THE LAND OF ISRAEL IN TANAKH #3
Prophecy

I. Sefer Yehoshua:

A. No holiday to celebrate entry to land and conquest. Piling of Jordan, Yehoshua even sets up proto-Seder (4:1-7, 21-24), but our living memory is of exodus and wilderness, rather than conquest and being landed. Torah applies everywhere, not just in land.

B. Stones in Josh 8 are national charter, gateway to land with Torah (following commandment in Deut 11, 27).

1. *Peshat:* You are entering Land, this is law of land, what it takes to stay there.

2. *Derash* (Sotah 35b): entire Torah in 70 languages, become model nation (Deut 4:6-8), share vision with world.

3. *Gerim* were there as well (8:33, 35), so there is element of *peshat* in the Gemara, also.

II. Mikdash:

A. David and Shelomo establish Jerusalem as capital of Israel, and also ממלכת היה.

1. David’s initiatives: Jerusalem, Ark in Jerusalem, Mikdash.

2. Shelomo builds palace next to Mikdash, linked.

B. Garden of Eden:

1. Ideal was for Adam and Eve to follow God’s commands and remain in Garden.
2. Instead, sinned and expelled. God guards Tree of Life with Keruvim (Gen 3:22-24).

3. Torah later on replaces Tree of Life with tangible symbol: the Torah. Keruvim are placed above it, to guard the Tree of Life (Mishkan is only other Keruvim in Torah). See Midrash HaGadol Gen 3:24.

4. Mishkan-Mikdash becomes a physical Garden of Eden (in potential), where all humanity can come to serve God, fulfilling Image of God potential.

5. Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer 20: Eden opens to Moriah, and that’s where Adam went from Eden.

C. I Kings 8:41-43 Torah is not only Israel-centric; it longs for universal ethical monotheism.

1. 8:60, wants everyone to recognize God.

2. Becomes central feature of later prophetic visions, Mikdash serves as religious center for world.

3. Restoration of Eden, universal harmony under God.

D. God responds, will be destruction and exile if don’t merit covenant. Always blessed when faithful (I Kings 9).

III. Messianic overview of Shelomo’s reign:

A. Wise king who judges fairly and is a prophet.


C. Temple is built, God’s Presence is manifest.
D. Nations of world flood to Jerusalem to see Temple, learn of Shelomo’s wisdom.

E. Later prophets use this imagery to depict messianic age (or, Yirmiyahu shapes Melakhim narratives in light of prophetic messianic visions).

1. Difference is kibbutz galuyot, which Shelomo didn’t need since everyone in Israel.

F. Idolatry and other unfaithfulness undermine ideal world, break down nation, eventually lead to exile.

IV. Completion of first nine Sefarim: Sin undercut creation and exile, just as beginning of Bereshit with Adam-Eve, exile from Eden.

A. תהת בוור (Jer 4:23), loss of Eden (Mikdash).

B. Jews end up back in Egypt and Babylonia, undoing exodus and כל צ.

C. Mikdash and palace destroyed together, capital of מלכות ה and of Israel fall together.

D. For most part, sounds like it’s over. Need Yirmiyahu and Yehezkel to look beyond reality (Lam 5:19-22, must reread 5:21 to reconcile with tradition of prophetic hope).


V. Isa 51:1-3 invokes covenant with Avraham and Yaakov, return to Israel, Eden.
A. Jer 29:4-14, realistic outlook on exile. Build Jewish life, but we’ll always return.

B. Ezek 36:16-38 Restoration of Israel to avoid חילול השם.


VI. In addition to promise of return to land, it is land of milk and honey, ”être de l'eau.

A. Moshe’s first prophecy at burning bush not just about redemption from slavery, but fulfillment of בראש אבות, first reference to land of milk and honey.

B. Israel’s agricultural beauty is regular theme in prophecies of redemption (e.g., Hos 2:23-25; Amos 9:13-15, where God will plant produce, and implant Israel in Land).

1. Sanhedrin 98a: sure sign of redemption.


1. Vayikra: defiling Israel through sin.

2. I Sam 26:19 David forced to live as refugee from Shaul, see Tosefta A”z 4:5, Ketuvot 110b.

3. Rashi on Gen 17:8 modifies to when Temple is standing.

4. Rashi on Lev 25:38, Rambam Melakhim 5:12 modify to one who departs from land, not one born outside—defending people who live in Diaspora.
5. II Kings 5:17-19, Naaman cured of tzaraat by immersing in Jordan. Takes two mule-loads of dirt from Israel to worship God back in Aram. Elisha says go in peace—sure, take the dirt, but you don’t understand. Pagan outlook that dirt itself holy (Rambam’s non-essentialist position).

D. Adin Steinsaltz (*Change and Renewal*, 2011, 212-213):

1. Symbol of exile is sleep, ביניהם ובלילה (Song 5:2): I am asleep, in exile (*Zohar*, Emor 95a).

2. Dream combines reality with elements that cannot be correct. But in dream state, it’s all coherent and feels real.

3. הדנה החלמים (Ps 126:1): While in exile, we were like dreamers (like Radak’s reading). Once we are redeemed from exile we realize that exile was a dream. We had a coherent sense but it was fundamentally wrong.

4. Advantage: we can survive and thrive in exile since it feels normal. But psalm acknowledges that this is a dream state. Incoherent.

VII. Goal is to be ממלכת כנינם וני קדוש, religious capital of world that teaches humanity to return to Eden (Isa 2:1-4; 11:6-9).

A. Agricultural beauty.

B. Holiness of land as centerpiece of covenant.

C. Realistic perspective to build Jewish life in exile, but it is punishment, hillul Hashem, and we’re out of sorts.

D. Mashiah: to restore מלכותת היא, Israel to time of Shelomo, and Eden.
THE LAND OF ISRAEL IN TANAKH #3
Prophesy

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1. Joshua 4:5-7

Joshua 4:5-7

"And Joshua said to them, "Walk up to the Ark of the LORD your God, in the middle of the Jordan, and each of you lift a stone onto his shoulder—corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel. This shall serve as a symbol among you: in time to come, when your children ask, 'What is the meaning of these stones for you?' you shall tell them, "The waters of the Jordan were cut off because of the Ark of the LORD's Covenant; when it passed through the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' And so these stones shall serve the people of Israel as a memorial for all time."

2. Joshua 8:30-35

Joshua 8:30-35

"At that time Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, as Moses, the servant of the LORD, had commanded the Israelites—as is written in the Book of the Teaching of Moses—an altar of unhewn stone upon which no iron had been wielded. They offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and brought sacrifices of well-being. And there, on the stones, he inscribed a copy of the Teaching that Moses had written for the Israelites. All Israel—stranger and citizen alike—with their elders, officials, and magistrates, stood on either side of the Ark, facing the levitical priests who carried the Ark of the LORD's Covenant. Half of them faced Mount Gerizim and half of them faced Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded them of old, in order to bless the people of Israel. After that, he read all the words of the Teaching, the blessing and the curse, just as is written in the Book of the Teaching. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua failed to read in the presence of the entire assembly of Israel, including the women and children and the strangers who accompanied them."

3. Proverbs 3:18

Proverbs 3:18

"She is a tree of life to those who grasp her, and whoever holds on to her is happy."
Or if a foreigner who is not of Your people Israel comes from a distant land for the sake of Your name—

for they shall hear about Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm—when he comes to pray toward this House,

...and may these words of mine, which I have offered in supplication before the LORD, be close to the LORD our God day and night, that He may provide for His servant and for His people Israel, according to each day's needs

to the end that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD alone is God, there is no other.

But if you and your descendants turn away from Me and do not keep the commandments [and] the laws which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,

then I will sweep Israel off the land which I gave them; I will reject the House which I have consecrated to My name; and Israel shall become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

But You, O LORD, are enthroned forever, Your throne endures throughout the ages.

Where is the bill of divorce of your mother whom I dismissed? And which of My creditors was it to whom I sold you off? You were only sold off for your sins, and your mother dismissed for your crimes.
Isaiah 51:1-3
1Listen to Me, you who pursue justice, you who seek the LORD: Look to the rock you were hewn from, to the quarry you were dug from. 
2Look back to Abraham your father and to Sarah who brought you forth. For he was only one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many.
3Truly the LORD has comforted Zion, comforted all her ruins; He has made her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the Garden of the LORD. Gladness and joy shall abide there, thanksgiving and the sound of music.

Jeremiah 29:4-10
4Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel, to the whole community which I exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon: 
5Build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat their fruit. 
6Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there, do not decrease.
7And seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to the LORD in its behalf; for in its prosperity you shall prosper...
10For thus said the LORD: When Babylon’s seventy years are over, I will take note of you, and I will fulfill to you My promise of favor—to bring you back to this place.

Ezekiel 36:22-24
22Say to the House of Israel: Thus said the Lord GOD: Not for your sake will I act, O House of Israel, but for My holy name, which you have caused to be profaned among the nations to which you have come. 
23I will sanctify My great name which has been profaned among the nations—among whom you have caused it to be profaned. And the nations shall know that I am the LORD—declares the Lord GOD—when I manifest My holiness before their eyes through you. 
24I will take you from among the nations and gather you from all the countries, and I will bring you back to your own land.

Ezekiel 37:11-12
11And He said to me, “O mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone; we are doomed.’ 
12Prophesy, therefore, and say to them: Thus said the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and lift you out of the graves, O My people, and bring you to the land of Israel.
Exodus 3:6-8
6 I am,” He said, “the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
7 And the LORD continued, “I have marked well the plight of My people in Egypt and have heeded theirs outcry because of their taskmasters; yes, I am mindful of their sufferings.
8 I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and to bring them out of that land to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the region of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Sanhedrin 98a
R. Abba also said: There can be no more manifest [sign of] redemption than this: viz., what is said, “But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel, for they are at hand to come.”
Psalm 126:1

A song of ascents. When the LORD restores the fortunes of Zion—we see it as in a dream.

Isaiah 2:2-4

In the days to come, the Mount of the LORD’s House shall stand firm above the mountains and tower above the hills; and all the nations shall gaze on it with joy. 3 And the many peoples shall go and say: “Come, let us go up to the Mount of the LORD, to the House of the God of Jacob; that He may instruct us in His ways, and that we may walk in His paths.” For instruction shall come forth from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 Thus He will judge among the nations and arbitrate for the many peoples, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up sword against nation; they shall never again know war.

Isaiah 11:6-9

6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard lie down with the kid; the calf, the beast of prey, and the fatling together, with a little boy to herd them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion, like the ox, shall eat straw. 8 A babe shall play over a viper’s hole, and an infant pass his hand over an adder’s den. 9 In all of My sacred mount nothing evil or vile shall be done; for the land shall be filled with devotion to the LORD as water covers the sea.