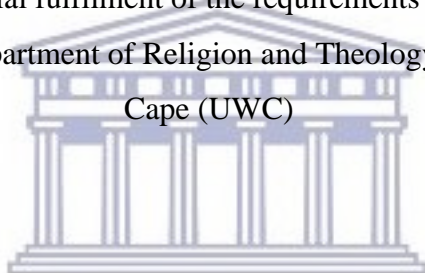


**The Relationship between Ideology, Food (In) Security and Socio-Religious Cohesion in
the Old Testament with specific reference to Deuteronomy and Eighth Century
Prophets**

By

Zukile Ngqeza

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister
Theologiae (MTh) in the Department of Religion and Theology, University of the Western
Cape (UWC)



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Key Words

Covenant

Ideology

Law

Gift of Land

Inheritance

Social Cohesion

Deuteronomy

Nutrition

Fertility Curses

Eighth Century Prophets

Famine

Brotherhood



Abstract

In this thesis I show the relationship and interplay between Deuteronomistic ideology, land (which sometimes leads to food security) and cohesion with God and with ‘brothers’ socio-religious cohesion) in Deuteronomy and the eighth century prophets (especially Micah, Amos, Isaiah and Hosea). This research argues that loyalty to the covenant with Yahweh guarantees cohesion/solidarity with Yahweh and with ‘brothers’, as well as “God’s gift of Land” (which sometimes amounts to food security). However, the broken covenant with Yahweh leads to “loss of land” which presents food insecurity, and as a consequence people turn against one another. These three interplaying-themes of ideology, land and cohesion does not follow a set path but rather but they appear in different ways hence in Deuteronomy 8 food security (abundance) leads to “loss of memory about Yahweh”. Yahweh is forgotten! But also food security fosters a relationship with Yahweh (idea of eating to remember Yahweh’s goodness). Deuteronomic texts of feasts, festivals and sharing will be utilized to prove how food (in)security guarantees and/or compromises cohesion with Yahweh and especially ‘brothers’ (Deuteronomy 6,14 and 15). The fertility curses of Deuteronomy 28 will be brought up as proof that the scarcity of food breaks down ideas of sharing and cohesion, hence, parents ate their children in secret without sharing with anyone (Deuteronomy 28:53-5). Cohesion is compromised due to famine. The relationship between disobedience, food and fertility curses in the eighth century prophets will be explored.

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Declaration

I declare that “The Relationship between Ideology, Food (In) Security and Socio-Religious Cohesion in the Old Testament with specific reference to Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets” is my own original work and that it has not been published in any other university except the University of the Western Cape. I have referenced the sources I have used in the form of in-text references and the provided bibliography at the end of this thesis.

Zukile Ngqeza

31 October 2018

Signature.....



Acknowledgments

I give all glory to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit to whom I owe my life. Without Elohim I would not have afforded education both intellectually and financially. I would also like to thank my dearest parents, Mbuyiseli Maxwell Ngqeza and Kulukazi Thelma Ngqeza who understood me when my academic and ministerial life demanded my full attention.

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To God be the Glory, Great things He/She has done!

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my fiancé, Lerato Tsagae, who has been my source of inspiration, strength and courage! Without her this thesis would be a dream not fulfilled. With Yahweh all this are possible!



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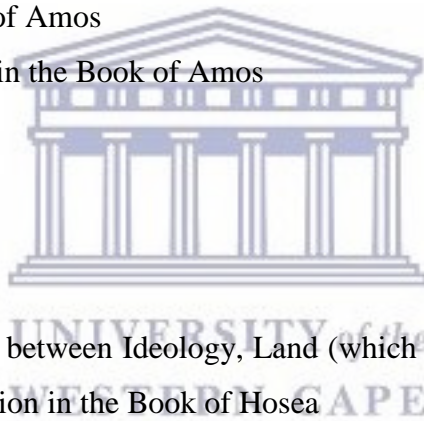
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Chapter 1

Introduction and Methodological Clarifications

1.1 Context and Relevance of the Study

This study is part of the bigger UWC research project on “Humanities and Food Contestation”. It is relevant, since MacDonald (2008b:1) argues that there has not been adequate work on food studies from the Old Testament perspective. Thus it plays a significant role in the study of food. Moreover in (South) Africa food insecurity is a major concern, especially in South Africa’s land restitution debate. Lack of food and resources has caused the breakdown of societal cohesion that manifested in xenophobia. Thus studying the relationship between ideology, land (which sometimes amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion would be an aid in the food contestation debate.

1.2 Background and Rationale

As part of the UWC research project on “Humanities and Food Contestation”, I chose to study this topic of “The Relationship between Ideology, Food (In)Security and Socio-Religious Cohesion in the Old Testament with specific reference to Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets”. I asked a number of questions: What did food insecurity mean in the Old Testament? Why would parents eat their children when there was no food? What is the relationship between ideologies such as law and covenant, food insecurity, cohesion with Yahweh and with ‘brothers’? These questions lead to the above topic. My topic contributes to knowledge in that it seeks to argue that the relationship between ideology, land and socio-religious cohesion in the Old Testament is not predictable. Thus it is an Old Testament contribution in the food contestation research project.

This contribution does not focus on the production, distribution and nutritional value of food items in biblical times. It goes without saying that human beings need nutritious food to survive. The production and consumption of food are, however, also deeply influenced by social, cultural and ideological structures. At least since the time of Mary Douglas (1972:37), it has been known that eating is not simply the taking in of nutrients. Eating goes beyond getting rid of hunger and quenching the thirst (Douglas, 1972:37). It has “social and religious

relations and meaning” (Douglas, 1972:37). These food relations and meanings include “encoding social events, expressing close friendship and family, bridging the gap between intimacy and distance, building cohesion between friends, strangers, guests and families as well as expressing Yahweh’s covenant with his people” (Douglas, 1972:37-46). Food and eating sometimes build and/or break cohesion with Yahweh and with people (Douglas, 1972:37, 46). Therefore, food goes beyond ‘nourishing’ the body but it is more about building or breaking cohesion between “friends, strangers, families and Yahweh” (Douglas, 1972:37, 46).

1.3 Methodology

My research will be qualitative and is based on a literature survey. This means that I will read commentaries on background of Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic theology on food as well as books on background of the eighth century prophets, particularly Amos, Micah, Hosea and Isaiah, and their theology on food, I shall look at festivals, feasts and sharing in Deuteronomy. I will also look at fertility curses in the Prophets. On the basis of this literature survey, I hope to determine to what extent and in what ways religious ideology, social cohesion and food (in)security are related to each other in the texts studied.

1.4 Hypothesis

The relationship between ideology, land and socio-religious cohesion does not follow a set path. It turns out differently in Deuteronomy and the eighth century prophets.

1.5 Research Problem

The relationship between ideology, land and cohesion with God and with ‘brothers’ is not so pellucid and does not follow a set path in Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets such as Amos, Micah, Hosea and Isaiah. It is not always the case that land access results to cohesion with God and/or with ‘brothers’. At times these relationships bring different results. Sometimes food (in) security results in cohesion, while in some instances food (in)security results in conflict and break-down of cohesion¹.

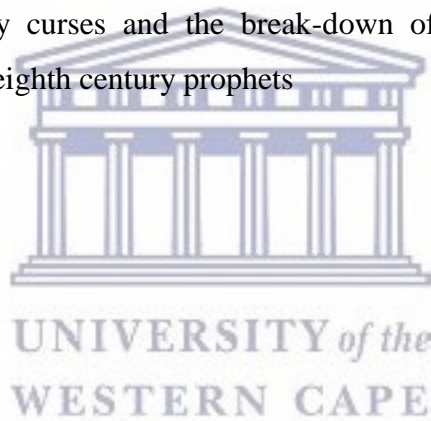
¹ Mosoetsa (2011) notes that in KwaZulu-Natal poor communities of post-1994 unemployment and poverty brought unity and cohesion among families. This is the idea of “eating from one pot”. Yet in some families of the same communities’ unemployment and poverty brought conflict (to an extent of compromising the position of men as “heads” of household.

1.6 Research Question

How is the relationship between ideology, land and cohesion presented in Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets such as Amos, Micah, Hosea and Isaiah?

1.7 Aims and Objectives

- To describe the relationship between ideology, food (in)security and cohesion in Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets
- To determine whether or not the relationship between these three is predictable and turns out differently to what is expected in Deuteronomy and the eighth century prophets
- To understand what is meant by land as “God’s gift” to his children and how the gift of land leads to and/or destroys cohesion
- To understand fertility curses and the break-down of socio-religious cohesion in Deuteronomy and the eighth century prophets



Chapter 2

2. Overview the use of Food in Deuteronomy and Eight Century Prophets

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I intend to examine the role that food plays in the book of Deuteronomy and in the eighth century prophets, and to show that food (in)security is frequently related to social cohesion. This will enable me to establish the contribution of the Old Testament, especially Deuteronomy and eight century prophets, to the ‘Humanities and Food Contestation’ research project that is registered at UWC. How is food introduced in the book of Deuteronomy and in the eighth century prophets? What is the significance of food in the book of Deuteronomy and the eighth century prophets? This chapter will allow me to show the interplay and the relationship between food and socio-religious cohesion in a pellucid way. I will also briefly provide the background of the book of Deuteronomy in this chapter.

2.2 Background of Deuteronomy

Before I deal with food and its use in Deuteronomy, it is necessary for me to provide the background of Deuteronomy. What is the meaning of the word ‘Deuteronomy’? Where is Deuteronomy placed in the Hebrew Bible? Who wrote the book of Deuteronomy? How is Deuteronomy structured and what are the key themes covered in the book?

Regarding the etymological meaning of ‘Deuteronomy’, both Christensen (1991: XL) and Phillips (1973:1) agree that the word ‘Deuteronomy’ comes from the Septuagint². Christensen (1991: XL) goes further by providing the precise Greek word ‘*deuteronomion*’ which means “second law”. The other meanings provided are ‘the copy of the law’ or ‘the repeated law’ (Christensen, 1991: XI and Phillips, 1973:1, also cf. Mayes, 1981 and Ridderbos, 1984). However, Mayes (1981:27) problematizes this idea of ‘Deuteronomy’ as ‘second law’ for two reasons. Firstly, Mayes (1981:27) argues that the idea of ‘Deuteronomy’ as ‘second law’ is good in that the covenant dealt with in the book of Deuteronomy different from the one that is established at Sinai: it is a second covenant which was made before the

² Septuagint is the Greek Translation of the Old Testament, since the original Old Testament was written in Hebrew. In fact Old Testament is also called ‘The Hebrew Bible’. Gentry (2014:35) discusses the etymological meaning of the word ‘Deuteronomy’ (Gentry, 2014:35). He suggests that the word ‘Deuteronomy’ is made up of two Greek words, namely, ‘deuteros’ which means ‘second’ and ‘nomos’ which means ‘law’ or ‘custom’ (Gentry, 2014:35).

entry into the land. For Mayes (1981:27) this makes Deuteronomy as the ‘second law’ not just a mere repetition of law found in Exodus. Secondly, contrary to the previous point, Mayes (1981:27) points out that idea of Deuteronomy as ‘second law’ may not work in that it does not consider the fact that many of the ideas expressed in Deuteronomy are the repetition of those mentioned in other books of the Pentateuch³. Hence, Mayes (1981:27) considers the book of Deuteronomy as repetition of the law mentioned already in the Pentateuch. Mayes (1981:27) substantiates this point by arguing that “fifty per cent of the Book of the Covenant in Exodus 20:23 -23:33 is paralleled in Deuteronomy”. This means that there is more than just the repetition of the Decalogue in Deuteronomy. Many of the ideas are also found in other books of the Pentateuch. Christensen (1991:XI) continues to argue that Deuteronomy is a “bridge” between the Torah and the Deuteronomic History’s Narrative⁴. This means that Deuteronomy is between the Pentateuch and Deuteronomic History; it is not necessarily part of the Deuteronomic History⁵.

Regarding authorship, there is no consensus, even though traditionally, the Jewish community considered Moses as the author of the Pentateuch including Deuteronomy (Phillips, 1973:2). However, Phillips (1973:2) continues to note that the style of the book of Deuteronomy is so different to the other books of the Pentateuch such that “it is clear that originally Deuteronomy did not belong with the rest of the Pentateuch” (Phillips, 1973:2). In fact for Phillips (1973:2) this style is also found in some the books in Deuteronomic History’s narrative. Hence some of the scholars argue that originally there was Tetrateuch⁶ and not Pentateuch. This makes us be critical of what Cairns calls the “precritical tradition which simply regarded Moses as the author⁷” (Cairns, 1992:1). This means that it is no longer easy to just regard Moses as the author of Deuteronomy. There many critical complications with that view. I do not view the book of Deuteronomy as simply ‘a book of Moses’ due to the fact that some its different aspects which are not found in the other books of the Pentateuch.

³ Ridderbos (1984:1) notes that ‘Pentateuch’ refers to the first five books of the Hebrew Bible and that Deuteronomy is the last of those five books.

⁴ The Deuteronomic History’s Narrative refers to “former prophets, that is, Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings” (Christensen, 1991: XI).

⁵ Of course, there are arguments that Deuteronomy was part of the Deuteronomic History’s Narrative. But such arguments are beyond the scope of this thesis (cf. Phillips, 1973:2).

⁶ Tetrateuch is the first four books of the Hebrew Bible, “from Genesis to Numbers” (Phillips, 1973:2).

⁷ Cairns (1992:1) notes that those who hold the view Ridderbos (1984:2) that Moses is the author of Deuteronomy base their argument from the texts of Deuteronomy that say “Moses wrote the words of this law in a book (Deut31:9, 24)” and that “he spoke in the ears of all assembly of Israel (1:5, 4:45, 31:30)”.

Concerning dating and to mention some contemporary views on authorship of the Book of Moses, Schott (2014:12) cites three typical scholarly views. Firstly, Schott (2014:12) cites Merrill who argues that there is a possibility that the Book of Moses was written by “pious conservatives around the time of King Josiah, who were concerned about the apostasy of Josiah’s predecessors” (Merrill in Schott, 2014:12). Merrill (in Schott 2014:12) argues that this group of ‘pious conservatives’ gave the book the name of Moses because they wanted it to get credibility in society. This view places Deuteronomy in the late monarchic period.

Secondly, Schott (2014:12) cites Miller who attributes the authorship of the Book of Deuteronomy to “circles or groups of person who might have been responsible for formulating, collecting, editing and expanding the work before us” (Miller as cited by Schott, 2014:12). According to this view, the Book of Deuteronomy as we have it was written by different groups. These three groups are the “Deuteronomy-Prophet, Levitical-Priestly or Wisdom-Scribal Circles” (Miller in Schott, 2014:12). These groups operated at different times, so that parts of the book are pre-exilic, parts are exilic and parts are post-exilic.

Thirdly, Schott (2014:12) cites Space who argues that the “internal evidence in the Book of Deuteronomy” suggests Moses as the “original author of the Book of Deuteronomy” (Space in Schott, 2014:12). In terms of dating, if Moses is the author of Deuteronomy, then the Book of Deuteronomy “can be calculated to the 40th year after the date of the exodus around 1447/1446 B.C and therefore the formation of Deuteronomy was about 1407/1406” (Space as cited by Schott, 2014:12). This view is seldom defended today. Notwithstanding, Hamlin (1995:2) argues that “Moses is the original inspiration” of the book of Deuteronomy (Hamlin, 1995:2). This means that according to Hamlin (1995:2), Moses is not necessarily the author of Deuteronomy but Moses is rather “the original inspiration” (Hamlin, 1995:2). Hence, Hamlin (1995:2) argues that the book of Deuteronomy was written by “an unnamed author sometimes referred to as the Deuteronomist or by the latter ‘D’” (Hamlin, 1995:2). This indicates that according to Hamlin (1995:2) Moses was the inspiration behind the Deuteronomist who wrote the book of Deuteronomy. This Deuteronomist “belonged to a group of reformers who, in the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah (715-687 BC), began gathering the old Mosaic teachings” (Hamlin, 1995:2). This denotes that the unknown author of Deuteronomy put together into a book the teachings of Moses. This Deuteronomist “lived about 100 years later during the reign of King Josiah (640-609 BC)” and when Israelites were taken into “exile in 587 BC in Babylon, the Deuteronomist gathered, arranged and edited the teachings of Moses for the benefit of people in his own time and for future generations”

(Hamlin, 1995:3). This indicates that the book of Deuteronomy was put together during the 587 BC Babylonian captivity of Israel. This date would be relevant only if the book of Deuteronomy was written by one Deuteronomist in his time only. This view to me seems limited, since there is more than one authorship suggestions about the book of Deuteronomy.

In terms of the structure and the themes covered in Deuteronomy, scholars submit both similar and slightly different structures and themes. However, Christensen (1991: xli) provides a simple structure by arguing that Deuteronomy can be divided into five parts, that is:

- A. The Outer Frame: A Look Backwards (Deut 1-3)
- B. The Inner Frame: The Great Peroration (Deut 4-11)
- C. The Central Core: Covenant Stipulations (Deut 12-26)
- D. The Inner Frame: The Covenant Ceremony (27-30)
- E. The Outer Frame: A Look Forwards (Deut 31-34)

On the other hand, Ridderbos (1984:2) structures Deuteronomy in the following pattern, namely: “Chapter 1-4 is the First Discourse, Chapters 5-26 is the second discourse, Chapters 27-30 is Concluding words, including extensive pronouncements of blessing and curse, and chapters 31-34 is Moses’ final arrangements, his farewell and death” (Ridderbos, 1984:2). These structures are similar even though they are slightly different. For both Christensen (1991: xli) and Ridderbos (1984:2) the ‘themes of law, covenant, blessing and curse, cultic worship’ are vital in Deuteronomy. Ridderbos (1984:2) goes further by arguing that in Deuteronomy the cultic laws bring the concept of joy, ‘eating and drinking in the presence of the Lord’. This means that worship and food bring cohesion between Israel and Yahweh as well as cohesion with ‘brothers’. Hence, the inclusion of “servants, the poor, widows, orphans, Levites and aliens in Deuteronomy (Ridderbos, 1984:2). Ridderbos concludes by arguing for the “demand for brotherly attitudes toward others” (Ridderbos, 1984:2). Therefore the relationship between the themes of law, covenant, worship, food, joy and cohesion with others is very important in Deuteronomy.

Regarding the themes of covenant, law, food and socio religious cohesion, Gentry (2014:36) argues that in the book of Deuteronomy there is a recapitulation of the covenant between Yahweh and his people. This happens through “covenant instruction, which is, the ‘tora’” (Gentry, 2014:36). This means that the ‘tora’ is Yahweh’s method of teaching his covenant to the Israelites. Yahweh establishes his covenantal relationship with Israelites through ‘tora’

teaching. Hence, there is a phrase in Deuteronomy 29:1 that says “karat berit (to cut a covenant)” (Gentry, 2014:36). For Gentry (2014:36) the phrase “to cut a covenant” means a “reinstatement and renewal of the covenant” (Gentry, 2014:36). This indicates that in the book of Deuteronomy the covenant between Yahweh and Israel is very important. This covenant was established in Sinai (Gentry, 2014:36) and was “renewed in Shechem” under Joshua (Gentry, 2014:36). The idea that the covenant had to be renewed means that everything is hinged on the theme of covenant in Deuteronomy.

There is a link between covenant, land and worship in the Book of Deuteronomy and in the Deuteronomic History’s narrative, in that, if Israelites stop worshipping other gods “Yahweh will keep their land and will drive Canaanites out of the Israelites’ land” (Gentry, 2014:37). This means that by worshipping other gods Israelites break their cohesion with Yahweh and consequently they will lose their land but if Israelites stop worshipping other gods, they will regain their land and Yahweh will conquer their enemies. If Israelites lose their land, it means they will not have food. Therefore, there is a relationship between covenant, worship, land (which amounts to food security) and religious cohesion. Gentry (2014:37) makes use of Joshua 23:16 *“if you violate the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, the Lord’s anger will burn against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land he has given you (NIV)”* (Gentry, 2014:37). Gentry (2014:37) argues that according to this text, worshipping other gods guarantees a broken covenant with Yahweh and therefore loss of ‘good land’⁸. This means that worshipping other gods lead to “transgressed covenant” with Yahweh. (Gentry, 2014:37). According to Gentry (2014:37) this idea of worshipping other gods as “equivalent to transgressed covenant” is a Deuteronomic ideology. This denotes that in Deuteronomy a covenantal relationship with Yahweh does not involve worshipping other gods and if Israelites worship other gods automatically their covenant with Yahweh is broken and therefore they lose their land (and its food).

Gentry (2014:37) also observes that in the book of Deuteronomy and in Joshua there is no possibility of mixing Yahweh worship and idol worship. This means that no one can worship Yahweh and other gods at same time. Hence, there is “an appeal to choose” (Gentry, 2014:38). Choosing Yahweh guarantees “life⁹” while choosing other gods guarantees “death”

⁸ By ‘good land’ it means a land that is produces food and therefore that guarantees food security.

⁹ ‘Life’ in this context does not only mean ‘living’ but rather it means prosperity in the land, including land that has food security.

(Gentry, 2014:38). This indicates that those who are choosing to worship Yahweh are automatically choosing 'life', prosperity, land, food and cohesion with Yahweh and with 'brothers'. Choosing Yahweh had socio-economic consequences. Hence, the idea of "loyalty (*hesed*)" is very important in worshipping Yahweh (Gentry, 2014:38). This denotes that those who are loyal to Yahweh will not worship other gods but they will worship only Yahweh. "The term '*heqim berit*' is used for fulfilling a commitment" with Yahweh (Gentry, 2014:38). This means that to worship Yahweh needs both loyalty and commitment.

Gentry (2014:40) notes what he calls "terms of the covenant" (Gentry, 2014:40). By 'terms of covenant', Gentry (2014:40) "refers to specific legal obligations, and their stated consequences, and applies to the laws, blessings and curses" that are mentioned in Deuteronomy 28 (Gentry, 2014:40). This means that the covenant between Yahweh and Israelites can either be maintained or broken if the 'terms of covenant' are not honoured (Gentry, 2014:40). For example, to break the law of Yahweh will automatically break the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his people and consequently there will be curses (Deuteronomy 28) which will result in loss of land and poverty. Therefore, in the context of Deuteronomy, the loss of land and poverty are a result of a broken covenant with Yahweh, with specific reference to failure to honour the "terms of the covenant" (Gentry, 2014:40). An example is Deuteronomy 28:38, 45 "You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it. All these curses will come upon you. They will pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the Lord your God and observe the commands and decrees he gave you" (Gentry, 2014:39 on Deuteronomy 28:38,45, NIV)". This pericope means that Israel faces the curse of food insecurity because of "not obeying the Lord their God and not observing his commands and decrees", thus Israelites have not honoured the "terms of covenant" (Gentry, 2014:39). Therefore, Israel's failure to honour the 'terms of covenant' lead them to food insecurity. This makes themes of covenant, law, worship, land, food security and socio-religious cohesion dominant in the book of Deuteronomy.

2.3 The Significance of Food

Why are we researching about food in the Humanities and especially in the Old Testament? What is the role of food in society? More importantly, what was the role of food in the book of Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets? MacDonald (2008b:5) argues that "Food is basic to life, and also an important social, cultural and economic marker". Here MacDonald

(2008b:5) tries argue that food is more than just eating; it has more meaning than the act of eating. It ‘marks’ one’s cultural identity as well as one’s cultural status’¹⁰. A good example would be the difference between what poor people eat and what rich people eat, what Xhosa people eat and what Sotho people eat in South Africa. McDonald (2008b:6) continues to argue that food “is a symbol of distress and happiness¹¹, and has a role in celebrations and other communal events, including the covenant meals”. Here MacDonald (2008b:6) argues for a religious aspect of food, especially the covenant meals. Hence, Lurry (1989:96) argues that in the Old Testament “All meals had a religious aspect”. By ‘all meals’ Lurry (1989:96) means both formal meals in the temple and those informal meals that were eaten in the family setting. Therefore, beyond cultural and socio-economic meaning of food, the idea of eating had religious aspect to it. This proves the relationship between food and religion, since food played a religious role in the Old Testament¹². Altmann (2011:1-2) argues that food goes beyond the idea of it “telling us more about the eater” but it connects the eater to common and shared identity with others (Altmann, 2011: 1-2). Hence, Altmann (2011:1) notes that “meals and feasts served as defining moments in the construction of human individual and *group identity*¹³”. This means food is not only concerned with the individual’s life and identity but it also important in strengthening the values of co-existence with others, shared humanity as well as cohesion with others¹⁴. Therefore, food is important in ensuring shared identity and humanity with others.

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¹⁰ Altmann (2011:1) expands on this idea of food and identity. He argues that food tells us more about the eater, the eater’s “individuality and the eater’s place in society” (Altmann, 2011:1). Here Altmann (2011:1) tries to argue that there is more to food than just eating.

¹¹ Here I think MacDonald comes from a perspective that in the Old Testament there was animal slaughtering and/or sacrifice when Israelites committed sin against Yahweh, however there was also animal slaughtering (which involves eating) when there were celebrations like Passover. This means that food formed relationships with Yahweh but it also broke down relationships with Yahweh (cf MacDonald, 2008a)

¹² McDonald (2008a:11, 12) admits the inadequacy of the focus on food in the Old Testament scholarship; however, he does argue that such inadequate focus on food in the Old Testament does not dispute the significance of food in the Old Testament. In fact, MacDonald (2008a) does argue for a relationship between food and religion, especially the Hebrew Bible (cf. MacDonald, 2008b:11, 12). For MacDonald (2008b:11, 12), the examples of food being used by Prophet Nathan to rebuke David concerning the sin and the crime he committed with Bathsheba. Here there is a relationship between religion, food, sexuality and family cohesion. This is because Nathan used the example of animal and stock farming language as a metaphor to demonstrate the sin committed by David.

¹³ By connecting food to the “construction of group identity”, Altmann (2011:1) argues that food connects an individual to others, it fosters common identity with others. This is the basic formation of cohesion.

¹⁴ Day (2015:86) expands on this point of food and cohesion with others by noting that “feasts were also means that Yahweh used to involve his people in caring for the poor and disadvantaged”.

2.4 The role of food in the book of Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets

What is the role of food in the book of Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets? Day (2011:86) provides five reasons why God made humans to eat, firstly, “Food leads to recognition of dependence on God (Deuteronomy Chapter 15)”. Here Day (2015:86) argues that each time we eat we led to a situation where we recognize that we depend on God for us to eat. Therefore, food and eating aids us to learn to depend on God (who provides food) (cf. Claassens, 2003:22). Secondly, “Food teaches Israelites to fear and trust Yahweh (Deuteronomy Chapters 6, 14)” (Day, 2015:86). This means that food improves the relationship between Yahweh and his people. This is the idea of food as a means to religious cohesion with Yahweh. Thirdly, food “points to Yahweh’s provision for his people” (Day, 2015:86). This points to Yahweh as the provider of food and not human beings¹⁵ (cf. Claassens, 2003). Fourthly, food “shows that true satisfaction is found in Yahweh’s word (Deuteronomy Chapter 8)” (Day. 2015: 86). This means that eating points to God’s word and not only to itself. This also indicates that eating is not an end in itself but means to an end, that is, Yahweh’s word. Lastly, food “is a means of participating in joyful worship of Yahweh’s goodness and cultivation thankfulness¹⁶ (Deuteronomy Chapters 12, 16, 26)” (Day, 2015: 86). This denotes that food and worship are interrelated. This means that food also can foster a religious cohesion between his people and Yahweh. These five observations of Day (2015:90) about the role and the significance of food in Deuteronomy show us that food and religion could not be separated Ancient Israel. In fact present and/or absence food did strengthen and/or break-down the socio-religious cohesion between Yahweh and his people and between Israelites and others. I will expand on that in the following paragraphs of this chapter.

2.5 Food, worship and cohesion with Yahweh

Since Altmann (2011:3) has already established a close relationship between food and worship, it is important to ask to what extent the relationship between food and worship strengthen the cohesion between Yahweh and his people, and if possible, between Israelites and ‘brothers’. Altmann (2011:3) is clear on the idea of cultic meals had a paramount importance in Israel. He refers to what he calls “the rhetorical potential of Deuteronomic

¹⁵ McDonalds (2008) expands on the idea of an “Appeal to remembrance”. This is an idea of eating to remember Yahweh and not to forget.

¹⁶ Altmann (2011:3) expands on the idea of “cultic means as central part of Israel religious practice”. Here the relationship food and worship is pivotal. Such a relationship fosters socio-religious cohesion with ‘brothers’ and also with God.

meal texts” (Altmann, 2011:3). These are texts that are food/meal oriented in Deuteronomy. These meals for Day (2015:92) denoted “the fellowship that Israelites were to enjoy with Yahweh”. This means that these meals were also about the cohesion between Yahweh and his people through food and worship. This is the idea of “eating before the Lord” (Day, 2015:93). For Day (2015:93) this meant eating in the presence of Yahweh. In fact Day (2015:93) goes further by arguing that these meals were the expression of God’s hospitality. Hence, there are ideas of joy, rejoicing and thanksgiving. On the basis of this, Day (2015:96) argues that “food should (is meant) to point to Yahweh’s relationship with his people”. This means that food in Deuteronomy directs Israelites to Yahweh. Israelites should not look at the food alone, but at the One to whom the food points them.

The other important aspect is the idea of “remembrance and forgetfulness¹⁷” (Day, 2015:94 & MacDonald, 2008b). For Day (2015:89) too much food is a “danger and causes forgetfulness” to Israelites. This means that when there is abundance of food, there is a temptation to forget Yahweh and his saving acts. For Day (2015:89) this forgetfulness is the way of “turning to other gods” rather than “eating and being satisfied” with Yahweh. This means that food does not only lead Israelites to Yahweh but it can also be a form of ‘turning to other gods’. Therefore, food abundance can lead to broken cohesion with Yahweh. Hence, there is an “Appeal to Memory”¹⁸ (MacDonald, 2008b:70-79). Both MacDonald (2008b:70-79) and Day (2015:89) refer to Deuteronomy 8:18: “when you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you” to argue for an ‘appeal to memory’ in the context of Deuteronomic Meal Texts (Day, 2015:89 & MacDonald, 2008b:70-79).

What Day (2015:89) and MacDonald (2008b:75) are trying to say is that if “food is not an end in itself”, as Day (2015:89) puts it, then food can either lead to remembrance or forgetfulness. This means that it can foster a religious cohesion with Yahweh or it can lead to a broken cohesion with Yahweh. Hence, the appeal is to remember Yahweh. This means that the relationship between food and religious cohesion cannot always be predicted. There is always a temptation to forget.

¹⁷ Altmann (2011:2) takes the idea of remembrance further by referring to what he calls “an appeal to public memory. This is the idea that Israel as a whole must remember that “they were once slaves” until God delivered them from slavery. So food for Altmann (2011) argues for “common identity” among Israelites. That of the shared freedom through Yahweh’s acts.

¹⁸ MacDonald (2008b) expands on the idea of food and memory. He argues for a connection between food and memory in the book Deuteronomy (MacDonald, 2008b). Of course, this connection for me is not symbiotic. This means that food is not always connected to memory and vice versa in Biblical times.

2.6 Food and cohesion with ‘brothers’ in Deuteronomy?

In what way is food related to the cohesion with ‘brothers’¹⁹ in Deuteronomy? Day (2015:94) argues that during “celebration of the feast of festival of tabernacles Israel had to care for others”. Here Day (2015:94) refers to a connection between sharing a meal and inclusion in the community. He uses Deuteronomy 16:13-14 that argues that Israelites must bring the “produce of their harvests to share with your sons and daughters, male and female servants, Levites, the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your town” (Day, 2015:94). This means that ‘eating before Yahweh’ leads to “sharing his abundant provision with others” (Day, 2015:94). This is a connection between eating and sharing, food and cohesion with ‘brothers’. Hamilton (1992:131) speaks of the inclusion of ‘triad of dependents’²⁰ in the celebration of meal feasts. Here Hamilton (1992:131) mentions “the sojourner, the orphan, and the widow along with others in a similar situation (the slave, the Levite)” as those who should be included in the meal feasts in Ancient Israel. Lurry (1989:95) observes that “the connection between a sacrifice and sharing a meal was quite common”. This means that almost all forms of sacrifice involved the sharing of the meal with others. For Lurry (1989:95) this sharing of a meal was not only among Yahweh’s people but even “God perhaps ‘smelled the sweet savor’ and was seen as sharing in the rejoicing over the meal” (Lurry, 1989:95). This means that this was not only people sharing with each other but they were also sharing with God. Therefore, these meals provided a socio-religious cohesion with God and with ‘brothers’. Lurry (1989:95) also mentions the idea of food and reconciliation specifically in the case of Jacob and Laban. Lurry (1989:95) observes that “The conciliation between Jacob and Laban was an occasion for a sacrifice and a meal”. This means that a meal provided a set up for reconciliation, that is, the restoration of cohesion between ‘brothers’. Food was a means of reconciliation and cohesion.

It is also true that sometimes food (abundance or absence of it) can lead to loss of cohesion with God and with ‘brothers’. The fertility curses are good examples of the broken cohesion

¹⁹ I use the word “brothers” because that is how cohesion with other human beings is stated in the book of Deuteronomy (cf. Clements, 1989, also cf. Clements, 2001). For Day (2015:91,94) the term ‘brothers’ would include the Levites, sojourner, orphans, the poor and widows” (Day, 2015:91, 94).

²⁰ Instead of using the term ‘brothers’, Hamilton (1992:131) the “triad of dependents” to refer to the “sojourner, the orphan, and the widow” (of course in including those who are on the similar situation like the slave and the Levite) (Hamilton, 1992:131).

with God and with ‘brothers’ (cf. Smoak, 2008:22²¹). These fertility²² curses led to the “destruction of vegetation which followed the destruction of the breach of the city walls and the final capture of the city” (Smoak, 2008:22). This means that the loss of cohesion with God led to loss of cohesion with ‘brothers’ which resulted to the loss of vegetation.

Hamilton (1992:132) takes the idea of food and cohesion with ‘brothers’ further by arguing that there is a law that ensure the “welfare of the triad of dependants” in Deuteronomy 24:19-22 (Hamilton, 1992:132). Here Hamilton (1992:132) refers to the law that instructs “the landowner to leave the gleanings of the harvest” (Hamilton, 1992:132). This means that the landowners must leave part of their harvest for the ‘triad of dependents’, that is, ‘the sojourner, the widow and orphan’ (Hamilton, 1992:131). Therefore, the landowners must share their harvests with ‘brothers’. This indicates the relationship between food and cohesion in the Deuteronomic laws. Hamilton (1992) refers to such laws as laws of social justice. Hamilton (1992:132) argues that the text justifies the need for the Israelites to share their harvests with others by using ‘slavery memory’. This is a phrase that says to Israelites “remember that you were a slave in Egypt” (Hamilton, 1992:132). This means that because Israelite landowners share the slavery experience with the current slaves, they must ‘share’ their food with those current slaves. Here ‘memory’ and cohesion with the ‘triad of dependants’ is formed.

2.7 Food, joy and cohesion in Deuteronomy and the Eighth Century Prophets²³

In this subsection I deal with the way in which Deuteronomic meal texts present meals as a means of communal joy as well as rejoicing before the Yahweh (Day, 2015:93). For Day (2015:93) this joy is coupled with generosity. This is generosity is “God’s gift of God” (Day, 2015:93). This is the idea that human beings cannot provide food but food is a result of God’s generosity to his people. Hence, his people must eat with joy (Day, 2015:93). Lurry (1989:95) also argues that “all food was seen as gift from God”, that is why “there was a tithe on all animal and vegetable produce” (Lurry, 1989:95). This was to acknowledge the ‘generosity’ of God as the giver of food. The themes of food, prosperity and joy are also used in the eschatological language in the eight century prophets (cf. Lurry, 1989:96-98). Lurry (1989:96) argues that “in the later books of the Old Testament, meals became part of the

²¹ Jeremy D. Smoak wrote a very important article on fertility curses. The title of the article is “Building Houses and Planting Vineyards: The Early Inner-Biblical Discourse on an Ancient Israelite Wartime Curse” (Smoak, 2008)

²² The words ‘fertility’ and ‘futility’ in reference to curses are used interchangeably by Smoak (2008:22).

²³ In Chapter 5 of this thesis I elaborate more on the ideas of food and cohesion in the eighth century prophets

messianic promise”. Texts that talk about a “great feast” in the future in Isaiah are used and the idea that “grain shall make young men flourish, and new wine the maidens (Zechariah 9:17) “(Lurry, 1989:96). This is a messianic banquet that Jesus speaks about in the New Testament (Lurry, 1989:96). More specifically, Claassens (2003:65) connects eschatological notions of food provision to the themes joy, celebration, happiness as well as ‘dancing and being joyous together’ in Joel. This means that food brings not only joy and celebration but ‘singing and being joyous together’. This speaks of unity and cohesion due to food provision.



Chapter 3

3. Life in Ancient Israel

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I intend to focus on the rural setting of Ancient Israel since “the economy of those villagers was agricultural” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:3). This means that “farming and herding” was the daily life of ‘those villagers’ (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993: xvi). Since Ancient Israel was “a communal²⁴ and not an individual world”, cohesion and solidarity was pivotal especially with ‘brothers’. Food in the form of feasts was also important in Ancient Israel. Hence, “every season of the year had its sacred feast days” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993: xx).

3.2 World of the Bible

How did the world of the Bible appear? How different is the world of the Bible to the contemporary world? Matthews and Benjamin (1993: xiii) admit that there is a huge distinction between the Biblical world and the contemporary world. They then list these differences. Among those differences I will limit myself into three since others are beyond the scope of this thesis. Firstly, Matthews and Benjamin (1993: xiii) argue that the world of the Bible is ‘ancient²⁵’, while the contemporary world is ‘modern’. This means that the world of the Bible was primitive and rural rather the modern set up of our world. However, it is not always the case that the Bible was primitive and rural with no ‘cities’ for instance. This is a western view and it is not completely accurate. Secondly, the world of the Bible is “agricultural²⁶”, while our world is “industrial” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: xiii). This means that in the Biblical world there were no firms and industrial zones but rather there was “more and more agriculturally marginal land that was turned into productive farms and vineyards” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993:4). This means that farming was the basic

²⁴ Matthews and Benjamin (1993: xvii) argues that the census in Ancient Israel was not about counting individuals but was about counting households. This was due to the fact that in Ancient Israel or “in the world of the Bible an individual could not survive” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993: xvii).

²⁵ By using the word ‘ancient’ in referring to the world of the Bible, Matthews and Benjamin (1993: xiii) are trying to demonstrate how primitive the world of the Bible was and that it was not modern, industrial and technological like our world today.

²⁶ Matthews and Benjamin (1993: xvii) note the agricultural metaphors in the Hebrew Scriptures. These include “the farmer as an olive tree, the childbearer as a vine, the new-born as first fruits and Yahweh as a shepherd” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: xvii).

economy and the dominant lifestyle in Ancient Biblical world. Lastly, in the Biblical world the society saw itself as “households” rather than as “individuals” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: xiii). This means that there individualistic mind-set was foreign to the Ancient Biblical world but rather there was a ‘communal²⁷’ mind-set. Hence, the ideas of cohesion and sharing were pivotal. Matthews and Benjamin (1993: xviii) go further by arguing that Ancient Israelites were “*group-oriented*, which means that only members of a household, a village and a tribe would survive” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: xiii). The idea of Ancient Israelites as ‘group-oriented’ calls for values of care, compassion, cohesion, solidarity and sharing. Hence, the religious feasts were shared with those in need, that is, “Levites, orphans, widows and foreign residents who do not have land of their own²⁸” (Clements, 1968: 53). Therefore, in the Biblical world in general and in Ancient Israel in particular, cohesion and sharing (especially of land and food) was a daily life practice. Hence, families would share in the work of “terracing, planting, and processing the grain and fruit” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: 4).

3.3 How did the Ancient Israelites live?

What kind of community was Ancient Israel? Matthews and Benjamin (1993: 1) submit that “Early Israel was a village culture”. This means the culture and the life of Ancient Israelites was not a modern one but rather a ‘village culture²⁹’. Farming and herding was a daily activity in these villages (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: 3). This was due to the fact that the economy of those villages was “agricultural” rather than “military” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: 3). These villagers “farmed a combination of wheat and barley, depending on the quality of the soil, temperature, and rainfall” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: 5). The other food they farmed was “fig, olive trees, and grape vines” (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: 5). This was due to the fact that “subsistence economy” was of paramount importance to Ancient Israelites (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993: 5) This means that survival, life and eating was of paramount importance to ancient Israelites. In this kind of ancient village economy there

²⁷ Matthews and Benjamin (1993: xvii) expand on the idea of Ancient Israel as the ‘communal’ society rather than an individualistic society. They argue that it was impossible to survive as an individual in the Biblical world (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993: xvii). Hence “an individual could not make a living, marry, parent, buy or sell” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993: xvii).

²⁸ Clements (1968: 53) states how land in Ancient Israel was shared with “those who are unfortunate enough to have no private allocation” (Clements, 1968: 53).

²⁹ It is good to note that Matthews and Benjamin, 1993:3) also discuss Ancient Israelite city life, even though the ‘village culture’ was dominant.

were “no monarchs, no soldiers, no slaves, no taxes and no way” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993: 5). Instead, it was all about sustenance and subsistence.

Dever (2012) writes extensively on how the Ancient Israelites live. He argues that according to the Old Testament, rural life was the “good life³⁰” for Ancient Israelites in the pre-monarchy period (Dever, 2012:191). This means that rural life was not as bad as it is in many African countries today; however, poverty was a reality. Hence, there would be provisions for widows and orphans. Dever (2012:191-193) uses archaeology to illustrate the rural life that was lived by ancient Israelites. He also uses Biblical Prophetic texts to show the reader how rural life was a ‘good life’ for ancient Israelites³¹. In the texts that Dever (2012:191-193) utilizes, ideas of property, land, food, eating and drinking are symbols of ‘good life’. Such acts are practical in the rural life of Ancient Israelites. Dever (2012:192) calls these activities of food, eating and drinking in the prophetic literature and other texts “visions of good life” (Dever, 2012:192). For instance Deuteronomy 8 speaks of “land of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, olives, lacking nothing” (Dever, 2012:192). These different types of food items are found in the rural farm life. In terms of the prophetic literature, Isaiah 65³² says “They shall build houses and inhabit them, they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit” is related to Amos and Micah’s idea of rural life as good life (Dever, 2012:193). This says to me that rural life is food related and that amounts to good life

How were the social arrangements of ancient Israelites? Dever (2012:187) notes in ancient Israel there was “a family based social structure”. This means that family was the basic unit of their life. Hence, Dever (2012:187) prefers the term “family of Judah” instead of the term “tribe of Judah” (Dever, 2012:187). He does this deliberately to grant accentuation to the idea of the family as the basic unity of Ancient Israel’s social structure. He continues to argue that the ‘good life’ was rural but also “clan oriented” (Dever, 2012:187). This means that Dever (2012:187) understands the family in terms of clans³³. Dever (2012:188) continues to argue that activities such as “baking bread, spinning and weaving were commonplace domestic

³⁰ Dever (2012:191) utilizes the phrase ‘good life’ to refer to well-being.

³¹ The following texts are good examples: “Owning one’s house and fields” (Micah 2:2), “No one seizes one’s fields or property” (Micah: 2:2), “Enjoying one’s gardens” (Micah 7:14), “Gathering summer fruits” (Micah 7:1), “Eating and drinking” (Micah 6:14). These texts show how property, land, food, eating and drinking are symbols of ‘good life’; they are witnessed in Ancient Israelites’ rural life. Meyers (1997:3) agrees with the idea raised by Dever (2012) that rural life was a ‘good life’ in Israel. Meyers (1997:3) argues that “early Israel was an agrarian society” and that “Israelites were farmers”.

³² Even though Isaiah 65 is Second Isaiah, however, the ideas it expresses are similar to those of Micah and Amos.

³³ This is the ‘*mishpaha*’ or ‘kin group’ according to Wright (1990).

activities” (Dever, 2012:188). All these activities are related to rural life, especially food. It is such a life that Dever (2012) considers it as a ‘good life’. Thus this rural life brought Israelites in “*harmony*”³⁴ with nature, each other and Yahweh” (Dever, 2012:193). Therefore, the rural life brought Israelites into cohesion with one another, nature and God. This is socio-religious cohesion.

In terms of archaeology, Dever (2012:193) lists “the waving process, the wooden beam of the loom, yarn, the warp threads, the shuttle, and the carding of the wool” while Deist (2000:157) lists “farmers, ploughers, planters, sowers, reapers, winnowers, shearers, wine traders”. These are activities and functions that took place in Ancient Israel’s rural farms. They are mostly related to food. For Dever (2012:193) these rural activities guarantee ‘good life’. I agree with Dever’s idea of rural life as good life, especially that of socio-religious cohesion (cf. Dever, 2012:193). However, in this research I am trying to argue that such a life of food security as expressed in Ancient Israel’s rural life does not always guarantee socio-religious cohesion or vice versa. Hence, there are notions of forgetting Yahweh when there is abundance of food (cf. Macdonald, 2008b & Brueggemann, 2002b).

3.4 Family in Ancient Israel

Since Dever (2012:187) argues that in Ancient Israel there was a “family based social structure”, Meyers (1997:2-37) expands on the significance of ‘family’³⁵ in Ancient Israel. Meyers (1997:16) begins by arguing that the categories of the ‘nuclear family’ do not fit the Ancient Israel family set up. Meyers (1997:16) argues for a “large family grouping” or rather what we know as the ‘extended family’³⁶. She notes that ‘the family’ was known as “*mishpahah*” in Ancient Israel³⁷ (Meyers, 1997:13). We must not have the picture of an individual household when we look at the term ‘*mishpahah*’ but rather that of “protective association of families” (Dever, 1997:13). This means that ‘*mishpahah*’ was not like one ‘nuclear family’ of the contemporary society but rather it was a ‘combination of extended families’ (Meyers, 1997:13). The other terms related to the ‘*mishpahah*’ are “residential

³⁴ Dever (2012:193) uses the word ‘harmony’ synonymously with the word ‘cohesion’ or ‘solidarity’.

³⁵ Meyers (1997:1) argues that the word ‘family’ used and understood differently in different cultures. She argues that ‘family’ “exhibit wide variation across culture” hence “it is complex and difficult” (Meyers, 1997:1). Meyers (1997:2) also argues that the term ‘family’ in the context of “early Israel here designates premonarchical Israel and this is Iron 1 period, which begins around 1200 B.C.E and comes to an end with the transition to statehood”.

³⁶ Meyers (1997:2) uses the architectural housing designs of Israelites’ household to prove her dismissal of the ‘nuclear family’ in Ancient Israel.

³⁷ Meyers (1997:13) admits that the term ‘family’ does not solely fit as the translation of ‘*mishpahah*’, yet it is a close translation.

kinship group or kinship group” (Meyers, 1997:13). For Meyers (1997:13) all these terms symbolize a setting where there are different group of families “sharing common settled space and earning their livelihoods in the fields, orchards, and vineyards surrounding the village site” (Meyers, 1997:13). However Meyers (1997:13-14) prefers the term “family household” since it is “more flexible term inkling both resident and economic functions”. These family households were much wider than the present nuclear family setting in that they included other members such as “sojourners, war captives and servants³⁸”.

How did these family households embrace values such as solidarity, cohesion and sharing? Meyers (1997:32) notes that these families had some degree of cohesion and solidarity³⁹. To such an extent that there was a high level of “interdependence” rather than independence (Meyers, 1997:32). This means the idea of individuality was not important to these family households but rather what were important were ideas such as sharing and solidarity. This idea of interdependence was so pivotal that even children were not solely treated as dependents like today but their parents and the entire households relied on children food, since children were used in household labour. (Meyers, 1997:32). Meyers (1997:33) also argues that “men were hardly breadwinners” in as far as the “industrialised West” is concerned. There was a great degree of importance when it comes to the interdependence between men and women (Meyers, 1997:33). This means that women were not ‘housewives’ who received alms from men but Meyers (1997:33) argues that both men and women contributed to the fertility and sustenance of the family household. However, in my view all of this took place at supervision of patriarchy, since male dominion was a norm. The ‘mishpahah’ had intrinsic values of cohesion and sharing so that Meyers (1997:37) argues that “the mishpahah was bound by shared sustenance concerns such that it represented solidarity of nearby family units that interacted with and sustained one another”. This means that these [protective association of families] were not self-centred but they shared with each other even food in order to ensure common sustenance (Meyers, 1997:37). Therefore, values such as solidarity, cohesion and sharing were imbedded in the mishpahah. These values were more visible in shared sustenance, which is, sharing of vegetation and food.

3.5 The Father in the Ancient Israel Family Structure

³⁸ It is in this context that the term ‘brothers’ in Deuteronomy is used to include those who are ‘not necessarily members of kin’ (Meyers, 1997:14). Some scholars use the term ‘*the other*’ in order to include those who are not part of Ancient Israel family kin or even part of Israelites at all.

³⁹ This is not to say there were no challenges such as patriarchy and poverty. Otherwise there would be no need of laws.

What was the role of the father in the ancient Israel family structure? Matthews and Benjamin (1993: 7) reiterate the ideas '*mishpahah*' as "extended family or household headed by father" (cf. Meyers, 1997). This indicates that the households were led by a father⁴⁰. These fathers had children as well as many dependents. This means that the father had a duty to provide "sustenance as well as subsistence" (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993:5). This also means that the act of providing food was also the duty of the father⁴¹. The duties of the father in ancient Israelites' household included "to protect and provide for his land and children" (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993:8). Other duties of the father included "adopting or excommunicating sons and daughters, recruit workers and warriors, negotiate marriages and covenants, host strangers and designate heirs" (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993:8). These duties confirm that the father played a very vital role, if not the most important role in the ancient Israel household.

Matthews and Benjamin (1993:7) continue to argue that "the father of a household was not just someone who sired, but someone who fed and protected". This means that providing food and protecting the family was the primary duty of the father of the ancient Israel household. Hence, the father would ensure the extent to which the family would engage in activities of 'farming and herding'.

In concluding the role of the father, Matthews and Benjamin (1993:10) do a comparison between the household father and the Creator as the father of the universe. They argue that the duties of the father in overseeing the work of farming remind us the role of the Creator in feeding and protecting as God's children. This means that the household father in Ancient Israel reminds us of the Creator as the father of the heaven and earth. The duties of providing, feeding and protecting are emanating from the Creator as the father of the universe. The father also ensures unity and cohesion among family members especially among children (cf. Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:8).

3.6 The Mother in the Ancient Israel Family Structure

What was the role of the mother in the ancient Israelite household? Matthews and Benjamin (1993:22) argue that there were no gender specific roles except for the roles of "childbearing and nursing" which were specifically the role of women (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:22).

⁴⁰ On the other hand, Matthews and Benjamin (1993:7) do admit that in some cases the some families were led by a mother.

⁴¹ Even though mothers would have a role to play in the household but the patriarchal system demanded that the father be the main provider at home.

This means that women could do almost everything that men were doing except that men could not do the roles of “childbearing and nursing” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:22). This suggests to me that women, unlike men, were not limited in terms of duties. Because, women could do almost everything that men were doing but men could not do some of the duties women were doing including “childbearing and nursing” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:22). Hence, Matthews and Benjamin (1993:22) confirm that, just like men, women did “protect and provide for their land and children”. However, much “bear children and arrange for other wives to bear children, manage the household by supervising domestic production, producing and preparing food, processing and storing beer, grain and vegetables” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:22). Some of these roles are also done by men but most of them are done by mothers only. Other roles for a mother include teaching of family values to children, offering conflict solutions and declare which child will be an heir (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:22). This means that the duty of a mother is far much more than just a domestic one. Since land and children were the “basic resources in every society” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:23), women were involved in both of these two resources. Hence, Matthews and Benjamin (1993:23) argue that mothers were part of major decision making processes in both households and society “for land and children” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:23).

Even though the powers and responsibilities of a mother were different than those of the father, the mother was never considered as lesser than the father (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:24). In fact Matthews and Benjamin (1993:24) note that in since not every male was the father of the household, in some cases women would play a higher role than some men. This means even though patriarchy was a reality in ancient Israel, it was not as bad as many feminist scholars⁴². The mother was valued equally with the father. The mother had to ensure the provision and sustenance of the household equally with the father. Both parents needed to ensure cohesion in the ‘*mishpahah*’. Hence, women also helped in in duties such as “managing herds, clear new fields, construct terraces, harvest, thresh, and winnow the fields, orchards, and vineyards” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:24). All these duties in our modern world are mostly considered as men’s role. Mothers “also planted, hoed, weeded and picked household gardens” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:24). Of course, Matthews and Benjamin

⁴² Matthews and Benjamin (1993:24) argue that “homemaking and childbearing were by no means inferior or unrewarding roles. They were responsibilities, not restrictions.” They go further by arguing that even in some cases where women were not considered, for example, priesthood, it did not mean that women were on the whole inferior to men. In fact the obligation of the Bible is to honour both a father and a mother (Matthews and Benjamin, 1993:24). In the family context women were not denied honour, although they wielded less authority in the broader community.

(1993:24) admit that duties such as farming and herding were generally done by men especially when a mother is pregnant. Therefore, women are not occasionally removed from farming and herding simply because of patriarchy but because of pregnancy. Therefore, the life and sustenance of the household was the shared responsibility between a mother and the father. Other roles that that mothers did included, “the mother as childbearer, manager, teacher, mediator, and priest” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:24-30). These roles denote that women were multifaceted and multitasking.

3.7 Farming in Ancient Israel

Matthews and Benjamin (1993:37) consistently emphasize the idea of “land and children as two basic resources” in ancient Israel. This meant that without land there would be no farming and without children there would be no one to work the land⁴³ in the future (cf. Mayes, 1997). The activities of “plowing, planting, threshing, and winnowing form a part of their everyday life” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:37). Hence, there was a “threshing floor to process grain and a wine press to squeeze grapes in or near every village” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:73). The most important thing is that these were daily activities for the sustenance of households. There is also what Matthews and Benjamin call the “agricultural cycle” (1993:39), that is, a “planting-cultivating-harvesting pattern” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:39). This means that farming was a ‘cycle’ and not a once-off activity in ancient Israel’s households.

Deuteronomy 8 speaks of land as a ‘blessing’ (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:40). This refers the blessing of food from the land. These are “barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and honey, making crop mixing possible” (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:40). This means that land had a great deal of importance in Ancient Israel. However, though land in general was regarded as precious, “worked land” in particular was very precious (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:40) in that it was productive. This means that even though all land was important to Israelites as living space, ‘worked land’ was more important. Hence, children were invested with a sense of importance since they would take care of the land in the future.

⁴³ Mayes (199:2-37) expand on the idea of children as investment for future family farming.

In the Biblical world land was so important that even Yahweh was referred to as a ‘farmer’⁴⁴ (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:45-56). Food and farming language is used sometimes to refer to Yahweh. The idea of “Yahweh as vineyard owner⁴⁵” is prominent in the Old Testament (Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:47).

3.8 Family, Land and Food in Ancient Israel

What is the relationship between family, food and land ownership in Ancient Israel? How was land owned and used in the Old Testament? Who owned land in the Old Testament period, especially in Ancient Israel? Wright (1990:1) writes extensively on how land and property were “primarily a family affair in Ancient Israel” (Wright, 1990:1). Here Wright (1990:1) argues for a relationship between land and family. He argues that land and property were not individual affairs but rather that of a ‘family’⁴⁶. He continues to argue that the family or household was “an integral part of Israel’s land theology” (Wright (1990:1). This means that in the Ancient Israel’s worldview, land and family were inseparable. In fact they were inextricably intertwined. Whether individuals owned land or not is a matter I will briefly discuss in this section⁴⁷. Who owned land in Ancient Israel? Was there a concept of private ownership?

Brueggemann (2002b:177) and Deist (2000:142) agree that “land was owned and belonged to the entire community”. This means that there was a communal ownership of land in Ancient Israel. Deist (2000:142) goes further by arguing that during the Deuteronomic History’s period there was no private ownership of land or farms in Ancient Israel. This means that land was not necessarily owned by individuals⁴⁸. However, Brueggemann (2000b:177) does

⁴⁴ Matthews and Benjamin (1993:45-51) expand on this idea of “Yahweh as a farmer”. But such a topic is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, I bring that concept to show how farming was important to Ancient Israelites such that even in the Bible farming and food metaphors are used to refer to Yahweh.

⁴⁵ Matthews & Benjamin, 1993:47) refer to the prophetic texts like Isaiah 5:1.

⁴⁶ Wright (1990:1) warns us not to think of a ‘family’ from the Western perspective, that is, the idea of a ‘nuclear family’, at least when we study family in Ancient Israel. He argues that in Ancient Israel family was “extended” in that it was multi-generational and included “any slaves and other residential employees, all within one household”.

⁴⁷ I discuss land ownership in Ancient Israel in order to see whether land ownership and/or land loss ensured cohesion or broke it down.

⁴⁸ Deist (2000:145) states very clearly that in early Israel no individual had title deed to a piece of land but the land belonged to the entire community. There is no very clear evidence for this view and some texts seem to refer to the buying and selling of land by individuals.

mention the case of Naboth who owned an inherited land⁴⁹. Brueggemann (2002:177) continues to argue that ‘clans’ and ‘households’ had their share of the community land. This means that all land (nahalah⁵⁰) belonged to the whole community and from it the ‘clans’ and ‘households’ were granted a share (cf. Deist, 2000:144). This means that land was shared among ‘clans’ and ‘households. Here I see the importance of sharing in land distribution. Hence, Deist (2000:144) argues that those who share land are tied to one another. This means that land binds people to each other. This is the idea of cohesion with ‘brothers’. “They belong to each other and stick to each other” (Deist, 2000:144). Hence, Deist (2000:144) continues to argue that to say “we do not share with you” is to reject cohesion with others⁵¹. Therefore, the idea of land sharing among clans was pivotal in Ancient Israel.

Wright (1990:48) argues that the word ‘families’ is deceptive since some may confuse it with the western idea of the family. He uses the Hebrew word ‘*mishpaha*’. He argues that ‘*mishpaha*’ is rather a “grouping of several families” (Wright, 1990:48). In the same work⁵², Wright (2000:49) prefers to use the word “kinship group” to refer to the ‘*mishpaha*’. This means that land was distributed among ‘kinship groups’. Hence, the idea of private ownership is dismissed (cf. Wright, 1990:66 & Deist, 2000:144). To be specific, Wright (1990:66) argues that the concept of “private property ownership was a late development with the rise of individualism and commerce”, while Deist (2000:144) argues that it was in “Persian-Hellenistic times that property was sold by deed and for money”. This means that private property ownership and property selling (especially permanently⁵³) was a later development. It is therefore pellucid that land was not initially owned privately by individuals but was shared among ‘kinship groups’. Deist (2000:144) notes that sharing was done through the casting of lots. Therefore land strengthened family cohesion. Hence, they even shared food and resources from the land (cf. Deist, 2000:145). What did land mean in terms

⁴⁹ Brueggemann (2002b:177) and Wright (1990:42) do agree on the idea that Naboth’s vineyard was not necessarily his individual property but belonged to the ‘household’ which was part of the community since “common land was distributed among ‘households’ for cultivation and often marked by boundary stones” (Deist, 1990:144).

⁵⁰ Wright (1990:6) argues that the ‘nahala’ denotes “the whole land as the inheritance of all Israel”.

⁵¹ Deist (2000:144) uses 1 Samuel 20:1 “We have no portion in David, no share in the son of Jesse! Everyone to your tents, O Israel” (Deist, 2000:144), to prove that refusing to share land or property with others is to cut the ties of cohesion, since land and sharing belonged together.

⁵² Wright, (1990) on his book with a title “God’s people in God’s land: Family, Land and Property in the Old Testament”.

⁵³ On the idea of permanent sale and jubilee, see, Wright (1990). It is also good to note that for Brueggemann (2002b:178) the idea of selling property/land was a result of “alternative theories” that came later. Also see Perdue (1997:234) on the ideal of ‘*go’el*’ (family redeemer) who was to “purchase the land (sold due to poverty) so that the extended household or clan could retain it”.

of Israel's relationship with Yahweh? Deist (200:145) argues that land described Yahweh's relationship with Israel. This means that land ownership strengthened religious solidarity with Yahweh. Therefore, land ownership and distribution guaranteed Israel's cohesion with 'brother' as well as cohesion with Yahweh, since land was not privately owned. Hence, Brueggemann (2002b:183) explains the commandment 'Do not covet' as a law that is "concerned with land polity". This means that to take somebody else's land is prohibited. Therefore, land theft was prohibited⁵⁴. But sharing and socio-religious cohesion was maintained. I find land as an entity of property that strengthens socio-religious cohesion.

Perdue (1997:169) goes further by connecting land to the economic life of the family. He argues that "familial land ownership resided at the economic base of Israelite and early Jewish households" (Perdue, 1997:169). Hence, the family land "was not a commodity to be bought or sold" (Perdue, 1997:169). This means that land was so important to the family that families depended on land for sustenance, such that loss of land led to loss of family cohesion (Perdue, 1997:169). This goes to a point whereby, "without land, families fragmented and members dispersed" looking for ways of survival even to an extent of being additional members in other households (Perdue, 1997:169). Therefore, land was not only important for the economic life of the family but it was also important for family cohesion and solidarity. Those who left their family households due to loss of land, they ended up being embraced by other extended families. Hence, there was what Perdue (1997:170) calls "the 'network of care' which extended beyond individual clans to the tribes and to the 'sons of Israel', whose 'poor' included Levites, widows, fatherless children, resident aliens, debt servants, slaves, and sojourners" (Perdue, 1997:170). These were the ways of ensuring that everyone has food in Ancient Israel, even those who lost land or experienced "crop failure" (Perdue, 1997:170). Therefore, even though loss of land scattered families; this 'network of care' ensured the survival of 'brothers'⁵⁵.

⁵⁴ Of course, Brueggemann (2002b) does except the fact that at some cases the promised land was gained through dispossessing others. For instance, Israelites receiving the land of Canaan through driving out philistines. But here the context is that of extending your land by "shifting and removing the markers" of your neighbour's land (Deist, 2000:144).

⁵⁵ I use the word 'brothers' to denote Perdue's idea of 'poor' included Levites, widows, fatherless children, resident aliens, debt servants, slaves, and sojourners" (Perdue, 1997:170).

Chapter 4

4.1 Ideology of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic idea of ‘brothers’ as marker of cohesion

4.1.1 Land flowing with milk and honey?

God promised Israelites a land flowing with milk and honey. What does “land flowing with milk and honey” mean (especially in relation to Deuteronomy)? MacDonald (2008a:3) notes that the ‘land flowing with milk and honey’ meant “a new land of their own⁵⁶” as well as food and sustenance. (MacDonald, 2008a:3). In other words, it primarily meant land ownership to Israelites as God’s people. This leads to the idea of “land as God’s gift to Israel” (Miller, 1990:44; cf. Brueggemann, 2002a:45 & Wright, 1990:8). For Miller (1990:44) this is the “preeminent gift, and all other gifts [including that of food] are related to it”. However, I will expand on the idea of land as God’s gift in the later sections of this thesis. MacDonald (2008a:3) argues that Israel’s spies did not see only milk and honey in the land; they came back “laden with fruit” but they affirmed that such a land flows with ‘milk and honey’. This denotes that there is more to ‘milk and honey’ than just mere ‘milk and honey⁵⁷’.

Hence, Miller (1990:44); even though he does not write about food, expands on the Deuteronomic idea of the “the land flowing with milk and honey”. Miller (1990:44) argues that the idea of the land “flowing with milk and honey” denotes the abundance of food in the Promised Land⁵⁸. This connotes that there is food security rather than food scarcity in the land. Miller (1990:44) continues to argue that this is a “kind of paradise⁵⁹”. This means that there is an abundant availability of food in the land. Miller (1990:44) mentions the qualities

⁵⁶ Boorer (2011:111) notes that possessing the land meant “the stability of the world, which God has brought to its perfected form” (Boorer, 2011:111). It also meant a “stable and peaceful order” in the land (Boorer, 2011:111).

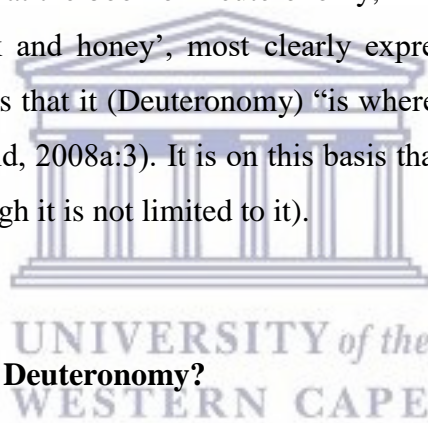
⁵⁷ Here I wish a reader to see beyond just ‘milk and honey’ in a literal sense.

⁵⁸ I understand Miller (1990:44) as denoting that the idea of the land “flowing with milk and honey” should not be taken literal as if there were only “milk and honey” flowing in the land but rather such phrase means that there is abundance of food in the land in that food scarcity is not a threat. Also see MacDonald (2008a:7), who argues that “the term milk (chalab) could easily be the word for ‘fat’ (cheleb) and the word for honey (debash) could indicate not bees’ honey but a sweet syrup made from fruit”. Here MacDonald (2008a:7) notes the danger of taking the notion of “milk and honey” literally. He argues that this idea of “milk and honey” if taken literally in terms of etymology, it could mean something else. Hence He concludes that the term “milk and honey evokes a general sense of the bounty of the land” (MacDonald; 2008a:7). He also concludes that this term also denotes “agricultural abundance” in the Land (2008a:7).

⁵⁹ Miller (1990:44) does not use the word paradise to refer to Eden or eschatological paradise but rather he uses the word ‘paradise’ to connote abundance and happiness in the land.

of this good⁶⁰ land. He observes according to Deuteronomy 8:7-10 in the land there are “brooks, fountains, and springs flowing in the hills and valleys, wheat, barley, grapevines, fig trees, and pomegranates, olive oil and honey, bread without lack (in fact, nothing shall be lacking), iron and copper” (Miller, 1990:44). This is the abundance of food security in the Promised Land⁶¹. Miller (1990:44) repeats the idea that in the land Israel “will eat and be full”. This denotes an idea of being satisfied. Towards the end of his chapter on land, Miller (1990:44) observes that the abundance of the land brings “enjoyment⁶²”. This means that there will be a good life among all the people. In recognition of this, people will bring their first fruits into the temple to honour Yahweh (Miller, 1990:44). In this way the abundance of food brings joy and fosters solidarity between the people and Yahweh. When the Israelites enjoy food in abundance, they bring first fruit to the Lord. Thereby they ‘remember’⁶³ their God and offer to him. Here availability of food fosters religious solidarity.

MacDonald (2008a:3) notes that the book of Deuteronomy, in repeatedly expressing the idea of a ‘land flowing with milk and honey’, most clearly expresses Israel’s ideas about the blessing of the land. He argues that it (Deuteronomy) “is where the vision of the land makes its fullest imprint” (MacDonald, 2008a:3). It is on this basis that the main focus of my thesis will be on Deuteronomy (though it is not limited to it).



4.1.2 What is the ideology of Deuteronomy?

4.1.2.1 Yahweh’s covenant, land and food security

What is the ideology of Deuteronomy? Clements (2001:20) mentions three pivotal realities in Deuteronomy, namely, “one nation, one land, one law⁶⁴”. This speaks to the idea of Yahweh having a relationship with only ‘one nation’, which is Israelites and Yahweh gave them the ‘law’ to regulate such a relationship (Clements 2001:18) and consequently that leads to ‘land’ access (2001:20). Here Clements (2001:20) forms an interconnection between the ideas of

⁶⁰ Miller (1990:44) uses the adjective ‘good’ to denote how “desirable and beneficent” the promised land is.

⁶¹ Boorer (2011:114) notes the inseparable relationship between “land” and “Produce” (Boorer, 2011:114). This means that where there is a provision of land there must be a “produce” of “crops” (Boorer, 2011:114). Thus the abundance of land brings food security.

⁶² Brueggemann (2002a:108) does expand on the idea that land/food security brings well-being (and joy).

⁶³ MacDonald (2008b) expands on notions of eating to ‘remember’ versus eating to ‘forget’ Yahweh. Also cf. Brueggemann, 2002a & Wright, 1990.

⁶⁴ Of course this is in the context of the Shema “the idea of one God as Yahweh only” (Cf. Miller, 1990:11-12)

“one nation, one land and one law⁶⁵”. Clements (2001:15, Clements 1989:20) and Miller (1990:11-12) agree that the theme of covenant is the central and prevailing one in the book of Deuteronomy in terms of ideology. It predominates to such an extent that Clements (1989:20) argues that the theme of covenant is a “major factor” in terms of the form of the book. Clements (2001:15) argues that the theme of covenant is a “*key one* in describing a relationship between Israel and the Lord God” (2001:15). This means that in the book of Deuteronomy everything is anchored in and hinges on the covenant between Israel and Yahweh. Therefore, one cannot study the book of Deuteronomy without considering the idea of covenant. Hence, Brueggemann (2002a) speaks of the “covenanted land”. This means that without Israel’s covenant with Yahweh, there would be no land. This means that Israel would be landless. Therefore, the covenant is central even to land access. Hence, Di Lella (1979:381) speaks of “fidelity to covenant” as to Ancient Israel’s land possession (Di Lella, 1979:481). This indicates that loyalty to Yahweh’s’ covenant determines land possession for Israelites. Clements (1968:50) builds on the idea of covenant and land by arguing that there is a close relationship between “the promise of land and a *particular* covenant⁶⁶”. He uses the adjective ‘particular’ to refer to a special covenant Yahweh made with Israel. This means that without this ‘particular’ covenant Yahweh made with Israel there is no ‘promise of land’. Yahweh promises land ‘only’ to the nation with which He has a covenant⁶⁷. Hence, Clements (1968:51) speaks about the idea that “people and land belonged together”. Here he links land with “nationhood” (Clements, 1968:51). In addition, land was given as a grant to those included in the covenant on condition that they keep the covenant law (Clements, 1968:51). Hence, Di Lella (1979:381) argues that only faithfulness to Yahweh’s covenant will guarantee “long life and prosperity in the land that Yahweh will provide Israel with” (Di

⁶⁵ Maposa, Hlongwana & Muguti (2013:136) argue that in the Old Testament the view is: “no land, no people, no identity”.

⁶⁶ Di Lella (1979:381) agrees with Clements (1968:51) on the idea of a relationship between “promise of land and particular covenant” (Clements, 1968:51). Di Lella (1979:381) argues that “obedience to Yahweh’s commands and fidelity to the covenant will be rewarded by ‘long life and prosperity in the land’” (Di Lella, 1979:381). Hens-Piazza (2003:28) also observes that both “curses and blessings are linked to this fundamental conceptualization of Israel’s relationship with God” (Hens-Piazza, 2003:28). Hens-Piazza (2003:29) also argues that faithfulness to the covenant with Yahweh guarantees “prosperity and longevity” (Hens-Piazza, 2003:29), while unfaithfulness to the covenant with Yahweh guarantees “judgment and punishment” (Hens-Piazza, 2003:29).

⁶⁷ Di Lella (1979:381) expands on this idea of covenant by arguing that even Yahweh’s love to Israelites was a “covenantal love” (Di Lella, 1979:381).

Lella, 1979:381). This means that faithfulness to Yahweh's covenant does not only guarantee land access for Israel but also 'long life and prosperity'⁶⁸ in that land.

Di Lella (1979:381) continues to argue that the disobedience of Israelites to their covenant with Yahweh causes them as a nation to "lose 'the good land' by being scattered or exiled" (Di Lella, 1979:381). This means that without obedience to the covenant that Israel had with Yahweh, they cannot receive the 'good land' from Yahweh. Hence, they end up being taken into captivity. However, disobedience to Yahweh's covenant does not only lead the Israelites into captivity but it also leads to "the land becoming desolate" (Di Lella, 1979:381). This means that the land itself suffers and become barren. It bears no fruit due to disobedience⁶⁹. Just as Israel cannot lead the good life without the land, so the land cannot reach its full potential without Israel.

Di Lella (1979:381) next considers the curses of Deuteronomy 28⁷⁰ in the light of the link between covenant and land. As a result of Israel's failure to observe the covenant they had with Yahweh, Israel will no longer possess the good land and the land will no longer be good. Di Lella (1979:381) concludes his argument about covenant by noting that the fact that Israel went to captivity and that land was left desolate was the direct consequence of "infidelity and apostasy". This means that the failure of Israelites to be faithful to the covenant of Yahweh with them had serious negative results including loss of 'good land'⁷¹. Hence, for Di Lella (1979:381) the Israelites will receive the 'good land' back only if they repent.

4.1.2.2 The law, covenant and the land

What is the role of the law and commandments in Deuteronomy? Clements (1989:18-19; 2001: xiv) emphasizes that the law⁷² is pivotal and paramount in the book of Deuteronomy. Hence, there are "dangers of not heeding to the law" (Clements, 2001: xiv). The dangers are

⁶⁸ This 'long life and prosperity' that Lella speaks of cannot happen without food security (Lella, 1979:381). Nevertheless the thesis argues that food security does not always lead to "life and prosperity in the land" (Lella, 1979:381). Sometimes food security leads to loss of cohesion among 'brothers'.

⁶⁹ Brueggemann (200a1:257) argues that the purpose of the curses was "to starve the inhabitants of the city, to deny food until they surrender" to Yahweh, the giver of land and food (Brueggemann, 2001:257).

⁷⁰ Lella (1979:381) makes specific reference to curses that led to "exile and desolation of the land" (Lella, 1979:381). Hens-Piazza (2003:29) observes that slavery is also a result of a broken covenant with Yahweh in Deuteronomy's fertility curses.

⁷¹ Lella (1979:381) argues that the term "the good land" derives from the book of Deuteronomy, that is, "1:35, 3:25, 4:21, 22, 6:18, 8:10, 8:10, 9:6, 11: 17", specifically, 8:7" (Lella, 1979:381).

⁷² Clements (1989:18) does note that the law in Deuteronomy makes use of "apodictic" and "casuistic" forms. He argues that the apodictic laws proceed directly from the mouth Yahweh while casuistic laws are rather in the third person form, mostly provided by Moses.

clear from the curses that are listed in Deuteronomy 27 and 28. This means that the law is one of the key ideologies in the book of Deuteronomy. However, Miller (1990:1) warns the reader not to reduce the book of Deuteronomy to a “policy document”. Clements (2001:18-19), following suggestions by von Rad, connects law to homiletics (preaching). Clements argues that the law in Deuteronomy comes in the form of preaching. He is trying to argue that there is more to Deuteronomy than just law in the legalistic sense; there is also an appeal in the form of a sermon. These “laws” are comprehensive and cover all aspects of life. They even include laws on sacrifices, laws on how to take care of your “brother⁷³”, the poor, foreigner, etc. Nevertheless, it is also vital to understand the importance of keeping the law to ensure the Israelites’ access to land (which leads to food security)⁷⁴. Brueggemann (2002a:xx) argues that there is an inseparable interconnection between God, land and Torah (law). For Brueggemann (2001a:xx), law is important for both land access and management.

What is the relationship between law and covenant? Clements (2001:18) reiterates the idea the law, particularly the Decalogue, states the “conditions of the original Horeb covenant”. Clements (1989:38) argued that the Decalogue is “terms of God’s covenant”. This means that according to Clements (1989:38; 2001:18), the Ten Commandments are established to set the terms and conditions of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel. Therefore, the law is neither aloof from the covenant nor is there a theological cleavage between the covenant and the law. In Deuteronomy, those who have a covenant with Yahweh must obey his law (in terms of Decalogue and Shema⁷⁵). It is also interesting to note that the law in Deuteronomy includes even dietary laws, though such laws are beyond the scope of my research. There are laws about sacrifice, holiness and worship (Clements 2001).

To explain the covenant (which he regards as central to the theology of the Old Testament), Eichrodt (1961:232-239) expands on the Hebrew *hesed*⁷⁶ *Yahweh* to argue that Yahweh demands loyalty from Israel but He also pledges loyalty to Israel as a chosen nation. This idea of *berit hesed* as demanding a good relationship among human beings is pivotal in Deuteronomy. Clements (1968:58) notes that the law was not given to ancient Israelites with

⁷³ Miller (1990:114) argues that Deuteronomy also uses the word ‘brother/s’ to refer to those who are poor, widows, foreigner, etc. He argues that this word ‘brother/s’ is not used in the patriarchal and gender-exclusive sense.

⁷⁴ Lapsley (2003:352) argues that the law was important in Ancient Israel in that it was the way to show that Israelites love Yahweh. Hence, the demand of Jesus to his followers in the New Testament “if you love me, you will obey my commandments” (John 14:15, Good News Bible).

⁷⁵ Miller (1990) notes that the Shema is the idea that Yahweh is one. For Miller (1990), the Shema is the summary of the first two commandments of the Decalogue.

⁷⁶ In the Hebrew Bible the word ‘hesed’ denotes Yahweh’s loyalty to Israelites as his children.

the purpose of binding them but rather for the “fullest enjoyment of life⁷⁷”. Hence, obeying the commandments of Yahweh leads to “long life and prosperity in the land” (Di Lella, 1979:381).

Di Lella (1979:383) goes further by arguing that constantly in the book of Deuteronomy “people are beseeched to fear the Lord” (Di Lella, 1979:383). For Lella, the idea to ‘fear Yahweh’ means to obey his law (Di Lella, 1979:383). Hence, he continues by submitting what he calls the “Deuteronomic equation” (Di Lella, 1979:383). This ‘Deuteronomic equation’ is:

“to love Yahweh = to fear him = to keep his commandments”.

This equation appears consistently in the book Deuteronomy. It is a demand to obey Yahweh and his commandments if Israelites love him. Hence, Lapsley (2003:350) argues that in the book of Deuteronomy, “love means loyalty to God and obedience to God is expressed through adherence to the law” (Lapsley, 2003:350). This means that to love God is to ‘keep his commandments’ in terms of what Lapsley calls “Deuteronomic love of service or duty” (Lapsley, 2003, 350). This also indicates that love in Deuteronomy is revealed through faithful duty by means of obeying the laws and regulations of Yahweh. Lapsley (2003:350) cites Moron who argues that love does not include emotions in the book of Deuteronomy⁷⁸, but is, rather, all about duty, This means that Israel’s love for Yahweh is not expressed emotionally but rather through “one’s duty by obeying the commandments” (Lapsley, 2003: 351). Hence, for Lapsley commitment to God is the key factor⁷⁹ (Lapsley, 2003:351). Therefore, Israelites are expected to remain committed to God in order for them to have ‘long life in the land’. This means that ‘life in the land’ is maintained by faithfulness and commitment to Yahweh, especially obedience to his law.

⁷⁷ By “enjoyment of life”, Clements (1986:58) refers to sustenance and provision in the ‘good land’

⁷⁸ I do not agree with the view that the love of the love of Israel to Yahweh does not include emotions. I consider both *emet* (faithfulness) and *hesed* (loyalty) as including affections, emotions and love (cf Davies, 1993:23).

⁷⁹ Here Lapsley (2003:351) refers to Deuteronomy 6:5 where Yahweh tells Israelites not to forget the commandments he gave them.

4.1.3 Ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and cohesion (with God and with ‘brothers’)

What is a relationship between ideology, land and cohesion with God and with “brothers⁸⁰”? Miller (1990:48) argues that “it is not possible to speak of the gift of land apart from obedience to God and God’s law”. Here Miller (1990:48) forms a symbiotic relationship between obeying God⁸¹ (covenant with Yahweh), obedience to God’s law and “gift of land⁸²”. Claassens (2003:17) concurs with Miller (1990:48) by arguing that Israelites by keeping the law “will receive life⁸³” (Claassens, 2003:17). Therefore, in Deuteronomic context many times obedience to God’s law leads to access to “God’s gift of land⁸⁴” (Miller, 1990:44). In Deuteronomy, land gift is not a surprise but it is a result of keeping the law/torah. Land loss is the result of breaking the law/torah (cf. Brueggemann, 2002:73). For Miller (1990:44) this “gift of land” has many benefits and “desirable qualities imbedded to it, including “brooks, fountains, springs flowing in the hills and valleys, wheat, barley, grapevines, fig trees, and pomegranates, olive oil and honey, such that nothing shall be lacking” (Miller, 1990:44). This means there shall be food security in the land. Whybray (2002:20) argues that food abundance is a symbol of blessing⁸⁵. This blessing includes fertility of the land since Israel will “enjoy the abundance of food from crops and fruit, and will gather the surplus into barns” (Whybray, 2002:20). This means that the availability of food is a form of blessing and good life. This happens only if Israel “obeys God and God’s law” (Miller, 1990:44-46). Clements (1968:52) agrees with Miller (1990:44) that the idea of ‘the good land’ emphasizes primarily that the land provides food. But Clements (1968:52) goes further by arguing that the ‘gift of land’ leads to comprehensive economic wealth and

⁸⁰ I have indicated in the above footnote that in Deuteronomy “brothers” is not used in the gender-exclusive sense but rather as a term that denotes cohesion and solidarity with fellow human beings.

⁸¹ Here obeying God appears as a result of a covenant between Israel and Yahweh.

⁸² Miller (1990:44-46) argues that “land is God’s gift to Israel”. This means that Israelites do not work hard to have land but they receive it from Yahweh as a “gift” on condition that they are loyal to him (hesed) and obedient to his law. Brueggemann (2002a:45) argues that “being landed is Sola Gratia”. Here Brueggemann (2002a:45) utilizes the New Testament grace to exalt the idea of land as ‘undeserved gift’. Di Lella (1979:381) also writes about the idea of “land as God’s gift”. He argues that the term of “land of Abraham” as well as the term of “land as God’s gift” are all derived from the book of Deuteronomy. This means that these are Deuteronomic terms (Di Lella, 1979:381). The other phrase that affirms ‘land as God’s gift’ is “the land which Yahweh your God swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (Di Lella, 1979:381).

⁸³ Of course ‘life’ in this context is good living in the land, even to a point of food abundance since Yahweh is the “God who provides food” (Claassens, 2003)

⁸⁴ Miller (1990:48) submits that God’s gift of land generally amounts to food security in Deuteronomy but not always.

⁸⁵ Whybray (2002) uses the word ‘blessing’ in terms of ‘well-being’ and ‘good life’.

prosperity. Here Clements refers to “raw materials, produce and ‘holy materialism⁸⁶’ as a Deuteronomy teaching (1968:52). This includes, of course, “the enjoyment of the fruits of the land” (1968:52).

Clements (1968:57) closes the concept of ‘land as God’s gift’ by arguing that there is a uninterrupted connection between “land and moral demands of land” (1968:57). This indicates that disobeying God’s ‘moral demands’ leads to the loss of land. Therefore, land is maintained on condition that Israelites keep the law. Hence, Clements (1968:58) identifies “breach of law” as a major reason of losing the land.

What does this idea of obedience to Yahweh and his law have to do with cohesion with God and/or with “brothers”? It seems that by and large obedience to God and his law leads to “God’s gift of land” and the gift of land means food security whereby people shall “eat and be satisfied⁸⁷” (Miller, 1990). This brings some sense of joy⁸⁸ and entrenched relationship with God. Eating to “remember Yahweh⁸⁹” is emphasized in Deuteronomy especially in chapters 6, 8, 14, 16 (Day, 2014:89-90). That is why Day (2015:96) argues that in Deuteronomy “food is not the end in itself, it points to Yahweh and his relationship with his people”. This means that in the Deuteronomic context food security leads to cohesion between God and his people. “Eating points to Yahweh” in Deuteronomy (Day, 2014:90). Therefore, as Israelites eat they “remember Yahweh” who provides food (Day, 2015:90). Eating and memory goes hand in hand in the book of Deuteronomy. Hence, Brueggemann (2002:50) argues that ‘memory’ is the prime method of resisting the temptation to forget Yahweh due to food security. Thus eating without ‘remembrance leads to the breakdown of cohesion with Yahweh.

Others agree at this point. Claassens (2005:41) argues that the “blessing of food” may lead to both “obesity and amnesia, which means, forgetfulness” (Claassens, 2005:41). Hence, the

⁸⁶ By ‘holy materialism’ Clements (1993:52) refers to “the right of Israel to material advancement”.

⁸⁷ The idea of being “eating and be satisfied” suggests joy and happiness with the God who provides as well as with fellow brothers. This may lead to cohesion with God and with “brothers” (Miller, 1990:44, cf. Day, 2015:93) on ideas of “eating and rejoicing before the Lord”. Brueggemann (2002:30) uses the phrase “making empty full” to denote the idea of “eating and being satisfied” (Miller, 1990:44)

⁸⁸ Di Lella (1979:383) expands on this idea the relationship between, land, provision of food and joy. He argues that “the concept of rejoicing because of God’s good acts is a recurring theme in Deuteronomy” (Lella, 1979:383). Hence, there is an undeniable ‘theology of joy’ in Deuteronomy, “especially 28:47” (Lella, 1979:383). In Deuteronomy, Israelites “have the right and the duty to rejoice” (Lella, 1979:383).

⁸⁹ MacDonald (2008b) writes succinctly on “food and memory”. Here MacDonald argues that food many times when people have eaten they turn to forget God like Israelites. This means that food security as provided by Yahweh can lead to or break cohesion with God (MacDonald, 2008b).

'blessing of God' can become a curse (Claassens, 2005:41). This denotes that, the provision of food can lead to Israelites forgetting God who is the provider of God. This leads to loss of cohesion with Yahweh. Di Lella (1979:384-385) echoes this idea of 'remembering'. He points out that the idea of 'remembering Yahweh' appears fourteen times in the book of Deuteronomy (Di Lella, 1979:384). This shows the importance of the idea for Israelites to 'remember Yahweh' when there is abundance of food. Hence, Di Lella (1979:384) speaks about the "theology of remembering" in the book of Deuteronomy. Di Lella (1979:385) argues that this theology of remembering "points Israel to divine providence" (Di Lella, 1979:385). This means that the idea of 'remembering Yahweh' leads Israelites to pass beyond food and look at Yahweh who is the provider of food⁹⁰. Yahweh in the book of Deuteronomy is not only presented as the "parent who provides food for her children" but rather he is also presented as the "rich food manager" (Claassens, 2005:37). Hence, Yahweh provided food for Israelites even in the wilderness, that is, "manna and quail" (Claassens, 2005:37).

In Deuteronomy 14, "eating before the Lord"⁹¹ also brings the idea of "sharing with others" such as "the Levite, sojourner, and orphan" (Claassens, 2003:37). Part of loving Yahweh involved sharing love and hospitality to others" (Day, 2014:91). This means that 'eating before the Lord' during feasts and festivals included ideas of sharing, solidarity and cohesion with others. In Deuteronomy 16 eating during the feast included "additional food others brought" so that "thanksgiving to Yahweh led to sharing in his abundant provision (of food) with others" (Day, 2014:91, 94). This means that cohesion with others was part of eating during feasts in Deuteronomy. Hence, Clements (1989a:56) argues that "all Israelites are encouraged to think of themselves as 'brothers' (Deut. 14:7, 15:2, 3). This means that cohesion with 'brothers' was part of God's provision of food in Deuteronomy.

Did 'God's gift of land (which amounts to food)' always lead to cohesion with God and with 'brothers/others'? MacDonald (2008b:84) suggests an emphatic 'no'. He argues that God's provision of land may lead to "forgetfulness where people attribute the possession of land to their own strength and not to the actions of Yahweh" (MacDonald, 2008b:84). This means

⁹⁰ Claassens (2005:37) among different metaphors of God she submits, she also writes about "God as a rock". In this metaphor she affirms this idea of "God as the parent who provides food for her children" (Claassens, 2005:37). This metaphor presents Yahweh as the provider of both life and food. This is a "link between parenting and food" in the book Deuteronomy, since naturally parents provide food for their children (Claassens, 2005:37). Yahweh did not just say 'I gave birth to you' but he also says 'I fed you' (Claassens, 2005:37). This is the metaphor of "God who provides" (Claassens, 2005:37).

⁹¹ This "eating before the Lord" is in the context of feasts and festivals. These are feasts like Passover, feast of booths, etc (Day, 2014:89).

that the moment people think that they have food because of their own strength then their eating will lead to forgetfulness. They will forget about Yahweh who provided food for them. Therefore, cohesion with God is broken even after ‘God’s gift of land’. Hence, Day (2014:89) writes about eating and broken cohesion with God. This means that food and eating do not always lead to ‘memory’ as suggested by MacDonald (2008b:71-76). Sometimes God’s provision of food may result in people forgetting about God and start hero-worshipping themselves or other gods. This is the broken cohesion with God. The other aspect is suggested by Miller (1990:46). He suggests that God’s gift of land to his people involves “Israel’s defeat of the enemy” (Miller, 1990:46). This means that in order for Israel to possess the land they have been promised, they must first defeat (sometimes by killing) those who are currently occupying the land. This leads to broken cohesion with others. This means that the Israelites receive land at the expense of ‘the enemy’. This also means that the Israelites eat at the expense of others in the Deuteronomic context. Therefore, in Deuteronomy ‘God’s gift of land’ may mean the defeat of the enemy, which amounts to broken cohesion with others.

4.1.4. The ideologies of land⁹² in the Old Testament especially Deuteronomy

Habel (1995) presents ‘six ideologies’ of land in the Old Testament, namely: “Land as a source of wealth, Land as a conditional grant, Land as family lots, Land as YHWH’s Personal nahalah, Land as Sabbath bound, Land as host country” (Habel, 1995). However due to the scope of this thesis I will limit my discussion into three ‘ideologies’, namely, “Land source of wealth, land as conditional grant, and land as YHWH’s personal nahalah” (Habel, 1995). I have chosen these three ideologies simply because they are relevant to the topic this thesis. Hence, as an introduction, Habel (1995:2) argues that it is people who belong to the land not vice versa. This means that no one has and/or should have land ‘entitlement’ since “‘land does not belong to people” but rather, “people belong to the land” (Habel, 1995:2). This obviously challenges the ideas about ‘private ownership of land⁹³’ (cf. Brueggemann, 2002)

⁹² Here (Habel, 1995) is used critically in this section in order to help us in understanding the different implications of land in ancient Israel periods. Habel (1995:1-2) notes that land means different things to many people. For instance, Habel (1995:1-2) argues that for the poor citizens of India land means just a piece of land enough to build a small one or two bedroom house while for “the European explorer, land is terrain to be conquered “ (Habel, 1995:2). This means that there cannot be a general approach to land, since it means many things to many people.

⁹³ Brueggemann (2002b) submits that initially all people are “tenants in Yahweh’s land”. He therefore, challenges the idea of ‘private property’ by arguing that land was granted to the ‘*mishpahah*’ rather than to an individual.

4.1.4.1 Land as source of wealth (A Royal Ideology)

Regarding this ideology Habel (1995:17) argues that “land is the source of wealth⁹⁴” and that it is the “divine right of the monarch to appropriate that wealth” (Habel, 1995:17). This means that it is the right of the royal king to preside over the land and its wealth. Hence, the monarch functions as God’s steward in terms of exercising dominion over the all the land. This means that ordinary people did not have the prerogative of deciding on the use and the sharing of land. It was the monarchs who had such a prerogative. Hence, Habel (1995:17) is consistent on the idea of “land as empire⁹⁵”.

Habel (1995:24) makes the idea of empire very broad. He argues that “empire is universal” (1995:24). For Habel (1995:25) the scope of this empire is “*nahalah*” (cf. Brueggemann, 2002). This means that the royalty of ancient Israel was considered as having ‘right of use⁹⁶’ and ownership of the entire *nahalah* (Habel, 1995:25). Hence, Habel (1995:25) argues that “the monarch owns the whole earth (*‘eres*) as a rightful land, an empire”. This means that Israel’s royalty has a ownership of the *nahalah* and its wealth⁹⁷. It was the monarchs who were responsible for land ownership and land distribution. Hence, Habel (1995:30) argues that the case of Naboth’s vineyard “was not necessarily an example of royal greed” but rather “conflict of ideologies” (Habel, 1995:30). He argues that Naboth was “faithful to the principle of his household ideology⁹⁸” while Jezebel was loyal to “the royal ideology of Israel” (Habel, 1995:30). This means that Jezebel had a sense of entitlement because she believed that all land (including that of Naboth) belonged to the monarch.

4.1.4.2 Land as conditional grant (A Theocratic Ideology)

Habel (1995:37, 39) begins with the idea Yahweh as a “landowner⁹⁹” who gives and grant land in book of Deuteronomy. The Hebrew word “*natan*” is used to refer to “giving or granting” (Habel, 1995:39). This positions Yahweh as the legitimate giver of land to his

⁹⁴ By ‘wealth’ Habel (1995:17) refers to the food and minerals that come from the land.

⁹⁵ The idea of “land as empire” is pivotal in that was acquired through conquest.

⁹⁶ By ‘right of use’ I mean royalty as stewards of God’s *nahalah*. Yet “Yahweh is the owner of the whole *nahalah*” (Habel, 1995:76, cf. Brueggemann, 2002). Habel (1995:76) goes beyond Brueggemann (2002) in that Habel argues that land belongs to both Israelites and Yahweh (Habel, 1995:76).

⁹⁷ It should be noted that in Deuteronomy land belonged to God, hence, Naboth could not sell the land to the king. Therefore, Habel (1995:25) is not correct on this aspect.

⁹⁸ Maposa, Hlongwana & Muguti (2013:136) argue that “based on patrimonial law, Naboth refused to give away the land of his forebears” (Maposa et al:2013:136)

⁹⁹ Habel (1995:76) argued that both Yahweh and monarch own the land but in this chapter he positions Yahweh as the “landowner” (Habel, 1995:37).

people. The land is therefore, the most important gift in the book of Deuteronomy (Habel, 1995:40). This means that all the gifts that are found in Deuteronomy, including the gifts of food and cattle are unsatisfactory without the ‘gift of land¹⁰⁰’. The ‘gift of land’ goes with acts of possession and dispossession (Habel, 1995:40). This means that Yahweh expects Israelites to ‘possess’ the land. However, this also means that in order for Israelites to ‘possess’ they must ‘dispossess’ those who are currently occupying the land (cf. Habel, 1995:40, Matthews & Benjamin, 1993: XVII). Hence, Matthews and Benjamin (1993: XVII) argue that all the potential land that God’s people must have is already occupied by somebody. Therefore, “if Hebrews without land were ever to have land, they had to take someone else’s land”. This means that one cannot speak about land ‘possession’ without land ‘dispossession’. Land possession compromises cohesion with ‘brothers’. The ideas of sharing and cohesion with ‘the other’ are compromised.

Habel (1995:41) also speaks of land as “good land”. He argues that the “goodness of land is given in Deuteronomy 8:7-10”. In Deuteronomy 8 the land is referred to as “the land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity” (Habel, 1995:42). This means that the ‘goodness of land’ is provision of food. Hence, there is an idea of “land as blessing¹⁰¹” (1995:44). Lastly, Habel (1995:46) speaks of “land as treaty”. This means that Israelites will acquire land only through faithfulness and loyalty to the covenant they had with Yahweh. The condition to receiving the ‘God’s gift of land’ is to be faithful to the covenant Israelites had with Yahweh. Habel (1995:46) argues that land is acquired as a consequence of faithfulness to Yahweh and therefore, unfaithfulness to Yahweh leads to loss of land as well drought (Habel, 1995:46, cf. Brueggemann, 2002b). This means that no one must want Yahweh’s land and yet they are not faithful to Yahweh the owner of all land. Therefore, the condition to receiving the grant of land is to keep the covenant with Yahweh, the owner of the land.

4.1.4.3 Land as YHWH’s *nahalah* (A Prophetic Ideology)

Who owns the ‘*nahalah*’? Habel (1995:76) begins by arguing that there is a relationship between “Yahweh, Israel and the land” (Habel, 1995:76). This means that Israelites to not possess land without Yahweh. For Habel (1995:76) the relationship between God, his people and the land is very important. It must be kept intact. The terms “*my* land and *my* *nahalah*”

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Clements (1968:57) on the idea of gift of land as the result of grace (*charis*).

¹⁰¹ By ‘blessing’ Habel (1995:44) means food as it comes from the land

are prominent in the book of Deuteronomy and the Old Testament (Habel, 1995:78). The possessive pronoun “my” denotes that the land belongs to Yahweh. Hence, Brueggemann (2002b) argues that all persons are tenants in Yahweh’s nahalah. This indicates the land does not belong to anyone except Yahweh.

Habel (1995:78) links land and fertility. Habel also argues that if Yahweh is the owner of all land, it means that Yahweh is also the owner of fertility (Habel, 1995:78). This means that Habel (1995) refuses to separate land from fertility, since fertility needs land for it to take place. Hence, no one can deny the necessary relationship between land and food. One cannot talk about food without the land, vice versa. Lastly, Habel (1995:80) talks about the inappropriateness of “land pollution and defiling¹⁰²” (Habel, 1995:80). For Habel (1995:80) Israelites cannot pollute the land, yet they want fertility from it. Therefore, preservation and good stewardship over Yahweh’s land is pivotal if Israelites expect to ‘eat and be satisfied’.



¹⁰² Land pollution is beyond the scope of this thesis, hence, I will not expand on it.

Chapter 5

5. Feasts and Fertility Texts in Deuteronomy and Eighth Century Prophets

5.1 Introduction

Weinfeld (2004:51) observes that Old Testament festivals “have no fixed dates since their occurrence is determined by the ripening of the crops” (Weinfeld, 2004:51). This means that there is a connection between Israel’s festivals and food, since “the ripening of crops” determines the time of the festivals (Weinfeld, 2004:51). Therefore, to speak about festivals without mentioning food is almost impossible. Weinfeld (2004:52) continues to argue that Israel had a “full agricultural and natural setting of the festivals” (Weinfeld, 2004:52), here Weinfeld (2004:52) mentions “the sheaf, the two loaves at Pentecost and other species” (Weinfeld, 2004:52). This means that agriculture and nature were very important in the festival of Israel. Hence, the idea of “eating and drinking” was one of the most important “characteristic features of the festivals” (Weinfeld, 2004:56). Here there is a connection between festivals, food and joy. These festivals were celebrations that brought cohesion with Yahweh (Weinfeld, 2004:56). Hence, the idea of “dancing before the Lord” (Weinfeld, 2004:56 on 2 Samuel 6:5, 20-21). This means that the festivals brought religious cohesion.

It also important to note that these festivals brought cohesion between ‘brothers’, especially families (Weinfeld, 2004:56). Hence, Weinfeld (2004:56) argues that “the festivals have a familial nature” (Weinfeld, 2004:56). This means that they are more than just national festivals, however, they were meant to bring “joy within the family” (Weinfeld, 2004:56). To substantiate this idea of festivals bringing joy in the family, Weinfeld (2004:56) uses Deuteronomy 16:14 “You shall rejoice before the Lord your God with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite, the stranger, the orphan and the widow” (Weinfeld, 2004 on Deuteronomy 16:14). Since there is a mentioning of “the slave, the Levite, the stranger, the orphan and the widow” in Deuteronomy 16:14, in Deuteronomic terms this text shows the relationship between festivals, food, joy and ‘brothers’ (cf. Clements, 1986:53 & Weinfeld, 2004:56). This is the relationship between festivals, food, joy and cohesion

between ‘brothers’. It is also important to note that the joy in these festivals is solely “linked to the ingathering of the crops” (Weinfeld, 2004:56). This denotes that the harvest of food brought joy for families and made people to ‘rejoice before the Lord’ (Weinfeld, 2004:56). This is a relationship between festivals, food, joy and socio-religious cohesion.

5.2 Fertility texts in Deuteronomy

Since law in Deuteronomy is the condition of God’s covenant with Israelites, breaking God’s law automatically means broken covenant with God (Clements, 1989:38). Therefore, to break God’s law is to break the covenant with God. Clements (2001:33) argues that obedience to God’s law leads to prosperity and “good life in the land¹⁰³” while disobedience to God’s law leads to ‘disaster¹⁰⁴’. This means that in the Deuteronomic context disaster is always a result of disobedience to Yahweh and his law¹⁰⁵. Hence, Clements (1989:45) submits that all kinds of blessings or curses are “under the umbrella of God’s law”. Here the formula is clear, ‘keep God’s law, you will prosper (in the land)’ or ‘disobey God’s law, you will experience disaster (curses which includes food insecurity especially in Deuteronomy 28)’. Hence, the curses of Deuteronomy 27 and 28 are the results of the broken covenant with Yahweh.

If Israelites do not obey God, “there shall be loss of the land and security, the failure of crops, and the loss of animals” (Whybray, 2002:40). This means that a broken covenant with God will lead Israelites to loss of land and food such that “Even the most gentle and sensitive man will eat his own children without sharing with others and a woman will eat her new born child in secret without sharing with anyone” (Ridderbos, 1986:15). This means that where there is no food the idea of sharing and solidarity is destroyed hence parents ate their children without sharing with anyone. Gaebelein (1992:40) goes further by arguing that due to the scarcity of food in Israel even siblings ate in secret and did not share with one another. Here the question of “with whom does one eat?” is very important in terms of eating habits and solidarity. On the other hand, McDonald (2008:48) goes further by arguing that lack of access to food leads to human aggression. This means that when there is not enough food, human beings become aggressive to each other, hence, solidarity is compromised. Claassens (2003:48, 49) argues that the Deuteronomy 28 text on cannibalism is more symbolic than

¹⁰³ The idea of good life in the land includes God’s provision of food (cf. Claassens, 2003).

¹⁰⁴ For both Clements (2001) and Miller (1990) the word ‘disaster’ includes curses and “loss of land”. This amounts to poverty. The Deuteronomy 28 curses come into play here.

¹⁰⁵ Clements (1989) argues that theoretically Israelites never feared witchcraft and its disasters because they believed that blessing or curse was always a result of obeying or disobeying God. Therefore, witchcraft was a myth in Ancient Israel.

literal¹⁰⁶. She continues to argue that such a text “captures some of the most desperate acts of desperate times in a few brush strokes”. This means that sometimes desperation (in this case that for food) can lead to desperate acts, even to the extent of cannibalism. However, Claassens (2008:49) concludes by warning us that cannibalism cannot be an excuse under any circumstance.

McDonald (2008:10) continues to argue that from the origin of creation in the book of Genesis there was no permission to eat human flesh; the only permission that existed was for the consumption of animals. Hence, cannibalism¹⁰⁷ came later in the Deuteronomic history as “normal response to extreme circumstances such as draught and famine” (Bosman, 2012:153). This means that the Deuteronomic history records cases where there was absence of food to a point that human being would eat another human being¹⁰⁸. In the case of Deuteronomy 28:53-57 parents would eat their children without sharing with anyone¹⁰⁹. Hence, Bosman (2012:156) observes that because of famine, there was a huge desperation such that different forms of *compassion*¹¹⁰, such as the relationship between a husband and wife or between parents and children, are obliterated. This means that the absence of food lead to the destruction of compassion, care, cohesion and solidarity in the family and/or the world. Food insecurity can result to broken cohesion with others (and even with God).

5.3 Curses in the context of siege in Deuteronomy and Eighth Century Prophets

Smoak (2008:19) argues that the most threatening words to Ancient Israel are those in Deuteronomy 28:30, “You will build a house, but you will not live in it. You will plant a

¹⁰⁶ Hens-Piazza (2003:86) argues that even though cannibalism is linked to poverty, it is “far more complex than simple cause and effect. Rather, its existence is yoked to a prevailing socio-political structure of domination and control” (Hens-Piazza, 2003:86).

¹⁰⁷ Bosman (2012:153) argues that “the term cannibalism is relatively new and is derived from the Spanish name for the Carib people of the West Indian islands who were notorious for their predilection for human flesh”. Before the term cannibalism was used, the eating of human flesh was called ‘anthropophagy’ until the usage of the term ‘cannibalism’ in the late 15th and early 16th century (Bosman, 2012:153). The lack of food (especially in the context of siege) is the impetus of cannibalism for Bosman.

¹⁰⁸ Hens-Piazza (2003:85) observes that “Cannibalism is never just about eating. It is not just a response to extreme hunger, as materialistic theories have proposed” (Hens-Piazza, 2003:85). Hence, many societies who experience extreme levels of hunger “do not resort to cannibalism” (Hens-Piazza, 2003:85).

¹⁰⁹ In Deuteronomy 28:53-57 my focus is not really on cannibalism but rather the idea that famine/absence of food/food insecurity destroyed solidarity (the idea of sharing with on other as family) such that the wife will eat her new born infant in secret and the father would eat his child in secret. This is due to the absence of food.

¹¹⁰ I observe that Bosman (2012:156) does not use the word solidarity but uses the word ‘compassion’. He argues that famine was so huge that the compassion (off course he uses the word compassion with the same impact as solidarity) the relationship between family members was compromised. This means that when there is no food in the family, the compassion and solidarity between parents and children is destroyed.

vineyard, but you will not harvest its fruit” (Smoak, 2008:19). These words threatened the future fertility of Ancient Israelites as well as the future possibility of eating. Smoak (2008:19) argues that “this particular curse held an especially prominent place in the discourse of ancient Israel and early Judaism¹¹¹” (2008:19). He then uses different examples of the ‘destruction of the city which was followed by the destruction of vegetation’ during the Assyrian siege context (Smoak 2008:20-24). In fact, the huge threat to fertility and vegetation was the curse (Smoak, 2008:24), in that “the curse came to symbolize the threats that a successful Assyrian siege posed, namely, the deportation of the population and the destruction of its agriculture” (Smoak, 2008:24). This means that the curse (specifically that regarding fertility) threatened two things, namely, the destruction of the city, which meant scattering of the people, and the destruction of vegetation.

How do fertility curses appear in the eighth century prophets like Amos¹¹²? Smoak (2008:24-29) uses Amos 5:11-15 to discuss the fertility curses as well as the reversal of the curses of fertility. Amos 5:11 says “Therefore, because you levy a straw tax on the poor and exact grain from him, you have built houses of hewn stone, but you will not live in them. You have planted lush vineyards, but you will not drink their wine” (Smoak, 2008:24). The key words for the curse in this text for Smoak (2008:24) are not necessarily “houses” and “vineyards” “but rather ‘houses of hewn stone’ and ‘lush vineyards’¹¹³” (Smoak, 2008:24). This means that the impetus behind the curse is the huge difference between rural set up and the urban set up such that the rich survived their luxury at the expense of the rural poor people (Smoak, 2008:26). To such an extent that the opulent people in urban areas owned lots of vineyards while the poor rural communities were lacking. Smoak (2008:26) argues that “the urbanization of the north [at the expense of the poor, *emphasis on square brackets is mine*] might have been the motivating social force behind this passage [that is, Amos 5:11, *emphasis on square brackets is mine*]” (Smoak, 2008:26). There was a broken cohesion between the elites in urban areas and the poor people in rural communities of the northern kingdom in the eighth century Israel. Hence, Smoak speaks about the “animosity between urban and rural sectors of the northern kingdom” (2008:26). This is clearly a broken cohesion

¹¹¹ Smoak (2008:19) observes that the similar curse is also found in the following texts, “Amos 5:11, 9:14, Isaiah 5:1-17, Zephaniah 1:13, Jeremiah 6:9-15, 29:5, 28, 31:4, Deuteronomy 28:30, Isaiah 62:6-9, 65:21, Ezekiel 28:26, 36:36). The texts in Amos are very important for this thesis.

¹¹² It is not my intention in this project to discuss the debates around the dating of Amos 5. Some scholars deny that Amos 5 comes from an eighth century context. Rather they argue that he was written in an exilic or post-exilic context. Such debates are beyond the scope of this project.

¹¹³ Smoak (2008:24) notes that the phrases “houses of hewn stone” and “lush vineyards” only appear in Amos 5 in the Old Testament.

and solidarity between those who lived in urban areas and those who lived in rural areas. This is what perpetuated the curses of fertility. This means that there is a connection between broken cohesion between ‘brothers’ and the curses of fertility. But what is important is that in these fertility curses the language of ‘food’ and ‘buildings’ is used, that is, “destruction viticulture and the breach of city walls” (Smoak, 2008:23).

However, Smoak (2008:26-27) argues the language of ‘food’ and ‘destruction of the city walls’ is also used to describe ‘restoration and the reversal of the fertility curses’ in eighth century period. Smoak (2008:26) uses Amos 9:14-15 demonstration the usage of such a language. “I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, they shall rebuild ruined cities and live in them, they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine. They shall cultivate gardens and their fruit. I will plant them upon their land. And they shall never again be plucked up out of the land that I have given them, says the Lord your God (Amos 9:14-15)” (Smoak, 2008:27). This may well be exilic or post exilic experience. The re-iterative and “shared vocabulary” of ‘building’, ‘vineyards’ and ‘planting’ demonstrate a correlative relationship between Amos chapter 5 and chapter 9 (Smoak, 2008:27). This means that the same vocabulary used for curses is also used for the removal of curses. The same language is used for casting of curses to Israelites in chapter 5 also used for the “restoring the fortunes” in chapter 9 (Smoak, 2008:27). Therefore, food, land and building are used for both casting of curses and the removal of curses. Smoak (2008:28) argues that in Amos 9:14-15 such a vocabulary is used as “language of promise” (Smoak, 2008:28). Therefore, viticulture and ‘houses’ are very important in fertility curses of the eighth century period.

At the end of his article, Smoak (2008:29-34) deals with the “imagery of building and planting” in the seventh century period¹¹⁴. He compares Zephaniah 1:13 with Amos 5:11. The Zephaniah text says “And their wealth will be for plunder and their houses for desolation. Though they build houses, they will not live in them, though they plant vineyards, they will not drink their wine (Zephaniah 1:13)” (Smoak, 2008:29). Smoak (2008:29-30) argues that both Zephaniah and Amos deal with this ‘imagery of building and planting’ but the difference is that, the Zephaniah text is in “third person” and the Amos text is in “second person”

¹¹⁴ Even though my thesis is about food and social cohesion in Deuteronomy and Eighth Century Prophets, however, Smoak (2008:29-34) demonstrates similarity between the ‘imagery of building and planting’ in the eighth century prophets like Amos as well as seventh century prophets like Zephaniah and Deuteronomy 28 fertility curse text.

(Smoak, 2008:29-30). What is clear is that both building and planting are addressed in Amos and in Zephaniah¹¹⁵.

What about Deuteronomy? How does fertility curse text of Deuteronomy relate to that of Amos? Smoak (2008:31) argues that Deuteronomy 28:30 “If you pay the bride-price for a wife, another man shall enjoy her. If you build a house, you shall not live in it. If you plant a vineyard, you shall not harvest it” is “agricultural dimension of the (building and planting) motif” (Smoak, 2008:31). He argues that there is an emphasis on agriculture not in terms of ‘eating or drinking’ but in terms of “harvest” (Smoak, 2008:31). This means that the curse is not really that Israelites will ‘not eat or drink’ but it is that they will not ‘harvest’. The idea of ‘not harvesting’ is due to the fact that Deuteronomy is set in the rural context not the urban context.

Smoak (2008:33) concludes by drawing a similarity between Amos and Jeremiah. Jeremiah 31:5 has a phrase that says “the planter shall plant and enjoy”. Smoak (2008:33) argues that this is the idea of “restoring of fortunes” that is also found in Amos 9:11-15. He argues that this idea that “the planter shall plant and enjoy” is in the “motif of promise” (Smoak, 2008:33) and that it is clear that Jeremiah drew from Amos. Hence there is a similarity between the fertility curses Jeremiah and Amos (Smoak, 2008:33).

5.4 Food and Socio-Religious Cohesion in the books of Micah and Amos

5.4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to deal with how the food is used to symbolize the presence or the absence of socio-religious cohesion in the books of Micah and Amos. In this section I will show in an explicit way how the language of food plays a major role in denoting the build-up or the breakdown of cohesion in the books of Micah and Amos.

5.4.2 The background of Micah

Who is Micah? Limburg (1988:162) starts by explaining the meaning of the word ‘Micah’. He states that the name ‘Micah’ comes from the Hebrew word “*Micayahu*’ which means ‘who is like Yahweh’”. Smith (1984:4) agrees with the idea that the name ‘Micah’ means ‘who is like Yahweh’ but he continues to argue that “for Micah God was incomparable”

¹¹⁵ Even though Zephaniah is not the eighth century prophet, it is important to note that he mentions some of the food imageries mentioned by Amos.

(Smith, 1984:4). This means that in the entire book Micah, God remains above everyone, including the leaders of those times (cf. Limburg, 1988:162). Hence, Micah was a prophet who worked as a “fearless defender of God’s rights over his people¹¹⁶” (Alfaro, 1973:3). For Limburg (1988:163) leaders were “*cannibalizing*¹¹⁷ the poor”(Micah 3:3 “who eat my people’s flesh, strip off their skin and break their bones in pieces, who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot” (NIV). This means that the leaders and elites ‘disempowered’ the poor in order for themselves as the rich to remain ‘empowered’.

When did Micah work? Smith (1984:5) and Alfaro (1973:3) agree that Micah was a prophet of the eighth century, even though Smith (1984:5) argues that specifically Micah worked at the end of the eighth century. This means that for Smith, Micah was written at the end of the eighth century rather than the beginning of the eighth century. Smith (1984:5) goes further by arguing that both Micah and Amos¹¹⁸ were written in the eighth century and that they are similar books in that in both books the authors are defending the poor from being “cheated” by the rich. Hence, the themes of “justice, judgement and grace” are key in the book of Micah (Smith, 1984:4)

5.4.3 What is the message of Micah?

Alfaro (1973:7) argues that there are two major sins that are addressed in the book of Micah, namely: “moral corruption and exploitation”, especially that of the poor (Alfaro, 1973:7). It seems that the rich people are the oppressors of the poor. Alfaro (1973:7) argues that for Micah there are four groups of power forces who “were responsible for the unjust social conditions” (Alfaro, 1973:7). These groups are: Firstly “Political powers, that is, princes, elders, and military officials” (Alfaro, 1973:7). These were politicians who “used their power to steal and abuse¹¹⁹” the poor (Alfaro, 1973:7). This means that political power meant gaining riches at the expense of the poor. Secondly, “Judicial powers” (Alfaro, 1973:7), these are “judges and elders” who manipulated judiciary processes to keep the poor people poorer

¹¹⁶ This is an important point as I study the breakdown of socio-religious cohesion in the book of Micah. Hence, there was no cohesion between leader and the poor in the eighth century (Cf. Limburg, 1988:163)

¹¹⁷ Limburg uses the word ‘cannibalism’ not just literally but rather to refer to how leaders and rich people fed on the poor economically, including stealing the land of the poor (cf. Limburg, 1988:169-173, ‘on rebuking leaders and elites against coveting the land and the property of the poor’)

¹¹⁸ In both cases this dating refers only to parts of the respective books. Precisely what parts belong to this context cannot be discussed in this thesis.

¹¹⁹ Here I think of South Africa’s 1996 Class Project. This is when politicians and their friends used power to make themselves rich while they maintained poverty in the rest of the community.

while they remained rich¹²⁰ (Alfaro, 1973:7). Thirdly, “Religious powers”, here Alfaro (1973:8) means that the religious leaders used religion to ensure that the poor people remain poor and that “their (religious leaders) go was money¹²¹” (Alfaro, 1973:8). Fourthly, “Economic powers” (Alfaro, 1973:8), here “the rich, landowners and merchants deceived, stole and cheated the poor especially with reference to most basic rights and dignity” (Alfaro, 1973). For Alfaro (1973:6) this includes ‘land theft’ by the rich from the poor people. This means that the rich stole land from the poor¹²². The rich fed from the poor. Hence, in this book there is a call for justice and peace.

5.4.4 Ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio religious cohesion in the book of Micah

What is the ideology of Micah? Alfaro (1973:8) the covenant between God and his people is vital in the book of Micah. Hence, Yahweh will remain faithful to his people. For Alfaro this is “God’s *hesed* (steadfast-love)” (1973:8). This means that nothing will make Yahweh hate his people. Yahweh’s covenant to his people will defeat over their weaknesses (Alfaro, 1973:8). However, it is Yahweh’s people that are not faithful to their covenant with Yahweh. They have now become “enemies of God” (Alfaro, 1973:8). And because they are the ‘enemies of God’, they consequently become “enemies of God’s people (the poor)” (Alfaro, 1973:8). This means that in Micah a broken relationship between Yahweh leads to the broken relationship with Yahweh’s people. A broken cohesion with Yahweh leads to a broken cohesion with Yahweh’s people (cf. Alfaro, 1973:8). The leaders and the rich people in Micah have broken their covenant with Yahweh; hence, they exploit the poor.

In relation of what I have written on Deuteronomy, in Micah Yahweh’s covenant with the poor is of paramount importance, so that, Yahweh refers to the poor as “my people” (Limburg, 1988:163). This covenantal emphasis ‘my people’ denotes God’s cohesion and solidarity to the poor people (Limburg, 1988:1663). Besides Yahweh’s faithfulness to his people, He will punish those who are not faithful to the covenant, either with Yahweh or with ‘brother (Alfaro, 1973:63). Hence, there is a theme of judgment in Micah. Alfaro (1973:8) argues that there is a tension between “hope” and “doom” in the book of Micah. There is doom coming for the rich leaders while there is hope for the landless poor people.

¹²⁰ Here I think of how South Africa’s apartheid legitimized the poverty of people of colour while it legitimized the wealth of white people through legislation and polity.

¹²¹ Here I remember how religion was used in South Africa to design and maintain the apartheid. Such that apartheid was seen as ‘Gods will’.

¹²² Land theft is a debate in South Africa today.

The prophet's cry for justice is vital in the ideology of the book of Micah, since the powerful fed on the powerlessness of the poor (Alfaro, 1973:6). Alfaro (1973:6) argues that "judges, priests, and prophets did not condemn the injustices but sold themselves to the system" (*that which perpetuated victimization of the poor, emphasis mine*). Hence, there was a need for justice for the poor people. Therefore, the themes of covenant, *hesed*, cohesion, grace, justice, hope, doom and judgement form part of the ideology of Micah.

5.4.5 Selected Texts in Micah (Chapters 2, 3 & 6)

In this section I will focus on how ideology and socio-religious cohesion is displayed in Micah 2:1-11, 3:1-12 & 6:6-8, 14-15.

Micah 2:1-11

*"2 Woe to those who plan iniquity,
to those who plot evil on their beds!*

*At morning's light they carry it out
because it is in their power to do it.*

*² They covet fields and seize them,
and houses, and take them.*

*They defraud people of their homes,
they rob them of their inheritance.*

³ Therefore, the LORD says:

*"I am planning disaster against this people,
from which you cannot save yourselves.*

*You will no longer walk proudly,
for it will be a time of calamity.*

*⁴ In that day people will ridicule you;
they will taunt you with this mournful song:*

*'We are utterly ruined;
my people's possession is divided up.*

He takes it from me!

He assigns our fields to traitors.'"

⁵ *Therefore you will have no one in the assembly of the LORD
to divide the land by lot.*

False Prophets

⁶ *“Do not prophesy,” their prophets say.
“Do not prophesy about these things;
disgrace will not overtake us.”*

⁷ *You descendants of Jacob, should it be said,
“Does the LORD become^[a] impatient?
Does he do such things?”*

*“Do not my words do good
to the one whose ways are upright?”*

⁸ *Lately my people have risen up
like an enemy.*

*You strip off the rich robe
from those who pass by without a care,
like men returning from battle.*

⁹ *You drive the women of my people
from their pleasant homes.*

*You take away my blessing
from their children forever.*

¹⁰ *Get up, go away!
For this is not your resting place,
because it is defiled,
it is ruined, beyond all remedy.*

¹¹ *If a liar and deceiver comes and says,
‘I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,’
that would be just the prophet for this people!’ (NIV)¹²³*

¹²³ The Hebrew in Micah is notoriously difficult. I can only note that different translations sometimes differ significantly.

In this chapter Micah writes against rich people who stole from the poor people in order to maintain their reaches. Smith (1984:24) accuses these elites as “covenant-breaking”. For Alfaro (1973:8) this covenant breaking is two-fold. This means that it is elite leaders breaking the covenant with Yahweh as well as breaking the covenant with ‘brothers’ (in the Deuteronomic language), since broken cohesion with God leads to a broken cohesion with God’s people (brothers) (cf. Alfaro, 1973:8).

These elites are “landholders and landgrabbers” who took the land of the poor (Alfaro, 1973:22). Micah accuses these elites simply because they took land that was “inherited¹²⁴”. This presents an idea that it may not be totally inappropriate to take land from someone as long as it is “not inheritance”. Here I think of Naboth who refused to grant the king his land since it was an “inheritance”. Naboth’s case for me is clear in that Naboth does not refuse with his land because ‘Yahweh’s land cannot be sold’ but he refuses because he cannot sell the “inherited land”. I think of tribal land and unoccupied land in South Africa. This denotes that land that is not ‘inherited’ can be sold. However, Alfaro (1973:22) does not go that far in his book. Instead he agrees with Brueggemann (2002) on the importance of land in ancient Israel. Alfaro (1973:22) argues that was the gift of God (cf. Brueggemann, 2002) and everybody was understood as “tenant in God’s land¹²⁵”. Hence, land had to be “protected and cared for, as a sacred trust from generation to generation¹²⁶” (Alfaro, 1973:22). This means that land could not be lost by any means, otherwise land loss lead to slavery (Alfaro, 1973:22).

In Micah chapter 2 there are two issues being addressed about “landgrabbing” (Alfaro, 1973:23). Firstly, landgrabbing led to the breakdown of cohesion between Yahweh and his people and with ‘brothers’ since “it is a threat to the socioreligious system based on the covenant traditions of Exodus” (Alfaro, 1973:23). This means that there is a relationship between land and covenant such that ‘landgrabbing’ breaks that relationship since land is granted on condition to faithfulness in Yahweh’s covenant (cf. Miller, 1990). Secondly, “land grabbing was a capital sin, the root of many other sins and injustices” (Alfaro, 1973:23).

¹²⁴ Ideas of land inheritance

¹²⁵ Cf. Brueggemann (2002) on idea of human beings as “tenants in God’s nahalah” (Brueggemann, 2002). Allen (1976:288-289) agrees with Brueggemann (2002) on this idea of Yahweh as owner of all land. Allen (1976:288-289) argues that in ancient Israel “there was a principle that land was Yahweh’s and that the people received it as a sacred trust which was handed down from generation to generation, from heir to heir” (Allen, 1976:288-289). Allen (1976:289) also cites “Naboth’s vineyard” as an example of land not for sale due to the idea that it is a ‘sacred gift’ from Yahweh and it must be “handed down from heir to heir” (Allen, 1984:289).

¹²⁶ Smith (1984:24) argues that land was granted to each tribe and family in Israel and it was “not transferrable” (Smith, 1984:24).

Hence, Alfaro (1973:23) argues that in Micah 2:15 the punishment of landgrabbing is death sentence. This means a broken relationship with Yahweh. Landgrabbers break cohesion with the poor and with Yahweh since it is Yahweh who provides land (cf. Miller, 1990 & Brueggemann, 2002).

In Micah chapter two those who are in the positions of power use their power “for their own benefit” (Alfaro, 1973:24). They use their power and laws to oppress the poor (Alfaro, 1973:25). Those who are in the positions of power “covet, seize, and take away, they oppress a man and his house and inheritance” (Alfaro, 1973:24). Here we see how power, abundance and access to land leads to greed and breakdown of cohesion with ‘brothers’. Hence, Yahweh in Micah will punish those with positions of power by granting the poor a “new division of land” while he casts the rich away (Alfaro, 1973). Here it seems that the rich gain land at the expense of the poor and Yahweh restores land to the poor at the expense of “casting away the rich” (Alfaro, 1973:24). It seems that “land grant” comes with the breakdown of cohesion, either between Yahweh and his people or the breakdown of cohesion between the rich and the poor. This means that the presence or the absence of ‘gift of land’ does not guarantee cohesion in Micah. “Landgrabbers prosper at the expense of the poor” (Alfaro, 1973:24). This means that the rich gain land through destroying cohesion with the poor. “The rich do not care about God nor neighbour, they are outside the realm of the Covenant” (Alfaro, 1973:31). This means that landgrabbing happens when there is no covenant relationship either with Yahweh or with ‘brothers’. The rich break their covenant with Yahweh, hence their covenant with their ‘brothers’ is broken. Simultaneously, Yahweh will give the land back to ‘the poor’ by destroying the rich (breaking cohesion with the poor).

Smith (1984:24) argues that the major sin addressed in Micah 2 was “covetousness” (Smith, 1984:24). Here the rich farmers were not sleeping every night trying to find ways of stealing from small farmers (Smith, 1984:24). This means that the rich farmers made it their business to destroy the small farmers. Since, we cannot talk about land without talking about food, Smith (1984:24) argues that “these land monopolizers controlled all the instruments of production in that agricultural society”. This means that the rich farmers monopolized land so that they can control a huge portion of food. This also denotes that the motive of landgrabbers was food and agricultural control. Here we see a relationship between covetousness, land theft and food in Micah chapter 2.

Limburg (1988:169) provides the following title for Micah 2:1-11, “the more you have, the more you want” (Limburg, 1988:169). The people Micah writes to have almost everything but they will do anything to get more, “no matter who is hurt along the way” (Limburg, 1988:170). This means that these leaders Micah writes to, do not mind in achieving more than they have even if they break relationship with Yahweh or others. Hence, Limburg (1988:170) argues that in Micah 2:2 the major word is “covet” (Limburg, 1988:170). Coveting against others was the heartbeat of everything these leaders did (cf. Limburg, 1988:170 citing Mays). Micah quotes from the Decalogue’ law that admonishes Israelites not to covet (Limburg, 1988:170). Notwithstanding, these leaders Micah writes to covet houses and fields (which amounts to food security). Therefore, in Micah two there is a relationship between covenant, law, land (which amounts to food) and the breakdown of cohesion. This means that the leaders broke their covenant with Yahweh by coveting and stealing the land and food of the poor¹²⁷. Since they got land by stealing from the poor, their cohesion with the poor is broken.

Micah 3:1-12

“1 Then I said, “Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel. Should you not embrace justice,

2 you who hate good and love evil; who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones;

3 who eat my people’s flesh, strip off their skin and break their bones in pieces; who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot?”

4 Then they will cry out to the LORD, but he will not answer them. At that time he will hide his face from them because of the evil they have done.

5 This is what the LORD says: “As for the prophets who lead my people astray, they proclaim ‘peace’ if they have something to eat, but prepare to wage war against anyone who refuses to feed them.

6 Therefore night will come over you, without visions, and darkness, without divination. The sun will set for the prophets, and the day will go dark for them.

7 The seers will be ashamed and the diviners disgraced. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God.”

¹²⁷ Since according to Brueggemann (2002) Israelites are tenants in God’s *nahalal*, the leaders in Micah chapter 2 did not only take the land from the poor but they took the land that belonged to Yahweh. Therefore, land coveting and theft in Micah does not only lead to a broken cohesion with the poor but also to a broken relationship with Yahweh, since all land belong to Yahweh.

8 But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin.

9 Hear this, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel, who despise justice and distort all that is right;

10 who build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with wickedness

11 Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they look for the LORD's support and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us." (NIV).

In chapter 3 the breaking down of cohesion with Yahweh and with the poor 'brothers' is displayed in the language of food, eating and agriculture (Limburg, 1988:175). "These leaders, *tear, eat, flay, break and chop 'my people'* as one would slaughter an animal to be eaten" (Limburg, 1988:175). The words such as 'tear, eat, chop' are food and meat slaughtering terms. Food and eating terms are used to symbolize the broken solidarity between these leaders and Yahweh and these leaders and the poor people. Allen (1976:307) argues the reference to "eating people or eating their flesh" in Micah 3:3, "was a common expression for oppression" (Allen, 1976:307). This denotes that 'eating people's flesh' was the oppression of the people by their leaders. This indicates that the relationship between leaders and the people was broken. However, Allen (1976:308) observes that Micah uses a language of sympathy, hence, he refers to poor Israelites¹²⁸ (Allen, 1976:308). This denotes cohesion between Micah and the suffering Israelites. It is because of the solidarity of Micah to Israelites that he refers to the "cannibal" behaviour of leaders (Allen, 1976L308). Therefore, the metaphor of cannibalism is used to express the broken cohesion between leaders and the poor Israelites. Eating (the flesh of people) is used to demonstrate how leaders inhumanly oppressed the people. Therefore, 'eating' is vital as a metaphoric language that denotes the broken cohesion between 'brothers'. Hence, "leaders butcher and batten on their victims like cannibals" (Allen, 1976:308). Here there is definition no solidarity and cohesion between leaders and 'brothers'.

Simundson (2005:313) expands on the idea of 'leaders eating the flesh of people. Simundson (2005:313) argues that Micah 3:3 displays "the viciousness of the shocking language"

¹²⁸ Simundson (2005:313) agrees with (Allen, 1976:308) that the mentioning of the term 'my people' is Micah's "identification with those who are severely abused". Therefore, for both Simundson (2005:313) and (Allen, 1976:308) the term 'my people' does not refer to cohesion between the people and Yahweh but rather it refers to the cohesion between Micah and the people.

(Simundson, 2005:313). This means that what is taking place in Micah 3:3 is not an ordinary occurrence. The reference to eating the flesh of people “sounds like cannibalism or the work of an animal predator or description of what a butcher does in preparing meat for the cook” (Simundson, 2005:313). However, for Simundson (2005:313) what makes this shocking is that this time “skins, flays, breaks the bones, and chops up into little pieces the flesh of humans, not animals” (Simundson, 2005:313). This means that this time the butcher does not chop animal meat for human consumption but rather the butcher chops and cooks human meat. What does this mean? Simundson (2005:313) is quick to suggest that the reference to eating human flesh in Micah 3:3 is metaphoric “and not literal” (Simundson, 2005:313). It denotes “uncaring, insensitive, hurtful violent ways in which the powerful bring grief to those who cannot defend themselves” (Simundson, 2005:313). This means that these cannibalistic acts mentioned in Micah 3:3 are a metaphoric demonstration of how the powerful leaders oppressed the powerless people they were leading. Therefore, eating the flesh of people is the demonstration of broken cohesion between leaders and the people.

Hillers (1984:43) agrees with Simundson (2005:313) on the idea that cannibalism in Micah 3:3 should not be taken literal but rather, the text should be taken metaphorically. Hillers (1984:43) begins by Micah 3:3 deals with “the greed” of the leader that affects “the weak” (Hillers, 1984:43). This is the situation where the ‘powerful’ oppress the ‘weak’. Hillers (1984:43) argues that this is the “figure of cannibalism” (Hillers, 1984:43). He refers to it as hyperbole¹²⁹ (Hillers, 1984:43). This means that for Hillers (1984:43) the cannibal activities mentioned in Micah 3:3 are only a figure of speech. This confirms the view suggested by Simundson (2005:313) that these cannibal activities should not be taken literal. Hillers (1984:43) compares this figure of cannibalism committed by the greedy leaders to the “charge against the shepherds in Ezekiel 34:2-3” (Hillers, 1984:43). “You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the sheep” (Hillers, 1984:43 on Ezekiel 34:2-3). For Hillers (1984:43) the figure of eating and slaughtering is used to indicate the broken cohesion between spiritual leaders and the people. Hillers (1984:43) also makes reference to Habakkuk 3:14 which says “you devour the poor in secret” (Hillers, 1984:43 on Habakkuk 3:14). This breakdown of cohesion between leaders and people is the same as the one in Micah 3:3, however, in Micah 3:3 it is expressed in the metaphoric language of cannibalism. As a result, Yahweh will vindicate his people by

¹²⁹ Hyperbole is “the figure of speech that uses exaggeration” (<https://www.google.com/search?source=hp&ei=16>, accessed: 05 March 2018).

releasing judgment on the unjust leaders in Micah 3:6-11 (Hillers, 1984:43). This judgment indicates the broken cohesion between Yahweh and the leaders.

On the other hand, Alfaro (1973:31) notes the term ‘my people’ that is used by Yahweh when he refers to the poor people. This denotes an unbroken cohesion between Yahweh and the poor people. Yet the term ‘my people’ denotes the broken cohesion between Yahweh and the leaders, since the leaders ‘tear, eat, flay, break and chop’ Yahweh’s people (my people). Therefore in Micah 3:1-4 the image of food and eating is used to display the breakdown of cohesion between Yahweh and leaders and between leaders and the poor.

In Micah 3:5-8 pastoral and farming language is utilized to denote the greed of the leaders (Limburg, 1988:176). The leaders are referred to as unfaithful shepherds who are greedy (1988:176). These leaders will do whatever it takes for them to “have properties for weekends and vacations in the country, with fresh air, a few houses and a marvellous view” (Limburg, 1988:176). This means that these leaders are self-centred rather than being people-centred. These leaders are “shepherds that lead the flock to the wilderness rather than to greener pastures” (1988:176). Even here the terms ‘wilderness’ and ‘greener pastures¹³⁰’ call up pastoral and food images. The term ‘greener pastures’ also connotes food. Therefore, the image of food is used to denote the broken cohesion between the leaders and the poor, since the leader do not lead the poor to ‘greener pastures’ but rather to the ‘wilderness’.

In Micah 3:9-12 there is also a usage of food and farming language to refer to the restoration of Zion (Limburg, 1988:178). “Zion shall be plowed. “Jerusalem shall become a heap” (Limburg, 1988:178). The word ‘plowed or plow’ agriculturally used to refer to vegetation farming. It is a language of food and vegetation in the farming context. Therefore, the language of food and farming is used to denote the restoration of Zion. This is also Micah’s restoration of city life, since ‘Jerusalem shall become a heap’ and that there will be agricultural production and food security.

Micah 6:6-8, 14 &15

“6. With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7. Will the Lord be pleased

¹³⁰ Here I think of Psalm 23 where the term ‘greener pastures’ denote provision of food.

with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8. He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. 14. You will eat and not be satisfied, your stomach will be empty. You will store up but save nothing, because what you save I will give to the sword. 15. You will plant and not harvest, you will press olives but not use the oil on yourselves, you will crush grapes but not drink the wine. (NIV).

Both Limburg (1988:192) and Smith (1984:50-52) note how Micah 6:6-8, 15 use the language of food and farming to refer to justice. Micah's reference to "river of oil" is compared to the power of justice for the poor (Alfaro, 1973:67). The reference to 'oil' denotes the image of food since oil was also used as food. However, Limburg (1988:192) goes further by comparing Micah's "river of oil" to Amos' "flowing, churning stream" to refer to justice (Limburg, 1988:192). All these terms and phrases are food and farming images denoting the power of justice as means of restoring cohesion between leaders and the poor and between leaders and Yahweh. Therefore, even there the image and language of food is used to refer to justice and restoration of socio-religious cohesion.

Mckane (1998:197) demonstrates how food language in verse 14 is used to refer to justice to Yahweh's people and judgment to unjust people. Mckane (1998:197) develops this point by arguing that in verse 14 there is "a sense of 'hunger' conjectured from the context 'you will eat and not be satisfied'" (Mckane, 1998:197). This means that judgment is metaphorized by 'hunger'. For Mckane (1998:197) this hunger leads to "constipation" (Mckane, 1998:197). Mckane cites from the Revised English Bible which says "Your food shall be heavy on your stomach" (Mckane, 1998:197). For Mckane (1998:197) this verse "is a polite way of saying 'you will be constipated'" (Mckane, 1998:197). Therefore, Yahweh will strike the unjust people with hunger that leads to constipation. This is a relationship between hunger, constipation and broken cohesion with Yahweh.

Apart from the use of food imagery to denote socio-religious cohesion, food in Micah 6:15 is also used to denote judgement of unjust leaders who refuse to repent. Their sentence is that they "shall sow and not reap, they shall tread olives and not anoint themselves with oil, they shall possess grapes and not drink wine" (Smith, 1984:52). Therefore, the language of food is used to denote the broken cohesion between Yahweh and leaders on the Day of Judgment (or in eschatological terms). Hence, 'they sow but not reap, they have grapes but do not drink

wine, and they have olives but cannot anoint themselves (Smith, 1984:52). Therefore, food image is referenced as sowing and reaping, olives, oil, grapes and wine. All these food images refer to judgment.

Waltke (2007:403) expands on Micah 6:15 with special reference to how the “language of judgement moves from loss of animals to loss of crops” (Waltke, 2007:403). This means that judgment is expressed in the language of food rather than the language of animals. Here again, food metaphors are used to demonstrate judgement. Waltke (2007:4403) notes how “agricultural activities such as ‘will sow again’ and ‘you will harvest’ are used to refer to ‘loss of life’ in the context of judgment” (Waltke, 2007:403). In verse 15a of chapter six there is a “shift to the loss of grain in spring harvest” (Waltke, 2007:403), while in verse 15a of chapter six there a mentioning of “loss of oil and wine in the harvest” (Waltke, 2007:405). This means that the implementation of judgement is manifested in a loss of food products such as ‘grain, oil and wine’. Hence, the language of food is used to refer to judgement¹³¹. The other food language used is found in the phrase “You will not drink” (Waltke, 2007:404). This phrase “is the climatic fourth repetition of the divine curse upon the judged” (Waltke, 2007:404). This means that the phrase ‘you will not drink’ indicates the curse that Yahweh is going to cast on those he will judge. Here the curse of judgment is expressed as the absence of ability to ‘drink’. Here ‘not being able to drink’ is used as a curse for those whom Yahweh will judge. Therefore, the absence of food is used to confirm the broken cohesion between Yahweh and his people.

Waltke (2007:412) also notes the repetition of a phrase “You will.....but you will not.....” (Waltke, 2007:412). Even in these phrases food language is used. Hillers as cited in Waltke (2007:412) suggests that these are “futility curses¹³²” (Hillers in Waltke, 2007:412). These are ‘futility curses’ in that ‘they plant but not harvest’ (cf. Hillers in Waltke, 2007:412): the normal outcomes of human activities are absent. Hence, Waltke (2007:412) argues that “in verse 14A, this entails eating without being satisfied, while verse 14B is about bringing birth without producing offspring” (Waltke, 2007:412). This means that food, eating and not being

¹³¹ Waltke (2007:403) argues that the mentioning of “grapes and olives” can be related to Martin Luther King’s famous ‘I have a dream’ speech (Waltke, 2007:403). This means that the eschatological vision of Martin Luther was derived from Micah in terms of using food metaphors and language to refer to hope and judgement. Martin Luther used food metaphors to inspire people to the coming prosperous America, the land of ‘grapes and olives’.

¹³² Hillers (1984:82) argues that the “futility curses” in Micah 6:14-15 are the same as those mentioned in “Deuteronomy 28:30-31 and 38-40, with briefer examples in Leviticus 26:26 and in the Prophets, Hosea 4:10 ‘They shall eat and not be satisfied, they shall play the harlot but not increase’” (Hillers, 1984:82).

satisfied are to denote broken cohesion with Yahweh. Those who have no cohesion with Yahweh will “eat and not be satisfied” (Waltke, 2007:412). Therefore, there is a relationship between food and broken cohesion with Yahweh in the book of Micah. Hillers (1984:82) puts it more clearly when he argues that the futility curses “were coming because the Israelites had broken their covenant with God” (Hillers, 1984:82). This means futility curses are a result of a broken covenant with Yahweh. To break a covenant with Yahweh leads to futility curses, that includes the idea of ‘eating and not being satisfied’. Therefore, there is a link between broken cohesion with Yahweh and food insecurity. In fine, a broken cohesion with Yahweh leads to food insecurity in terms of Micah 6:14-15.

In verse 15 of Micah six there is also a mentioning of “plagues, sword and loss of food due to war, not drought” (Waltke, 2007:412). This means that the loss of food will not be a result of natural disaster but rather food will be lost because of war between Yahweh’s people. This indicates that food will be lost because of broken cohesion between ‘brothers’. Therefore, there is a relationship between food and broken cohesion between Yahweh’s people. The broken cohesion with ‘brothers’ leads to loss of food (cf. Waltke, 2007:412). Hence, “they will eat and not be satisfied” (Waltke, 2007:412).

Micah 6:6-8 also mentions “*hesed*¹³³ (steadfast love and loyalty)” (Limburg, 1988:192). This *hesed* is used to denote the faithfulness between Yahweh and his people as well as loyalty between people (Limburg, 1988:192). Therefore, there is a need for this *hesed* in order to build socio-religious cohesion. Hence, Hillers (1984:79) argues that “justice and kindness are broad terms expected from those who have a social bond such as covenant with Yahweh” (Hillers, 1984:79). This means that ‘justice’ and ‘kindness’ mentioned in Micah 6:8 are covenantal values that are expected to those who have cohesion with Yahweh. Hillers (1984:79) notes that specifically “love fits in the covenant” (Hillers, 1984:79). Therefore, love confirms the covenant that Yahweh had with his people.

There is also a quest for “walking humbly” (Limburg, 1988:192). The idea of ‘walking’ may have been derived from a pastoral context of a shepherd. Waltke (2007:394) explains this idea of ‘walking humbly’ as denoting “a covenant solidarity with Yahweh” (Waltke,

¹³³ Limburg (1988:192) argues that *hesed* “when used of human relationships, it means love with a strong element of loyalty, such as that between a husband and wife or between friends”. Yet Limburg (1988:192) also argues that *hesed* “when used of the human relationship with God, it again means love-loyalty, steadfast-love”. This means that Micah uses both implications of *hesed* in Chapter 6:6-8

2007:394). This means that to ‘walk’ with Yahweh indicates ‘solidarity’ and/or ‘cohesion’ with him. Walking with Yahweh is behaving in ways that please Yahweh. Therefore, ‘walking’ indicates religious cohesion with Yahweh. Hillers (1984:79) puts the idea of ‘walking’ this way, to “‘walk with’ means to ‘live in communion with’” (Hillers, 1984:79). The idea of ‘living in communion with’ denotes religious cohesion with Yahweh.

5.4.6 The relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion in Amos

I will now focus on the relationship between ideology, food and socio-religious cohesion in Amos.

5.4.6.1 Background of Amos

Who is Amos? Mays (1969:1) holds that Amos was a prophet “in the middle decades of the eighth century”. This means that Amos and Micah were prophets almost in the same time in history (cf. Smith, 1984:5). It is apparent that Amos was a prophet in the time of King Uzziah (Mays, 1969:1). Amos hailed from a town called Tekoa, “a town in the hill country of Judah” (Mays, 1969:3). He went to the land of Judah to carry his missiological task (Mays, 1969:3). This background is vital since it shows that Amos did not come from an opulent background but rather from a country background. Because of this, he identified with the poor people. Mays (1969:3) notes that Amos “was a sheep-breeder before he became a prophet” (Mays, 1969:3). However, this does not mean that Amos was poor. Instead it suggests that he understood leadership and was a “respected man of his community” (Mays, 1969:3). He is a man that was very much involved in the agricultural setup. Hence, food and the pastoral ‘Sitz Im Leben’ (Life situation) are very important in the book of Amos. Terms such as “herdsman, dresser of sycamores, sheepbreeder” are used to refer to Amos’ life (Mays, 1969:3).

What bothered Amos? Amos is perturbed by the “stark contrast between the luxury of the rich and misery of the poor which he repeatedly indicts” (Mays, 1969:3). This means that Amos was bothered by the inequalities between the rich and the poor. Hence, Mays (1969:3) argues that Amos defended the poor against the rich scavengers. The rich people were living an opulent life (Mays, 1969:3) while the poor were being “exploited economically” (Mays, 1969:3). Hubbard (1989:87) agrees with Mays (1969:3) on the idea that Amos was a prophet

who was against the exploitation of the poor by the rich. Hubbard (1989:87) goes further by arguing that Amos was addressing the “abuse of power in the social realm”. This indicates that the rich people and leaders ‘abused’ their power by disempowering the poor. Hence, the rich “conscripted their (the poor) lands, confiscated their goods, violated their women and cheated them in business along the way” (Hubbard, 1989:87). This means that rich people were guilty of land theft, goods and patriarchy. These are the issues that led Amos to write his book. Amos does not blame Yahweh for the poverty that is experienced by the poor but he (Amos) blames “men (not God) for poverty in Israel¹³⁴” (Vengeyi, 2011:224). For instance, the poor “were taken for non-payment slavery” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). This is the breakdown of cohesion between the rich and the poor.

5.4.6.2 What is the message of Amos?

Amos as the messenger of Yahweh was sent by Yahweh to pronounce the “end of Israel” (Mays, 1969:6). This means that the message of Amos is eschatological. Amos is concerned about “the weak, poor, afflicted and the righteous” (Mays, 1969:6). This means that in Deuteronomic terms, Amos is concerned about the well-being of ‘the brothers’. The poor people were “sold into slavery (2:6), dispossessed (2:6, 8:6), exploited (8:5, 5:1) and ignore (6:6)” (Mays, 1969:10). Mostly, the rich and the elites had a fair contribution to the plight of the poor. This means that there was no cohesion between the rich and the poor¹³⁵. Therefore, Amos was the voice of justice during his times¹³⁶ (Mays, 1969:10). In fact, Mays (1969:10) argues that “Amos was Yahweh’s response” to the cries of the poor and the weak (Mays, 1969:10). Amos advocated for “good instead of evil” (Mays, 1969:10). This means that Amos advocated for “justice and righteousness for the weak¹³⁷” (Mays, 1969:10). Amos’ message was not neutral; but rather it was in favour of the poor.

5.4.6.3 Ideology, land (which amounts to food security and socio-religious cohesion in the book of Amos)

¹³⁴ In his article “Zimbabwe poverty is man-made: Demystifying poverty by appealing to the prophetic book of Amos”, Vengeyi (2011) argues that just as in the times of Amos, poverty in Zimbabwe is caused by selfish leaders and not by God or the poor” (Vengeyi, 2011:225)

¹³⁵ Escobar (1995:169) notes that the “corporate sin” of the rich “led to the state of hopelessness for the socially marginalized” (Escobar, 1995:169). Therefore, the unfaithfulness of the rich had produced the marginalization of the poor.

¹³⁶ Wax (2013) argues that Amos deals with “the widespread of injustices”. This means “lack of concern for the basic humanity of the poor” (Wax, 2013:106).

¹³⁷ Escobar (1995:169) argues that in the book of Amos the words “justice” and “righteousness” are used interchangeably. Hence, there is a call that says “seek me and live” (Escobar, 1995:169). To ‘live’ means living a meaningful life including the provision of food (Escobar, 1995:169),

What is the ideology of Amos? How is the ideology of Amos related to land and socio-religious cohesion in Amos? Mays (1969:7) argues that Amos does not really address directly the covenant between Yahweh and his people, the Israelites. This means that in the book of Amos the covenant between Yahweh and the Israelites is not addressed directly as in the book of Micah (cf. Alfaro, 1973:8). However, Mays (1969:7) argues the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and Israelites lead Yahweh to refer to Israelites as “my people” (1969:7). It seems to me that Mays (1969:7) believes that the term ‘my people’ is a covenantal term, in that it confirms a covenantal relationship between Yahweh and Israelites. Hence, Amos had to rebuke the rich people who were building their mansions by means of dispossessing the poor (Mays, 1968:11). Amos spoke against those rich people since the Lord refers to the poor Israelites as ‘my people’. Therefore, since the poor Israelites are ‘Yahweh’s people’, anyone who dispossesses them will not have cohesion with Yahweh.

How does faithfulness to the covenantal relationship with Yahweh (and with brothers) affect ‘the gift of land’ (which amounts to food provision) in the book of Amos? In the book of Amos there is a plea to “seek the Lord and live¹³⁸ (Amos 5:6)” (Escobar, 1995:172). This means that ‘to live’ is possible only when Israelites “seek the Lord” (Escobar, 1995:172). To live a faithful covenantal life with Yahweh will bring ‘blessing’ not only to Israel but “consequently the *nations* of the earth would be blessed” (Escobar, 1995, 170). The nations include other nations beyond Israel. It also includes the poor (brothers). Therefore, “renewed covenant” between Israel and Yahweh brings ‘life’ (which includes land and food) to Israelites but beyond its confines including the “nations of the earth (brothers)” (Escobar, 1995:170). This denotes that there is a relationship between covenant and blessing in Amos. Such that failure to keep the covenant with Yahweh leads to the destruction of justice.

The relationship between land and socio-religious cohesion is also vital in the book of Amos. In that those who have a broken cohesion with Yahweh build their “estates by dispossessing the peasants” (Mays, 1969:11). This means that because the rich have no cohesion with Yahweh, they consequently have no cohesion with the poor. Hence, these rich people are

¹³⁸ In the context of Escobar (1995:171) to ‘seek the Lord’ means to have a “renewed covenantal relationship with God” and to ‘live’ means to be “blessed” including receiving the ‘gift of land’ and food (Escobar, 1995:171). While Wax (2013:165) argues that “the term ‘seek me’ suggests ways in which Yahweh could be sought” and that “Yahweh avails himself to those who seek him” (Wax, 2013:165). This call of seeking Yahweh is an “imperative call” in the book of Amos (Wax, 2013:165).

greedy and self-centred¹³⁹ (Mays, 1969:11). They steal the land of the poor (Mays, 1969:11). There is definitely no cohesion between the rich and the poor in Amos. Access to power, land and resources broken down the cohesion between the rich and the poor. The rich are willing to kill the poor in order to increase their riches (Mays, 1969:11). Here we find the presence of land (which amounts to food) compromises the cohesion with 'brothers'. It seems that the more the rich have land, food and resources, the more they want – more to the extent of sacrificing solidarity with the poor (cf. Alfaro, 1973). The rich sacrificed the poor and their solidarity with them (the poor) as well as the cohesion with Yahweh. I find the presence of land and food as a breaker of cohesion between the rich and the poor in Amos but also a breaker of cohesion between the rich and Yahweh. In brief, the breakdown of socio-religious cohesion.

Vengeyi (2011:229) also notes what he calls “Amos’ idea of ‘selling the poor for a pair of sandals” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). This to me is the commercialisation of the poor. These were the rich people getting wealth the expense of the life of the poor. The rich would sell the poor to slavery and/or they would make decisions that would impoverish the poor further, while the rich are getting richer. This means that there was no solidarity between the rich and the poor to such an extent that Vengeyi (2011:229) argues that “the law served the rich and not the poor” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). This is a clear indication that the law was in favour of the rich and not the poor. Here we see the law becoming a vehicle for the breaking down of cohesion between the rich and the poor. The rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer (Folarin & Olanisebe, 2014:243). Vengeyi (2011:229) also speaks about the difference between the quality of food eaten by the rich and the poor. He argues that the rich people would eat expensive food like “wheat” (Vengeyi, 2011:229), while the poor were eating cheap and low quality food such as “barley” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). Here I note how the quality of food would confirm the broken cohesion between the rich and the poor, specifically between 'brothers'. Therefore, not only access to power, land and property confirm the broken cohesion between 'brothers' but even access to quality and abundance of food confirmed the broken cohesion between the rich and the poor. Hence, Vengeyi (2011:229) speaks about the rich “eating at the expense of the poor” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). This means that for a rich person to eat well, the poor person must starve or lose his or her land. Here eating happens at the expense of not eating or land loss.

¹³⁹ It is not always the case that broken cohesion with Yahweh leads to broken cohesion with the poor, in some cases it is the opposite. In that broken cohesion with others and/or the poor leads to broken cohesion with Yahweh. It is not clear which one comes first.

5.4.6.4 Selected Texts in the book of Amos

What is the relationship between food security and socio-religious cohesion in these selected texts? In this section I will deal with specific texts in chapter 2, 5, 8 and 9. These texts will reveal the relationship between ideology, food and socio-religious cohesion

Amos 2:8

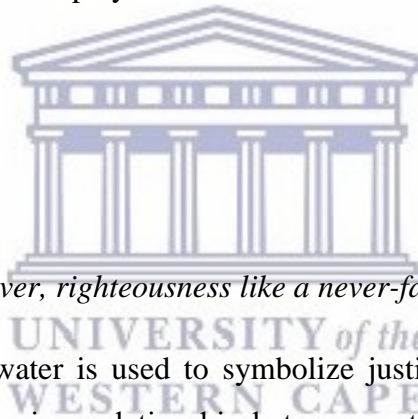
“They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. In the house of their god they drink wine taken as fines” (NIV)

In chapter 2 verse 8, Amos notes the “social gatherings of the rich – drinking bouts” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). This could imply that the rich would have their own gathering where the poor are excluded. If so, it suggests that the poor were not invited in these ‘social gatherings’. In fact, Vengeyi (2011:229) notes that “These feasts were literally held at the expense of the poor” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). This connotes that these feasts were a result of ‘stealing’ from the poor. In fact Vengeyi (2011:229) argues that “Amos 2:8 confirms that both cloaks of these parties and the wine they drank were obtained by the impoverishment and distress of the poor” (Vengeyi, 2011:229). It is clear that all the food and the wine these rich people drank were from the poor. This is eating through stealing from the poor, which is, eating and drinking by means of breaking solidarity and cohesion with the poor (brothers). This means for these rich people to eat, the poor people must starve and or lose land. Eating for the rich means starving or loss of land for the poor. Eating for the rich means the breakdown of cohesion with the poor.

Simundson (2005:172) develops further the point of the rich living at the expense of the poor. He notes how the “rich have corrupted justice, at the expense of the poor and powerless” (Simundson, 2005:172). This notes the broken cohesion between the rich and the poor in verses 6-8. This broken cohesion between the rich and poor would lead to the rich “acquiring property” of the poor (Simundson, 2005:172). This shows a relationship between broken cohesion and land/property. In verse 8, there is a use of wine at the expense of the poor (Simundson, 2005:174). The wine that the rich were drinking in their houses was “taken from the fines they got unfairly from the poor” (Simundson, 2005). This means that the rich drank wine at the expense of the poor. The poor people would be fined so that the rich can take that money and buy expensive wine. Here I think of Gauteng’s E-Tolls in South Africa, where

politicians and business people are using the E-Toll money from the poor and middle-class in order to maintain their wealth and to keep the poor people poor. Therefore, wine is used in verse eight of chapter two to denote a broken cohesion between the rich and the poor. This is a relationship between food and broken cohesion with ‘brothers’.

Mays (1969:47) argues that “‘wine gained from fines’ must refer to a payment in kind exacted from debtors” (Mays, 1969:47). This means that there were fines that were taken from the transgressors of the law¹⁴⁰. Mays (1969:47) continues to argue that this was how the poor people “suffered under the power of the rich who used legal process to their own advantage” (Mays, 1969:47). This was a clear method employed by the rich to “feast on the profits gained from the exploitation of the needy” (Mays, 1969:47). This means that the rich people would enjoy feasts with money they robbed from the poor. This is a clear demonstration of the broken cohesion between the rich and the poor [brothers]. Food language [wine] is employed to display the broken cohesion between the rich and the poor [brothers].



Amos 5:24

“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream” (NIV)

In Amos 5:24 the image of water is used to symbolize justice (Escobar, 1995:171). This means that in Amos 5:24 there is a relationship between water and justice, in that “justice shall flow like a river” (Escobar, 1995:171). Therefore, “the image of waters is used for justice” (Escobar, 1995:171). To emphasize this idea of water and justice, Escobar (1995:171) utilizes Isaiah 45:8 where “water and showers from heaven” are used to symbolize justice. Therefore, there is a relationship between food (water) and justice, in that water is used to denote justice. This justice is for the poor (brothers). This means that water also is used to bring cohesion between the rich and the poor (brothers).

Mays (1969:108) agrees with Escobar (1995:171) on the relationship between water and justice. Mays (1969:108) argues that Amos 5:24 is “the demand for justice (*mishpat*) and righteousness (*tsedaqa*)” (Mays, 1969:108). This means that water is used as a symbol of both justice and righteousness. Specifically, Amos 5:24 is “an announcement of judgement”

¹⁴⁰ Hammershaimb (1970:49) notes that “the payments to the temple prostitutes were extorted from the poor” (Hammershaimb, 1970:49).

(Mays, 1969:108). This means that justice and righteousness in Amos 5:24 will come in the form of judgment. Therefore, water is used to denote judgment of those who exploit the poor. This means that the image of water to denote broken relationship between Yahweh and the rich leaders, since Yahweh will judge them¹⁴¹.

What is the meaning behind the image of water in Amos 5:24? Mays (1969:109) argues that Amos was “familiar with open country” (Mays, 1969:109). This means that Amos was aware of country living where there would be scarcity of water. Hence, “justice must roll down like the floods after the winter rains and persist like those few wadis whose streams do not fail in the summer draught” (Mays, 1969:109). Since, water was needed in both winter and summer, therefore justice is also needed. This brings ideas of water as symbol of life and justice as life (Mays, 1969:108).

Amos 8:1-2

“1. This is what the Sovereign Lord showed me: a basket of ripe fruit. 2. “What do you see, Amos”? He asked. “A basket of fruit”, I answered. Then the Lord said to me, “The time is ripe for my people Israel, I will spare them no longer” (NIV).

Amos chapter 8 begins with the vision of “basket of summer fruit¹⁴²” (Hubbard, 1989:218). Hubbard (1989:218) argues that this is not just a basket of fruit but rather it is the Hebrew word “*qayish*” which means “summer season” (Hubbard, 1989:218). During the summer season of eighth century Israel, the fruits that would be ready for consumption would be “figs or pomegranates” (Hubbard, 1989:218). Hubbard (1989:218) argues that the ripe fruit that is mentioned here denotes the end of “compassion” for Israelites and that for Israelites are “ripe for judgement” (Hubbard, 1989:218). This means that the season of the ripe fruit in this text symbolizes “the finality of judgement”, that is the ultimate destruction of cohesion between Yahweh and Israel. Hence, Simundson (2005:220) agrees with Hubbard (1989:218) on the idea that this summer fruit indicates the final judgement that has come. Simundson (2005:220) argues that the “the word summer fruit is nearly the same as the word that means ‘the end’” (Simundson, 2005:220). This means that this summer fruit meant ‘the end’ of

¹⁴¹ Here I use the word ‘judgment’ in the sense that if to Yahweh’s people water is a symbol of life according to Mays (1969:108), then water is a symbol of death to the wicked people. This means judgment to those who oppress Yahweh’s people.

¹⁴² Mays (1969:141) observes that it is possible that “the basket was an offering brought to Bethel on the occasion of Israel’s autumn festival, when the worshippers who came to the sanctuary celebrated the coming of a new year and hoped by their ritual to secure blessing and prosperity in it” (Mays, 1969:141).

unjust people due to judgment. In verse 8 “catastrophe, punishment and death” is symbolized by food (Simundson, 2005:220). Therefore, food is used to denote the broken relationship between Yahweh and his people. In this chapter food indicates the broken cohesion between Yahweh and his people. In this chapter the basket of summer fruit denotes the breakdown of religious cohesion. Hubbard (1989:218) argues that the summer fruit in this text indicates the end of the mercy of Yahweh to Israel. This means that the presence of food in this text represents the end of cohesion between Yahweh and Israel. Here the abundance of food is not a sign of hope.

As noted above, Escobar (1995:171) also argues that water symbolized ‘life’. Here I think of New Testament’s John 4:4-6 where Jesus Christ refers to himself as “the living waters”. This means that if water or river symbolized life, this means that in this text, justice is life and without justice there is no life.

Mays (1969:141) observes that the significance of the vision of the ‘basket of summer fruit’ in Amos “contradicts hope” (1969:141). This means that according to Mays (1969:141) the vision described in Amos 8:1-2 is not the vision of ‘hope’ rather it is a vision of judgement. Mays (1969:141) argues that the message express in Amos 8:1-2 is “end, not beginning, ruin, not renewal” (Mays, 1969:141). This means that ‘the basket of fruit’ in this passage of Amos is about judgment rather than hope, “the end, rather than the beginning” (Mays, 1969:141). The ‘basket of summer fruit’ is used to denote judgment. Therefore, food is used to denote judgment. The language employed in Amos 8:1-2 and the “sound-play on the key-words” reflect Yahweh’s judgment against Israelites. Thus food in the text is used to denote the broken covenant between Yahweh and his people in the context of judgment. This means that food is employed to indicate broken cohesion between Yahweh and his people. In a specific terminology, food is used to indicate the breakdown of religious cohesion.

Amos 9:11-15¹⁴³

“11. “In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins and build it as it used to be, 12. So that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name”, declares the Lord, who will do these things. 13. “The days are coming”, declares the Lord, “when the reaper will be overtaken by the ploughman and the planter by the one treading grape. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from

¹⁴³ Let me note that this pericope is usually taken as not part of the original Amos text.

all the hills. 14. I will bring back my exiled people Israel, they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will make gardens and eat their fruit. 15. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them” says the Lord your God. (NIV)

In 9:11¹⁴⁴ Amos refers to how Yahweh will ‘restore’ the ‘booth’ of Israel (Hubbard, 1989:240). Mays (1969:164) argues that “a booth was a rude structure usually made by setting up a simple frame and spreading branches over it. Booths were used to shelter troops in the field, watchers in vanguard and for pilgrims at the festival of booths or tabernacles” (Mays, 1969:164). Hubbard (1989:240) argues that the mentioning of booth denotes an “agricultural and rural setting” (Hubbard, 1989:340). He further argues that the mentioning of the restoration of ‘booth’ means “a beautiful picture of joyful and abundant fertility in the land” (Hubbard, 1989:240). Therefore, the restoration of ‘booth’ denotes joy and “fertility in the land” (Hubbard, 1989:240). Since there cannot be a restoration of ‘booth’ without land and food, it means that land will be granted to Israelites again and there will be food. Hence, there is an idea of ‘joy and fertility’. Therefore, the restoration of agricultural booths denotes ‘joy and fertility’. Hence, there will be cohesion with Yahweh and with ‘brothers’.

In 9:13 of Amos McKeating (1971:70) notes that “imagery of abundant harvest” that comes unexpectedly (McKeating, 1971:70). This abundant harvest is so extraordinary that men will not be able to finish reaping. Hubbard (1989:243) calls this great harvest “the fecundity of the land”. This is the time where there will be a great fruitfulness. For McKeating (1971:70) this great harvest of fruitfulness denotes an “apocalyptic and eschatological” restoration of Israel (McKeating, 1971:70). This means that in Amos 9:13 food and fruitfulness symbolises the restoration of Israel, since it is Yahweh who restores Israel. Therefore, the restoration of Israel means the restoration of Israel’s cohesion with Yahweh. Therefore, if fruitfulness symbolizes restoration, it means that food and fruitfulness in the text symbolizes the restoration of cohesion with Yahweh. Food and fruitfulness denotes cohesion with restoration Yahweh rather than the destruction of cohesion. Therefore, there is a relationship between food and cohesion in this text. In fact both Hubbard (1989:243) and McKeating (1971:70) do agree that this harvest gathering is done by Israelites “men” together (Hubbard, 1989:243 & McKeating, 1971:70). Even though they do the harvest gathering together as men of the region, yet they fail to finish the harvest because of its great abundance. The idea that these

¹⁴⁴ Mays (1969:166) argues that in Amos 9:11 the theme that being addressed is the political renewal of Israel such that “there is restoration of divine blessing, especially land as Yahweh’s gift to his people”.

men harvest together brings a sense of unity, solidarity and cohesion. The abundance of fruit brought them together. Food brought cohesion among men and/or ‘brothers’. Therefore, there is a relationship between food and cohesion with ‘brothers’. Ultimately in Amos 9:13 there is a relationship between the abundance of food and (restored) socio-religious cohesion.

In Amos 9:14 Yahweh uses a covenantal language to refer to Israelites (Hubbard, 1989:244). Yahweh refers to Israel as “my people” and uses the “agricultural language of vineyard” to symbolize the restoration of his people (Hubbard, 1989:244). This means that Amos uses the language of food and vineyards to refer to the covenantal restoration of Israel as “God’s own covenant family” (Hubbard, 1989:244). This means that food is used to symbolize the restoration of Israel as the family of God. This once more denotes the cohesion of Israel with God. Therefore, food is used to symbolize the restoration of Israel’s cohesion with Yahweh¹⁴⁵. Food denotes the restoration of religious cohesion. However, the phrase “God’s covenant family” denotes that as a family, Israelites are in cohesion with one another as ‘brothers’. This means that if Israelites are restored as a ‘family’ there is therefore, unity and cohesion among them. Food, in the form of vineyards, symbolizes such socio-religious cohesion in Amos 9:14.

In Amos 9:15 “the agricultural language such as ‘pluck’ and ‘plant’” are used to denote the restoration of Israel in their land (Hubbard, 1989:244). Therefore the agricultural words ‘pluck’ and ‘plant’ are used to symbolize ‘God’s gift of land’ in Israel (Hubbard, 1989:244, cf. Brueggemann, 2002 & Miller, 1990). This means land restoration is symbolized by agricultural and food language in Amos 9:15. Therefore there is a relationship between food and God’s gift of land in this text. This relationship is not so much more on food production that comes from the land that will be granted to Israelites but rather this relationship is on agricultural food language used to symbolize the restoration of ‘God’s gift of land’ in Israel.

Mays (1969:166) observes that the restoration of Israel’s blessings by Yahweh is expressed in “two motifs, that is, the fertility in the land during each year (v.13) and the security and stability of life throughout the years (vv.14)” (Mays, 1969:166). This means that the motifs of fertility and security are used to indicate the restoration of Israel by Yahweh. This means the language of food through fertility and security is used to refer to the restoration of Yahweh. Mays (1969:167) continues to argue that in Amos 9:13 the reference to “land flowing with milk and honey” denotes “productive land that the year’s rhythm hardly allows time to finish

¹⁴⁵ It is important to note generally in the book of Amos food is used both to judge and to restore.

the work of each season¹⁴⁶” (Mays, 1969:167). According to Mays (1969:167) this vision of abundant fertility and food goes beyond “physical hunger” (Mays, 1969:167). This fertility is about restoration of his covenant with Israel (Mays, 1969:167). Therefore, in Amos 9:13-15 there is a relationship between food and covenant, in that, food is used to indicate restoration of Yahweh’s “covenant promises and blessings” to his people (Mays, 1969:167). Since, in the Deuteronomic context, blessings come as a result of a covenant with Yahweh, then food and fertility in these verses are used to denote restored covenant that Yahweh will renew with his people in the future. Therefore, food in these verses is used to denote the renewed cohesion between Yahweh and his people. The usage of the figure of “planting and uprooting” and “the theme of unending fertility” in verse Amos 9:15 indicate the future renewal of the covenant between Yahweh and his people and “restoration of covenant blessing of Deuteronomy 28” (Mays, 1969:168). Food and ‘unending fertility’ are used to refer to renewed cohesion with Yahweh (Mays, 1969:168).

5.4.7 The relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion in Hosea

I will now focus on the relationship between ideology, food and socio-religious cohesion in Hosea.

5.4.7.1 Background of Hosea

Who is Hosea? Landy (1995:15) argues that Hosea saw “himself as part of a succession of prophets, of which the prototypes are Samuel and Moses”. (Landy, 1995:15). Like other prophets, the duty of Hosea included “chastising, appointing and dismissing rulers” (Landy, 1995:15). This indicates that Hosea had to hold leaders accountable for their leadership actions. As a prophet, Hosea would “hew the forest of disloyalty¹⁴⁷ and injustice” (Landy, 1995:15). This indicates that Hosea was a prophet who emphasized justice and loyalty between Yahweh and his people. Prophet Hosea had a responsibility to remind the Israelites of their covenantal “relationship with Yahweh” (Landy, 1995:15).

¹⁴⁶ Mays (1969:167) observes that “in the Palestinian agricultural cycle barley and wheat ripen for harvest in April-May, grapes are gathered for vintage in August-September, ploughing is done after the rains come in October, and sowing follows” (Mays, 1969:167). Therefore, in the future the fruit would be so ripe and ready for harvest that “the harvester cannot finish before time for ploughing, and pressing out the grapes to make wine will not be finished when sowing time arrives” (Mays, 1969:167). Hammershaimb (1970:141) there will be so much fertility to the extent that that “the work of ploughing and the work of reaping will catch up with one another, and similarly the pressing of grapes and sowing” (Hammershaimb, 1970:141).

¹⁴⁷ For Hosea, this loyalty would be *hesed* (cf. Davies, 1993:22 on *’emet* (faithfulness) and *hesed*, (loyalty)).

In terms of the Hosea's social status, he was, according to some, "considered to be a member of the urban elite, probably close to royal circles, primarily concerned with the affairs of his class" (Landy, 1995:16). This means that Hosea was not from a rural setting like Amos but instead he was coming from a wealthy background. Whether that means Hosea stood for the people of his class or not, I have no doubt that he stood for justice for all, though Landy (1995:16) suggests that Hosea was "primarily concerned with the affairs of his constituency" (Landy, 1995:16). However, Wolff (1974:xxii) observes that "there is no evidence of the places in which Hosea lived and worked, except for the fact that he (Hosea) was active in the Northern Kingdom" (Wolff, 1974:xxii). This indicates according to Wolff (1974:xxii) the idea of where Hosea "lived and worked" is not clear in the book of Hosea (Wolff, 1974:xxii). Hence, it is not easy to be certain of his social status as expressed by Landy (1995:16). Notwithstanding, Wolff (1974: xxii) also notes that the cities Hosea names are "chiefly in the regions of Ephraim and Benjamin and that Hosea does not mention Jerusalem or any other Judean city" (Wolff, 1974: xxii). This means that since Hosea was concerned about the cities, including those of Ephraim and Benjamin, he (Hosea) also had city life experience. Hence, Wolff (1974: xxii) suggests that Hosea's mentioning "of the 'watchman' of Ephraim in Hosea 9:8, 5:8 and 8:" suggests that Hosea was a city man who would "address public gatherings, for example, at the city gate" (Wolff, 1974: xxii). There is no mentioning of Hosea as a rural Prophet in Wolff (1974: xxi-xxii). However, Wolff (1974: xxii) does observe that in the book of Hosea there is no "mentioning Hosea's birthplace, age or details of his personal life" (Wolff, 1974: xxii). Hence, it may be possible that Hosea had rural life experience too.

When was the book of Hosea written? Davies (1993:13) argues that "the book of Hosea comes from the old Northern Kingdom of Israel before its downfall in 722 BCE". Hence, Davies (1993:13) says "the book of Hosea is unusual in the Old Testament" (Davies, 1993:13). This means that Hosea is different from other prophetic books of the Old Testament. For instance, in the book of Hosea there is no mentioning of Jerusalem and the "royal house of David is mentioned only once" (Davies, 1993:13). The other matter that Davies (1993:13) mentions is that the places mentioned in the book of Hosea are mainly "northern or eastern"¹⁴⁸ (Davies, 1993:13). In the book of Hosea there is evidence of an

¹⁴⁸ "Jezreel, Gilgal, Bethel, Mizpah, Tabor, Shittim, Gibeah, Ramah, Adam, Gilead, Shechem, Samaria, Baal-Peor and Beth-arbel" are some of the places mentioned in Hosea (Davies, 1993:13).

“agricultural economy” (Landy, 1995:16). This means that agriculture was the main business also in northern Israel.

What is the message of Hosea? Landy (1995:20) notes that during the time of Hosea Israelites gave in to “betrayal of the covenant, worship of false gods, and to be seduced by the distractions that Hosea ceaselessly satirizes” (Landy, 1995:20). This means that Israel had broken the covenant with Yahweh and they were worshipping other gods. Landy (1995:20) continues to argue that “*hesed*, justice and faith in Yahweh” are the themes of Hosea (1995:20). Therefore, Landy (1995:18) argues that “knowledge, kindness, love and faithfulness is the goal of the book” (Landy, 1995:18). Such themes would be important if one understands what Landy terms the theme of “the erotic union” of the book (Landy, 1995:18). By ‘ironic union’ Landy (1995:18) refers to the marriage metaphor that is mentioned in Hosea.

5.4.7.2 Ideology, land (which amounts to food security and socio-religious cohesion in the book of Hosea

In terms of the ideology of Hosea, it is important to note that in Hosea what is dominant is “the story of Hosea’s marriage” (Davies, 1993:21). In fact, Davies calls it “the symbolism of marriage” (Davies, 1993:21). This means that marriage that is mentioned in the book of Hosea is not literal but symbolic¹⁴⁹. Davies (1993:21) argues that this symbolic marriage denotes and “portrays the love of God for his people and his reaction to their unfaithfulness in turning to the worship of Baal” (Davies, 1993:21). This means that the marriage in the book of Hosea is a symbolic union that indicates the extent to which Yahweh loves his people and how Yahweh’s people are not faithful to him. Landy (1995:19) mourns the fact that Yahweh is presented as a male in the book of Yahweh and that there book of Hosea is dominated by male characters. However, such matters are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Since the book of Hosea is in the context of marriage, the idea of covenant and/or covenantal love is important as an ideology (Davies, 1993:23). Here Davies refers to Hosea 8:2 “*My God, we-Israel-know you*” (Davies, 1993:23). For Davies (1993:23) this text “expresses a special bond, as between intimate friends, that was believed to exist indissolubly between Israel and their God” (Davies, 1993:23). This means that for Davies, the phrase ‘My God, we Israel know you’ is an indication of a special relationship and amity between Yahweh and his

¹⁴⁹ Landy (1995:18) notes three things in Hosea, that is, “metaphor, mysticism and misogyny” (Landy, 1993:18).

people. Such relationship and friendship is covenantal for Davies (1993:23). That is why Hosea mourns “the breach of the covenant” by Israelites (Davies, 1993:23). There is little doubt that the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his people is a very important ideology in the book of Hosea.

Since there is an ideology of a covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his people, obedience to the law is vital in the book of Hosea (Davies, 1993:23). In this regard, Davies (1993:24) notes a “link between disobedience to the law and the breaking of the covenant” (Davies, 1993:24). This means that the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his people is maintain by obeying the law and is destroyed by disobeying the law. Hence, Davies (1993:24) argues that “covenant-breaking is paralleled by faithlessness” (Davies, 1993:24). In the book of Hosea the covenant is broken only by disobeying the law of Yahweh. Thus there is a mentioning of “murder, stealing and adultery¹⁵⁰” in the book of Hosea (Davies, 1993:24). These three offences break the cohesion with Yahweh. Therefore, the law maintains the special relationship between Yahweh and his people.

In the book of Hosea there is also a view that the broken relationship with Yahweh leads to the broken relationship with others in society (Davies, 1933:23). Hence, Davies (1993:23) cites Hosea 4:1 “*There is no faithfulness or loyalty. And no knowledge of God in the land*”. Here Hosea addresses the absence of “faithfulness (*‘emet*) and loyalty (*hesed*)” among people (Davies, 1993:23). The absence of these values of faithfulness and loyalty are a result of broken relationship with Yahweh.

How do the ideologies of covenant and law affect food security in the book of Hosea? Davies (1993:24) refers to the “knowledge of God”, law and food security in the book of Hosea (Davies, 1993:24). This ‘knowledge of God’ is “knowledge of and obedience to the law” (Davies, 1993:24). This means that the knowledge of God is to know and obey the law. Hence, in the book of Hosea to forget is to disobey the law (Davies, 1993:24). However, Davies (1993:24) argues that there is more to lack of “knowledge of God” than just disobeying the law (Davies, 1993:24). He argues that the lack of ‘knowledge of God’ can “be described as their forgetfulness of Yahweh’s provision for their needs in the past” (Davies, 1993:24). This means that the disobedience to the law does not only lead to broken cohesion

¹⁵⁰ Davies (1993:23) argues that these three offenses “murder, stealing and adultery” are in the Decalogue. Here Davies (1993:23) proves that the law is vital in the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his people.

with Yahweh but also leads to forgetting that Yahweh is the provider of food. I will expand on Hosea 2:8 in the following section.

5.4.7.3 Selected texts in the book of Hosea

What is the relationship between food security and socio-religious cohesion in these selected texts? In this section I will deal with specific texts in chapter 2, 8, and 10. These texts will reveal the relationship between ideology, food and socio-religious cohesion.

Hosea 2:8

“She has not acknowledged that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil, who lavished on her the silver and gold – which they used for Baal” (NIV)

In this text Hosea confirms that food abundance can cause “forgetfulness of Yahweh’s provision for their needs in the past” (Davies, 1993:24). This means that food caused Israelites to “forget” (Davies, 1993:24, cf. McDonalds, 2006b on food and memory). Food caused people to ‘forget’ the knowledge of God (Davies, 1993:24). This ‘knowledge of God’ is Yahweh’s relationship with Yahweh (Davies, 1993:24). This means that food led to Israelites forgetting their relationship with “Yahweh who provides” (Davies, 1993:24). Therefore, in this text there is a relationship between food and forgetting.

Birch (1997:33) notes how in Hosea 2:8 “the question is from whom the gifts of the land come, the Lord or Baal?” (Birch, 1997:33). This means that the main emphasis in Hosea 2:8 is not so much on the unfaithfulness of the woman but rather on ‘forgetting’ who the provider of food is. Hence, judgment is expressed in the language of food (Birch, 1997:33). Hence, Yahweh will “with-hold the gifts of produce from the land (verse 9) or to give failed crops (verse 12)” (Birch, 1997:34). This means that the judgment that Yahweh grants to the unfaithful woman comes in the language of food, that is, lack of food and produce. Yahweh “will make her like a wilderness, and turn her into a parched land, and kill her with thirst” (Birch, 1997:34 on Hosea 2:12). This means that Yahweh’s verdict of judgment comes in the form of infertility in the land. This means that the broken cohesion between Yahweh and Israelites is expressed in the language of food insecurity. Food insecurity is the result of broken cohesion with Yahweh. Hence, for Birch (1997:34) food insecurity is the consequence of “forgetting Yahweh” (Birch, 1997:34). Therefore, ‘forgetting Yahweh’ leads to food

insecurity. Those who ‘forget’ Yahweh will live in the unproductive land and therefore, they will not be able to eat. This is the relationship between forgetting Yahweh and not eating.

Pentiuc (2002:38) observes that the phrase “she did not know” in Hosea 2:8 denotes that “until this time” Israel forgot Yahweh as the provider of the land and food (Pentiuc, 2002:38). This means that Israel for as long as they had food, they did not recognize Yahweh as provider. It is interesting to note the observation of Pentiuc (2002:38) that when Yahweh responds by saying he “will take back his gifts”, Yahweh uses “the first person singular suffix” to refer to his gifts to Israel (Pentiuc, 2002:38). Yahweh refers to his gifts to Israel as “my grain” etc (Pentiuc, 2002:38). This affirms the idea that Yahweh is “the owner and giver of natural goods” (Pentiuc, 2002:38). Hence, Yahweh refers to these gifts “my grain, new wine, wool and flax” (Pentiuc, 2002:38). Therefore, food in this pericope is used to affirm Yahweh as the “owner and giver of natural resources” (Pentiuc, 2002:38).

Hosea 2:21-23

“21. In that I will respond, declares the Lord-

“I will respond to the skies,

And they will respond to the earth,

22. and the earth will respond to the grain,

The new wine and oil,

And they will respond to Jezreel.

23. I will plant her for myself in the land,

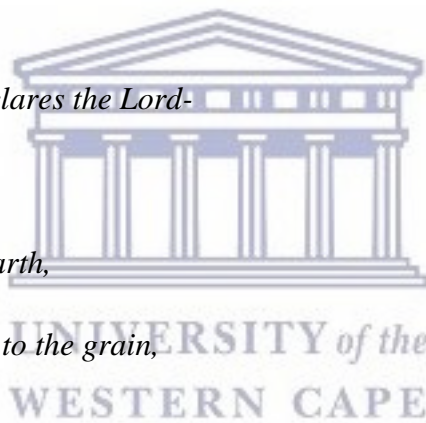
I will show my love to the one I called ‘Not

My loved one’.

I will say to those called ‘Not my people’, You

Are my people,

And they will say, ‘You are my God’”.



In this text food is used as a symbol of both judgement and restoration (Landy, 1995:44). Hence, there is a “repetition of the term ‘I will betroth you’” (Landy, 1995:44). Here food is used to symbolize judgment and revenge for his people. Landy (1995:44) also argues that food is also used in this pericope to denote the implementation of “righteousness, justice, *hesed*, and compassion” (Landy, 1995:44, 45). Here he refers to the part that says “*I will plant her for myself in the land*” (Landy, 1995:44, 45 on Hosea 2:23).

Birch (1997:39) observes that Hosea 2:21-23 deals with “the reversal of the broken relationship between God and Israel symbolized by alienation from the earth and its productivity” (Birch, 1997:39). This means that if broken cohesion between Israel and Yahweh led to unproductive land, then the restoration of the relationship between Israel and Yahweh must lead to productive land. Therefore, if by broken relationship with Yahweh Israelites face food insecurity, then by restoration of the relationship with Yahweh, Israelites are guaranteed food security. The broken covenant with Yahweh is symbolized by lack of food and the restored covenant with Yahweh is symbolized by food provision (Birch, 1997:39). Hence, Yahweh says about Israel, “I will *sow* him for myself in the land” (Birch, 1997:39). Here Yahweh uses the language of food to symbolize the how he has restored the covenant he had with Israel. Hence, Yahweh will ‘sow’ Israel in the land. Therefore, the language of food and planting is used to declare how Israelites are rooted in the covenant with Yahweh. Yahweh says about Israelites “‘You are my people’ and Israel says ‘You are my God’” (Birch, 1997:39). This is the language of the renewed cohesion between Yahweh and his people.

Hosea 10:1

“1. The people of Israel were like a grapevine that was full of grapes. The more prosperous they were, the more altars they built. The more productive their land was, the more beautiful they made the sacred stone pillars they worship. 2. The people whose hearts are deceitful must now suffer for their sins. God will break down their altars and destroy their sacred pillars”.

How is the relationship between food, land and socio-religious cohesion seen in this text? Davies (1993:28) argues that Yahweh blessed Israelites with “abundant fruitfulness in the land, but they responded to this divine blessing only by a multiplication of the external vehicles of religious devotion” (Davis, 1993:28). This means that after Yahweh blessed the land of Israel with ‘abundant fruitfulness’, Israelites in return worshipped other gods. Davies

(1993:28) notes how Israelites turned to foreign “altars and disloyalty” after Yahweh had blessed them with a land that has abundant food (1993:28). This means that in Hosea 10:1 food broke the cohesion of Israelites with their God. Food in this text fosters a broken cohesion with Yahweh. After eating, Israelites worship other goods and they are disloyal¹⁵¹ to Yahweh. Hence, Yahweh in Hosea 10:2 promises to “*breakdown their altars and destroy their sacred pillars*” (Davies, 1993:28 on Hosea 10:2). Since Israelites are not “faithful (*’emet*) and loyal (*hesed*)” to Yahweh after food provision, Yahweh will bring destruction to them (Davies, 1993:23). This means that food provision does not only lead to unfaithfulness and disloyalty but it eventually leads to judgment (breakdown of cohesion with Yahweh). After eating the food of Yahweh, Israelites are disloyal (destruction of the virtue of *hesed*) and eventually Israelites will be “*suffer for their sins*” (Davies, 1993:28). This means that there is a relationship between food, idol worship (cult) and judgment. In that food security will cause them to worship other gods and consequently, Yahweh will judge the disobedient Israelites.

Wolff (1974:173) argues that in Hosea 10:1 the emphasis is on “abundant life in the land” since food for brings life (Wolff, 1974:173). However, this ‘abundant life in the land’ led “Israelites into giving too much attention to her alters” (Wolff, 1974:173). Here we see Wolff (1974:173) in agreement with Davies (1993:28) in the idea of food leading to false worship, which means a broken cohesion with Yahweh. Wolff (1974:173) observes that “the large amount of grain” Yahweh gave to Israelites, led Israelites to break their cohesion with Yahweh. Food therefore, leads to the breakdown of religious cohesion.

Birch (1997:90) notes the relationship between provision of food and cult in Hosea 10:1 (Birch, 1997:90). He argues that food provision and prosperity in Hosea 10:1 does not only have economic results but it also has cultic results (Birch, 1997:90). This means that the more Israelites had food and prosperity, the more they did not worship Yahweh, and instead they worshiped false gods. Hence, Birch (Birch, 1997:90) argues that “fruit increase and country improvement” led to more false alters (Birch, 1997:90). This denotes that ‘fruit increase and country improvement’ led to Israelites not acknowledging Yahweh, and therefore, broken cohesion with Yahweh. Here access to more food leads to broken cohesion with Yahweh. Those who are given food by Yahweh choose to worship Baal who did not grant them food.

¹⁵¹ Here food provision destroys the virtue of *hesed* and *’emet* (Davies, 1993:23)

Therefore, food and wealth leads to broken cohesion with Yahweh. Hence, Yahweh will “breakdown their alters” (Exodus 10:2 on Birch, 1997:91).

Pentiuc (2002:129) presents a linguistic analysis of Hosea 10:1. Pentiuc (2002:129) observes that in Hosea 10:1 there is use of a figure of speech called simile (Pentiuc, 2002:129). He notes that the adjective “luxuriant¹⁵²” used to refer to the vine denotes “having good shoots and fruit-bearing branches¹⁵³” (Pentiuc, 2002:129). This indicates a large quantity of fruit for harvest and consumption. Pentiuc (2002:130) observes the abundant fruit was equivalent to the number of idols Israelites worshiped. This means that the more food they had, the more idols they worshiped. This means that Yahweh’s food was used to worship idols. Thus food is used to break Israel’s relationship with Yahweh. Pentiuc (2002:130) agrees with Birch (1997:91) on use of food to indicate a broken cohesion between Yahweh and Israelites. Hence, Pentiuc (2002:130) argues that there a connection between ‘prosperity and spirituality’, in that the more Israelites prospered, the more they worshiped idols (Pentiuc, 2002:130). In this text, prosperity breaks down spirituality. That is why because of “luxuriant vine”, Israel do not longer worship Yahweh, the owner of “luxuriant vine¹⁵⁴” (Pentiuc, 2002L130). Therefore, abundant food in this text leads to a broken cohesion with Yahweh.

5.4.8 The relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion in Isaiah

I will now focus on the relationship between ideology, food and socio-religious cohesion in Isaiah.

5.4.8.1 Background of Isaiah (Eighth Century, Deutero-Isaiah & Trito-Isaiah)

What is the background of the book of Isaiah? Brueggemann (1998:1) argues that “the book of Isaiah is like a mighty oratorio whereby Israel sings its story of faith” (1998:1). This means that for Brueggemann (1998:1), the book of Isaiah is a “story of faith” of Israelites (1998:1). This means that the book of Isaiah records the journey of the walk of faith of the

¹⁵² Andersen and Freedman (1980:549) note that “the luxuriant vine may be questioned on several accounts since there is a clash of gender”, in that here the Hebrew word *gepen* is used as masculine but it is generally used as feminine (Andersen and Freedman, 1980:549). “Secondly, the root *pqq* is generally used to refer to emptiness and it describes a land laid waste but never a vine” (Andersen and Freedman, 1980:549).

¹⁵³ Andersen and Freedman (1980:549) observe that the Sitz Im Leben of this text is a horticultural setting.

¹⁵⁴ Andersen and Freedman (1980:549) argue that the idea of “Yahweh as who made Israel prosperous” is of paramount importance in the book of Hosea (Anderson and Freedman, 1980:549). This is important matter in Hosea, since the charge of Yahweh against Israel was that instead of “producing fruit for Yahweh, Israelites wrongly donated Yahweh’s gifts to pagan gods” and not to Yahweh the “giver of prosperity” (Andersen and Freedman, 1980:550).

Israelites. However, it should be noted that Brueggemann (1998:2) warns the readers not to think that the book of Isaiah is a “history” or “theology” book (1998:2). I find Brueggemann (1998:2) contradicting himself when he says the book of Isaiah is a “story of faith” (Brueggemann, 1998:1), yet he also says the book of Isaiah is not “history” or “theology” (Brueggemann, 1998:2) since ‘stories of faith’ can be both historical and theological. However, in responding to this concern, Brueggemann (1998:2) suggests that the book of Isaiah is a “prophecy” (Brueggemann, 1998:2). For Brueggemann (1998:2) prophecy is a “combination of history and theology” (Brueggemann, 1998:2). This means that the book of Isaiah is both historical and theological. These two aspects bring the genre of prophecy into being (Brueggemann, 1998:2).

Which period does the book of Isaiah cover? The book of Isaiah covers “the chronology of the Assyrian Empire from the incursions of Tiglath-pileser III (745-727 B.C.E) to the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib in 707” (Brueggemann, 1998:1). This was the time of “Babylonian empire¹⁵⁵” (Brueggemann, 1998:1). It is important to note that both Brueggemann (1998:1) and Clements (1980:1-28) do not expand on the dating of the book of Isaiah¹⁵⁶.

Isaiah as a person “was called to be a prophet in the year of Uzziah’s death (736 BC)” (Clements, 1980:12). This was during the “beginning of the Syro-Ephraimite crisis” (Clements, 1980, 12). Isaiah’s father was Amoz and he is not the same with the famous eighth century Prophet Amos (Clements, 1980: 12). This means that unlike Hosea, at least the book of Isaiah provides us with the short biography of Isaiah (cf. Clements, 1980: 11-13).

Regarding the authorship of the book of Isaiah, Gray (1975: xxx) notes that prophet Isaiah “is not the only author of the book of Isaiah” (Gray, 1975: xxx). This indicates that the book of Isaiah is has more than one author. Gray (1975: xxx) argues that the main reason for saying Isaiah is not the only author of the book of Isaiah is that “a large part of the book of Isaiah was written at the least two centuries after his time” (Gray, 1975: xxx). This means that there is more in the book of Isaiah that was not written by him. Hence, Whybray (1983:1) observes that many people “take it for granted that the whole book of Isaiah consisted of the collected prophecies of one man, Isaiah the son of Amoz, who lived in Jerusalem, in the eighth century” (Whybray, 1983:1). However, both Gray (1975: xxx-xxxi) and Whybray (1983:1)

¹⁵⁵ This applies to “Deutero-Isaiah” and not necessarily all sections of the book of Isaiah (cf. Whybray, 1983:ix & Gray, 1975:xxx-xxxi).

¹⁵⁶ I will deal with the dating of the book of Isaiah when I discuss the authorship.

agree that the book of Isaiah has two other sections what were not written by Isaiah. In fact these other sections “were written two centuries after Isaiah’s time” (Whybray, 1983: xxx). This means that it should not “be taken for granted” that the entire book of Isaiah was written by one other (cf. Whybray, 1983:1). There are sections in the book of Isaiah that were not written by him.

What are the sections in book of Isaiah that were not written by him? Whybray (1983:ix-x) argues that “the sixteen chapters (40-55) of the book of Isaiah usually known as Deutero-Isaiah or Second Isaiah were not of the prophet Isaiah who lived and prophesied during the eighth century B.C” (Whybray, 1983:ix-x). This means that the section of Isaiah chapters 40-55 was not written by prophet Isaiah of the eight century (who wrote chapters 1-39). According to Whybray (1983:x) these chapters (40-55) were written by “a prophet whose name is unknown to us (hence the title ‘Deutero-Isaiah’) who lived and prophesied in Babylon during the sixth century B.C” (Whybray, 1983:1983:x). This means that the section of Isaiah chapters 40-55 were not written in the same period or date with Isaiah chapters 1-39. These sections were also not written by the same author. This denotes that the eighth century prophet Isaiah did not write Isaiah chapters 40-55 but rather an “unknown” prophet wrote these chapters¹⁵⁷ (40-55). Hence, Whybray (1983:xi) suggests that “Deutero-Isaiah came relatively late in the succession of Israelite prophets” (Whybray, 1983:xi). This means that ‘Deutero-Isaiah’ came late that the prophets of Israel including the eighth century prophet Isaiah. That is why chapters 40-55 cannot be attributed to the authorship of prophet Isaiah of the eighth century.

Whybray asks, “What about Isaiah chapters 56-66”? (Whybray, 1983:4). According to Duhm in Whybray (1983:4-5) Isaiah “chapters 56-66 form a separate work, that is named ‘Trito-Isaiah’” (Duhm in Whybray, 1983:4-5). This means that even Isaiah chapters 56-66 is not the work of prophet Isaiah of the eighth century. But it is rather “a separate form of work” (Duhm in Whybray, 1983:4). This means that chapters 56-66 are a different work than that of chapters 1-39 (which was written by prophet Isaiah) and chapters 40-55 (which is “known as Deutero-Isaiah”) (Whybray, 1983:ix). These last chapters of the book of Isaiah (56-66) were

¹⁵⁷ Whybray (1983: x) considers “these chapters as the most influential chapters in the entire Bible”, yet they were not written by the prophet Isaiah whose name the book of Isaiah is named after (Whybray, 1983:x). The following theological themes are discussed in Isaiah chapters 40-55, namely: “the Judaeo-Christian doctrine of God, as unique, as creator of all things, as Lord of history, as almighty, righteous, loving, merciful and holy and as Saviour and Redeemer of his people owes a great deal to the teaching of ‘Deutero-Isaiah’ of the sixth century and not prophet Isaiah of the eighth century (Whybray, 1983: x).

written by different “authors who were trying to adapt the message of Deutero-Isaiah to the circumstances of a somewhat later generation” (Whybray, 1983:5). This indicates that chapters 56-66 of the book of Isaiah were written by ‘different authors’ with an intention of making Deutero-Isaiah section relevant to the “later generation” (Whybray, 1983:5).

Gray (1975:xxxix) summarizes the authorship of the book of Isaiah in the following pattern: “Firstly, prophecies of the 8th century B.C. Secondly, prophecies of the 6th century B.C. Thirdly, the work of an editor who brought together these prophecies which, though so widely separated in time, are intermingled in a compilation” (Gray, 1975:xxxix). This summary of Gray (1975: xxxix) demonstrates that there are three sections written by different authors in the book of Isaiah¹⁵⁸. The other matter that is displayed in this summary of Gray (1975: xxxix) is the dating of the book of Isaiah. Here Gray (1975:xxxix) suggests that the first section (chapters 1-39) was written in the eighth century, second section (chapters 40-55) belongs to the sixth century (Gray, 1975:xxxix). Regarding Isaiah chapters 56-66, both Gray (1975: xxxix) and Whybray (1983:5) agree that the date of writing is still unresolved.

5.4.8.2 Ideology, land (which amounts to food security and socio-religious cohesion in the book of Isaiah)¹⁵⁹

In terms of the ideology of the book of Isaiah, Clements (1980:16) notes how Isaiah comprehends the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his people as central. This means that in the book of Isaiah the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his people is the main theology. Hence, Clements (1980:16) argues that the phrase “Holy One of Israel” is Isaiah’s “famous title” (Clements, 1980:16). This means that Yahweh is for Israel and not other nations. This affirms and confirms that Yahweh has a special relationship with Israel and not any other nation. Hence, “Yahweh was the God of Israel” (Clements, 1980:16). This indicates that Yahweh was not a neutral God but he was the God of Israel (and not other nations) and subsequently not the God of other nations. Yahweh had a covenant with Israelites only and this theme of covenant is dominant in the book of Isaiah.

In terms of the relationship between ideology of covenant and land, Clements (1980:16) notes how the covenant with Yahweh “was hostile and strained” (Clements, 1980:16). The people that Yahweh referred to as “my people” have now become “a band of rebels” (Clements,

¹⁵⁸ I note that Gray (1975:xxxix) attributes the authorship chapters 56-66 to an editor while Whybray (1983:5) attributes the authorship of chapters 56-66 to different authors.

¹⁵⁹ Here I deal with Eighth Century Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah & Trito-Isaiah.

1980:16). Such covenantal rebellion led to the loss of “the land as the historic gift of God” (Clements, 1980:16). This indicates that broken cohesion with Yahweh led to loss of Yahweh’s ‘gift of land’. Even in the book of Isaiah, to rebel against Yahweh would lead to loss of land and that means loss of food provision. Therefore, there is a relationship between covenant, land and food security in the book of Isaiah. I will expand on the use of food in the following section.

5.4.8.3 Selected Texts in the book of Eighth Century Isaiah

What is the relationship between food security and socio-religious cohesion in these selected texts? In this section I will deal with specific texts in chapter 7, 17, and 35. These texts will reveal the relationship between ideology, food and socio-religious cohesion.

Isaiah 7:18-25

“18. In that day the Lord will whistle for flies from the distant streams of Egypt and for bees from the land of Assyria. 19. They will all come and settle in the steep ravines and in the crevices in the rocks, on all the thornbushes and at all the water holes. 20. In that day the Lord will use a razor hired from beyond the River – the king of Assyria – to shave your head and the hair of your legs, and to take off your beards also. 21. In that day, a man will keep alive a young cow and two goats. 22. And because of the abundance of the milk they give, he will have curds to eat. All who remain in the Lord will eat curds and honey. 23. In that day, in every place where there were a thousand vines worth a thousand silver shekels, there will only briers and thorns. 24. Men will go there with bow and arrow, for the land will be covered with briers and thorns. 25. As for all the hills once cultivated by the hoe, you will no longer go there for fear of the briers and thorns, they will become places where cattle are turned loose and where sheep run” (NIV)

Brueggemann (1998:73) notes how in this pericope food is used in the context of eschatological hope. This means that food used to indicate hope and judgment that will be realized “in that day” (1998:73). Here the language of food is used to “set the future in motion” (1998:73). This is Yahweh’s vindication of his people. Brueggemann (1998:73)

argues that “the good news is the abundance of milk ‘for everyone that is left¹⁶⁰” (1998:73). Here Brueggemann (1998:73) demonstrates that Yahweh will provide enough food for “his remnant¹⁶¹”. Hence, in spite of the destruction brought about by Ahaz, “there is still a thousand vines, rich, prosperous agriculture”. Therefore, food demonstrates how Yahweh is faithful to his people. Food fosters cohesion between Yahweh and his people. To emphasize this point, Clements (1980:91) notes that in Isaiah 7:21, the reference to ‘curds and honey¹⁶²’ “refers to the food resources which would be available to ‘everyone who is left in the land’” (Clements, 1980:91). This is indeed Yahweh’s provision of food to the remnant that is faithful to him. This is the food that will be provided to those who have a relationship with Yahweh. Indeed, here the provision of ‘curds and honey’ indicates the cohesion between the remnant and Yahweh. This means that the availability of ‘curds and honey’ denotes religious cohesion.

It is also good to note that in this pericope, food language is used to denote destruction of those of are not faithful to Yahweh, in that “vines will be displaced by briars and thorns¹⁶³” (Brueggemann, 1998:74 on Isaiah 7:23-24). This means that there will be no fertility in the land. “The land so fertile and blessed will revert to desolation and abandonment¹⁶⁴” (Brueggemann, 1998:74). This means that there will no longer be food in the land that once had abundance of food. This also indicates that in this pericope judgment and desolation is witnessed by the absence of food, since “vines will be displaced by briars and thorns¹⁶⁵” (Brueggemann, 1998:74). Food symbolizes a broken cohesion between Yahweh and his people. And since without food “life is no longer viable” (Brueggemann, 1998:74), the cohesion between ‘brothers’ will be broken down. Food will no longer be available to bring ‘life’ between Yahweh’s people (brothers). I agree with the idea of ‘food as life giver’ and

¹⁶⁰ Clements (1980:91) argues that the reference to “curds and honey for everyone who is left” denotes “a picture of the pastoral way of life as the aftermath of judgement” (Clements, 1980:91).

¹⁶¹ Brueggemann (1998:73) uses the word ‘remnant’ to refer to those who are faithful to Yahweh’s covenant.

¹⁶² Clements (1980:91) argues that the mentioning of ‘curds and honey’ indicates “natural food diet and abstinence from “very rich dairy foods” (Clements, 1980:91).

¹⁶³ Clements (1980:91) notes that the term ‘in that day’ connotes “a picture of the future and the judgement that will come to the “vineyards of Israel” when Yahweh’s judgment takes place. Indeed food is used to symbolize judgment.

¹⁶⁴ Oswalt (1986:218) observes that the land that was so “tillable will revert to wilderness” such that “even the finest vineyard, stocked with the most costly plants, will shortly become briars and thorns” (Oswalt, 1986:218).

¹⁶⁵ Clements (1980:93) argues the ‘briars and thorns’ are “metaphors of soldiers” (Clements, 1989:93). This means the evidence of armies for judgment. The broken cohesion between Yahweh and his people. Oswalt (1986:218) notes that the reference to “briars and thorns” indicates a land that is “only fit for the pasturage of the animals” (Oswalt, 1986:218).

that without food there will be no cohesion between ‘brothers’. Therefore, the absence of food in the pericope denotes the breakdown of socio-religious cohesion.

Isaiah 17:4-6

“4. In that day the glory of Jacob will fade, the fat of his body will waste away. 5. It will be as when a reaper gathers the standing corn, and harvests the corn with his arm – as when a man gleanes ears of corn in the Valley of Rephaim. 6. Yet some gleanings will remain, as when an olive tree is beaten, leaving two or three olives on the topmost branches, four or five on the fruitful boughs,” declares the Lord, the God of Israel”.

In this pericope there is the “nullification of God’s beloved people” (Brueggemann, 1998:147). This happens in such a way that the glory of the Yahweh’s people ‘fades away’. They move “from fat to lean and from prosperity to the misery of war” (Brueggemann, 1998:147). This denotes a mood of judgment for the people of Yahweh. And judgement denotes a broken cohesion between Yahweh and his people. It is important to note that, Brueggemann (1998:147) observes that in this pericope there is a “dominant image, that is, the harvest” (Brueggemann, 1998:147). This means that judgment is expressed through the image of the harvest. Here the language food, that is harvest, is used to refer to the broken relationship between Yahweh and his people. Food language is used to indicate the breakdown of religious-cohesion.

However, Brueggemann (1998:148) argues that there is more to the “dominant image of harvest” employed in this pericope than just symbolizing judgement. Brueggemann (1998:148) argues that the image of harvest denotes how the reapers will take all the food and leave very little for the remaining remnant of Israel. This means that there will be little fruit left and it will be “out of reach” for the remnant (Brueggemann, 1998:148). This means that the reapers will not share the fruit equally with everyone who is left. I find this as a broken cohesion with ‘brothers’ in terms of Deuteronomic language. To emphasize this point further, Brueggemann (1998:148) argues that “the stress, however, is not on the few left, but on the ‘almost all’ taken” (Brueggemann, 1998:148). This means the emphasis is on the fact that the reaper took ‘almost all’ the fruit and did not share with others. This means that the values of care and cohesion were compromised since it was the time of judgment and there was not enough food. Here there is a connection between the broken relationship with Yahweh, food scarcity and broken cohesion between ‘brothers’.

Clements (1980:159) expands on this idea of the reapers taking ‘almost all’ the fruit. Clements (1980:159) observes that the fact that the reapers took ‘almost all’ the fruit is against “the law of Deuteronomy 24:19 that demands the leaving of some gain for the poor of the community to glean” (Clements, 1980:159). To be specific, Deuteronomy 24:19 commands the reapers to leave some food for “the alien, the fatherless and the widow” (NIV). In the context of Deuteronomy this is mainly to share the food with ‘brothers’ (cf. Clements, 1989). Therefore, in the context of judgement in Isaiah 17:4-6 the reapers did not share the food with ‘brothers’. This is the broken cohesion with ‘brothers’. Thus in Isaiah 17:4-6 there is a broken cohesion between Yahweh and his people, hence there is judgment. There is also broken cohesion between the reapers and ‘brothers’, in that the reaper take ‘almost all’ the food. Therefore, the availability of food causes the breakdown socio-religious cohesion in this pericope.

Isaiah 17:9-11

“9. In that day their strong cities, which they left because of the Israelites, will be like places abandoned to thickets and undergrowth. And all will be desolation. 10. You have forgotten God your Saviour; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress. Therefore, though you set out the finest plants and plant imported vines, 11. Though on the day you set them out, you make them grow, and on the morning when you plant them, you bring them to bud, yet the harvest will be as nothing in the day of disease and incurable pain” (NIV)

In this pericope Isaiah demonstrates how forgetting Yahweh “leads to a self-destructive policy” (Brueggemann, 1998:149). In that when Israelites forgot Yahweh, they no longer had “support for life in the word” (Brueggemann, 1998:149). To forget Yahweh means loss of cohesion with Yahweh and therefore Yahweh does no longer support the Israelites. The image of food in terms of “planting and growing” is employed in the pericope. Since Israelites have resorted for other forms of worship, that is, “alternative plantings, yet they produce nothing” (Brueggemann, 1998:149). It is demonstrated in the pericope that forgetting Yahweh leads to “no harvest” and therefore, loss of food security. This means that the broken cohesion with Yahweh leads to food insecurity. Hence, “their harvest will be as nothing” (Brueggemann, 1989:149 on Isaiah 17:11).

On the other hand, Brueggemann (1998:149) observes how Israel’s false worship is expressed in the language of food, in that, Israelites “plants pleasant plants, makes them

grow, yet the harvest will flee away¹⁶⁶” (Brueggemann, 1998:149). Here Israel’s disobedience is expressed as planting plants that will fade away. Therefore, false cult is expressed in the language of food. Food is used to indicate Israel’s broken cohesion with Yahweh in the context of the cult. Therefore, there is a relationship between broken cohesion, cult and food insecurity. This means that those who have broken the covenant with Yahweh by worshiping other gods will lose their food harvest.

Isaiah 35:6b-7

“6b. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. 7. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow” (NIV)

In this text there is a usage of “environmental imagery” (Brueggemann, 1998:278). This is because there is a mentioning of “waters, streams, pools and springs” (Brueggemann, 1998:278). Therefore, the environmental language of waters and streams is used to denote Yahweh’s restoration (Brueggemann, 1998:278). This means that water is used to denote restoration. Hence, there is “abrupt verbs ‘break forth’ and ‘become’” (Brueggemann, 1998:278). Now the draught is gone and there is “fruitfulness and generativity” in the land. The image of waters is used to denote abundance of fruit. It denotes Yahweh who provides food. These waters denote the restoration of cohesion with Yahweh; hence Yahweh brings back waters that produce food. Waters of fruitfulness are a proof of restored cohesion with Yahweh. Clements (1980:276) argues that “the promise of rivers in the desert is taken from Isaiah 40 and provides a foundation assurance of the new world order that is expected” (Clements, 1980:276). This new world order that is symbolized by ‘waters that break forth in the desert’ indicates the restoration of socio-religious cohesion. This is a new world of cohesion with Yahweh and with ‘brothers’. Hence, there will be fruitfulness in the land.

Eating in Isaiah 65 – 66 (Trito-Isaiah)

In this section I will deal with the subject of food and eating in Isaiah 65 to 66. Even though Isaiah chapters 65-66 belong to the section Whybray calls “trito-Isaiah” (Whybray, 1983:5), these chapters express a relationship between ideology, food security and socio-religious cohesion. I recapitulate Whybray (1983:5) when he argues that these chapters (56-66) were

¹⁶⁶ Clements (1980:160) argues that “the planting of cuttings was a Hellenistic practice that was associated with the god Adonis in Canaan and Mesopotamia. It was a form of private ritual which was believed to bring life and fertility to the participants” (Brueggemann, 1980:160)

the work of “different authors who were trying to make Deutero-Isaiah relevant for future generation” (Whybray, 1983:5).

“My servants will eat, but you will go hungry, my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty, my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame” (Isaiah 65:13, NIV)

“They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit” (Isaiah 65:21, NIV)

“10. Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her, rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn with her, all you who mourn over her. 11. For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts, you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance. 12. For this is what the Lord says: ‘I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream, you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees” (Isaiah 66:10-12, NIV)

Abernethy (2014:144) argues that these meal and eating promises “are against those feasting for idolatrous cults (Isaiah 65:4, 11, 66:3, 17)” (Abernethy, 2014:144). This means that while Israelites will be ‘eating’, those who worship idols will be ‘going hungry’ and while Israelites will be ‘drinking’, those who worship idols will be ‘getting thirsty’ (Abernethy, 2014:144). This indicates that ‘eating’ reveals the hunger of those who have broken their cohesion with Yahweh, hence they ‘will hungry and thirsty’ while Israelites eat.

Abernethy (2014:145) also argues that eating is associated with joy, while hunger is also associated with joy in some instances (Abernethy, 2014:145). This is because Israelites “will drink and delight in her overflowing abundance” (Abernethy, 2014:145 on Isaiah 66:11). Here ‘drinking’ brings ‘delight’ (Abernethy, 2014:145). Therefore eating is a symbol of joy, while hunger is a symbol of shame. Abernethy (2014:146) continues to argue that in Isaiah 65:1-7 food is used to “characterized the apostates who are destined for judgment” (Abernethy, 2014:146). These ‘apostates’ are people who are “offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on altars of brick an. Who sit among the graves and spend their nights keeping secret vigil, who eat the flesh of pigs, and whose pots hold broth of unclean meat” (Abernethy, 2014:146 on Isaiah 65:3b-4). Here food and eating are used in a “negative” way (Abernethy, 2014:146). This denotes that food and eating are used to denote apostasy against Yahweh. Food and eating are used to worship idols. Thus, food and eating are used to

symbolize a broken cohesion with Yahweh, especially when these rebellious people have “pig and unclean meat¹⁶⁷” in their pots (Abernethy, 2014:146).

How does the book of Isaiah end on the subject of food and eating? Abernethy (2014:153) notes that the book of Isaiah ends by presenting hope and destruction in the language of eating and hunger. This refers to the fact that those who are faithful to Yahweh will eat and those who are worshiping idols will go hungry. This connotes that eating symbolizes those who have cohesion with Yahweh, while hunger symbolizes those who have a broken cohesion with Yahweh. Abernethy (2014:153) continues to argue that Isaiah 65:13 presents “two contrasts” in a food language (Abernethy, 2014:153). The “first contrast emphasizes the possession and lack of food” while the “second contrast presents the presence and loss of joy” (Abernethy, 2014:153). The contrasts are the fact that those who are faithful to Yahweh “will eat while those who worship idols are going hungry” and that others “will rejoice” while others “will be put to shame” (Isaiah 65:13b-14). This means that food and eating in Isaiah are used to symbolize hope and joy while hunger symbolizes shame and judgment. This also means that food and eating are used to indicate those who have cohesion with Yahweh and those who have no cohesion with Yahweh. Abernethy (2014:154) continues to argue that the idea that food, eating and drinking symbolize blessings while hunger symbolizes curse is a Deuteronomic theology¹⁶⁸. According to Abernethy (2014:154) these blessings of eating, drinking and joy in Isaiah 65:13-14 are symbols are covenantal in nature. This means that Israelites ‘will eat and drink’ because their covenant with Yahweh is restored. This denotes that eating and drinking in Isaiah 65:13-14 are a proof of a covenant between Israel and Yahweh in the future. Therefore, Isaiah 65:13-14 presents a relationship between eating, drinking, joy and covenant with Yahweh. This relationship is demonstrated by the idea that “servants will eat and drink, but the apostates experience hunger and thirst” (Abernethy, 2014:154, 155).

Abernethy (2014:155) argues that Isaiah 65:21-22a present “hopeful prospect of eating” (Abernethy, 2014:155). This means that there is a hope of ‘eating’ again. The mentioning of “building houses and dwell them, planting vineyards and their fruit¹⁶⁹”, according to Abernethy (2014:156) denotes “a scenario where everyday living can take place” (Abernethy,

¹⁶⁷ Abernethy (2014:148) observes that “the use of pigs in cult of the dead and demonic ceremonies in the ancient world invites disassociation from swine in Israel” (Abernethy, 2014:148).

¹⁶⁸ Here Abernethy (2014:154) refers to the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28.

¹⁶⁹ Abernethy (2014:156,157) observes that the idea of “building but not dwelling in the house as well as planting but not eating” is a curse found in Deuteronomy 28.

2014:156). This means that the verbs of “building houses, planting and eating” denote “everyday living”. (Abernethy, 2014:156). Therefore, planting and eating in this verse indicates life.

Abernethy (2014:157) observes that the reference to “building houses and dwelling on them as well as planting and eating the fruit” is a “reversal of the curse” of Deuteronomy. This indicates that planting and eating in Isaiah 65:21-22 denotes removal of the curse and since the curse was brought by broken covenant with Yahweh, then the reversal of the curse means the restoration of the covenant between Yahweh and Israelites (Abernethy, 2014:157). Therefore, food, planting and eating in Isaiah 65:21-22 denotes the reversal of the curse through the restoration of cohesion with Yahweh. Hence, Abernethy (2014:157) notes that “this is the vision of ideal life where covenant curse is no more” (Abernethy, 2014:157). According to Abernethy (2014:157) “this is the utopian vision of everyday eating and drinking” (Abernethy, 2014:157). This means that there will be abundance of food and wine such that there will be no day where there will be hunger. However, those who worship idols “will not share in this ideal future¹⁷⁰” (Abernethy, 2014:157). This means that food and eating are used to punish those who broke their covenant with Yahweh, hence, “they will not share in this future” (Abernethy, 2014:157). Therefore, building houses, planting and eating denote broken cohesion between Yahweh and idol worshipers.

Isaiah 66:11 presents “the image of nursing” by means of “eating from the mother” (Abernethy, 2014:158). The “nursing functions” are used to describe “the birth of a new community of servants” (Abernethy, 2014). Abernethy (2014:158) continues to argue that the “nursing metaphor connotes sustenance, joy, and care of a mother as well as security in safe birthing and long life” (Abernethy, 2014:158). This means that Yahweh is presented as a Mother who protects and feeds her children. This “nursing mother” image denotes Yahweh’s “parental love” (Abernethy, 2014, 158). And since parents have deep cohesion with their children, then in this Isaiah 65:11 the image of the nursing mother, breast feeding and the eating from mother’s milk denotes restoration of the cohesion between Yahweh and his people.

¹⁷⁰ Here Abernethy (2014:157) refers to Isaiah 65:11-12a “11. But as for you who forsake the Lord and forget my holy mountain, who spread a table for Fortune and fill bowls of mixed wine for Destiny, 12a. I will destine you for the sword and you will all bend down for the slaughter” [verse 12 is my emphasis].

6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I intend to draw conclusion on the relationship between ideology, food (in)security and socio-religious cohesion in the book of Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets. I will also reflect on this topic from a South African perspective.

6.2 Concluding Remarks

What this thesis is seeking to establish is that the relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) is not predictable and turns out differently in different contexts. This indicates that in some texts ‘the gift of land’ guarantees food security and cohesion. Yahweh promises the Israelites ‘the land flowing with milk and honey’, yet there are instances where access to land and food lead to destruction and breakdown of cohesion. In such cases, there is the threat of ‘eating and not being satisfied’ and the idea of leaders ‘boiling the flesh of people’ in Micah 3:3. The following points need to be noted.

Firstly, in this thesis I have described the relationship between ideologies such as covenant, law, loyalty, holiness, etc and how these relates to the ‘gift of land’ and socio-religious cohesion. It is clear in this thesis that the covenant with Yahweh guarantees the ‘gift of land’ and food security. And that those who are not faithful (*‘emet*) and loyal (*hesed*) to Yahweh will lose the land, since Yahweh is the owner of all land. (cf. Davies, 1993 & Brueggemann, 1992). To worship other gods breaks the covenant with Yahweh and that leads to loss of land. To keep the law maintains the covenant between Yahweh and his people. Hence, to break the law leads to broken cohesion with Yahweh. Therefore, covenant, law, commandments, cult affect either lead to the ‘gift of land (which amounts to food security)’ or loss of loss of land.

Secondly, it has also been established in this thesis that there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ in the relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion. This relationship turns out differently and is not predictable. Different events have different results when it comes to this relationship. Sometimes the absence of food broke-down the cohesion with Yahweh and with ‘brothers’, hence, the fertility curses where ‘a father will eat his child without sharing with the wife and other children’. On the other hand, the availability of food may lead to a broken relationship with Yahweh and with ‘brothers’.

That is why Deuteronomy pleads, 'After you have eaten, remember Yahweh'. Though food may remind Israel of the Provider, food and eating can also lead to loss of memory and amnesia. That is why an idea of 'eating to remember Yahweh' is introduced. The availability of food can also lead to broken cohesion with 'brothers'. Micah's complaint about the leaders who are boiling the people in the pot is good example. Therefore, the relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion is not predictable in Deuteronomy and eighth century prophets.

Thirdly, a broken covenant between Israelites and Yahweh leads to fertility curses. These fertility curses cause severe poverty to such an extent that parents will eat their children. These fertility curses confirm a broken cohesion with Yahweh, at the same time; they lead to a broken cohesion between 'brothers'. These curses are reversed only if Israelites return to Yahweh and be faithful and loyal to their covenant with Yahweh.

6.3 Socio-Religious Implications of Food and Eating today

What are the social and religious implications of food and eating today? Douglas (1972:37) deals with "social relations being expressed in food and eating" (Douglas, 1972:37). This means that food goes beyond getting rid of hunger and drinking goes beyond quenching thirst (Douglas, 1972:37). Eating and drinking has social and religious implications even today. Food and eating have "different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across the boundaries" (Douglas, 1972:37). This indicates that food classifies people into different levels and has an ability to exclude and/or include others. Hence, Douglas (1972:37) argues that food "encodes social events" and meanings (Douglas, 1972:37). This means that each and every meal as a social and/or religious meaning. Therefore, it is not just about getting rid of hunger and quenching thirst.

What are some of the social and religious implications of food? Douglas (1972:41) looks at the social meanings of some food items that are cooked at home. She argues that "Drinks are mainly for strangers, acquaintances, workmen and family" while "meals are for family, close friends, and honoured guests" (Douglas, 1972:41). This means that by and large we offer drinks to people we are familiar with, people who work for us and some of our family members but to special people and friends we offer meals. Hence, Douglas (1972:41) argues that a "meal expresses close friendship" (Douglas, 1972:41). This denotes that when we offer meals we express love and friendship to those we invite. Therefore, meals indicate "close friendship" and "bridge the gap between intimacy and distance" (Douglas, 1972:41). This

connotes that during the meal the social distance is replaced by intimacy. Therefore, meals are beyond just dealing with hunger but they are for bridging the distance between people and offer opportunity for ‘close friendship’, love and ‘intimacy’ (Douglas, 1972:41). Meals unite and combine families with love and intimacy. Meals provide opportunity for close friendship. Therefore, there is a relationship between food, meal, eating, friendship, hospitality and family. This means that food and eating foster cohesion between friends, strangers, guests and families. Thus food builds social cohesion between friends, strangers, guests and families. Hence, Douglas (1972:41) observes that “barbecue and cocktail events act as bridges between intimacy and distance” (Douglas, 1972:41). This denotes that at “barbecue and cocktail events¹⁷¹” ordinary friends become close friends, enemies become friends, strangers become family and families that were divided are united (Douglas, 1972:41). Hence, these events provide intimacy and not distance.

Regarding meals and religious dimension, Douglas (1972:46) notes the relationship between meat and holiness in the Old Testament (1972:46). Here Douglas (1972:46) refers to instances in the Leviticus 11 where certain meats are mentioned to be “unclean” and others “clean” for Israelites since they have a covenant with Yahweh (Douglas, 1972:46). Douglas (1972:46) also refers to “animals classified according to degrees of holiness” (Douglas, 1972:46). This is the list of meats to be consumed or not consumed by Yahweh’s people as long as they want to maintain their covenant with Yahweh. Hence, Israelites were not allowed to “touch certain meats” (Douglas, 1972:46, 47). This means that meals had a potential of building or breaking Yahweh’s covenant with his people (Douglas, 1972:46). There is a relationship between meals, holiness and covenant between Yahweh and his people. Eating may lead to built-up or break down of cohesion between Yahweh and his people. It is either one eats to build or to break cohesion with Yahweh. This forms a relationship between meat, meals, eating, holiness and religious cohesion. After eating one can be a “close friend” or “the enemy” of Yahweh (Douglas, 1972:45-47).

Douglas (1972:50) refers to the socio-religious implications of the Eucharist, in that “drinking wine and eating bread” makes disciples the “body of Christ” (Douglas, 1972:50). This means that “drinking wine and eating bread” builds a special community. This means that this Christian meal leads to a body of unity and cohesion. This means that the “Lord’s

¹⁷¹ Douglas (1972:42) also speaks of the “social dimension of Sunday meals and Christmas meals” and how these meals provide guests with celebration and intimacy (Douglas, 1972:42).

supper” leads to cohesion between God and his body (community) (Douglas, 1972:50). This forms a relationship between the ‘Lord’s supper’ and socio-religious cohesion.

In her other work, Douglas (2003:1) argues that it is a mistake to think that food insecurity would be solved only by “increasing food production” (2003:1). This means that producing more food will not solve the global problem of food insecurity. Food insecurity calls more than just “increasing food production” (Douglas, 2003:1). Douglas (2003:1) continues to argue that “food is not merely about production, storage and conveyance” (Douglas, 2003:1) What would lower the levels of poverty would be looking at “social, legal and economic aspects of food problems¹⁷²” (Douglas, 2003:1). Otherwise “famine would occur even with good harvests and even in prosperity. People die of starvation in front of food-filled shops” (Sen as cited by Douglas, 2003:1). This means that people do not die of hunger due to lack of food, instead people die of hunger while there is abundance of food. This happens because of “complex shifts in the legal entitlements which determine individuals’ access to food” (Douglas, 2003:1). This indicates that there are laws that prevent an ordinary person to access food even “in front of food-filled shops” (Douglas, 2003:1). People may not be able to eat even in presence of the abundant food because there are laws that prevent them. Hence, Douglas (2003:2) observes “administrators are blinkered by their conviction that causes lie in the physical supply of food” (Douglas, 2003:2). This indicates that the reason why administrators cannot solve food insecurity problem is that they assume that it is caused by the inadequate supply of food. However, Douglas (2003:2) suggests “cultural influences and micro-politics that govern food production” are the causes of famine¹⁷³ (Douglas, 2003:2). Here Douglas (2003:2) forms a relationship between food and politics. She argues that people get hungry not because there is no food but instead politics are the cause of hunger¹⁷⁴. Hence, Douglas (2003:2) argues that “unequal access to food is the result of social inequalities” (2003:2). This means that the inequalities in society determine those who have access to food and those who will experience famine. Hence, Douglas (2003:2) problematizes the idea of “separating food from social thought” (Douglas, 2003:2). This means that food is the result of the social structure of society. If in the society there rich people and poor people, then there rich will have enough food while the poor are hungry. That is why Douglas (2003:2) argues

¹⁷² Douglas (2003:1) observes that “the worst horrors of famine would be diminished if social, legal and economic aspects of food problems were given priority” (Douglas, 2003:1).

¹⁷³ Douglas (2003:2) warns us against depoliticizing food and she argues that it is westerners who want to removes food from politics (Douglas, 2003:2).

¹⁷⁴ Here Douglas (2003:2) refers to policies that prevent other groups from food and eating.

that countries that have unequal distribution of food are those that are “most sensitive to political criticism” (Douglas, 2003:2).

Douglas (2003:2) argues that “there is a relationship between food sharing and social integration” (2003:2). This means that how food is shared depends on “social integration” (Douglas, 2003:2). Here Douglas (2003:3) wants to bridge “the gaps separating food sciences, critical analysis and sociology” (Douglas, 2003:3). This means that these relationships of “food sciences, critical analysis and sociology” will determine how food is shared (Douglas, 2003:3). Hence, Douglas (2003:3) argues that the problem of food insecurity “is inherently political¹⁷⁵” (Douglas, 2003:3). Therefore, people experience hunger because of political policies that lack the values of sharing, love and cohesion¹⁷⁶. If we are to solve the challenge of poverty, then we must be able to deal with the current socio-economic policies that deny people food and eating. If we want to solve the problem of “unequal access to food”, we must first deal with the problem of “social inequalities” in the world (Douglas, 2003:2). Moreover, Douglas (2003:5) speaks against “metaphysical separation of spirit and flesh¹⁷⁷” (Douglas, 2003:5). This to treat food as either spiritual or a flesh (physical) matter rather than as both. This means that food is not only a spiritual obligation but it is also a physical obligation. Spiritual obligation refers to God while physical obligation refers to human beings. Therefore equal food supply would fulfil cohesion with God and with human beings.

6.4 South African Reflection

Since the 1994 democratic breakthrough in South Africa, there has been a debate on whether 1994 fulfilled the tasks of the ‘Freedom Charter¹⁷⁸’. Political Parties like Congress of the People and Economic Freedom Fighters broke away from the ANC since they felt that the ANC is not ‘radical’ enough in fulfilling the tasks of the Freedom Charter as well as those

¹⁷⁵ Douglas (2003:2) argues that “perhaps the extraordinary emphasis on food production is a response to a need to depoliticize the subject of food. This would promote politicized method of thinking about food production” (Douglas, 2003:2).

¹⁷⁶ Douglas (2003:5) notes the “ordinary consuming public in modern industrial society works hard to invest its food with moral, social and aesthetic meanings of food” (Douglas, 2003:5).

¹⁷⁷ Here Douglas (2003:5) refers to the dualism between flesh and spirit as expressed mostly in the Pauline corpus. Douglas (2003:5) speaks of “religious distinction between godliness and worldliness” (Douglas, 2003:5).

¹⁷⁸ The Freedom Charter is a document that was drafted in 1952 at Kliptown, Johannesburg. It is considered as the will of the people of South Africa about the kind of democracy they wanted. Terms like ‘the doors of learn and culture shall be open’ as well as “people shall share in the country’s wealth’ still raise conflicting ideas even currently.

expressed in South African's constitution.. Protests like #FeesMustFall¹⁷⁹ and #SaveSouthAfrica¹⁸⁰ are a demand for 'Radical Economic Transformation (ANC, 2017:1-20). But the key question is what is 'radical' about radical economic transformation (RET)? Is economic transformation not 'ontologically' radical? While the ANC Economic Transformation Discussion document does not answer this question directly, it offers six suggestions that would aid in achieving the 'radicalization' of economic life of South Africa (ANC, 2017:1-20). These include "state owned investment infrastructure, transformation of the mining sector to benefit ordinary citizens, increasing the level of youth employment, implementation of National Development Plan and New Growth Path, as well as supporting the macroeconomic policy framework" (ANC, 2017:3). This means that in South Africa, while there is political justice, there is a need for economic justice (cf. NPC, 2011:1-30 & ANC, 2017:1-20). At the centre of the economic justice is the question of land (Ngcukaitobi, 2018:10) and the "land promise in the Old Testament can be a source of hope in South Africa" (Cezula, 2017:13). However, we cannot separate land from food, in that, the 'gift of land many times leads to food security. Therefore, 'the gift of land' in South Africa should provide food security.

However, it is emphasized in this thesis that the relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion is not always predictable. This is true in the South African context. Ideas expressed in the Freedom Charter [as an ideology of democracy in South Africa], for example, "land shall belong to those who work it" and "people shall share in the country's wealth" did not guarantee land access, food security and social cohesion in South Africa (Congress of the People, 1955). Even though there are ideologies of land ownership and sharing in the Freedom Charter many people have no land in South Africa and consequently they have no food. Hence, there is no unity and cohesion in South Africa.

Will expropriation of land with/without compensation in South Africa guarantee justice and food security? In South Africa there have been public hearings in all the provinces of South

¹⁷⁹ #FeesMustFall is a tertiary student initiated movement that was formed in the last quarter of 2015. Even though it started at Wits University in Johannesburg, it was inspired by the #RhodesMustFall protests and lectures that were held at the University of Cape Town. The aim of both #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall is to drive the government of South Africa to implement Free Decolonial Education as well as uprooting the effects of Apartheid.

¹⁸⁰ #SaveSouthAfrica is a non-partisan civil society organisation that fights against corruption as well as advocating for regime change in the Government of South Africa. It was formed in 2016.

Africa¹⁸¹ in order to hear the views of the citizen on whether section 25 of the constitution of South Africa should be changed or not for land reform program (Merten, 2018 & Constitutional Assembly, 1996:10-11). Notwithstanding, there is a view expressed by farmers that if government owns the land, there will be food insecurity in the country. This view is motivated by the fact that South Africa is one of the resourced countries in Africa (in terms of minerals and food production), yet many people are still economically excluded. This is due to corruption, greed and lack of cohesion between politicians and the people. This denotes that if democratic South Africa did not amount to economic freedom but rather inequalities between the rich and the poor, then expropriation of land will not guarantee food security and economic justice.

This means that the idea that the relationship between ideology, land (which amounts to food security) and socio-religious cohesion is not predictable, also applies to the South African context. In the South African context access to political and economic power by the ANC to a greater degree guaranteed the breakdown of cohesion between political leaders, business people and the poor. Just like in Micah 3:3 the leaders of South Africa boiled the flesh of the poor people through policies like Black Economic Empowerment, which only enriched the few people. Therefore, even the expropriation of land without compensation may not lead to food security but instead it may lead to greed and corruption¹⁸². Eventually there will be no cohesion between the people of South Africa. Access to land and food breaks the cohesion between the people of South Africa

Nevertheless, it is also true that during the time of Apartheid, there was no cohesion between the government leaders and the people due to economic exclusion. Because black¹⁸³ people were politically and economically excluded, they fought the apartheid government. It is also good to note that food insecurity brought black people together. Economic exclusion brought unity, cohesion and the values of sharing to black people. Hence, there was a popular slogan

¹⁸¹ <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/.../2018-11-08-the-politics-of-land-expropriation-wit>, Accessed on 14 March 2018, 08:06

¹⁸² Maposa, Hlongwana & Muguti (2013:136) note how in Biblical times “the very land that contained ‘milk and honey’ made great and greedy kings to become ‘Machiavellian princes of death’ in that “land became source of dehumanisation, exploitation and oppression” (Maposa et al: 2013:136).

¹⁸³ It is good to note that there were white people who united with black people in fighting the apartheid system. I think of Joe Slovo, Beyers Naude etc. This means that to some extent lack of access to economy and food brought together both blacks and whites in the struggle against apartheid.

“Amandla Ngawethu¹⁸⁴” that would be chanted in strikes and political meetings. This means that black people saw power in unity, sharing and cohesion. Therefore, lack of resources and food insecurity brought people together under the values of unity and cohesion. Something similar to this took place during the eighth century, especially in Micah 3:3 where the rich and the elites were ‘eating the flesh of the poor’. This also happened in Deuteronomy 28 where parents did not share the flesh of their children with the loved ones. This indicates how lack of resources cause people to love the values of unity, sharing and cohesion.

Post-Apartheid government broke the values of unity and cohesion among black people. Like in the days of Micah, politicians would drink expensive wines at the expense of ordinary people. Political leaders ate expensive food while poor had no food. The ideas of sharing and unity got compromised as early as the dawn of democracy. The poor people started killing each other due to political positions. This means that access to resources and food does not always guarantee cohesion. I say this because the post-apartheid South Africa was expected to bring unity and cohesion instead people started to kill each other even though the resources were supposedly more accessible than during apartheid times.

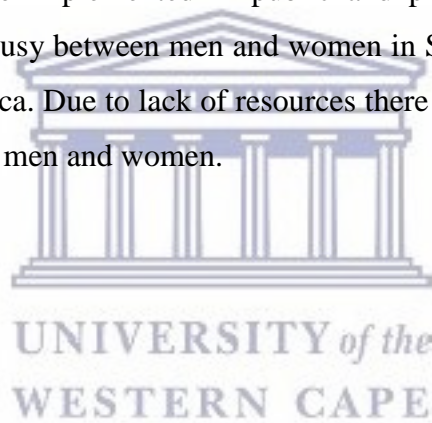
Lastly, the relationship between ideology¹⁸⁵, economic power/land/food security, and cohesion have not been predictable even in the context of South Africa. In that sometimes the human rights such as education have brought good results in terms of job creation, on the other hand they have been bad results. This is manifested in violence that took place during protests like Fees Must Fall. The same applies to government tenders. They brought financial stability to few families but at the same time many South Africans did not benefit. Therefore there are similarities between the Deuteronomy, eighth century prophets and South African context. Deuteronomy 28:53-55 is an example of how food insecurity destroys values of care and cohesion, in that the father would eat his child and not share with his family members. This is relevant in South Africa especially as an impetus of Xenophobic attacks in the Townships (Hagensen, 2014:34-36). These Xenophobic attacks have always been about scarcity of resources. This means that, just like in Deuteronomy, lack of food (resources) cause Africans to kill each other. In Deuteronomy the father refuses to share the meat of his child because “nothing will be left” (Deuteronomy 28:53-55). In the same breadth South Africans do not want too many Foreign national owned shops in the Townships because

¹⁸⁴ ‘Amandla Ngawethu’ means ‘all power to the people’. This is the power of being together. This is the power of unity and cohesion.

¹⁸⁵ By ‘ideology’ I mean the ideas of democracy and freedom expressed in the Freedom Charter, the Constitution of South African and the Bills of Rights

“nothing will be left” for South Africans regarding jobs and business¹⁸⁶ (economic access). This leads to black South Africans attacking violently other black foreign nationals¹⁸⁷. This also denotes the idea that when there is no ‘brothers¹⁸⁸’ kill each other. In this process women and children suffer the most, for example, in Soweto a teenager boy died while he went to buy in the Somalian shop in Soweto¹⁸⁹ (Nyanda, 2018:na). This boy was killed by a shop owner thinking that the boy is one of the South Africans who are looting and killing foreign national shop owners.

The well-intended initiatives of affirmative action¹⁹⁰ and women empowerment/gender equality have divided families and the nation, even though they were meant to redress the societal ills of the past. Due to lack of economic resources, white qualifying South Africans feel left out in the economy when affirmative action is applied. This has caused a conflict between black and white South Africans. The same predicament happens when women gender equality initiatives are implemented in public and private sector. This causes a conflict and professional jealousy between men and women in South Africa. This is all about scarce resources in South Africa. Due to lack of resources there is no cohesion between black and whites as well as between men and women.



¹⁸⁶ This is a view expressed by a great number of black South Africans in the Townships when they are asked why they attack foreign nationals. They say “there are no jobs in South Africa and foreign nationals take the last jobs left for us” (this is what comes to my memory as I watch news and listen to many black South Africans)

¹⁸⁷ It is important to note that the xenophobic attacks, by and large, do not affect white foreign nationals.

¹⁸⁸ I use the term ‘brothers’ to refer to black South Africans killing other black foreign nationals (especially those who are also from the continent of Africa).

¹⁸⁹ www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/south-africa/2018-08-30-soweto-looting-somali-community-board-wants-justice-to-take-its-course/, Accessed on 14 March 2019, 08:15

¹⁹⁰ Affirmative action is a South African Government initiative to include black qualifying South Africans in the top positions of government and private sector.

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