

Dongshin Don Chang, *Phinehas, the Sons of Zadok, and Melchizedek. Priestly Covenant in Late Second Temple Texts* (Library of Second Temple Studies 90; London – New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark 2016). Pp. XI+242. \$114 (HB), \$91.99 (eBook). ISBN 978-0-56766-704-5 (HB), 978-0-56766-705-2 (eBook)

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Dongshin Don Chang is an Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies at Northwest Baptist Seminary at Trinity Western University, Canada. His book *Phinehas, the Sons of Zadok, and Melchizedek* is a revised version of a doctoral thesis written under the supervision of G.J. Brooke, submitted to the University of Manchester in 2013. The study is an examination of combined concepts of covenant and priesthood in the compositions written in the Second Temple period. Chang tries to discover the importance of priestly covenant for a better understanding of some Second Temple texts. The book comprises seven chapters, followed by a bibliography and two indexes: of references and authors.

In the first, introductory chapter (pp. 1-19) the author shows the importance of his study, beginning with a presentation of four major issues: understanding combined concepts of priesthood and covenant, reasons for this combination, its influence on various ideologies and, finally, the relationship between priestly covenantal claims and the character of communities related to analysed texts. The central part of this chapter is *status quaestionis* made up of two parts: studies on the concept of covenant and the importance of priesthood in the Second Temple period. The former consists of a section dedicated to the Hebrew Bible (which ends with the sociological approach of N.K. Gottwald) and Second Temple Judaism, the latter is concentrated on the functions of priests and recent studies regarding this subject. The aim of this part is to show a lack of scholarly interest towards combined concepts of priesthood and covenant. However there are some articles concerning this issue (e.g. not included in the book's bibliography: P.J. Leithart, "Womb of the World: Baptism and the Priesthood of the New Covenant in Hebrews 10:19-22", *JSNT* 22 (2000) 49-64; A. Taggar-Cohen, "Covenant Priesthood: Cross-cultural Legal and Religious Aspects of Biblical and Hittite Priesthood", *Levites and Priests in Biblical History and Tradition* (ed. M.A. Leuchter – J.M. Hutton) (AIL 9; Atlanta: Society

of Biblical Literature 2011) 11-24), but Chang is absolutely right that “priestly covenant” needs further investigation.

The second chapter (pp. 23-50) considers this issue in 1 and 2 Maccabees. The author focuses on structural usage of the term “covenant” in 1 Maccabees, based on former studies by N. Martola and D. Williams. He shows also the role of Phinehas as a model of priestly covenant employing two motifs: “zeal” and “father”. One minor issue is a lack of precision in some statements. At p. 37 the author writes about three occurrences of the term “covenant” referring to “covenant of our ancestors” (namely 1 Macc 2:20, 27, 50), while in 2:27 this reference isn’t explicit. At p. 41 he mentions the presence of the “father motif” in articulation of the concept of covenant in 1 Maccabees chapters 1 and 2, while it is true only in the second chapter of this source. Concerning 2 Maccabees Chang tries to convince us that the phrase “covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob” from 2 Macc 1:2 has a priestly aspect. It’s a difficult task because the only reason presented in favour of this statement is the observation that this phrase “is in a literary unit that is similar to a priestly blessing” (p. 47). Nonetheless, in the introduction to the section dedicated to 2 Maccabees the author says that this instance of “covenant” “seems to have a strong priestly aspect” (p. 46). One may ask if Chang really “lets the texts speak for themselves” and “avoids imposing any model on them” as he declared in the first chapter of his work (p. 18).

Chapter 3, “Pre-Sectarian Priestly Covenant Tradition” (pp. 53-88) begins with a presentation of three strands of priestly traditions, namely Levitical, Zadokite and Aaronic. The first source analysed in this chapter is Ben Sira, especially the so-called Praise of the Fathers (Sir 44:1–50:21). This text is an example of Aaronic tradition, which develops the motif of priestly covenant in relation to Aaron instead of Phinehas and emphasises the significance of priesthood as inheritance. Because of the existence of textual variants of Ben Sira it is particularly important to maintain coherence and precision in its analysis. The high priest Simon is once called “son of Jochanan” (p. 65) according to the Hebrew text, elsewhere “son of Onias” (p. 67) as in Greek translation. Section 2.2.1 is titled “Priestly Clothing and Sacrifice”, while it says almost nothing about sacrifices, dealing extensively with the important notion of “eternal office” from Sir 45:7. At p. 70 one may also observe a lack of consistency in translation, where within one paragraph the phrase *δήλοις ἀληθείας* is rendered once as “clear [evident] truth” and once as “for manifestations of truth”. In the concluding paragraph of this section (p. 73) Chang writes about the author of Ben Sira while referencing to the Greek text, which is previously attributed to “translator”. It’s also not always clear in some passages why the author decides to quote only the Greek or only the Hebrew text.

The third part of this chapter is, according to the title, dedicated to two compositions: *Aramaic Levi Document* and *Jubilees*. Actually Chang makes only an observation about “the poor condition of the remaining Shechem accounts in the *Aramaic Levi Document*” and goes straight to analysis of the corresponding sections of *Testament of Levi*. The author makes reference to two editions of *ALD* (J.C. Greenfield – M.E. Stone – E. Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document*. Edition, Translation, Commentary (SVTP 19; Leiden – Boston: Brill 2004) and H. Drawnel, *An Aramaic Wisdom Text from Qumran. A New Interpretation of the Levi Document* (JSJSup 86; Leiden – Boston: Brill 2004)), but they serve only to be consulted “for different structural suggestions” (p. 80-81, n. 79). Nb page ranges in these cases point not only to sections concerning the order of passages in the source, but also to the text and translation of *ALD*. The authors of the above-mentioned editions are uncertain (“The scholarly discussion continues [...] to what extent can we argue back from the structure of *TPL* [*Testament of Levi*] to recover the structure of *ALD*”, Greenfield, 14) or sceptical (“The *Testament of Levi* is of little value for the interpretation of *Document* because of these redactional elaborations that molded its testamentary form and annihilated many literary units of the Aramaic work”, Drawnel, 4) about the possibility of reconstruction of the *ALD* text on the basis of *Testament of Levi*. Nonetheless Chang does not make any attempt to deal with this problem, analysing simply *Testament of Levi*, and stating afterwards that the “zeal motif of the Shechem episode is also evident in the *Aramaic Levi Document*” (p. 83, without any reference to the source), and later: “Ben Sira, and the *Aramaic Levi Document* with *Jubilees* have been further investigated” (p. 87), which obviously is not true. The whole of this part (about *Testament of Levi* and *Jubilees*) has also one intriguing characteristic: lack of original quotations from the analysed sources (quoting only translations, usually taken from *OTP*, without clear attribution) – their presence in the rest of the book was very useful to track and deepen understanding of the matters discussed.

In the fourth chapter (p. 89-126) the author considers “sectarian priestly covenant traditions” in two groups of documents: quasi-sectarian (namely 11Q19 and 4QMMT) and sectarian (*Damascus Document* and the *Serek* texts: 1QS, 1QSa, 1QSB and 4QS). In the first of these texts, *Temple Scroll* 11Q19, Chang pays attention to the pluralism of priestly ideologies, similar to one presented in the Torah. The 4QMMT is an example of the development of priestly ideologies with a number of priestly-related laws and Deuteronomic covenantal aspect. In the *Damascus Document* the author recognizes the presence of all of the three priestly traditions (Levitical, Zadokite and Aaronic). A minor issue here is the lack of coherence between the quoted Hebrew text (p. 102) and translations (p. 102: “<...> holiness <...>” and p. 103: “first men of Holiness”) caused by using

different editions for text and translation. Similarly at p. 104 the author writes about a “group of people who initiated a movement, which possibly consists of the sons of Zadok, the priests, and the Levites”, while in the very next sentence (“both the sons of Zadok and the Levites are to be considered as prominent groups in relation to the initiation of the movement”) he loses sight of “the priests”. Finally Chang examines the texts from the *Serek* materials showing their Aaronic character and the relationship between Ben Sira and IQSb. The most interesting part of this section is an attempt to link the *Serek* documents and their priestly ideology with a particular moment of the Qumran community, just after the death of *Moreh Zedek* and before “renewal of the idealized earlier form of the community” (p. 115) reflected in 4QS.

The fifth chapter (p. 129-172) is titled “Priestly Covenant in Hebrews”. In its introductory part Chang discusses the time of composition (before or after the destruction of the Temple) and the presence of Melchizedek priestly tradition, and introduces his further analysis concerning combined concepts of covenant and priesthood in Hebrews. The next part, dedicated to priesthood, presents the function of three terms: “priesthood”, “priest” and “high priest” and concludes with some remarks about the nature of Jesus’ high priesthood: its cultic setting (compared to the concept of priesthood in DSS) and its metaphorical character. The following “covenant” section, despite one of the headers (“3.1. Covenant in Hebrews 7–8”), doesn’t refer too much to chapter 7, but depicts the use of this motif in the context of the “new covenant” from Jer 31, mainly in chapter 8 and following. According to the author, as the law was a priestly aspect of the Mosaic covenant in Exodus, now the oath of God has the same function in the new covenant. Because of the key significance of the relationship between priesthood and covenant for his study, he shows the motif of Jesus’ blood in two aspects: covenant-making and purification, as a bridge between them. The final part of this chapter deals with two issues: the priestly role of Jesus in Hebrews and the right way of understanding covenant there as really “new”, not only “renewed” as in DSS and Jeremiah.

Chapter 6 (p. 173-200) is also dedicated to Hebrews, but is focused on the Melchizedek traditions used there. Chang begins from the very short presentation of these traditions in the Bible (a large part of this section is dedicated to Heb 7:1–3) and in Second Temple compositions, proceeding to the second part: “Melchizedek Traditions in Hebrews 7”. There once again one may see a bit of inconsistency: under the header “Hebrews’ Use of Genesis 14 in Hebrews 7:1–3” is analysed only verse 3; the identity of three expressions (“law of the fleshly commandment”, “earlier commandments”, “the law”) here is treated as certain, while at p. 157 it was only speculated; the phrase νόμον ἐντολῆς σαρκίνης is translated once as “law of the fleshly commandment” (p. 157, 184), another time

as “a legal requirement concerning physical descent” (p. 186 where the Greek text is also improperly quoted with the verb γέγονεν; cf. also p. 187). Two key motifs used by the author of Hebrews to explain Jesus’ priesthood as a part of Melchizedek tradition are its “eternity” and “oath-taking”. Chang also once again pays attention to the “metaphorical feature of Jesus’ priesthood”, which should allow a better understanding of the Hebrews’ notion of the new covenant. Finally he discusses four detailed issues: typology of Melchizedek and Jesus, the possible heavenly status of Melchizedek, the relationship between 11QMelchizedek and Hebrews and the link between the covenant motif and Melchizedek’s priesthood.

The final chapter (p. 203-213) serves as a conclusion. It gathers together once again and sums up the content of the whole study, trying to respond in a very synthetic (maybe too synthetic) way to the four questions raised in the first chapter. It is also noteworthy that Chang in all chapters and sections gives somewhat long introductions and summaries, allowing us to follow the main ideas presented along the study and their relations, but regrettably often not instructive enough. However it must also be noted that he doesn’t avoid repetitions both in the summations (one paragraph of conclusions of chapter 4, p. 124-125 is almost word for word a copy from p. 88) and the body of the study (e.g.: Brooke’s suggestion at p. 61 repeated in note 20; refutation of Johnson’s argument at p. 137 and in n. 38).

The comprehensive bibliography (p. 214-228) contains studies up to 2013 (the year of original thesis submission). Also here the lack of consistency is visible in using full first names or only initials (an unusual case is “Drawnel, Henryk S. D. B.”, where the religious congregation’s abbreviation is mistakenly put as initials) and alphabetical order (“Cohen” before “Coggins”). The bibliography contains also books which were not referred to directly in Chang’s study, but through other works (e.g. two articles from E. Tisserant and A. Caquot noted in n. 26 at p. 134) or not at all (e.g.: W. Brueggemann, “The Tribes of Yahweh” or R. Davidson, “Covenant ideology in Ancient Israel”).

Generally speaking the book gives an intriguing picture of priestly ideologies in the period of the Second Temple. The author in his attempt to demonstrate the way that concepts of covenant and priesthood were combined in antiquity tries to convince us that this perspective may shed a new light on the exegesis and story of this period. Undoubtedly he is right, even if not every part of his study is convincing enough. This however creates new approaches to already known texts and invites further investigation, which should also lead to verification of Chang’s interpretations and, above all, to deepening our understanding of Judaism in the Second Temple period. Anyone concerned about priesthood in this milieu will find here an inspiring study, which may bring some fresh ideas and become an important incentive to rediscover this area of biblical context.