

“What is my boast? Is it not you?”:

Εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι as Scriptural Language in Philippians 2,16

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RESUMEN Este estudio propone que la frase de Pablo (εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι) constituye un lenguaje bíblico, basado en el lenguaje precedente de los LXX que anticipa la promesa del pacto de la que Israel presumiría en recompensa por la obediencia a YHWH (Deu 26,19; Jer 13,11; Zep 3,19-20). Pablo postula a sus auditores gentiles de manera radical como destinatarios viables para este pacto como un honor. El estudio también muestra cómo Pablo se imagina participando en el honor que se deriva de la obediencia de los filipenses, ya que comparte la vocación y, por lo tanto, la recompensa del Siervo de Isaías (cf. su alusión a Is 49,4 en Fl 2,16).

PALABRAS CLAVE Gloriarse, Honor mutuo, Alianza, Lenguaje escriturístico, Siervo isaíánico.

SUMMARY *This study argues that Paul's phrase εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι in Phlp 2,16 constitutes Scriptural language, drawing on LXX precursors to the covenant promise that Israel would become a boast (εἰς καύχημα) for YHWH in reward for obedience (Deu 26,19; Jer 13,11; Zep 3,19-20). Paul radically posits his Gentile auditors as viable recipients for this covenantal honor. The study also shows how Paul envisions himself as participating in the honor which accrues from the Philippians' obedience, since he shares in the vocation and thereby the reward of the Isaianic Servant (cf. his allusion to Isa 49,4 in Phlp 2,16).*

KEYWORDS *Boasting, Mutual Honor, Covenant, Scriptural Language, Isaianic Servant.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sánchez Bosch's seminal study of Paul's boasting situated the apostle's penchant to boast within a Jewish framework, noting linguistic parallels in

the Septuagint to instances of boasting within the Pauline corpus¹. Since that work, however, few scholars have followed up Sánchez Bosch's careful observations by developing connections between Paul's common assertion that his churches are his boast² and similar assertions in the Septuagint that present Israel as YHWH's boast. In the following study I intend to build upon the foundational insights of Sánchez Bosch to analyze Paul's language of boasting in Philippians 2.

When Paul seeks to motivate his Philippian converts to upright living in Php 2,14-16 by appealing to his own eschatological fate that is at stake, it is easy to look past the Scriptural backdrop of such a claim in light of the other significant details cropping up. It is the purpose of the present article, however, to call attention to how Paul's notion that his congregations play an integral role in establishing for him a boast in the final assize draws its language and conception from key statements about covenantal and eschatological honor in Israel's sacred writings. Specifically, the apostle's assertion that the Philippian Christ-followers, as long as they heed his call to faithfulness, will "become blameless and pure children of God...as a boast for [Paul] (εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι) into the day of Christ" (Php 2,15-16), reflects the language and thought of such passages as Deu 26,19, Jer 13,11, and Zep 3,19-20, each of which depict Israel serving "as a boast ([εἰς] καύχημα)" through displaying covenant obedience. In order to demonstrate Paul's indebtedness to Scripture for this aspect of his theology, we will first discuss the grammatical probability of reading Philippians 2,16 in this way. Next, we will highlight the linguistic and thematic elements of these Scriptural precursors to Paul. Finally, we will demonstrate the appropriateness of this traditional theme for elucidating the context of Paul's letter to the Philippians more broadly.

II. GRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF Εἰς ΚΑΥΧΗΜΑ IN PHILIPPIANS 2,16

The lengthy sentence that stretches across Php 2,14-16 begins with the imperative "Do all things without grumbling or complaining" (v. 14) and then

1 J. SÁNCHEZ BOSCH, *'Gloriarse' según san Pablo: Sentido y teología de καυχῶμαι* (AnBib 40; Rome 1970).

2 See e.g., 2 Cor 1,14; 7,4.14; 8,24; 9,3; 10,15-17; 11,10; 1 Thess 2,19-20; Php 2,16.

presents as the motivation for this command the hoped for outcome "that you might become (γένησθε) blameless and pure..." (v. 15a). By the time Paul reaches the conclusion of the sentence his language becomes quite dense and compact: εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα (2,16b). The focus of our study rests on the first clause, εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι. The majority of scholars render this phrase as a purpose clause, e.g. "so that there may be boasting for me", or more loosely "so that I may boast"³. This is to interpret the preposition εἰς that opens the clause as designating purpose, well within its range of usage⁴. But as Reumann rightly recognizes, by interpreting εἰς as telic in this way, one must supply a "summarizing subject" for the copulative in the clause; hence, Reumann paraphrases: "that is a grounds for boasting on my part"⁵.

While yet consistently labeling the preposition in this phrase as telic, or indicating purpose (or result), numerous scholars reflect a slightly different reading in their paraphrasing, namely, that the Philippian believers *themselves* become the boast for Paul⁶. Though the difference is slight, this variation will be important for our study in that an important aspect drawn from the Scriptural occurrences of the phrase εἰς καύχημα revolves around its usage to describe the community of Israel becoming YHWH's boast. Hence, it will be important to show that Paul not only envisages the Philippians' obedient behavior

3 G. D. FEE, *Philippians* (NICNT 46; Grand Rapids 1995) 248, refers, however, to the ambiguity caused by this preposition: "Part of the difficulty with this clause [2,16b] has to do with the sense of these two occurrences of εἰς".

4 D. B. WALLACE, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids 1996) 369.

5 JOHN H. P. REUMANN, *Philippians. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33B; New Haven 2008) 413, where he notes that he understands that which entails Paul's grounds for boasting to be "the Philippians' continuing to hold fast to the gospel and living out their salvation till the End".

6 E.g., F. W. BEARE, *Philippians* (BNTC; London 1969) 93: "[The Philippians] will be his pride"; J.-F. COLLANGE, *Philippians*, trans. A. W. Heathcote (London 1979) 113: "those who will be his 'pride in the day of Christ'"; J. GNILKA, *Der Philippenerbrief* (HTKNT; Freiburg 1976) 153: "Darum sollen sie sein καύχημα sein am Tage Christi"; U. B. MÜLLER, *Philippener* (THKNT 11/1; Leipzig 1993) 121: "Sie sollen der Gegenstand seines Ruhmes sein (καύχημα)"; M. BRÄNDL, *Der Agon bei Paulus: Herkunft und Profil paulinischer Agonmetaphorik* (WUNT 222; Tübingen 2006) 257: "Paulus hofft, daß die Gemeinden, die am ‚Wort des Lebens‘ festhalten, am Tag Christi...sein καύχημα sein werden"; Luc PIALOUX, *L'épître aux Philippiens: L'Évangile du don et de l'amitié* (ET 75; Leuven 2017) 359, who notes that the Philippians are "invitée à devenir un sujet de fierté" for Paul (emphasis added); U. POPLUTZ, *Athlet des Evangeliums: Eine motivgeschichtliche Studie zur Wettkampfmetaphorik bei Paulus* (HBS 43; Freiburg 2004) 305: "Am Tag Christi sollen die philippischen Gemeindeglieder der Gegenstand seines Ruhmes (καύχημα) sein".

facilitating his own ability to boast, but, more precisely, to show that in their purity the Philippian believers themselves become Paul's boast.

One way grammatically to support this reading of the Philippian congregation becoming Paul's boast is to carry over the γίνομαι verb found at the beginning of v. 15. In doing so, v. 16b would accordingly be rendered, "*in order that you might be* [all implied from v. 15] *as a boast* for me towards the day of Christ"⁷. The main grammatical difference here is that the εἰς preposition is no longer interpreted as introducing a purpose clause, since the ἵνα implied from earlier in the sentence already marks it as such⁸. Rather, the εἰς functions here as a marker of the predicate, translated into English with "as"⁹. This too is within the semantic range for the preposition εἰς¹⁰, and, as I will seek to

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- 7 K. BARTH, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, trans. James W. Leitch (London 1962) 77, slightly different from what I am arguing, links the subjunctive verb γένηθε from v. 15 to the outcome in v. 16: "Thus sanctified, Paul concludes, *you exist*, must exist, will exist to my glory against the day of Christ" (bold in the original; italics added).
- 8 FEE, *Philippians*, 241, sees a parallel between what he considers the "telic" preposition εἰς in 2,16b and the two earlier telic prepositions in 2,11 (εἰς δόξαν Θεοῦ πατρὸς) and in 2,13 (ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας), both of which also provide the final goal of an imperative from Paul. In light of this grammatical parallel, for Fee, the introduction of Paul here in the third of the parallel prepositions marks it as "an unexpected—and abrupt—turn, whose ultimate purpose appears to be transition: namely, to return to the narrative about his and their affairs that was broken off at 1:26".
- 9 See M. S. J. ZERWICK, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Rome 2007) 597, who renders the εἰς: "to serve as". Cf. A. T. ROBERTSON, *Paul's Joy in Christ: Studies in Philippians* (Nashville 1980) 154, who views εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι as either "exegetical or further purpose"; the former view is closely in line with what I am arguing here, which would render a translation like "so that you might be...children of God..., namely, a boast for me".
- 10 BDAG, εἰς 4d, 290, εἰς can mark "vocation, use, or end indicated for, as", and further in meaning 8, "The predicate nominative and the predicate accusative are sometimes replaced by εἰς with accusative under Semitic influence, which has strengthened Greek tendencies in the same direction". J. H. MOULTON, *Grammar of New Testament Greek: Volume I Prolegomena* (Edinburgh 1967) 71-72, "common to nominative and accusative is the use of εἰς with accusative to replace a predicate, in such phrases as εἶνα εἰς and ἐγγείρειν εἰς (Acts 8:23; 13:22). This cannot fairly be described as a Hebraism, for the vernacular shows a similar extension of the old use of εἰς expressing destination: so for example KP 46 (ii/A.D.), ἔσχον παρ' ὑμῶν εἰς δά(ναειον) σπέριματα, a recurrent formula. It is obvious that "I received it as a loan" and "for a loan" do not differ except in grammar. The fact that this εἰς is mainly found in translation falls into line with the other phenomena already discussed—the overdoing of a correct locution in passages based on a Semitic original, simply because it has the advantage of being a literal rendering". D. B. WALLACE, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids 1996) 184, "Occasionally, the [double accusative] construction is marked by the presence of εἰς or ὡς before the complement". Wallace explains further, 47-48, "Εἰς + the accusative is occasionally found replacing the predicate nominative in the NT. Although this construction is found in the papyri, it is usually due to a Semitic influence (Hebrew ל). This idiom is frequent in OT quotations". Although Wallace points out that such a usage for εἰς appears only "occasionally", his observation that it is "usually" influenced by Semitic and OT language is particularly pertinent to our present case as seen by the discussion below of the expression "εἰς καύχημα" as found in the LXX.

demonstrate below, is more in line with usage of the phrase εἰς καύχημα as it occurs in the various LXX authors¹¹.

Paul uses the preposition in this way elsewhere in his corpus. For instance, when describing manifestations of spiritual gifts in the church, Paul declares that "tongues are *as* a sign (εἰς σημεῖόν εἰσω)...for non-believers (τοῖς ἀπίστοις)" (1 Cor 14,22)¹². An even closer parallel appears within the Pauline tradition at 1 Tim 1,12, which depicts God "placing [Paul] *as* a minister (θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν)." Here the verb τιθήμι appoints the apostle into his new state as a minister¹³. In a conspicuously negative sense, Paul can deploy the preposition εἰς to warn believers against misbehavior: "only do not let your freedom be *as* an opportunity (μὴ τὴν ἔλευθερίαν εἰς ἀφορμήν) for the flesh" (Gal 5,13). In conjunction with these parallel Pauline usages, we contend that in the phrase εἰς καύχημα, the preposition functions as a marker for the predicate nominative. Hence, the Philippians are to *become*, in their blameless obedience, *as a boast* for Paul on the day of Christ¹⁴.

Although Paul frequently employs the noun καύχημα within his arsenal of terms to describe the unique reward he expects from his gospel ministry among his churches¹⁵, apart from Php 2,16 he never uses the specific construction εἰς καύχημα to indicate this hope. It is conceivable that the appearance of καύχημα here within a clause introduced by the preposition εἰς could merely be coincidence such that the preposition need not mark καύχημα as a predicate noun. A discussion of the usage of εἰς καύχημα by Septuagintal authors, however, is illuminating for understanding why the preposition should in fact be read in this way.

11 For the purpose of this study, I will refer to the Old Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible as the LXX. While the LXX is commonly a shorthand way to refer to the entire collection of the OT Scriptures translated into Greek in their various textual traditions, this study will take into account the fact that each OT book was translated individually, and thus may reflect various translational strategies, rather than seeing the LXX as a single, united work.

12 P. T. O'BRIEN, *Philippians* (Grand Rapids 1991) 298 n. 54, notes this verse in connection with the phrase εἰς καύχημα ἔμοι in Phil 2:16. Cf. Gen 9,13LXX.

13 BDAG, τιθήμι, 1004, 3b, describing the use of τιθήμι in the middle voice, "τιθεσθαι τινὰ εἰς τι *appoint someone to or for something*".

14 See in particular BDAG, γίνομαι 5a, 198, where the meaning of γίνομαι εἰς is described as "to experience a change in nature and so indicate entry into a new condition, *become something*" (italics original).

15 1 Cor 9,15-16; 2 Cor 1,14; 9,3. Additionally, Paul often uses other καύχ- related terms to describe his experience of pride in his churches' success: Rom 15,17; 1 Cor 15,31; 2 Cor 7,4,14; 8,24; 11,10; 1 Thes 2,19-20.

III. SCRIPTURAL OCCURRENCES OF ΕΙΣ ΚΑΥΧΗΜΑ

The term *καύχημα* has a firm background in the Greek translations of the Scriptural texts that were so influential in the formation of the Early Church¹⁶. Whereas common Greco-Roman usage often relegated the term, along with its cognates, to the derogatory realm of arrogance¹⁷, the Jewish usage, in addition to this negative connotation¹⁸, included a positive meaning for the term¹⁹. In

16 The noun *καύχημα* occurs 16 times in the LXX: Deu 10,21; 26,19; 33,29; 1 Chr 16,27; 29,11; Ps 89,18; Pro 11,7; 17,6; 19,11; Jer 13,11; 17,14; 28(51),41; Zep 3,19.20; Zec 12,7; Syr 45,12.

17 K. C. DONAHOE, "From Self-Praise to Self-Boasting: Paul's Unmasking of the Conflicting Rhetorico-Linguistic Phenomena in 1 Corinthians" (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2008) 34, describes that Greco-Roman usage of the related *καύχ-* stem views boasting "in negative terms and never in overtly positive terms". She describes further, 37, of the *καύχ-* stem, "Within the extant Greco-Roman texts, *καυχάομαι* occasionally appears in the positive sense to glory in the accomplishments of deserving individuals", but she then goes on to note that "in most texts, however, *καυχάομαι* appears in a pejorative sense to indicate an individual overstepping the suitable limits of self-praise tolerated by his audience". C. DOGNEZ – M. HARL *et al.*, *Les douze prophètes* (BA; Paris 1999) 373 note on Zec 3,19: "The word *καύχῆμα*, rare in the LXX, ... is employed with a positive value that it does not have in Greek usage, where, in accord with the verb *καυχήομαι*, 'to boast', it signifies 'boasting, glorying'; one occurrence is found in Plutarch (*Life of Paul Aemilius* 27.6; the only example from this author), where the word is associated with *húbris*: to a presumptuous youth who demonstrates after victory arrogance (*phrúagma*) and exultation (*gauríama*), Aemilius addresses the words which keep in check their *καύχῆμα* and their *húbris*. In the LXX, the positive value of *καύχῆμα* is seen by its equations with the Hebrew 'praise' (in a small number of other verses: Deu 10,21; Jer 13,11; 17,14; 28 (51),41, as equivalent with *gauríama*, which also acquires a positive value (Isa 62,7). The word *καύχῆμα* or *καύχῆσις* serves also for *tip'èrèt*, 'glory', 'honor', (Deu 26,19... and 5 times in Ezekiel): whether of the boastful promise to the people of God, or of the boast that God has of his people" (my translation).

18 The *καύχ-* stem can often be found with its more common negative associations throughout Greek writings of the Second Temple period. For instance, the Sibylline Oracles frequently employ the verb *καύξω* to mean 'arrogantly take pride in,' 3.488; 4.88; 5.64; 6.12, as well as the verb *ἐπαυχέω* (4.54) and *μεγαλανχέω* (3.473; 4.70; 8.75; 14.83; cf. Apoc. Dan. 13.5). See also the clear association of the verb *καυχᾶται* with the idea of pride (*ὑπερφανίας*) and arrogance (*μεγαλοφρονη*) in Test. Reub. 3.5. Test. Jud. 14.8 describes a drunkard who "prides himself (*ἐγχαυχᾶσθαι*) in his own dishonor (*ἀτιμία*)". Elious accuses Job of having "boasted (*καυχωμένον*) that he is a righteous man" (Test. Job 41,3).

19 E. FUCHS, "Gloire de Dieu, Gloire de l'homme": *RTP* 27 (1977) 321-332, 329-330, "Dans tous ces cas [1 Chr 29,11; Ps 89,18, Deu 26,19], sauf Prov 11:7, *καύχημα* a un sens positif: il peut désigner d'abord une qualité qui appartient à Dieu lui-même, ainsi 1 Chron 16:27 ou 1 Chron 29:11; cette qualité, Dieu peut en quelque sorte la faire reposer sur ses élus, ainsi Jer 13:11. *Καύχημα* est donc un des attributs qui marque l'appartenance du peuple à Dieu... Cette aspect "démonstratif" du *καύχημα* est souligné dans Zep 3:19 et 20". This observation is confirmed also by J. SCHREINER, "Jer 9,22.23 als Hintergrund des paulinischen 'Sich-Rühmens'", in: *Biblische Randbemerkungen*, ed. H. MERKLEIN – J. LANGE (Würzburg 1974) 530-542, 539, "Mit dieser Übersetzung [i.e., Deu 26,19 LXX's use of *καύχημα* to translate *כָּוַח*] war eine wichtige Entscheidung getroffen. *Καυχάομαι* konnte nun innerhalb der griechischen Bibel auch im positiven Sinn verwendet werden, und die Bedeutung "Ruhm" war für *tlh* neben "Lobpreis" grundsätzlich anerkannt". The literature of the Second Temple period maintains, though somewhat less frequently, this positive use of the *καύχ-* stem: *ἐγχαυχάομαι* (Apoc. Dan. 2.9); Test. Job 33,8 links the

terms of the verbal corollary to the noun, *καυχάομαι*, Jeremiah programmatically lays out, in clear contrast with the negative meaning also available, the positive meaning for the idea of boasting: "Thus says the Lord, 'Let not the wise one boast in his wisdom, nor the strong man boast in his strength, nor the rich man boast in his riches, but let the one who boasts boast in this, in knowing and understanding that I am the Lord'" (Jer 9,22-23 LXX)²⁰.

This positive understanding of the activity of boasting, as long as it is done with reference to (i.e., in the realm of) the Lord, is carried over into the usage of the noun *καύχημα* throughout the Greek Old Testament, since for it, too, the positive sense requires relationship to the Lord²¹. For instance, LXX authors can use the substantive *καύχημα* to describe a characteristic of God himself, as in 1 Chr 29,11, where a list of attributes is ascribed to the Lord: "Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the boast (*καύχημα*) and the victory and the strength..."²²; and again in 1 Chr 16,27: "Glory and commendation are before him, strength and boasting (*καύχημα*) in his place"²³. The noun can also be used to describe the priestly garb specifically designated for ministry in the temple, seen in Syrach 45,12: "A crown of gold upon a turban, a carving of a seal of holiness, a boast of honor (*καύχημα τιμῆς*), a

noun *καύχημα* with the noun *δόξα* (though the context is ambiguous whether the two nouns bear either a positive or a negative connotation; the same couplet bears a clearly negative meaning in Test. Job 40,13, describing Job's unbelieving wife as a "woman of *καυχίματος δόξης*"). U. HECKEL, *Kraft in Schwachheit: Untersuchungen zu 2. Kor 10-13* (WUNT 2.56; Tübingen 1993), 161, concurs: "Wie schon einige der eben angeführten Belege erkennen ließen, können *καύχημα* und *καύχισις* vor allem in der jüdisch-christlichen Tradition einem Ehrentitel nahekommen, besonders wenn sie synonym zur Wortfamilie *δόξα* oder im Zusammenhang mit *στέφανος* gebraucht sind".

20 All quotations from the LXX are from the NETS translation unless otherwise noted. Cf. Test. Jud. 13,2, "do not boast (*μὴ καυχᾶσθαι*) in the strong deeds of your youth."

21 Of the 15 occurrences of *καύχημα* with a positive connotation in the LXX (only once does the noun occur with a negative connotation, in Pro 11,7, where the *καύχημα* of the impious is said to perish), only three appear to break this pattern, since they seem to be found not in immediate context with any relationship to the Lord. However, two of these three appear in the book of Proverbs (17,6 and 19,11), throughout which book the success of the righteous (described in these two verses with the experience of possessing a *καύχημα*) is seen as directly related to the fear of the Lord. The final instance, in Jer 28,41 (51,41 in MT), is one in which the noun is used ironically, since it is fallen Babylon who is said to be the *καύχημα* of the whole earth.

22 "σοί, κύριε, ἡ μεγαλωσύνη καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ τὸ καύχημα καὶ ἡ νίκη καὶ ἡ ἰσχὺς...".

23 "δόξα καὶ ἔπαινος κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, ἰσχὺς καὶ καύχημα ἐν τόπῳ αὐτοῦ." SANCHEZ BOSCH, *Gloriarise*, 61, "In all the texts [e.g., Deu 26,18-19; Jer 13,11; Zep 3,19f.; Jer 33,9; Isa 62,3; 63,14; 43,7] it is clearly apparent that they deal with a glory *for God*; [yet] in all these we can perceive... that this glory resides with the character of something concrete, positively glorious, *in the people*" (my translation) – since his quote was obviously originally in Spanish.

work of strength, objects of desire for the eyes, adorned”²⁴. Even though this last usage seems to veer away from a context in which God is the beneficiary of the boasting, it should be pointed out that the reason the priestly garments are pictured in such exalted and honorific terms is due precisely to the work of the priest in the temple, which is the place where God’s glory and honor particularly reside²⁵.

Finally, the remaining occurrences of the substantive *καύχημα* within the LXX emerge in the context of the specific, indeed covenantal, relationship between God and his people²⁶. These occurrences can be seen from the perspective of two related sides: on the one hand, there are depictions of YHWH as the *καύχημα* of his people, and, on the other, there are portrayals of Israel as the *καύχημα* of YHWH. On the side of YHWH presented as Israel’s *καύχημα*, we find:

Deu 10,21: οὗτος καύχημά σου καὶ οὗτος θεός σου, ὅστις ἐποίησεν ἐν σοὶ τὰ μεγάλα καὶ τὰ ἔνδοξα ταῦτα, ἃ εἶδοσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ σου.

*He is your boast, and he is your God, who did among you these great and glorious things that your eyes have seen*²⁷.

Deu 33,29: μακάριος σὺ, Ἰσραηλ, τίς ὁμοίός σοι λαὸς σφῶζόμενος ὑπὸ κυρίου; ὑπερασπιεῖ ὁ βοηθός σου, καὶ ἡ μάχαιρα καύχημά σου, καὶ ψεύσονται σε οἱ ἐχθροὶ σου, καὶ σὺ ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτῶν ἐπιβήσῃ.

24 “στέφανον χρυσοῦν ἐπάνω κιδάρεως, ἐκτύπωμα σφραγίδος ἀγιάσματος, καύχημα τιμῆς, ἔργον ἰσχύος, ἐπιθυμήματα ὀφθαλμῶν κοσμοῦμενα”.

25 Cf. HECKEL, *Kraft im Schachheit*, 160, “Vom Lobpreis Gottes färbt dieser positive Sinn auf *das Rühmen von Personen und Dingen* ab, die in einer engen Beziehung zu Gott stehen und den Glaubenden als Ideal vorgehalten werden” (italics original).

26 SÁNCHEZ BOSCH, *Gloriarse*, 70, discussing the way that both YHWH and Israel are described using the *καυχ-* word group in LXX Deuteronomy, writes: “‘Dios’ y ‘el pueblo’ se encuentran en una perfecta intercambiabilidad respecto del término ‘gloria’”, pointing similarly to such verses as presented below.

27 SÁNCHEZ BOSCH, *Gloriarse*, 71, elucidates this verse by pointing out the broader context, where he sees Israel’s election described in Deu 10,15 preparing the way for an understanding of YHWH as the *καύχημα* of Israel in 10,21.

Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord? Your helper will shield you, and the dagger will be *your boast!* And your enemies shall speak falsely to you, and you shall tread on their neck²⁸.

Jer 17,14: ἴασαί με, κύριε, καὶ ἰαθήσομαι, σῶσόν με, καὶ σωθήσομαι, ὅτι καύχημά μου σὺ εἶ

Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, because *you are my boast*.

Ps 89,18: ὅτι τὸ καύχημα τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτῶν εἶ σὺ, καὶ ἐν τῇ εὐδοκίᾳ σου ὑψωθήσεται τὸ κέρας ἡμῶν.

Because *you are the boast* of their power and by your favor our horn shall be exalted.

On the other hand, the substantive *καύχημα* is used a number of times to represent the other partner in the relationship, as a descriptor for what *Israel* represents *to God*. It is interesting to note that these examples come from similar books as those listed above:

Deu 26,18-19: ¹⁸ καὶ κύριος εἶλατό σε σήμερον γενέσθαι σε αὐτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον, καθάπερ εἶπέν σοι, φυλάσσειν πάσας τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ.

¹⁹ καὶ εἶναί σε ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν, ὡς ἐποίησέν σε ὀνομαστὸν καὶ καύχημα καὶ δόξαστόν, εἶναί σε λαὸν ἅγιον κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου, καθὼς ἐλάλησεν.

¹⁸ Today also the Lord has chosen you to be his exceptional people, as he said, to keep all his commandments, ¹⁹ and that you be high above all nations, as he has made you renowned and *a boast* and glorified, that you be a people holy to the Lord your God, as he spoke.

Jer 13,11: ὅτι καθάπερ κολῶται τὸ περιζῶμα περὶ τὴν ὄσφιν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, οὕτως ἐκόλλησα πρὸς ἐμαυτὸν τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ πᾶν οἶκον Ἰουδα τοῦ γενέσθαι μοι εἰς λαὸν ὀνομαστὸν καὶ εἰς καύχημα καὶ εἰς δόξαν, καὶ οὐκ εἰσήκουσάν μου.

28 The parallelism between "your helper," and "your boast" demonstrate that God is to be seen as the reality behind the elusive term "dagger".

Because as the loincloth clings to a person's loins, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to myself in order that they might be for me a people of name, both *as a boast* and as a glory. And they did not listen to me.

Zep 3,19: ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ποιῶ ἐν σοὶ ἔνεκεν σοῦ ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, λέγει κύριος, καὶ σώσω τὴν ἐκπεπισμένην καὶ τὴν ἀπωσμένην, εἰσδέξομαι καὶ θήσομαι αὐτοὺς εἰς καύχημα καὶ ὀνομαστοὺς ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ.

Behold, I will act in you for your sake in that time, says the Lord, and I will save her who has been thrust out and her who has been rejected; I will welcome and make them *objects of boasting* and renowned in all the earth.

Zep 3,20: καὶ καταισχνυθήσονται ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ὅταν καλῶς ὑμῖν ποιήσω, καὶ ἐν τῷ καιρῷ, ὅταν εἰσδέξωμαι ὑμᾶς, διότι δώσω ὑμᾶς ὀνομαστοὺς καὶ εἰς καύχημα ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς λαοῖς τῆς γῆς. ἐν τῷ ἐπιστρέφειν με τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν ὑμῶν ἐνώπιον ὑμῶν, λέγει κύριος.

And they will be ashamed in that time, when I do well with you and in the time when I accept you; for I will make you renowned and *objects of boasting* among all the peoples of the earth, when I return your captivity before you, says the Lord.

IV. THE COVENANT PROMISE OF ISRAEL BECOMING A BOAST

While much could be said about this relational component of the substantive *καύχημα* as it is used in the LXX, for the purpose of our discussion of Php 2,16b we will focus our attention on the second list, where Israel is described as the *καύχημα* of YHWH. The first thing to notice is that in all four cases, the noun occurs within a string of terms (a triad in the first two examples, and then a diad in the second two). The second thing to note is that these honorific descriptors are applied to Israel by YHWH as a reward for

faithful obedience²⁹. Third, and most importantly for our text in Philippians, three of these four instances in which καύχημα depicts Israel's honorific standing include the preposition εἰς as introducing the substantive. This wording is not surprising since the MT for all four of these verses includes a prefixed ל to the equivalent noun (apart from the Deuteronomy verse, all of them use καύχημα to render the Hebrew term הַלְלָה)³⁰. Thus, the Greek preposition εἰς serves the same function as the Hebrew preposition ל, namely as a marker for the predicate.

One unifying component of the last four verses listed above (Deu 26,19; Jer 13,11; Zep 3,19 – 20), in addition to the fact that they all present Israel as representing a boast for YHWH, is that they include the idea of Israel being *made into* a boast, i.e., entering into a new and honorable state. In the three non-Pentateuchal cases, this transition into the new state is clearly marked in the Greek text with the inclusion of the preposition εἰς prior to the noun καύχημα³¹. In the case of Deu 26:19, this same transition is arguably also

29 This is particularly evident in the Deuteronomy passage, since Israel's obligation to "keep all [YHWH's] commands" immediately precedes God's ascription of the honorific triad to Israel. The surrounding context of the Jeremiah verse also has covenantal overtones, as shown by references to Israel as "those who refuse to obey my words" and as those who "have gone after foreign gods" (Jer 13,10). For the Zephaniah passage, the pericope leading up to the oracle of salvation that begins in Zep 3,14 describes God's purification of his people from their former "rebellion" (v. 11) resulting in a remnant that "shall do no wrong" and "utter no lies" (v. 13), but who instead "shall seek refuge in the name of YHWH" (v. 12). It is to such a purified, covenant-keeping remnant that God promises to reinstate into a position of prominence in vv. 19-20.

30 In the Deuteronomy verse, a comparison between the MT and the LXX is elucidating when considered in light of these three other similarly phrased verses in Jeremiah and Zephaniah. Both the MT and the LXX of Deu 26,19 include three honorific terms תְּפִאֲרוֹתַי, שֵׁם, תְּהִלָּה in the case of the MT; ὀνομαστόν, καύχημα, and δόξατόν in the LXX). But the ordering does not match, since the MT places the "name" term in the middle, while the LXX moves it to the front. When the three other prophetic passages are examined, however, the same order is maintained throughout in which the "name" term always comes first (this is true of both the MT and the LXX in each case). Thus, the only text that diverges from the pattern is the MT of Deu 26,19, and one wonders whether the Deuteronomy LXX translator in this case followed the pattern from these other parallel texts when rendering the honorific triad of Deu 26:19.

31 The three verses employ a different verb in each case (γίνομαι in Jer 13,11, τίθημι in Zep 3,19, and δίδωμι in Zep 3,20), but all three of the verbs can be classed as "verbs of institution", since each can be used grammatically together with the preposition εἰς to describe transition into a new state. BDAG, 198, on γίνομαι, meaning 5, "to experience a change in nature and so indicate entry into a new condition, *become something*" (italics original), which can be true of nouns both with or without the preposition εἰς. BDAG, 1004, on τίθημι, meaning 5, "to cause to undergo a change in experience/condition, *make, consign*", and 5b, "with a double accusative *make someone something*", and more pertinently, "τίθεσθαι τινὲς εἰς τι *consign someone to something*" (all italics original). Cf. BDAG, 242, on δίδωμι, meaning 7, "to "appoint to special responsibility, appoint", and "with double accusative" it means "*appoint someone something*" (italics original).

present by means of the use of the verb of institution (see below), ποιέω, in which God is said to “make” Israel *into* a boast³². This idea of transition into a new state is noticeably absent from the four verses that describe the opposite side of the relationship, in which God is the boast of Israel (i.e., in Deu 10,21; 33,29; Jer 17,14; Ps 89,18). That is, God is never *made into* a boast for Israel; neither does Israel *set* God *as* their boast. In each instance God simply exists as such. This can be demonstrated in the Greek text by the lack of the preposition εἰς before the substantive καύχημα, whereas the texts with Israel as boast do bear such a construction.

Moreover, the MT bears out the distinction in this list between Israel *becoming* a boast while God simply *is* the boast. The Hebrew text for all four verses presenting Israel as a boast include the prefixed preposition ל before the noun translated into Greek as καύχημα. This ל is used to designate the accusative noun as a predicate nominative in the sentence³³. The ל prefix in each of these cases functions grammatically together with what can be termed a “verb of institution”, or “verb of installation”: namely, a verb that installs a person or object into a specific function, role, or position³⁴. These verbs of institution appear in two distinct categories. On the one hand, they can be *extrinsic*, that is, a force outside the subject acts upon it and institutes it into its new role. Such extrinsic verbs include עשה³⁵ | | ποιέω (“to make into”), שים³⁶ | | τίθημι (“to set

32 BDAG, 841, on ποιέω, meaning 2hβ, “with a double accusative, of the object and the predicate, *make someone or something (into) something*” (italics original).

33 BDB, 511, ל, meaning 4, “*into* (εἰς), of a transition into a new state or condition, or into a new character or office” (italics original).

34 This language comes from BDB’s discussion of the use of היה, meaning II.2f, 226, “followed by ל predicate,” which can mean “*be instituted*.” For all of the cases provided in this study the state into which the subjects transition is always a positive one, involving status and honor. Another good example of this, the LXX translation of which does not, however, make use of the καύχημα term, can be found in Ex 28,2, where Moses is commanded to “make” (verb of institution) priestly garments for Aaron “*for glory and for honor*” (לכבוד ולתפארת). In this case, the LXX translator retained one of the two ל prefixes, rendering the phrase, “to make” (using ποιέω) the stole for Aaron “*for glory and honor*” (εἰς τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν). Such use in honorific installation is not a necessity with the structure, however, as it can be used to institute the subject into a negative state as well, oftentimes a state involving shame, as reflected in Deu 28,37 and as is especially prominent throughout Jeremiah (e.g., Jer 24,9; 25,9).

35 BDB, 794, עשה meaning II.1g, “*make* something into something,” adding that it “also [can appear] with the accusative plus ל.”

36 BDB, 963-964, שים meaning 3b, “*establish* something as (ל)”, followed by either a “ל of office”, a “ל of title”, or a “ל of purpose”.

as, place"), נתן³⁷ | | δίδωμι/παράδιδωμι³⁸ ("to establish into the position of"). On the other hand, the verb of institution can be *intrinsic*, in which the transition into the new state merely comes about due to characteristics inherent within the subject. In this case the copulative verb is used: היה³⁹ | | εἰμι⁴⁰/γίνομαι ("to become"). Such verbs of institution nearly always elicit a predicate nominative within the sentence, since the subject that is placed into the new role is distinct from the role into which they are instituted. Thus, the structure looks like this: *to institute someone/something as a functionary*⁴¹.

In the case of the MT for these four verses (Deu 26,19; Jer 13,11; Zep 3,19.20), the same grammatical structure is followed: there is a verb of institution followed by a string of predicate nominative nouns, at least one of which is marked off as such by means of the ל prefix. In Deu 26,19, Israel is "given" (verb of institution⁴²) "as a praise, and as a name, and as a glory" (לתהלה ולשם ולתפארת)⁴³. In Jer 13,11, Israel was "to be" (verb of institution) to the Lord "as a people, and as a name, and as a praise, and as a glory" (להיות לרעהם ולשם ולתהלה ולתפארת)⁴⁴. In Zep 3,19, the Lord promises "to set" (verb of

37 BDB, 681, נתן meaning 3b, explains that when used "with accusative plus ל" the verb means to *make something into*.

38 BDAG, 761f., on παράδιδωμι, meaning 1b, "hand over, turn over, give up a person". They note the verb's use "with final εἰς", citing for comparison Enoch 97,10, where the wicked are warned that their present prosperity will be overturned, "and you will be given over to a great curse" (καὶ ὑμεῖς εἰς κατὰραν μεγάλην παραδοθήσεσθε).

39 BDB, 226, meaning II.2e, describes that when "followed by ל predicate" it means "become", "also in the sense of *turn into*, be changed so as to become, or, *serve as*". They further describe (in II.2f) that the construction can mean "*be instituted, established*".

40 BDAG, 285, on εἰμι, meaning 6, when used "Hebraistically," "—of becoming or turning into something, *become something*". Or additionally under the category of 'Hebraistic' usage: "--*Serve as something*".

41 In this case, the description by HECKEL, *Kraft im Schwachheit*, 161, of the substantive καύχημα as coming close to an "Ehrentitel" applies in that the person is instituted into a new honorific role. For treatment of the metonymy inherent within such grammar of installation, cf. Isaac D. Blois, "Formulas for (Dis)Honorable Installation in Deuteronomy 26:19 and 28:37: The Honorific Implications of Israel's Covenant (Un)Faithfulness": CBQ 82.3 (2020) 381-406.

42 This verb comes actually at the beginning of the verse and must be inferred in the phrase in the latter portion of the verse.

43 In this case all three predicate nominative nouns of the triad are marked with the ל prefix.

44 Again, all four predicate nouns (in this case, the initial noun "people" is included as a fourth element to the oft-recurring triad of honorific nouns that follow) are marked with the ל prefix. It should be noted also that in Jer 33,9, even though the LXX translator (Jer 40,9 LXX) did not use the same Greek terms to render the Hebrew, the MT presents the same honorific triad as seen in Jer 13,11 again within this grammatical structure: "and [Jerusalem] *will be* (verb of institution)" for the Lord "as a name of rejoicing, as a praise, and as a glory," employing the ל prefix in all three instances of the predicate noun.

institution) Israel “*as a praise and as a name*” (ושמתיים לתהלה ולשם)⁴⁵ in all the earth. And finally, in Zep 3,20, the Lord promises “to give” (verb of institution) Israel “*as a name and as a praise*” (אתן אתכם לשם ולתהלה) among all the nations of the earth⁴⁶. As reflected in the LXX translations given above, the MT for the four verses that present God as the boast of Israel do not once use such a grammatical construction to describe God’s status as Israel’s boast. He is never *given, set, or made as a glory*, it is only Israel that experiences the transition into such an honorific state.

The LXX in each of these four cases for Israel as YHWH’s boast follows the tack set out by the MT. In each instance, a verb of institution is used—three of the cases use an extrinsic verb of institution (ποιέω in Deu 26,19; τίθημι and δίδωμι in Zep), whereas only one makes use of the intrinsic copulative verb (γίνομαι in Jer 13,11). And as mentioned above, three of the four instances make use of the preposition εἰς to mark off one or more of the predicate nominatives describing Israel’s new prestigious role or status. The Greek of Jer 13,11 employs the εἰς preposition three times, excising one of the four Hebrew ל̄ prefixes. Interestingly, the LXX translation here reads the second element in the chain of four predicate nominatives as an adjective for the first noun in the chain, thus “as a people, and as a name” is rendered “as a *name-worthy* people.” This pattern of turning one, or more, of the predicate nominative nouns into an adjective is seen also in the two Zephaniah verses, where it is in fact the same term, שם, that the LXX reads in adjectival form: ὀνομαστός. Hence, in both Zep 3,19 and 3,20, only one of the ל̄ prefixes appears, rendered with εἰς so as to mark out the predicate noun καύχημα. The other ל̄-marked substantive, *name*, is turned into the adjective *name-worthy*. Thus, in both verses the phrase now runs: “to *set/give*” (verb of institution) Israel “*as a boast and name-worthy*.” This same pattern is reflected then in the Deuteronomy passage, where the LXX translator renders two of the three honorific predicate nominatives as adjectives⁴⁷, leaving only one noun intact as a substantive, though devoid of its prepositional marker. Thus, the phrase

45 Both predicate nouns are marked with the ל̄ prefix (in both verses Zephaniah only uses two of the three terms from the standard honorific triad).

46 Again, both predicate nouns are marked with the ל̄ prefix.

47 See J. W. WEVERS, *Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy* (SCS 39; Atlanta 1995) 414.

as it presumably stood in the translator's Hebrew Vorlage⁴⁸ which read "[to set you] *as* a praise, and *as* a name, and *as* a glory," became in the LXX translation: "he has made you *name-worthy*, and a boast, and *glorious*"⁴⁹.

One more important thing that these four Old Testament verses speaking about Israel *as a boast* adds to our understanding of Paul's use of the phrase εἰς καύχημα in Philippians is the inclusion within this grammatical structure of a dative of personal reference. This can be seen most clearly in the Jer 13,11 text, where YHWH declares that Israel, if she chose to obey, would have been as a name-worthy people, as a boast, and as a glory "*for me*" (לִי | | מוֹי). The same feature appears in the Deu 26,19 text, though it is found in the following clause, where YHWH's promise of making Israel name-worthy, and a boast, and glorious is immediately followed by the promise/command that "you will be a holy people *to the Lord your God* (לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ | | κ̅υρι̅ω τ̅ω θε̅ω σου)". In each case the Greek translator employs the dative to designate the beneficiary from the transformation into the new state: God establishes Israel *as* a boast, *as* a people, with the result that their newly instituted status would be *for him*, that is, to his own advantage. Such a feature is clearly present within the installation phrase in the Hebrew MT of these texts, where the beneficiary is designated by a ל̅ *personae*, otherwise known as a ל̅ of reference⁵⁰. Although this feature does not occur in the Zephaniah texts, both verses there do have the idea of God "receiving" or "accepting" Israel (the LXX author in both cases uses εἰσδέχομαι). While this could merely signify Israel's re-instated promise, i.e., they are worthy again of acceptance, this could also introduce the

48 There is no reason to doubt that the MT here reliably presents the Vorlage from which the LXX translator presumably would have been working. See J. W. WEVERS, *Deuteronomium* (Septuaginta 3.2; Göttingen 1977).

49 In addition to the twofold switch from noun to adjective, notice also the rearrangement of the triad, moving the term for "name" or "name-worthy" so that it is now listed first, which is more in line with all the other uses of the honorific triad throughout the Hebrew Bible (in addition to the verses listed above, cf. 1 Chr 22,5).

50 BDB, 511-512, ל̅ meaning 4b, describes that the usage of ל̅ הִיהָ (*to become*) "is also combined idiomatically, with great frequency, with a 2nd ל̅, of reference, giving rise to such phrases as Deu 28,9 ["YHWH will establish (קָם) you *to himself* as a people holy"; LXX: ἀναστήσαι σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου ἐαυτῷ λαὸν ἅγιον]. BDB, 513, ל̅ meaning 5a_d, further explains that the prefixed preposition ל̅ means "with reference to, viz. defining those in reference to whom a predicate is affirmed", and also that it "[denotes] *relation* (to be *to* or *towards* one in a particular regard or capacity)", citing Ex 19,5 ["and you, if you hear my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be (הִיָּה) to me as a *special possession* from out of all the peoples, because the whole earth is *mine*"; LXX: καὶ νῦν ἐὰν ἀκοῇ ἀκούσητε τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς καὶ φυλάξητε τὴν διαθήκην μου, ἔσεσθέ μοι λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν, ἐμὴ γὰρ ἐστὶν πᾶσα ἡ γῆ], and Ex 22,30 ["and holy men you shall be to me (לִי הִיָּה)"; LXX: καὶ ἄνδρες ἅγιοι ἔσεσθέ μοι].

idea that God, too, benefits from their exalted status: he *receives* Israel *as a boast* just as much as he *makes* them into one⁵¹.

The reason this last point is illuminating for our Philippians passage is because Paul too includes a dative of reference within his use of the εἰς καύχημα phrase. Paul writes that the Philippians, by means of their blameless conduct, will be as a καύχημα “for me,” employing the emphatic first person pronoun in the dative (ἐμοί). If one accepts based on the foregoing discussion that Paul was influenced by these previous Scriptural occurrences of the phrase εἰς καύχημα, then his use of the first person dative in this case to refer to *himself* is astounding. In every case where such a dative of reference was used in the Scriptural texts referring to Israel’s status as a καύχημα the referent was always to YHWH. It is true that this could occur in the first person singular (μοι), but always with YHWH as the speaker, such that the institution of YHWH’s people into the role of a καύχημα, aside from being beneficial for Israel herself, was only ever for the benefit and exaltation of Israel’s God YHWH⁵². Here, however, Paul astonishingly inserts *himself* into the position of beneficiary with reference to the Philippians’ future eschatological exaltation. In order to grasp the full weight of what Paul is communicating in this short but theologically dense phrase in Php 2,16b, it is essential to grapple with Paul’s understanding of his own position as “servant of Christ Jesus” (Php 1,1) vis-à-vis both the Philippians as God’s people and God himself as ultimate patron of the community. How does Paul see himself fitting into this seemingly clear-cut schema presented in the OT Scriptures?

V. ISRAEL’S COVENANTAL BOAST IN Php 2,16

Paul’s central exhortation to the Christ-followers at Philippi is that they would conduct their communal life in a way that is worthy of the gospel of the Christ (Php 1,27) into whom they have been incorporated (cf. Php 1,1: “to the

51 This idea is clearer in the first verse, Zep 3,19, where εἰσδέχομαι seems to be working in tandem with τιθῆμι (εἰσδέξομαι καὶ θήσομαι αὐτοὺς εἰς καύχημα). The second verse, Zep 3,20, though, might also allow for the verb εἰσδέχομαι to be working in tandem with the verb of institution (in this case ποιέω), as revealed by the chiasmic structure of the verse: “whenever I work (ποιέω) rightly in you”; “whenever I receive (εἰσδέχομαι) you”; “because I will make (ποιέω) you....”.

52 See e.g., Jer 13,11; 33,9 (40:9 LXX); Ex 19,5; 22,30; Deu 28,9.

saints *in Christ Jesus*"). Christ's pattern of life is to be their own (2,5), and Paul's hope is that these believers' obedience will mirror that of Christ himself (2,12; cf. 2,8), with the result that honor will accrue from their faithfulness (2,15-16). When discussing the type of obedience to which he is calling this congregation (2,12) the apostle brings in Scriptural language and themes⁵³, drawing on the example of Israel as an anti-model. Hence, Paul presents faithless Israel's grumbling as the attitude to be avoided (2,14)⁵⁴, with believers aiming instead for a fidelity that will garner success in contrast to the wilderness generation's failure. Key to the apostle's presentation of the contrast between the faithfulness of these Christ-followers and the faithlessness of the wilderness generation is his allusion to the Song of Moses in which Israel is depicted as "blemished children, not his (οὐκ αὐτῷ τέκνα μωμητά), have sinned, a generation, crooked and perverse (γενεὰ σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη)" (Deu 32,5 LXX). In contrast, Paul sees the Philippian believers as "unblemished children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα)" (2,15), those who have, on the basis of their standing fast for the faith of the gospel, displayed covenant faithfulness and have thereby earned the covenant reward.

The appropriateness, therefore, of viewing the honorable outcome (καύχημα, 2,16) of the Philippians' blamelessness as fulfilling the hopes of YHWH's past promises to Israel is evident. If these Gentile believers can succeed at maintaining covenantal obedience, and Paul believes they can because of the powerful working of Christ's Spirit in their midst (cf. 2,2) which enables their working for God's good pleasure (cf. 2,13 in conjunction with 1,6)⁵⁵, then they can expect to receive the same honorific exaltation that YHWH offered to his chosen people when he gave them the covenant. Just as YHWH proffered to Israel the hope that as a reward for obedience they would become "name-worthy, and a boast (καύχημα), and glorious" (Deu 26,19), so Paul presents the Philippians as now able to cash in on that promise. The

53 Cf. D. McAULEY, *Paul's Covert Use of Scripture: Intertextuality and Rhetorical Situation in Philippians 2:10-16* (Eugene, OR 2015) 1, who speaks of "the density and interplay of the tacit references, in seven contiguous verses, to five texts in four books of the OT" occurring in Phil 2:10-16. Similarly, M. A. JENNINGS, *The Price of Partnership in the Letter of Paul to the Philippians: "Make My Joy Complete"* (LNTS 578; London 2018) 112, argues that "every phrase in Phil 2:15-16a alludes to a Jewish scriptural text".

54 FEE, *Philippians*, 243-244, points out that in Php 2,14 γογγυσμός "offers a biblical frame of reference".

55 M. J. KEOWN, *Philippians 1:1-2:18* (EEC; Bellingham, WA 2017) 135, argues forcefully for "an implicit reference to the Spirit" at Php 1,6.

convergence in Php 2,12-16 of the theme of covenant obedience, of Israel's failure, and the language of the Philippians becoming εἰς καύχημα alerts us that Paul envisions the honor arising from this community's faithfulness as fulfilling longed-for hopes of covenantal blessing (Cf. Jer 13,11; Zep 3,19-20).

VI. PAUL'S ISAIANIC BOAST IN Php 2,16⁵⁶

Having demonstrated thus far that Paul presents the honor accruing from the Philippians' faithfulness as a fulfillment of Israel's expectation of covenantal honor, it remains only to explain how Paul can have the audacity to claim this same covenant honor for himself. This is especially bold since in all the Scriptural passages referred to above the honor accruing from Israel's obedience redounded to God himself. The explanation for this daring move from Paul lies in the apostle's understanding of his own mission in light of that of the Isaianic Servant⁵⁷. The apostle directs us to this Scriptural source by alluding to Isa 49,4 in the final portion of Php 2,16, where he speaks of having "neither run in vain, nor labored in vain (οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα)".

The phrase that Paul takes up here from Isaiah describes the Servant's lament over an unresponsive field of ministry. Moreover, this lament is the one negative statement surrounded by positive statements about the Servant's divine vocation and vindication. Most importantly, the second half of the Servant's declaration, which Paul does not incorporate within his allusion, is that his "judgment is with the Lord" (49,4b). Thus, by negating the Servant's

56 This section draws on my doctoral thesis, now published as ISAAC D. BLOIS, *Mutual Boasting in Philippians. The Ethical Function of Shared Honor in Its Scriptural and Greco-Roman Context* (LNTS 627; London 2020) 146-149.

57 For classic presentations of Paul's ministry being formed by the role of the Isaianic Servant, see L. CERFAUX, "Saint Paul et le 'Serviteur de Dieu' d'Israël": *RLC*, 2.439-454 and D. M. STANLEY, "The Theme of the Servant of Yahweh": *CBQ* 16 (1954) 415-418, 416: "Paul, whilst ever conscious that Christ Himself is the Servant *par excellence*, repeatedly reminds his listeners that in his own apostolic labours the work of the Servant is being carried forward." Cf. M. GIGNILLIAT, *Paul and Isaiah's Servants: Paul's Theological Reading of Isaiah 40-66 in 2 Corinthians 5.14-6.10* (LNTS 330; London 2007) 52, who calls attention to "the issue of Paul's close identification with the Servant of Yahweh without collapsing the identity of the Servant of Isaiah 40-55 onto Paul." GIGNILLIAT affirms the "definite overlap between Paul and the Servant of Isaiah 40-55," but argues that the category of "the servants of the Servant in Isaiah 53-66" provides for Paul an identity that is not collapsed with the Servant of Isa 40-55 (p. 53).

lament via his positive statement in v. 16c, Paul has essentially employed the Servant's lament from 49,4a in a way that lines up with the positive image from 49,4b⁵⁸. Now, however, the Lord will not vindicate Paul's faithfulness *in spite* of the fact that he labored in vain, as with the Isaianic Servant, but precisely *because* Paul has *not* labored in vain⁵⁹.

The apostle has Scriptural, Isaianic warrant to make such a change, however, since a later (eschatological) passage from Isaiah's prophecy makes just such a reversal of this image. In Isa 65,23, God promises to a renewed Israel that the covenant curses will be overturned and that they will experience anew the covenant blessings, one element of which is that they will "not labor in vain." Whereas the Servant lamented that he *has* labored in vain, both renewed Israel and now the apostle Paul exult that they have *not* labored in vain⁶⁰. At the same time, while the Servant lamented over his lack of success, he remained confident that God would empower his labor; and though Paul is experiencing the success of the gospel, he too reflects this same confidence. In Isa 49,5 the Servant exclaims: "I will be gathered and glorified (δοξασθήσομαι) before the Lord⁶¹, and my God shall become my strength (ισχύς)" (49,5 LXX, cf. Isa 41,10). Paul similarly affirms that he "has strength (ισχύς) through the one who enables (ἐνδυναμοῦντί)" him (Php 4,13).

This assurance of support and reward for the Servant follows the trajectory of reward as developed throughout Isaiah 40-66. In the second Servant song, such an assured reward appears as the Servant's prerogative (κρίσις) in 49,4b. Paul taps into this tradition of the Servant's reward when speaking about his

58 COMFORT, "Futility": DPL 321: "the second half of Isaiah 49:4 may stand behind Paul's expression of confidence [in Php 2,16] that his ministry will be vindicated and he will 'boast' on the Day of Christ". For as McAULEY, *Scripture*, 231, points out, "an initial intertextual pattern formed by Paul... could include God's approval of the servant despite his apparent failure". MARKUS BOCKMUEHL, *Philippians* (Peabody 1998), 159, also points to the Servant's assurance that his "toil" is before the Lord in Isa 49,4b as possibly formative for the apostle's understanding of his own apostolic labor. D. HAÜSSER, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Philipper* (HTANT; Witten 2016) 189, similarly argues that behind Paul's confidence in 2,16 stands Isa 49,4, in which the Servant's lament becomes absorbed "in dem Vertrauen auf Gott, dass er sein Recht und Lohn ist".

59 BRÄNDL, *Agon*, 257, recognizes that the background of the Servant's reward (Lohn, פְּעֻלָּתוֹ, מְשַׁפְּטֵי) in Isa 49,4 could lead to an understanding of καύχημα in Php 2,16, though he understands the connection emerging from a common experience of success between Paul and the Servant, rather than taking into account the Servant's experience of failure.

60 So too SILVA, *Philippians*, 127: "Quite likely, Paul's language reflects the promise of Isa 65:17-25", and T. SILL, *Philippians & Philemon* (Macon, GA 2011) 79: "While Paul, like exiled Israel, sometimes thought his labor might be for naught (see Isa 49:4; cf. Hab 2:13), his eschatological and pastoral hope was that his apostolic ministry would not be in vain (cf. Isa 65:23)".

61 Along with reiterating 49,3, this idea echoes various earlier divine declarations to his people: e.g., Isa 43,4; 45,24.

own ministry in Philippians (and elsewhere⁶²). Just as the Servant was faithful to his task to call Israel to repentance and so could count on receiving divine exaltation when God brought about Israel's glory, so too the apostle expects that God will grant him glory once his ministry of fostering the exaltation of God's people in Philippi reaches its *telos*. The result of the Servant's faithfulness would eventually be a new covenant community that experiences the covenant blessing of labor that is *fruitful*, not *fruitless* (Isa 65,23). Such fruitfulness is just what Paul expects both for his own continued ministry (cf. 1,22 with 2,16c) and for the Philippians' participation in that ministry (cf. 1,7, 11; 4,17)⁶³. Isaiah presents this non-futility as a future, eschatological blessing, but Paul envisions himself already sharing in the eschatological reality of non-futility because of his role as minister of the gospel of the risen and exalted Christ.

In Php 2,16 Paul's inclusion of the *καύχημα* term as the positive counterpart to labor that is not *εἰς κενόν* allows him to conjoin the honorific language reserved for God's covenant people from Deu 26:19 LXX (cf. Jer 13:11; Zep 3:19-20) with the exaltation promised for the ministry of the Isaianic Servant in Isa 49:4. This link between covenant honor and the honor facilitated by the Servant is not a Pauline *novum*; indeed, the MT of Isaiah 40-66 attests remarkable linguistic overlap with the honorific triad from Deu 26:19, with the terms "honor" (תְּהִלָּה), "name" (שֵׁם) and "glory" (תְּפָאֵרֶת) recurring regularly. Moreover, while the Greek equivalents of two of these terms abound in LXX-Isaiah ([ἐν] δόξα and ὀνομαστός), the *καυχ-* word-group is conspicuously absent⁶⁴, which supports further the supposition that Paul derived the "boasting" motif in Php 2:16 from Deu 26:19 LXX as read within its larger literary context.

62 E.g., Gal 2,2; 1 Thess 2,1; 3,5; 2 Cor 6,1. Cf. Gal 4,11; 1 Cor 9,15; 15,10, 14, 58. Note the comment by ROY E. CIAMPA, *The Presence and Function of Scripture in Galatians 1 and 2* (WUNT 102; Tübingen 1998), 131-132, that Isa 49,4 "is a favorite phrase of St. Paul's" (citing B. LINDARS, *New Testament Apologetic*, 223-224). Cf. KARL OLAV SANDNES, *Paul – One of the Prophets?: A Contribution to the Apostle's Self-Understanding* (WUNT 2.43; Tübingen 1991) 218, who describes "not in vain" (1 Thess 2,1) as "a typical Pauline expression of biblical language...from Isa. 49:4".

63 Paul, therefore, being on the other side of the eschatological divide, is expecting an outcome of his ministry that is *opposite* to that of the Servant. In contrast, C. J. BJERKELUND, "'Vergeblich' als Missionsergebnis bei Paulus," in: *God's Christ and His People*, ed. J. JERVELL – W. A. MEEKS (Oslo 1977) 175-91, 181, finds in the Rabbinic literature confirmation that "'vergeblich' als charakterisierende Norm beibehalten wird, und dass es hier [viz., Isa 65,23] ausgesprochen die kommende Welt ist, die dem, was 'nicht vergeblich' ist".

64 FUCHS, "Gloire de Dieu," 326 n. 13: "les traducteurs d'Ésaïe dans la LXX semblent systématiquement ignorer l'ensemble *καυχ-*". Fuchs notes, however, that "ce qui n'est pas le cas pour Aquila (41,16: [הַלֵּל]); 60,19: [תְּפָאֵרֶת]; 63,14), Théodotion (41,16: [הַלֵּל]; 60,18; 62,7: [תְּהִלָּה]), ou Symmaque (55,5; 60,7: [פְּאֵרֶת])".

Thus, by aligning himself with the role of the Isaianic Servant, Paul envisions himself sharing in the eschatological "reward" offered to the Servant. Isaiah's Servant figure, because of his divinely-bestowed mission to Israel (and the nations) (cf. Isa 49,6), becomes a focal point for the exaltation previously offered to God's covenant people (cf. Deu 26,19; Isa 45,25). As the figurehead who represents Israel, the Servant is therefore often depicted in the same exalted, glorified terms applied to Israel (cf. the Servant "is glorified (δοξασθήσομαι)" [Isa 49:5], as Israel was to be made "glorious (δόξαστόν)" [Deu 26:19]). In his identity as Israel's representative and embodiment of her glory, the Servant figure plays a significant role in bringing this eschatological glory about through his ministry to restore Israel, and thereby gains for himself a distinctive reward (cf. Isa 49,4; 53,12). This notion of the unique reward given by God to the Servant thus provides the framework within which Paul could envision *himself* as the beneficiary of the honorific καύχημα engendered by the Philippians' obedience⁶⁵.

Against this backdrop of Deu 26,19 and Isa 49,4, the eschatological boast that Paul envisions as a reality on the day of Christ represents the culmination of the obedience displayed by the newly constituted children of God as they become blameless, pure and faultless on the one hand, and by his own faithfulness on the other, both of which are represented in Php 2,15-16. This "boast" is the same honorific reality that was offered to Israel when they entered into covenant with YHWH in Deu 26:16-19; but, as Phil 2:15 makes clear, it is only now becoming attainable because of Christ's work in establishing a new community of faithful children in contrast with faithless Israel. It is a boast that is enjoyed mutually, as was true of the original promise in Deuteronomy. There, both God and his people participated in the exaltation that ensued from their (hoped for) obedience. Here in Philippians, as in Isaiah, three entities now participate in the exaltation arising from the believers' obedience: God⁶⁶, the Philippians, and Paul himself in his role as their apostolic "servant."

65 P. GENTHS, "Der Begriff des καύχημα bei Paulus": *NKZ*38 (1928) 501-521, 511, calls attention to Paul's emphatic self-appropriation of the honor accruing from the Philippians' obedience: "ἐμοι hebt das Selbstgefühl des Apostles deutlich heraus".

66 Hence, Paul does not rob the honor that would appropriately redound to God from his people's faithfulness. To the contrary, he adds to it (cf. Php 1,11; 2,11; 4,20). A. N. KIRK, *The Departure of an Apostle: Paul's Death Anticipated and Remembered* (WUNT 2.406; Tübingen 2015) 171, shows how Paul's appropriation of boasting for himself does not conflict with his ability to boast in God, pointing to a "causative" relationship between them: "God alone is Paul's boast, but particularly in how

VII. CONCLUSION

This study has argued that Paul's presentation of the boast accruing to himself (εἰς καύχημα ἑμοί) from the Philippian believers' faithfulness in Php 2,16 draws on Scriptural precursors to the covenant promise that Israel would become a boast (εἰς καύχημα) for YHWH in reward for obedience. Paul's use of Pentateuchal material throughout Php 2,12-16 allows him not only to deploy the wilderness generation as an anti-model (cf. the allusion to Deu 32,5 in Php 2,15 and to Israel's "grumbling" in 2,14), but also to take up the promise that Israel would become a boast (εἰς καύχημα) for YHWH from Deu 26:19. This hope recurs often throughout the Scriptures (e.g., Jer 13,11; 33[40],9; Zep 3,19-20), but the apostle radically envisions the Gentile believers at Philippi receiving this covenant reward. What is even more radical, Paul appropriates the honor accruing from their covenant faithfulness to himself, by way of his participation in the Isaianic Servant's reward (cf. his allusion to Isa 49,4 in Php 2,16). Paul's confidence that the crucified and risen Messiah has begun his good work in these believers, and that he will complete it through his ongoing work in them, allows him to weave these Scriptural hopes into his exhortation to perseverance so that he can exult together with his friends on the day of Christ.

his grace leads to Paul's integrity and sufficiency in ministry, and especially as that leads to the transformation of...[Paul's] converts".