1) accusative particle with suffix or accusative + (2) verb (3) + (ירא) *waw* conjunctive with accusative particle and 4) + (מצוה) verb (שמר).<sup>25</sup>

Third, the larger context of Ecclesiastes favors Deut 13:4 as a source text. Elsewhere Qohelet appears to echo another text within Deuteronomy 13 to censure rash speakers and dreamers who needlessly multiply empty words and impose *hebel* on others (Eccl 5:2, 6) (evoking Deut 13:3, 5). Deut 13:1–5 and Eccl 4:17–5:6 are, in fact, the only passages in their respective books to use the term חלום (“dream”). Both texts use the term in a negative fashion to condemn dreamers who mislead others. Qohelet’s evocation of this Deuteronomy context elsewhere heightens the likelihood that he adapts a text from the passage here.<sup>26</sup> This correlation undergirds the important methodological step of relating text and intertext more systematically to find other latent resonances beyond the immediate context.<sup>27</sup>

#### LITERARY ECHO

In addition to providing the backdrop for a literary citation and allusion, Deuteronomy provides a few other source texts that Qohelet echoes in Ecclesiastes. The literary echo is the most elusive category to define. Literary echo is the intentional or unintentional rhetorical adaptation of an earlier text by a later author, often due to that text’s formulaic shaping of the author’s worldview or language.<sup>28</sup> Often literary echoes result from lexical priming, which is the subconscious, accruing record of the

25. None of the other Deut texts listed above carries this same structure, terminology, and semantic collocation. The closest is Deut 6:2, but there the text does not front the accusatives and has חק (“statute”) in place of מצוה (“commandment”).

26. This alignment fits the “volume” criterion that Richard B. Hays outlines as one of seven indicators of intertextuality (“the degree of explicit repetition of words or syntactical patterns”) (*Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989], 29–32).

27. On the importance of this step in the methodology of intertextuality, see Will Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping: Job’s Dialogue with the Psalms*, BZAW 437 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 37–60.

28. Beetham defines literary echo as “a subtle, literary mode of reference that is not intended for public recognition yet derives from a specific predecessor” (*Echoes of Scripture*, 24).

context and co-text of a given word or phrase, fixed by an authoritative or widely-known text, in this case antecedent Scripture.<sup>29</sup> The echo may be characterized as a fragment or whisper of a previous text, similar in function but fainter in form than the allusion.<sup>30</sup>

In the same unit (4:17–5:6) Qohelet warns against speaking rashly to God because of the divine authority inherent in the Creator/creature distinction: “Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few” (Eccl 5:2). The language of the transcendent “God in heaven” (האֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם), distinct from the sphere of finite humans on “the earth below” (עַל־הָאָרֶץ), is surprisingly rare in the OT, occurring only five times (Gen 1:17; Deut 4:39; Josh 2:11; 1 Kgs 8:23 [=2 Chr on 6:14]; Eccl 5:1). In assessing these texts, Gen 1:17 occurs in the opening creation discourse in which God places the greater lights in the expanse of the heavens to illuminate the earth below, a theme and emphasis different from Eccl 5:1. Another possible literary antecedent, Josh 2:11, is itself an allusion or citation of Deut 4:39, with six identical lexemes occurring in succession. These unlikely precursors leave two texts as the possible backdrop for Eccl 5:1: Deut 4:39 and 1 Kgs 8:23. The latter text offers interesting possibilities in that there Solomon prays to dedicate the newly-constructed temple during the Festival of Sukkot. Several commentators have noted pervasive links to Deuteronomy in Solomon’s dedicatory prayer, suggesting his knowledge of the Mosaic Covenant.<sup>31</sup> Solomon’s traditional connection to Ecclesiastes provides a tantalizing nexus for the literary echo. In the end, however, it appears most plausible that both 1 Kgs 8:23 and Eccl 5:2 depend literarily on Deut 4:39.

29. On lexical priming, see Michael Hoey, *Patterns of Lexis in Text* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3; idem, *Lexical Priming: A New Theory of Words and Language* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 8–12; idem, “Lexical Priming and Literary Creativity,” in *Text, Discourse, and Corpora: Theory and Analysis*, ed. Michael Hoey, Michaela Mahlberg, Michael Stubbs, et al. (New York: Continuum, 2007), 7–8; Michael Pace-Siggs, *Lexical Priming in Spoken English Usage* (London: Palgrave Macmillan), 1–3.

30. Beetham, *Echoes of Scripture*, 21.

31. Simon J. DeVries, *1 Kings*, WBC (Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 126; Peter Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, Brazos Theological Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 68; Lissa M. Wray Beal, *1 & 2 Kings*, AOTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 143–45.

In Deuteronomy 4 Moses addresses the Israelites in his first speech to underscore the uniqueness and authority of Yhwh, evidenced historically from several key creative and redemptive acts: the creation of the world, the exodus from Egypt, the destruction of Israel's enemies, and the provision of the Law on Sinai. God's singular authority is evident both in his transcendence from the created realm and in his imminence among his people: "Know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other" (Deut 4:39). The pairing of "heaven" and earth" is a merism denoting God's unique sovereignty over the whole created order.<sup>32</sup> Qohelet has adapted the pairing of "heaven above" and "earth beneath" not only to highlight God's sovereignty but to accentuate mankind's finitude. Rather than emphasizing that *God* is operative and authoritative in both spheres, Qohelet shifts the terminology to point to God's transcendence and man's limitation: God is in heaven but finite, foolish humans are on earth. More than a hint of Qohelet's frustration over the lot of fallen man lies behind the exhortation. The singular divine authority underscored in the Deuteronomy text is intended to serve as a check on fallen man's tendency toward rash outspokenness. Since humanity cannot sufficiently or exhaustively "mind the gap" between themselves and God, they must learn to hold their tongues.

The final literary echo of Deuteronomy in Ecclesiastes occurs in the same chapter. In Eccl 4:17–5:6 Qohelet exhorts his audience concerning the need to restrain one's words before God in view of human transitoriness, finitude, and evil (5:1–16). In Eccl 5:2, 6, Qohelet contrasts the danger posed by elusive dreams and foolish diatribes as over against the value of personal piety. The wise person, exhorts Qohelet, demonstrates his unswerving commitment to God largely through his silence. Qohelet likely draws here again from Deuteronomy, namely from a passage dealing with the identification and eradication of false prophets and dreamers. Deut 13:1–18 underscores the necessity of personal and exclusive covenantal devotion to Yahweh due to the threat of future defectors and apostates, led often by false prophets.<sup>33</sup> In

32. Rabbinical authorities identified this statement as the most overt assertion of monotheism in the Hebrew Bible (Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, JPS Torah Commentary [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996], 57).

33. See J. Gordon McConville, *Deuteronomy*, AOTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 234–35.

Deut 13:4–5 these religious apostates offer the blandishment of false revelation to entice Israel. Israel must repudiate these seductive seers and their spurious claims: “You shall not listen to the *words* of that prophet or that dreamer of *dreams*. For the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the Lord your God and *fear* him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him” (Deut 13:3–4 [HB 4–5]). An interesting facet of these verses is the constellation of the prominent terms דְּבָרִים (“words”), חֲלוֹם (“dreams”), and יִרָא (“fear”). The collocation of “words” and “dreams” in the same text is relatively rare in the OT, occurring in seven instances (Gen 37:8; 41:32; Num 12:6; Deut 13:3; Eccl 5:3, 7; Jer 23:28). When combined with the imperative conjugation of יִרָא, however, this sequence occurs only in Deut 13:4–5 and Eccl 5:7. Qohelet appears to draw again from the wellspring of Deuteronomy in formulating his wisdom exhortation. In the context of foolish dreams and profuse words, Qohelet identifies a subtle threat to proper worship. Heeding futile dreams and empty words serves no lasting purpose but only to spiritual detriment and folly; the wise person instead fears God.

#### SHARED SEMANTIC FIELDS AND DISCOURSE CONCEPTS

Having surveyed several literary ties between Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes, we turn to the more oblique yet significant commonality of semantic fields and discourse concepts. Within the fields of hermeneutics and discourse linguistics, many recognize the importance of going beyond word studies to engage in linguistic and intertextual analysis.<sup>34</sup> Grant Osborne thus champions a semantic theory that transcends the meaning of individual words or phrases: “We dare never study only occurrences of the particular term if our purpose is to trace the theology behind a word or phrase. Such will help in determining the semantic

34. Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1989), 146–55; Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988, 1989), 1.xvi; Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meanings: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, 2nd revised ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 112–14; Andreas J. Köstenberger and Richard D. Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 626–30.

range of that particular term but will not recapitulate the range of the author's thought or of biblical teaching."<sup>35</sup> In this vein, Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes share not only a number of key terms but also several discourse concepts that go beyond literary echoes to exhibit a common theology.

Bartholomew identifies several potential conceptual links between Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes: (1) the theme of eating and drinking, (2) the prohibition of adding to or subtracting from God's work (Deut 4:2; 12:32; Eccl 3:14; 12:12), (3) the motif of remembrance, and (4) the "one shepherd" of Eccl 12:11 as reflecting the "one God" of the Shema in Deut 6:4.<sup>36</sup> In the light of the links already explored, these other conceptual connections may provide corroboration that Deuteronomy is an important source for Qohelet.

### *Eating and Drinking*

Eating and drinking is a motif common to Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes. The customary term for "eat," אכל, occurs 95 times in the two books (80x in Deut; 15x in Eccl), while its usual paired term שתה ("drink") occurs 14 times (9x in Deut; 5x in Eccl). Given the relatively rarer occurrences of "drinking" in the two books, the collocation of eating and drinking in the same context would seem at first glance to hold significance as a possible thematic link. The verbs for "eating" and "drinking" occur together in the same verse or in adjoining verses 8 times in Deuteronomy (Deut 2:6, 28; 9:9, 18, 28:39; 29:6; 32:13–14, 38) and 5 times in Ecclesiastes (Eccl 2:24; 3:13; 5:17; 8:15; 9:7). Only once in Deuteronomy is the concept of "drinking" *not* paired with eating, and this appears in a context in which the land is drinking water from heaven (Deut 11:11). In Ecclesiastes drinking is *always* paired with eating.

35. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd revised ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 92–112, here 92.

36. Bartholomew, *Ecclesiastes*, 368–69n45. Bartholomew adds a few other links, several of which we treated earlier, including the law of vows (Eccl 5:4–5; Deut 23:22–24), the exhortation to fear God and keep his commandments (Eccl 12:13; Deut 5:29; 13:4), and the so-called Name theology of Deuteronomy and Eccl 5:1–7 (Bartholomew does not elaborate as to what he means by "Name theology" so this cannot be pursued further). Unfortunately Bartholomew relegates these insights to a footnote without further development, so we intend to fill out this lacuna.

To examine possible links, however, in the theme of eating and drinking, we must first discern if the books present a similar purpose and goal for the activities. Qohelet depicts eating often in Ecclesiastes as a positive activity. The activities of eating and drinking are commended as a way to reprise in small measure the good lost by the fall (Eccl 2:24; 3:13; 5:17; 8:15; 9:7). Eating and drinking when taken together in Deuteronomy, however, carry almost none of the positive, commendable features of Ecclesiastes. Twice the notion of eating and drinking occurs in the context of Israel's difficulties in obtaining provisions from foreign peoples on the way to Canaan (Deut 2:6, 28). Twice they occur in the context of Moses' abstention from food and water during his forty-day fast on Sinai (Deut 9:9, 18). Twice they occur in the context of the *absence* of available food due to Yhwh's judgment (Deut 28:39; 29:6). Once they appear in the context of idolatry, where foreign gods supply illicit food and wine to their worshippers (Deut 32:38). This leaves one possible context where eating and drinking are acclaimed as a desirable and profitable activity. In Deut 32:13–14 Moses rehearses in his concluding song the Lord's provision for the Israelites, including his bestowal of lavish foods and abundant wine: "He [Israel] *ate* the produce of the field, and he suckled him with honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. Curds from the herd, and milk from the flock, with fat of lambs, rams of Bashan and goats, with the very finest of the wheat—and you *drank* foaming wine made from the blood of the grape." These images pertain likely to God's historical provision of food and drink during the wilderness wandering, including Israel's longer sojourn in the fertile Transjordanian region.<sup>37</sup> Alternatively, the references may anticipate the future bounty accessible in Canaan.<sup>38</sup> In either case, Moses commends eating and drinking here as God's provision for the enjoyment of his people in a way resonant with the theme of Ecclesiastes, although the wording is different. This passage provides a clue that Deuteronomy, beyond the largely negative function of eating and drinking when taken together, may offer elsewhere a positive outlook on food itself, especially as an aspect of God's provision in blessing his people.

37. Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 415.

38. Peter C. Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 381; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 305.



This view is corroborated in several texts that mention eating as a beneficial and desirous activity. In these texts eating often stands as a cipher for the fertility and productivity of the land to which they are going, a land that holds the potential for divine blessing: “It is a good land that the LORD our God is giving us” (Deut 1:25). Moses extols the periodic and seasonable eating to one’s fill as an activity consistent with the expected gratitude and humility that should characterize Israel’s response to the Lord’s provision (Deut 6:11; 8:10, 12; 11:15; 12:7, 15, 18, 20; 14:23, 26, 29; 15:20; 26:12; 27:7; 31:20). Significant in these latter passages are texts which celebrate eating as a reverential reflection on the goodness and provision of God: “When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you” (Deut 8:10, NIV; cf. 14:29). Other texts link eating specifically to joy or blessing: “There, in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to, because the LORD your God has blessed you” (Deut 12:7, NIV; cf. 12:18; 14:26; 27:7). Likewise, the thematic emphasis of Ecclesiastes commends eating and drinking as consistently linked to joy and “seeing good” (Eccl 2:24; 3:13; 5:17, 19; 8:15; 9:7). So while it is difficult to posit a single text in Deuteronomy where eating and drinking clearly function as a literary source for Qohelet, the discourse concept of eating as the appropriate and grateful response to divine goodness and favor resonates in both books. While Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes may be drawing from the common stock of ANE cultural norms in their positive view of eating and drinking,<sup>39</sup> it is likely, given the other textual links discussed so far, that Deuteronomy has influenced Ecclesiastes toward a positive view of eating (and drinking) as a means of applying divinely-granted joy and blessing.

### *Remembrance*

Another theme present in both books is remembrance. The verb “remember,” *בָּזַר*, occurs 19 times in the two books (15x in Deut; 4x in

39. On eating and drinking in ancient Israel and its environs, see Oded Borowski, “Eat, Drink and Be Merry: The Mediterranean Diet,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 67 (Jun 2004): 96–107; E. W. Heaton, *Everyday Life in Old Testament Times* (New York: Scribner, 1956), 81–87; Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 64–68.

Eccl), while the noun “remembrance,” בזרון, occurs 3 times in Ecclesiastes. “Remembering” functions mainly in a positive and hortatory sense in Deuteronomy, where the Israelites are enjoined to keep in mind the continuing significance of God’s deliverance from Egypt and his provision in the wilderness (Deut 5:15; 7:18; 8:2; 9:7; 15:15; 16:3, 12; 24:18, 22; 25:17). To remember in Deuteronomy is never cast simply as an historical framework whereby Israel recalls an element of her past but always in an obligatory sense whereby Israel must keep foremost in her mind key truths concerning the character of God, expressed through the volitional imperative (Deut 9:7, 27; 32:7), imperatival infinitive absolute (Deut 24:9; 25:17), or the *weqatal* stipulating future behavior (Deut 5:15; 8:2, 18; 5:15; 16:12; 24:18, 22).<sup>40</sup>

Remembering in Ecclesiastes, however, functions mostly throughout the book in a negative sense. Here the all-too-common lack of remembrance whereby evil days are soon forgotten (Eccl 5:19; 11:8) or the memory of the deceased quickly fades (1:11; 2:16; 9:5, 15) underscores Qohelet’s frustration over the brevity and enigma of human life. In one text, however, there is a closer correspondence between the books. In Eccl 12:1 Qohelet casts remembrance with a positive and imperatival focus redolent of Deuteronomy as he charges his readers to remember their Creator while they possess ample time and ability: “Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, ‘I find no pleasure in them’” (NIV).

Although Deuteronomy never juxtaposes remembering with the idea of divine creation (rather, it almost always links it to divine redemption in the exodus), its frequent exhortations to remember hold a conceptual correspondence to this final appearance of זכר in Ecclesiastes. In both writings the command to “remember” bears significant present implications. Remembrance involves adjusting one’s mental disposition to a proper view of God’s sovereignty and goodness. To remember is to meditate upon God and his character as exemplified powerfully in the past as the antidote to one’s present sinful tendencies toward pride (Deut 8:2), fear (7:18), greed (8:18), and spiritual laxity

40. Dallaire shows that when the *weqatal* is governed by an imperative expressing a command, it occurs almost exclusively in discourse situations where a person of greater rank is addressing someone of lower rank, a scenario that fits the rhetorical context of Deuteronomy (*The Syntax of Volitives in Biblical Hebrew and Amarna Canaanite Prose*, 222).

(5:15; 16:3, 12; 24:18). Similarly in Eccl 12:1 the imperative to remember God's powerful and personal act of creation in the past fortifies the reader against the follies of youth and makes the most of the fleeting brevity of life. To remember in Deuteronomy and in Eccl 12:1 is to bear in mind definitive and decisive elements of God's character as a dynamic shaper of one's behavior and as an inducement toward godly and reverent piety.

### *Adding and Subtracting*

The theme of adding and subtracting may carry ties between the books. In this connection, however, the links are not as clear as in the previous motifs. The notion of adding occurs in these books primarily through the verb *הסי* ("to increase") and the noun *רתוי* ("what remains, excess, left over"), while the idea of subtracting occurs with the verb *ערג* ("to diminish, lessen"). The concept of adding and subtracting is significant to the programmatic framework of Ecclesiastes, as Qohelet ruminates on the relative advantages and detriments of life under the sun. In most cases there is little or nothing of value that can be added to one's life in view of human mortality (Eccl 2:15; 6:8), finitude (3:14; 7:16), and ignorance (Eccl 12:12). Still, Qohelet adds key elements to his knowledge as part of his wisdom enterprise. He adds wisdom in his quest for more comprehensive understanding (1:16), he adds one item to another in his pursuit of ultimate solutions (7:27), and he adds together a litany of aphorisms to form an arrangement of pleasing proverbs (12:9–10). Subtraction, on the other hand, appears only in the negative sense concerning what cannot be removed from God's work (3:14).

The concepts of adding and subtracting are not as prevalent in Deuteronomy and connect only to the prohibition against adding to or excising the commandments of God (Deut 4:2; 12:32). The latter text occurs in the larger context of warning against potential seduction from dangerous false prophets (Deut 12:32–13:18), a passage which we already suggested has influenced Qohelet particularly in Ecclesiastes 5. Given this ligature, it is possible that this text has colored Qohelet's view of addition and subtraction, although it seems unlikely owing to the absence of other clear literary markers.

*Divine Kingship*

Finally, the concept of divine singularity and kingship carries an intriguing possible link between books. As noted earlier, Bartholomew suggests that in formulating the “one Shepherd” in Eccl 12:11 the author may be drawing from the oneness of God as expressed in the Shema of Deut 6:4: “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” (NASB).<sup>41</sup> Michael Fox raises the possibility of this interpretation and promptly dismisses it.<sup>42</sup> He adduces several arguments against the view. (1) God is called a shepherd in his protective capacity in the Hebrew Bible, but this is unrelated to the context of Ecclesiastes 12. (2) God is never called a shepherd in isolation but always in tandem with his other characteristics. (3) The words of the wise and the teachings of the sages are never attributed to God. (4) What is “given” in this context is not “the words” but “the goads” that any shepherd might employ. (5) The verse, if read as “one shepherd,” would place too much emphasis on the term “one” to the exclusion of the other similes and would amount to an assertion of monotheism at odds with the context. He concludes that the term  $\text{אֶחָד}$  (“one”) conveys the sense of an indefinite article and that the one shepherd here denotes simply “a shepherd” or any shepherd, functioning as the nameless character in an analogy depicting the stinging nature of the sages’ sayings.<sup>43</sup>

Fox’s arguments fall short, however, for several reasons. First, the divine shepherd metaphor is more robust in the OT and *not* as disconnected from the milieu of biblical wisdom as Fox suggests. Focusing on the divine shepherd imagery of Psalm 23, Beth Tanner has argued persuasively that the term “shepherd” constitutes a frequent and pervasive royal title for God that appears throughout the OT and transcends merely the role of divine preservation (Gen 48:15; 49:24; Isa 40:11; Jer 31:10; Ezek 34:15; Ps 23:1; 28:9; 80:2): “God does provide protection and care, but as a function of God serving as king.”<sup>44</sup> She points

41. Bartholomew, *Ecclesiastes*, 369n45.

42. Fox, *A Time to Tear Down*, 355–56; idem, *Qohelet and His Contradictions* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 325–26. Cf. Choon-Leong Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, AB (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 388; Longman, *Ecclesiastes*, 279; Thomas Krüger, *Qoheleth*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 211.

43. Fox, *A Time to Tear Down*., 349.

44. Beth Tanner, “King Yahweh as the Good Shepherd: Taking Another Look at the

to two OT passages in which God indicts Israel's wicked leaders by using the metaphor of evil shepherds and contrasts their malevolent leadership with his own. He is the great shepherd who will restore the sheep and judge these rapacious rulers (Ezek 34:1–24; Zech 11:4–17). Tanner calls attention to a canonical correlation within the Psalter that underscores the royal connotations of the shepherd title. Besides Psalm 23, only three psalms open with a verbless nominal clause, and in each case the opening clause identifies Yahweh as king (Pss 93, 97, 99). She suggests, based on this correlation, that attentive readers of the Psalter would connect the shepherd metaphor of Ps 23:1 to its underlying royal imagery made explicit in these other psalms. Moreover, the divine shepherd-as-king metaphor was common stock throughout the ANE, in writings as diverse as the Akkadian "Ritual of the *Kalū*-Priest," the Egyptian "'Sea Peoples' Record of Ramesses III," and the Akkadian Creation Epic.<sup>45</sup> Given that the royal court and the person of the king were the originating context and medium of wisdom not only in the Bible but in all of the ANE, the possible connection in Eccl 12:11 to divine shepherd imagery simply accentuates God as the ultimate king and supreme sage, the source of true wisdom (cf. Job 28:12–28).<sup>46</sup>

Second, the words of the wise should not be divorced from their source in divine wisdom, the same source underlying all canonical wisdom literature. The phrase "the words of the wise" (דברי חכמים) as found here in Eccl 12:11 occurs only 4 times in the OT, twice in Proverbs (Prov 1:6; 22:17 [cf. 24:23]) and twice in Ecclesiastes (Eccl 9:7; 12:11). Gerald Wilson emphasizes the meaning: "In all instances the reference is to a knowable body of knowledge (Prov 22:17–18),

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Image of God in Psalm 23," in *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in Honor of J. J. M. Roberts*, ed. B. F. Batto and Kathryn L. Roberts, 267–84 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 271. Dennis Pardee concurs that the divine shepherd imagery "is only comprehensible in the context of royal ideology," ("Structure and Meaning in Hebrew Poetry: The Example of Psalm 23," *Maarav* 5–6 [Spr 1990]: 272).

45. See *ANET*, 69, 71, 72, 337; *COS*, 4:12. Cf. also *TDOT*, s.v. "רָעָה," by G. Wallis, 13:547–49.

46. On the royal court setting of ancient wisdom, see Christopher Ansberry, *Be Wise, My Son, and Make My Heart Glad: An Exploration of the Courty Nature of the Book of Proverbs*, BZAW 422 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 184–90; Bruce V. Malchow, "A Manual for Future Monarchs," *CBQ* 47 (Apr 1985): 238–45; Udo Skladny, *Die ältesten Spruchsammlungen in Israel* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 58–62.

which is to be the subject of meditation (Prov 22:17; Qoh 9:17) and understanding (Prov 1:6) and which is commended to the reader for personal benefit.<sup>47</sup> In other words, the phrase designates a quantifiable and carefully collated corpus of sapiential sayings presumably coextensive with the biblical wisdom writings.<sup>48</sup> To claim, as Fox does, that the wise never trace their wisdom to God ignores the foundation of all biblical wisdom as predicated upon the fear of Yhwh (Prov 1:7; Eccl 12:13; Job 28:28). Indeed, the final exhortation of the “the wise” in their first compendium in Proverbs (Prov 22:17–24:22) centers on an admonition, placed last for emphasis, to fear Yhwh: “Fear the LORD and the king, my son, and do not join with rebellious officials, for those two will send sudden destruction on them, and who knows what calamities they can bring?” (Prov 24:21–22, NIV). This directive provides an important link to the preamble of Proverbs (1:7) and subtly creates a canonical correlation to the divine source and governing norm of wisdom as Yhwh (cf. Prov 2:6; Eccl 2:26; Job 28:23). Moreover, “the wise” appear elsewhere in Proverbs as the commended cadre of sages (Prov 10:1–15:33). The wise are engaged in prudent speech or receptive listening, functioning as the gatekeepers and disseminators of wisdom and knowledge, the sort of companions the young person is to seek (10:14; 13:20; 15:2, 7, 12, 31). To detach the assembly of the wise from their important function as the mediators of divine wisdom is unlikely.

Third, the indefinite meaning of *ḥḥ* that Fox suggests is neither the best understanding of the term nor the best nuance for this context. Exactly what Fox means to say in arguing that a gloss of “one” for *ḥḥ* would emphatically overwhelm the other similes of the passage is unclear. The similes stand whether or not the interpreter reads *ḥḥ* as a numeral. An analysis of the usage of the term *ḥḥ*, in fact, points in the opposite direction. The term occurs 19 times in Ecclesiastes, nearly always meaning “one,” possibly to be glossed “the same” a few times (e.g., Eccl 2:14; 3:19–20; 9:2–3 in the NIV and NET).<sup>49</sup> In the canoni-

47. Gerald Wilson, “‘The Words of the Wise’: The Intent and Significance of Qohelet 12:9–14,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 176.

48. Richard L. Schultz, “Unity or Diversity in Wisdom Theology? A Canonical and Covenantal Perspective,” *TynB* 48 (Nov 1997): 280.

49. Eccl 2:14; 3:19, 20; 4:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 6:6; 7:27, 28; 9:2, 3, 18; 11:16; 12:11. On the meaning of “the same” for *ḥḥ*, see Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew*

cal wisdom corpus of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, **רֹחֵל** occurs 35 times and never carries the sense of an indefinite article. When **רֹחֵל** does represent an indefinite article in the other, predominantly narrative, portions of the OT it most often denotes, as Waltke and O'Connor suggest, a “specific indefinite.”<sup>50</sup> Given such a connotation would convey here the sense of “a *certain* (specific) shepherd” or perhaps “a *single* shepherd.” Therefore, it is doubtful that one should render the phrase, as Fox does, simply as “a shepherd” or “any shepherd.” Rather, nouns with **רֹחֵל** possess a higher degree of specificity. These evidences suggest that the “one shepherd” points to more than a random, illustrative shepherd adapted for the purposes of the analogy. The shepherd terminology suggests a specific, unique shepherd. Furthermore, to identify God as the royal shepherd who disseminates wisdom is not foreign to the context. But is the shepherd here to be identified specifically with the one God of Deut 6:4?

Jason DeRouchie suggests that this may be the case, as he links this text to messianic and divine references made elsewhere in the OT, predominantly in Ezekiel.<sup>51</sup> He argues that the shepherd terminology should be tied back as a thematic thread to Qohelet’s earlier expressions concerning humanity’s inability to control reality. In these summary statements Qohelet frequently uses the metaphor of striving after the wind (**רָעוּת רִיחַ**) (Eccl 1:14; 2:11, 17, 26; 4:4, 6; 6:9).<sup>52</sup> DeRouchie posits that a reference to divine monotheism is not foreign to the immediate context but in keeping with the epilogue’s concluding exhortations not

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*Syntax* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 34.

50. Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 273.

51. Jason S. DeRouchie, “Shepherding Wind and One Wise Shepherd: Grasping for Breath in Ecclesiastes,” *SBJT* 15 (Fall 2011): 4–16.

52. Koehler and Baumgartner designate **רָעוּת** as an Aramaic loanword deriving from **רָעָה** under the rubric of a third homonym meaning “to desire,” “strive after,” in addition to the more common homonyms meaning “to shepherd” and “to associate with” (*HALOT*, 1265). Lauha follows this track and glosses the term as “intent” (Wille) or “decision” (Entscheidung) (*Kohelet*, 46). These suggestions are not persuasive, however, as the Aramaic term they allege to be borrowed connotes “good pleasure” or “desire” elsewhere in the OT (cf. Ezra 5:17; 7:18), which is difficult to align with the term’s use in Ecclesiastes. This would turn the objective genitive (“striving after” or “chasing wind”) into a subjective genitive (“the good pleasure” or “desire of the wind”), which makes comparatively little sense in the context of Qohelet’s frustrations over *human* finitude in the face of the enigmas of life.

to exceed the established wisdom directives, to fear God and keep his commandments, and to live with a view toward God's future judgment.

The final chapter has in this regard a distinctly divine orientation, where God is referenced as the creator (12:1), the provider and sustainer of life (12:7), the authoritative law-giver (12:13), and the sovereign judge (12:14). The pairing of vivid images depicting God as creator and shepherd in fact forms an inclusio at the beginning and close of chapter 12. Elsewhere in the OT the concepts of God as creator and shepherd are juxtaposed as powerful metaphors depicting God's relationship to his people (Ps 95:6–7; 100:3; Jer 23:3). Moreover, the phrasing of "one shepherd" (רעה אֶחָד) occurs only two other times in the OT: Ezek 34:23 and 37:24. In both texts the one-shepherd terminology carries divine, and more precisely messianic, overtones as describing the future Davidic king of the eschatological kingdom who will reign absolutely. Hence, to view the shepherd in 12:11 as referring ultimately to the God who supplies wisdom is not contradictory to the context. Instead, it points vividly to the source of Qohelet's wisdom. Thus a connection here to the one God of Deut 6:4 is possible, although demonstrating a more concrete literary link to this specific passage is difficult to substantiate. Nonetheless, the divine oneness that shapes the theology of Deuteronomy shapes also the theology of Qohelet. Qohelet seeks to explore wisdom as an enterprise balancing obedience to the torah with the realities of life in a fallen world.

## CONCLUSION

With these numerous literary connections, Deuteronomy shapes Qohelet's discourse and theology in profound ways. The importance of this influence may be contextualized by recognizing that Deuteronomy carries an ultimately positive message concerning the blessings of life that God's people enjoy as the grateful and obedient recipients of divine grace.<sup>53</sup> These literary links suggest that Qohelet, like Moses,

53. Daniel I. Block, "The Grace of Torah: The Mosaic Prescription for Life (Deut. 4:1–8; 6:20–25)," *BSac* 162 (Jan–Mar 2005): 3–22; idem, "The Joy of Worship: The Mosaic Invitation to the Presence of God (Deut. 12:1–14)," *BSac* 162 (Apr–Jun 2005): 131–49; Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 52–56; J. Gordon McConville, *Grace in the End: A Study in Deuteronomistic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 132–39; E. R. Clendenen, "Life in God's Land: An Outline of the Theology of Deuteronomy," in *The Church at the Dawn of the 21st Century: Essays in Honor of W. A. Criswell*, ed. Paige Patterson, John



balances the tensions between divine blessing and divine curse, as well as between salvation and judgment, to accentuate ultimately the positive aspects of life over its negative aspects. Although Qohelet is often viewed as a skeptic whose outlook on life is entirely bleak, the positive perspective of Deuteronomy, when silhouetted with Ecclesiastes, would suggest otherwise. Moses promises future happiness in the land: “There, in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to, because the LORD your God has blessed you” (Deut 12:7, NIV). The Hebrew verb for “rejoice,” *שמח*, appearing 11 times in Deuteronomy often in the context of the joyful celebration of festivals,<sup>54</sup> appears 9 times in Ecclesiastes.<sup>55</sup>

In Ecclesiastes, the term *שמח* underscores Qohelet’s frequent summons to celebratory joy as a means of appropriating God’s blessing and mitigating the sorrows of the curse. The frequency with which Qohelet commends joy has been noted (Eccl 2:24–26; 3:12–13, 22; 5:17–19; 8:15; 9:7–10; 11:7–12:1). Eunny Lee summarizes the prominence of the joy motif in Ecclesiastes: “Joy appears in virtually every literary unit of the book—with other sobering elements, to be sure, but nonetheless present everywhere. It is notable also that this repetition does not occur at random, but in strategic places in the movement of the book, often marking the climactic moment of a literary unit where Qohelet engages in explicit and sustained theological reflections.”<sup>56</sup> These recurrent summons to joy surpass the *שמח/החמ* word group to include the notions of “seeing good” (2:1, 24; 3:13; 5:17), “doing good” (3:12), “satisfied by the good” (6:3), “being in (the) good” (7:14), and “seeing life” (9:9). Moreover, Qohelet’s invitations to enjoyment “increase steadily in emphasis as the book proceeds” constituting a *Leitmotiv*.<sup>57</sup> This common theme of joy is a pointer to the likelihood that Qohelet should be relieved from the wholly negative strains in which he is so frequently cast. Instead, Qohelet is applying Deuteronomy’s theology

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Pretlove, and Luis Pantoja, 159–78 (Dallas: Criswell Publications, 1989).

54. Deut 12:7, 12, 18; 14:26; 16:11, 14, 15; 24:5; 26:11; 27:7; 33:18.

55. Eccl 2:10; 3:12, 22; 4:16; 5:18; 8:15; 10:19; 11:8, 9.

56. Eunny Lee, *The Vitality of Enjoyment in Qohelet’s Theological Rhetoric* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 3.

57. R. N. Whybray, “Qoheleth, Preacher of Joy,” 88.

of grace in fresh, albeit realistic, ways. Joy is a mechanism for Qohelet and by extension for his readers to alleviate the pain and disappointments of fallen life by appropriating God's good gifts with a posture of gratitude and reverence. Such joyful appropriation is, for Qohelet, a vital aspect of the whole duty of man (Eccl 12:13).