JAMES A. SANDERS

Scripture in Its Historical Contexts

Volume II:
Exegesis, Hermeneutics, and Theology

Edited by
CRAIG A. EVANS

Forschungen
zum Alten Testament

—————

Mohr Siebeck

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Edited by

Konrad Schmid (Zürich) · Mark S. Smith (Princeton)
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Prologue for Scripture in Its Historical Contexts II: Exegesis, Hermeneutics, and Theology

This second of two volumes of selected papers, composed and published over the past sixty years in scattered journals and various compendia, focuses on exegetical efforts to understand the original meanings and general importance of passages of Scripture in their ancient Near-Eastern and Eastern Mediterranean contexts. It gathers studies on the exegesis of various crucial passages in both Testaments and at Qumran, especially on the function of First Testament passages cited and alluded to in the Second Testament, and on critical methods developed since the mid-twentieth century in order to do so.[1] The author has for years taught students that the New Testament is also biblical, that is, for a growing Jewish sect of the first two centuries of the common era it was added to a Jewish "canon," but more importantly it fit well as an addition to the earlier collections that Judahites and increasingly hellenized Jews found helpful in attempts to understand how God worked through adversity to bring blessing both to them and to all God's world.

It brings together in one volume twenty-one studies that focus on how exegesis and its results can be developed to understand various parts of Scripture, how the hermeneutics of antiquity can be discerned by modern exegetical work, and how crucial understandings of God expressed in the Bible can be ferreted out of critical study of Scripture. All of it is an effort to understand how Scripture that was first expressed in ancient cultural contexts can be re-expressed in modern cultural contexts. Needless to say, "critical" in this context means, not being critical of Scripture, but being aware of and attempting to set aside what the modern reader instinctively brings to Scripture, and instead attempting to understand what the ancient speakers, authors, editors, and schools thereof understood of what they were trying to say that caused these particular writings to make it into a canon of Scripture.

The writer is a product of twentieth-century, Western/European culture and hence of necessity thereby limited, as are we all in modern scholarship, to that extent in perceiving what our ancestors meant when they said and wrote what they did in their ancient cultural and political contexts. We believe, nonetheless, that with the tools developed since the Enlightenment, we increasingly have the means to probe as deeply as is possible into what ancient Scripture meant in its ancient contexts and can yet mean in the various cultures to which we are

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[1] Sanders, "Dead Sea Scrolls and Biblical Studies," 328–29.

ourselves limited today in all our varied cultural contexts. But we also believe that though Western scholarship is of necessity limited by its particular values, Enlightenment study of Scripture is becoming more and more equipped to probe into ancient cultural expressions of what life was/is about in order to express them in today's varied terms. The assumption that we can do so is based on the critical observation that the Bible itself emerged out of ancient Israel's struggles with adversity from the ancient Egyptian, Canaanite, Philistine, Syrian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman threats to her very existence. What was found helpful enough to be repeated, shared, and then passed down to their heirs emerged as something we moderns call canon. The followers of Jesus in their turn searched those Scriptures in an attempt to find answers to why God let happen to their Galilean teacher what God had let happen to ancient Israel through the preceding centuries when life beyond collective death emerged in new forms and realities.

That alone is reason enough to pull together in two volumes what one has been trying to do over the last six decades so that students of more recent and future generations can winnow through such efforts to see what can be built on, and what is more limited in purview, to do what they in their time must do.

The writer was brought up in an American form of Christianity that he early on saw was a form of *apologia* for the suppression of cultures that weren't northern European in origin. That form so focused on individualistic understandings of Christianity and its Bible that its adherents could find support in it for stealing others' lands on the excuse of bringing European understandings of the faith to indigenous peoples, sometimes committing genocide to do so, then finding support in it for slavery, segregation, prohibition, suppression of women's and gays' rights, and those of anyone different from them who claimed rights for themselves. They made the untenable claim that their understanding of the Bible was inerrant and harmonious, but it was actually based on passages that formed a sort of scrap-book Bible that supported their biases. They in essence wanted the whole nation to practice what they preached but rarely fully practiced themselves.[2]

By contrast I found in critical readings of Scripture applied to current issues the challenge humans need to live lives of Torah, or lives in Christ, indeed to respond in any adequate way to the biblical command to love the enemy (Jer 29:7; Matt 5:44; et al.) and to come to realize that all humans inhabiting this very small planet in an ever-expanding universe need each other, no matter how varied and different, to make sense of it all. The realization that we live on an ever-shrinking ball of fiery rock in a universe impossible to envisage in its immensity, coupled with the realization that all of us on it are born to die, and that all of life on it must return to the dust whence it came, should bring us all to learn to appreciate all the cultures on it into which and through which God has reached out to touch humanity in various ways around the globe. It should also bring us all to learn to

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[2] See Sanders, *Re-birth*, and the review of it by Prof. Walter Brueggemann, "A Scholar's Faith."

love and appreciate all the "others" on the same shrinking planet. The message of the "death of death and hell's destruction" is the biblical re-assurance that God is the God of death (1 Sam 2:6; Deut 32:39) as well as of life, and that birth and death both remain the divine gifts they have always been.

Such thinking brought me to the conviction that the central message of the Bible critically studied is the monotheizing process, that we all are part of the same Reality, and should think, live, and act like it.[3] There is indeed but One Reality or God of (us) All. With all our diversity of skin colors, sexual givens, cultures, stories, and religions we are all integral parts of a God-given whole.

Hence the efforts assembled in this volume are offered, probing as deeply as the writer has been able to probe, the amazing, continuing relevance of the messages of Scripture we inherit from ancient Near-Eastern and Eastern Mediterranean antiquity.

As in Volume I, the essays are reproduced here basically as previously published, though style conventions have been harmonized; however, where it has been felt necessary to add updating, current information has been added inside square brackets.

James A. Sanders

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[3] Sanders, *Monotheizing Process*.

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACF	*Annuaire du Collège de France*
Aeg. WB	A. Erman and H. Grapon. *Wörterbuch der aegyptischen sprache.*
AGSU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums
ANQ	*Andover Newton Quarterly*
AOS	American Oriental Series
ASOR	American Schools of Oriental Research
AT	Alte Testament/Ancien Testament
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
BA	*Biblical Archaeologist*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BDB	Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.*
BH	*Biblia Hebraica*
BHQ	*Biblia Hebraica Quinta*
BHS	*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*
BHT	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
Bib	*Biblica*
BibB	Biblische Beiträge
BibS(N)	Biblische Studien (Neukirchen)
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament
BR	*Biblical Research*
BRev	*Bible Review*
BSOAS	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CEV	The Contemporary English Version. New York: The American Bible Society, 1991–92.
ChrCent	*Christian Century*
DBSup	*Dictionnaire de la Bible: Supplément.* Edited by Louis Pirot and André Robert. Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1928–.
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
ET	English Translation
ETL	*Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*

FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
Folio	*The Folio: The Newsletter of the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center for Preservation and Research*
HB	Hebrew Bible
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
IB	*The Interpreter's Bible: The Holy Scriptures in the King James and Revised Standard Versions with General Articles and Introduction, Exegesis, Exposition for Each Book of the Bible*, edited by George A. Buttrick et al. 12 vols. New York and Nashville: Abingdon, 1951–67.
IDB	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by George A. Buttrick. 4 vols. New York: Abingdon, 1962.
IDBSup	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supplementary Volume.* Edited by Keith Crim. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976.
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
Int	*Interpretation*
IOSCS	International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies
ITQ	*Irish Theological Quarterly*
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JANESCU	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBR	*Journal of Bible and Religion*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JTC	*Journal for Theology and the Church*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KJV	King James Version (Authorized Version)
LXX	Septuagint
McCQ	*McCormick Quarterly*
MT	Masoretic Text
MS	manuscript (pl. MSS)
NCB	New Century Bible
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NRTh	*La nouvelle revue théologique*
NT	New Testament
NTP	*The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Translation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OLZ	*Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*
OT	Old Testament
OTL	Old Testament Library
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studiën*
PEQ	*Palestine Exploration Quarterly*
RB	*Revue biblique*
RBL	*Review of Biblical Literature*
RevExp	*Review and Expositor*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumrân*
*RGG*³	*Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, edited by Hans Dieter Betz. 3rd ed. 6 vols. + index. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1957–65.
RSR	*Recherches de science religieuse*
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBLSP	SBL Seminar Papers
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SDSRL	Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SRKAE	Schriften reihe der katholischen Akademie der Erzdiözese
SSEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
SwJT	*Southwestern Journal of Theology*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76.
Textus	*Textus: Annual of the Hebrew University Bible Project*
ThTo	*Theology Today*
ThViat	*Theologia Viatorum*
TLZ	*Theologische Literaturzeitung*
TWNT	*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932–79.
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
USQR	*Union Seminary Quarterly Review*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

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Part 3: Exegesis

1

A Multivalent Text: Psalm 151:3–4 Revisited

(1985)

It is now twenty-three years since I unrolled 11QPsᵃ [in 1961] and saw in its last written column the Hebrew psalm(s) lying back of LXX-Syriac Ps 151.[1] I recognized it immediately, thanks to my teachers, especially Sheldon Blank, who instilled in me a deep respect for the biblical text and its early versions. It is a pleasure to be able to thank Professor Blank, in this manner, for all that he gave me during my three years at the Hebrew Union College and since then in his writings.

It was clear on first perusal that the Qumran Hebrew and the LXX-Syriac Ps 151 differed considerably. The most obvious difference lay in the lacunae in the LXX-Syriac, and especially in the total lack of anything corresponding to 11Q vv. 3 and 4. I fixed my attention immediately on these, and though it was apparent that one could read it in different ways (see, e. g., the circelli I affixed above each *waw/yod* in the Clarendon publication),[2] it seemed only logical that one should prefer the plainest, simplest reading that would explain the glaring omissions in the LXX and Syriac versions – the heterodox idea that mountains and hills did not witness to God's works. This was so clearly non-biblical (and against everything I had been taught) that it commended itself as the explanation for the salient and lengthy lacuna in the clearly orthodox LXX Ps 151 and, of course, the Syriac 151, its faithful daughter.

Once thinking along this track, I wondered just how heterodox the "original" psalm was. I was asked by Paul Lapp, director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, and by Roland de Vaux, director of the École Biblique there, to share my findings in the scroll with the scholarly community of (then) Jordanian Jerusalem. At a meeting in the library of the ASOR (now the Albright Institute) in the late winter of 1962 I presented what was published soon thereafter.[3] The reaction was positive. Fr. Jean-Paul Audet was among those present, and it was he who suggested the figure of Orpheus as the explanation for the 11Q verses lacking correspondence in the versions.[4] I delved straightaway into the question of whether 11QPs 151 did not perhaps provide the missing literary link to the frequent artistic presentations of an Orphic understanding or "resignification" of David. I published Ps 151 making that suggestion.[5] Jean Magne has

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[1] Sanders "Ps 151 in 11QPss."
[2] Sanders, *Psalms Scroll*.
[3] Sanders, "Scroll of Psalms" and then Sanders, "Ps 151 in 11QPss."
[4] See Sanders, *Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*, 99.
[5] Sanders, "Ps 151 in 11QPss"; Sanders, *Psalms Scroll*; Sanders, *Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*.

since then provided a sane, clear statement of why one would logically expect such a literary link to appear sometime.[6]

The first reactions to the suggestion were mixed. The first to come to my attention was that of Isaac Rabinowitz.[7] Upon reading his rebuttal in manuscript form, I decided to let the debate take its course, for in the meantime other responses were quite favorable.[8] Since then more scholars have tried their hand at reading the text in what each has been confident was the author's intention. Most of them tried to deal with the question of whether there had been a Hebrew recension *Vorlage* to the present LXX and Syriac version. But only two, to my knowledge, have suggested that the 11Q text is corrupt and offered reconstructions of the original.[9] Magne thinks that the negative particles in 151:3 are later insertions, while Smith thinks all of 151:4 is a later insertion; the latter thinks a full line dropped out of 151:3. Neither of these had appeared when I did a first review of the situation.[10] The two scholars who have studied the script of 11QPs[a] the closest in attempting to determine readings in these two verses of Ps 151[11] disagree at every crucial point (see the synopsis below), so that it would appear that paleography provides no obviously clear answers.

No one who has written on Ps 151 since the Nida Festschrift[12] appeared had apparently read it, for no one has referred to it. Nor have I seen any clear references to the fresh observations I made in 1967.[13] But then it is very interesting to note that none of those who prefer to read *haqqol* as a genitive has offered a satisfactory explanation of the accusative translations of it in LXX[S], OL, et al. If Sinaiticus can be ignored … ! John Strugnell, noting and respecting Sinaiticus, reads *haqqol*, with me, as accusative.[14]

Yigael Yadin understood that, like the Temple Scroll,[15] the Psalms Scroll was functionally canonical for the Essenes at Qumran.[16] D. Barthélemy,[17] E. Puech,[18] and G. Wilson,[19] among others also agree.[20]

I will here simply reaffirm my assessment of Ps 151 as stated in 1967 and 1974, and offer in the manner of 1967 a synopsis of the sixteen scholarly attempts

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[6] Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme," 533 ff.
[7] Rabinowitz, "Alleged Orphism."
[8] See Brownlee, "11Q Counterpart"; Carmignac, "La forme poétique"; Dupont-Sommer, "Le Psaume cli."
[9] See Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme"; Smith, "Psalm 151."
[10] In Sanders, "Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs[a]) Reviewed."
[11] See Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme," and Cross, "David, Orpheus."
[12] Sanders, "Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs[a]) Reviewed."
[13] Sanders, *Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*, over Sanders, "Ps 151 in 11QPss" and Sanders, *Psalms Scroll*, especially those in the extensive footnotes in *Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*, 96–97.
[14] Strugnell, "Notes on the Text."
[15] Yadin, *Temple Scroll*, 1:298–300.
[16] See Sanders, *Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*, and Sanders, "Cave 11 Surprises."
[17] Barthélemy, "Histoire du texte," 347–51.
[18] Puech, "Fragments du Psaume 122," 547n2.
[19] Wilson, "Editing of the Hebrew Psalter."
[20] *Pace* Skehan, "Liturgical Complex"; Skehan, "Jubilees and the Qumran Psalter"; and Homan, "Comparative Study."

at reading Ps 151:3–4 since the *editio princeps*. A translation of the full psalm is offered for the convenience of the reader, followed by the translations that others have made of the two verses (where full translations of them have been provided); and thereafter the specific readings by each scholar of the crucial multivalent words in the two verses. A bibliography on 11QPs[a] from its recovery [to 1985] is appended. I wish to express gratitude to three graduate students: Mr. William Yarchin for helping to update the bibliography, Mr. Peter Pettit for collaboration in composing the following, and Mr. Stephen Delamarter for typing the final draft.

Translation of 11QPs 151[21]

A Hallelujah of David the Son of Jesse

1. Smaller was I than my brothers
    and the youngest of the sons of my father,
So he made me shepherd of his flock
    and ruler over his kids.
2. My hands have made an instrument
    and my fingers a lyre;
And (so) have I rendered glory to the Lord,
    thought I, within my soul.
3. The mountains do not witness to him,
    nor do the hills proclaim;
The trees have cherished my words
    and the flock my works.
4. For who can proclaim and who can bespeak
    and who can recount the deeds of the Lord?
Everything has God seen,
    everything has he heard and he has heeded.
5. He sent his prophet to anoint me,
    Samuel to make me great;
My brothers went out to meet him,
    handsome of figure and appearance.
6. Though they were tall of stature
    and handsome by their hair,
The Lord God chose
    them not.
7. But he sent and took me from behind the flock
    and anointed me with holy oil,
And he made me leader to his people
    and ruler over the sons of his covenant.

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[21] Sanders, "Ps 151 in 11QPss," 75–76.

Other Translations of 11QPs 151:3–4

Skehan[22]
the mountains cannot witness to Him
        nor the hills relate:
Neither the boughs of trees, my words,
        nor the flock, my compositions;
Who indeed can relate, and who can tell,
        and who can recount the works of the Lord?
Everything, God saw,
        everything He heard – and He gave heed.

Brownlee[23]
"Mountains do not witness to Him,
        nor do hills proclaim (Him).
The trees have extolled my words,
        and the flocks my deeds.
        Yet who can proclaim?
        and who can tell?
        And who can recount
        the deeds of the Lord?"
All this did God observe;
        all this did He hear;
        and He gave ear.

Carmignac[24]
Les montagnes ne sont pas un témoignage pour lui
et les collines ne sont pas une annonce.
Les instruments (de musique) ont mis en valeur mes paroles
et le troupeau mon activité.
Mais qui annoncera? qui exprimera?
qui racontera les oeuvres du Maître?

                              Second Strophe

Elôah a vu le tout,
Lui, Il a entendu le tout,
et, Lui, Il a écouté.

Dupont-Sommer[25]
"Les montagnes ne lui rendent-elles pas témoignage?
        Et les collines ne [Le] proclament-elles pas?"

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22 Skehan, "Apocryphal Psalm 151," 409.
23 Brownlee, "11Q Counterpart," 380–81.
24 Carmignac, "La forme poétique," 375.
25 Dupont-Sommer, "Le Psaume cli," 32.

Les arbres prisèrent mes paroles
　　et le troupeau, mes poèmes.
Car qui proclamera et qui célébrera
　　et qui racontera les oeuvres du Seigneur?
L'univers, Eloah le voit:
　　l'univers, Lui l'entend, et Lui prêté l'oreille.

Rabinowitz[26]
"The mountains will not bear witness for me,
nor the hills;
　　the trees will not report my words on my behalf,
　　nor the flocks my deeds;
　　　　but O that someone would report,
　　　　O that someone would speak about,
　　　　O that someone would recount my deeds!"
The Master of the universe saw;
The God of the universe –
　　He himself heard,
　　and He himself gave ear.

Weiss[27]
But who can proclaim and who can tell,
　　and who can recount the works of the Lord of the Universe?
The God of the Universe has seen –
He has heard and he has heeded.

Carmignac[28]
"Les montagnes ne témoigneront pas pour moi
et les collines ne proclameront pas en faveur de moi,
les arbres (ne proclameront pas) mes paroles
et le troupeau mes oeuvres.
Qui est-ce donc qui proclamera,
qui est-ce qui exprimera,
qui est-ce qui racontera mes oeuvres?"

　　　　　　　　　Second Strophe

Le maître de l'univers a vu,
le dieu de l'univers, lui, il a entendu
et, lui, il a prêté l'oreille.

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[26] Rabinowitz, "Alleged Orphism," 196.
[27] Weiss, *Herut*, and *Massa*, v. 3 with Sanders, "Ps 151 in 11QPss."
[28] Carmignac, "Précisions," 250–51. See also Carmignac, "Nouvelles précisions."

Delcor[29]
Nicht können die Berge für mich Zeugnis ablegen noch die Hügel,
noch die Blätter der Bäume meine Worte verkünden,
noch die Herde meine Werke.
Denn wer kann ankündigen,
wer kann sagen,
wer kann meine Werke erzählen.
Der Herr des Universums hat gesehen,
der Gott des Universums;
er selbst hat aufgehorcht,
er selbst hat hingehört.

Strugnell[30]
The mountains cannot witness to Him,
      nor the hills proclaim about Him;
(Nor) the trees (proclaim) His words,
      nor the flocks his deeds.
For who can relate, who can tell
      and who can recount the works of the Lord?
But God saw all, all He heard,
      and He gave ear.

Meyer[31]
Die Berge zeugen für ihn nicht,
      und die Hügel verkündigen [ihn] nicht;
[Aber] die Bäume preisen meine Worte
      und das Kleinvieh meine Werke.
Fürwahr, wer verkündet und wer bespricht
      und wer erzählt die Taten des Herrn?
Alles sieht Gott,
      alles hört er und nimmt er wahr.

Magne[32]
"Les montagnes [ne] témoignent [pas] sur moi,
et les collines [ne] rapportent [pas] à mon sujet;
les arbres <racontent> mes chants,
et les brebis, mes oeuvres;
mais qui rapporte,
et qui chante,

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[29] Delcor, "Zum Psalter von Qumran," 18, 20.
[30] Strugnell, "Notes on the Text," 280.
[31] Meyer, "Die Septuaginta-Fassung," 165.
[32] Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme," 544.

et qui raconte les oeuvres du Seigneur?”
Dieu voit tout,
il entend tout:
il écouta.

van der Woude[33]
“Die Berge legen für mich kein Zeugnis ab,
und die Hügel verkünden mir zugunsten nicht,
(weder) die Bäume meine Worte
noch die Schafe meine Taten.
Wahrlich, wer wird verkünden
und wer wird erwähnen
und wer wird erzählen meine Taten?”
Der Herr des all sah (es),
Der Gott des All, –
Er selbst hörte hin
und Er selbst horchte auf.

Auffret[34]
“Les montagnes n’iront pas témoigner à mon sujet,
et les collines n’iront pas rapporter sur mon compte,
<ni> les arbres mes dits
ou les brebis mes oeuvres.
Qui irait rapporter,
et qui irait dire,
et qui irait raconter mes oeuvres?”
Le Seigneur de l’univers a vu,
le Dieu de l’univers, lui a entendu
       lui a prêté l’oreille.

Cross[35]
O that the mountains would bear Him witness,
O that the hills would tell of him,
The trees (recount) his deeds,
And the flocks, His works!
Would that someone tell and speak,
And would that someone recite His works!
The Lord of all saw;
The God of all heard,
And He gave heed.

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[33] van der Woude, “Die fünf syrischen Psalmen.” 39–40.
[34] Auffret, “Structure littéraire et interprétation du Psaume 151,” 164–65.
[35] Cross, “David, Orpheus,” 69.

Baumgarten[36]
The mountains cannot witness to Him
neither the hills tell about Him
(nor) the trees His words
nor the sheep His deeds.
For who can tell, and who can bespeak,
and who can relate the deeds of the Lord of All Things?
God has seen everything, He has heard and He has heeded.

Starcky[37]
les montagnes ne lui portent pas témoignage,
les collines n'annoncent rien de lui,
(ni) les arbres ses faits et gestes,
(ni) les troupeaux ses oeuvres!
Qui donc annoncera ses oeuvres,
qui en parlera, qui les racontera?
Le Seigneur de l'univers a vu,
le Dieu de l'univers, lui, a écouté,
et lui, il a prêté l'oreille.

Smith[38]
The mountains do not witness to him,
Nor do the hills proclaim about him.
        <But I will tell of his deeds;
        (As) my burnt offerings I shall offer thanksgiving:>
            (for) the logs, my words,
            and (for) the sheep, my deeds.
[   ]
God saw everything;
He heard and He heeded.

Synopsis of Crucial Readings

Ps 151:3a (stich 9):
lô: Sanders; Skehan; Brownlee; Carmignac, "La forme poétique"; Dupont-Sommer, "Le Psaume cli"; Weiss; Strugnell; Meyer; Cross; Baumgarten; Starcky; Smith.
lî: Rabinowitz; Carmignac, "Précisions"; Delcor; Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme"; van der Woude; Auffret.

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[36] Baumgarten, "*Perek Shirah*," 575–76.
[37] Starcky, "Le Psaume 151," 9.
[38] Smith, "Psalm 151."

Ps 151:3c (stich 11):
ʿillû: Sanders; Brownlee; Carmignac, "La forme poétique"; Dupont-Sommer, "Le Psaume cli"; Weiss; Meyer.
ʿălê: Skehan; Delcor.
ʿālay: Rabinowitz; Carmignac, "Précisions"; Magne, "Recherches"; van der Woude; Auffret.
ʿālāw: Strugnell; Cross; Baumgarten; Starcky; Smith.

Ps 151:3c–d (stichs 11–12):
debāray/maʿăsay: Sanders; Skehan; Brownlee; Carmignac, "La forme poétique" and "Précisions"; Dupont-Sommer, "Le Psaume cli"; Rabinowitz; Weiss; Delcor; Meyer; Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme"; van der Woude; Auffret; Smith.
debārāw/maʿasāw: Strugnell; Cross; Baumgarten; Starcky.

Ps 151:4b (stich 15):
maʿăsê: Sanders; Skehan; Brownlee; Carmignac, "La forme poétique"; Dupont-Sommer, "Le Psaume cli"; Weiss; Strugnell; Meyer; Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme"; Baumgarten; Smith (but, as intrusion).
maʿăsay: Rabinowitz; Carmignac, "Précisions"; Delcor; van der Woude; Auffret.
maʿăsāw: Cross; Starcky.

Ps 151:4b–c (stichs 15–16):
ʾādôn: Sanders; Skehan; Brownlee; Carmignac, "La forme poétique"; Dupont-Sommer, "David et Orphée"; Strugnell; Meyer; Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme."
ʾădôn haqqôl: Rabinowitz; Weiss; Carmignac, "Précisions"; van der Woude; Auffret; Cross; Baumgarten; Starcky; Smith.

Ps 151:4c–d (stichs 16–17):
ʾĕlôʾah: Sanders; Skehan; Brownlee; Carmignac, "La forme poétique"; Dupont-Sommer, "Le Psaume cli"; Strugnell; Meyer; Magne, "Orphisme, pythagorisme, essénisme"; Baumgarten.
ʾĕlôʾah haqqôl: Rabinowitz; Weiss; Carmignac, "Précisions"; van der Woude; Auffret, 1977; Cross; Starcky; Smith.

Conclusion

The text has been available to the full scholarly world for over twenty years, and yet there is still no consensus on how to read 11QPs 151:3–4. Some of the world's most respected scholars have worked on the text, and still there is no compelling argument for a single grouping of readings of the above six crux words or phrases. While I do not want to appear dogmatic about my own read-

ings, I at the same time have seen no compelling reasons to abandon them. And I can readily imagine my colleagues all making the same point.

In other words, we have a treasure in 11QPs 151 to use as a model for illustrating the literary phenomenon of multivalency at its most basic level. While there is multivalency in good literature beyond the basic textual level with many examples to illustrate it, rarely have we been given, in less than four lines from a scribe's hand, six ambiguous readings on which seventeen world-class scholars have worked with no consensus emerging twenty full years after publication. Indeed, the latest efforts have been among the most divergent!

While multivalency of texts is a universal literary phenomenon, the hermeneutics by which texts are read determines how the reader chooses readings. This is no less the case when the multivalency is a basically textual one than when it is of a supposedly higher literary sort. In the case of 11QPs 151, I must admit that I have at times sensed a hermeneutic of avoidance as much at play in the work of some of my colleagues as I discerned in 1962 in the work of the early translators, or perhaps in the revised *Vorlage* they worked with.

Be that as it may, we can all at least celebrate the fact of a richly multivalent text to illustrate the point that really good texts are to some extent beyond the manipulation even of first-rate scholarship. It might even be seen as a further contribution to the efforts in the 1980s of scholarship to be a bit less singularist and a bit more humble about recovering "authorial intentionality" of these texts we all love so much. This alone should make a true scholar like Sheldon Blank happy indeed.

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2

The Function of Annunciations in Scripture

(2007)

Annunciations occur at numerous junctures in the Bible. They are a primary expression of the biblical belief that God would intervene in history at crucial intervals by providing for the eventual birth of a new leader in order to save his people, despite all their sins, from disaster or even extinction. Annunciations had a recognizable form that the reader or hearer would have understood as indication that God as Lord of history intended to provide the next generation a savior or helper in crisis situations to ensure that the people survive with identity to continue their mission on earth.

I am pleased to offer the following observations as a gesture of appreciation for the work and friendship of my esteemed colleague, Lee McDonald, with whom I have worked on several projects and from whom I have learned much.

My students and I have over the years identified some twenty passages (in the Tanak and Protestant Bible alone) that exhibit the annunciation form or at least reflect it sufficiently to have functioned as good news for the future. The single-verse accounts (in Gen 35:17 and 1 Sam 4:20) barely qualify but need to be recognized for their function in context.

An annunciation was notice that God was aware of the need of the people and intended to send a leader for the next generation to save them or to provide the leadership necessary for continuity. Seven of the passages are in the book of Genesis with six in the Early Prophets, one in Chronicles and three in Isaiah, for a total of seventeen in the First Testament. There are three in the Gospels, two offering authenticating credentials for Jesus and one for John the Baptist. Annunciations served in part the same role as genealogies in the Bible, some of which showed ancestral lineage back to those whose conception and birth had been foretold in annunciations. Genealogies, however, focused attention on the inherited credentials of the generations of humans involved, while annunciations focused attention on the future but also back on the promise of progeny by God to Abram and Sarai in Gen 12.

Gen 15:1–6   – to Abraham about progeny generally
Gen 16:7–12   – to Hagar re Ishmael
Gen 17:1, 3, 15–22 – to Abraham re Isaac
Gen 18:1–2, 10–15   – to Abraham and Sarah re Isaac
Gen 25:21–25   – to Rebekah re twins
Gen 30: 22–24   – to Rachel re Joseph

Gen 35:17	– to Rachel re Benjamin
Judg 13:2–23	– to wife of Manoah re Samson
1 Sam 1:9–20	– to Hannah re Samuel
1 Sam 4:20	– to wife of Phineas
2 Sam 7:12–16	– to David re Solomon
1 Chron 22:7–10	– to David re Solomon
1 Kgs 13:1–3	– to the altar re Josiah
2 Kgs 4:14–17	– to Shunnamite woman re son
Isa 7:10–17	– to young woman re Emanuel
Isa 8:1–4	– to Isaiah re Maher-shalal-hash-bas
Isa 54:1–8	– to Jerusalem in exile re future generations
Matt 1:18–25 (20–21)	– to Joseph re Jesus
Luke 1:5–25 (11–20)	– to Zechariah re John the Baptist
Luke 1:26–38	– to Mary re Jesus

In each case Israel was in trouble, sometimes even despair. The ongoing story of Israel as God's people was threatened in some way and hope was waning. In each case it appeared as though a chapter of Israel's life was closing with no future in sight. In the case of the patriarchal stories in Genesis, the issue was whether the promises of progeny and land to Abram and Sarai in Gen 12:1–7 would be fulfilled, and whether the story would even get off the ground. All of them dealt with whether there would be progeny yet to come. Four of them in Genesis deal with the issue of progeny in the first place, and three address the issue of children for Isaac and Jacob, the second and third generations of the called people of God.

The annunciations in Judges and 1 Samuel came in the midst of the Philistine threat to Israel's very existence while those in Samuel/Kings and the one in Chronicles offered assurances that the Davidic dynasty would endure. Those in the Second Testament story came in the crucial period of Roman oppression between the end of the first century BCE, and the outbreak of the Jewish revolt against Rome in the 60s of the first century CE, when Rome tried to obliterate Judaism from Jerusalem entirely.

In other words, annunciations meant hope that the story would continue beyond the crisis, and that Israel would not cease to exist. These are parallel to stories of women in the Bible who went to great lengths to assure that there would be progeny, even to the point of grievous sin. The salient such story was that of Tamar (Gen 38) who seduced her father-in-law Judah into having sex with her at a sheep-shearing fair because Judah had failed to enforce the custom of levirate marriage in order that her deceased husband have heirs. Tamar had married Judah's son, Er, one of three sons Judah had by the Canaanite woman, Shua. One of Er's brothers was Onan and the other Shelah. When Er died Judah gave Onan to Tamar, but Onan was loath to serve the interests of his deceased brother and refused to consummate the marriage, but then died prematurely. Judah failed then to give Shelah to Tamar, as would have been the custom. He was reluctant to do so because he feared Shelah might also die like his brothers.

When Shelah had grown to marriageable age and Judah did not arrange for him to marry Tamar, she went herself to the fair, took off her widow's garments, redressed as a woman of the street, and seduced her father-in-law. In a marvelous story of personal intrigue, Tamar later forced Judah to recognize that she was bearing his own son. But not until Judah had accused her of harlotry and was about to have her burnt to death did Tamar show him the signet, the cord, and the staff he had given her on the occasion of the tryst at the fair. Thereupon Judah declared Tamar "more righteous than I in that I did not give her my son, Shelah" (Gen 38:26). By law and by custom Tamar deserved death by burning for playing the harlot, but when Judah acknowledged that the personal tokens of pleasure were indeed his, he declared her righteous. Canonically speaking, that is, to later readers/hearers, this would have meant "righteous" because Tamar was a true "mother in Israel" who assured the continuity of the promise of God to Abram and Sarai, despite her flaunting the law. Tamar's son by her father-in-law, Judah, was named Perez, who is cited as ancestor to Jesus in the genealogies in both Matthew (1:3) and Luke (3:33).

The story serves to show that continuity of the people sometimes overrode particulars of the law. The Tamar story occurs in the Bible just after the beginning chapter of the story of Joseph's brothers, including Judah, plotting to kill Joseph but instead selling him into slavery in Egypt (Gen 37). It has long puzzled scholarship as to why the Tamar story intrudes into the Joseph story. But in a close reading of the text it is clear that the editors of Genesis intentionally chose to place the story of Tamar's bravery/effrontery in providing an heir for her deceased husband just after the threat to Joseph's life by his own brothers. The Joseph story is about how God converted the evil of Joseph's brothers into the reason for their later survival of a drought. Joseph, whom they detested as their youngest brother, had become a powerful leader in Egypt where food was available. The Bible, in such stories as well as in the genealogies, shows more concern about Israel's survival and continuity than about strict obedience to the law. The governing factor was the two promises of God to Abram and Sarai in Gen 12, progeny and a place to live, as indeed it is in much of the biblical story from Genesis on.

Annunciations gave evidence of God's continuing concern for survival and continuity of the people promised, especially when the circumstances were threatening, while genealogies provided evidence that God had indeed kept the promise generation after generation – a particular concern during the Persian period of the Chronicler and of the priestly editors of the Pentateuch, as well as of the Gospels.

In the First Testament, the woman to whom the annunciation referred was generally too old to have children, or was barren, or both – as is succinctly stated in the case of Elizabeth in Luke 1:36. Only in the case of Mary was it different. Mary is described as neither old nor barren, but a young virgin. The shift undoubtedly reflected the later Hellenistic context in which claims of virginal conception were a cultural factor lacking in the earlier Semitic contexts.[1] The

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[1] Cf. the annunciations in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 3.1–2; Flavius Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 1.4–6; Plutarch, *Life of Numa* 4; *Moralia* 9.114–19; Aeschylus, *Suppliants* 17–19. I am indebted to Craig Evans for these references.

form of the annunciation in the Bible had distinct traits, with some, as in the cases of Isaac, Samson, Samuel, and Jesus, fuller and offering more details. The annunciation to Mary in Luke is a good example of the full form.

Luke 1:26–38 may serve as an example of the form, which would have had six parts with the third having six subparts:

1. The appearance of an angel or representative of God's presence (Luke 1:26–28)
2. A reaction of fear by the parent-to-be (common in the presence of divinity, Luke 1:29)
3. The annunciation proper by the angel
   3a. "Fear not" (Luke 1:30)
   3b. The woman is with or about to be with child (Luke 1:31)
   3c. She will give birth (come to term; Luke 1:31)
   3d. A name is given the child to come (Luke 1:31, 35b)
   3e. An interpretation of the name is offered (Luke 1:32a)
   3f. Future accomplishments of the child are noted (Luke 1:32b –33)
4. The putative parent demurs or shows disbelief (Luke 1:34)
5. A sign is given (Luke 1:35–37)
6. Acceptance and close (Luke 1:38)

The import of most of the annunciations lies not only in their early meanings to early audiences but also in their canonical dimension. By canonical in this sense, as in most of my work, I do not mean the issue of what is contained in a canon or how and when it got there, nor indeed in meanings discerned by reading a text in its larger canonical context, but in the force of the stories when they were reread and reheard in later or different contexts because they apparently had value enough to be heard again and again, and had then later become part of regular cultic recitations in communities that found their identity in the stories recited.[2]

Though it does not precisely reflect an annunciation form, in Gen 15 Abram's plaint to Yahweh sounded a note of frustration bordering on loss of belief in the promise of Gen 12 that he and Sarai would have progeny. He confronts God with the fact that if he continues heirless his Syrian servant, Eliezer his major domo, would be his heir. That may well have reflected an "original" Bronze or Iron Age custom concerning the importance of a major domo in an heirless household, but the canonical importance of the story lay in the threat it conveyed to the later worshipper and hearer, that God's blessings might have been

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[2] Once a canon was stabilized and accepted, each part of it had to continue to be interpreted as relevant to ongoing generations; but in the early, critical stages of the canonical process the various books or parts had to speak meaningfully to varying situations in order to get onto a kind of tenure track toward a canon. Relevance of a canon then continued to be the expectation of the believing community for which it functioned as canon. While my friend Brevard Childs was mainly interested in the meanings of texts in their "final," stable, literary, canonical contexts, my interest has been in the fact that a text intended to address the needs of one community when first composed, spoke also to other needs of other communities by later repetition and recitation in quite different situations and times. Canonical texts are hence inherently multivalent. The subdiscipline of comparative midrash was developed to probe this dimension of the canonical process. See Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4."

assigned to Israel's longtime enemy, Syria. Where then would Israel be? In the annual lectionary readings, every year God's total freedom had to be faced in the recitation, before the comfort of the rest of the story could be realized.

The same importance can be seen in the story of the annunciation to Hagar and the birth of Ishmael, Abram's only heir at that point. But it can be even more poignantly seen in the annunciation to the aged Abraham that the aging Sarai (now Sarah) would bear him a son (Gen 17:15–16). In complete disbelief, Abraham fell on his face and laughed (17:17) because he was a hundred and she ninety, well past menopause. The story is graphic. Abraham fell prostrate before God, in a posture of great piety, but in that humble position he snickered at the annunciation. "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" He indeed "demurred" as indicated in the fourth part of the annunciation form noted above.

But the most poignant moment for the later reader or hearer came next in v. 18 when Abraham pled: "Oh, that Ishmael might live in your sight!" Abraham needed a little rationality injected into his relation with God. Since he could not believe that the annunciation was realistic because of their advanced age, he asked God to let Ishmael be the heir, or "live in your sight," not just live, but live in God's sight and thus be the heir of the blessings and the promises. The later Jewish worshipper in hearing the recital could not but have an existential moment at hearing Abraham's plea for a little sanity in the situation. No longer are Eliezer or the Syrians the threat but now it is the whole Arab world through the patriarch, Ishmael, that threatens to be the heir – if Father Abraham had had his way! God comforts Abraham's fatherly concern about his son, Ishmael, saying that Ishmael will indeed be the progenitor of a great nation of people, but not the heir of the promises or the covenant; that will be reserved for Sarah's son to come. But the editors of Genesis saw fit to include a second, equally poignant account of the same annunciation.

So, in the next chapter, Gen 18, we find Abraham and his retinue camped under the shade of a mighty tree in Mamre. Abraham was seated at the entrance of his tent during the heat of the day when he looked up and saw three men standing over in front of him. He hastened to greet them, according to the custom of the time, and bowed to the ground before them to welcome them and ask them to stay awhile and accept his hospitality. After a rather sumptuous meal, the visitors asked Abraham where his wife was. She was just inside the tent, listening intently to the conversation. Thereupon the visitors proclaimed that she would bear Abraham a son. The text goes on to make it explicit that Sarah was too old and beyond the ability to have children so that she laughed at what she heard. Though the text assures us that Sarah laughed "to herself," the visitors could hear the snickering and asked why Sarah laughed. Sarah went on to ask how such a thing could even be possible at their age. This time it was Sarah who did the laughing. And this time, like Abram in Gen 12:11–13, it is Sarah who lied, claiming that she had not laughed. The visitors closed the interview by insisting that she had lied.

Whew! Yet again the later reader/hearer of the story has lived through another narrow escape, as it were, and been confronted by the fact that these

ancestors were indeed but frail humans like themselves. Israel's and Judaism's very existence was many times threatened so that the later worshipper would, in hearing the stories again, be comforted that such threats did not stump God. They would be forced to the one and only conclusion possible: Isaac, the lad yet to be born, was, despite the parents' incredulity, a gift of God. The humanity of Abraham and Sarah would well reflect that of the later worshipper. But the point of the stories through it all was the more poignant: the second generation of the called people of God was a gift because the parents were biologically incapable of having a child. One need but think of how the Torah is read through every year in shul, or synagogue. And every year these stories, precisely because they are canonical, have to be heard and heard again year after year in ever-changing circumstances until the point strikes home: every generation of the called people of God, no matter its needs or situation, is a gift of God; in fact, everything a human has or is, is a gift of God. If these stories do nothing else for the hearers they underscore the biblical insistence that one's very existence is a gift of God, all the more so that of Israel as a people.

A sure way to miss the point is to moralize on reading the stories and hence either remain skeptical, or worse, try to defend them on rational grounds – such as claiming that some women don't have menopause until late in life, or refer to experiments with old rabbits, or some other irrelevant claim – as though the Bible were somehow a textbook in accord with modern understandings of biology. These come from those who fight a totally different battle – the question of the authority of the Bible. But that cannot be achieved by seeking the approval of modern science. The only way to understand them is to "theologize" while hearing them by asking instead what the text indicates God was up to in the story. One of the falsehoods of popular religion is to claim that the Bible is scientifically compatible with modern enlightenment understandings of science, but superior to them. The Bible, on the contrary, is a foreign and strange book that has to be understood critically on its own ancient terms, the on-going relevance of which is theological and not "scientific." These annunciations insist that the continuity of the called people of God in every crucial phase – indeed every generation – was a gift of God, often despite the inability of the people involved then or later to believe or understand God. God is ultimately the most important single factor/character in the Bible – but incomprehensible, since God is, according to the Bible, of a totally different order of being.

The truncated annunciations to Rebecca and to Rachel concerning the following generations (in Gen 25, 30, and 35) are not so dramatic or explicit, but the point about annunciations has been made, especially when the going got rough and prospects for the future seemed dim indeed. In a similar manner there is only one annunciation concerning one of the judges. All of these early, difficult conceptions and births focus on God's faithfulness to his promises in Gen 12 and his ability to fulfill them despite the human limitations involved.

The annunciation to Manoah's wife, in Judg 13, is the fullest and most complete in the Bible. Israel was under the domination and hegemony of the Philistines and future prospects seemed so bad that the whole venture threatened to

come to an end. But just as the end seemed to be in sight, an angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife: "Behold you are barren and have no children but you shall conceive and bear a son" (Judg 13:3). He would be a Nazirite, and would start Israel's journey back away from possible oblivion: "He shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines." The story is the most elaborate of all the annunciations in the Bible. Manoah asked the question that elicits from the heavenly visitor who has spoken to his wife the points in 3d–f in the above form of the annunciation: "What is to be the boy's manner of life and what will he do?" Manoah wanted to prepare a meal (as Abraham had done for his visitors) but the angel refused and said Manoah should instead prepare a sacrifice for Yahweh (Judg 13:16–20). The angel then returned whence he had come by ascending the flame from the altar of sacrifice. Because the angel appeared to them no more, Manoah knew, in his husbandly heart, that it had been an angel and not a man attracted to his wife (Judg 13:8–14). She bore a son and "called his name Samson." Yahweh blessed him with exceptional gifts, as the story goes on to say in the following chapters. It may seem strange that such an elaborate annunciation would be told about such a character as Samson, but the careful reader/hearer knows that the Philistine threat to Israel's existence was very real and needed a dramatic turn if there was to be a future for the promises. Israel in all periods and eras needed to know that there was no crisis fatal enough to stump God. This point would become extremely important in the later Babylonian exile when the kingdoms of Israel and Judah had been destroyed and there seemed no future at all for the called people of God.

Very important in this regard was the annunciation to Hannah concerning Samuel. Her husband, Elkanah, had two wives: one, Peninnah, who bore him many children, and Hannah who was barren. Peninnah did not spare Hannah her joy at her superior place in the household, and because of it, and because of her own barrenness, Hannah was miserable. She wept bitterly and prayed at the sanctuary in Shiloh that Yahweh would open her womb and give her a son. She vowed to dedicate him to Yahweh if he would but bless her with issue. She prayed so fervently that Eli, the priest there, could see her lips move but heard no voice, and hence thought her drunk. What the priest took for inebriation was rather that Hannah was "a woman sorely troubled" who poured out her soul to Yahweh because of vexation and anxiety (1 Sam 1:16). After they had returned home to Ramah, Hannah indeed became pregnant, and after Samuel was born and weaned she took him with sacrifices back to Eli at Shiloh and dedicated him to service in the temple there. When the ceremony was complete, Hannah again prayed to Yahweh, but this time it was a prayer of thanksgiving – one of the great anthems of the Bible (1 Sam 2:1–10). The Song of Hannah provided the model for the Magnificat of Mary in the Gospel of Luke.[3]

The story and Song of Hannah occupy an exceptional place in the Bible. They introduce the Book of Samuel, a crucial part of the story of ancient Israel. Samuel

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[3] They are both included among the Odes in Codex Alexandrinus and other MSS beginning in the fifth century; see Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis*, 78–80, 341–65.

became a pivotal leader in the history of the people. The Philistines were camped at Aphek and were a dire threat to Israel, so the people took the Ark of the Covenant from Shiloh to Aphek. This dramatic move on Israel's part both scared and inspired the Philistines, who proceeded to defeat Israel in battle there. They captured the Ark of the Covenant and took it to Ashdod in Philistine territory. That proved to be a mistake on their part, for wherever they took the Ark, during the seven months it was in Philistine hands, disasters befell them. What Israel's fighting men could not accomplish, the Ark did on its own. The Philistines wanted rid of the Ark and mounted it on a cart drawn by two milch-cows from whom their calves had been separated and locked away. The cows went straight up to Bethshemesh in Israelite territory, lowing as they went, veering neither right nor left. Their lowing was bovine mourning, the cows desperately wanting to rejoin their calves but nonetheless driven (by God, it is assumed) to take the Ark back to Israel (1 Sam 4–6).

Samuel was Israel's judge or principal leader during the continuing Philistine menace, riding circuit out of his home at Ramah. This was the great turning point for Israel from the period of the Judges, of whom Samuel was the last, to the period of the Early Prophets when, because of the Philistine threat, Samuel gave them a king, which they thought would be the answer to their plight. The monarchy brought with it its own problems as the Latter Prophets make abundantly clear, but not until David and Solomon had brought fame and glory to the people of the United Kingdom of Israel and Judah. What Hannah foresaw in her eucharistic prayer in 1 Sam 2 of the risings and fallings to come would indeed take place under the aegis of God "who kills and brings to life, makes poor and makes rich, defeats and exalts, for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's and on them he has set the world" (1 Sam 2:8). The Song of Hannah is thus a witness to the monotheizing process that had started earlier and would continue through the rest of the Bible.[4]

Nathan's communication of his revelation from Yahweh to David in 2 Sam 7:4–17 is important in a number of ways in the story to this point. Nathan assures David that God does not want or need a house built for him, his son Solomon will do that. God nonetheless reaffirms the promises of a place to live and progeny that were made in Gen 12. As a part of the divine reaffirmation, in 2 Sam 7:12–16 Nathan includes an annunciation of sorts concerning the coming birth of Solomon, who will indeed build a temple for Yahweh. Little of the form of the annunciation is used but there is enough to include the passage here. It is an example of an echo of the form in order to establish the Davidic dynasty; which was clearly an interest of the Yahwist and Deuteronomic historians.

The next important annunciation takes place in Isa 7:10–17 where Isaiah, in another truncated form of an annunciation, proclaimed to a distraught King Ahaz that his worries (around 734 BCE) concerning the threats from the alliance of northern Israel and Syria against the southern kingdom of Judah would

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[4] See the arguments advanced in Sanders, *Torah and Canon* [and in *The Monotheizing Process*].

come to naught. He assured the king of relief by the time a woman who had come to where they were with other water-drawers to the upper pool off the road to the Fuller's Field to fetch water – a common, even daily, occurrence – would conceive and bear a son (in nine months or so) and name him Emanuel, meaning "God with us." That is, the threat would dissipate to the point that the relief would cause the mother of a child to name him "God-with-us" in order to celebrate the relief from the Syro-Ephraimitic menace, which itself would soon thereafter be confiscated by the king of Assyria. It is this annunciation (in a Greek translation of it) that caught the attention of some early Christians who resignified it as foretelling the birth of Christ (Matt 1:23).

In the next chapter (Isa 8:1–4) Isaiah reports that God told him to write his future son's name on a tablet "in common characters," as in writing a deed, for which he got "reliable witnesses." Thereupon the prophet went in to the prophetess (his wife) who then conceived and bore a son whom the parents called by the name that had been written on the tablet by divine dictation. The message was a follow-up to the case of the young woman in the previous chapter: the wealth of the Syro-Ephraimitic alliance would be looted by the king of Assyria. The northern kingdom of Israel (Ephraim) would fall to Assyria in 722 BCE, only some twelve years after the threat of the alliance had failed.

The apostrophe to Jerusalem in Isa 54:1–9 is a poetically developed expression of hope that contains major elements of the annunciation. Mary Callaway has brilliantly shown how this passage in the Second Isaiah echoes the Genesis accounts but resignifies Sarah and Rachel into Jerusalem or Zion. "Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her that is married, says the Lord" (Isa 54:1).[5] This is a poignant example of how a familiar form could be adapted to speak to a new situation with the authority and power needed to console those who were in despair (cf. Isa 51:1–3; 66:10–12, and the "Apostrophe to Zion" in 11QPsᵃ col. 22).

In the Gospel of Matthew, Mary's pregnancy disturbed her betrothed Joseph, who became suspicious as to whose child it was (like Manoah in Judg 13) until an angel appeared to him in a dream (Matt 1:20). The angel assured Joseph that the pregnancy was by the Holy Spirit and that Mary was due to give birth to a son whose name would be Jesus for he would save the people from their sins. Matthew claimed that this should be understood in the light of the annunciation in Isa 7. Joseph's suspicions were allayed but not those of non-Christians who made much of the illegitimacy of Jesus.[6] It has not disturbed all Christians, however, who have been able to see, if need be, in such a questionable view of Jesus' birth, a testimony to God in the incarnation being identified with an outcast, marginalized Jew of the first century – the view that God so loved the world that he stooped to pick up the lowliest of the low and, lifting him on high, proclaimed

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[5] Callaway, *Sing, O Barren One*. Callaway shows how this resignification of the barren matriarch into Jerusalem continues in Isa 66:10–12; cf. Bar 4:11–20; 4 Ezra 9–10, and Gal 4:21–31.
[6] See Schaberg, *Illegitimacy of Jesus*.

him his own beloved son! Given the biblical stories of continuity assured by women who flaunted the law (some, like Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba appearing in the genealogical lists in Matthew and Luke) such would clearly be a biblical view. Be that as it may, Matthew viewed the story of Isaiah's consolation of King Ahaz as sufficient prophetic indication of what God was doing through Mary and in Jesus, whether with the Hebrew word in Isa 7:14 being "young woman," or with the Greek translation in one manuscript being "virgin."

The annunciations in Luke 1 were delivered by the angel Gabriel to Zechariah in the case of John the Baptist (1:5–25), and to Mary in the case of Jesus (1:26–38). Both follow the form of the biblical annunciation faithfully, indicating to the reader and hearer that these were indeed legitimate proclamations of the intention of God to intervene once again in the history and lives of his people during one of the most threatening periods of their whole history, Roman occupation and oppression. Rome was generous enough to those who submitted to its yoke and domination but cruel and merciless to those who did not, and the Jews basically did not. The story of Jesus' life and ministry is set in the time frame between the revolts against Rome that took place in the large Jewish community in Egypt, then in Palestine upon the death of Herod in 4 BCE, the all-out rebellion marked by what Josephus the historian called The Jewish War, of 66 to 73 CE, and finally the disastrous "messianic" revolt by Bar Kokhba in the early second century CE. It was a period of troubles and threats as dire as Israel had experienced in all her history, equal to or exceeding the earlier Philistine threats or those at the hands of the Assyrians, Babylonians, or Seleucids.

The annunciation to Mary by Gabriel is deeply scriptural. Jews tended to write what new they had to say in the terms and cadences of Scripture in order to give authority to it. Luke, probably a Gentile convert to the Christian Jewish sect, though maybe a hellenized Jew, followed the form of the annunciation with faithful intention. Though it is clear that Luke knew no Hebrew, it is equally clear that he was intimately familiar with Greek translations of Scripture in his time. In addition, he put into the mouth of Mary a song that echoes the Song of Hannah noted above – the Magnificat. If one reads Hannah's song (1 Sam 2:1–10) and then reads Mary's (Luke 1:46–55), one knows that Luke wanted to convey the message that Mary's was scripturally authentic. Jesus might well have been understood as one who would occupy in the history of the Jewish people in his time the place that Samuel had had in ancient Israel. Whereas Samuel had ushered in the Kingdom of Israel over against the Philistines under David, Jesus would proclaim the Kingdom of God over against the Roman Empire. The message would have been very clear to those with scriptural ears to hear.

The experience of the shepherds in the field near Bethlehem was that of hearing a "proclamation of royal birth" (not an annunciation) by a heavenly host proclaiming and singing the doxology, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among those with whom God is pleased" (Luke 2:14). The model for the angelic proclamation of Jesus' birth in Luke 2 would have been that in Isa 9:6: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given" (cf. Isa 11:1–9). It was probably composed to celebrate the birth of Manasseh to King Hezekiah after Isaiah had

informed the king that even though Jerusalem had survived the Assyrian siege of 701 BCE it would later succumb to Babylonian invasion. Manasseh's birth after the narrow escape of 701 was sufficient reason to celebrate "peace in our time" for the Kingdom of Judah (cf. 2 Kgs 20:21). Luke thus wove aspects of the form of the annunciation (Luke 2:10–12) into the angelic birth proclamation to the shepherds in the field that "to you is born this day a savior who is Christ the Lord."

But perhaps the most striking echo of the "proclamation of royal birth" is in Luke 24. On the first day of the week, following Jesus' crucifixion and burial, women of his group went to the place he was buried to administer spices to the body, which would have begun by then to decompose. Upon entering the tomb they did not see the body. Despondent as to how the body might have been taken away or even stolen, they saw two men in dazzling apparel. The women were frightened, but the angels comforted them with the news that God had raised Jesus up from death to life, as Jesus himself had earlier told them. "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen" (Luke 24:5). The women immediately understood, and believing the information of the angels went to tell the men, who were skeptical. This form of the "proclamation" is not complete in Luke 24 but familiar enough to make the point I'm sure Luke wanted to make, that God had converted Jesus' tomb into a womb of life beyond death. And thus the deeply biblical claim that God can convert evil into good provides the climax for Luke of the gospel story.

The annunciation had a clear message conveyed by the literary form in which it was cast, or which it echoed. All that was necessary was to fill in the blanks, as it were, with the names and circumstances of each case. It would not have been necessary for every annunciation to be recited in full form; often in the Bible, as in all good rhetoric, a feather-touch allusion to the essence of a tradition is quite enough to ring in the changes on what it meant and could mean again without belaboring the obvious to those who knew Scripture and tradition. Luke's congregation would have known a Greek translation of Scripture because I am quite sure Luke, the theological historian and teacher of his flock, would have fervently taught them all he knew of Scripture. As his two volumes, the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, show clearly, Luke knew Scripture amazingly well, in Greek of course, but well indeed; and he would have taught his flock everything he knew of it. That is not the problem that some students of Luke have imagined. In fact, the New, or Second Christian Testament, is written as scripturally as any Jewish Hellenistic literature of the time, especially Luke–Acts. And if Jaroslav Pelikan and others are right that all forms of Christianity in the first four centuries, despite their many differences otherwise, believed in (1) monotheism and (2) the church's being the true successor of early Israel rather than rabbinic Judaism, the promise of continuity would have been as interesting to Christians as to Jews at the time.[7]

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[7] Pelikan and Hotchkiss, *Creeds and Confessions*. If Marcion's proposal to eliminate the First Testament had succeeded, the churches, all of them, would have lost both points – the reason, I am sure, it failed.

While each annunciation has a common form, each has its own special contours and shape. Luke's account of the annunciation by Gabriel to Mary illustrates the point. When Mary demurred, and asked how what the angel had said could be true since she was without a husband, Gabriel explained the role of the Holy Spirit in the matter and then chided her a bit, as if to say (Luke 1:36), "Young lady, if you knew Scripture well you would know that your cousin Elizabeth fits quite well the role of the mothers in the earlier annunciations, since like most of them Elizabeth is both old and barren." Luke would have had the annunciation to Abraham and Sarah in Gen 18:14 in mind when he had Gabriel speak to Mary by answering the heavenly visitors' question in the earlier incident (in Greek translation) in the very terms of their question to Sarah, "Is anything impossible with God?" In Hebrew they asked, "Is anything too difficult for Yahweh?" Luke probably did not know the Hebrew question, but he knew its Greek translation well enough to have Gabriel answer it in its own terms: it is as though Gabriel shouted back across the centuries his answer to the question his heavenly colleagues had earlier asked of Sarah, "No, colleagues, with God nothing is impossible."

The promises in Genesis kept Israel alive. Recital of the old traditions kept identity and hope alive, especially when they were most threatened – the Egyptian, the Philistine, the Syrian, the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Seleucid, and the Roman threats to Israel's very survival. In fact, the times in Israel's history when the canonical process was most decisive were those when outside forces threatened but did not kill the promise or the people – those times when memory and recital of the traditions breathed new life into a remnant, no matter how small, that refused to forget who they were and why they survived. As Joseph told his brothers (in Gen 50:20), God transformed their evil into good "to bring it about that many may be kept alive as they are today." The promises in Genesis were a generating force for life behind much of the Bible in whatever canonical form it later took.[8]

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[8] The above observations are based on my own work and that of my students in seminars over the years, with special thanks to one of them, Craig Evans, who graciously suggested some of the titles noted below.

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3

The Ethic of Election in Luke's Great Banquet Parable

(1974)

Much indeed has been learned from John Duncan Martin Derrett's treatment of the Great Supper parable, especially in its Matthean guise.[1] But although Derrett's vision of the problems posed in Matthew is largely convincing, it must be noted that he left aspects of the parable in Luke untouched.

My own work on the parable began while reflecting on the apparatus to Dominique Barthélemy's edition of the Qumran Rule of the Congregation.[2] In the apparatus to 1QSa 2.6 Barthélemy has a simple one-line reference to Luke 14:21 but does not suggest his own thinking about it.[3] Yigael Yadin, in his masterful edition of the Qumran War Scroll, made no reference at all to the Lukan material despite obvious similarities between battles, banquets, and guests in the two.[4] The English publication of Joachim Jeremias's *Parables of Jesus* in 1963 attempted no improvement of the German edition.[5]

In 1966 Robert Funk published *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God*. Central to his effort to make direct application of the so-called New Hermeneutic, or *Sprachereignis* (language-event) hermeneutic of Ernst Fuchs and Gerhard Ebeling is a long section in two chapters on the parable of the Great Supper. These chapters, in the design of the book, bear much of the burden of Funk's argument about the validity of the New Hermeneutic. I have no quarrel with the New Hermeneutic as such. On the contrary, such an approach in its proper place, combined with the sociology of knowledge,[6] can be a valuable tool in exegesis and in the new efforts being launched to recover a valid sense of "canon" for our day.[7] But Funk had gleaned through the finest First Testament scholarship on the parable and still did not see the parable as I do.

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[1] Derrett, *Law in the NT*, 126–55.

[2] Also called the Manual of Discipline (*Serekh ha-Yaḥad*).

[3] Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave 1*, 177. See Sanders, "Banquet of the Dispossessed."

[4] Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 63–86, 290–93, 304–5.

[5] Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 175–80, cf. 63–69. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 110–16, follows Jeremias in all important particulars in interpreting this parable. Other studies in the same time period that treat the parable include those by Linnemann, "Überlegungen zur Parabel vom grossen Abendmahl"; cf. Linnemann, *Parables of Jesus*, 89–91, 160–62; Glombitza, "Das grosse Abendmahl"; Haenchen, "Das Gleichnis vom grossen Mahl"; and Via, "Relationship of Form to Content." However, Glombitza and Via are purely form-critical studies, and all ignore the OT and Qumran materials.

[6] Berger, *Social Construction of Reality*.

[7] Cf. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis*; Sanders, *Torah and Canon*; Sanders, "Adaptable for Life," esp. nn. 1–4 and 42–45 for bibliography. See also Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics*.

The approach that I take here is that of comparative midrash; this method of exegesis has been discussed in my essay with Craig Evans.[8] As will be made clear below, the comparative approach to the study of the Great Banquet parable sheds light on the contexts of Jesus, the early Christian community, and the evangelist Luke. We begin with a discussion of prophetic criticism.

Prophetic Criticism

For some years now, my students and I have been diligently searching the available (and in some cases unpublished) Qumran literature to find evidence of the use there of the hermeneutics of prophetic criticism. So far, we have been significantly unsuccessful. In no instance have we found a case at Qumran of contemporizing a First Testament tradition as a challenge to the in-group. Such an observation in no way mitigates the fact that the faithful at Qumran had a high doctrine of humanity and sin. On the contrary, they apparently daily confessed their manifold sins and wickedness and unworthiness, in general confession, collectively and individually.[9] But, interestingly, every instance of interpretation of the First Testament is favorable to the denomination. Every blessing is seen as flowing toward themselves in the end time and every possible curse toward their enemies – whether the Hasmoneans, the Romans, or the cosmic forces of evil. In other words, they were a normal denomination!

By contrast, when the above-outlined method is followed, one sees that, whereas the early Christians often followed just such in-group exegesis also, Jesus himself might have employed prophetic-critique hermeneutics in what he had to say to his in-group Jewish contemporaries. In the realm of canonical criticism, in fact, one reason the teachings of Jesus were so popular in the period after his death, and especially following the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE, is that Jesus' prophetic strictures against his fellow Jews looked like the comfort and support the later struggling Christian community thought they needed for their own view of themselves as the new Israel. This false transfer of the Jesus traditions was effected by static analogy to their situation.

Obviously, in any attempt to reconstruct the second focus in the time of Jesus (as contrasted with the time of the evangelists) one needs extra-biblical material from Palestine of the earlier time period. And, in contrast to rabbinic literature, which is notoriously difficult to date and control, Qumran provides just such material[10] – dated pre-70 CE and, like the Second Testament, accepting as its acknowledged base of authority the First Testament. Sound methodic procedure would suggest looking for passages in both Qumran literature and the Second

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[8] C. A. Evans and Sanders, "Gospels and Midrash."
[9] As is quite clear in 1QH and CD; see Pss 154 and 155 in 11QPs^a.
[10] Cf. Neusner, *Rabbinic Traditions*, esp. 3:301–19. The Bar Maʿyan story in the Palestinian Talmud (Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 178–79; Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 114–20) is not only impossible to date but also impertinent.

Testament that treat of the same First Testament material in order to compare the hermeneutics used in each. Fortunately, there is a plethora of such cases, one of which is provided by the Great Banquet parable in Luke 14 and by several passages in Qumran Cave 1 literature.

The central section of Luke's Gospel has been an enigma of Second Testament scholarship. Until Canon Streeter's *Four Gospels*, this section was variously called the travel document, the Perean section, the Samaritan document, and so on.[11] Since Streeter it has almost universally been designated by the term "central section." Even so, little headway has been made into probing its significance, the reason that Luke arranged his material in this way, and the ideas he wished to convey by so doing. In 1955, however, Christopher F. Evans, in a little-heralded article, showed that Luke had arranged his material parallel to Deut 1–26. Evans's article has received precious little attention, and the reason is, I think, that he failed to probe Luke's major purpose in doing what he had done.[12]

Evans rightly stresses that Luke presents Jesus in this section as the "prophet like Moses" fulfilling Deut 18:15. The substance of Evans's work is the observation that in Luke 9:51–18:43 the evangelist followed the order of LXX Deuteronomy by using catchwords. Though he does not make it explicit, Evans has shown clearly the midrashic technique of calling the reader's attention to a well-known First Testament authority. Luke, in excellent midrashic fashion, insists that to understand what Jesus said and did, to perceive the real truth about him, one must draw down, as a backdrop to Luke's report of his words and deeds, the one authority needed to test the accuracy of the claims about Christ – the First Testament. Modern historians, in quest of answers to their needs, pull down a map or a chronological chart as a backdrop to test the truth of claims.[13] This approach, however, ignores Luke's own intention and presumes that he did not know Palestine at the time of Jesus and did not know Jesus very well. It is not that Luke knew Jesus very well, but that contemporary backdrops do not constitute a true control factor in making historical judgments about biblical materials.

If C. F. Evans is right that Deut 18:15, the promise of the prophet like Moses,[14] is at the heart of what Luke wants to say about Jesus in this section, and if he is right that the sequential pattern of Deut 1–26 lies behind this section, then special attention is drawn to what can readily be seen, in the light of Evans's work,

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11 Streeter, *Four Gospels*. See also Wright, *Luke in Greek*, xix.

12 C. F. Evans, "Central Section." Evans's thesis has been pursued in Acts by Goulder, *Type and History in Acts*. A student has called to my attention a popular, devotional-type presentation of Evans's thesis by Bligh, *Christian Deuteronomy (Luke 9–18)*. See also Ballard's excellent article, "Reasons for Refusing." It is encouraging to see increasing recognition of the importance of Deuteronomy in Luke.

13 One of the values of the sociology of knowledge is its ability to help us understand ourselves at those times we consider ourselves "objective." We are about ten generations into biblical scholarship and are now able to see that each generation in that noble procession was in basic ways responding to its own Zeitgeist. Qoheleth's observations, especially in 3:1–11, emerge as keenly pertinent after applying the sociology of knowledge in current research.

14 Cf. Luke 7:16; 9:8; and especially Acts 3:22; see also Zehnle, *Peter's Pentecost Discourse*, esp. 71–94.

as the heart of this central section of Luke's Gospel – the Great Banquet parable in Luke 14. That this parable is at the heart of the whole section becomes clear when one realizes that the principal reason Luke arranged his material in this fashion was that he understood Jesus' teaching largely as prophetic critique of current inversions of the Deuteronomic ethic of election.

I tested this hypothesis by doing another vertical reading of the Gospel. Using the Greek *Synopsis* edited by Kurt Aland, I read Luke and kept this question in mind: Is it possible that Luke was presenting Jesus as delivering a prophetic critique against false assumptions about election? And, *mirabile dictu*, while much of Luke preceding 9:51 but not much after ch. 18 may be so construed, everything in the central section can be so understood. If one takes Evans's lead, the purpose of the section and of the Great Banquet parable becomes evident.

Deuteronomy 20

In the Great Banquet parable, the three excuses submitted by the *keklēmenoi* (invited), who are unable to attend, are based on the four causes for deferment from serving in the army of the holy war of Yahweh given in Deut 20:5–8. Evans correctly sets Deut 20 parallel to Luke 14:15–35 in his schema.[15]

According to Deut 20, the four acceptable reasons for exemption from service in the army of the faithful are: (1) having built a house as yet not dedicated; (2) having planted a vineyard whose fruit has yet to be enjoyed; (3) having married and not yet consummated the marriage; and (4) being fainthearted. In the parable, only three reasons are given: (1) having bought a field not yet inspected; (2) having bought five yoke of oxen not yet examined; and (3) having married recently.

Deuteronomy 20	Luke 4
Built a house not yet dedicated Planted vineyard not yet enjoyed Marriage not yet consummated Fainthearted	Bought a field not yet inspected Bought oxen not yet examined Recent marriage

The parable follows the first three stipulations in Deuteronomy rather closely. To put it another way, the distance between the first three stipulations in Deu-

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[15] By contrast, note the judgments about the excuses by scholars who are unaware of the midrashic nature of the Lukan material and hence of the Old Testament roots: K. H. Rengstorf, "unrealistic"; G. V. Jones, "unrealistic"; E. Linnemann, "apologies for coming late"; G. Bornkamm, "fatuous"; J. Jeremias, "flimsy"! My own work on the parable indicated the pertinence of Deut 20:5–8: cf. Sanders, "Banquet of the Dispossessed"; and Derrett, *Law in the NT*, 135–37, perceives its relevance. I have found myself often in work on Luke reverting to Deuteronomy despite the standard New Testament works on Luke. I called this to the attention of my colleague, R. H. Fuller, and he directed my attention to Evans. It was a felicitous confirmation in the sense that Evans approached the material along entirely different lines.

teronomy and the three in Luke 14 is no more or less than might be expected in a midrashic search of Scripture of this sort from this period.[16] The important point is that the parable follows the Deuteronomic holy war legislation in enumerating both economic and social reasons as a base for exemption from participation.

Important also is the fact that the fourth stipulation in Deut 20 is omitted from the parable. Interestingly enough, it is the converse in 1QM 10.5–6. Only the fourth reason for exemption occurs in the War Scroll. But Yigael Yadin, the editor of the scroll in its definitive edition, explains that the members of the first three groups would have been eliminated on going forth from Jerusalem and those affected would simply remain at home.[17] The fourth group, however, the fainthearted, could, according to Yadin, be determined only at the battlefront when the army comes face to face with the enemy; 1QM 10.5–6 sets the process here and Yadin does not doubt that this was the actual procedure.[18]

By calling to the attention of the hearer or reader the holy war legislation of Deut 20, Jesus or Luke's Jesus, in excellent midrashic fashion, says one must have Deut 20 in mind in order to understand the parable's point. As Evans has demonstrated, this would have been no surprise to Theophilos or to any knowledgeable reader after him, since Luke 14 takes its place in the Deuteronomic sequence in the central section of the Gospel, a sequence already established as necessary to perceiving the theme being pursued.

That Deut 20 is concerned with a battle and Luke 14 with a banquet is no surprise either. Luke 14:14–15 has already established the parable as describing or dealing effectively with the great eschatological banquet. An astute hearer or reader would have expected the legislation of Deut 20 to be brought into the parable in 14:18–20. The holy war legislation is eschatologized at Qumran, as Yadin has shown from the War Scroll; and certainly, the messianic banquet as anticipated in the Rule of the Congregation (1QSa) is eschatological.

Following the shift of emphasis from the this-worldly questions of lifestyle in the teaching on humility in Luke 14:7–14 (which occurs precisely at the end of that teaching [14:14] and in the transition comment from a guest at table [14:15]), the parable of the Great Banquet speaks directly of the guest list of the kingdom table in the eschaton. The relation of battle to banquet in the eschaton is discussed by Derrett[19] but needs elaboration.

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[16] A comparative midrash study of the function of Deut 20:5–8 (cf. Isa 65:21–22) in later literature indicates that the first two excuses were not followed rigidly but indicated social preoccupation that might distract, whereas the last two were strictly adhered to – love commitment in betrothal and fear of death. See below n. 18.

[17] Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 65–70.

[18] Ibid, 69.

[19] Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, 135n2, and 136n1; to his references add Ps 23:5. Because certain points are overlooked and others are confused, Derrett's work is vulnerable to criticism; cf. Fitzmyer, *Luke X – XXIV*, 1056. Marshall, *Luke*, 586, also raises some questions, but concedes that "the series of excuses in Lk may bear some relationship to Dt 20:5–7." In his commentary, C. F. Evans, *Saint Luke*, 574, has concluded that there is a relationship between the excuses of Deuteronomy and those of the Lukan parable. He detects "strong echoes" of Deuteronomy in Luke 14.

Whereas Matthew used the word for wedding feast (*gamos*), Luke used the more general word for dinner or banquet, *deipnon*, which also meant "the Messiah's feast symbolizing salvation in the kingdom of heaven" (Rev 19:9, 17; cf. 1 Cor 11:20) according to Thayer's lexicon.[20] The call to feast in Luke's parable was to the victory banquet that would follow the holy war (cf. Ps 23:5; Isa 21:5). One needed but believe that the battle was already won, or in Lukan terms that the great Jubilee or kingdom of God had been introduced by the coming of the Messiah/Christ. The failure to believe that the eschaton had been introduced in Christ induced "anger" in the host (Luke 14:21). To think that the battle was yet to be fought and that the deferments of Deut 20 still obtained – eliciting belief that God as holy warrior would traditionally not need many soldiers in that battle still to be waged (cf. Joel 4:9–12 [ET 3:9–12]) – angered the host (God) who had in Christ effectively already fought the battle for all (cf. Luke 10:18, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven") and was calling the *keklēmenoi* to celebrate the victory. All of Deuteronomy, indeed all of Scripture, had now to be read in the light of the new hermeneutic of the coming of Christ.

Only in Luke 14 and 15 and in 16:25 do we find forms of *kaleō* (and *parakaleō*) with other than the very neutral meanings of "named," "designated," "called," and the like. I have already pointed out the reason such a restricted use of *kaleō* is so interesting: a vertical reading of the central section of this Gospel with Deut 1–26 as backdrop clearly indicates Luke's great concern for abuses of Deuteronomy's theology and ethic of election.[21] It is surprising that Luke does not use this all-important word elsewhere (save in such cases as "You shall call his name John" [1:13]) to signify election, not even in Acts. Clearly he wants to underscore its use in this core material of the central section of his Gospel. That *kaleō* (with *parakaleō*) serves Luke, in both the Great Banquet and the Prodigal Son parables, with the ambiguity of both meanings "invite" and "elect" is emphasized by the one exception, in 16:26, where it can only mean "comforted" or "entreated" in the sense of "elect": Lazarus is elect while the rich man at whose gate on earth he ate scraps is cursed or in pain. Lazarus is in heaven, the rich man in Hades – the final proof of election.

This is a major theme of the central section: the Deuteronomic ethic of election or ecclesiology has been subverted. Whereas Deuteronomy stressed that obedience brings blessings and disobedience curses, one cannot go on to assume (as many ever since Deuteronomy did assume – see the arguments of the friends in Job) that suffering indicates that one is not elect while riches or ease on earth indicate that one is elect. Clearly the theme reaches a climax in the parables of the Great Banquet, the Prodigal Son, and the Rich Man and Lazarus. This is why most discussions (nearly all negative) of whether *kaleō* in Luke 14–16 has to do with election are nowadays considered irrelevant and impertinent.[22] Inter-

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[20] Thayer, *Greek–English Lexicon*.
[21] See, among others, Perlitt, *Bundestheologie*.
[22] Schmidt, "*kaleō*," esp. 487–91, is more nearly right in this regard than his critics, but even he did not, in my opinion, go far enough. Note, however, that his comment on Deut 20:10 and the use there of *ekkalein* for *qara'* (490) is not pertinent to our discussion.

est has shifted to why Luke limited his use of *kaleō* to these three chapters. The answer is not difficult to secure. In the two parables in chs. 14 and 15, the center of attention is a banquet. *Kaleō* clearly means "invite" in the context of dinners and banquets, and only in such a context can Luke stress his major point that those who are confident that they shall be at the eschatological banquet, yet do not believe that the victory has proleptically been won, in all likelihood will not be.[23] This literary concept of double entendre serves his purposes admirably, and it is introduced by the apparently mundane discussion in 14:7–14 of a wisdom teaching on earthly practices of inviters and invitees. Luke thereby insists that we understand the meaning "invite" so that we do not think only of "elect" as we might otherwise. It is an excellent rhetorical device and well executed. Also, as Larrimore Clyde Crockett has admirably shown, Luke is intensely interested in table fellowship and centers his discussions of election and the relation of Jews and Gentiles in pictures of table fellowship.[24] *Keklēmenoi* in Luke means "apparently elect" or "those who consider themselves elected."

Holy War at Qumran

A number of links forge the intimate relation between the teaching of humility in 14:7–14 and the parable in 14:16–24. The principal ones are as follows:

1. The formulary introduction to the parable appears in v. 7 along with the introductory matter leading into the didache material of vv. 8–14, just as the mis-en-scène for both the teaching and the parable is provided at the head of the report of the deed (and challenge) of healing on the Sabbath that begins ch. 14. These are Lukan redactional techniques that cannot be overlooked.

2. The key word *keklēmenoi* (invited and "apparently elect") appears four times, twice in the teaching pericope (vv. 7–8) and twice in the parable itself (vv. 14, 24).

3. The four-word listing "poor, maimed, lame, and blind" appears precisely in the two pericopes, at 14:13 and 14:21.

4. The exhortation that closes the pericope on humility ends on the same eschatological note that introduces the parables (vv. 14 and 15). Thus the "resurrection of the just" in v. 14 and "shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" in v. 15 both fix the focus of the parable on who is truly elect. The parable's ethical lesson apparently is given before the parable itself, that is, the challenge to the lifestyle of those who consider themselves *keklēmenoi* is leveled before the picture is painted of how it will actually be when the herald goes forth to proclaim that the kingdom table is prepared to receive those who have been "called" (*keklēmenoi*). The lesson is a challenge to the lifestyle of the *keklēmenoi* and the parable a challenge to their very identity.

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[23] See the similar conclusions of Moessner's study of the parallels between Deuteronomy and Luke in his *Lord of the Banquet*, esp. 289–325.

[24] Crockett, "OT in Luke." See the thesis of de Meeûs, "Lc XIV et le genre symposiaque," to the effect that all of Luke 14 is a literary unit like the symposia of Plato, Xenophon, and Plutarch (apud Martin, *Symposium*, 33–148).

The parable itself is in three parts: (1) vv. 16–17 describe the "invitation" and despatch of the herald; (2) vv. 18–20 give the excuses or the reasons the *keklēmenoi* "beg off" (*paraiteisthai*); (3) vv. 21–24 describe the reaction of the host who has freedom to alter the guest list at will, which allows the herald to "bring in" (v. 21) and "compel" (v. 23) others to come.

The herald is dispatched to call in the "many" (*kai ekalesen pollous*). Clearly *pollous* here means not crowds or the like but an in-group. As has been established on other bases, *polloi* is often the equivalent of the frequently used *ha-rab-bim* at Qumran, a synonym of the elect.[25] The message of the herald is simple. "Come, for now all is ready."[26] The banquet table is prepared to receive those who will eat bread in the kingdom of God.

At this point, as might have been expected in the Deuteronomy sequence, the *keklēmenoi* begin to send in their reasons for not heeding the call. But Luke has not simply transferred the Deuteronomic material here out of context. The excuses applicable to the eschatological war are not pertinent to the eschatological banquet, which presupposes the eschatological victory and the introduction of the Jubilee kingdom in the coming of the Messiah/Christ. The fact that the fourth reason for exemption from the eschatological scene, faintheartedness, is omitted from the parable underscores the reasoning developed by Yadin for the omission of the first three from 1QM 10.5–6,[27] all the more so since the victory is assured. This is precisely the point at which Qumran and the Second Testament differ: for the former the eschaton was at hand, for the latter it had already been introduced by God's victory in Christ.

Matthew's use of the banquet tradition is quite different from that of Luke's.[28] Matthew does not follow Deuteronomy at all but develops a midrash on Zeph 1. Hence, Matthew's presentation of the supper as a *gamos* (wedding banquet) given by the king for his son relates to the battle (because of Zeph 1) in quite a different manner from Luke's *deipnon* (banquet). Matthew cryptically summarizes the excuses as concern for farm and business and pictures an army in the place of Luke's servant or herald. Matthew describes the newly called guests as "all you can find" or simply as "both bad and good" and brings in the murder theme by picturing the *keklēmenoi* as unworthy and finally rejected by the

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[25] Cf. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery*, 101, and Cross, *Ancient Library of Qumran*, 251; and see the comprehensive study by Carmignac, "HRBYM."

[26] Discussion of double invitations and the like as by Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, followed by Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, are impertinent; hence the relevance of *Lam. Rab.* 4.2 § 2 to our passage is obviated.

[27] Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 69–71.

[28] Derrett, *Law in the NT*, 126–55, fails at critical junctures to distinguish between Matthew and Luke in their treatments of this material. This is generally the case with Derrett's work on the New Testament; he pays insufficient attention to either tradition criticism or redaction criticism. I admire his confidence in his attempt to reconstruct what Jesus himself said and did and his approach is preferable to other treatments that in my opinion are too skeptical, but he is less than convincing when he pays little or no attention to the process intervening between Jesus and the Gospels. Derrett's astute observations about the importance of the Targum to Zeph 1 are limited to the Matthean guise of the parable.

king.[29] By contrast, central to the parable in Luke is the new list of guests specifically named as the poor, maimed, blind, and lame (as in 14:13). First, it must be noted that Luke uses no form of *kaleō* here. The new guests are simply brought in or compelled to come in, as though Luke wanted to be very careful in his use of this key word. He reserves it here to designate those who would consider themselves elect. Thus does he emphasize the freedom of the host to alter the guest list at will. "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" indeed! God can in prophetic critique be angry at the "elect" (Luke 14:21) and execute the power and freedom in favor of whom God wishes, especially when belief in the new divine act, the final holy war victory, is spurned.[30]

In order to understand the list of new guests one must once more turn to the First Testament and to Qumran. The Rule of the Congregation, which specifically deals with those who may be admitted to the Qumran inner council and those who will sit at table when the Messiah comes, establishes an index of those forbidden access to either (1QSa 2.5–22). And the War Scroll establishes an index of those forbidden to approach the field of battle of the last great holy war when the holy angels will fight on the side of the faithful against their enemies (1QM 7.4–6). Both lists of the forbidden are drawn from the category of the sons of Aaron in Lev 21:17–23 who are proscribed from approaching the veil or altar to offer the *leḥem ʾelohîm* (bread of God).

Lev 21:17–23	1QSa 2.5–22	1QM 7.4–6
blind	afflicted in flesh	(women and boys)
lame	crushed in feet or hands	lame
mutilated face	lame	blind
limb too long	blind	halt
injured foot	deaf	permanent defect in flesh
injured hand	dumb	afflicted with impurity of
hunchback	defective eyesight	flesh
dwarf	senility	impure sexual organs
defect in sight	(the simple – 1:19–20)	
itching disease		
scabs		
crushed testicles		
any blemish		

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[29] The judgment of Perrin and others, that the *Gospel of Thomas*'s "version is nearer to the teaching of Jesus than either of the others" (*Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 112–13) is in my analysis of *Thomas* incorrect. From a synoptic study of Matt 22, Luke 14, and *Thomas* § 64, it is apparent that *Thomas*, as well as Matthew, is totally unaware of the Deut 20 basis of the excuses. The only serious question is whether Luke molded the tradition he received to the Deuteronomic midrashic base or received it in the approximate form in which he reports it. My judgment is that Deut 20 is so integral to the parable that possibly it was this parable (at the heart of Luke's central section), received in a form close to what appears in Luke, that led Luke to construct his chs. 9–18 as he did.

[30] Much of the material in Luke stresses God's freedom to elect whom he wills: cf. his use of *dektos* in Luke 4:19, 24, and the meaning of *eudokia* in 2:14. See Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4," 63–69.

Despite differences of terminology in the three lists, Lev 21 clearly lies behind both proscriptions in the Qumran documents.[31] There can be little question that the twice-recorded "poor, maimed, blind and lame" in Luke 14 partly reflects such proscriptions. Qumran drew on the list in Lev 21 to clarify both who should not approach the field of eschatological battle and who should not be present at the messianic table. The Lukan list, however, reflects the levitical only as refracted through such legislation as that of Qumran, and it is used with the opposite intention, as though the Great Banquet parable was specifically constructed to contradict the sort of membership or guest lists now known from the Qumran literature.

The Rule of the Congregation, just before and after the list of those forbidden access to the core of the community, gives two quite different kinds of lists. The first specifies those who are "invited" to the community council, and the second those "invited" to the community council when God will bring the Messiah for the messianic meal. The word "invited" occurs three times in this document (once as *niqraʾim* and twice as *qeruʾim*). (And, *mirabile dictu*, the other two occurrences of *qeruʾim* in the Qumran literature are in 1QM 3.2 and 4.10 – the other document from Qumran so important for understanding the Great Banquet parable!)[32]

These are the men who will be invited (*niqraʾim*) to the Community Council (from the age of twenty): all the wise men of the congregation, the understanding and the knowledgeable, the pure in piety, the men of great virtue with the leaders of the tribes, together with their judges and captains, commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and the Levites – each in his assigned place of duty. These are the men of renown called by the Assembly (*qeriʾê moʿed*), appointed to the Community Council in Israel in the presence of the Priests Sons of Zadoq. (1QSa 1.27–2:3)

Next comes the list of those forbidden to have membership in the community council. Then ensues one of the most interesting passages in the document for understanding the Great Banquet parable.

This is the seating order of the men of renown, called (or invited) by the Assembly to the Community Council whenever God will bring the Messiah to be with them. The High Priest will come at the head of all of the Congregation of Israel. As for all the elders (fathers?) of the priests, Sons of Aaron, called (or invited) by the Assembly, men of renown, they shall take their place under his primacy, each according to his status (or dignity). Thereafter shall the Messiah of Israel take his place. And then shall the heads of

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[31] The midrashic relation between 2 Sam 5:8 and 6:19 and the Great Banquet tradition in the Second Testament needs to be studied now in light of the developing methods here indicated. Note that the texts 4QMᵃ and 4QDᵇ reflect the same proscriptions as those in the 1Q documents here cited. Cf. *m. Ḥag.* 2:7; *m. ʾAbot* 2:6; *m. Bek.* 7; and *m. Ṭehar.* 7; but cf. *m. ʾAbot* 1:5 and *ʾAbot R. Nat.* A 7.2. A related problem is that presented by 4QFlor 1.4 (the exclusion of the *mamzer*, *ben nekar*, and *ger*), but this stems from Deut 23:2–4 (1–3): cf. Ezek 44:6–9 as well as *m. Yebam.* 2:4; 6:1; 8:3; *m. Qidd.* 3:12; 4:1; *m. Ketub.* 3:1; 11:6; *m. Mak.* 3:1; *m. Sanh.* 4:2; *m. Hor.* 1:4; *Ps. Sol.* 17:28. See Baumgarten's excellent treatment of the *ger* at Qumran in "Exclusion of 'Netinim'"; and Baumgarten, *Studies in Qumran Law*, 75–87.

[32] These expressions for the "elect" in 1QSa and 1QM are undoubtedly drawn from Num 1:16; 16:2; 26:9.

the thousands of Israel take their place under his primacy, each according to his status (or dignity) and according to the post that he occupies in their camps and on their marches. Thereafter shall all the heads of the elders (fathers?) of the Congregation as well as all the wise men of the Holy Congregation take their places under their primacy, each according to his status. When they shall be gathered about the table of the Community, or for drinking the wine, and when the table of the Community shall be ready (prepared) and the wine mixed so that it can be drunk, let no one touch the first bite of bread or touch the wine before the priest. For it is he who shall bless the first bite of bread and the wine; and he shall be first to touch the bread and then bless all the members of the united Congregation, each according to his status. (1QSa 2.11–21)

Thereafter it is provided that this messianic meal may be celebrated proleptically whenever a minimum of ten men are gathered to do so.

Luke and Jesus

It would be difficult to imagine more appropriate foils than these to what Luke reports that Jesus said, in both the teaching on humility and in the parable. He has completely inverted both the guest list and the seating arrangement as stipulated in the Qumran documents. People should assume neither where at table they will sit nor indeed that they will even have a place there. By focusing attention on the time of the "resurrection of the just" and on who "will eat bread in the kingdom of God," Luke makes it clear that Jesus is challenging the identity of those who consider themselves *keklēmenoi*. Like the classical prophets of the First Testament, Jesus raises the question of Israel's identity and challenges assumptions about election.[33] "I tell you, none of the *keklēmenoi* shall taste my banquet" (Luke 14:24).

A final word is in order about the presence of the word *ptōchoi* in the two lists of substitute guests in Luke. This word, "poor," does not appear either in Lev 21 or in the two Qumran lists of those forbidden. And it is difficult to imagine that it would, for in both the First Testament and the Qumran literature all such words that might be rendered *ptōchoi*, the poor, the afflicted, and the humble, frequently appear as appellatives of Israel or the elect. At Qumran, such words are used as self-designations of the sect: they considered themselves to be God's poor ones.[34] Throughout the First Testament such terms often appear in covenant formulations of the self-understanding of Israel. Israel in the First Testament is constantly reminded that the people had been slaves and must always be conscious of the poor and powerless in order to continue to be God's people in the full sense of the meaning of covenant people.[35] Luke's construction of these two pericopes constitutes Jesus' call to harken to this basic biblical concept. For

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[33] Cf. Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, 85–90.

[34] Cf. 1QH 2.34; 5.13–14; CD 6.16–21; 14.14; and Ps 154:18 (11QPsᵃ 18:15) and the notes thereto, in Sanders, *Psalms Scroll*, 66–67, and the ensuing discussion.

[35] Deuteronomy designates Israel's concern for the poor, dispossessed, or powerless, by the terms sojourners, fatherless, and widows (cf. Deut 14:29; 16:11–14; and 26:11–13).

this reason what is here proposed is an understanding of the parable, and the teaching on humility, as a prophetic critique of a common *inversion* of the Deuteronomic ethic of election. Deuteronomy may well say that God blesses the obedient and judges the disobedient. But it does *not* say that poverty, affliction, and lack of bodily wholeness are proof of God's disfavor.[36] On the contrary, these Lukan constructions appear to insist on a common First Testament theme that God has a kind of bias for those in apparent disfavor.

That common theme can sometimes seem to run counter to another, the pious desire of the faithful to practice purity out of reverence for God. In Lev 21 the afflicted are forbidden access to the veil and to the altar because of deep concern in the holiness code for purity in the community's cultic relations with God. At Qumran, it is stated several times that the afflicted and impure are forbidden access to the council, to the eschatological battlefield, and to the messianic table, because of the *malʾakhê qodhesh* (the holy angels) who, it is feared, might be offended by such impurity.[37]

To recognize the possibility of conflict between two such prominent biblical themes is to engage in the necessary canons of historical research; for such conflict demonstrates the historical principle of ambiguity of reality without recognition of which no student can claim to be a historian. The historian cannot assume that one group is "good" and the other "bad," but must scrupulously describe what the sources lead us to perceive. This same principle must be recognized as well in working on the disputation sayings of the false prophets in the First Testament. We cannot claim to have understood the so-called true prophets until every effort has been made to understand the best arguments of the so-called false prophets.[38] This is precisely what was meant above by the historical and literary foci of full context. The text before us can be understood only to the extent that we are aware of its spoken or written context. Only in this manner can points originally scored be recovered. We need not always assume a debate as such; but we must assume there was a reason for speaking or writing.

Is Luke alone responsible for such material that so vividly comes alive when seen as a prophetic critique of the in-group thinking of those who in the first century were confident they would be at the kingdom table? Any valid judgment of that question must finally depend on how crucial we view the Qumran materials for reconstructing the second focus, the foil to the parable, for surely they depict a Palestinian setting before 70 CE.

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[36] In a sense, the books of Job and Ecclesiastes address themselves, in their time and way, to earlier inversions of the Deuteronomic ethic of election; cf. Isa 56:3–7. In a broad sense, such a popular understanding of Deuteronomy's theology of election turned Jeremiah into its most insistent antagonist in the late seventh century BCE.

[37] Most clearly in 4QFlor 1.4; 1QSa 2.8; 1QM 7.6; 10.11; but see also 11QMelch.

[38] As brilliantly demonstrated by van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute." See also Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, 85–90; Sanders, "Jeremiah and the Future of Theological Scholarship"; and Sanders, "Hermeneutics in True and False Prophecy." Just such a positive approach based on "discussion literature" underlies the study of false prophecy by Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*. See also Hossfeld and Meyer, *Prophet gegen Prophet*.

Was Luke, in structuring this parabolic tradition as he did, attempting to say, "The Jews opted out and the Gentiles must be urged to come in"? It is possible, indeed, that such was his purpose – Matthew seems to intend such. Even so, a crucial question is in order. Is this not a good example of how a prophetic in-group critique of the earlier period (Jesus) can without malice aforethought be later subverted to say the opposite when contemporized by static transfer to fit the later second focus? In such a case, the original substance needed little change when the later focus was so utterly different.

Is it not possible that recognition of such dynamics of focus may lead to more optimism about recovering the teaching of the historical Jesus? The historian deals in probabilities, not certainties. Perhaps Luke's older reputation as a "historian" (reporting what was done and said by Jesus) should be as seriously entertained as his newer reputation as a "theologian" (making Jesus traditions relevant to his day). One need not make Luke an antiquarian to appreciate him as a gifted theological historian in the biblical sense.

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4

From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4

(1975)

This chapter will sketch a history of the function of Isa 61:1–3 from its appearance in the Tanak to its role in the Lukan account of Jesus' appearance and sermon in the Nazareth synagogue. The method employed here is comparative midrash.[1]

Isaiah 61

The efforts of modern biblical scholarship have not rendered clear judgments about the meaning of Isa 61:1–3 at its first stages of formation. There are three major positions on its literary nature or form. But whether or not the pericope should be seen as the opening strophe of the fuller poem, 61:1–11, the first three verses are commonly seen as the basic small unit.[2] Some scholars view it as an Ebed Yahweh poem.[3] Otto Michel and others think it was influenced by the Ebed poems, an early poetic midrash on the Ebed idea.[4] Still others believe that, form-critically, it presents the call of a prophet, perhaps 3 Isaiah.[5] Part of the reason for such diversity of opinion is the difficulty of determining the nature of Isa 56–66; much of what one thinks of the passage depends on a prior judgment about the larger body of material in which it is embedded.

Equally important in contributing to the uncertainty is content analysis of phrases in the text. As Bernhard Duhm pointed out, the author has mixed the figures of herald of good news and prophet.[6] Whether or not it is a confusion depends on one's understanding of either figure. Also, as Claus Westermann remarks, this pericope is surely the last example of a prophet freely and surely

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[1] See definition and discussion in C. A. Evans and Sanders, "Gospels and Midrash." And see Callaway, *Sing, O Barren One*.

[2] Muilenburg, "Isaiah 40–66," 708–16, sees the basic poem as including 61:1–11 and having five strophes, of which vv. 1–3 form the first.

[3] Cannon, "Isaiah 61:1–3"; Procksch, *Theologie des AT*, 290. Cf. Koch, "Der Gottesgeist und der Messias (II)," esp. 396–401, and Morgenstern, "Isaiah 61."

[4] Michel, "Zur Eigenart Tritojesajas." See also Zimmerli, "Das 'Gnadenjahr des Herrn.'"

[5] Elliger, "Der Prophet Tritojesaja"; cf. Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 290–92. See also Zimmerli, "Das 'Gnadenjahr des Herrn,'" whose position is rather complex but would not rule out the form-critical category of a prophetic call; cf. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 425–26.

[6] Duhm, *Jesaja*; cf. Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 290.

expressing the certainty that God had sent him or her with a message to the people. Such a view depends, of course, on the date one assigns to the basic unit. Another reason for scholarly uncertainty is that the author clearly draws on earlier material, especially Isa 42:3 and 7; Michel has seen this better than most. Isaiah 61 is a good instance of what Renée Bloch called biblical midrash in the Bible itself. Walther Zimmerli, who disagrees with Michel in part, concludes with a very similar view when he suggests that the passage is the essence of an exilic sermon based on both Lev 25:10 and Deutero-Isaianic traditions![7]

Philologists have offered two suggestions about a difficult reading in the MT, the verb *pqḥ*, in 61:1, which elsewhere in the Bible is used only of the opening of eyes or ears.[8] These suggestions are mutually exclusive – one bids us turn to Egyptian documents and the other to Babylonian. In 1947 the Egyptologist A. S. Yahuda cited the portion after the *maqqep* in the Isaiah text, *qôaḥ*, as a loan word that in New Egyptian means "a wooden collar, especially used to be fastened tightly around the neck of the prisoners (*Aeg. WB*. V 66)." He takes the phrase to mean "to open the collars of the prisoners," and excuses the use of *pqḥ* instead of *ptḥ* as a purposive literary device of the author.[9] This is a very attractive explanation: biblical authors did precisely that sort of thing to score points by such rhetoric.

But did they go to such extremes to accommodate an Egyptian word that the first hearers or readers might not have known? The answer to that question depends on a number of factors. In the meantime, an attractive explanation has been advanced by the renowned Assyriologist Shalom Paul.[10] Pointing out that Isa 42:7 has already equated opening the eyes with liberation from prison, Paul suggests the prophet made *pqḥ-qḥ* parallel to *derôr* and thus used it also to mean freedom. Paul cites a cuneiform inscription in which Sargon declares that in liberating Dur-Yakin he destroyed the prisons and "let the prisoners see the light." Such a phrase, Paul states, was the equivalent of "I set them free." Paul translates Isa 61:1–2, then, "To proclaim liberty to captives and to prisoners freedom." This explanation has the advantages of recognizing the import of Isa 42:7 for our passage and of suggesting a Mesopotamian idiom as an extrabiblical parallel: it fits a broad view of the exilic or postexilic Mesopotamian provenance of the passage.

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[7] Cf. Zimmerli, "Das 'Gnadenjahr des Herrn.'" This, I think, is right; see the next note below. Bloch, "Midrash."

[8] In Isa 42:20 it is used for opening ears. Note the same problem with respect to the Greek verb *dianoigō*, which, although elsewhere used only for the opening of eyes or of the heavens (in a vision), signifies in Luke 24:32, after its normal use in 24:31, opening a scroll! This effective rhetorical device was used by Luke to stress that one can "see" (open the eyes) in the present only after one "sees" (opens) the Scriptures. This point is more certain than the so-called proleptic eucharist celebrated in Emmaus: the breaking of bread as study of Torah is very ancient.

[9] Yahuda, "Hebrew Words," esp. 86–87.

[10] Paul, "Deutero-Isaiah," esp. 182.

Early Witnesses

Early witnesses to the text betray patterns familiar in text criticism. They all exhibit keen interest in the *pqḥ-qḥ* reading, clearly indicating to the trained observer that they were struggling with the text (whether one word or two) represented by the MT, and not with a genuine variant. 1QIsaᵃ and 1QIsaᵇ leave no space for a *maqqep*, suggesting perhaps a duplicated form of the last letters of the root or perhaps indicating, with the MT tradition, early uncertainty about both the form and the meaning. Classical and traditional grammarians have most often taken the *pqḥ-qḥ* to be a hapax noun form based on *pqḥ* with an intensive sense of eye-opening.[11]

Apparently the LXX understood it thus in translating it by the noun *anablepsis* and in translating the previous word by *typhlois*, rendering the phrase *kai typhlois anablepsin*, continuing the predicate construction after the verb *kēryxai/liqroʾ*, which is precisely the text of Luke 4:18. Modern scholars have suggested that the LXX, and hence Luke, read *velassanverîm* instead of *velaʾasûrîm*.[12] I think such a reading highly unlikely as *Vorlage* for the LXX. On the contrary, because of similar expressions in Hebrew Isa 42:7, 18, 22, and 43:8, the Greek translator had no difficulty whatever in understanding and conveying the metaphor of blindness for prisoners.[13] The burden of proof rests on those who defend a variant *Vorlage* behind the LXX reading. If I read Seeligmann correctly, this phrase in 61:1–2 is hardly surprising as an effort that the LXX translator understood as a metaphor in the Hebrew text.[14] Luke, as already noted, followed the LXX at this point, which is not surprising from what is known of First Testament quotations in Luke–Acts elsewhere. The Lukan citation reflects the LXX verbatim save for two variations: Luke omits the fourth of the six colons of 61:1 and reads *kēryxai* instead of *kalesai* as the first word of 61:2. But we shall return to these and other observations about the Lukan citation.

When encountering a difficulty in the *Vorlage*, the LXX translator resolved it by translating the phrase (*velaʾasûrîm peqaḥ-qôaḥ*) metaphorically as the original author apparently had intended; and I think the translator would have based a defense on the same metaphors already cited in Isa 42–43. These chapters repre-

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[11] Most modern scholars have also taken it as a noun, as suggested by the ancient translators except the targum; see BDB. Volz, *Jesaia II*, 254, thought, on the basis of ten medieval manuscripts, that *qh* stood alone in an early text and was corrected above the line by the addition *pqwh*, the two of which then flowed together. Zimmerli, "Das 'Gnadenjahr des Herrn,'" 322, by contrast sees *pqhqwh* as a dittography of *pqwh*. Ibn Ezra, in contrast to both, had defended the MT grammatically by citing other verbs whose last two root letters are doubled, in the so-called *peʾalʿel* form. Qimhi and Mezudat Zion admitted the possibility of a noun, but Targum Jonathan, Ibn Ezra, and Rashi are very clear about its being a verb in form if not in function.

[12] Cf. first apparatus of *BH³* (>*BHS*).

[13] Isaiah 29:18 and 35:5 apparently refer to actual healing (cf. Matt 8:1–9:34; Matt 15:31; Luke 7:22) and not, as in the Deuteronomic/Isaian passages, to prison blindness.

[14] Seeligmann, *Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 95–121. Seeligmann does not deal directly with Isa 61:1–3.

sent different authors in antiquity, indicated by the so-called 2 and 3 Isaiahs. But as Walther Zimmerli has suggested, the later author may well have developed the earlier author's idea. It is even possible that in 61:1 an Isaianic disciple engaged in a very early midrashic reflection on the Deuteronomic/Isaian materials cited, and that the later LXX translator of Isa 61 understood quite well what the earlier one had done.[15]

Other points of interest arise when one compares the LXX with the Vulgate; almost invariably the latter follows the MT tradition where it differs from the LXX. The Vulgate follows the MT verbatim in the difficult opening phrases of v. 3, as compared to a translational attempt in some manuscripts of the LXX to facilitate the transfer into the receptor Greek: the inclusion of *Dominus* in v. 1b where the LXX lacks *kyrios* for the MT tetragrammaton, and the inclusion of *Deo nostro* in v. 2b, after *diem ultionis*, where the LXX lacks *tō theō hēmon* (most manuscripts) for the MT *le'lohenû*. One such point, however, is intriguing, and belongs, I am convinced, to the study of history of midrash rather than to textual criticism; this again, as in v. 1f, is the *peqaḥ-qôaḥ* difficulty. Here the Vulgate reads *clausis apertionem*,[16] which is just as interpretative in its own way as the LXX *typhlois anablepsin*, but in a different tradition, represented later by Rashi and Qimhi: the opening of prisons instead of, with the LXX, the opening of eyes of the blind in prison. Of course, the rabbis often go on to interpret the prison as *galut*, which one cannot attribute to Jerome. Jerome probably did not have a variant *Vorlage* before him; he merely wanted to make sense in Latin of a cryptic Hebrew expression and in doing so showed himself a good student of the Bethlehem rabbinate.

In two cases the Latin appears to agree with the LXX rather than the MT. *Indulgentia* in v. 1e seems to stress a connotation of the LXX *aphesis* rather than the plain meaning of the MT *derôr*,[17] and *fortes iustitiae* in v. 3e is certainly closer to the LXX *geneai dikaiosynēs* than to the MT *êlê hazzedeq*. However, it is very interesting to note that in this, too, Jerome seems to anticipate rabbinic interpretations recorded in Mezudat Zion and Mezudat David where "oaks of righteousness" are viewed as *gedolîm bemaʿaseh zedeq* – precisely *fortes iustitiae*.[18]

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[15] Translators may take advantage of a vertical reading of a biblical book, and the LXX translator of the later chapters of Isaiah in all likelihood translated 2 Isaiah as well; cf. Seeligmann, *Septuagint Version of Isaiah*. The translator would therefore have translated ch. 61 only a comparatively short time after chs. 42 and 43. (The Syriac in this whole section seems to be a faithful daughter of the LXX.)

[16] Vetus Latina apparently had *vinctis apertionem* (understand *carceris*). Jerome in his commentary remarked that the sense of the Hebrew could be either that "the blind might see" (*caecis ut videant*) or that "prisons be opened" (*clausis apertionem*). Note that Aquila chose *diablepsin* (seeing clearly), Symmachus *apolysin* and *dianoixin*. All ancient traditions except the targum understood *peqaḥ-qôaḥ* as a verbal noun form.

[17] *Aphesis* is, of course, correct for Hebrew *derôr* since the LXX here follows the practice of the LXX in Lev 25 and elsewhere (cf. Jer 34:8), but in those passages the Latin usually has *libertas* and not *indulgentia*. Cf. Daniel, *Recherches sur le vocabulaire*.

[18] Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion read *ischyroi tou dikaiou*, with variant *tou laou* [*sic*], which seems to be a middle term understanding between LXX *geneai* and Latin *fortes*.

Some manuscripts and editors of the MT read *elê* in Isa 61:3e, "gods," without the first *yod*. 1QIsaᵃ has the *yod* while 1QIsaᵇ has a lacuna and is therefore indeterminate. Józef T. Milik reads *elê* [*hazzedeq*] in 11QMelch 14 (see below) as a citation of our passage. 11QMelch, however, cannot be taken as textual witness since it is clearly a midrash and, according to the midrashic rules of the period, was perfectly free to read *elê* for *êlê*. In fact, no ancient witness is determinate for what the translator or the midrashist had as *Vorlage*; all the witnesses, including the targum (see below), could as well have read the one as the other to derive the sense they convey. On the other hand, one must leave open the possibility that *elê* was a very early, genuine variant, even, possibly that the MT *êlê* is a hidden *tiqqun* or scribal correction for *elê*. The greater likelihood, nonetheless, is that the author fully intended "oaks of righteousness" as parallel to "a planting of Yahweh" but stylistically allowed for the possible poetic ambiguity: see *êlê ha-'arez* in Ezek 17:13 and 2 Kgs 24:15 (*qere*), where the meaning clearly is "powerful men."

The Targum Jonathan to Isa 61 is difficult to date, but it is interesting to compare the effort there with those of Qumran and the LXX to understand *peqaḥ-qôaḥ*.[19] The targum reads *velidʾasîrîn* for *velaʾasûrîm* of the MT but for *peqaḥ-qôaḥ* offers in direct discourse the very words the herald is to proclaim to the prisoners: *ʾitgelû lenêhôr*, "Come forth to the light." Not surprisingly, the targumist appears to reflect the tradition of the *maqqep*, and takes *peqaḥ* to be a collective imperative, strengthened perhaps by the *qôaḥ* enclitic. Then the targumist simply throws in the towel. If one reads *peqaḥ* as a verb, "Open the eyes," it may, in the context of prisoners, say to them what the targum says, "Come out into the light."

But, in contrast to the LXX, there are other points of interest in the targum for our study. The targumist makes clear at the beginning of 61:1 that this passage was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, *ʾamar nebîyaʾ*. The targumist understands this passage as rabbinic Judaism later understood it (see below), as a reflection by the prophet on his vocation and hence on his source of authority. Scholarly discussions about the Ebed Yahweh, or about the office of *mebasser*, or about 3 Isaiah, would have been strange to the targumist, who saw Isaiah as saying something here about the prophet's vocation. That's the peshat; and there's an end of it.

For the targumist, *rûaḥ ʾadonai ʾelohîm ʿalai* becomes *rûaḥ nebûʾah min qadam ʾadonai ʾelohîm ʿalai*, which specifies the sense of the passage rather narrowly. A spirit of prophecy had gone forth from the presence of God to settle like a mantle on the prophet. In later rabbinic literature, this passage is cited to stress the peculiar authority of Isaiah as distinct from all other prophets. Although they do not, like the targum, introduce the idea of a spirit of prophecy, the midrashim and the commentators do not depart far from this interpretation by the targum. The elimination of the word *mashaḥ* and the substitution of *der-*

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[19] Editions used were the *Miqraʾot Gedolot* and Sperber, *Bible in Aramaic*. Cf. Stenning, *Targum of Isaiah*, 202–5.

abbê yatî ʾadonai, "The Lord has appointed me," and reading it with the following, *lebassaraʾ ʿinvetanayyaʾ*, effectively eliminates the whole notion of anointing. "The Lord has appointed me to bear good news to the afflicted." Rashi and Mezudat Zion say that it does not mean anointing but being made important or great.[20] Ibn Ezra and Qimhi cite Ps 105:15 (1 Chron 16:22; cf. 2 Sam 1:14–16) to insist that the passage refers to the prophet himself and none other.[21] The targum uses the expression *qadam ʾadonai* in interesting ways. The first, as we have seen, is in speaking of the spirit of prophecy *min qadam ʾadonai*. The second instance is in the first colon of v. 2 where the text says *liqroʾ shenat razôn laʾdonai*. The targum translates the *lamed* by *qadam*, so that the sense of the colon becomes, "To proclaim the year of acceptance before the Lord and the Day of Puranut before our God." Here is a consistent picture of a *mebasser*, a herald-prophet, who goes forth from the presence of God to proclaim exactly what God wishes. All messianic overtones are eliminated, making the targum possibly an indirect witness to earlier messianic interpretations. Whereas the LXX and Qumran indicate some interest in the *lameds* in v. 2,[22] the targum shuts out all options with its *qadam ʾadonai*. Finally, in v. 3, the targum, in translating the phrase *êlê hazzedeq*, understands *rabrebê qushtaʾ* "princes of righteousness" instead of "oaks of righteousness."[23] As noted above, this is interesting in the light of the possibility that 11QMelch 14 read the phrase "Gods of Righteousness," or of Justice.[24]

The Rabbis

Before turning to Qumran (where interest in Isa 61:1–3 was as great as in the Second Testament), we might for a moment look to the various rabbinic sources, although the interest there was clearly not as great as among the sectarians. According to Aaron Mordechai Heimann, Isa 61:1 is cited nine times down through Ibn Bakudah, who includes 61:1 in his index, and Isa 61:3 five times.[25] About half these instances are mere passing references with no real interest in Isa 61 except perhaps in *asmakhta* (a rabbinic technique of using one passage to clarify another) to something else quite different. These, except for the following one, I omit from consideration. In the Zohar (II 136b), the Sabbath is presented as the reflection of the *ʾôlam habbaʾ*; on the Sabbath, the souls of the just enter

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[20] Mezudat Zion, like Rashi, uses the expression *ʿinyan gedûlah*, but then cites Isa 45 and Cyrus to explicate. This seems to argue for an anti-Christian tendency as one tradition of Jewish interpretation. The Christian use of Isa 61 would have been the foil for this tradition.

[21] "Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm."

[22] Cf. Ziegler, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum: Isaias*, *ad loc.*, where *eniauton kyriou dekton* has the variant *eniauton tō kyriō dekton*. At Qumran, the reading becomes *shenat ha-razôn lemalkî zedeq* in 11QMelch 9. See also the discussion in this essay.

[23] Targum reads *veyiqrôn* for the MT *veqoraʾ* where 1QIsaᵃ has *veqareʾû* or perhaps *yiqreʾû*.

[24] According to Milik, "Milkî-sedeq et Milkî-resaʿ," quotations from 98 and 106. And I agree; see Sanders, "OT in 11QMelchizedek." The original editors had read *êlê merômîm*. See also this essay.

[25] Heimann, *Sefer Torah*, *ad loc.*

paradise on high and at a given moment, after a Sabbath promenade in para-dise, recite either Isa 61:1 or Ezek 1:21. Both passages concern the activity of the spirit. The Ezekiel passage, so closely associated with the *merkabah* traditions, needs no explanation in the Zohar,[26] but it is interesting that our passage in Isa-iah should be viewed in the same category. The Zohar is not an eschatological text but a mystical one; it nonetheless martials Isa 61 to support its speculations.

The *Mekilta* to Exod 20:21[27] claims that the text there, which speaks of Moses entering the ʿ*araphel* or deep darkness, really concerns Moses's humility. Isa-iah 61:1 is cited alongside Num 12:3, Isa 66:2, and Ps 51:14 to establish Moses's great humility. In the same line is a passage in *b. ʿAbod. Zar.* 20b, recorded as well in *Yalqut Shimoni* and *Yalqut Mechiri*,[28] which, after providing in the name of Pinhas ben Yaʾir a scale of cause and effect in ascending ranks of piety and reward, states, in the name of Joshua ben Levi, that humility is the greatest of all these and cites as *dictum probantium* our passage, noting that the text does not say *lebasser hasîdim* but *lebasser ʿanavîm*. They are the ʿ*anavîm* who will receive the good news; hence humility, ʿ*anavah*, is *gedolah mikkulam*. The assumption is that ʿ*anavah* earns the reward entailed in the message of the herald.

In *Lev. Rab.* 10.2 (on 8:14)[29] is recorded the familiar tradition, with slight vari-ants in each, that in contrast to all other prophets, Isaiah alone received the Spirit of God, or as *Pesiqta* has it, "out of the mouth of God" (cf. 1 Kgs 22:20–23). While these do not stress, as does the targum, a spirit of prophecy from God, they do not contradict the targumic tradition. Isaiah 61:1 is at least twice cited along with Isa 32:14 and Isa 60:22 as one of the three passages that speak of the Holy Spirit in relation to the redemption of the end time. One is *Lam. Rab.* 3:49–50 § 9. In *Yalqut Mechiri*, *ad loc*., Lam 3:49 appears in the place of Isa 60:22. Finally, Isa 61:1 is linked in *Tg. Ps.-J.* Num 25:12 with Mal 3:1 in a view of the mission of Elijah when he announces the end time and the coming of Messiah.[30]

In three of the six rabbinic traditions in which Isa 61:1–3 figures with any import at all, the passage is seen in relation to the eschaton: the mission of Eli-jah, final redemption by the *rûaḥ haqqodesh*, and the exalted place of humility in receiving the good news of the final herald. In none of these is the passage interpreted strictly messianically, but clearly it was not unimportant in rab-binic discussions of the end time. An originally exilic text referring to a histori-cal situation, in which, in all probability, an Isaianic disciple is thought to have

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[26] Neusner, "Development of the *Merkavah* Tradition."

[27] Par. *Jethro* § 9. This same midrash is recorded also in *Yalqut Shimoni* 2 § 302, § 485, § 954.

[28] The *Yalqut Shimoni* and *Yalqut Mechiri* references are *ad loc.* Isa 61:1.

[29] Also in *Pesiq. R.* 33.3; *Yalqut Mechiri*, *ad loc.*; *Yalqut Shimoni* 2 § 443; *Pesiq. Rab. Kah.* 16.4.

[30] The phrase *peʾer taḥat ʾepher* in 61:3 is cited numerous times in the literature as proof text for the place the ashes of mourning for the temple should be put, i. e., on the same place on the forehead as the tefillin (*Midr.* Ps 137.6; *b. Taʿan.* 16a; *Yalqut Shimoni* 2 § 404 and § 685). For those interested in literary style or later hermeneutics, there is a rare observation about rhetori-cal devices in 2 Isaiah; cf. *Pesiq. Rab. Kah.* 16.4. Also, there is quite a literature from the Middle Ages emanating from the ʾ*avelê zîon*, who took their name from Isa 61:3.

the authority of God's Spirit to announce a Jubilee release from the oppressive aspects of diaspora, became in some rabbinic traditions an eschatological reference. This is, of course, especially the case at Qumran and in the Second Testament, to which we now turn.[31]

Isaiah 61 at Qumran

Until thirty years ago [1945] the importance of Isa 61:1–3 at Qumran was largely unrecognized. The use the Essenes made of these verses had gone virtually unnoticed except in an article by David Flusser.[32] Flusser here signaled allusions to Isa 61:1–2 in Matt 5:3–5, but he also pointed out an "enriching" juxtaposition of Isa 61:1 and Ps 37:11 in 1QH 18.14–15 and in 4QpPs 37. Flusser's translation of the former emphasizes his point:

To (have appointed) me in Thy truth
a messenger (of the peace) of Thy goodness,
To proclaim to the meek the multitude of Thine mercies
to let them that are of contrite spirit
he(ar salvation) from (everlasting) source
and to them that mourn everlasting joy. (1QH 18.14–15)

Flusser's work on 4QpPs 37, however, was considerably complemented by the work of H. Stegemann on the pesher (commentary) in 1963 and 1967, the full publication of the pesher in 1968, and John Strugnell's review of the latter in 1970.[33] But Flusser's essential observation is still valid: the pesher on Ps 37:11 clearly reflects Isa 61:1–2 by the midrashic technique of "enrichment common in all Judaism of the period."[34] A fresh translation of the pesher in the light of the work of Stegemann and Strugnell would read as follows:

But the *ʿanawîm* shall inherit the earth and delight in abundant peace. Its pesher concerns the congregation of the *ʾebyonîm* who accept the season of affliction but will be saved from the snares of Belial and thereafter all who inherit the earth will delight and luxuriate in all the delights of the flesh. (4QpPs 37 ii.9–10)

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[31]   The only passage I have so far been able to locate in (what used to be called) the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha is Sir 48:10–12, where it is said in the Greek that Elijah was filled with his spirit (certain MSS and Syro-Hexaplar have "holy spirit") and in the Syriac that Elijah received a double portion of prophecy. Unfortunately, the Cairo manuscripts are mutilated or nonexistent at this point in ch. 48, and the Masada fragments do not extend this far. Ben Sira is probably not thinking either of Isa 61 or of the eschaton in this famous passage. Strack, *Die Sprüche Jesus', des Sohnes Sirachs*; Smend, *Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach*, 1:55–56, 461–63; Segal, *Sefer Hakmat ben Sira*, 80; Skehan and di Lella, *Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 530–32.

[32]   Flusser, "Blessed are the Poor in Spirit." Cf. Keck, "The Poor among the Saints in the NT," and Keck, "The Poor among the Saints in Jewish Christianity and Qumran," who criticizes Flusser. Keck's argument is unconvincing here.

[33]   Stegemann, "Der Peser Psalm 37," and Stegemann, "Weitere Stücke von 4QpPsalm 37," esp. 193–210; Allegro and Anderson, *Qûmran Cave 4, I*, plates 14–17; Strugnell, "Notes en marge du volume V," esp. 211–18. Cf. Fitzmyer, "Bibliographical Aid," esp. 65–67.

[34]   Gertner, "Terms of Scriptural Interpretation," and Gertner, "Midrashim in the NT." Cf. Ellis, "Midrash, Targum."

But the redemptive aspect of the *shenat razôn laʾdonai* is not the only facet of this passage reflected in Qumran thought. The *yôm naqam* of Isa 61:2 is stressed in 1QS 9.21–23, where the *maskîl*, or instructor at Qumran, is described as zealous for the *ḥôq*, law, and its time of fulfilment, which is paraphrased as the *yôm naqam*, when the instructor will do nothing but *razôn* in that day.[35] This *razôn*, of course, means doing the pleasure of God, or doing what is *dektos* to God, at the end time. This passage alone makes clear the dual aspect of the *shenat razôn laʾdonai* of Isa 61:2 as understood at Qumran – bliss for the true Israel but utter damnation for Qumran's enemies.[36] The *yôm naqam* of Isa 61:2 also appears in 1QM 7.4–5; there the people of Qumran who are to fight with the holy angels in the great final battles are described as "volunteers, pure of spirit and flesh, and eager for the *yôm naqam*."[37] This line in 1QM immediately follows the passage that lists those who are forbidden to come near the battlefield on that day, the halt, blind, lame, and those of impure or injured body.[38]

These uses of Isa 61:1–2 at Qumran were dramatically supplemented in 1965 in the publication of 11QMelch by Adam S. van der Woude.[39] Merrill P. Miller showed in an article published in 1969 that Isa 61:1–2 "stands behind the unfolding pesher material" of 11QMelch.[40] Isaiah is not just a part of the enriching biblical material but "is woven into the fabric of the commentary material and is in fact its formative element."[41] In his paper, Miller convincingly demonstrates that the citations in 11QMelch from Lev 25:13, Deut 15:2, Isa 52:7, and Pss 82:1–2 and 7:8–9[42] are all related to phrases from Isa 61:1–3, which link the citations so as to demonstrate the unity of the Scriptures. Words and phrases from Isa 61:1–3 appear in lines 4, 6, 9, 13, 14, and 18–20 at points crucial to the fabric of the whole piece.[43] The words from Isaiah 61 are as follows, with lines in 11QMelch indicated:

 4 *ha-shebûyîm* (*lishbûyim*)
 6 *weqaraʾ lahem derôr* (*liqroʾ lishbûyim derôr*)
 9 *shenat ha-razôn lemalkê zedeq* (*shenat razôn laʾdonai*)
13 *noqmat mishpetê ʾel* (*yôm naqam leʾlohênû*)
14 *ʾelê [hazzedeq]* (*êlê hazzedeq*)
18 *hamebasser* (*lebasser*)
18 *meshîaḥ ha-rû[aḥ]* (*mashaḥ YHWH ʾoti*)
19 *[lenahem kol ʾabelîm lasûm laʾabelê zîon]*
20 *lenah[em] haʾ[abelîm]* (as above)

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[35] Cf. 1QH 10.19.
[36] Mezudat David interprets the phrase *shenat razôn leyisraʾel*.
[37] Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 291.
[38] Sanders, "Ethic of Election."
[39] van der Woude, "Melchisedek als himmlische Erlösergestalt"; de Jonge and van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the NT"; Fitzmyer, "Further Light on Melchizedek"; Milik, "Milkî-sedeq et Milkî-resaʿ"; Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchiresaʿ*; Puech, "Notes sur le manuscrit de XIQMelkîsédeq."
[40] Miller, "Function of Isa 61:1–2."
[41] Ibid., 469n13.
[42] Isa 8:11 in line 25 of 11QMelch should be added to the list.
[43] See Sanders, "OT in 11QMelchizedek."

In 11QMelch, Isa 61:1–3 eschatologizes the Jubilee Year proclamation of Lev 25 and Deut 15 and shows the unity of Scripture, according to Miller.[44] In 11QMelch it is Melchizedeq, a heavenly judgment and redemption figure, perhaps the chief figure in the Qumran view of the heavenly council, whom Milik calls "une hypostase de Dieu" (as over against Melkireshaʿ, his evil antagonist), who proclaims *shemittah* (line 3) and *derôr* (line 6) for the captive, that is for the Essenes, but proclaims the *yôm naqam* for the forces of Belial.[45] Melchizedeq proclaims or announces the end time (i. e., *melkî-zedeq* is the subject of the verb *qaraʾ* of Isa 61:1 and 2), and executes God's judgment of the eschaton. Melchizedeq is identified as the evangelist or *mebasser* (lines 16 and 18) who is anointed by the Spirit (line 18). What Melchizedeq proclaims, in effect, is the "acceptable year of Melchizedeq" (line 9);[46] four times is Melchizedeq called the *ʾelohîm* (lines 10, 16, 24, 25) or heavenly being[47] who on that day will reign and execute judgments against the forces of Belial but bring redemption for the "captives" (*shebûyîm*) or Essenes.[48] "Captives" in 11QMelch becomes an epithet for the covenanters, like "poor" or "pure" or "good" in other Qumran texts.[49]

Hermeneutics

The quotation of Isa 61:1–2a is peculiar to Luke; it is lacking in the Mark 6 and Matt 13 parallels.[50] Luke has made of the rejection pericope an important statement about the aspects of Jesus' teachings that offended his contemporaries. In

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[44] Miller, "Function of Isa 61:1–2," saw allusions to Isa 61:1–3 in 11QMelch lines 4, 6, 9, 13, and in line 18. See also Sanders, "OT in 11QMelchizedek." One of the remarkable aspects of Zimmerli's study, "Das 'Gnadenjahr des Herrn,'" is that he had seen Isa 61:1–3 as a reflection on Lev 25:10 and Isa 42:7 by the tradition-critical method without reference to Qumran or the rabbis. This suggests how complementary the two methods are if handled properly.

[45] I agree with Milik, "Milkî-sedek et Milkî-reshaʿ," against Carmignac, "Le document de Qumran sur Melkisédeq."

[46] Recall that Rashi and Ibn Ezra interpreted 61:2a as *geʾûlah*, unlike Qimhi and Mezudat David who interpreted it to mean *shenat haggalût* and *shenat razôn leyisraʾel*. Rashi and Ibn Ezra could be messianic whereas the others appear political.

[47] In 11QMelch he is the *ʾelohîm* of Ps 82:1 and the *ʾelohayik* of Isa 52:7.

[48] The key word for the Essenes in 11QMelch is the *shebûyîm* of Isa 61:1.

[49] See 11QPs 154 for a significant clustering of such appellatives for the Qumran denomination: Sanders, *Psalms Scroll*, 68–69; Sanders, *Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*, 108–9; Sanders, "Psalm 154 Revisited."

[50] Isa 61:1–2 in Luke has been treated by Crockett, "OT in the Gospel of Luke." This fine work came to my attention only after the first draft of this study was completed; it is still available only through University Microfilms. See also Crockett, "Luke 4:25–27 and Jewish–Gentile Relations." An important study that Crockett overlooks in this article is that of Strobel, "Das apokalyptische Terminproblem," which concerns itself with the relation of Isa 61:1–2 and Lev 25:10 in Luke 4:16–30. Neither Strobel nor Crockett saw the importance of Isa 61 (not to mention Lev 25:10) in 11QMelch, nor 11QMelch for Luke 4. For a more recent treatment of the peculiarities of the quotation in Luke, see Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 105–11. See also Sanders, "Isaiah in Luke." In the classic source-critical mode, Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte der Nazareth Perikope," concludes that Luke 4:17–21 (23a) and 25–27 come from Mark, and 4:16, 22, 23b, 24, 28–30, from the *Redequelle* or sayings source: hence, one must not

Mark and Matthew, both of whom state that the folk at Nazareth *eskandalizonto en autō*, the offense is that of the prophet not honored in his own country nor by his own kin: his wisdom and his works seem pretentious for a hometown *tektōn* (carpenter). In Luke, by contrast, we attend a synagogue service, see Jesus given an ʿ*alîyah* to the *bîmah*, hear him read a *haftarah* portion from Isaiah, and hear him do biblical midrash on it based on Elijah and Elisha.[51] Luke makes it very clear, *pace* Jeremias,[52] that the faithful of Nazareth took offense at Jesus' midrash on the Isaiah passage enriched by the references to 1 Kgs 17 and 2 Kgs 5. What in Mark and Matthew is a rejection by Jesus of the people's *apistia*, in Luke is a rejection of Jesus by the people because of his sermon. The ambiguous reaction of the people after Jesus reads the passages from Isa 61 and 58:6 is shown in their single question (contrast parallels), "Is not this Joseph's son?" The people were both pleased and astonished by Jesus' acclamation that this very familiar and key passage of Scripture was being fulfilled on that very day. To say that this particular passage was being fulfilled was to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. The people would have been exceedingly pleased to hear that the great day had arrived but would have been puzzled that Jesus, a familiar local personage, would have arrogated to himself the role of *mebasser*, the herald of the great day, a role that at Qumran was, as we have seen, reserved for Melchizedeq, the chief ʾ*elôhîm* of the heavenly council. That which in v. 22 is pleased astonishment, in v. 29, seven verses later, becomes threatening anger. Jesus' cousins and familiar friends turn from a puzzled but receptive audience into a lynching party. Luke forces us to ask what happened within vv. 23–27 that would cause a receptive congregation to turn into an angry mob. The same kind of question is forced upon us by Baruch when Jeremiah's cousins and familiar friends at Anathoth turned against him, stoned him, chased him out of town, and threatened to lynch him (Jer 11:18–23). What had the man said that made them so angry?

In Luke it is not Jesus' general wisdom nor even his works that offend the people, as is apparently the case in Mark and Matthew: in Luke it is the specific application Jesus makes of the Isaiah passage. There are many problems, as everyone knows, but the discovery of the importance of Isa 61:1–3 in 11QMelch focuses our attention on the question of the hermeneutics involved in this sermon at Nazareth as reported by Luke. The hermeneutic techniques that Luke used, however, are not as significant as the hermeneutic axioms underlying those

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attribute to Luke everything not in Mark, nor build up a redaction-historical theology therefrom. The advice is cautionary and to some extent valuable, but the method exposes the need for a history-of-midrash approach. For an assessment of the critics, see Marshall, *Commentary on Luke*, 178–80, and Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 526–28.

   [51] The critique of Guilding's theory (*The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship*) about a triennial lectionary cycle in the first century, by MacRae, "Meaning and Evolution," 259–61, and other critics, should shift attention to the work of Billerbeck, "Ein Synagogengottesdienst," which I have not seen mentioned by anyone dealing with this problem.

   [52] Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, 44–45, following Violet, "Zum rechten Verständnis der Nazareth-Perikope."

techniques.[53] Before one can attribute true value to the hermeneutic techniques that an ancient midrashist used, one must first try to recover the hermeneutic axioms on which the techniques were based.[54] Work on midrash at Qumran suggests that two hermeneutic axioms were operative at Qumran.

The first was the principle that has been recognized by nearly all scholars who have worked on the Qumran pesharim but that was well expressed by Karl Elliger in 1953: "Der Ausleger hat ein ganz bestimmtes hermeneutisches Prinzip als Richtschnur. Und dieses lässt sich in zwei Sätzen zusammenfassen: 1. Prophetische Verkündigung hat zum Inhalt das Ende, und 2. die Gegenwart ist die Endzeit."[55] In other words, at Qumran, prophecy had as its content the end time, and the present is the end time. B. J. Roberts extended this observation to show that the Qumran faithful believed that the Bible generally, and not just prophecy, had as its object the end time and that the covenanters believed they were to fulfill the role of the central *personae dramatis* of the end time.

The Bible was their concern and constituted their whole being … What we have here (in the scrolls) is the literature, the actual self-expression, of a people who regarded themselves and everything surrounding them, as the embodiment of the fulfillable word of God.[56]

They believed themselves the true Israel of the end time.

These are but different ways of expressing the first hermeneutic axiom at Qumran. The second has not been as clearly recognized but in my opinion is just as important as the first. One of my students expressed the axiom thus in a seminar paper, "All words of woe, curse, judgment, disapproval, etc. are to be directed against those outside the community, especially those in Jerusalem; but all words of blessing, praise, salvation, comfort, etc. are to be directed towards those inside the community."[57] Put more simply, the second hermeneutic axiom at Qumran required that Scripture be interpreted so as to show that in the eschaton God's wrath would be directed against an out-group and God's mercy toward the in-group. This does not mean that the covenanters viewed themselves as sinless or exempt from God's temporal judgments. The

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[53] Gertner, "Midrashim in the NT," 270, lists six middot employed by NT writers (*ʾal tiqrey*, *tartey mashmaʿ*, enriching, *muqdam meʾuhar*, syntactical inversions, and *midrash shemot*), and in Gertner, "Terms of Scriptural Interpretation," the larger rubrics of midrash (*gezerah shavah*, *peshat* [*dianoigon*], *midrash haggadah*, etc.). Brownlee, "Biblical Interpretation among the Sectaries," listed thirteen "presuppositions," or what we would now call hermeneutic technique, at Qumran, evident in 1QpHab. A look at midrashic technique at Qumran has been offered by Slomovic, "Toward an Understanding," (*gezerah shavah*, *zeker ledaver*, and *asmakhta*). See Gertner's excellent caveat, "Terms of Scriptural Interpretation," 20–21, following Ben-Yehudah's Thesaurus, that the meaning of *peshat* is not "literal" but "contextual" or "widespread-meaning."

[54] See Sanders, Review of *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, and Sanders, Review of *Garments of Torah*.

[55] Elliger, *Studien zum Habakuk-Kommentar*, 275–87 – a remarkable, early statement of Qumran ideology.

[56] Roberts, "Bible Exegesis," esp. 195, 199.

[57] J. Bresnahan, a Master of Sacred Theology candidate at Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

Qumran doctrines of humanity and sin were very high indeed, and the sect daily confessed and executed their ablutions. But in part because they viewed themselves as having an orthodox doctrine of sin and as judged betimes, they had faith that when the great day came they would be the objects of the blessings the Bible allowed. Put another way, the Essenes never in their commentaries interpreted Scripture as judgmental of themselves, there was no prophetic realism, in the form of a challenge from within their own self-conception, or prophetic critique at Qumran. No Scripture was ever interpreted as a judgment or challenge to their own theology or ideology, or to their confidence in their blissful destiny in the end time. They apparently had no prophet who interpreted the tradition as Jeremiah interpreted the Exodus covenant traditions so as to force his own people to face the essential and existential question of whether they really were the true Israel they claimed to be. Prophetic realism is that dimension within a community that challenges its identity and challenges it on the basis and authority of the very tradition from which that identity springs. There was clearly no prophetic hermeneutic at Qumran but rather the hermeneutic tradition that John Bright calls the "official theology" as well preached by ancient court prophets and so-called false prophets who represented the normal, reasonable theology of their time. Prophetic critique does not simply challenge the ethics of a community but its very ethos or interpretation of the *mythos* – its self-understanding – without, however, rejecting the community.[58]

The first hermeneutic axiom at Qumran was eschatological. The second was constitutive: it marshaled scriptural authority in service of Qumran ideology. Only after the importance of these two hermeneutic axioms is perceived do the various hermeneutic techniques at Qumran have any significance.

Hermeneutical Axioms

When Jesus said in Luke 4:21, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your ears," he was saying what the good folk at Nazareth so much wanted to hear. He was observing, according to their "ears," the first hermeneutic axiom, but in doing so he went beyond anything we have in the Qumran scrolls. Near the end of 1QM occurs the famous prayer to be recited at the end of the seventh great battle against the forces of Belial when the final victory was won, but even there when *hayyôm* in the sense of "today" does occur, the context is still a prayer, *hayyôm hôphiaʿ lanû*, "Today, appear Thou to us." Like the Essenes, the early Christians were convinced that Scripture was pertinent to the end time of their day, the ʿet *haqqez*; the Law and the Prophets and Psalms were subjected to the first hermeneutic axiom of Christian midrash, which was the same as at Qumran. The early church also employed constitutive hermeneutics in order to demonstrate that

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[58] See Sanders, *From Sacred Story to Sacred Text*, 61–105.

Christ was the true Israel and in him the church was the new Israel of God.[59] In their belief, the truth of the First Testament was revealed only when contemporized to their day through the Christ figure as initial fulfillment of all that was there. To rephrase B. J. Roberts: what we have here (in the Second Testament) is the literature, the actual self-expression of a people who regarded Christ and everything surrounding him as the embodiment of the fulfillable Word of God.

So the first hermeneutic axiom in the Second Testament, like that at Qumran, is eschatological, but here it is intensified and heightened. The actual fulfillment had begun, and nowhere in the Second Testament is this more sharply put than in this hapax in Luke 4:21, *sēmeron peplērōtai hē graphē hautē*. Following this, Luke omits the Markan report that the people were scandalized, but suggests that they were amazed, as we have seen. Jeremias, following Violet, interprets this puzzlement or wonderment, by retroversion to Aramaic, as anger at Jesus for omitting the phrase "and day of vengeance for our God."[60]

Jeremias's point that Luke omits the phrase kai *hēmeran antapodoseōs* in Jesus' citation of Isa 61:2 is of great significance as we shall see in a moment, but not for the reasons that Jeremias cites! As mentioned above, the second axiom in Essene hermeneutics was the belief that the end time meant blessings for the Essenes but only woe for their enemies; this is apparent in all Qumran literature, especially in 11QMelch, which maintains that Melchizedeq on that great and final day will wreak vengeance on Belial and all other enemies. Jesus' omission of this all–important phrase in his recitation of Isaiah is considerably more significant than his omitting the earlier phrase in v. 1, "To bind up the brokenhearted," which has synonymous parallels in the phrases preceding and following. The addition of the phrase, *apostelle* [*aposteilai*] *tethrausmenous en aphesei*, from Isa 58:6, necessitated the elision of one such colon for the dual purpose of establishing a parallelism between the occurrences in Greek of *aphesin* in 61:1 and *aphesei* in 58:6, and of emphasizing the idea of release, as 11QMelch also does. The whole of the first half of 11QMelch is a midrash on the idea of release in the Jubilee texts of Lev 25, Deut 15, and Isa 61. Here, 11QMelch and Luke 4 are in striking harmony and seem both quite faithful to the ancient fabric of Isa 61:1–3 itself.[61]

Where they differ radically is in the Lukan Jesus' midrash on who the poor, the captives, and the blind were. Whereas 11QMelch, by citing Lev 25:10 and Isa 52:7, reflects the second Essene axiom that the captives to be released are

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[59] Sanders, "Habakkuk in Qumran"; Sanders, "Dead Sea Scrolls – A Quarter Century," esp. 144–48; and Sanders, "Foreword."

[60] See Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, 44–45, following Violet, "Zum rechten Verständnis der Nazareth-Perikope."

[61] See Michel, "Zur Eigenart Tritojesajas"; Zimmerli, "Das 'Gnadenjahr des Herrn.'" Miller, "Function of Isa 61:1–2," saw allusions to Isa 61:1–3, in 11QMelch lines 4, 6, 9, 13, and 18. See also Sanders, "OT in 11QMelchizedek"; Perrot, "Luc 4:16–30." Perrot has advanced the bold hypothesis that the service in which Jesus read and preached may well have been Yom Kippur in Tishri. The great value of Perrot's remarks is in his taking the Jubilee Year theme as key. Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 530, 532, is aware of 11QMelch and its use of Lev 25, but he makes little of it.

the in-group or Essenes, Jesus' citations of the gracious acts of Elijah and Elisha toward the Sidonian widow and the Syrian leper show that he does not subscribe to the Essene second axiom. Far from it, by this enriching juxtaposition of Elijah, Elisha, and Isa 61, Jesus demonstrates that the words meaning poor, captive, blind, and oppressed do not apply exclusively to any in-group, but those to whom God wishes them to apply. God sent Elijah (*epemphthē elias*) and Elisha to outsiders, the Sidonian widow and the Syrian leper.

Luke's congregation would have known these stories very well if Luke's two-volume theological history of what God had done in Christ and was doing in the early church was the literary result of a theocentric program of instruction in which narrative Scripture (LXX) was read (aloud by the literate for all) in *lectio continua*. The remnant who stayed in "the way" after the fall of Jerusalem and the apparent failure of the parousia would have asked crucial questions about what kind of God was working in Christ and through the church. Through such a program, Luke's community became knowledgeable about the One God of Scripture who had sent the prophets and Jesus, the herald of God's good news. The widow and the leper, being outside ancient Israel, could lay no claims on divine promises nor on the blessings that Elijah and Elisha freely bestowed; God, as seen throughout biblical prophetic critique, was free to grant divine blessings where God willed.

Jesus' second axiom, if we read Luke correctly, is the contradiction of the Essene second axiom. Prophetic critique, so significantly lacking in the Qumran literature, is an integral part of Luke's Gospel or, perhaps, his Jesus sources. If the second axiom in the early church was largely the same as that at Qumran, as it surely was, then the church in its polemic with Judaism, about who was the true Israel, needed only to transmit Jesus' prophetic challenges to the Jews intact but to read them as acceptance of Gentiles and rejection of Jews. Thus, the *ipsissima vox Jesu*, read by a diametrically opposed hermeneutic axiom (the constitutive rather than the prophetic), would say the opposite of what Jesus had intended. A simplified view of the operation of these two axioms would be as follows:

	Qumran	Jesus and NT(?)	Early Church and NT(?)
first axiom	Eschatological	Eschatological	Eschatological
second axiom	Constitutive	Prophetic	Constitutive

It seems to me that the long-standing debate over the place and significance of the proverb in Luke 4:24 and parallels – that the prophet is either *atimos* or not *dektos* in his own *patris* – should be reviewed because the prophetic dimension of the hermeneutic second axiom underlying much of the Scripture use by Jesus and Luke has now been recognized.[62] Two salient observations about the Lukan

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[62] See the review of the problem in a different light by Anderson, "Broadening Horizons," esp. 263–66.

form of the proverb are necessary. First, only Luke, like Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1§6, has the adjective *dektos*. Mark and Matthew have *atimos*, and John in 4:44 has the noun *timē*. Second, Luke's citation of Isa 61:2 ends on the climactic *eni-auton kyriou dekton – shenat razôn laᵓdonai* – which, *pace* Jeremias, is the proper explanation for the omission of the following phrase about God's day of vengeance in Isa 61:2. Luke thus anticipated, by citing the Wisdom tradition about the nonacceptance of prophets, the exegesis that he would give to the Isa 61 lection by recalling the acts of grace of Elijah and Elisha: the year of the end time is determined by God alone. *Dektos* is normally used to express God's pleasure; in this proverb, it is apparently used to speak of one person's acceptance of another. Just as *eudokia* in the *bat-qol* in the Bethlehem theophany in Luke 2:14 expressed God's *razôn*, so the *dektos* of Isa 61:2 refers to the *razôn* of God alone. By the midrashic technique of *gezerah shavah* the Lukan Jesus not only empha-sizes the climactic position he had given to the concept of *dektos*/*razôn* in the Isaiah reading, so he emphasizes that it is not what people have pleasure in or accept, but what is acceptable to God that matters in the eschaton. The proverb in Luke, "No prophet is *dektos* in his own *patris*" is not only much more likely the original, as the Oxyrhynchus citation would indicate, it is a far stronger and more offensive statement (if from Jesus) than the flaccid form of the proverb in Mark and Matthew.

But the proverb in Luke has a greater function than to emphasize God's will in the eschaton rather than human will. The proverb signals which herme-neutic second axiom Jesus intended in his exposition of Isa 61 (and not only there, but in his whole ministry, which Luke claims began with this midrash on Isa 61). No prophet, that is, no true prophet of the Elijah, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah type, is *dektos* by compatriots, precisely because the message always must bear in it a divine challenge to Israel's covenantal self-understanding in any generation. This is the reason we still have the messages of the preexilic prophets: they explained for those in exile why God let old Israel and Judah be destroyed.

In other words, a true prophet of the prophet-martyr tradition cannot be *dek-tos* at home precisely because of prophetic hermeneutics. As the so-called true prophets of old cited the ancient Mosaic and Davidic Torah traditions of Israel's origins not only as the very authority of Israel's existence but as a judgment upon and a challenge to the official ideology of their day, so the Lukan account of the rejection pericope shows Jesus in that same prophetic tradition vis-à-vis his con-temporaries. By the prophetic-hermeneutic second axiom Jesus turned the very popular Isa 61 passage into a judgment and a challenge to the definitions of Israel of his day. The proverb is true not only because a hometown figure is overfamil-iar and lacks the authority that a measure of strangeness might bring, but also because a true prophet, in an Elijah-type biblical tradition, must cast a light of scrutiny upon compatriots from the very source of authority on which they rely for their identity, existence, and self-understanding. It is in this sense of the word "prophet" that I understand Otto Michel's dictum cited by Asher Finkel: "Jesu Messianität ist prophetisch. Sie erhebt sich auf prophetischer Grundlage, sie lebt

von prophetischen Gesetzen … Es liegt eine innere Notwendigkeit in Jesu Gang zum Kreuz: Der Prophet ist Märtyrer."[63]

Larrimore Clyde Crockett asks if the controversy between Jesus and John the Baptist, as reported in Luke 7:22–23, might not have occurred because Jesus interpreted the crucial words "poor," "captive," "blind," and "oppressed" to mean those whom the Essenes viewed as impure of spirit and flesh.[64] John, who would have gotten much of his own eschatological orientation at Qumran in his youthful years there, apparently disagreed with Jesus on this. Jesus' question *ti exēlthate idein* in Luke 7:24–25 is perhaps the vital one. What one looks for is axiomatic in how one reads a situation. The Jesus in Luke's sources apparently meant that if the word "poor" means poor, and the eschaton means good news whether the poor are in the in-group or not, then dwelling in the desert in sackcloth and ashes, fasting, or embracing poverty while rejecting the blemished victims of poverty, all miss the point. It would appear as though John had his doubts as to whether Jesus was indeed *ho erchomenos/ha-baʾ*, and I suspect that the doubts arose precisely because John agreed with the Essene second axiom. If one expected the *mebasser* to come like Melchizedeq, in a blaze of glory with heavenly armies, then Jesus' point – that when Elijah comes he will act as he had previously and will bless outsiders – would have been offensive indeed.[65] "Blessed is he who takes no offense at me" (7:23) would mean that one's second axiom could not have been exclusivist, and *ptōchoi/ʿanawim* could not be in-group appellatives. If this construction of the encounter or controversy between Jesus and John is sound, then we may have grasped a pre-resurrection tradition.[66]

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[63] See Finkel, "Jesus' Sermon," esp. 115.

[64] Crockett, "OT in the Gospel of Luke"; Crockett, "Luke 4:25–27 and Jewish–Gentile Relations."

[65] Offensive to Jews, spoken to them by a fellow Jew who was an eschatological prophet, but encouraging to early Christians when later read (or misread) by constitutive hermeneutics to mean Judaism was rejected and the young church (mostly made up of Gentiles) was elect.

[66] See Bajard, "La structure de la péricope de Nazareth." This is a valuable study that coincides with my own at two essential points. After analyzing the so-called incoherencies in the Lukan material, Bajard concludes (and this is his thesis) that Luke so transformed the structure of the account, as it appears in Mark, that the so-called incoherencies appear only if one sees Luke as taking Mark as his point of departure. On his own terms, Luke has precisely ordered his material to demonstrate that Jesus was rejected at Nazareth (contrast Mark and Matthew) at the beginning of his ministry for the same reason that he was put to death at its end – his refusal to limit salvation to his own homeland. Bajard correctly sees that the rupture between Jesus and his compatriots takes place in Luke only at v. 27 after the sermon and not at all at vv. 22–23. The bulk of Bajard's article is a study of the three key words in Luke's account, *marturein*, *thaumazein*, and *dektos*. These lead him to a view of vv. 22–23 that coincides with the one presented here, as well as to a view of the importance of *dektos* in vv. 19 and 24, gained by the word-study method. Bajard apparently knows nothing about midrashic techniques. Another relevant article is Hill, "Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth"; after reviewing the various problems presented by the Lukan account and the inadequacies of earlier studies, he correctly sees that *dektos* plays a crucial role in the pericope. Hill suggests that Luke here presents a programmatic prologue to Jesus' ministry and thereby makes two important points: (1) Jesus' gospel of "release" will achieve success outside the confines of Judaism; (2) rejection by the Jews and acceptance by the Gentiles are not wholly matters of free choice but are phases in the overall purposes of God and essential

Luke and Jesus

In view of the comparisons available in the midrashic history of Isa 61 in the Second Temple Period, especially between Luke 4 and 11QMelch, can we any longer have confidence in a purely redaction-historical approach to the source of the midrash on Isa 61 reported in Luke 4? Who provided this prophetic dimension in the Nazareth sermon? Whose gift to the Second Testament was its prophetic second axiom – Luke's or the man Luke reports as having offended his compatriots to such an extent that they tried to lynch him? Why attribute this prophetic dimension to Luke? Is it not possible that Jesus used the Essene second axiom as foil against which he gave his prophetic understanding of the judgments and grace of God in the end time – and thereby deeply offended some of his compatriots (was not *dektos* in his own *patris*)?[67] If we can recover the foil against which a Second Testament concept comes to full vitality, have we not satisfied one of the most rigorous criteria that make historical reconstruction of the thrust of Jesus' didache, his prophetic critique, possible? Whether or not

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stages in the Lukan theological history. After a review of the first-century synagogue lectionary problem (in which he cites Crockett, "Luke iv 16–30 and the Jewish Lectionary Cycle," but not Crockett's dissertation, which no one seems to know), Hill draws six conclusions (1) Jesus stresses, through Luke, that the prophetic ministry that will win acceptance (with God) must transcend the limits of one's own land and people; (2) Luke's, similar to Paul's, theological history attempts to account for the failure of the gospel among Jews and its success among Gentiles; (3) one cannot reach back to Jesus by means of observations about lectionary cycles; (4) nonetheless, it is fair to suggest that Jesus preached and taught in Nazareth and received less than enthusiastic reception (the rest is Luke's); (5) Jesus probably applied Isa 61:1 to himself at some time as seen by 11QMelch 18 [*sic*]; (6) the Beatitudes in Matt 5 and the Nazareth pericope in Luke 4 indicate that both the first and the third evangelist put peshers on Isa 61 at the start of Jesus' ministry (Hill fails to cite Flusser, "Blessed are the Poor in Spirit"). The works of Bajard and Hill are very encouraging. Both have seen the importance of *dektos* without using the method of comparative midrash so that each fails to see its full importance (although Hill rightly sees the Lukan stress on divine will) in terms of Jesus' role in Luke as eschatological prophet. Each offers some suggestion about the contribution of Jesus to the Lukan account (and Hill rightly denies that either linguistic criteria or studies in the calendar will avail), but neither asks whether the point being scored in the episode better fits, or has a foil, in Jesus' or in Luke's time. This all-crucial question cannot be put without engaging in comparative midrash. And if one attempts to trace a history of the function of Isa 61:1–3, one must, of necessity, emphasize its importance at Qumran for locating its significance in the Lukan story. Hill alone refers to 11QMelch in work to date [to 1975] on Luke 4, but, even so, misses its significance altogether: he cites line 18, and comments that it is the only instance at Qumran of a single prophet being designated "anointed." Hill falls to see the basic position Isa 61 occupies in 11QMelch and fails to understand the basic similarity-yet-contrast to its function there and in Luke 4. He also does not see how the heavenly Melchizedeq as *mebasser* is a foil par excellence in the role of *mebasser* played by Jesus in Luke.

[67] Some studies clearly leave open the possibility that Jesus himself may have been responsible for the wordplays on *aphesis* and *dektos* in Greek; but what is important is not the origin of the hermeneutical technique but the source of the second, prophetic, axiom. See Gundry, *Use of the OT*, 178–204; Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek?*, 176–91; Fitzmyer, "Languages of Palestine"; Emerton, "Problem of Vernacular Hebrew"; Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*; Kee, "Archaeology in Galilee," esp. 11 ("[In Palestine] most people, including Jews, spoke Greek") and 14 ("I cannot imagine, on the basis of archaeological evidence, anyone surviving in Galilee who did not speak Greek").

we agree with Jeremias that the parables were directed by Jesus at his critics, we must concede that Jesus' prophetic critique of the common inversion of the Deuteronomic ethic of election was correctly understood by his critics and provoked reactions from them.[68]

This sketch of the history of the function of Isa 61:1–3 in the Second Temple Period provides a context for understanding its function in Luke 4[69] and a breakthrough for understanding what are otherwise inconsistencies in Luke 4 as emphasized by source criticism.[70] It is the position of this chapter that none of these so-called inconsistencies actually exists in the text of Luke if approached using the method of comparative midrash as a supplement to other methods.

Whether Luke correctly understood Jesus' own second (prophetic) axiom and whether he shared the early church's second (constitutive) axiom, he clearly intended to stress the disproportionate earlier and later reactions of the congregation. He wanted to show that Jesus' exegesis of Isa 61 by means of the material from Kings on Elijah and Elisha disturbed his family and friends at Nazareth. Just after Jesus' reading from Isa 61, the people would have interpreted the passage as favorable to themselves; but when Jesus used the hermeneutic of prophetic critique the people were deeply offended.[71] One can hardly blame the congregation at Nazareth for expecting Jesus to interpret the *logoi tēs charitos* (Luke 4:22) or *divrê hesed*, which he had read from Isa 61, as favorable to themselves, particularly when he had stressed *aphesis/derôr* by the interpolation of Isa 58:6 (which also ends in *aphesis/hophshîm*). He had moreover insisted, immediately upon sitting down, that the Isaiah passage should be understood in the eschatological or, at least, penultimate situation that they, like the faithful at Qumran, believed themselves to be in.

The LXX indicates, as Seeligmann points out in discussing similar passages in Isa 9, 11, and 2 Isaiah, that the *derôr* of which the prophet spoke in ch. 61 pertained to the *galut* (diaspora) that would walk from the darkness of dispersion to the light of life in Eretz Israel. Later the rabbinic traditions picked up the same interpretation and expanded it to the point of interpreting the *shenat razôn laʾdonai* as *shenat razôn leIsrael*. Although it is difficult to date the origins of the

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[68] See Sanders, "Ethic of Election."

[69] Note, too, the symposium volume of four essays: Eltester, *Jesus in Nazareth*, containing Grässer, "Jesus in Nazareth"; Strobel, "Die Ausrufung des Jobeljahres"; Tannehill, "Mission of Jesus"; and Eltester, "Israel im lukanischen Werk." Prof. Tannehill made some helpful comments on the occasion of the first exposure of my work on this subject at an annual Society of Biblical Literature meeting in New York in 1970, and I am very pleased to see his own work now available, especially his *Narrative Unity of Luke–Acts*, Vol. 1, *The Gospel of Luke*; cf. Sanders, Review of *The Narrative Unity of Luke–Acts*. The four studies in Eltester indicate great promise. Strobel deals at some length with 11QMelch and Tannehill with the Isaiah quotation, although none of the articles can be said to engage in comparative midrash.

[70] See my effort with respect to the origins of the *Carmen Christi* of Phil 2: Sanders, "Dissenting Deities."

[71] It is not necessary to belabor the point clarified by C. F. Evans, "Central Section of St. Luke's Gospel," that Luke viewed Jesus on a primary level as "the prophet like Moses" (Deut 18:15 reflected in Luke 9:51–53; 10:1; 11:27–28; 12:47–48, passim, and Acts 3:22; 7:37).

midrashic and talmudic passages in which Isa 61 figures with the same interpretation, Jerome's translation indicates they date at least from the fourth century CE, and the LXX and targum indicate a much earlier date. The uniqueness of Isa 61, which mentions prophetic authority directly from God rather than from prophetic predecessors, is also part of this tradition. The eschatological reinterpretation is indicated by the passages in *Midrash Lamentations* and the Palestinian Targum (*Ps.-J.*) to Numbers.

The material from Qumran, which provides ample evidence that all these interpretations were current in Jesus' day in Palestine and were fully held by the covenanters there, offers the necessary foil for understanding how Jesus' exegesis of Isa 61 would have shocked the people of Nazareth and angered them – and justifiably so. At Qumran, the *mebasser* was interpreted as the Melchizedeq of Ps 110:4, a heavenly judging and redeeming figure who would come at the head of angelic armies to redeem the true Israel – that is, Qumran – and wreak vengeance and retribution on all its enemies, human and cosmic.

Jesus, by contrast, arrogates this passage of unique prophetic authority (which Qumran had already apotheosized to a heavenly figure, Melchizedeq) to himself and apparently insists that the *aphesis* of which it speaks will pertain in the end time to those outside Israel, and that what is *dektos*, *eudokia*, or *razôn*, is totally God's free choice. In the highly charged eschatological atmosphere of Qumran and the Second Testament, this would not simply have been divine largesse to outsiders on the way to final truth; it would be, as so often elsewhere in Luke (and in the prophetic corpus), a challenge to in-group meanings of election.

In Luke's effort to expand the petty opposition between Capernaum and Nazareth (which one gets more miracles?) to the tension between two early understandings of the mission of Jesus – that to Israel alone, that to the Gentiles – and to the prophetic tension that arises from that tension, far from there being an inconsistency in the pericope (between vv. 24 and 25–27) about who rejects whom, the Nazareth congregation rejected Jesus precisely because he preached Isa 61 in the way he did – by applying the hermeneutic axiom of prophetic critique even to the end time. Little wonder that the faithful at Nazareth rejected not only his interpretation but the preacher-interpreter as well. The offense was intolerable – it denied all they believed in, in the manner of earlier prophetic applications of precious identifying traditions.

The method of comparative midrash supplements other methods to clarify, perhaps for the first time, this Lukan pericope. From the perspective afforded by this method, there are no inconsistencies in the pericope but rather a text of introduction to Jesus' prophetic ministry in an eschatological age, which proleptically rehearses the end of that ministry at its beginning.

Often scientific exegesis is a search for the ancient question to which the text before us provided answers. The finding of the question or concern addressed unlocks the full significance of a text, and the "quest for the question" can be aided by (1) sketching a midrashic history of the passages of Scripture cited in that text so as (2) to recover the foil against which the midrash in the text comes alive. Luke's Nazareth pericope is the foundation stone of his Gospel, which he

wrote largely to answer the embarrassing question of why Jesus was crucified. Jesus was the eschatological prophet anointed by the Spirit (Luke 3:21–22 where Ps 2:7 is interpreted in a midrashic complex with Isa 42:1 and 61:1); Jesus so challenged his compatriots' assumptions about divine election that he met the prophet-martyr's end. His message as *mebasser* was both a prophetic challenge to such assumptions and the announcement of the end time, not just one or the other. The combination was strange indeed. The angry reception his message received in Nazareth anticipated, according to Luke, the reception it would finally receive at its end.

Comparative midrash, seeking the foil to which a prophetic critique is directed, can be an aid in reaching behind Luke to Jesus himself. What may appear anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic in Luke, in Jesus would have been simply a challenge leveled at the theological ideology or political theology of his compatriots or *patris*. Hence, our final suggestion is that the Gospels and especially Luke, like the books of the prophets of old, if read out of context, appear anti-Jewish,[72] but read in full original context they are together part of the glory of a common past.

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[72] See Dahl, "Story of Abraham in Luke–Acts," and more recently Jervell, *Luke and the People of God*, as well as Crockett, "OT in the Gospel of Luke."

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5

Isaiah in Luke

(1982)

Isaiah is cited or alluded to in the Second Testament more than any other First Testament book.[1] Five hundred and ninety references, explicit or otherwise, from sixty-three chapters of Isaiah are found in twenty-three New Testament books (239 from Isa 1–39; 240 from chs. 40–55; 111 from chs. 56–66).[2]

Isaiah was apparently the single most helpful book of the Old Testament in assisting the early church to understand the sufferings and crucifixion of the Christ; it aided the understanding of nearly every phase of Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection. Isaiah also helped the early churches to understand who they were and what their role was as witnesses to the Christ event and as those who prepared for the eschaton's fulfillment by proclaiming what God had done in and through Christ. Christology and ecclesiology were formulated in the early churches with the help of Isaiah.

Although there have been quite a few studies of the First Testament, and more specifically of Isaiah, in the Second Testament,[3] the work has hardly begun. The First Testament in general and Isaiah in particular are sometimes used in the Second for proof texts; but it is becoming clear that early Christians searched Scripture midrashically to understand why Christ suffered the fate of a criminal (or, depending on how we should understand the meaning of *lēstēs* [cf. its use in Josephus], perhaps even the fate of a defeated insurrectionist), why he was so ignominiously treated, why he was crucified. They found help in the prophets, especially in Isaiah, to understand how God could turn tragedy into triumph.

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[1] Songer, "Isaiah and the NT"; Flamming, "NT Use of Isaiah." Using the Scripture index in the 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland *NT Graece* one sees that Isaiah appears most often in Revelation with some 155 occurrences, whether citations or allusions. Next is Matthew with 87 occurrences, then Luke with 78, Romans with 46, Acts with 39, John with 37, Mark with 28, and Hebrews with 23. Such statistics have limited value, and the student should be cautious about drawing too many conclusions from them. The compilation of a significant and useful Scripture index for the NT has yet to be done. See Shires, *Finding the OT in the New*; and Sanders, Review of *Finding the OT in the New*. At the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center in Claremont we plan to compile a Scripture index of all our films of manuscripts. It will be a massive undertaking, but with computer technology and a clear method of work we hope eventually to provide this service to scholarship.

[2] M. Kispert, PhD candidate in biblical studies in the Claremont Graduate School, did some of the basic research for this article, especially working through the Nestle-Aland *NT Graece* Scripture index, 26th edition.

[3] See the excellent, although now somewhat dated, critical bibliography in Miller, "Targum, Midrash," esp. 43–78. This can now be supplemented by the bibliography in Dinter, "Remnant of Israel."

Isaiah was particularly helpful in understanding why Christ's own people and contemporaries rejected him. The hard words of Isa 6:9–10 were illuminating: sometimes God hardened the heart of a foreign authority like Pharaoh or sent someone like Isaiah whose proclamation had the purpose, or at least the result, of making his own people's eyes blind, ears deaf, and heart dull.[4] Passages such as Isa 42, 49, and 53, and Pss 22 and 118 illuminated for early Christians the heartbreaking tragedy of the crucifixion in such a way that they could perceive its transformation from ignominy and shame to the symbol of salvation for the world. Just as the old Israel and Judah had died in the Assyrian and Babylonian assaults but were resurrected (Ezek 37) as the new Israel, Judaism in the exile, so God was effecting through the crucified and resurrected Christ a new Israel, the church. Such citing of Scripture is not prooftexting but midrash (Scripture searching) at its best.

Early Christian readings of Scripture shaped the thinking of the church about what God had done in Christ and was doing with people – it shaped their writing when they wanted to share that thinking in Gospels, letters, or other literary forms. As the work progresses on the First Testament's function in Second Testament literature, a theocentric hermeneutic continues to emerge. People wanted to know what God was doing and saying to them in their time.

Luke's knowledge of Scripture was rather remarkable. His Bible was a Greek text of the First Testament as it then was. Abundant evidence in Luke and Acts shows that Luke knew First Testament Scripture, especially certain portions,[5] very well indeed. The Semitisms in Luke's work can be accounted for otherwise, for semitization was widespread in the Hellenistic language and literature of his time. He thought and wrote in the Koine Greek of his world. In no case of Luke's reading and understanding of Scripture need one go to a Pharisaic-rabbinic type of Jewish interpretation for an Old Testament passage to see how Luke moved through the ancient text to the modern message. One must often rummage around in the Targums, midrashim, and Jewish commentaries to learn how a passage of Scripture functioned for Matthew. The First Gospel was sometimes dependent on a particular interpretation or understanding of a passage of Scripture: indeed, he would have had that interpretation in mind even as he read or cited a text.[6]

[4] See, e. g., C. A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive*.

[5] Holtz, *Untersuchungen über die alttestamentlichen Zitate*, claims that Luke knew best the Minor Prophets, Isaiah, and the Psalter, based on passages where he is closest to a recognizable Septuagint text. Holtz also states that Luke did not know the Pentateuch at all, but his conclusions are simply wrong. For more recent studies see Kilpatrick, "Some Quotations in Acts"; Richard, "OT in Acts"; Jervell, "Center of Scripture"; Ringgren, "Luke's Use of the OT"; and Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*.

[6] One must apply some sociology of ancient knowledge when interpreting an ancient text, especially when trying to understand how an ancient author used a text or tradition older than that author. In order fully to understand Matthew's parable of the Great Banquet in 22:1–14, one must know *Tg. Zeph*. 1.1–16, as Derrett has shown in *Law in the NT*, 126–55. But this is unnecessary for understanding Luke's form of the parable in 14:15–24 as I tried to show in "Luke's Great Banquet Parable." See also Sanders, "Ethic of Election."

By contrast, Luke's knowledge of Scripture apparently came from assiduous reading. Luke had his canon within the canon just as everyone and, indeed, every denomination does. But whether before conversion Luke had been a Gentile or a Reform Jew, he knew certain parts of Scripture in such depth that unless the modern interpreter also knows the Septuagint or Greek Old Testament (LXX) very well indeed he or she will miss major points Luke wanted to score. Those portions were centrally the Torah and the Deuteronomic history, that is, Genesis to 4 Kingdoms (2 Kings).[7] Those sections of Scripture not only helped shape Luke's understanding of what God was doing in Christ (the Gospel) and in the early church (Acts), it also helped shape Luke's two-volume report of that activity.

Luke's reputation as the Second Testament historian is well deserved if one understands by that term what Luke's Scripture already contained as history. Although he had some acquaintance with Herodotus and perhaps other historians known in the Hellenistic world, Luke's intense acquaintance with the history of God's work in ancient Israel as presented in the (LXX) Deuteronomic history shaped the way he wrote his own. Luke's reputation, since 1954, of being a good theologian is in no way tarnished by re-appreciation of his work as the Second Testament historian of the work of God in Christ in the Gospel, and the work of God in the early church in Acts. Like his Old Testament predecessors, he was a good theological historian.[8]

A few observations must suffice. Luke's two annunciations in ch. 1 follow in detail the great annunciations in Gen 15–18, 1 Sam 1, and Judg 13, especially the annunciation to Hannah.[9] Mary's Magnificat is but a bare reworking of the song of Hannah (1 Sam 2). The new kingdom announced by God in the first century, to be fully understood, must be seen in the light of the kingdom introduced by God through Samuel, culminating in David. In many ways, Luke presents Christ as the new David, even reporting that Christ asked Saul of Tarsus, on the journey to Damascus (Acts 9:4), a question very similar to the one the young David had asked King Saul at Ziph (LXX 1 Sam 26:18). King Saul had not joined the new kingdom under David but had fallen on a sword and died ignominiously (1 Sam 31:4). Saul of Tarsus, by contrast, not only joined the new kingdom under the new David but became its greatest herald.

And how does Luke conclude his second volume? "And he [Paul] lived there [Rome] two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered" (Acts 28:30–31). Compare that to what we find

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[7] For the central or special section of Luke's Gospel, 9:51–18:14, see C. F. Evans, "Central Section of St. Luke's Gospel," and Sanders, "Luke's Great Banquet Parable." For other studies following Evans's lead, see Drury, *Tradition and Design in Luke's Gospel*, 138–64; Wall, "Finger of God"; Wall, "Martha and Mary"; Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet.*

[8] With this concern in mind, I much appreciate the balance in Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian.*

[9] See the brilliant work on the annunciation in Brown, *Birth of the Messiah.*

at the end of 2 Kings: "So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And every day of his life he dined regularly at the king's table; and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, every day a portion, as long as he lived" (25:29–30). The point is not that King Jehoiachin was a type for the Apostle Paul but rather that Luke leaves the theological history of what God is doing in God's time as open-ended as the Deuteronomic historian had. Jehoiachin was freed from prison in Babylon at the beginning of the dispersion of Jews throughout the world; Paul, although awaiting trial, was free to witness in Rome at the beginning of the dispersion of the church throughout the world. Each was in the capital of the dominant power of the time, and each was on the threshold of something new in the work of God. This was undoubtedly Luke's theocentric way of suggesting why the parousia had not taken place on the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. He searched the Scriptures to find an understanding of what God was doing. Without question the eschaton was still expected; but, equally important, it is not for us to know the times and seasons of God (Luke 12:35–56). The God who made the first annunciations to Abraham and Sarah, and especially to Hannah, has announced a new kingdom to come in a spectacular way, and it will come in God's good time. God is continually active.

Luke is the most explicit of the evangelists in insisting that to understand what God was doing in Christ one had to know Scripture. Nowhere is his conviction clearer than in the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man in Luke 16:19–31. When the rich man finally understands why he is in Hades and asks Father Abraham to send Lazarus back from paradise, where he has gone at death, to explain to the rich man's five brothers how matters lie in ultimate truth, Abraham patiently explains that if they will not read Scripture, Moses and the Prophets, using the right hermeneutics, then they will not be convinced by someone rising from the dead (16:27–31) – and Lazarus would have to be resurrected if he were sent back to explain. This passage, set near the climax of Luke's central section, when matched with the same kind of emphasis in the last chapter of the Gospel (24:13–49) after another person had been resurrected, conveys Luke's deep-seated conviction that a correct reading of Scripture, Moses and the Prophets, gives one the ability to see what was actually happening in the real world.

In both his volumes, Luke is interested in eyewitnesses, those who can see what God is doing amid current events. Luke makes it clear that it was not just the appearance of the resurrected Christ, on the road to Emmaus and in Jerusalem, that convinced the disciples of what had been going on and what was happening to them, it was because the resurrected Lord gave them exegesis classes that their eyes were opened, and the disciples finally became witnesses (24:48). They, who had been dull and uncomprehending throughout the Gospel, became wide-eyed apostles upon being instructed by the risen Christ through the Scriptures as to what was really happening (24:25, 27, 32, 44, 45); they were then ready for Pentecost, as Luke makes clear at the beginning of Acts. Luke further underscores his point with a solecism in 24:32 that uses the Greek word *dianoigō*. That verb was used in Greek for the opening of eyes. As in Semitic languages, another word was used for opening a scroll, but Luke used *dianoigō* to refer to Christ's

opening the Scriptures to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus: their eyes were opened.

Luke's Scriptures functioned for him in various ways, not only when he cited a passage or alluded to a First Testament event or figure, but also when he did not do so. That is, his remarkable knowledge of the Greek First Testament helped to shape his history of God's work in the first century. When Luke wrote in his prologue of those who from the beginning had been eyewitnesses and servants of the word (1:2), he meant from the beginning of God's work as Creator, Judge, and Redeemer, as revealed in Scripture. Luke constantly wove phrases and images from the Septuagint into his writing. A beautiful example is Gabriel's word of assurance (and also chiding) to Mary that with God nothing is impossible (1:37). Those are exactly the words spoken by the heavenly visitors in LXX Gen 18:14. In Genesis they are in interrogative form while in Luke they are in declarative. Thus, Luke not only generally knew the annunciations in the First Testament, he explicitly knew the ones in Genesis.[10] It is as though Gabriel answered his Genesis colleagues back across the centuries, "No, nothing is impossible with God." Again, Luke's basic hermeneutic was theocentric.

One might ask how Luke came to know Scripture so well, or, supposing him to have been a Reform Jew who already knew Scripture in Greek, how his congregation knew it well enough to appreciate the subtle ways in which he used it. The answer is that new converts are usually enthusiasts. Upon conversion, first-century Christians apparently became quickly and intimately acquainted with their only Scripture, the First Testament, in Hebrew or in Greek. The few literate members would read aloud for all, and intense discussion would follow in Koine paraphrases of the Septuagint Greek.[11] Reports from contemporary China describe churches packed with young people seeking copies of the Bible that they then read together avidly. One can imagine the great demand for copies of Greek First Testament scrolls in the Hellenistic churches springing up around the Mediterranean. What an insistent teaching elder Luke must have been in the instructional life of his own congregation.

Part of his program of instruction clearly included reading Isaiah. Only three times does Luke actually cite Isaiah or use a formula introduction for a clear citation. But if the Scripture Index of Nestle-Aland reflects the actual situation even relatively speaking, Luke falls behind only Revelation and the Gospel of Matthew in the use of Isaiah in the Second Testament. The three quotations of Isaiah with formulae are in Luke 3:4–6 (Isa 40:3–5); 4:18–19 (Isa 61:1–2 and 58:6); 22:37 (Isa 53:12). Explicit Isaianic phrases also appear at Luke 2:30–32 (Isa 52:10; 42:6; 49:6); 7:22 (Isa 26:19; 29:18; 35:5–6; 61:1); 8:10 (Isa 6:9–10); 19:46 (Isa 56:7); and 20:9 (Isa 5:1–2). Isaiah 9:6, which is explicitly cited in Acts 13:47 and is reflected in Luke 1:79 and 24:47 as well as in Acts 1:8 and 26:20, apparently influenced the shape of Luke's entire work.

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[10] *Pace* Holtz, *Über die alttestamentlichen Zitate.*
[11] See Sanders, "Communities and Canon."

To probe seriously and deeply into Isaiah's role in such passages in Luke, one needs to work on them in terms of text criticism, comparative midrash, and canonical criticism in relation to form criticism and redaction criticism. Two passages that have been so treated are the reflection of Isaiah's Song of the Vineyard (5:1–7) in the Luke 20 parable of the Wicked Husbandmen[12] and the citation of Isa 61:1–2 (with a phrase from 58:6) in the Luke 4 account of Jesus' sermon at Nazareth.[13] The following remarks are based on these studies, especially for Luke 4. Many other passages in Luke must be studied but the work accomplished during the past twenty years indicates that what we have learned about the function of Isa 61 in Luke can be generalized to the rest of the Gospel.

It has been shown that Isa 58 and 61, or part of them, constituted the *haftarah* lesson attached to the Torah portion on the death of Israel as lectionary readings already in the first century,[14] but this hardly matters in terms of how Isaiah functions for Luke in Jesus' sermon. Unlike Luke, Mark (6:1–6) and Matthew (13:53–58) focus on Jesus' works rather than on his preaching in their report of this event. Furthermore, the other two synoptists place it in the middle of Jesus' Galilean ministry, whereas Luke puts it at the beginning and provides a citation from Isaiah and a sermon based on it. Luke in effect highlights the event as a harbinger of the crucifixion, for he clearly states that Jesus' own home congregation, his relatives and friends, reject him because of his interpretation of the Isaiah passage. This is the opposite of Mark and Matthew's report that it is Jesus who rejects the people for their unbelief. Thus, Luke stresses that what offended Jesus' contemporaries most was his hermeneutics, his interpretation of one of their favorite passages of Scripture.

Jesus read the passage from the Isaiah scroll and sat down. The congregation waited to hear how he would comment on the passage or what homily he would give. He electrified them by saying that on that day the Scripture was fulfilled in their ears. One must understand how much that particular passage meant to Jews in the first century under Roman oppression and rule. Isaiah had spoken of a herald anointed by the spirit of God to preach good news to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. In Luke, Jesus' reading of the passage stopped here. Jesus omitted the phrase about healing the brokenhearted and inserted one from LXX Isa 58:6 about sending the oppressed away in release, literally, or setting at liberty those who were oppressed. The phrase in Luke 4:18 repeats verbatim LXX Isa 58:6.

Why would Luke, or Jesus, mix Scripture like that, and how could he get away with it? In the first century, it was not uncommon to pull two or more passages out of their original literary contexts and read them together. This was most often done by word tallying, that is, both passages would have had in them

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[12] This has been done by Miller, "Scripture and Parable."
[13] See Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4."
[14] See Sloan, *Favourable Year of the Lord*.

at least one word that was the same. Here it was the Greek word *aphesis*, meaning release or forgiveness: to preach *aphesis* to captives (Isa 61:1) and to send the oppressed in *aphesis* (Isa 58:6).

To get the full impact of this word tallying one must realize that *aphesis* is the Greek translation of Hebrew *shemittah* in Deut 15 and Hebrew *derôr* in Lev 25 – the two passages in the Old Testament that provide legislation concerning the Jubilee Year. Luke's Jesus conjoined the two passages from Isaiah fully in the spirit and even the letter of Isa 61, which was itself composed out of Jubilee traditions.[15] The central concept of Jubilee was periodic release or liberty: letting the land periodically lie fallow, releasing debts, freeing slaves, and repatriating property. The Lord's Prayer is basically a Jubilee prayer.[16]

The matter of greatest interest to the congregation in Nazareth who heard Jesus read the Isaiah passage was release from the burden of Roman oppression, although they would have been interested in any release the Jubilee afforded. Release of slaves presented problems (Jer 34), but release of debts had proved the most problematic aspect of the old legislation, as was already recognized in Deut 15:7–11. As time passed, the problem was met in early Judaism in two ways: in Pharisaic circles by a juridical ploy called *prosboul*, whereby waivers could be obtained when the Jubilee Year was approaching so that the economy would not collapse; and in eschatological denominations in Judaism by a growing belief that the real Jubilee would arrive in the eschaton and be introduced by Messiah. God's kingdom would come and God's will be done on earth as it was in heaven precisely at the introduction on earth of the great Jubilee, when the divine economy, or superstantial (not daily) bread of the Lord's Prayer, would be manifest on earth. The congregation in Nazareth might well have thought at first that Jesus was the herald of Isa 61 sent to proclaim the great Jubilee release from slavery to Roman oppression.

In order fully to grasp Luke's point in placing this episode at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry and in providing us with one of the most precious passages in the Second Testament for discerning the hermeneutics applied to interpretation of Scripture, it is well in reading Luke 4 to resist the temptation to which we usually succumb of identifying with Jesus when we read a Gospel passage. We should instead identify with the congregation made up of Jesus' family and friends. We now know that Isa 61 was one of the favorite passages in Judaism at the time of Jesus.[17] If the faithful in the Nazareth synagogue understood the passage in the way others understood it at the time, they would have interpreted it, as Jesus read it, as beneficial to themselves. They would have identified, in their turn, with the poor (for they were poor), the captives (for they felt themselves to be captive to the Romans), the blind (for they felt like dungeon inmates who were blind), and the oppressed (for they surely were oppressed). They had

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[15] As shown by Zimmerli, "Das 'Gnadenjahr des Herrn.'"

[16] See Ringe, "Gospel of Liberation"; cf. Ringe, *Jesus, Liberation, and the Biblical Jubilee*.

[17] See Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4," 89–92. See also Tiede's study, *Prophecy and History in Luke–Acts*, including his critique of my own work on pp. 47–49.

every right to feel that the blessings of Jubilee would devolve on them when the eschaton arrived and when Messiah, or Elijah, the herald of the eschaton, came.

Thus, when Jesus said that the passage was fulfilled that very day, he seemed to bolster their hope and they spoke well of him. This was not because he spoke graciously, as some translations lead us to think, but because (1) he had read one of their favorite passages about the grace of God and (2) he had apparently said it would be fulfilled immediately. They were hearing it by the hermeneutic of the grace of God; they understood it in terms of God as Redeemer of Israel. God's purpose in sending the herald would have been to save the people who were enduring a plight comparable to that of the slaves in Egypt when God sent Moses to release them from Pharaoh's bondage. The congregation would have rightly understood the passage in such a manner.

But then Jesus continued, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country" (Luke 4:24). Why? Because he was Joseph's son? On the contrary, all the great prophets of Scripture had been homegrown. Amos had gone from Judah to Israel to preach, but all had the same covenant identity; prophets were commonly known in the communities where they preached. It was the message those prophets bore to their people that made them unpopular and unacceptable. It was the hermeneutics they applied to the most precious traditions, turning them into the authority whereby the prophets exposed the secrets of their people's hearts and thereby exposed corruption of consciousness. Luke's Jesus makes this point very clear in the blessings and woes of Luke 6:20–26.

Luke has Jesus stop his reading of the Isaiah passage after the first phrase of Isa 61:2, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The passage then speaks of a day of vengeance when God will bring joy and gladness to a Zion that mourned. Why would Jesus stop short of reading the rest of the passage, which gave such explicit comfort? First, he stopped reading just before Isaiah spoke of vengeance, supposedly against Israel's enemies, and comfort supposedly for Israel. But second, he made a telling rhetorical or midrashic point by ending his reading on the Greek word *dektos* – "acceptable," in this case a year acceptable to God. A Jewish interpretation understood this as a year acceptable to Israel! That indeed would be based on a hermeneutic of grace emphasizing God as Israel's own redeemer God only.

But Luke hereby signals for us his understanding of Jesus' hermeneutic in interpreting the Isaiah passage. No prophet is *dektos* to his own people when he applies their precious, authoritative traditions in such a way as to challenge the thinking of the people and their corruption of consciousness. Here is a word tally in the Lukan passage: the Jubilee will come at a *time acceptable to God*; and the prophet who wrests a prophetic challenge to his own people out of their identifying traditions, precisely by the hermeneutic of the freedom of God as Creator of all peoples, is himself *not acceptable to them*. Isaiah had said to his hearers that they were right to think that God was a holy warrior who had aided David in his battles against the Philistines (Isa 28:21; 2 Sam 5:17–25; 1 Chron 14:10–17), but they were wrong to think that God was shackled to them. On the contrary, Isaiah went on, God as holy warrior and Creator of all peoples would,

this time, be at the head of the Assyrian troops fighting Judah. God was not only Israel's Redeemer but also Creator and Judge of all peoples. Jesus went on to say something similar to what Isaiah did.

Do we really want Elijah to come? Why do we not look back at what he did when he was here? When he himself needed sustenance, and had a blessing to bestow, he was sent not to a widow in Israel but to a foreigner: a Phoenician widow (1 Kgs/3 Kgdms 17–18). And when Elisha had a blessing to bestow it was bestowed not on an Israelite leper but on a leper from Syria, Israel's worst enemy (2 Kgs/4 Kgdms 5). The freedom of the God of grace is perhaps the most difficult concept for any generation of believers to grasp.[18] Jesus interpreted Scripture (Isa 61) by Scripture (3 Kgdms 17 and 4 Kgdms 5) using the hermeneutic of the freedom of the God of grace – free even at the eschaton, in the great Jubilee, to bestow the blessings of Isa 61 on other than those who felt sure they were elect.

Little wonder the congregation wanted to lynch him. They put him out of the city and attempted to stone him as punishment for blasphemy (to throw an offender down a cliff is preparatory to stoning). If in reading Luke 4 one identifies with the congregation, one can move with them from the feeling of hope and elation, after Jesus had read the Isaianic passage, to the feeling of intense anger that they understandably would feel at hearing the favorite passage (something like John 3:16 for Christians) interpreted in such a way as to indicate that at the eschaton, when the curtain of ultimate truth was lifted, God might freely bestow favors and blessings on folk outside the in-group of true believers.

The real prophetic offense in Jesus' sermon was theological; it was serious and ultimate. Jesus told the congregation that God was not Jewish. This was comparable to a preacher saying that God is not Christian. Of course God is not Muslim, Buddhist, Communist, or any other faith. But when a people or a church or a denomination so emphasizes God's work as Redeemer that they feel they have God boxed up and domesticated, then a prophet must appear to expose their corruption of consciousness. Whenever we feel we have a corner on truth or a commanding grip on reality, then, if we are fortunate, a prophet will appear to shock us into realizing that God is God. It is not that God is not our Redeemer. Thank God, God is! But God is also the Creator of all peoples. God is both committed in promises and free to surprise and even re-create us. God is free to bestow grace anywhere. Grace is a form of divine injustice – undeserved when God first bestowed it on Israel, and undeserved when God bestows it on Phoenician widows and Syrian lepers. The passage stresses what is acceptable to God, not what is acceptable to the faithful; it disengages any thought that God's agenda must follow Israel's. It also stresses release or forgiveness and God's freedom to dispense this to any creature.

In the context from which Luke's Jesus drew the phrase "set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Isa 58:6), the prophet challenged the people for believing God owed them something because they were faithful. "Why have we fasted but you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves but you take no knowl-

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[18] See Sanders, *God Has a Story Too*, 14–26.

edge of it?" The faithful seem always tempted to feel that God should honor their efforts on God's behalf.

By dynamic analogy, Jesus and Luke bring Isaiah to us as a challenge whenever we as Christians feel we have God boxed into our ideas of the incarnation. The temptation for Christians to feel they have God tamed in the incarnation is perhaps even greater than for Jews to feel they had God on a leash as children of Abraham (Luke 3:8). If we follow Luke and do a theocentric reading of Isaiah canonically and as a whole, without worrying whether it is 1, 2, or 3 Isaiah, we must realize that Luke's Jesus brings Isaiah forward to the first-century, and to the twentieth [twenty-first]-century, believer in a canonically true manner.

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6

A Hermeneutic Fabric:
Psalm 118 in Luke's Entrance Narrative

(1987)

The records of Jesus' "royal" entry into Jerusalem in the four Gospels have varying points of emphasis. But all four accounts agree on a major component for understanding the import of the entrance into Jerusalem: they all cite portions of Ps 118, and Matthew and John cite also Zech 9:9. The confluence of these two First Testament passages signals a particular context of ideas whose importance for understanding the accounts should not be overlooked. According to the Synoptics, the entry into Jerusalem would have marked the first time Jesus, in the years of his ministry, visited the historic city of David. The significance of the entry is thus heightened in the first three Gospels because it is presented as an event of unique import.

Zechariah

All four Gospels force one's attention to the claim that Jesus was the king expected, the one who was to come; and the two First Testament passages here brought together emphasize the royal dimension of the claim. The Zechariah passage (9:9) points to the expectation that the messianic son of David will ride into Jerusalem on an ass and will claim the heritage of kingship. In the MT, the passage reads:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you;
a righteous one and saved is he,[1]
humble and riding on an ass,
on a colt, the foal of an ass.

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[1] The citations of Zech 9:9 in Matthew and John exhibit the typical fluidity of the period in quotation of Scripture. Neither bothers with the second or fourth colon (stichos) of the six in the verse. The second is in synonymous parallelism to the first and is easily dropped. But the omission of the fourth, "A righteous one and saved is he," is interesting. The LXX translates it "righteous and saving"; most witnesses reading the *autos* with the following (fifth colon). The re-signification in the LXX from "saved" to "saving" indicates lack of knowledge on the part of the LXX translators of the association of Zech 9:9 with the liturgical events expressed in Ps 118. Matthew and John, who often reflect loose translations of a Hebrew text instead of the LXX,

And Ps 118 points to the mode of entry of kings in antiquity, providing particulars on what was said and recited by the king, priests, and people when the royal procession approached the eastern gates of the city, passed through them, and went into the temple precincts. The four Gospels cite expressions from v. 26 of Ps 118, and all but Luke the "Hosanna" of v. 25, but a full understanding of the psalm's function in the Gospel tradition depends on the reader's knowledge of the whole psalm to grasp the complete significance of the entry as a symbolic act.

A word of caution is in order. Modern readers of the Second Testament should not attribute their own possible ignorance of Scripture, that is, the Scripture of the first-century church, to either the Second Testament writers or to their congregants. There is every reason to believe that common to all programs of instruction on conversion in the early churches was assiduous reading of Scripture, what we call the First (or Old) Testament, as well as Jesus traditions. Scripture was not so much Jewish as it was sacred, especially the Septuagint in the Hellenistic world; but other less formal-equivalent, more spontaneous translations such as those evidenced in some Second Testament literature as well as in much Jewish literature of the period were also studied. Such readings were typically done aloud in communities for the benefit of the illiterate, who were perhaps a majority of early Christians.

The Synoptics make the point that Jesus reached Jerusalem from the east. This is quite significant because of the tradition that the Messiah would approach Jerusalem from the area of the Jordan Valley.[2] But they also make it clear that Jesus did not ride the ass until he reached the eastern bounds of the city at Bethpage and Bethany. Riding the ass into Jerusalem is presented therefore as a symbolic act.[3] In ancient Israel the heir of David to be anointed rode the royal ass to coronation. Thus was Absalom's riding on the mule or ass, when he was hanged by the great tresses of the hair of his head, symbolic of his claim to the kingship he wished to wrest from his father, David (2 Sam 18:9). Thus was poor Mephibosheth's riding an ass as he approached the city a symbol of the claim he would have made for the old house of Saul if Absalom's insurrection had succeeded (2 Sam 19:26). Thus was it necessary for Solomon to ride on the royal mule or

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both omit any vestige of the fourth colon. They or their sources might not have known of the LXX re-signification of "saved" to "savior," or they might have wanted to continue with the image of the humble one riding. Matthew reflects a belabored literal translation of a (pre-MT) Hebrew text of the last two cola while John reflects a typically trimmed-down version. Neither seems to know the LXX. See Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 113–14. See other points discussed in Derrett, "Law in the NT"; Patsch, "Der Einzug Jesu"; and Michel, "Eine philologische Frage."

    [2] See the excellent study by Blenkinsopp, "Oracle of Judah," especially on the importance of Gen 49:8–12 for understanding traditions of messianic expectation as well as for seeing how riding the ass would have been variously interpreted by the Romans on the one hand and by different Jewish groups on the other.

    [3] See Crossan, "Redaction and Citation." Crossan's discussion is the clearest I have seen to date [1987] on the necessity of seeing both the entry and the cleansing in the light of the prophetic symbolic acts recorded in the First Testament.

ass in the Kidron Valley to the sanctuary at Gihon in order effectively to counter Adonijah's claim to the throne and to secure his own accession (1 Kgs 1:33–37).

On the historical level, Jesus apparently went out of his way to demonstrate his claim to fulfillment of these ancient royal traditions. On the Gospel level, however, the reader clearly is not to miss the royal claim established by the account of the trip to Jerusalem. Every gesture reported had a significance that traditionists would have understood very well indeed. The fact that all three Synoptics include in the account the spreading of garments (*himatia*) in front of Jesus as he rode confirms the royal claim by its apparent allusion to the anointing of Jehu (2 Kgs 9:13) where it is said that after the young prophet from Elisha had privately anointed Jehu, the latter's lieutenants and close associates spread each a garment (LXX: *himation*) on the steps of the sanctuary, blew the trumpet, and exclaimed, "Jehu is king."[4]

Psalm 118

In the time of Jesus, Ps 118 was recited at the Festival of Tabernacles or Booths in the fall, at Passover in the spring, that is, the fall and spring equinoctial festivals, and also at Hanukkah.[5] In preexilic times, however, Ps 118 was a royal psalm that would have been recited at the annual enthronement of the king during the fall equinoctial celebration of the New Year.[6] In the first century during the fall celebration of Tabernacles, palm branches, probably marketed from sources in Jericho or elsewhere east and south of Jerusalem, would have been available to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for building the sukkoth or booths. Unless the Jerusalem entry episode was somehow related in Gospel tradition to the Festival of Tabernacles in the fall, we must suppose either that Jesus and the disciples transported a considerable quantity of palm branches with them in the spring as they came up from the eastern valley (which seems unlikely), or that the symbols involved purposefully point to the ancient royal dimension of the reference.[7] The validity of the latter view seems confirmed by the fact that the citation from Zech 14:16 brings to mind the Festival of Tabernacles, during which the Lord, Yahweh, would appear on the Mount of Olives. "On that day Yahweh's feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which lies before Jerusalem on the east" (Zech 14:4).

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[4] On the royal/messianic dimension of the entrance narrative, see Vanbergen, "L'entrée messianique"; George, "La royauté de Jésus"; and Bartnicki, "Das Zitat von Zach ix, 9–10."

[5] See *m. Pesah.* 5.5 and 10.6; and *b. Pesah.* 117a, 118a, and 119a; *b. Sukk.* 45a; and *b. 'Arak* 10a. In the last-mentioned reference, Rabbi Yohanan (d. 279) noted the Hallel (Pss 113–118) were recited on 18 days of the year in Palestine (8 days of Sukkoth, 8 days of Hanukkah, the first day of Passover, and the first of Weeks [*sic*]), and 21 days in the Diaspora (9 Sukkoth, 8 Hanukkah, 2 Passover, and 2 Weeks).

[6] See the remarks by Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:118–21, 170, 180–81, 245; 2:30, about Ps 118 and its preexilic cultic function. See also Dahood, *Psalms III*, 155; and Ellis, *Luke*, 191.

[7] See Mastin, "Date of the Triumphal Entry."

The admixture of the Zechariah and Ps 118 passages and their citation in the entrance narrative (in Matthew and John) would have been as explosive as any such fusion could be. It is indeed significant that in all three Synoptics the entrance narrative and temple-cleansing sequence are followed by a passage on the question of authority (Mark 11:27–33; Matt 21:23–27; Luke 20:1–8). Of all the acts attributed to Jesus either in the ministry materials or in the passion accounts, the entry into Jerusalem, with the royalist claims it implied, would have been taken as a challenge and even an offense to the establishment of the day, an establishment precisely represented by those who raised the question of authority – the priests, elders, and scribes. It would have been acceptable to recite Ps 118 as one among many psalms in celebration of a festival, but it was blasphemous to re-enact it with its original royal meanings to those not otherwise convinced of the claim. Such a re-enactment would surely not occur until Messiah came to make a royal entry into city and temple, when the authorities would receive and acknowledge their messianic king.[8]

The fact that the evangelists or their sources expected their readers and hearers to have in mind the whole of Ps 118, and more importantly to know its significance,[9] is indicated by the fabric of thought woven when the entrance narrative is taken seriously on its own scriptural or canonical terms. What the evangelists record might be thought of as the warp with the psalm and other scriptural allusions as the woof; together they make up the weftage of the Gospel accounts.

Hans-Joachim Kraus's discussion of the relationship between individual and communal elements in Ps 118 demands a clearer answer than has heretofore been offered.[10] Rabbinic efforts to see in Ps 118 a liturgical dialogue offer clues for the following suggestion as to how the psalm functioned in preexilic temple ritual.[11] As a hymn of royal entry, Ps 118 would have been recited in Iron Age Jerusalem

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[8] See again the discussions above in nn. 1, 2, and 4, and especially in Blenkinsopp, "Oracle of Judah," and Vanbergen, "L'entrée messianique."

[9] See Lohse, "Hosianna."

[10] Kraus, *Psalmen 64–150*, 800–809.

[11] There are three efforts, in my knowledge, in rabbinic literature to elaborate the liturgical aspects of Ps 118: those in *b. Pesah.* 119a, the midrash to Ps 118, and the targum to Ps 118. English translations of the talmudic and midrashic texts may be consulted in Epstein, *Babylonian Talmud*, *ad loc.*, and in Braude, *Midrash on Psalms*, 2:242–45. Those in the Talmud and targum are historicizing, that is, they suggest who originally said or spoke the several parts of the psalm; the midrash seems to suggest who should recite which parts in the future, perhaps at Messiah's arrival. The midrash indicates that the first halves of vv. 15, 16, 25, 26, 27, and 28 will be recited by "the men of Jerusalem inside the walls" while the second halves of those verses will be recited by "the men of Judah outside the walls." Then both groups will recite all of v. 29. Curiously, the midrash mentions that "David said" v. 19a. The Talmud and targum scan the psalm in quite similar ways but with different people taking different parts. They agree, however, at two places: both see Samuel as having said v. 27b and David v. 28a. The Talmud notes that David said vv. 21a, 25b, and 28a; Jesse vv. 22a and 26a; David's brothers (priests, presumably?) vv. 23a and 25a; and "all of them" vv. 27a and 28b. The targum notes that "the builders" said vv. 23a, 24a, 25a, and 26a; the Sons of Jesse (priests?) vv. 23b and 24b; Jesse and his wife v. 25b; the tribes of Judah v. 27a; Samuel vv. 27b and 29; and David v. 28. These ancient perceptions of the dramatic/liturgical nature of Ps 118 suggested the effort here elaborated. See again Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 180–81, and Press, "Der Gottesknecht im AT," 90.

when the king entered the city and the temple on the occasion of an annual rite of re-enthronement. After enduring the rite of humiliation, the king approached the city and gave an account of how the Lord God had delivered him from evil-doers, the humiliators. The people would then have shouted, "Give thanks to the Lord, for his mercy [*hesed*, in royal theology meaning perhaps promise or providence] endures forever" (v. 1). In antiphony the people, the priests, and the "Yahweh-fearers" would then sing in turn the refrain of vv. 2–4, "For his *hesed* endures forever." After an initial general recital of the humiliation experience (vv. 5–7), a chorus, perhaps, or the king and the people together, would have sung forth the "It is better" affirmations of vv. 8 and 9.[12]

The king would have resumed the recital in vv. 10–13, but this time in the more specific terms of the "event" of humiliation. Thereupon the people or a chorus would join in the glad affirmation of v. 14.[13] Such an affirmation of faith would incite the following song, as recorded in vv. 15 and 16, sung by all present! One can almost hear the solo voice of, or for, the king as an obbligato rise above the song with "I shall not die …" of vv. 17–18. After turning to face the temple gates, the king would intone v. 19, "Open to me …" A select group of priests from within the temple would ponderously intone v. 20 to remind all that they were guardians of the gate of the Lord's house and had sole authority for granting admission.

In response, the king would appeal directly to the saving act of God, which marked the salient day of ceremony, by engaging in the act of thanksgiving of v. 21. Thereupon would the chorus and perhaps all the people sing out about the wonder of divine election of the Davidic king, a wonder never ceasing to astound and amaze, generation to generation, even year to year – indeed the very marvel (*niphlat*, MT/*thaumastē* LXX v. 23) being celebrated in the joyous ritual. It is difficult to determine if the traditional (LXX and ancient versions influenced by it) understanding of v. 24 is the correct one, that is, the affirmation of God's creation of that special day of celebration and reconfirmation of election; or if Mitchell Dahood is correct in seeing v. 24 as affirming that the day was indeed special since God had once more saved the king from death and reasserted the election.[14] The portion of the hymn sung by chorus and people (vv. 22–25) concludes with the stirring plea to God of the *hoshiʿah-naʾ*, later in Greek to be called the *hōsanna* (v. 25).

At the conclusion of the plea, which may in performance have been much longer, the priests, who had earlier fulfilled their role as gatekeepers (v. 20), now joyfully intoned the great "Blessed be he who enters …" thereby officially recognizing and receiving the one arriving as the king. The climax of the ceremony has now been reached and the king once more affirmed as king. Yahweh's king-

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[12] Ps 118:1, 8, 9, 15, 16, 29 afford examples of common liturgical phrases that were adaptable to more than one hymn or song; cf. 11QPsª 17:1–6.

[13] Ps 118:14 is found verbatim also at Exod 15:2a and Isa 12:2b, another example of common liturgical phrases used in different hymns.

[14] See Dahood, *Psalms III*, 159.

ship may be in part expressed in the earthly Davidic king so that the king's very presence is the divine gift of light, and the chorus and people affirm this (v. 27).[15] Verse 27b indicates the commencement of offering sacrifices of thanksgiving and may perhaps have been intoned by the priests. The hymn concludes with the reaffirmation of faith by the king and all the people (v. 28) and finally the reverberation of the incipit of v. 1 now as the refrain of the whole hymn *in inclusio*.

People	1. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his *hesed* endures forever! 2. Let Israel say: his *hesed* endures forever. 3. Let the house of Aaron say: his *hesed* endures forever. 4. Let the Yahweh-fearers say: his *hesed* endures forever.
King	5. Out of distress I invoked Yah; Yah answered me with largesse. 6. When Yahweh is with me I have no fear. What could a mere mortal do to me? 7. When Yahweh is with me as my helper, then I look with confidence at my enemies.
People	8. It is better to take refuge in Yahweh than to trust in humans; 9. It is better to take refuge in Yahweh than to trust in princes!
King	10. All nations surrounded me; in the name of Yahweh I cut them off. 11. They surrounded me, they were all around me; in the name of Yahweh I cut them off. 12. They surrounded me like bees, they blazed like thorns on fire; in the name of Yahweh I cut them off. 13. I was hard pressed about to fall, but Yahweh helped me!
King and People	14. Yahweh was my strength and my song; he was with me as salvation.[16]

[15] Ps 118:27 recalls the priestly benediction (Num 6:24–26) and the light of God's presence, here expressed in the presence of the king as a gift of God.

[16] The verse can, as has become customary, be translated in the present tense to emphasize God's ever-present strength and salvation. I have put it in the past tense here to show that it may also be seen as the grand conclusion to the recital of vv. 10–13, a summation of the presence of God in the event of humiliation.

All	15. A shout of joy and salvation throughout the tents of the righteous: the right hand of Yahweh acts valiantly, 16. the right hand of Yahweh is exalted, the right hand of Yahweh acts valiantly.
King	17. I shall not die but shall live to recite the deeds of Yah! 18. Yah disciplined me sorely, but he did not hand me over to death. 19. Open for me the gates of righteousness; I shall enter through them, I shall give thanks to Yah!
Priests	20. This is the gate that belongs to Yahweh; only the righteous may enter through it.
King	21. I give thanks to you for you answered me; you were with me a salvation.
People	22. The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. 23. This is Yahweh's own doing; it is a marvel in our eyes. 24. This is the day on which Yahweh has acted; let us rejoice and be glad in him. 25. Pray, O Yahweh, grant salvation; pray, O Yahweh, grant prosperity.
Priests	26. Blessed by the name of Yahweh be he who enters! We bless you from the House of Yahweh.
People	27. Yahweh is God and he has given us light!
Priests	Bind the festal sacrifice with ropes onto the horns of the altar.
King and People	28 You are my God and I do give you thanks, O, my God, I extol you.
All	29 Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good; his *hesed* endures forever!

The psalm thus would have been at the heart of the annual ceremony of the king's humiliation and exaltation, itself a liturgy of reaffirmation of Yahweh as God and King. The heart of the psalm is expressed in the two verses cited in the

Gospel accounts: the hosanna plea of v. 25, which affirms the sovereignty of the acting, humbling, and exalting God, who has in this New Year experience of the king demonstrated God's sovereignty by a new mighty act; and the welcome in v. 26 to the king expressed by the priests from the temple steps.

The Entrance

The warp and the woof weave a pattern that bears a message of barely subdued excitement. The Messiah has arrived and has been recognized as king by acclamation, not by those with power or authority but by a scraggly crowd of disciples and followers. Typical biblical themes abound in this pattern.

The approach to Jerusalem was traditionally from the east.[17] Bethphage and Bethany, modern Et-tor and Esariyeh, are located on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives, a location that none of the Synoptics takes for granted but that all specify since, as we have seen, the Mount of Olives had eschatological meaning. The references in Zech 14 are important complements to the locales mentioned; they are probably more eschatological than geographic, though actual historicity is also highly possible. On the Gospel level, however, all history culminates here. The commission to fetch the colt depends on the glad expectation expressed in Zech 9 as well as on acquaintance with scriptural traditions about coronation. The episode of the colt is as much eschatological as historical[18] in dimension; the rhetorical mode of recounting the story heightens the mystery or divine dimension of the mission.

The references to the garments spread before the one riding the donkey provide a striking pattern of royal dimension. This is a king riding to coronation. "As he was drawing near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had witnessed" (Luke 19:37). Subtly woven in is reference to the Kidron Valley in preparations for the recitation and enactment of Ps 118. The phrase *peri pasōn dunameōn*, for all the mighty works, refers not only to the Old Testament gospel story of God's mighty acts toward the elect people Israel but more directly to God's election and traditional acts toward David and his heirs, traditional divine acts that are now contemporized in Christ's humiliation-exaltation story to be told in the Passion account. Luke and John include the epexegetic *ho basileus*, the king, to clarify who was coming or arriving.

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17 See Blenkinsopp, "Oracle of Judah."
18 See Patsch, "Der Einzug Jesu."

The Hosanna

It would be well at this point to trace the texture of the woof suggested in the hosanna (which Luke omits). First, it is a citation of Ps 118:25, which in the ancient royal use of the psalm was both the king's and the people's full recognition or confession of the kingship of Yahweh. Specifically, it was a plea for mercy and justice before the king. In the psalm it was a plea to God for salvation and prosperity for the following year. It was also ancient Israel's affirmation of the kingship or sovereignty of God even in the ceremony of the enthronement of the earthly Davidic king. But the *Hoshiʿah-naʾ* also has another context. It was the cry of the litigant as he or she entered the court of the king to submit a brief and plead a case (2 Sam 14:4 and 2 Kgs 6:26). The opening formula as the litigant entered the presence of the king who sat in judgment of cases in the city gate was the phrase *Hoshaʿ-naʾ/Hoshiʿah-naʾ*. It was a cry for justice and mercy, but, more important, it was a formula spoken when entering the presence of the king as judge. In the psalm the people pronounced it when the humiliated, exalted king entered the temple gates of Yahweh, the Gates of Righteousness. Lohse is undoubtedly right that the Psalm had attained a messianic meaning as a *Zuruf* in pre-Christian Judaism.[19]

In the Gospels, except Luke, the phrase was spoken by the disciples or the people before the temple after Jesus' entry into the city gate. It is repeated in the phrase "Hosanna in the highest" just after the recitation of Ps 118:26, the "Blessed be he …" in both Mark 11:10 and Matt 21:9. Matthew uses it a third time just after the entrance when the people in the temple react to Jesus' healing of the blind and the lame by shouting, "Hosanna to the son of David." Luke omits the hosanna but has the epexegetic *ho basileus* in citing v. 26 of the psalm. Mark, who has the hosanna (11:9), adds after the citation of Ps 118:26, "Blessed be the coming kingdom of our father, David" (11:10). John, who also has the hosanna, further notes the royal dimension by adding "and the king of Israel" (12:13) after citation of the psalm.

In the Synoptics this recognition and acknowledgment of the king as judge in the city gate is immediately followed by Jesus proceeding into the city and entering the temple, as is indicated in Ps 118:25–26. In the Davidic royal entry, the king's arrival was marked by the exclamation of the priests from the temple steps, "Blessed by the name of Yahweh be he who arrives (or, comes): we bless you from the House of Yahweh." Thereafter follows in 118:27 the sacrifice of the festal victim(s) and the affirmation that Yahweh is El. This final event indicated in the psalm is reflected in Matt 21:12 and Mark 11:15 in the mention of "those who sold pigeons" for sacrifice. Even Luke has "drive out those who sold" also in the pericope on the cleansing of the temple.

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[19] Lohse, "Hosianna."

Stones and the Temple

The sequence of the disciples' recitation of Ps 118:26 and Jesus' first act of judgment as eschatological king within the temple against those who had made it into a den of robbers is interrupted in Luke by the intrusion of verbal exchange between Jesus and the establishment (which occurs in Matthew after the cleansing of the temple). Some Pharisees are reported to have chided Jesus to rebuke his blasphemous disciples. Jesus' reply was that if the disciples did not say the "Blessed be he …" (which the temple priests should have recited), then the very stones would recite it. Some students of the passage understand this pericope in Luke to be placed by the evangelist on the Mount of Olives overlooking the city and the stones to be those of the path or road from Bethany. Such a view puts geography above theology; here, as in much of the rest of the Gospels, we have theological or eschatological geography.

From the fuller context of the Lukan warp and the woof from Ps 118, the stones clearly refer not to pebbles of a rocky path but to the building stones of the temple, the destruction of which Jesus prophesies at the end of the intruding pericope. Luke 19:45, immediately following, indicates that Jesus was already in the city (contrast Mark 11:11 and Matt 21:10) and now enters the temple for judgment. What Jesus is saying to the Pharisees, according to Luke, is that the part of the royal entrance liturgy, which according to Ps 118 the priests were supposed to have recited from the temple steps (namely the "Blessed be he …"), would have been recited by the stones of the temple if it had not at least been recited by the disciples (see a similar kind of theological affirmation in Luke 3:8). It is as though Jesus responded, "I'm sorry, friends, this event is happening, and the roles indicated have to be filled." Such high, objective theology is a Lukan characteristic.

A Theophany

The fabric woven of the warp of the new act of God (*jeshuʿah – sotēria*) recorded in the Gospels, and the woof of the acts of God heralded in the psalm, is canonical in texture and eschatological in design. According to the Gospel claim, Christ was the long-expected king unrecognized upon arrival by the authorities of the day. From them he won no credentials, and Gospel accounts faithfully reflect the understandable rejection by the authorities of the claims Jesus and the early church laid to the authority of the scriptural (First Testament) traditions. As the king uncrowned, Jesus passed judgment on the church and state of his day, very much as Yahweh had done through the prophets of old. And as with those prophets, the judgments and blessings went unheeded by contemporaries save for a few disciples and followers. On the one hand, Jesus' symbolic act was no more compelling or convincing than earlier prophetic acts had been. On the other, however, this later act, like its prophetic predecessors, was offensive to the responsible authorities, who were charged with the bur-

den of the continuity of tradition. The claim to kingship was messianic, but the effect was a prophetic challenge.

Luke has two phrases emphasizing the claim to Davidic kingship as a reign of peace. Just after the citations from Ps 118 by the disciples, Luke adds the expression, "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest" (19:38), similar to the phrase he attributes to the heavenly chorus at the Bethlehem theophany (2:14), perhaps suggested to him by the *en tois hypsistois* in Mark/Matthew. In Jesus' lament over the city Luke employs the time-honored pun on the name of Jerusalem by reporting Jesus as saying of the city, "Would that you knew the things that make for peace!" The word *eirēnē*, peace, occurs more often in Luke than in any other New Testament book: it is apparently a Lukan interest.

In yet another sense Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is a theophany for Luke. Luke as much as any other Second Testament writer attributes to Jesus in the Second Testament what the First Testament says of Yahweh. The entry into Jerusalem seems more eschatological in dimension in Luke than in the other Synoptics, all of which are eschatological enough. The stones of the temple might indeed welcome Jesus according to Luke, if no one else did. In light of the psalm the priests should have greeted Jesus from the temple steps after the disciples shouted the hosanna, but they did not; so the disciples shouted the "Blessed be he …" Why did the priests not receive this "king" at his so-called triumphal entry? Because, as the prophetic intrusion says (Luke 19:41–45), Jerusalem did not know the time of its visitation, that is, the *kairos* of divine appearance. They could not recognize, they could not see that in this little parade the king had entered the gates of city and temple and thereby entered into judgment with his people. They simply did not believe that the time of judgment had arrived with the messianic king riding on the ass's colt from Bethany. They lacked the vision to which the disciples gave witness. This is not to say that on the historical level the disciples and followers knew what they were doing in terms of the eschatological significance of the enactment. On the contrary, there is a canonical dimension to God's re-signifying what humans otherwise do. What from the standpoint of the established institutions and recognized authorities of the day was a misguided, scandalous demonstration by a fringe group of society, in the divine economy, according to the Gospels, was a theophany, the arrival of a king and the presence of God.

Luke says that when "he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold," Jesus said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer'; but you have made it a 'den of robbers'" (Luke 19:45–46). Matthew and Mark's picture of the arriving king's judgments in the temple is even more dramatic; according to Mark, Jesus "overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons, and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple" (Mark 11:15–16). The citations or authoritative references for Jesus' acts of judgment against the established authorities were, significantly enough, to Isaiah (56:7) and Jeremiah (7:11). According to the book of Isaiah, the temple should be a house of prayer for all peoples, but, like Jeremiah, Jesus upon entering it found it a den of rob-

bers.[20] The offense to the authorities was unmistakable. Jesus thrust the rapier of prophetic judgment to the heart of the cultus, and the reaction of the "chief priests and the scribes and the principal folk of the people" (Luke 19:47) was to bring charges against him later in the week, much as their predecessors had done against Jeremiah; both were charged with sedition and blasphemy (Jer 7 and 38).

A Canonical Rereading

We cannot blame Jesus' contemporaries. On the contrary, we should identify with them. The enactment of the psalm as a prophetic symbolic act would have been no less blasphemous and scandalous to those responsible for Israel's traditions (and they would have known them well) than similar acts performed by the prophets in the late Iron Age. One thinks of Isaiah walking about in Jerusalem naked and barefoot for three years (Isa 20:3–4) to dramatize his message; or of Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's similarly dramatic acts in order to press the points of their messages (e. g., Jer 13:1–11; 16:1–9; 18:1–11; 19:1–13; Ezek 4:1–17; 5:1–4; 12:3–20). Such prophetic acts were also called "signs" (as in Ezek 12:11). They in all cases challenged the religious and political authorities of the day and brought alienation, pain, and suffering upon the prophets who enacted them.

In all such passages, modern readers who are responsible for the traditioning of Scripture, both preserving and presenting it, should by dynamic analogy identify with their appropriate counterparts in the scriptural narratives, so as to experience and hear the message conveyed. This is as much the case in reading the Gospel accounts of this prophetic enactment as in reading the prophets. With the priests, scribes, and elders in Mark 11:27, Matt 21:15 and 23, and Luke 20:1, we should be induced by our reading of this offensive act to ask by what authority Jesus did "these things." The precious psalm was not to be read and enacted in that way until Messiah came. Would there be a single judicatory of any Christian community today that would have been on those temple steps to recite the "Blessed be he …"? I dare say not. Not until Christians learn to monotheize when reading the Second Testament, to refuse to engage in good-people/bad-people hermeneutics, will they be able to read it for what it canonically says.

One of the remarkable things about the Gospel reports of the offense taken by the Pharisees and the other religious authorities at Jesus' teaching of Scripture and his various acts, symbolic and otherwise, was their continual willingness to dialogue with Jesus up to the point of being able to take no more. They knew very well the passages of Scripture he preached, taught, and re-presented by word and deed; they simply had a different hermeneutic for understanding them.

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[20] On the question of corruption in the first-century temple, see Evans, "Jesus' Action in the Temple: Cleansing"; Evans, "Jesus' Action in the Temple and Evidence of Corruption"; Evans, "Opposition to the Temple."

One wonders how many modern Christians would be as tolerant of Jesus' scandalous interpretations and re-presentations of Scripture as the Pharisees were. "And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to him, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples.'" They were still willing even after this offense to discuss it with him.

But Jesus' response was in effect to say that although debating Scripture, indeed a very Jewish vocation, was important, this time it was not just a matter of debate; God was in fact bringing Scripture to fulfillment before their very eyes. The event was happening and that part of the liturgy (Ps 118:26) that should have been recited by the priests on the temple steps was at least being recited by the unauthorized followers of Jesus. And even then, should they have balked, the stones of the temple steps would have acted. Such is Luke's theocentric, objective theology.

At last, after Jesus' even more offensive act of daring to disrupt the customary temple procedures that facilitated the purchasing of animals so that the people, particularly those on pilgrimage, were able to offer sacrifices, the priests and scribes could not tolerate further offenses and still be responsible to their office. They had finally to take action themselves. And so, on to the passion account.

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7

Sins, Debts, and Jubilee Release

(1993)

It has long been recognized that the Lukan account of the uninvited woman who shows extravagant love and devotion to Jesus in Luke 7:36–50 is considerably different from the accounts of a similar episode related in Mark 14:3–9, Matt 26:6–13, and John 12:1–8.[1] Gospel synopses usually offer two titles for the same accounts, "The Anointing at Bethany" when the synopsis follows the other three accounts, but "The Woman Who Was a Sinner" or "The Woman with the Ointment" when the synopsis focuses on Luke.[2] Raymond Brown seems to lean, with Pierre Benoit, toward there having been two historical but similar episodes lying behind the differences.[3] Joseph Fitzmyer thinks of one tradition taking various forms in an early oral stage, a point Brown also allows.[4]

A third option needs to be kept open; Luke might possibly reflect primary contours of the episode that was interpreted by the others in terms of the beginnings of the passion account.[5] At least two points in favor of this possibility are (1) slippage from anointing of the feet to anointing of the head is easier to explain than the reverse;[6] and (2) the abuse of the paraphrase of Deut 15:11 in Mark, Matthew, and John. The manner in which the latter is used to support the woman's anointing of Jesus (head in Mark and Matthew, feet in John) is totally divorced from its function in understanding the Jubilee theme and does nothing to advance the Markan point about Jesus' acceptance of his anointing by the woman in preparation for his passion; by contrast, the theme of Jubilee release of debts/sins is integral to the Lukan account, which lacks the paraphrase.

If Luke knew Mark or the others, he does not let knowledge of Mark's totally different points affect the power of meaning of Jubilee for Jesus' ministry and teaching.[7] It is of course possible that Luke knew an early account similar to

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[1] See Brown's very helpful summary comparison of the four accounts, *John I–XII*, 450–52. See also Fitzmyer's comparative comments in *Luke I–IX*, 684–86, and Mann, *Mark*, 555.

[2] See Aland, *Synopsis* (1964), 160–63, 361–63, 426–28; Huck and Greeven, *Synopsis*, 79–80, 232–34.

[3] Legault, "Application of the Form-Critique Method."

[4] Brown, *John I–XII*, 450–51; see Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 686.

[5] Holst has argued that more rigorous form-critical method shows that Luke reflects the most primitive version; see "One Anointing," 443, 446.

[6] Holst, "One Anointing"; Brown supports the point (*John I–XII*, 451).

[7] See J. A. Sanders, "Isaiah 61 and Luke 4," 54–69. See also Ringe, *Jesus, Liberation, and the Biblical Jubilee*.

Mark's, and was encouraged by the paraphrase of Deut 15:11 to pursue his Jubilee interpretation of events reported and transmitted about Jesus, giving this episode its distinctive Jubilee cast and thus taking it completely out of the passion context of anointing. The two objections noted above are strong enough, however, to cause one to think rather that the traditioning movement was from a spontaneous act of adoration, cleansing Jesus' feet with tears and anointing them with oil, toward anointing his head with valuable oil made of pure nard in anticipation of his passion, with the Jubilee cast of the whole reduced, in misunderstanding, to Jesus' patently proof-text defense of the woman's act by paraphrase of Deut 15:11, the earlier legislation regarding observance of Jubilee.

Comparison of the four accounts shows that in Luke the woman's extravagance is expressed not in terms of the market value of the ointment but in terms of her spontaneous actions. In Luke there is no indignation shown on the part of others toward the woman's extravagance but rather toward Jesus' acceptance of her devotion.

Jesus' act of acceptance causes his host to question his authority as a prophet, a point Luke has carefully established by crowd and audience reactions to his teachings and miracles (4:32, 36, 37, 41, 44; 5:1, 15, 25, 26; 7:3, 6, 16, 17; cf. 8:1, 4, 34, 35, 39–40, 42; 9:43).[8] Jesus' quotation of the proverb, "No prophet is acceptable in his own country," in the Nazareth sermon (4:24), however, anticipates the negative reactions to this point by Pharisees and other leaders (4:28–29; 5:21–22; 6:7–8). As in our story, the doubts harbored by scribes and Pharisees, in contrast to the Nazareth congregation, have not yet been voiced; they are perceived by Jesus, however (5:22; 6:8; 7:39, 49), thus underscoring for the reader/hearer Jesus' prophetic power and authority.[9] The question of the Baptist concerning Jesus' identity (7:20) contrasts with the certainty of the demons' knowledge of Jesus' identity (4:34, 41) and contributes to the atmosphere of doubt created by the silent questioning of the leaders.

The narrational ploy of interjecting the leaders' doubts into the unfolding story of Jesus' perceived popularity permits Luke to underscore for the hearer/reader Jesus' prophetic powers of knowing their unexpressed thoughts; it is intensified in our story by the host's doubts about Jesus' knowledge of the identity of the woman, when it is the host who doubts Jesus' identity. Indeed, Jesus shows no interest in convincing Simon of his own identity, in contrast to his later concern about the lack of faith by the questioning disciples (8:25). If he did so, he might simply have to admonish Simon not to tell, in the same manner in which he had rebuked the demons; and that would not advance the flow

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[8] See Tannehill's insightful literary-redactional analysis of Jesus' quite different relations in the Lukan narrative to the oppressed, the crowds, the authorities, and the disciples, *Narrative Unity, Luke*, 101–27.

[9] A point also stressed by Ravens, "Setting of Luke's Account." I agree with Ravens that our story is well placed in the flow of the Lukan narrative, but for more reasons than he offers; he is certainly right however that part of Luke's thesis in this crucial section of the Gospel before the journey to Jerusalem begins is that Jesus was the prophet expected and promised in Deut 18:15, 18. This latter point is stressed convincingly by Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet*, 45–79, 259–88.

of the narrative at all. In fact, the host is probably to be understood as included in "those seated together" in 7:49 who do not move from doubt to belief, but rather from doubt to offense taken at Jesus' expression of authority to forgive the woman's sins. This beautifully anticipates the very same move on the part of the leaders generally as one moves through the central section into the passion account.[10]

A marked difference between Luke's account of this episode and that of the other evangelists is the abuse of Deut 15:11 in the latter and its total absence in Luke; in its place is a parable about what a truly charitable creditor might do when the Jubilee Year came around. The narrative of the episode of the uninvited woman, as Luke recounts it, hinges on the story within the story (7:40–43). The remarkable thing that the creditor did is not even mentioned in the story. Verse 42 might have read at some early point in the traditioning process, "Since they could not repay, the creditor, instead of seeking a prosbul, graciously remitted both (debts)." It is easily understood that, as the traditioning of the story moved into more distinctly gentile settings, the technical detail of Jewish halakah would easily be omitted since it would probably raise unnecessary legal questions and detract from the point understood in any cultural setting, the creditor's release of the debts. In the same process, reference to Deut 15:11 would possibly be dropped since its appearance in Mark, and perhaps his sources, was seen as irrelevant and abusive of the Jubilee legislation, and since the statement that the two debtors did not have the money to repay made the point about the presence of poor people in a pertinent way.

The verb used twice in the inner story is *echarisato* from *charizomai* meaning "freely remit or graciously grant." Luke had just used the verb (Matt 11:2–6) in 7:21 in narrative preparation of Jesus' response to the question of the Baptist about Jesus' identity, "and to many blind folk he graciously granted sight." Here Luke's Jesus says that the creditor "graciously granted or remitted to both (debtors)," "their debts" being understood. These are the three times Luke uses the verb in the Gospel. The other evangelists do not use it. He will use it four times in Acts, each time having the basic denotation of "remit" or "grant." In Acts 3:14 he uses it in reference to the remittance or release of Barabbas.

Charizomai does not appear in the LXX except in late texts; it undoubtedly came to be used in the place of the LXX *aphiēmi*, which occurs with the noun *aphesis* five times in the Jubilee legislation in Deut 15:1–3, and some fourteen times in the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25. *Aphiēmi* is used in the LXX to translate both *shamat* and its derivatives in Deut 15, and *darar* and its derivatives in Lev 25, the two passages establishing Jubilee legislation. Whether it was also used in the early traditioning stages of the story in Luke 7:40–42 is difficult to say; but *charizomai* is a beautiful synonym for *aphiēmi* in these contexts and apparently came to be used for forgiveness of debts as well as sins.[11] Luke uses *aphiēmi* and

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[10] One of the marks of Luke's literary style is that of "anticipation"; see Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 207, 445, 518, 538, 632, passim.

[11] See Josephus, *Ant*. 6.7.4 § 144, and the helpful note by Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 690.

derivatives four times in our passage but only in vv. 47–49 in terms relating to the forgiveness of sins – its most common usage in the New Testament.

Paraphrase of Scripture throughout early Jewish literature was very common, and *charizomai* in 7:40–42 is an appropriate synonym for *aphiēmi* in vv. 47–49, which in the New Testament most often pertains to remission, release, or forgiveness of sins. The importance of Jubilee themes to Luke's view of Jesus' mission and ministry was already signaled by Jesus' mixed citation of both Isa 61:1 and 58:6 in Luke 4:18.[12]

The legislation in Deut 15 includes exhortations to creditors to be generous toward fellow Israelites even and especially when the Jubilee Year approaches. While in 15:3–4 there is a promise that faithful remission of debts in the Jubilee Year would bring such divine blessings that there would be "no poor among you," considerably more space is given to the exhortation not to be mean to a poor brother when the Jubilee Year draws near (Deut 15:7–11). Within the parenesis is the statement that there would always be the poor in the land (v. 11); this is in contrast to the promise in v. 4 that faithful obedience to the Jubilee legislation about remission of debts would bring divine blessing "in the land which the Lord your God gives you by inheritance." Leviticus 25, the other major Jubilee legislation, includes considerably more exhortation than Deuteronomy concerning generosity to the poor and obedience to the principles and stipulations of the Jubilee.

When Jewish society moved into the more complex Hellenistic situations of an increasingly urban culture, loans became an intricate part of day-to-day commerce and not merely charitable sharing. Hillel is attributed with instigation of the institution of the prosbul (Hebrew *prozbul*, Greek *prosbolē*), a sort of waiver signed before a judge, in which a creditor could reserve the right to call in a loan regardless of the Jubilee legislation.[13] Nearly every creditor would take advantage of the provision. Not to do so would have been rare indeed, but it could happen. Our inner story tells of a creditor who was generous and charitable enough to forgive two debts and hence not secure a prosbul.

Luke casts the story of the forgiveness of the sinful woman's many (*pollai*) sins in the light of the Jubilee provision for the forgiveness of debts.[14] The woman did not have human creditors; at least we are told of none. On the contrary, she had means enough apparently to bring the myrrh with which she anointed Jesus' feet. Luke does not mention market value of the ointment, but one can imagine how she earned the money to buy it – a point lacking in the other Gospels where the woman's reputation is unmentioned. Possibly one or more of the *synanakeimenoi* about the table would have known.

Be that as it may, Jesus states that she loved *polu*. There has been a great deal of discussion about Jesus' description of the woman's activity. The force of Jesus'

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[12] See J. A. Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4," 62.

[13] *m. Shebiʿit* 10:1–2, 3–4, 8–9.

[14] The terms "sin" and "debt" are found in synonymous juxtaposition in 4QMess^ar; see Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 223–24.

question to Simon after he had told the Jubilee parable was to affirm that a heavy debtor would love the forgiving creditor more than one who had owed less (vv. 42–43); so Simon answered and so Jesus agreed. Commentators have puzzled, then, over Jesus' statement about how much the woman (had) loved. The exchange with Simon about the debtors would indicate that it was the woman's many "loves" indicated by *polu*, but it surely also refers to the love and devotion she has shown toward Jesus. All three of the verbs for "love" in the story are from *agapaō*, which in Koine Greek had taken on many shades of meaning. It seems to be purposefully ambiguous in the received text, however it might have been in the early traditioning process. One aspect of the multivalency might be that "little love" could refer to Simon's attitude or to the attitude of any of Jesus' antagonists in the fuller narrative Luke crafts.[15] Luke, more than the other evangelists, stresses Jesus' offensive behavior to the "righteous," in contrast to his great popularity and attraction for sinners and outcasts in society, such people as the uninvited woman. He indeed has just contrasted his behavior with that of the Baptist (7:31–35); the woman in that sense was indeed one of Wisdom's children.[16]

The second suggestion of silent controversy, or offense taken by those at table, comes in v. 49: "And those reclining at table began to say among (to?) themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives (*aphiēsin*) sins?'" In contrast to Jesus' seeming acceptance by the crowds, the religious leaders, the tradents of all the traditions about God's grace, are the ones who must ask: "Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" (5:21). God alone forgives sins, but others are not infrequently commissioned by God to announce divine forgiveness, such as members of the heavenly council (MT Isa 40:2), or priests (LXX Isa 40:2), a herald (Isa 61:1–2), John the Baptist (Luke 3:3), and others.[17] Jesus' pronouncement of forgiveness in 7:48 is simply, "Your sins are forgiven (*apheōntai*)."[18]

The manner in which Jesus is presented as offending leaders elsewhere in the Gospel leads the reader and hearer to understand that Jesus here is viewed as something more than simply herald. The cultural and social history in which the persona of the sender is viewed as incarnate in the one sent is too extensive and well known to document here; this is especially the case where the one sent does not, with socially acceptable signs of humility, make the distinction clear. Luke leaves the whole scene pregnant with multivalency; he could not do otherwise,

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[15] See Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 692.

[16] Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet*, 109.

[17] See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 273. Ravens ("Setting of Luke's Account"), citing Sanders, mistakenly assumes with LXX Isa 40:6 that 40:2–5 refers to the prophet. The MT of Isa 40:1–11 is a report of a meeting of the heavenly council, including God's commission to its members to pronounce forgiveness and salvation. The LXX re-signified the whole scene to include priests (40:2) and the prophet (40:6) as herald of the good news.

[18] Undoubtedly a theological passive, "forgiven" by God. See Fitzmyer's discussion of the frequency of such theocentric expressions in Luke, *Luke I–IX*, 143–258. See also the study of passive forms in the Synoptic Gospels in Deer, "Les constructions à sens passif."

given the total story he must tell. In the multivalency, then, is room for sympathy for the sensibilities of the fellow guests: "Who is this fellow? He is popular as a teacher and healer. But does he think he is also God's herald?" The answer is yes; that role was established already at Nazareth in ch. 4, before the teaching and the healing started.

What Luke wanted to establish for the reader and hearer is that Jesus was indeed the one who was to come (7:20), the herald of the arrival of God's Jubilee, God's acceptable year (Isa 61:2a; Luke 4:19) of release of sins. This was not simply a Jubilee Year indicated by the calendar; this was the introduction of God's Jubilee, indeed God's kingdom of love, faith, salvation, peace, and forgiveness (7:50). Responsible religious leaders of any society would have to be cautious about and skeptical of those presenting themselves on their own authority (4:21, 32, 36) as heralds of God's Jubilee, the long-awaited eschaton. Even modern religious leaders, academic or clerical, must in all honesty appreciate the multivalency of the passage and find some reflection of their own humanity in the thoughts of Simon and his *synanakeimenoi*.

Like the prophets of old, whose role Luke insists Jesus assumed in his day with his people, Jesus went about challenging powerful sinners, the leaders with social and institutional responsibility. But in all the Gospels, and Luke's especially, Jesus is portrayed in addition as going about forgiving powerless sinners like this marked woman. The prophets got into trouble enough with the authorities of their day, but Jesus' added role of herald of the release of all debts to God, pronouncer of the forgiveness of sins and the introduction of a new order, had to be a serious threat to those who had given their lives to being responsible to the established order, even when Jesus included the promises of hope that the new order would bring. Jesus presents a double offense to those who have tried most to be responsible. Like the prophets of old, he forces responsible folk to identify with those in the past whom Nathan, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, and the others had addressed. That was bad enough, but he also makes the same responsible folk face up to what divine grace really means, the strangeness of it, and the threat it harbors to established institutions in society and to familiar modes of piety and practice.[19] The word Luke used to express the cancellation of the two debts in 7:42–43 is based on the same root as the word "grace," *charis*. Their debts were pronounced released, indeed graced out, and forgiven by the creditor. In like manner, the sins of the uninvited woman Jesus pronounced released and forgiven by God. God's Jubilee had arrived. "Go in (to) peace."[20]

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[19] See J. A. Sanders, "Strangeness of the Bible."
[20] Most manuscripts read *eis eirēnē*, which was idiomatic and common enough; but D reads *en eirēnē*, which brings to mind the possibility that the other prepositional accusative expression bore with it the connotation of entering into peace, God's peace, not just into a momentary clear conscience, that might soon be sullied. Much of Luke's Gospel from this point on depends on the reader/hearer clearly understanding that Luke believed that in Christ's coming, God's Jubilee or kingdom had been introduced. Because of this, a new hermeneutic had been introduced in Jesus' teaching for rereading and resignifying familiar Scripture passages and traditions; see J. A. Sanders, "Ethic of Election."

By putting his version of this beautiful story at this point in his narrative, Luke makes several points crucial to his thesis. Jesus' identity as the herald of the Jubilee, the year acceptable to God (Luke 4:16–30, based on Isa 61:1–2), was already well established by the miracles and healings reported in Luke 4:31–7:17. "This report about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country" (7:17). His identity as the one who was to come was accepted by the people at large, but the religious leaders were disturbed at his attitude toward the law (6:1, 11). Not long before the events recounted in this story, John the Baptist underscored the question of Jesus' identity by sending two disciples to ask Jesus pointedly if he was the one who was to come (7:19–20). Jesus' answer constitutes a review of what Luke reported about Jesus' healings and miracles in the Gospel narrative, a recital of fulfillment of the mission of the Jubilee herald of Isa 61, almost point by point (Luke 7:21–22).

In order to leave no doubt whatever in the reader's mind about Jesus' identity as a prophet, Luke reported that Jesus' host, Simon the Pharisee, said to himself that Jesus could not be a prophet because he apparently did not know who and what sort of woman was fawning over him. But he also reported that Jesus knew what Simon was thinking. Even if the Baptist and Simon were not sufficiently impressed by Jesus' works to accept his identity, the reader now knows that Jesus' prophetic powers extend to mind reading.

Clearly this is not just another Jubilee Year on the calendar of ancient Judaism. This is God's Jubilee, which Luke, after reporting more miracles and after describing the beginning of Jesus' and the disciples' journey to Jerusalem, identifies with God's kingdom to come. Luke's version of the dominical prayer (11:2–4) has several interesting differences from its counterpart in Matthew's Gospel (Matt 6:9–13), but the major difference is in Luke's phrase, "Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us" (Luke 11:4), parallel to Matthew's "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt 6:12). Whereas Matthew reports the petition for forgiveness in purely Jubilee terms, that is, debts and debtors, Luke, through the telling of this beautiful Jubilee story that parallels forgiveness of debts and forgiveness of the woman's sins, resignifies debts to God as "sins." He then underscores the resignification in his version of the dominical prayer, which follows three chapters after the story.

It does not require great imagination to perceive how meaningful this story on its simplest level would have been to Luke's congregation. One question it might have answered was whether there was anyone when Jesus was alive who loved him the way they obviously loved him. To remain in the Way, and not to revert to Mithraism, the imperial cult, or even Judaism, particularly after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE, the apparent failure of the parousia, and the increasing persecution and rejection on all sides, meant that the little Christian remnant of Luke's day must indeed have experienced a depth of faith that was undeniable and irrepressible. They would have had many questions for a teacher like Luke. And some of those questions would surely have been something like the following: "Teacher, was there anyone back then who loved him the way we would like to? Do you know of anyone who expressed directly to him what we ourselves

feel? Was it one of the disciples? Was it a religious leader of the time?" No, Luke would have had to respond, none of those. But there was one, also rejected and misunderstood in normal society, who loved him quite extravagantly because she had found in him true release and forgiveness.

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Part 4: Hermeneutics

8

The Vitality of the Old Testament: Three Theses

(1966)

Two scholars, of divergent theological persuasions, have made remarks that have attracted attention and interest. Neither scholar is, by training or trade, an Old Testament technician, and yet each has propounded views one normally associates only with Old Testament enthusiasts. In his book *History, Sacred and Profane*, Dean Alan Richardson states that "Old Testament theology is perhaps today the most vital and significant of the theological disciplines."[1] And in a very provocative paper entitled "The Historicity of Biblical Language," Professor James M. Robinson, of the Claremont Graduate School, goes so far as to say that "at the present moment there are indications that Old Testament scholarship could move beyond its departmental confines into a central theological position in the coming generation."[2]

How can a British churchman say that Old Testament theology is perhaps the most vital of the theological disciplines? And what does a New Testament specialist (of all people) mean when he says that Old Testament scholarship might well move to a central position in theological conversation and concern in the next generation? If these quotes came from lesser names, we might dismiss them or at least discount them. I, on the contrary, should like to take them seriously and to make an attempt to understand how it might be that these men came to such views.

There are two necessary questions: (1) What in the Old Testament makes it so relevant? And (2) what in the next round of theological debate would require it to relate to the Old Testament vitally and significantly? Or, how have Old Testament concerns moved toward central questions, and how have the central questions moved toward the Old Testament? One hears it said that theological conversations of the end of the nineteenth century were dominated by the church historians, and that the next round was dominated by the neotestamentarians. Or one hears it said that the liberal period, with its interest in general revelation, gave way to neo-orthodoxy, with its emphasis on particular revelation. Such generalizations make the head swim with wonderment, driving us to ask those questions that always arise out of over-simplification. Yet we cannot deny that in the past hundred years [since ca. 1866] the church has wrestled intensely with

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[1] Richardson, *History, Sacred and Profane*, 232.
[2] Robinson, "Historicality of Biblical Language," 150.

the problem of general versus particular revelation, and whereas fifty years ago [ca. 1916] the main struggle was with issues of *revelatio generalis*, more recently it has been with the issues of *revelatio specialis*.

In both periods the Old Testament was not infrequently consulted. The seeming universality of the prophets and the seeming particularity of the priests provided poles of contribution to the struggles. The mission of Israel was well appreciated in the earlier period while the election of Israel well suited the conversations of the later interests. Israel's history of revelation seemed to offer clues to truth for the one era, while Israel's revelation in history spoke to the concerns of the other. Each period has had its own style of Marcionism, but the Old Testament has been able, nonetheless, to make notable contributions to both "liberal" and "neo-orthodox" theologies.

Then what is there about the present situation that would bring the Old Testament to the center, and the center to the Old Testament?

I should like to suggest three theological concerns that, it seems to me, will command considerable attention in the next generation and that, by their very nature, will involve the Old Testament in crucial and critical ways. I shall state three theses and then attempt to demonstrate them.

1. The Old Testament is vital to any historically or theologically valid understanding of the New Testament.

2. The Old Testament is vital to the ecumenical conversations which, in their next phase, must center in the Jewish-Christian dialogue.

3. The Old Testament is vital to the theological crisis of the 1960s heralded by the so-called death-of-God movement.

I

Marcion attempted to deny the Old Testament as valid for Christian faith. Just as erroneous for Christian faith is the attempt to force the Old Testament to be seen solely through the eyes of New Testament faith.

If the Old Testament is read only as the New Testament reads it, the New Testament is deprived of the very basis of its arguments and claims, which rest solely on Old Testament faith. Krister Stendahl has shown that in the New Testament the major concern is to make clear that all is "old," in accordance with the expectations of the prophets. The issue between the Essenes and the early Christians was not that of "originality," but rather that of who were the legitimate heirs to the prophetic promises and who could produce the most striking arguments for fulfillment.[3]

The faith that the Old Testament itself propounded must never be permitted simply to be seen in the light of the New Testament's understanding of it. The

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[3] Stendahl, *Scrolls and the NT*, 6. The following four paragraphs are adapted from Sanders, "Habakkuk in Qumran."

Old Testament was the New Testament's major premise; hence, the Old Testament case for faith must be seriously examined on its own terms. The minor premise in the New Testament's argument is its own claim to the fulfillment in Christ and his church of the promise of the major premise, hence, both the Old Testament statement of faith referred to in the New, and New Testament claim based on that statement, must be taken equally seriously.

The New Testament lays a claim based on Old Testament faith; therefore, to deny the major premise of that claim would be to deny the faith of the New Testament itself. Furthermore, to force an Old Testament statement into a position other than its own, in order to bolster a New Testament argument, not only would be a logical fallacy but would be evidence of a lack of faith. The Old Testament can best serve the New Testament by being distinct from it and maybe even a little strange to it.

Christ is our criterion and, figuratively, our crisis as well. Christ is our judge and our judgment (*krisis*). He is the Christian's canon of what in the Old Testament is relevant and valid to the life of faith. But the Old Testament stands in a special relationship to Christ that nought else can claim. Before it, too, finally came under his judgment, the Old Testament was the criterion by which to identify the Christ. The Old Testament was not only Jesus' Scripture, hence his canon of faith, but, in the end, the major premise of the church in its claim that Jesus was the Christ. All the while that we insist that nothing is exempt from the judgment of Christ – even our faith-understanding of the Old Testament – we must remember that the Old Testament was, and, in some sense, is the criterion whereby Christ is Christ. Without the Old Testament, Christ is innovator, not fulfilment.

To argue that the Old Testament no longer enjoys this distinction or has lost its significance as canon for the New Testament is to declare the New Testament argument outdated and, in some sense, therefore, to destroy the whole concept of the canon of Scripture. When one denies to the Old Testament this dual relationship to the New Testament, one has denied to the New Testament any abiding significance of its first-century argument. In so doing, one has denied the relevance of Scripture. Without the Old Testament, the New Testament image of Christ and the New Testament claims made for him and his church are without foundation, without context, without force, and without meaning. In other words, without the Old Testament, Christ is not Christ at all in the New Testament sense. It is, therefore, not just a question of understanding Christ, it is a question of having him at all. The New Testament is the New Testament because of the Old Testament, in some sense both absolute and relative. Therefore, we assert Christ cannot be the New Testament Christ without the Old Testament, and the Old Testament cannot be the Christian Old Testament without Christ. Precisely because of the Old Testament is Christ Christ, and precisely because Christ is Christ is the Old Testament Christian.

It derives clearly from the preceding that serious study of and appreciation for the Old Testament is a Christian task. Reading the Old Testament is a Christian responsibility. Jesus Christ demands it. Careful research into all that the Old Tes-

tament means and says, and all it meant and said in antiquity, is a Christian task. There is an uncertain, rather tacit, uncritical attitude among a great many Christians that the current cascading loss of the knowledge of Hebrew by Christian scholars can be tolerated finally by the church because, it is said, there are always the rabbis to whom we may turn to tell us what the Old Testament says should we need to consult it. Corollary to that bit of sentimentalism is the equally prevalent attitude that consulting the Old Testament seems less and less urgent and important in the modern world. The two attitudes go hand in hand. Such attitudes are simply thought-free; for the next step would be to invite the Eastern Orthodox Church to take over the New Testament and tell us what it says, should we ever need to consult it. If these are to be the fruits of ecumenism – that is, an ever-widening circle of specialization on the one hand, and ignorance on the other, then we had best reflect on how romantic some of our current views of relevance and significance are.

If the church can be convinced of the tragedy in store for it if it should lose the Bible, that is, if it simply could not read it, then, I think, some of the prevalent uncritical, romantic arguments about the irrelevance of ancient Near Eastern studies would be vitiated.

To lose, or to be unable to read, the New Testament would, scientifically speaking, leave the Old Testament untouched and unharmed. But to lose the Old Testament would, scientifically speaking, leave the New Testament a shambles. Not only is a high percentage of the wordage of the New Testament nothing other than cryptic, almost code style, quotation of the Old Testament, but, much more significantly, the basic arguments of the New Testament presuppose the Old Testament, so that when attempts are made to read a New Testament passage without diligent pursuit of the Old Testament references, allusions, and concepts used therein, the central point of the New Testament passage is blunted if not lost altogether. We must always be very careful not to attribute our modern ignorance of the Old Testament to the New Testament writers.

But, while the Old Testament is by far the largest component part of the New Testament, there are many strands and strains that derive from other sources, and these must also be traced and read and studied. The variegated background of the New Testament is its greatest challenge – so great, indeed, that most interpretations of the New Testament exhibit the bias of the competence of the interpreter. Some excellent New Testament scholars admit they have let their Hebrew slip and cannot, to that extent, read the Bible; but it would be equally regrettable if they read the New Testament only from an Old Testament bias. To read the New Testament without any knowledge of rabbinics, of Hellenism, and of the Mediterranean and Persian mystery cults would be fallacious indeed. One must, on the contrary, be prepared to bring many lights to bear on the New Testament, as many as are needed to recover every sense of the text imbedded in it. And one of those lights, without question, is brought to bear by our asking of the text our own existential questions.

It is, of course, right to assume that the message of the Bible was addressed to us, that is, to our questions and needs. It is, of course, right to attempt to demy-

thologize the text so that it can speak clearly to us, that is, remythologize it so that its historical images correspond with our historical images. It is, of course, right to assume that the Bible speaks to our existence, meets us at our "no exit," as well as rises out of and reaches back into the human situation. And it is, of course, right to assume that it confronts us at the frontiers.

But the light of relevance, the conviction of the relevance of the Bible, is only one of a number of lights necessary for reading what is in the text. The relevance of the Bible must arise out of its inherent word as well as out of our conviction that it is relevant. That is, to put it theologically, the relevance of the Bible stems ultimately from the sovereignty of God over all its sources, over all its parts, and over all its images. Convictions brought to the Bible about what its relevance is are always in danger of smothering its fire and muting its message. The Bible must first judge us by its difference before it can bless us by its relevance. Convictions about the relevance of the Bible must be free of the fear that it might not after all be relevant. The Bible, in all its parts, comes to us from the ancient Near East, from the Bronze Age to late Hellenism, and we must be prepared to reconstruct ancient Near Eastern concerns in order to be able to put the originally pertinent "existential question" to which the text was addressed, before we can be in a position to find its authentic relevance to our current existential questions. To perceive the mindset, the great concerns, or the "question" in the thoughts of the original audience of an address, is as crucial as perceiving the "answer" that in the address was being offered by the speaker or writer.

I should like to take this occasion to make a proposal.

Just as archaeological discoveries of artifacts and documents in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries gave rise to a number of institutes of oriental studies, university departments of Semitics, centers of Byzantine studies, classical studies, and the like, so the recovery of the great wealth of early Jewish literature, since 1947, of the periods prior to and during the birth and expansion of the early church, will certainly give rise to an institute or center for the scrupulous study of early Judaism and early Christianity in the light of the new knowledge of the Judaism and the general Hellenistic culture of that time.

Such a center should include scholars working "shoulder to shoulder" in five areas or disciplines of research. The time-honored method of working separately and at great distances with little or no contact, save by that of writing and reading articles for the various scholarly meetings and periodicals, tends to contribute to specialization and isolation rather than to comparative studies offering insight and challenge, each to the other. This proposal envisages the opportunity to bring such specialists together on a permanent basis to do the teaching and research they have all along been doing, but also to work together to bring to bear upon the study of early Judaism and early Christianity those critical faculties that now are divided among five separate major areas or disciplines of research.

Those five areas are (1) the classics, (2) Hellenistic studies, traditionally emphasized by New Testament scholars, (3) the Old Testament with its traditional emphasis on the Bronze and Iron ages, (4) early rabbinics, the Tannaim,

the great wealth of Pharisaic literature; and (5) the non-rabbinic or non-Pharisaic sectarian and apocryphal Jewish literature of the intertestamental period, especially the Qumran documents.

The wealth of early Jewish materials recovered in Palestine since 1947 is overwhelming and will require decades of careful study. Not only are the scrolls and fragments of the so-called Essene library of about 500 volumes to be included here, but also the new discoveries, from the general New Testament period, near Ein Gedi and now at Masada in Israel, from Chenoboskion and Nag Hammadi in Egypt, from the Greek monastery at Mar Saba, and from caves in Jordan discovered ten miles north of Jericho in the Wadi ed-Daliyeh. This material must not be studied in isolation, but must be kept in the perspective of the whole period in question.

Because nothing should be driven as a wedge between the Old and New Testaments, such a center or institute should be established both in conjunction with a seminary where the best traditionally-conceived biblical studies would be available, and in conjunction with a university where the best work in the classics would be a part of the concept of the center. The earlier periods, both Semitic and Greek, should be ably represented and be an intimate part of the "shoulder-to-shoulder" interaction and thinking bearing on understanding both Judaism and Christianity.

This is a day of dialogue and conversation on the ecumenical and interfaith levels. We no longer use words such as "controversy" and rarely even a word like "debate." This is a day of listening to each other, of sending observers and of learning a common past. Why should there not be structured, interdisciplinary conversations as well as ecumenical dialogue? No one need finally regret our common headlong rush into narrower and narrower specialization, if we can at least listen to each other. And no one need regret contributing articles to and reading articles in journals of limited fields, if he or she can truly engage in conversation across disciplinary lines.

Union Theological Seminary is in a particularly favorable situation to assume the responsibility for such a center. Renowned scholars in all five areas are already at work here on Morningside Heights, each in their own institution, and each in their own field. Could they not meet on a structured basis, regularly, to read together the primary texts of both Judaism and Christianity? Have we not reached such a reasonably mature level of understanding of the problems of lower criticism and of higher criticism that there could be at least a common text to read together? Would it not be an academic excitement of the highest order to listen to a sympathetic rabbinics scholar say what, out of her or his expertise, he or she reads in a New Testament text? Would it not be an academic privilege to listen to a friend in the classics relate what, out of his or her expertise, she or he sees in the same passage? And is it not absolutely necessary to attempt to read such a New Testament passage, if possible and indicated, in its original first-century Palestinian context, the theological glossary of which is growing measurably with every newly recovered scroll and fragment published? And would it not be the greatest boon to this seminary, or any seminary, if its Old Testament and

New Testament departments listened to each other, as well as to scholars in the ancillary disciplines?

It is my conviction that if the recovery in the nineteenth century and early twentieth of the Nineveh, Mari, and Nuzi tablets gave rise to institutes and departments of Semitics and Near Eastern studies, just so will the recovery of the great treasure of early Jewish manuscripts from Palestine, as well as early Gnostic manuscripts from Egypt, provide a similar impetus for the establishment of such a center for the advanced study of first-century Judaism and Christianity. It is only a question of Where? The work is already being done by individuals at Columbia, Union, the Jewish Institute of Religion, and Jewish Theological Seminary: only the roll remains to be called so that the era of structured interdisciplinary conversation may begin.

II

My second thesis is that the Old Testament is vital to the ecumenical conversations that, in their next phase, must center in the Jewish-Christian dialogue.

If the Old Testament may be viewed as central to a historically and theologically valid understanding of the New Testament, so it may also be viewed as central to the current expanding ecumenical conversations in the Jewish-Christian dialogue. While the European efforts in this regard seem to be in advance of our own, especially in Germany where Hans Joachim Schoeps and others have contributed in substantial ways to the so-called Jewish-Christian *Gegenüber*, the American theological community has much to offer to the dialogue.[4] I should like to take this occasion to make a second proposal that Union Theological Seminary and Jewish Theological Seminary assume a major responsibility for the Jewish-Christian dialogue in the coming decade.

I sense that the Jewish-Christian dialogue in America, and perhaps as well in Europe, must take a course pursuing two basic attitudes. There must first be an increasing number of responsible Christian scholars and theologians who will openly disavow the so-called Christian mission to the Jews. The Declaration of Vatican II, "On the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions," which will help bring an end to the grossest sin of Christians through the ages, that of blaming the Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus – as if the message of the gospel of the suffering love of God permitted us to blame anybody for the judgment that devolves on us all – should be matched throughout all Christian communions by a clear disavowal of any mission directed specifically at the Jews as a special

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[4] Schoeps, *Jewish-Christian Argument*. Most of the April 1965 issue of *JBR* 33 is dedicated to aspects of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. It contains a very valuable, critical, annotated bibliography by A. Roy Eckhardt of the European *Gegenüber* or *Gespräch* ("The Jewish-Christian *Gegenüber*") and a less valuable but interesting bibliographic listing of standard works in English on various topics including Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations (Celnik and Celnik, "Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations").

group. This is, in any case, the first condition to any meaningful Jewish-Christian dialogue. This must be met, of course, on the Jewish side by their acceptance of these disavowals in good faith. For if the Jewish conversants in the dialogue cannot actually convince themselves that the Christian conversants do not intend to convert them, then they will surely not be prepared to listen or talk when the conversation gets down to the necessary and exciting considerations of the historic counter-claims of the two faiths.

The second basic attitude requisite to the Jewish-Christian dialogue would, by contrast, fall as a burden principally on our Jewish colleagues. They would have to sacrifice any exclusive claim that they might otherwise like to place on the Old Testament. The Law and the Prophets, and for that matter the Writings of the Old Testament, are not Jewish in any current confessional sense of the word "Jewish," to the exclusion of other claims. This means, among other things, that the dialogue would be a genuine conversation and not one in which the Christian conversants would be expected to defer to their Jewish colleagues on specific meanings of the Old Testament text. Jewish scholars, who may have grown up learning Torah and Talmud at their grandparents' knees, cannot claim a more immediate or valid understanding of biblical or even Tannaitic Hebrew than their non-Jewish colleagues. On the contrary, the understanding they derived from their grandparents' *hakmah* and *kavvanah* may possibly prevent them from appreciating alternative understandings, and hence from the one pertinent to the text under consideration – just as the lack of such an experience may possibly be a hindrance to a correct understanding for the non-Jewish scholar. In such a dialogue as is here envisaged, no scholar should need either to deny their training and preparation or to apologize for it. But, just as the Jew needs to accept in good faith the Christian scholar's disavowal of intent to convert, so the Christian must accept in good faith, and in sympathetic appreciation, the detachment they demand of the conversant Jew toward the Old Testament, and respond to it with a balancing measure of commitment to the Old Testament on their part.

The Christian will not, even privately, ask why the Jew does not accept Christ as Messiah, and the Jew will not, even privately, ask why the Christian does not accept the Old Testament as Jewish. Each will respect the historic claim on the Bible the other represents. The Old Testament is both proto-Jewish and proto-Christian: that is, it was crucial, critical, and essential to everything that happened in Palestine, and out of it, to both Judaism and Christianity in the first century AD (the first century CE). In such a conversation, Hebrew and Aramaic are a Christian responsibility just as Greek and Latin are a Jewish responsibility.

I shall mention only two areas of investigation that I think would be fruitful to pursue in the Jewish-Christian dialogue: the meanings of the word "Law" and the meanings of the word "Israel." Derived examples of the two attitudes mentioned above can be drawn up on the basis of the word "Law." The Christian conversant must be prepared to understand that Torah means many, many things before it means legalism. It means "revelation"; it means "gospel"; it means an aspect of divine activity; it can even mean "God." Far, far down the list is the legalism so dear to Christian arguments. But the Jewish conversant must likewise

be prepared to admit the validity of certain aspects of the Christian understanding of Torah. *Ho nomos* is often used by Paul in a sloganic way simply to mean the Judaism of his time that did not accept Jesus as the Christ. Paul, in his arguments, makes a caricature of "Law," but one cannot assume or conclude that he misunderstood it simply because he did not favorably present the Pharisaic or Essene or Zaddoqite or Sadducaic view of "Law." There was a wide variety of understandings of Torah, that is, the gospel of Judaism, in the first century, and Paul's was in all probability neither a private view nor an original view (just as the proto-masoretic text of the Old Testament was not the only authentic text in the first century).

More interesting, perhaps, would be a thorough-going conversation on the meanings of the word "Israel." I think that if the Jewish-Christian dialogue can survive a discussion of "Israel" it will be able to engage any topic. Are we mature enough, we Jews and Christians, to manage this one? Is it even possible for Christians to admit that Judaism is Israel, and for Jews to admit that to Christianity, the church is Israel? I do not know, for it is on this level that our counter-claims on the Old Testament clash directly. But I do think that each conversant could exhibit the maturity to listen to the claims of the other. The committed Christian believes that the church is Israel, the heir of the promises and the recipient of the grace of God in Christ – and can make a very real case for that claim in modern scholarly terms. The committed Jew believes that Judaism is Israel, the heir of the promises and the recipient of the grace of God in Torah – and can make a very real case for that claim in modern, scholarly terms. Still, what a boon to truth it would be if we could sit together and quietly investigate the various available meanings of the concept "Israel," political, religious, prophetic, and sacerdotal; if we could converse seriously and calmly about why the Torah in its Pentateuchal aspect is in its entirety pre-political, pre-state; if we could ask together the question whether political Israel contained or confined theological Israel, or whether covenantal Israel might not have been theologically quite independent and free of the state and its governments, and distinct even from the cult, whether Israel did not have many meanings that neither Judaism nor Christianity alone can exhaust.

The Jewish-Christian dialogue must be seriously encouraged and quietly engaged in this country. (Harvard Divinity School plans a Jewish-Christian colloquium for the fall of 1966.) Can we talk fruitfully and listen profitably to each other, not only about the safe topics but also and particularly about the vital ones? It might be that out of such a conversation we Christians might learn, in new and surprising ways, what it really means to call ourselves Christian. If Paul in Romans views Christians as honorary Jews, are not Jews then in some sense honorary Christians? Since there is but one God, and there is no other, are not we both, each in our own imperfection, the Israel of God? I do not mean to imply agreement with those such as Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, and Will Herberg who are associated with the "two ways" view of Judaism and Christianity. My point is not that we are both right, but precisely that we are both wrong. For if Judaism has failed to recognize the biblical God in Christ, Christianity has

failed to represent him. And if the church's sin is that it has concealed the Christ, Judaism is an implicated accomplice in that it has permitted the church to do so.[5] Because of its otherwise understandable preoccupation with the apparent lack of biblical truth in the church, Judaism has, for the most part, refused even to consider the biblical (Old Testament) truth resident and evident in the New Testament and in the New Testament Christ. But the wrongness of Judaism, in another sense, is the same as the wrongness of Christianity. They both claim the Bible rather than permitting the Bible to claim them, that is, to stand in corrective judgment over their respectively limited understandings of it. Might not listening to each other help us to listen to the Bible? And would not listening to the Bible prohibit our seeking proof-texts in it? Christianity has concealed God's truth in Christ precisely by succumbing in every age to the ever-present and necessary demands for his (con)temporary relevance. But Christ's timelessness stands always over against his timeliness; his irrelevance stands in judgment over his relevance. Christ's own revelation of and witness to God stand over against all the church's "Christologies" from the earliest councils to the present day. Either the Christian Trinity is rigorously monotheizing or it is non-biblical. Even so, God is not God because Christ revealed him; rather Christ is Christ because God's kingdom (*basileia*) came in him.

It may be that Christian theologians could learn from Jews, as Dean Roger Shinn emphasized in his report on the Jewish-Christian Consultation this summer at Bossey,[6] what they only very reluctantly accept from their Old Testament colleagues, that *God is God ere Christ be Christ.* And it may be that from the Jews we may learn how to be theocentric Christians as well as christocentric theologians.

III

My third thesis is that the Old Testament is vital to the theological crisis of the 1960s heralded by the so-called death-of-God movement.

The death-of-God movement claims to be indigenous to our American shores.[7] Certainly it is one of the most exhilarating modes of theological thinking to strike these shores in modern times. Never has there been, I think, in Christian theological circles, headier thinking, frothier enthusiasm, or more sheer giddiness. The most vigorous radical of them all, Thomas J. J. Altizer of Emory, at times, in his writing, seems to be executing a primitive choreographic joy, and,

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[5] A point suggested in conversation by Professor David Noel Freedman.

[6] A course on "The Elect People of God in the Service of the World (Israel and the Church)" was given at the Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies in Bossey, Switzerland, during the 1964–65 term (cf. Eckhardt, "Jewish-Christian *Gegenüber*," 152). Then from August 16–20 a "Jewish-Christian Consultation" was held at Bossey, composed of some thirty Jews and Christians from eleven countries.

[7] A select bibliography of the movement, and of a few of its critics, is attached below.

like Snoopy in *Peanuts*, twirls around and around, singing his Easter message, "God is dead, God is dead."[8] Thinkers like Altizer claim that they are the true Christians and that all who react against his kenotic Christology are the orthodox bad guys who are not Christian at all. Others among them, like Paul van Buren of Temple, and William Hamilton of Colgate Rochester, while no less clear in proclaiming the death of God, show considerably more hesitation and wonderment at what is happening to them. John B. Cobb Jr. and Harvey Cox, as well as other so-called Christian relativists and secularists, are not to be confused with the genuine death-of-God group.[9] The secularists claim that the theological vocabulary of orthodoxy is dead and must be completely altered, whereas the radicals claim that God is dead, and Christianity must be completely altered. Altizer thinks that his kenotic Christology has never heretofore been expressed: "Until this day Christian theology has refused a consistently kenotic Christology. Yet an open confession of the death of God can be our path to the Christ who is fully Christ, the kenotic Christ who has finally emptied himself of Spirit in wholly becoming flesh."[10] For William Hamilton, God is man's idea of a problem-solver who has completely failed: he simply hasn't solved any problems and is therefore dead.[11] But Jesus is not dead, for Hamilton. On the contrary, Jesus is playing hide-and-seek out in the world somewhere and the game is to go out into the world and tear off his mask.

Jesus is in the world as masked, and the work of the Christian is to strip off the masks of the world to find him, and finding him, to stay with him and to do his work … Life is a masked ball, a Halloween party, and the Christian life, ethics, love, is that disruptive task of tearing off the masks of the guests to discover the true princess.[12]

Altizer's Christ who is pure flesh, and Hamilton's Jesus who is the true Princess, make the world, which they cherish as truth, sound like a Hefner Bunny Club to which Christians can now belong with no feelings of guilt or shirking of Calvinist duty.

Fortunately, the death-of-God movement has an interpreter, sometimes called its scribe, who is not himself one of their number, Langdon Gilkey of Chicago. While the actual adherents are out there in their world "becoming Jesus," as Hamilton would say, Gilkey makes his acute observations on the sidelines.[13] It is Gilkey who has shown most clearly how the death-of-God movement has grown out of Barthian neo-orthodoxy, a point that Hamilton agrees to and

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8 See, for instance, Altizer, "Creative Negation."
9 See ibid., 865, where Altizer calls Cobb "one of the new theologians." Cobb's Whiteheadian "absolute relativism" is joined, seemingly, to the Barthian dichotomy of sacred and profane that is so fragilely basic to the whole death-of-God movement: cf. Cobb, "From Crisis Theology," esp. 174–79. However, one cannot include Cobb in the death-of-God group but rather, perhaps, among those modulating existentialists for whom, also, "experience is concreteness."
10 Altizer, "Creative Negation," 866.
11 Hamilton, "Death of God Theology," esp. 40.
12 Ibid., 46–47.
13 Gilkey, "Is God Dead," and "God Is Not Dead."

accepts.[14] (Hamilton, my former colleague of eleven years, was until five years ago [1961] a thorough-going Barthian, a fact that even his *New Essence of Christianity* of 1961 did not dispel.) But Gilkey has also shown their indebtedness to Tillich and Bultmann as well.[15]

The radicals have seemingly accepted the very points of thinking in Barth, Tillich, and Bultmann that biblical scholars and careful biblical theologians have been reluctant to accept from those giants of the past generation. The christocentrism of Barth's essentially dualistic cosmology, the non-theist ontology of Tillich, and the existentialist spiritualizing of biblical images in Bultmann are precisely those contributions of the past generation most puzzling and unacceptable to biblical students (that is, of course, students of the whole Bible).

The balancing positive elements in the thinking of these three greats, Gilkey goes on, "do not seem consciously to influence the new (theologians)." Those positive elements are precisely the lessons grasped and accepted by biblical theologians, namely, "the emphasis on God, revelation, and the word in Barth; on an ontological analysis of existential 'depth,' on revelation and on Being itself in Tillich; and on existential inwardness and self-understanding 'at the boundary' and 'before God' in Bultmann."[16] But it appears that it has been their negative, the nether-side contributions, that have come to the fore in the radicals: Barth's christocentric particularity as over against God's universal sovereignty and reign; and Tillich's and Bultmann's finding God only out at the frontier or edge of existence and not in ordinary living. Unwittingly each man seemed to deny God's immediate reign and sovereignty in the common stuff of life, the world into which the radicals now summon us to follow in exuberance.

Accepting this separation of holy and secular,[17] the radicals claim that truth is to be found not in the sacred special places of Word, Christ, and church, but in the ordinary places of the profane world where Jesus actually is and has been all along. All the non-verifiable and non-propositional truth of theology, eschatology, and mythology are completely rejected in favor of the verifiable, provable world.

I should like to record both my positive reactions to and my serious criticisms of the New Theology. First and foremost, I admire and support their intellectual honesty. This is perhaps their strongest asset. They are saying out loud, in many ways, the honest reservations we are all harboring in the haven of faith. They are willing to express on their feet what we have all been pondering in our swivel chairs. Armed with such honesty they might just happen to be, for today, God's special people, his elite guard of madmen, his prophets of our day with the tongues of sword, his cherished iconoclasts of established thinking. In the face

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[14] Hamilton, "Death of God Theology," 30.
[15] Gilkey, "Is God Dead," 4.
[16] Ibid.
[17] The dichotomy of the sacred and the profane is basic to all the radicals but especially important to Altizer. The most succinct, and perhaps the most helpful, statement of Altizer's position is in his "Theology and the Death of God."

of such a force of intellectual honesty, what they say cannot be ignored, no matter how outlandish it may seem. Those twins of falsehood that forever crouch at the door of faith, credulity and hypocrisy, cannot long remain lodged among us when prophets are on the loose. Is it not at the heart of the Old Testament to hear the prophets say, "Your view of God is not God – he isn't here, he's there; he's way ahead of you; nothing you think about him touches him; your thoughts are not his thoughts"? For God is mobile not static; he is itinerant not stable; he is forever active, not immutable. (He told Moses of the children of Israel, "Go tell them I'll be there." And the women at the tomb were informed, "He is not here.") God is forever outside our beliefs about him. The orthodox belief we may pretend to have is itself under the judgment of God. One can only thank God for the intellectual honesty of the death-of-God theologians.

Secondly, I appreciate their affirmation of the world, the whole world I hope – and not just Hamilton's "pro-bourgeois, urban and political" worldliness, nor only Cox's "technopolis," but the whole world in all its aspects, the whole of creation and all of human experience. Here especially is the Old Testament truth of the wholeness of life being restated by the radicals. The so-called ethical dualism of the Hellenistic and New Testament writings needs periodically to come under the judgment of Old Testament thinking. Harvey Cox has, at least partially, understood that the faith of Israel was a secularization of ancient Near Eastern thinking, a desacralization of all creation myths, a proclamation that God and his world are all there is.[18] The world is good because it is whole.

Thirdly, I acclaim the iconoclasm of the new theology. If their "Wait without Idols"[19] can truly be a waiting on the Lord, without idolatry, then let us pray that he will indeed renew their strength. By iconoclasm I mean not so much the destruction of our conventional understanding of idols, apostasy, and sin, though that is ever-present; I mean rather the comfortable in-group thinking into which we have cozied our minds so that we have somehow managed to convince ourselves that salvation comes by jargon and slogan. If the young Turks shall but cause us to re-examine our established vocabulary and the settled theology of the establishment, they shall have effected a blessing upon us all. But even more important a boon might issue from an honest reappraisal of the relationship and interaction between the God of the Bible and the God of Christian metaphysics. For all our much-touted "Return to the Bible" in the past forty years [since ca. 1926], have we honestly subjected the God of Western speculation to the judgment of the biblical God? There are a number of us stubborn students of the Bible who think not. If with Barth what we have managed to do is somehow to separate God from his world; and if with Tillich we have managed somehow to discount biblical personal theism; and if with Bultmann we have managed somehow to separate God from the biblical modes of speaking

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[18] Cox, *Secular City*, 18 ff. Whatever one may think of Cox's book, one should not overlook his 1965 article, "New Christian Soldiers."

[19] The title of Vahanian, *Wait without Idols*. Waiting on "God" is an important aspect of the New Theology, especially for Altizer and Hamilton.

about him and of praising him – all this, mind you, with the purpose of replacing biblical thinking with modern understandable and acceptable thinking – then is not the resultant "God" of recent theology already very nearly remade in our image? Could we not have foreseen that a Christian theology that centered itself in an ontologically and existentially acceptable Christ would find its goal in losing its God? Has not Christian theology itself, in its excessive christocentrism, perhaps indeed veiled God? Can we really blame Altizer for coming up with his so-called kenotic Christology? "God so loved the world that he died for it." The great hope I see in the new Jesusology is that when, in Hamilton's masked ball, we have found him, we may see something in him, not, pray God, of our kenotic and empty selves, but of the inexhaustible grace of God that, like the Syrian widow's cruse of oil, is always full, and that we finally may see in him the biblical Jesus who claimed nothing for himself. Then may we develop a truly theocentric Christology and set aside all vain attempts at a christocentric theology.

But while I am very excited by the possibilities for Truth, in the sense of the Greek word for Truth, *alētheia*, which etymologically means unveiling or unmasking, as in Hamilton's Halloween party, I must take issue with three of their most basic tenets.

First, while I admire their honesty[20] and feel that it will be an offense to our false faces and masks, I greatly fear that they have made of their honesty a god. The biblical God is not subject to the judgments of man's honesty; man's honesty is the subject of God's judgments. Have we not yet learned that the honesty we cherish today will tomorrow be seen as dishonesty? The next generation will look upon our soul-searching honesty of today with the same disdain by which we look back upon our Barthian or even our liberal-Victorian honesty. Bertrand Russell, of all people, made my point in his essay, "On Being Modern-Minded": "Our age," said Russell,

is the most parochial since Homer. New catchwords hide from us the thoughts and feelings of our ancestors, even when they differed little from our own. We imagine ourselves at the apex of intelligence. There must be something which is felt to be of more importance than the admiration of the contemporary crowd.

The death-of-God movement bears the earmarks of being perhaps the most parochial school of thought in all modern theological searching. By their own insistence they are peculiarly an American movement. They claim to want to free American theology from the domination of European attitudes. I find here

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[20] Or is it autobiographic honesty, as Mr. Clifford Green, a graduate student at Union, has privately suggested? Is it perhaps honest navel-staring with the vague conviction that others must be "seeing" the same? Hamilton seems to be saying as much in his article, "Shape of a Radical Theology." One cannot (God help him) but wonder whether this movement is not an "honest" product of the frenzy for relevance, and the concomitant lack of emphasis on the classical disciplines that has gripped theological education in America in the past forty years [since ca. 1926]. Much of the future of Christian theological education may depend precisely on how we react to this extreme challenge of the "all-out present" (cf. Hamilton, "Thursday's Child"): let us hope that the reaction will not itself be frenzied but rather a sober appraisal of the requirements of the next generations as well as of the present.

a strange sort of theological isolationism. But by parochial I mean not only their desire to incubate their ideas in their own heat, I mean also their disdain of history. John B. Cobb pleads for a new breed of Christian theologian who will "reach out for a novelty that disdains all appeal to the authority of the past and dares to think creatively and constructively in the present."[21] I hope that they shall do so, for experimentation can only help in giving birth to new thoughts. But certainly human honesty cannot lead to a denial of God. Human honesty can lead only to a recognition of the limitations of human honesty. Human honesty, to be honest, is judged by God. I have doubts aplenty, but I, for one, doubt man's omniscience considerably more than I doubt God's.

My second stricture on the New Theology is directed at their kenotic Christology, or Jesusology. God, like a good friend, has laid down his life for us. One must remember that these Christian radicals are not atheists, nor are they agnostics. They have more beliefs than most of us; what they believe is not that there is no God, but that God has died for us. They might be called ultra-orthodox literalists. They believe in the Incarnation without a stopper. In the foreword to his novel *A Death in the Family*, James Agee described a summer evening in his boyhood neighborhood when all the fathers on the block, in their suspenders, quietly watered their lawns with the garden hoses, which, when turned off, were "left empty, like God, by the sparrow's fall." The radicals do not bother with the ontological question of the existence of God.[22] God lived, right enough, but now he is dead. Not like El and the other gods of ancient Near Eastern pantheons, because of old age or battles among the gods, the way Marduk slew Tiamat or Yahweh slew Rahab. But rather, God gave himself, emptied himself, killed himself for humanity's sake, so that humanity might mature and come of age. God weaned us. Since humanity has now come of age, say the radicals, it is finally time to shout the Easter message, "God is dead." And that leaves us with humanity alone. They accept a basic dualism or radical distinction between the sacred and the profane, between God and the world, in order to be rid of the sacred and to proclaim the death of God. Humanity and the world are left without God or the gods: humanity and the world are completely secularized. God as a problem-solver is finished, they say. But the providence of God in biblical terms is not God in the guise of humanity's trouble-shooter. The providence of God in biblical terms cuts across humanity's self-understood wants and needs: his wonders are alien; his gifts are strange (Isa 28:21). Could we not have foreseen radical theology by our over-emphasis on the Lutheran rediscovery of God in Bethlehem's cradle? Have we failed sufficiently to emphasize the *deus absconditus* and the judgments of God? God cannot die if he never existed; for according to classical Christian theology, God does not exist, he gives existence.

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[21] Cobb, "From Crisis Theology," 181. Cobb continues, "To refuse the authority of the past need not mean to ignore its truth and reality … (the Christian theologian is) avidly open to all truth – yet still believing."

[22] See Altizer, "Theology and the Death of God," 136 ff.

My third stricture is directed against the false dichotomy of sacred and pro-fane whereby the biblical transcendence of God is in effect ridiculed and human-ity displaces a useless, impotent god, a straw-god, bearing no relation to the sov-ereign God of the Bible. There is a sense in which the central proclamation of the death-of-God movement fits a classic biblical definition of sin. In the Bible it is God alone who lives; it is the human who dies.[23] "He lives" is the central message of Habakkuk in the sixth century BCE exile, and it is the central message of the evangelists in the first-century CE gospel.[24] No matter what valiant efforts may be exerted to avoid setting the human up as one's own god, or better as three billion gods, I fear that that is precisely what the death-of-God group are likely to do. Paul Tillich has said, "The temptation not to accept finitude, but rather to lift one's self to the level of the Unconditioned, the Divine, runs through all his-tory."[25] Only those who fancy humanity to be god can call their God dead, that is, have convinced themselves that there is no truth that transcends the human. Only those who think that our current honesty is the final honesty can truly believe that God is dead. Does "man come of age" not mean humanity fancying themselves to be God? But one who knows that tomorrow's honesty will stand in judgment over today's honesty, and that the work of Truth or unveiling and unmasking is never done, can truly believe that God is God. "What is truth?" asked Pilate of our Lord. And he did not answer, for Truth is judgment, divine judgment; it is the judgment of the condemned on the accuser, of the oppressed on the oppressor, of tomorrow's discovery on today's ignorance. It is the saving judgment of the Ultimate on all our penultima: it is the silence of God's Christ in the presence of our Pilate.

"Man utterly without God," writes Schubert Ogden, "is man utterly without the dignity and freedom by which he both can and should be (in Camus' phrase) something more than a dog."[26] To believe that Jesus, without God, is out in the world today doing his work, which we should seek out to share, is simply to remythologize the New Testament message in a way vaguely acceptable today. Christology without theology is anthropology. To those in Israel who are confi-dent that God is dead and Jesus is his son, Elijah issues his challenge on Mt. Car-mel, "How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow Baal" (1 Kgs 8:21).

To opt for the world (Baal) as over against God is to set up a false dichotomy and then run the course of old Liberalism far beyond anything the Liberals ever imagined. To demand immediate relevance and meaning and significance, free of the judgments of seeming irrelevance and apparent insignificance, is to make the world, as we understand it, that is, to make of empiricism, the canon of truth. Are we reduced to accepting as Truth things simply as they appear? Gordon Allport has cautioned against over-belief in Itsy-Bitsy Empiricism, accepting the

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[23] Sanders, "God Is God."
[24] Sanders, "Thy God Reigneth."
[25] Tillich, "Frontiers," 22.
[26] Ogden, "Christian and Unbelievers," 23 (brackets mine); [cf. Sanders, "God is God."].

immediate results of verifiable studies as truth. Luther was right to say *Entweder Gott oder Abgott*: we do worship either the one, true God, or idols.[27]

The God who entered the huts and hovels of Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt is not dead, but is probably today in the huts and hovels of Vietnamese peasants. The God who spoke from a burning bush might be speaking from a jungle aflame. The God who served as Israel's guide in her desert of new-found freedom may be serving as our guide in our desert of new-found freedoms. And we may find, as those freed slaves found, that he is not dead, but has gone on three days' journey ahead of us. And we may also find, when our postmodern freedoms from the past have lost their lustre, that God has not weaned or abandoned us after all. The God who directed Nebuchadnezzar to take Israel into exile and then joined them in Babylon's dungeons and jails might be with us yet (Immanuel) in the refugee camps of the world. The God who got down into the cradle of a baby Jew threatened by Herod's sword is still known in a world threatening its own destruction. And the God who got onto the cross of a man trapped in the justice of the combination of the two best legal systems of antiquity (the Hebraic and the Roman) surely is yet to be known in our justice, in Hayneville and Harlem. The Bible says when you get to prison, just remember he's already been there. Father John J. Hill, a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago, tells of how, after he had been arrested in Chicago and convicted, jailed and fined for sitting-in, an ancient Negro woman met him in front of his church on the Sunday after the trial. She shook his hand and said, "Thank you, Father, for being convicted."[28] God's humility, in biblical terms, is not his impotence, but his sovereignty and his judgment upon us. So great is his majesty that it expresses itself in divine humility. To know the judgment upon us of God's humility is, in thanksgiving, to pray, "Thank you, Father, for being convicted."

IV

We have attempted to anticipate what contributions the Old Testament might make in the next rounds of theological concern. We assume the relevance of the Old Testament to the existence of modern humanity in the realms of social revolution, the freedom movement, international politics, and aspects of ecumenism not dealt with here: neither time nor space permits the development of the vitality of the Old Testament to these and other areas of our common life, and we have purposely, though regrettably perhaps, limited our suggestions to three.

Accepting the challenge of scholars in other disciplines, Old Testament students must, in the coming generation, step boldly to the fore in at least three major areas of theological discussion (1) biblical hermeneutics, specifically the New Testament in its ancient Near Eastern setting from the Bronze Age to Hel-

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[27] Contrast Hamilton, "Death of God Theology," 40. This point is tellingly made in one of the most trenchant critiques of the new Jesusology, Holcomb, "Christology without God."
[28] Hill, "Priest in Jail."

lenism; (2) the ecumenical conversations of Christianity with other faiths, specifically the Jewish-Christian dialogue; and (3) post-Barthian secular theology, specifically the theological crisis heralded by the "death-of-God" radicals. It may be that it is precisely because the Old Testament is so strange to the postmodern world that it must now assume a central place in Christian thought and bear a major burden of the judging, redeeming Word of God to a world in which the church at least may, indeed, in the next decades, come of age sufficiently to hear and receive this stranger in its midst. In the words of the psalmist (Ps 118:22), the stone that the builders have rejected may yet become the chief cornerstone. And if we permit ourselves to see Jesus Christ in his fully biblical context and let him be a stranger, the healing stranger he was then and can be now, then perhaps we shall be able to live our lives, and do the work of the next decades, in the presence of the *Living God*.

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9

Jeremiah and the Future of Theological Scholarship

(1972)

The dominant image in American Protestantism has for three centuries been that of God's creating a special nation. This was based on the Old Testament image of ancient Israel's freedom from slavery and settlement in Palestine. Old Europe was Pharaoh's Egypt and America God's Promised Land. From God's New Zion, his America, light and justice would flow forth to the rest of the world.[1]

This view of the churches' identity and mission was a part of the older idea of the establishment of Christendom: Europe was to have been the Zion from which light and justice would flow to the rest of the world. Western imperialism and the industrial revolution were often seen as proof of God's blessing on this view.

But, as in ancient Israel, so in Europe and America there has been a fusion of faith and culture and a confusion of religion and society. God has been reduced, at best, to a Christian god; at worst, to a partisan god or head of clan. It has thus been difficult for most American Christians to contradict Milton's phrase, "God is an Englishman" and equally difficult to understand the New Testament phrase, "Our judge is the God of all."

The biblical image that judges our abuse of the old idea of a Christian nation and can help us know who we truly are and what we are to do in a secular and alien world is that of the church in exile, a pilgrim folk in a foreign land.

The church of Jesus Christ is going into exile. As ancient Israel was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar and taken captive into Babylonia, and then dominated by Persia, so the church today has been invaded by secularism and taken captive by the dominant culture of Western society. Like ancient Israel in captivity, we must work out the existential question of who we are vis-à-vis secular culture, and work out the essential question of what our obedience to that identity must be. And like the early church at the end of the first century CE, which was in many ways dominated by the Hellenistic culture of the time as well as by the forces of ancient Rome – and thrust out of the Holy Land to find its identity and life-style scattered throughout the Mediterranean area – we, in our turn, must work out

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[1] A number of articles and essays have appeared on this theme: cf. Bellah, *Beyond Belief*; Handy, *A Christian America*; Lynn, "Sometimes on Sunday"; and Scheick, "Agencies of Historic Change." I am indebted to my colleague Robert Lynn, cited above, for guided reading in this area. Some wag recently suggested, concerning the pilgrims landing on Plymouth rock, that it's too bad it wasn't the other way round!

our salvation with fear and trembling in the catacombs of secularism and recover what it means to be "in Christ."

St. Paul's formula, that the true Christian finds his or her identity "in Christ," was the means whereby Christians could accept being expelled from Palestine by ancient Rome. The Judaism of the time expected the messiah to appear "in the land" and the early church expected the parousia "in the land." But how could this be if Rome was conqueror and Hellenism master of "the world"? The early church at that point reread St. Paul's letters (and other literature that became the "new testament") and found the key to who they were as pilgrims in an alien culture; they were not in Zion, but they were "in Christ" – no matter where they were and no matter what culture was dominant.[2] Even within alien confinement they were free because they knew who they were: they were "in Christ." Christ was their place, their Holy Land, no matter where they were dragged and no matter where they were shackled in the chains of foreign power. Thus did the early church create a truly responsible counterculture as witness to their vision of Christ. Being the church in exile or diaspora did not mean being insulated, however; on the contrary, being "in the world but not of it" meant real responsibility for the world precisely because they took their marching orders from another realm, a peculiarly Christian set of values.

I

By dynamic analogy, the church of Jesus Christ, especially in the Western white world, is somewhere between the neo-orthodox reformation of 621 BC and the Babylonian exile of 586 BC. We are in the time of Jeremiah. Karl Barth died, graciously, in December 1968. Barthianism, as he himself recognized, had died in the early 1960s. John Bennett, past president of Union Seminary, New York, wrote in 1966 that he hoped to live to see what would come after neo-orthodoxy. He wrote a few years later that he had no idea either that his wish would come true so fast or that the sequel would be so tumultuous. The Death-of-God fad was a herald of its demise, though in many ways it perpetuated it. It is far from clear at this writing what the sequel is or has been these last seven or so years [since ca. 1959]: secular theology, theology of hope, contextual theology, Jesu-

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[2] Cf. Georgi, *Die Geschichte der Kollekte*. If Georgi's thesis is shifted from discussion about what Paul intended by the *en Christō* formula to how the formula was read and adapted and understood by the churches in the canonical process after 70 CE, as indicated by canonical criticism, then it is valid. A graduate student in Biblical Studies at Union Seminary, Fr. David Bossman, is writing a dissertation, along the lines suggested by Vermes in *Scripture and Tradition*, locating the origin of the *en Christō* formula in Paul's midrashic efforts on LXX Gen 21:12 where the basic elements of Pauline theology lie latent *in nuce*, including the expression *en Isaak*. It is important always to distinguish between the point originally scored (to use James Robinson's apt phrase) in a biblical text and the understanding of that tradition in the later canonical process (whether indicated by redactors, or, as often, discernible only by searches into the historical accidents of an even later process).

sism, neo-particularism, etc.[3] None of these has apparently been reducible to systematic presentation, certainly not in the fashion available to Barth, Tillich, and Niebuhr of the past generation.

But one thing is quite clear from biblical and ecclesiastic history. It has always been characteristic of transition periods, of the sort in which we now find ourselves, for church and synagogue to turn to the canonical heritage with the all-crucial question: Who are we? And that is right. For, by definition, it is the function of canon to engage the believing communities that adhere to it in dialogue on the two questions: Who are we? and What are we to do? Identity and lifestyle questions are properly addressed to the Bible, for these were precisely the basic questions uppermost in the minds of the generations of antiquity who were most responsible for that selection process of authoritative traditions that shaped the Bible.[4]

One of the most exciting aspects of the new field of canonical criticism is the question of why the so-called classical prophets survived the canonical process of early Judaism. Why do we not have in that corpus the record of the messages of the so-called false prophets? (Or, if we do, why, and which are they?) One of the most productive fields of twentieth-century study of biblical prophecy is that of attempting to recover from the extant, canonical literature the debates between the so-called true and so-called false prophets.[5] Methods are slowly developing for locating the *Disputationswörter* in the prophetic literature of the Bible. Some enigmatic passages are gaining new clarity by assuming that the canonical corpus contains quotations from the false prophets (or reflections on their form of theologizing), or perhaps responses from the so-called true prophets to the arguments of their colleagues whose messages per se are not preserved. Such work is based directly on the comparatively new assumption of canonical criticism, that what is received in the canonical corpus is only a fraction of what ancient Israel and early Judaism actually had. Older scholarship sometimes suggested that books like Nahum and Obadiah record the thinking of the so-called false prophets. And such suggestions may recur as a result of the new methods being developed in canonical criticism. But, for the present, considerable work needs yet to be done on the material in the books of the classical prophets.

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[3] See the probing essay by Marty and Peerman, "Introduction."
[4] Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, esp. xvff. In a sense the whole essay deals with the two questions here noted. See now also Sanders, "Adaptable for Life."
[5] The literature is growing. From 1962–72 see the following: Osswald, *Falsche Prophetie* (also Rendtorff, "נביא"; Fichtner, "Propheten II," 621–22); Rendtorff, "Erwägungen aus Frühgeschichte"; Clements, *Prophecy and Covenant*, 11–44, 119–29; Barr, *Old and New in Interpretation*, 149–70; Freedman, "Biblical Idea of History"; Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis*, 93; and especially van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute."

II

Jeremiah is, of course, a fruitful field for labor of this sort. Jeremiah 23 and 27–29 provide many clues on how to proceed with the work. In his disputations with the false prophets Jeremiah clearly shows his respect for them as well as his inability to disprove what they had to say. At one and the same time he seems to stand unequivocally for their right of free speech (Jer 23:18, 22, 28) as well as for his conviction that their authority for their work was poorly based, false, or insufficient. The only real distinction between himself and the others seems to be in Jeremiah's claim to have stood in the heavenly council; he denies that the false prophets have stood there or that they have been dispatched from there (Jer 23:21; 27:15, etc.). In other words, he seems reduced to denying their personal authority. He denigrates their individual "calls" or personal experiences as a true base for their messages. In denying their personal authority he focuses our attention on his own claim to have stood in the council and to have heard the message of which he was the *shaliaḥ* (messenger).[6]

But it is in his disputations with these colleagues that we see the core of his respect for them. After hearing Hananiah denounce his message of adversity and divine discipline of Judah, and assert a message that was diametrically the opposite of his own, Jeremiah said, "Amen, may the Lord so do. May the Lord make the words which you have prophesied come true …" (Jer 28:6). Scholarly explication of this passage must go beyond the stage of discussion as to whether Jeremiah appreciated Hananiah's sincerity, or whether Jeremiah really meant what he seems to say. Clearly there was that in what Hananiah said that gave the prophet pause beyond the simple possibility that Jeremiah, out of love for his people, preferred Hananiah's message of peace and continuity to his own of war and disruption. While Jeremiah seems sharp and clear in his denial of the personal authority of the false prophets, he is unable completely to deny to them all authority.

Twentieth-century work on the prophets has shown that they made appeals to two sources of authority, not just one. It has long been recognized that the "calls" of the classical prophets in effect constitute their establishment of credentials as Yahweh's messengers. It is in the "call" material in the prophetic literature that we are provided with the prophets' answers to the question: How and why do you have a right to say what Yahweh says? The prophet's answer was in terms of some personal experience (Amos 7; Hos 1 and 3; Mic 3:8; Isa 6; Jeremiah passim; Ezek 1–2; Isa 40, etc.). Either they had stood in the heavenly council, like the First Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the Second Isaiah (Isa 40), or they had a special experience of receiving the Word of God (Amos 7; Jer 2; Ezek 2–3); or they had been touched in some way by the Spirit of God (1 Kgs 22; 2 Kgs 2; Mic 3:8; Isa 42:1; Isa 61:1; Ezek 2:1–4).

But the prophets also made appeal to another, quite different, type of authority. They all cited Israel's Torah story in one form or another either in its Exo-

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[6] Cf. Ross, "Prophet as Yahweh's Messenger."

dus –Mosaic guise, like most of them, or in its Davidic guise like the First Isaiah, or a combination of them like Ezekiel and the Second Isaiah. In other words, they cited not only their own "calls," they also cited Israel's "call." They all sooner or later told the story, in its basic outline, that lies at the base and heart of the Torah. This was as important to their arguments for the validity of their messages as their references to their own calls. They told the story of God's saving deeds that "called" Israel into being. They pointed to the very roots of Israel's self-understanding as authority for how it should understand itself contemporarily in terms of what was happening to it historically in its own day, for what God was doing "presently." Much attention has been given to this in study of the prophets and does not need to be reiterated here.[7]

What is interesting in study of the so-called false prophets is that we are discovering that they too cited Israel's Torah story in their arguments for the validity of what they had to say God was doing or would do in their day. Common to them both was the Torah or gospel story of God's righteousnesses in the past. They differed in their hermeneutics, in making that story relevant to current events. Not only, then, do the "calls" of the so-called true prophets need review to see if we can ferret out of them indications of canonical prophetic hermeneutics, but so do the disputations with the false prophets. It is the thesis of this paper that between the two, between the calls and the disputations, we may be able to discern the hermeneutics of the canonical prophets.

There is not the space here to record all one's work in this regard, but a few suggestions are in order. The disputation suggested in Isa 28:20–22 yields interesting results. There Isaiah cites two traditions of the Davidic Torah story. Fortunately, these traditions are preserved for us in 2 Sam 5:17–25 and 1 Chron 14:10–17. Isaiah's use of them is surprising even to us today. But the full impact of his application of them is realized only when we assume that the prophet is responding to a quite different understanding of them, in fact, an understanding much easier for us to comprehend ourselves. I think we can be confident that here we have a one-sided and cryptic record of a disputation with so-called false prophets. However, in order to grasp the situation, we must not assume that Isaiah's antagonists in the debate were "false" prophets. It is for this reason that I use the modifier "so-called" in referring to the true prophets and false prophets. Psychologically these inherited terms prevent us today from fully recovering the point originally scored by Isaiah in the debate. Let us simply think of a debate without prejudice as to which message of which prophet eventually became "true" in the later canonical process. (This is the task, precisely, of canonical criticism.)

If, on the contrary, we do what any good historian ought to do, we will read into the actual situation of the debate the ambiguity of reality. That is, we must not assume the outcome. We must attempt to attribute to both parties both their credentials and the fullness of their arguments. The best way to do so, for the

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[7] See Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, 54–90.

student today, is to take the side of the so-called false prophets. If this much is granted, then we are prepared to hear some good, thoughtful Davidic theologian object strongly to the sorts of things Isaiah has been saying up to this point in the chapter. Isaiah has in the clearest terms possible declaimed a message of judgment by God upon Judah; and he has done so in terms of the Davidic traditions (Isa 28:16, e. g.) as his base of authority. The other theologian says, "No, Isaiah is wrong." And he marshals for his counterargument equally valid Davidic traditions, those cited in Isa 28:21. On the contrary, he says to Isaiah, our God will not bring a message of judgment by some overwhelming scourge (Isa 28:17–19); rather, he will save us from this Assyrian threat. Indeed, the proof that Yahweh will save us now is the fact that he saved David from the Philistine threat on Mt. Perazim and in the valley of Gibeon. In other words, the same God who saved David before will save us now.

Isaiah takes up the cudgels of the argument, and citing the same Davidic traditions comes out with the opposite message – God will indeed rise up, as on Mt. Perazim and as in the Valley of Gibeon "to do his deed – strange is his deed, and to work his work – alien is his work." It is as though Isaiah responded by saying, "Right on! I fully agree that God will act now as he acted then. But this time it will be for judgment and not for salvation." Frankly, I think, if I had been there (continuing in the ambiguity of reality) I would have agreed with the so-called false prophet. If tradition is authoritative, we have to use it correctly. And in the story in 2 Samuel God saved David; therefore, to be true to the story we have to say, by analogy, he would save again.

But Isaiah had a different hermeneutics. The "true" Davidic theologian would say, "Yahweh gave David this Jerusalem so he will preserve it. God is not whimsical and subject to the vagaries of history. It is a question, Isaiah, of believing, as you have yourself said on other occasions (Isa 7:9 etc.), in the power of God to keep his promises. I admit that things look bleak, indeed, with Sennacherib besieging the city and having the upper hand militarily in every way; but Yahweh is our Holy Warrior and will save us himself." This is heady stuff. Gerhard von Rad has said that the book of Genesis was compiled finally in the way we have it precisely as a challenge to Judaism in the exile to believe that, all evidence to the contrary, God can keep his promises. In other words, Isaiah's antagonist was a good theologian. And I would have to say he was right.

But Isaiah said "No." Using the same authoritative traditions as his colleague, he argues that "just as Yahweh was able to capture Jerusalem through David, he is able to capture it again now through Sennacherib, the instrument of his judgment on his people, Israel." Strange his deed, this time, and alien his work in our day.

The difference between the two points of view was not in their reference to authority. Just as two opposing theologians can today appeal to the same passage, both Isaiah and his antagonists cited the traditions we know from 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles. The difference was in their hermeneutics. But even there the difference was not what in Judaism and New Testament literature we call hermeneutic rules or techniques. The difference was in a basic hermeneutic axiom. The real

distinction between the true and the false prophets (and this conclusion I draw from work on many such passages) was in their views of God, in their basic *theology*. Both believed in an active Yahweh. Both believed that it was Yahweh's acts that made Israel Israel and brought them to where they stood together – perhaps on the ramparts of the City of David overlooking the siege works of their enemies, the Assyrians (undoubtedly being constructed outside the walls). But whereas the one believed that Yahweh would keep his promise to David unconditionally, the other believed that Yahweh was above all free, especially free to chastise his people when their view of God had grown too small, when in their mind he was reduced to a guiding, protecting deity who was obliged to preserve them. This basic hermeneutic axiom of the canonical prophets often brought them to challenge the best of theological doctrines of "providence." Isaiah's God was, so to speak, infinitely bigger than that of his colleague's.

<div align="center">III</div>

Jeremiah's debate with Hananiah bore the same basic point. Hananiah introduced his message of comfort concerning Judah's relation to Babylon by the same messenger formula that Jeremiah himself used: "Thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel." The editors of the material at this point in Jeremiah do not actually indicate the references of authority used by either prophet, but it is surely right to assume that Jeremiah's many references throughout the book to the Exodus –Torah story would apply in this debate. And it is equally right to assume that Hananiah cited similar traditions. Jeremiah speaks to Hananiah as to an equal, "The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times …" (Jer 28:8). The reality of the situation does not permit us to assume that Hananiah tried to deliver his message on his own authority alone. Such an assumption would deny the important ingredient in understanding the debate, the ambiguity of reality. In other words, if we had been there on that day, in the temple, among the priests and people witnessing the debate (Jer 28:1, 5) we would not have given the laurels to Jeremiah simply because Hananiah pretended to speak only for himself. We can be sure that Hananiah, like Jeremiah and all the prophets, rooted his message in the authoritative traditions of Israel, that is, in the Torah story of God's saving deeds in Israel's "call." The debate rather centers, according to Jeremiah, in the nature of prophetic tradition, that is, in how prophets "from ancient times" read current events in the light of Israel's self-understanding in the covenant. Whereas in the case of the debate just discussed in Isaiah, the assumption we had to make was that there was a debate, here we must assume that the debate, so clearly recorded, rested in citations of authority. Neither assumption is more than the texts allow; on the contrary, they complement each other in our efforts to understand them.

The scene in Jer 28 takes place in the period between the two major sieges of Jerusalem, between 598 BCE and 586. Nebuchadnezzar has already, in 598, deported Jehoiachin the king and other important citizens, as well as some of the

temple treasures. Hananiah's message is that "in a couple of years" Yahweh will bring those taken away back to Jerusalem. Hananiah neither affirms nor denies Jeremiah's major point that it was Yahweh, through the agency of Nebuchadnezzar, who had exiled them. In fact, in v. 3, he only speaks of Nebuchadnezzar when referring to the deportation. He emphasizes his own positive point that Yahweh will in any case bring them back, and that right soon. His argument might have run like this: "Yahweh who brought Israel up out of Egypt, guided them in the desert, and brought them into this land, can and will bring back those recently taken away from this land. It is really a question, Jeremiah, of whether you have faith that Yahweh is powerful enough and faithful enough to sustain us."

Jeremiah's response is a prayer that Yahweh will do as Hananiah says and not as he, Jeremiah, says. He seems himself to prefer his colleague's interpretation of Yahweh's hand in current events. However, Jeremiah draws upon a tradition of hermeneutics in his rebuttal.

The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the Lord has truly sent the prophet. (Jer 28:8–9)

This tradition of hermeneutics did not deter Hananiah and he proceeded forthwith to reaffirm his position by the symbolic act of breaking the yoke that Jeremiah had worn that day as indication that Yahweh was submitting his people to Babylonian hegemony and domination, that is, subjecting them to another government.

But Jeremiah's reference to prophetic hermeneutics is worth considerable pause. If we do not stumble over the terms peace and war, but understand them to indicate status quo and disruption, continuity and change, we can seize a better perspective. Jeremiah claims that at the heart of prophetic hermeneutics is judgment, or challenge to things as they are. Jeremiah asserts, therefore, that unless history indicates otherwise, reflection on the Torah story, or God's righteousnesses in the past, should be in terms of the challenge it conveys to contemporary self-understanding, or the covenantal relationship. The historian may interpret past events as "providential" of God's blessing, but the prophet should interpret the present and future actions of God as judgmental or challenging.

One cannot say that Hananiah believed in Yahweh's *ḥesed* whereas Jeremiah did not. But I dare say if we had been there, we might have put it that way. In the ambiguity of reality of that debate Hananiah was challenging the faithful standing in the temple precincts to believe in God's loving loyalty, recent historical evidence to the contrary notwithstanding. But Jeremiah, throughout this book, insists on another view of that same *ḥesed* of God. Jeremiah claimed that God's *ḥesed* was being expressed in his day in terms of a transforming love, even a transformation of Israel into a much more intimate covenant relation with God (Jer 30–31), and that his *ḥesed* was being expressed in terms

of judgment, wounds, and healing, indeed a new covenant. In effect, Jeremiah was saying, "Yahweh who brought Israel up out of Egypt, guided us in desert, and brought us into this land, will take us out of this land." Little wonder that Jeremiah was tried twice and imprisoned three times for blasphemy and treason. We understand divine providence to be God's subscribing to our programs of continuity, and divine forgiveness to be God's commitment to support his people willy-nilly, and read such poor theology into our meaning of the word *ḥesed*.

I have been studying Jeremiah rather intensely for some twenty years.[8] Perhaps what I should say is that Jeremiah has been studying me intensely for some twenty years. Bultmann is surely right, in his method of biblical interpretation, when he says that the exegete begins to understand the text when he finds himself being exegeted. Recently I read through the 52 chapters of this prophet once more, looking specifically for the method by which Jeremiah may have tried to counter the arguments of such colleagues as Hananiah. And in the rereading I was struck, as I had never before been impressed, with the great number of times Jeremiah appeals to Yahweh's work as Creator.[9] The more I read and reread the crucial passages the more convinced I became that it was here that Jeremiah rested his hermeneutics in applying the Torah story to the current history of his people. He precisely countered the arguments of his antagonists by insisting that Yahweh was not only Israel's God, but also the God of all creation. A cursory review of the other preexilic prophets yielded similar results, though perhaps not quite so impressive as in Jeremiah. Jeremiah, and the others, found themselves resorting more and more to a view of God as something more than Israel's savior and redeemer in order to stress their message that God was free enough of his own people to engage in purposeful discipline of them, in a transforming act that would extricate the covenant relationship from the falsehood of narrow views of divine providence. The burden of Jer 18:1–11 is borne directly by a broadening view of God beyond that of his exodus activity. It was as *yotser* that God was creating a new Israel, even though he clearly was acting in ways similar to those acts heralded in the Torah story of creating the old Israel. But it is not only Jer 18 that reads in this manner; the list of passages is very long indeed.

Methodologically speaking, such a recovery of the specific turn of argument in countering simplistic views of Yahweh's work of providence ought to correspond with what is being said in the call of the prophet. How does he, Jeremiah, come up with a message diametrically opposite to that of the Hananiahs of his day – out of the same authority, the Exodus–Torah story? And again, we find the crucial verb, *yotser*, in Jer 1:5. When Jeremiah deals directly with the difference between himself and the others he stresses, as the single base of his argument, that God is not only a God at hand, but also a God afar off; he fills heaven and

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8 See Sanders, *Suffering as Divine Discipline*, and Sanders, *OT in the Cross*.
9 Van Seters, "Doctrine of Creation," has done a very fine early job of correcting G. von Rad's work in this regard.

earth (Jer 23:23–24). Then if we move to Jer 27–29 we find the word *sheqer*. Intensive work on *sheqer*, or falsehood, corroborated by Overholt,[10] yields the observation that the antonym of *sheqer* was not ʾ*emet*, truth, as one might otherwise imagine, but ʾ*emunah*, faith. The opposite of falsehood in Jeremiah is faith. Faith in the Bible is, in effect, its monotheizing process. Faith, as it appears in Isaiah, Habakkuk, and Jeremiah (especially these) means being able to affirm the sovereignty of the one God of all over the adversity that befalls Israel: it specifically excludes narrow views of a divine obligation to prosper his people.[11] And in these chapters in Jeremiah where the prophet openly struggles with the so-called false prophets, *sheqer* precisely means just such narrow views.

The prophetic corpus in the Old Testament is, by and large, a ringing "No" to such narrow views of God, to falsehood. The prophets, especially Jeremiah, redeemed the authority of the Torah story from abuse by insisting on a challenging view of God, an ever-expanding concept of deity or reality. By dynamic analogy the prophetic message for us, in our ambiguity of reality, is that God is not a Christian. Probably the most unfortunate title from the whole neo-orthodox period, which, as noted above, is now past, was that of Donald M. Baillie's otherwise probing little book, *God Was in Christ*. We have taken that to mean that God was captured in Christ. We have assumed the incarnation to mean that God became a Christian, the head of our clan, the protector of Christendom. Ian Lochman, the great Czech theologian, in his inaugural address at Union Seminary in September 1968, said, "In the incarnation God did not become a Christian, he became a man." The challenge of the Bible today is surely in the phrase of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Our judge is the God of all." God did not cease his activity with his righteousness committed in Christ (Rom 10:4). He did not stop being God in the first century; and he does not act only in the church as we know it.

<div align="center">IV</div>

God is not a Christian. The challenge of the Bible for theological scholarship and theological education today is to try to prepare the church for its exile. By exile I do not mean what has sometimes been meant in the history of the church by *ecclesia in exilio*, little pockets of insulated ghettos of Christians over the world waiting for the eschaton. On the contrary, it means what the biblical literature of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE and the first century CE present it to mean: a renewed view of the church as a pilgrimage movement carefully distinguishing between God the Giver and his gifts, refusing to make idols of his institutions, being able to affirm its identity as the people of God experiment even when all past symbols have been stripped away. It means being in the world but not of it. It means being fully responsible in God's creation precisely by creating a respon-

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[10] See Overholt, *Threat of Falsehood*.
[11] Cf. Gese, "Idea of History."

sible counterculture in its midst. It means understanding the church as a move-
ment and not confusing it with the institutions through which it works from age
to age. It means finding our identity not in God's gifts but in the awful embrace
of the Giver (Jer 31:2–3).

Out of their love of their people, the prophets did not themselves want the
transformation to take place. They did not seek Israel's death and rebirth. But by
canonical criticism we can now see that because the prophets said what they said
before the exile took place, they provided the remnant in exile with the faith, the
theological perspective, to be able to affirm their identity as Israel, all "historical
evidence" to the contrary notwithstanding. They cried for repentance to the last,
but they provided the perspective, the view of the bigness of God, that meant
that when the worst happened they were not in despair but in rebirth. Judaism
arose out of the ashes of old Israel because there had been these unpopular men
in the time before the transforming activity of wounds and healing to afford the
key, the perspective of what was happening to them.

And that, I think, is our task in theological education: to prepare the churches,
the faithful, with the theological perspective that will permit them to see in 1984
and beyond, that the radical alterations of forms that will come do not mean
that God has, like some cosmic scientist, turned away from this experiment as a
bad effort, but on the contrary, has been active in a new death and rebirth of his
church. This does not mean that in theological education we seek the church's
death; it means that we sharpen and hone our hermeneutic tools, centering in a
broadening theological perspective, so that when the church comes at that time
to review its Torah or gospel story it will be able to reaffirm its essential identity
and seek the style of obedience responsible at that time.

Specifically, this means developing and presenting seminary students with the
skills and methods they can use in their day for reading the primary sources of
the faith. It means we cease giving them our answers to our questions, and also
cease the romanticism of recent efforts at absolutizing current student questions.
It means putting all the current work of the guilds of scholars, that is, the current
secondary literature, in perspective – subjecting it to the higher importance of
students' being able to read the primary sources in their day with the questions
they must ask at that time. It means appreciating the limitations of scholarship as
well as upgrading its storehouse of tools and methods; it means trying to work
out a theology (or philosophy, if you will) of responsibility within that humil-
ity. It means appreciating the ambiguity of reality in our reading of the history
of the faith instead of choosing a single point of view to absolutize and call the
way of truth.

All this calls for a revamping of current trends. It demands of biblical schol-
arship a new self-understanding, efforts to be responsible for rules of eisegesis as
well as exegesis. We have been successful in our rules of exegesis at locking the
Bible into the past. Let us continue to sharpen the tools and methods by which to
recover the point originally scored in full biblical and historical context, but also
embark upon the unfamiliar task of developing the tools of contemporizing and
making relevant those points. The textbook of a valid hermeneutic for tomor-

row is the Bible itself (as in the Isaiah and Jeremiah passages studied above).[12] This will be a new area for some professionals and may prove embarrassing. But we must do it. We must be real historians and not antiquarians. We must find ways to open up the Torah and gospel story to the ambiguity of reality we know was present in the past when the biblical point was originally scored, then by dynamic analogy (not static analogy), apply the hermeneutic rules recoverable from the Bible itself that will show us once more the canon's adaptability as well as its stability.

Biblical scholarship must heed this new call. We must stop disdaining proclamation and midrash and start being responsible, if historians we be, for seeing that the canon, no matter how stable, has never really been "closed" in the ways scholarship has tended to render it irrelevant. In its high pluralism and diversity, it is in reality a paradigm for us, not a vein of gold for mining, but a paradigm available for conjugating the verbs of God's present reality in the church and the world.

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[12] The work of the Word-Event school of the New Hermeneutic has been ineffective precisely at those points where it has failed first to attempt to recover the biblical point originally scored before applying its existentialist tools. Full contextual exegesis means not only full literary context but also, and especially, full historical context. The biblical point cannot be recovered until the two foci have been clarified: both what the text says and the situation into which it spoke; the point sought lay in the tension between the two.

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10

Hermeneutics in True and False Prophecy

(1977)

The problem of true and false prophecy in the OT has become a focal point for study of canonical hermeneutics. The thesis of the present study is that prophecy in biblical antiquity, whether "true" or "false," can be more fully understood when studied in the light of three major factors where available: ancient traditions (texts), situations (contexts), and hermeneutics. The following diagram may indicate their interdependence and interrelationship.

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                       hermeneutics

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   texts/                              contexts/
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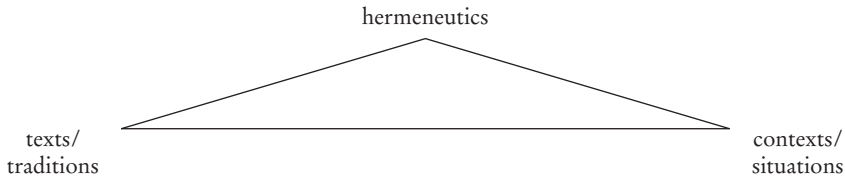
By texts is meant the common authoritative traditions employed and brought forward (re-presented) by the prophet to bear upon the situation to which he or she spoke in antiquity.[1] Such traditions included both the authoritative forms of speech expected of prophets and the authoritative epic-historic traditions to which they appealed to legitimate their messages.[2]

By contexts is meant the historical, cultural, social, political, economic, national, and international situations to which prophets applied the "texts." Context here, then, is not solely or even principally a literary reference (though often the literary context is determinative for meaning), but refers primarily to the full, three-dimensional situation in antiquity necessary to understand the significance of the literary record or unit under study.[3]

By hermeneutics is meant the ancient theological mode, as well as literary technique, by which that application was made by the prophet, true or false, that is, how he read his "texts" *and* "contexts" and how he related them.

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[1] The masculine-neuter pronouns will be used throughout the essay to refer to both prophets and prophetesses.
[2] Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, 54–90.
[3] See the critical discussion of "situation" by Buss, "Idea of *Sitz im Leben*."

I

A review of work done to 1977 on true and false prophecy indicates the importance of attempting to discern the hermeneutics of prophecy, especially in those instances where two or more prophets spoke to the same context, notably the disputations. Focus on these may yield indications for discernment between true and false prophecy not yet fully recognized.

Jeremiah 28, with Deut 13 and 18, is the *locus classicus* of the problem. G. Quell, in a study published in 1952, is often given credit for liberating study of true and false prophecy from a priori assumptions about Jeremiah's colleague, Hananiah (Jer 28), who had been thought of largely as a cultic, nationalistic, pseudo-prophet, a fanatic demagogue, a libertine in morals, illiterate of spirit, and, indeed, an offender against the Holy Spirit.[4] He showed, by contrast, that Hananiah subscribed to the same traditions as Jeremiah, employing the same expected forms of both speech and symbolic action as the latter. It was the LXX that introduced the term pseudo-prophet; the Hebrew Bible does not have it. Since Quell, intentionality is no longer a criterion for discernment of distinction between Hananiah and Jeremiah, and hence between so-called false and true prophets generally. Not only did Hananiah feel that he was right and Jeremiah wrong, Jeremiah was constrained after their initial encounter to identify with Hananiah and his message: "Amen! May the Lord do so!" (Jer 28:6). It is simply not possible to impugn the so-called false prophets with conscious, evil intention. Recognition of this fact in modern study has received broader support from the acknowledgment of pluralism as a factor in research. Unresolved debate at any juncture of history and recognition of the ambiguity of reality are stressed also in the sociology of knowledge.

Gerhard von Rad in 1933 could with some confidence find in his study of Jer 28, and Deut 13 and 18, confirmation of what he already knew, that history was the vehicle of revelation.[5] And Sigmund Mowinckel in 1934 found that prophecies based on the Word of Yahweh had greater likelihood of being true than those based on the Spirit of Yahweh.[6] Martin Buber in 1947 anticipated Quell's so-called defense of Hananiah in calling him "*ein prinzipientreuer Mann*," a man true to his principles.[7] But Buber went on to use quite negative epithets: Hananiah was a political ideologue, blind in comparison to Jeremiah, and a successful politician. Although Buber's study of the crucial debate in Jer 28 contains valuable observations for discussion of prophetic hermeneutics, he leaves us with the impression that the passage offers at least functional criteria for distinguishing true and false prophets. All such discussions and suggestions were well received in the neo-orthodox atmosphere of his time.

Since Quell, however, a healthy measure of the ambiguity of reality, and of the thinking of pluralism, has entered into discussions of the problem with sober-

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[4] Quell, *Wahre und falsche Propheten*, 65.
[5] von Rad, "Die falschen Propheten," 119–20.
[6] Mowinckel, "'Spirit' and the 'Word,'" 206.
[7] Buber, "Falsche Propheten," 279.

ing effect, so much so, indeed, that skepticism concerning criteria of distinction has been the salient mark of serious work done since 1952. There is no clearly defined criterion to distinguish true and false prophecy, or to identify the true prophet in a debate.[8] Although E. Osswald summarized the thinking of von Rad in her 1962 study, she did so only after careful, critical consideration of all criteria that had been advanced.[9]

J. L. Crenshaw's study (1971) goes the furthest in the direction of skepticism, even to the point of judging that the inevitability of false prophecy, stemming from the lack of criteria to discern it in any given situation, caused the failure and demise of prophecy in the early exilic age.[10] His pressing the matter to its logical and realistic conclusion has drawn considerable criticism.[11] And yet Crenshaw himself, following Edmond Jacob,[12] seems to leave us, if not with a criterion of discernment, at least with a clear warning that all true prophets (whoever they might have been) were in constant danger of succumbing to the temptation of confusing the *vox populi* with the *vox dei*. Indeed, Crenshaw claims, because true prophecy was such a fragile affair and false prophecy so realistically inevitable, that prophecy as a biblical phenomenon failed and wisdom and apocalyptic took their place in early Judaism.

L. Ramlot has revived the criterion of the *vox populi* as a positive factor of discernment by suggesting its role in the later canonical process.[13] It was the *vox* of the later remnant, or surviving Judaism, in reviewing the preexilic and exilic messages of the prophets, true and false, that found value for survival in those messages that it went on to preserve for us in the canon. My own work would underscore such an observation.[14] But that remnant found itself in a totally different situation or "context" from that of their predecessors who had actually heard the canonical prophets and had formed the earlier *vox populi*. It is in the canonical process that the so-called criterion of "history" (Jer 28:9; Deut 18:22) or fulfillment of prophecy should be understood, rather than in the simpler sense of specific prediction coming to pass or not; and it is in this sense that the emphases of von Rad, Buber, and Osswald on "history" as the vehicle of true revelation can be retained.

Such an observation does not, however, actually contradict Crenshaw's quite valid view that in their time the *vox populi* was a negative and powerful pressure on the prophets whose interpretations of their current history and expectations of their immediate future ran counter to those of the vast majority of their people, who were well represented by the so-called false prophets. Numerous passages in the prophets indicate that they were constrained to indict the people and

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[8] Hossfeld and Meyer, *Prophet gegen Prophet*, 161.
[9] Osswald, *Falsche Prophetie*.
[10] Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*.
[11] See Fohrer, Review of *Prophetic Conflict*; Williams, Review of *Prophetic Conflict*; Brueggemann, Review of *Prophetic Conflict*; Bič, Review of *Prophetic Conflict*; Dreyfus, Review of *Prophetic Conflict*; Jacob, Review of *Prophetic Conflict*.
[12] Jacob, "Quelques remarques," 479.
[13] Ramlot, "Prophétisme."
[14] Sanders, *Identité de la Bible*, 153–67; Sanders, "Adaptable for Life."

the so-called false prophets often in the same manner and with the same words (Isa 30:8–14; Mic 2:6; 3:5, 11; Jer 26:8; Ezek 13–14). Their messages simply were not popular in their time: even the exilic Isaiah challenged his people in Babylonia (1) not to assimilate to the dominant culture but to retain their Jewish identity, and (2) to believe that the God who was in his time redeeming and liberating them was the same who had delivered them to the despoilers (Isa 42:24, et passim). There is no evidence at all that the great prophet of the exile was the *vox populi* of his day; quite the contrary.

Hence, Osswald designated the criterion of judgment (Jer 28:8) as primary; and it was this aspect that Sheldon Blank and A. Heschel elaborated in their different but equally moving descriptions of prophetic suffering and pathos. Their messages were charges (*maśśāʾ*; Jer 23:33) that challenged their people's understanding of themselves and their God.[15] Their love for their people was so deep, and their identity with them so complete, that their messages hurt the prophets before and while they delivered them to their people.[16] My own work also affirms such observations as these, and they touch directly on the question of prophetic hermeneutics.

Apparently following Weber and Jacob, A. van der Woude stresses ancient Zionism or nationalism as a criterion of false prophecy in the preexilic situation. In his work on Mic 4, van der Woude broaches the old problems of so-called postexilic additions to Micah in a fresh way by the method of identifying *Disputationswörter*.[17] Micah 4 would appear to be a locus of record of debates Micah might have had with contemporary prophetic colleagues who challenged his message of divine judgment in the situation of the eighth century BCE. Instead of seeing those passages that appear to contradict Micah's message of chs. 1–3 as later additions, one might view them as quotations of colleagues who held a different theology – that of God as the Holy Warrior who sometimes allows Israel's enemies to encamp at Zion's gates to besiege Jerusalem in order that Israel may the more easily thresh them and destroy them. The enemies outside the gates say, "Let her [daughter of Zion] be profaned, and let our eyes gaze upon Zion" (Mic 4:11). "But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord, they do not understand his plan, that he has gathered them as sheaves to the threshing floor," say Micah's prophetic opponents (v. 12). Israel's enemies, if they knew the truth, said the latter, ought better to say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord … that he may teach us his ways" (v. 2).

These are valuable findings. A review of what earlier scholarship has called secondary passages or exilic additions might indeed yield considerable recovery of such debates between the canonical prophets and their contemporary colleagues. Scholars have struggled with the observation that the judgmental prophets appear to have opposed static application of royalist theology in their day (Jacob) or a simple "parroting of Isaiah" (Buber).

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[15] Blank, *Of a Truth*.
[16] Heschel, *Prophets*, 103–39.
[17] van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute"; van der Woude, "Micah IV 1–5."

Buber's essay on the encounter between Jeremiah and Hananiah was seminal and is worthy of review. He sought to understand why and how Jeremiah, after saying Amen to Hananiah's message of consolation, could upon reflection return with the strength of his original conviction reinforced, "*Geschichte geschicht.*"[18] Time marches on and no one moment can be totally equal to another. The living God is not an automatic machine. God's truth cannot be systematized. Humankind endowed with free will changes to the point that historical reality and the divine will may become quite different in one moment from what they had been in another. Hananiah was the person who had real knowledge but was a prisoner of that knowledge. Parroting Isaiah, he was satisfied to repeat a solution of the past; for with all his knowledge of history he did not know how to listen. He was truly a man of principle who was convinced that God too was a man true to his principles, bound by the promises he had made to Isaiah. Hananiah did not know how to recognize history "becoming." He knew only the eternal return of the wheel, but not the scales of history that tremble like a human heart. He was the typical fanatic patriot who accused Jeremiah of treason. Jeremiah, however, did not think of his homeland as a political ideology but as a colony of people, an assemblage of human living and mortal beings whom the Lord did not want to see perish. In counseling them to submission to Nebuchadnezzar he wished to preserve their life. Despite his grand ideology, Hananiah was but a blind man while Jeremiah was a realist. The one, concluded Buber, was but a politician with dazzling illusions, the successful man; the other, in his suffering silence, in the pit, and in failure, did not know the intoxication of success.

Ramlot reports that J. Ngally has extrapolated from Buber's essay an affirmation of the sovereign freedom of God and of the politics of the true prophet, which were opposed to the timeless political ideology of the false prophet and sought the concrete salvation of flesh and blood people.[19]

II

It would be easy, in using without caution the prism of Buber's moving essay, to draw from it false criteria for discernment of prophecy. Surely one cannot always denounce those who appear to be fanatically patriotic or who strive to live by historically learned principles; that would be but to turn Hananiah, as Buber perceived him, around the other way. But one who has read the Bible in all its pluralism of expression can but affirm Buber's basic observation of the dynamic nature of the divine will, as the Bible expresses it, in ever-changing historical and cultural contexts or situations. Within biblical historical typology there is movement.[20] Although typology appears to be the most fundamental of intra-biblical hermeneutic techniques, especially in the prophets, notably Deutero-Isaiah and

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[18] Buber, "Falsche Propheten," 277.
[19] Ramlot, "Prophétisme," col. 1042.
[20] Cf. Gese, "Idea of History."

the NT, it would be difficult to find a passage where it is applied statically.[21] Although the canonical prophets apparently referred to some form of the Torah story, by citation or subtle allusion, they also stressed listening to the voice of God in their own day.[22]

Crenshaw is right to relate Buber with Osswald's statement: "The true prophet must be able to distinguish whether a historical hour stands under the wrath or the love of God."[23] Such discernment requires both intimate knowledge of the traditions or "texts" of the ways of God in Israel's past (its *mythos* or Torah story) and a dynamic ability to perceive the salient facts of one's own moment in time as they move through the fluidity of history. With apparently no one around after the exile to offer such discernment, history indeed appeared to be static, or worse, to be but some alternating cadence between birth and death, planting and plucking up, breaking down and building up (Eccl 3:2–3).

The student of the history of interpretation well knows how a single text, when stabilized in form and content, scores different points when read in different contexts. Deuteronomy in its original context of seventh-century BCE Judah was a challenge to a royalist theology based on unconditioned promises (no matter how much Manasseh had needed the flexibility of domestic policy it offered in the face of Assyrian foreign policy) and the blessed assurance of God's faithfulness. But a stabilized, inflexible text of Deuteronomy (Deut 4:2; 12:32), read unchanged a few decades later in a totally different context, apparently scored a quite different point from that intended by its authors, or heard by Josiah; and the Deuteronomic admonition that disobedience would bring abrogation of the covenant was sometimes read to say, if an individual suffered deprivation and hardship, he must have sinned. Deuteronomy did not say that, but Job was surely written in part to record a resounding No to such inversions of the Deuteronomic ethic of election.[24] No one need have changed the text of Deuteronomy for the inverted reading to occur. On the contrary, if one did not alter the reading of Deuteronomy dynamically, to adjust its "text" to the new "context," then the inversion was almost bound to occur. Such an observation is common to the student of canonical criticism; it is the nether side of the "stable" aspect of canon.[25]

But it is the very nature of "canon" to be adaptable as well as stable. On this all segments of both Judaism and Christianity – the full spectrum from liberal to conservative – agree: the Bible as canon is relevant to the ongoing believing communities as they pass it on from one generation to the other. They may disagree on its stability, what books are in the canon and in what order (whether the Jewish, the Catholic, or the Coptic canon), but they all agree on its adaptability. Before the triumph of Deuteronomy[26] those authoritative traditions that later

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[21] Cf. Wolff, "Hermeneutics of the OT," and Wolff, "Understanding of History."
[22] See Sanders, *Torah and Canon*.
[23] Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 54.
[24] Sanders, "Ethic of Election."
[25] See Sanders, "Adaptable for Life," 544–52.
[26] See Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, 36–53.

came to make up part of the Bible had been quite fluid, largely in oral transmission and subject to many different oral forms, and hence supposedly less subject to the dangers of stability or static application. And yet, as Jacob and Buber stress, the so-called false prophets seemed to tend to employ typology statically.

Hence all scholars since Buber and Quell, as is well attested in the works of Osswald, Crenshaw, and Hossfeld and Meyer, agree that changes in historical-cultural situations indicated that hearing afresh the Word of God and its dynamic message was a mark of the so-called true prophet, although they do not put it quite this way. Probably the Reformers had a similar message when, in devaluing the magisterium of the Roman church and its extended traditions, they said that the Bible became the Word of God in new contexts only when interpreted dynamically by the Holy Spirit.

Few would wish to debate the fact that a stable tradition or text may say something different to different situations. What is difficult for modern heirs of the Enlightenment is determination or definition of what the canonical prophets meant by listening to the voice of God (Jer 7:23, 26), or what the Reformers meant by interpretation by or through the Holy Spirit. What can be said today about such a factor in the adaptability of the prophetic message to changing historical moments? What can be said of the prophet's ability "to distinguish whether a historical hour stands under the wrath or the love of God"?

III

Scholarship seems now to be generally in agreement that nothing really critical can be said. Von Rad and Quell deny that we can establish with clarity or objectivity what the *exousia* of the true prophet at any point was: it simply is not subject to scientific analysis.[27] Ramlot uses the term *mystique en un sens large*.[28] But one wonders if we are reduced entirely to such a judgment. Partly in response, Crenshaw points to what he calls the failure of prophecy and its yielding in the exilic period to wisdom and apocalyptic.

The mid-term between canon's stability and its adaptability is hermeneutics. The more stabilized a tradition became the more crucial the role hermeneutics played in rendering it relevant to new situations. However, even in preexilic times before stabilization of forms had become a dominant feature in the pre-canonical history of those traditions (the early canonical process), prophets, psalmists, and others frequently made allusion to Israel's *mythos* traditions in order to legitimate their thoughts and messages. Prophetic literature is replete with such references, as von Rad has shown.[29] An interesting aspect of study of tradition-criticism today, especially in the prophets, is prophetic hermeneutics. When the ancient biblical thinkers rendered the old traditions relevant to their day,

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[27] See also Hossfeld and Meyer, *Prophet gegen Prophet*, 160–62.
[28] Ramlot, "Prophétisme," col. 1044.
[29] von Rad, *OT Theology*.

what hermeneutics did they employ? Such study is keenly advanced when the hermeneutics of contemporaries can be compared: for example, if two ancients apply the same epic tradition to the same contemporary situation but draw quite different conclusions from it.

Studies in true and false prophecy have not until 1977 taken sufficient advantage of such comparative study. In the prophetic corpus, recognition of disputations between contemporaries centers, of course, in the encounter between Jeremiah and Hananiah. The work of van der Woude since 1969 has brought the disputations to the fore, as Crenshaw recognized.[30] Every study of true and false prophecy since Quell has attempted, more or less seriously, to discern the theology of the false prophets. But for the most part scholars have so far seemed satisfied to give such theologies labels: royal theology (Jacob), establishment theology (Bright), Zionist theology (van der Woude), *vox populi* (Crenshaw), fanatical patriotism and political ideology (Buber), all somehow voiced at the wrong historical moment. Lacking in the field is a serious attempt to extrapolate from the disputation passages the hermeneutics of the debating colleagues.[31] The present paper is a probe in that direction.

Buber's point, followed by Osswald and others, that the historical context was vastly important in terms of validity of prophetic message, cannot be gainsaid. Careful study of the Bible in search of what it was the so-called false prophets actually said and preached yields a number of passages where such prophets cannot be dismissed facilely in terms of their theology, or by what little is known of their lifestyle. All scholars of the question agree on this. Such agreement permits us to focus on the form, content, and theology of the "false" prophets. Koch's work, because it is so thorough, permits us to move beyond the question of the forms they used: they were the same as those used by the so-called true prophets.[32]

Did they, however, make reference to Israel's ancient epic traditions? The answer all scholars have given to this is Yes. But it is apparently at this point that the question of hermeneutics has failed to arise, because thus far it has apparently been sufficient to remark, one way and another, on how the false prophets invoked an otherwise decently good theology but at the wrong time, supporting leaders and people when they needed a challenge. And the right theology at the wrong time is variously described, as we have seen, as royalist, Zionist, and the like, while the so-called true prophets were apparently invoking a right theology at the right time, supposedly a Mosaic view of conditional covenant, or, at least, a different tradition.

If, however, both parties invoked the same theology at the same time, addressing the same situation, then hermeneutics would have to enter the picture. Such may or may not be the case in the famous debate between Jeremiah and Hana-

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[30] Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 23 ff.
[31] See Sanders, "Jeremiah and the Future," for a preliminary effort; see also Sanders, "Hermeneutics."
[32] Koch, *Growth of the Biblical Tradition*, 200–10.

niah, but we cannot know for certain because the immediate record does not state what "text" or tradition each recited. There are other passages in the prophetic corpus, however, that may assist in this regard.

<div align="center">IV</div>

In order to gain further perspective on the importance of "context" or situation, let us compare Ezek 33:23–29 and Isa 51:1–3. In the first, the situation is 586 BCE, or very shortly thereafter, for the pericope is placed just after the report of the message from Palestine to Ezekiel's Babylonian deportee camp that Jerusalem had fallen (Ezek 33:21; cf. 24:26).[33] The historical moment is very clear. Some of the people on that occasion apparently took heart, in a spirit of hope, and cited an authoritative tradition to apply to their situation: "Abraham was only one man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many; the land is surely given us to possess" (33:24). The hermeneutical techniques employed were typology and *argumentum a fortiori* (or, *qal wa-ḥōmer*). But the central interest of hermeneutics is not in its techniques but in its basic modes and suppositions. In the second passage (Isa 51:1–3), Deutero-Isaiah advances the same argument, in every respect, that the people presented in Ezek 33: "Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you, for when he was but one I called him, and I blessed him and made him many. For the Lord will comfort Zion …" (51:2–3).

And yet in the first passage, Ezekiel rejected the people's argument out of hand. His response to them was as harshly judgmental as any passage in the book: God will continue the judgment upon the land until utter and complete desolation sets in (Ezek 33:25–29). The time or context was wrong, for the self-same argument was presented some fifty years later by Deutero-Isaiah as true prophecy. These passages seem not to have figured so far in any discussions of true and false prophecy, one supposes, because the Ezekiel text does not specify that the people who advanced their argument were prophets. And yet, neither does the text say they were not prophets. But it hardly matters since the form of their argument is very close to the form or argument of prophecy when it cites ancient traditions to support its message: it is not, however, in the literary form of *Botspruch*; hence it has been overlooked. Neither, for that matter, is the form of the passage in Deutero-Isaiah totally conformative!

The people in both Ezek 33 and Deutero-Isaiah use the same hermeneutic techniques of typology and *argumentum a fortiori*. In both arguments the hermeneutic principle is also the same: The God who called Abraham and Sarah out of Babylonia will call the exiles out of Babylonia; he will do the same kind of thing and execute the same kind of mighty act as he had done in the Bronze Age. The assumption is that God will be consistent: "the God who brought Abraham

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[33] See Zimmerli's excellent discussion of the Ezekiel passage in *Ezechiel*, 817–21 (ET: *Ezekiel*), as well as his *Ezechiel: Gestalt und Botschaft*, 35–37.

out of Babylonia and brought him into the promised land will bring us out of Babylonia into the promised land – all the more so because we outnumber him by far." Deutero-Isaiah said Yes to what Ezekiel fifty years earlier had said No to. The hermeneutic principle of the "false prophecy" in Ezekiel and of the true in Isaiah was the same: they both cited the tradition constitutively, as a support to what the people felt they needed. Those early moments just after the temple had fallen were not right for such a message; it would have but increased the people's deception (Ezek 33:30–33). The First Isaiah had had to say No to a similar argument in a similar situation just after 722 BCE. The good folk of Samaria, with the buoyancy of the human spirit of hope, said: "The bricks have fallen, but we will build with dressed stones; the sycamores have been cut down, but we will put cedars in their place" (Isa 9:10). Such undaunted spirit all admire and applaud. Who can say it is by principle wrong? But the First Isaiah, like Ezekiel later, denounced it in as harsh, judgmental terms as may be found in the prophetic corpus. It was apparently the wrong time.

When Jeremiah used the Rechabites as an object lesson for obedience, he did not approve of their static view of it (Jer 35). The Rechabites practiced obedience by attempting to retain earlier nomadic contexts of living: Jeremiah, in contrast, stressed continually listening (Jer 35:14).

When Nebuzaradan had taken Jerusalem, and offered Jeremiah a pension in Babylon, the prophet elected to stay in the desolate land (Jer 40:1–6), despite the fact that up to the moment of defeat he had counseled defection to Babylon (Jer 37–38; cf. 6:16). Jeremiah remained consistent theologically by changing his message when the context changed (cf. Jer 42:10). Context is an important factor. In point of fact, the messages of Hananiah in Jer 28, that of the people in Ezek 33, and of Deutero-Isaiah in Isa 51 were all similar in announcing restoration. Isaiah 51 is distinct from them only in contextual timing. If restoration had occurred immediately upon destruction, the transformation of the covenantal relation between Israel and God that both Jeremiah and Ezekiel sought could certainly not have taken place (Jer 24; 30–31; Ezek 36:26–28). They both used the great physician metaphor, among others, to speak of that transformation. Divinely inflicted wounds for the purpose of transformation take time to heal properly; otherwise they are but soothed with the ineffectual balm of Gilead (Jer 8:22) or, to use another metaphor, are daubed with whitewash (Ezek 13:10). It would appear that forty to fifty years were needed to let the message sink into the *lēb* of the people: God can abrogate the covenant and act very strangely indeed, all the while pursuing his own agenda that no one generation can verify or falsify.

Actually Deutero-Isaiah faced the opposite problem, it would appear. After a period of time the people would be gravely tempted to abandon their Jewish identity and assimilate to the dominant culture – join the First Church of Marduk, or of Ahura Mazda, so to speak. The challenge they apparently needed so as to retain their Jewish identity amounted to a symphony of consolation, which Deutero-Isaiah nonetheless intimately related to God's judgments of fifty years earlier.

The importance of context or historical situation can also be seen in tracing in the Bible its most common theologoumenon: *Errore hominum providentia divina* – God's grace works through human sinfulness. This "theology" of prevenient grace can be said to underlie some three-quarters of biblical literature. G. von Rad has brilliantly shown that it is the foundation of the final form of the Genesis text.[34] It is indeed the foundation of Torah. Deuteronomy indicates, however, that Manasseh exploited it and abused it; Jeremiah and Ezekiel agreed, finding abuse of it right up to the destruction of 586. The priestly theologians who shaped the Genesis traditions in the form we have them, as well as the final form of Torah, however, clearly saw that the old theologoumenon was an idea whose time had come once more. Hosea and Jeremiah reflect a minority view that there had been a golden age of obedience and devotion on the part of Israel in the early days before entrance into the land (Hos 2:16–17 [RSV 2:14–15]; 9:10, 15; 11:1–3; Jer 2:2–3). But the Torah, as well as the other prophets, know of no such tradition. According to them, although Israel had always been disobedient and recalcitrant, God's grace was not thwarted. Whatever evil Joseph's brothers, Jacob's eponymous sons, "intended" against him, God could and did "intend" it for good to the benefit of all (Gen 50:20). Insistence on the faithfulness of the promiser (Heb 10:23) in some contexts was apparently crucial to survival and continuity, but in other contexts (750–586 BCE?) apparently became deception and falsehood.

In the NT the theme is celebrated decisively in the Gospels and Paul. In the former the ineptitude of the disciples is stressed in the teachings, while their failure to support Jesus in the Passion account is woven into the text as integral to his arrest, trial, and crucifixion. In Paul the theme is so central that to comment on it would be to review the Pauline doctrine of grace: God uses human sin and disobedience to effect his plans. Paul celebrated the theme so fully that he had to face the obvious challenge to it: shall we sin the more that grace may the more abound? And his answer was a resounding No (Rom 6:15). But very clearly the existential age of the delicate birthing of the early churches required an emphasis on the theme, just as the existential age of the birth of Judaism out of the death of old Israel and Judah in the sixth century BCE required equal emphasis on the same theme in Genesis once the message of divine judgment for disobedience and divine expectation of obedience and right understanding of election expounded by the prophets and Deuteronomy had already been fully expressed (750–586 BCE).

V

The importance of historical situation and context, therefore, cannot be overstated. In the prophetic disputations, however, the historical situation was always the same for the debating prophets (as ancient biblical theologians): they addressed the same problem but offered totally different suggestions as to what

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[34] von Rad, *Genesis*, 13–42.

might be expected of God in that context. Even if they simply applied to that situation two different theologoumena, one emphasizing divine grace and faithfulness in and through and despite human sinfulness, and the other stressing divine expectations and obedience of the people in a theology of conditioned grace, the hermeneutical question arises precisely at the point of why they chose the theological theme they did choose.

Did they have a choice, willy-nilly, between a royalist theology of God's unconditioned promises and a Mosaic theology of divine expectation of obedience? Or, more acutely, was the one bound by personal identity to Davidic tradition and the other to the Mosaic, so that they had no such choice?

The case of the first Isaiah would indicate otherwise. The central theological complexity of Isa 1–33 is that of its seeming to contain both these theological themes – grace and judgment – both based on authoritative Davidic traditions. Isaiah apparently in his early ministry could base a message of blessed assurance to Ahaz (Isa 7:1–16) on the same Davidic traditions that he later cited in his message of stringent judgment.[35] At some point in his ministry Isaiah perceived that the earlier message had caused deceit and falsehood when carried into the era of the Assyrian threat (7:17–8:8). Upon reflection he perceived that God urged him not to walk any longer in the way of the people in this regard (8:11–15). Such reflection apparently caused him to claim that continuing to rely on the earlier message had caused the people to become deaf, blind, and insensitive to the later message of divine judgment through Assyrian assault upon Judah (6:9–13). God had, in his inscrutable way, poured a spirit of deep sleep upon those prophets who remained true and consistent to the message of divine grace without judgment (29:9–10). Did he include himself in that indictment to the extent that he had been consistent before altering his own hermeneutics?

Isaiah did not change theologies, nor did he shift allegiance from one tradition, the Davidic, to another, the Mosaic. There is simply no textual evidence for such a shift.

Is there, on the other hand, textual indication that he changed hermeneutics, that is, applied Davidic traditions to the new historical context of Assyrian threat *in a different hermeneutic mode*?

Isaiah 28:21 is a crucial passage in this regard. "For the Lord will rise up as on Mount Perazim, he will be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon; to do his deed – strange is his deed! and to work his work – alien is his work!" The historical references in this remarkable statement are to 2 Sam 5:17–20 (Mount Perazim) and to 2 Sam 5:25 plus 1 Chron 14:10–17 (valley of Gibeon). But in those traditions, it was claimed that Yahweh arose to *aid* David against the Philistine threat. Such references, on the face of it, would seem more (theo)logically apt if advanced by those prophets who argued that Jerusalem would be saved from the Assyrian siege, just as David had been saved by Yahweh. And yet Isaiah refers to them to score the opposite point! Yes, indeed, Yahweh *will* act again: he *will* rise up and be wroth as he has done in the past; but this time the Holy Warrior will direct

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[35] Cf. Vriezen, "Essentials of the Theology of Isaiah."

his wrath toward his own people. He will indeed execute another "mighty act" as in the tradition, but this time it will seem strange and alien. Thus, Isa 28:21 seems to be another biblical record of but one side of an ancient debate: in this case, that of Isaiah.

If the self-same authoritative "text" (the tradition in 2 Sam 5) can be appealed to with such opposing conclusions, the difference lies not in theological tradition (Mosaic or Davidic) but in the hermeneutics applied to that tradition. They both referred to the same "gospel" text (of God's past activity) but derived from it totally different messages.

Isaiah 29:1–8 seems to demonstrate the same point. Again, the same historical context or situation is addressed with both parties apparently appealing to the same Davidic tradition. David did indeed encamp in Jerusalem; it is Ariel, the city of the Lion of God. But Ariel is also God's altar where sacrifices are made to him, and Jerusalem will burn like an altar. God will encamp against it and besiege it through the agency of the invader; and the multitude of the foes doing so will be as numerous as the small dust particles Jerusalem experiences in its seasonal *ḥamsin* when heat currents are inverted, and the air is polluted so thickly that the city is enveloped in them. It will be like the nightmare of a hungry, thirsty man who awakens to find no relief from his misery. (The metaphor is comparable to that of the Assyrian flood reaching Judah's neck in Isa 8:8.)

Isaiah agrees again that Yahweh is a Holy Warrior, but this time he will be at the head of the enemy forces (cf. Isa 1:24). Again, each appeals to the same tradition in the same context, but with radically different hermeneutics. And the difference is indicated in Isa 29:15–16. Those who hide deep their counsel and their deeds are those who turn things upside down, that is, those who regard the potter as the clay, those who deny God as creator.

And therein lies the clue to the hermeneutics of those who from 750–586 BCE could apply the ancient traditions of either the Davidic story or the so-called Mosaic Torah story to their contexts or situations and prophesy salvation in and through judgment.[36] To stress the tradition of Yahweh as redeemer, provider, and sustainer, and deny Yahweh as creator would be, in that historical context, to engage in "false prophecy." The so-called true prophets never *denied* that God was the God of Israel who had elected Israel and redeemed them from slavery in Egypt, guided them in the desert, and given them a home, *and/or* had chosen David and established his throne and city. They referred to those authoritative traditions sufficiently and often enough to be convincing. But in addition to affirming God as redeemer and sustainer, the true prophets stressed that God was also creator of all peoples of all the earth. This would have made a radical difference in hermeneutics.

Amos seems to have been quite clear on this point, but in a different way. "'Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O people of Israel? says the Lord. Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?'" (Amos 9:7). If this sequence of rhetorical ques-

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[36] Cf. Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, 46n23.

tions is viewed in the context of a colleague continually stressing the tradition or
"text," of the Exodus as authority for a message of assurance that the God who
brought Israel out of Egypt would not abandon it but would sustain it – it takes
on considerable significance. The God who thus redeems and creates Israel also
sustains; he is not a whimsical deity who cannot be trusted. His grace would
be constant and would indeed function even in the midst of Israel's sinfulness.
Amos's reply would indicate that he agreed with the "text." Indeed, Yahweh
did bring Israel out of Egypt. But did Israel think it was the only folk who ever
had a migration? By no means. If the Philistines and Syrians migrated, as indeed
those arch-enemies of Israel had done (in their own traditions), then Yahweh as
creator of all peoples had been their guide (*mōlîk*) as well. But, it was protested,
he made a covenant only with us! Yes, indeed, Amos said, but being the creator
of all, as well as your redeemer, he is free: to "punish you for all your iniquities"
(Amos 3:2). Just as being creator of all he was free to judge Israel's neighbors
(Amos 1:3–2:3), so he is free as well to judge Israel itself!

The assurance, "disgrace will not overtake us" (Mic 2:6), can indeed be drawn
from the Torah story when the hermeneutics of divine grace is applied with-
out reference to divine freedom. "Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No evil
shall come upon us" (Mic 3:11; 4:9) is excellent theology in certain situations
(Rom 8:31).[37] Deutero-Isaiah could magnificently combine belief in God the
creator with belief in God the redeemer[38] when the challenge indicated was Isra-
el's need to maintain its identity, sustain a remnant, and resist assimilation to
Babylonian and/or Persian cult and culture. Historical moment, or context, as
stressed above, is a crucial factor in determining which hermeneutic to apply.

But that alone would be insufficient, for the factor of hermeneutic is equally
crucial. *Whenever the freedom of God as creator is forgotten or denied in adapt-
ing traditional "text" to a given context, there is the threat of falsehood.* In Deu-
tero-Isaiah's situation, the conjoining of emphasis on God as creator of all the
earth with emphasis on God as Israel's particular redeemer in the exodus issued
in a powerful *message of retention of identity in the regathering of the people*. He
who had used Nebuchadnezzar as instrument of judgment could use Cyrus as
instrument of blessing: his was the world and all that was in it.

In Jeremiah's situation, the conjoining of emphasis on God as creator of all
the earth with emphasis on God as Israel's particular redeemer in the exodus
had issued, on the contrary, in a powerful *message of retention of identity in the
scattering of the people*.

If the message of Hananiah as prophet can be viewed also as applying author-
itative tradition to the context that he and Jeremiah both faced, the debate takes
on a dimension beyond what has so far been suggested in studies on it. If he used
the traditions of "form" in delivering his message, as has often been noted, might
he not also have used the traditions of "text"? Those who transmitted the record
of the debate to the literary form we inherit in Jer 28 do not suggest reference to

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[37] van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute" and "Micah IV 1–5" does not seem to recognize this.
[38] Anderson, "Exodus Typology."

authoritative "text" tradition. But with the constitutive hermeneutic of God as redeemer and sustainer with emphasis on his grace, he might well have preached in the following manner: "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel [who brought Israel up out of Egypt, guided it in the wilderness, and brought it into this land]: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two years I will bring back to this place all the …" (Jer 28:2–3 with insertion). He might have said, in the debate, "Jeremiah, it is a question of having faith in God that he is powerful enough to keep his promises. He is not whimsical. He who brought us out of Egypt and into this land is strong enough to keep us here. It is a matter of firm belief in his providence and sustaining power." And Jeremiah, upon returning with the iron yoke, might have said, "Hananiah, he who brought us out of Egypt and into this land is strong enough *and free enough* to take us out of the land. It is a matter of belief in God not only as redeemer and sustainer, but also as creator of all." As Jeremiah says in 28:14 in reference to Nebuchadnezzar, "I have given to him even the beasts of the field." This is a clear reference to the same God the creator that Jeremiah portrays in 27:5–7:

It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me. Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and I have given him also the beasts of the field to serve him. All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson, until the time of his own land comes; then many nations and great kings shall make him their slave.

There is considerable debate about whether Jeremiah said all that or others later attributed it to him. But as Weippert has indicated with regard to the so-called "C" or Deuteronomistic source in Jeremiah, much of it is in congruity with what the prophet says elsewhere.[39] And certainly Jeremiah frequently refers to the freedom of God the creator. "Am I a God at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can a person hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? [This is a direct reflection of Isa 29:15–16.] Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord" (Jer 23:23–24).

<div align="center">VI</div>

What seems quite clear is that the so-called false prophet did not refer, in times of threat, to God as God also of the enemy. Such an affirmation of God the creator of all peoples is a part of the canonical monotheizing process.[40] It is at one with those struggles elsewhere in the Bible to monotheize in the face of evil, to affirm the oneness or (ontological and ethical) integrity of God in the face of an almost irresistible temptation to polytheize or particularize, and attribute evil to some other god or gods. Because he wanted his people to fall and stumble,

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[39] Weippert, *Die Prosareden des Jeremiabuches*; cf. Holladay, "Fresh Look."
[40] See Sanders, *Identité de la Bible*, 153–67; Sanders, "Adaptable for Life"; Sanders, "Jeremiah and the Future"; Sanders, "Hermeneutics"; [Sanders, *Monotheizing Process.*]

or be tested, as a part, supposedly, of a much larger plan,[41] from the hardening of the heart of Pharaoh all the way to attributing to God the message of false prophets (1 Kgs 22; Deut 13:1–5), all was a part of a monotheizing process to which, apparently, the so-called false prophets did not, like the true prophets, consciously contribute.

Within and through the pluralism in the Bible, a basic feature of the canon is its tendency to monotheize. It may be doubted if any large literary unit of the Bible, even Deutero-Isaiah, is thoroughly monotheistic. But there seems to be no literary unit of any size that contradicts the observation that the fundamental canonical thrust of the Bible is its struggle to monotheize.[42] Can it be affirmed that wherever the struggle to monotheize failed, "false prophecy" threatened?

Study of the subject has indicated that no single criterion of distinction between true and false prophecy can be emphasized, whether judgment (Jer 28:8), "fulfillment" (Jer 28:9; Deut 18:22; cf. Deut 12:2), or any other criterion or combination of such. But surely to polytheize (Deut 13:2; 18:20) in any form whatever (including particularizing God without affirming his ontological *and* ethical integrity) is in canonical terms falsehood. Conversely, to adapt any "text" or tradition to any "context" without employing the fundamental hermeneutic of monotheizing within the dynamics of that situation is in canonical terms falsehood.

Under that fundamental hermeneutic rubric, a given context or situation may indicate adapting the "text" in a constitutive mode – to organize and lead a program of obedience by seeking supportive guidance in the texts, and in the manner of Deutero-Isaiah, or in a prophetic mode – to challenge an established program of obedience by seeking corrective guidance in the texts, in the manner of Jeremiah. The impulse to monotheize must affirm the possibility that the creator was fashioning a new thing, a new heart, a new spirit in his people, indeed was transforming his people, by wounding and healing, into a new Israel.

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[41] Crenshaw here is especially perceptive; see his *Prophetic Conflict*, 77–90.

[42] Smith, *Palestinian Parties and Politics*, confirms this observation by a quite different method of approach to the canonization of the OT.

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11

The Hermeneutics of Translation

(1998)

Translation of a text from one language to another is the most challenging task a scholar faces. It is one thing by exegesis to come to a reasonable understanding of a text stemming from another culture, it is quite another to create a translation that corresponds responsibly to the meaning of the *Vorlage* – the text to be translated – in terms of its structure, morphology, intertextuality, and content. And even when one has done reasonably well in those essential respects, it is yet another matter to attempt to convey in the receptor language the depths of multivalency that inhere in a text.

It is commonplace to note that there are two basic kinds of translation: formal equivalence and dynamic (or functional) equivalence.[1]

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible may well be the best extant example in English of a completely formal equivalence translation. It reflects the structure of the Hebrew and NT Greek texts of the Bible as well as can be done and still convey meaning in English. It attempts to translate crucial words with the same English words each time they occur, insofar as context and meaning allow; it puts words necessary for clear meaning in English in italics if there is no strictly corresponding word in the Hebrew or Greek. It reflects the structure of a verse or sentence or paragraph as well as possible; and it translates the *Vorlagen* it had with a minimum of emendation. The fact that the KJV is in an early English sometimes difficult to understand four hundred years later, and was based on late manuscripts and printed texts of the Bible, does not detract from its value as a formal-equivalence translation of the biblical text available to it at the time. It is still useful to the student of the Bible who, though unable to handle the Hebrew and Greek, is nonetheless interested in biblical intertextuality and how later passages often build on earlier ones; the KJV sometimes manages to convey the fact that the Bible is midrashically full of itself.

The Good News Bible, and its successor, the Contemporary English Version, are good examples of functional-equivalence translations, of the sort sponsored by the American and United Bible Societies under the influence of the linguis-

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[1] Sterk, "Translation as Re-creation," argues (1) that the only really true constraint in a text is located at the juncture of literary form and meaning, (2) that the real choices are between translation as re-creation and translation as adaptation, and (3) that literal and functional equivalence translations are both adaptive, over against translation as re-creation. Like any new hypothesis, Sterk's will have to be viewed as doubtful until fully debated.

tic genius of Eugene Nida. They, especially the Contemporary English Version, already largely follow in practice what is here proposed in theory. The focus of functional equivalence is to score the essential point or points of a passage in the receptor language without necessarily reflecting the original with its textual nuances. Both types of translation are useful for different kinds of readers, and for different purposes.

Even so, both types share characteristics of what a translation basically is. Writing about early Jewish and Christian translations, Elias Bickerman wisely remarked, "Every translation was an adaptation of the original to the needs of its new readers."[2] Bickerman was writing principally about translations in the pre-Christian period of Hebrew and Aramaic (largely biblical) texts into Greek. The Greek translations in the so-called Septuagint varied considerably in terms of formal and dynamic equivalence. The Torah or Pentateuch is basically quite stable in the Septuagint and has characteristics of formal-equivalence translation. By contrast, as Isaac Seeligman has convincingly shown, the Greek translation of Isaiah is often midrashic and sometimes targumic, or quite free, with as much regard for the needs of Jewish readers of Greek of the time as for its Hebrew *Vorlage*.[3] The same is true of the available Greek translations of other biblical books, such as other prophetic books and most of the Writings. Recent work in text criticism takes into account the widely differing characteristics of the Greek translations, and of other ancient Versions, of the various books of the First Testament.[4]

Tradents and Texts

There is an overall observation one can make, in fact, about all tradents, ancient and modern, of biblical texts. A tradent was/is one who brings the past into the present, specifically a biblical text. All scribes, translators, commentators, preachers, and teachers of the biblical text were/are tradents. Another word sometimes used instead of tradent is traditionist, that is, one who engages in his or her time in the traditioning process of a community text, such as the Bible. A traditionist is not a traditionalist; the two should not be confused. Whereas a traditionalist wants to make the present look like the past, a traditionist, or tradent, tries to bring the past into the present in an understandable way.

In doing so, the tradent of necessity has two responsibilities. The one responsibility is to the past, or the biblical text, and the other is to the present, or the community being served. Put another way, a tradent, specifically a translator, has to pay as much attention to the needs of his or her community to understand the text in their terms, as to the needs of the biblical text inherited from the community's past. It is integral to the task of traditioning to know the requirements for

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[2] Bickerman, *Studies*, 1:196.
[3] Seeligman, *Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 42–44, 95–120.
[4] Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 3:cxvii–ccxxvii; Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 121–54.

understanding by one's community in order to bring the past into the present. One can range ancient Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible, done between the third century BCE to the second CE, on a scale from the freely dynamic to the rigidly formal, demonstrating a range of understanding of the two responsibilities.

It is a commonplace in text criticism since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and recent New Testament papyri to note that the earliest texts and versions of the Bible, both Testaments, were more fluid and adapted to the needs of ancient communities than later texts and versions. Consciously "accurate" copying and transmission did not become a concern in either early Jewish or early Christian communities until a certain point in their histories, the first century of the common era for the First Testament and the fourth century for the Second.[5] This suggests that early tradents were keen on making sure their communities understood the text they were traditioning. The focus was on understanding, and that of necessity meant shaping and adapting the translation in such a way that their people were adequately served in terms of their own cultural gifts and givens. It also suggests, of course, that it was the understanding of the particular tradent and his or her community that shaped the effort. This may be contrasted with Greek translations done in the early second century of the common era: Aquila, Theodotion, and to a large extent Symmachus, which showed an understanding of the biblical text that was quite different from the way it had earlier been understood.[6]

Hermeneutics

Such an observation focuses attention on the importance of the hermeneutics of translation. The word "hermeneutic" comes from the Greek word meaning "understanding." A translator's understanding of a text depends on what one thinks the text essentially is. One enters a hermeneutic circle concerning the text being engaged by bringing to it one's prior understanding of the nature of the text. But one can be secure in that understanding only through sufficient, initial acquaintance with the text and the ability to approach it with concepts and methods appropriate to it. One's prior understanding of the nature of a text indicates the expectations one has when reading it. In the case of biblical texts, one usually brings to the text the prior understanding of it espoused and taught by the faith community to which one belongs. Different faith communities bring different understandings to the biblical text as to what they think the text is, and then meanings of passages crucial to their self-understanding are those assigned to them by the traditions of that community. This is the principal reason there are so many different "denominational" understandings of the Bible and so many different interpretations of crucial passages in it.

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[5] Sanders, "Text and Canon: Old Testament and New," and Sanders, "Stability and Fluidity." See Scanlin, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 15–38.

[6] Sanders, "Text and Canon: Concepts and Method," and Sanders, "From Sacred Story."

The uncritical mind often thinks of the Bible as a "rule book" that governs or should govern the beliefs and conduct of the adherents of that community. Or the Bible may be thought of as "the Word of God" that one consults, as one might an oracle, to discern the will of God. At ancient Qumran, Scripture was viewed as essentially "prophetic" in nature. For them, Scripture, indeed all Scripture, addressed the end of history as they knew it, and since the faithful at Qumran believed that they lived in the end-time, it was a matter of conviction that Scripture was a kind of encoded message intended directly for their situation.[7] The Greek-speaking Jews for whom Aquila and Theodotion translated apparently viewed Scripture as yet a different kind of code based on verbal and even literal inspiration of Scripture.

By contrast, most Western-cultural scholarship understands the Bible as a product of history, which can be understood only in its "original" historical settings. In fact, it has been suggested that guilds of modern Western scholars constitute "modern" believing communities, since their adherents seem to subscribe to a kind of faith that Baruch Spinoza was right to claim (in 1670) that the truth of the Bible would be found in the history of its formation and in the intentionality of its authors.[8] Most "modern" translations of the Bible reflect the Western, scholarly hermeneutic that the truth of each book or passage of the Bible is to be found in efforts to reconstruct the history of formation of the biblical text as well as in the ancient authors' intentions within their historical contexts.

Text Criticism

The history of the work of text criticism since Martin Luther is interesting in this regard. Beginning in 1523 when Luther started his work of translating the First Testament, he gathered what manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible were available to him in and around Erfurt, along with the printed First Rabbinic Bible, and then the Second Rabbinic Bible in 1525, and realized that he would have to work out a hermeneutic of text criticism whereby he could make decisions as to the best readings among the apparent variants he found in those manuscripts. His hermeneutic called for selecting the reading, and even a change in Hebrew vowel pointing if necessary, that led most clearly to the gospel of Jesus Christ (his understanding, of course, of Paul's understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ). Eventually, by the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, the hermeneutic of text criticism followed by most German and French scholars was instead to follow Spinoza's call and to choose the reading that reflected scholarly understandings of the time of the history of the formation of the text, and hence authorial intentionality.[9]

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[7] See Silberman, "Unriddling the Riddle."
[8] Sanders, "Bible as Canon." [See also Sanders, "The Hermeneutics of Establishing the Text" in this volume.]
[9] See Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Text Criticism."

The interface between the hermeneutics of text criticism and the hermeneutics of translation in Western scholarship has been fairly well set since the eighteenth century with the work of Johann David Michaelis. It has been assumed that translations should reflect the same intention as the text-critical principles that determined the text to be translated. And yet, the assumption is not without problems. It is fully recognized that the art of First Testament text criticism, as well honed and developed as it has become, especially since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, can only establish a text probably composed at considerable remove from the events that it reflects. In the case of biblical texts that purport to recount "history" there is often still a gap between what scholarship understands to be the time of the author(s) and editors of a text and the events that the text relates. How to span the gap between record and event is a constant problem for the student interested in the historical value of biblical texts.

The problem was well illustrated by two publishing events in the middle of the twentieth century, Martin Noth's *The History of Israel* (first German edition, 1954) and John Bright's *A History of Israel* (first English edition, 1959). The first discounted the Pentateuch as a source for Israel's history prior to entry into the land, while the latter insisted that the Pentateuch has solid, though admittedly limited, value in reconstructing the periods of the patriarchs and of the exodus and wanderings events.[10] It was a difference in hermeneutics or understanding of the nature of the Pentateuchal text. Bright, a worthy student of William F. Albright, reflected his teacher's view that through consideration of the data of archaeology and the findings of philology the scholar can reconstruct a biblical text by emendation and conjecture that reflects an earlier stage in the formation of the text, thus reducing the gap between record and event. That view, or hermeneutic, has also affected its adherents' hermeneutics of text criticism.[11] And that hermeneutic clearly emphasizes text-critical and translational decisions that stress historical value of the text, and help span the gap between record and event by re-dating the sources to an earlier period than scholarship had generally done.

The Gospels and Acts

The pertinence of the hermeneutics of text criticism and the hermeneutics of translation of biblical texts to the task of removing anti-Judaism from Christianity lies principally in the texts of the Gospels and Acts. As Norman Beck has

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[10] The problem was well defined and discussed in John Bright's *Early History in Recent History Writing*.

[11] One can see the influence in Tov, *Textual Criticism*; see the writer's views of Tov's hermeneutics in Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Text Criticism." One can also see the influence in the NRSV over against the old RSV. About a half of the scholars working on the OT part of the NRSV shared the Albright/Cross hermeneutic of text criticism and translation. Other views of text criticism, by contrast, are evident in the work of both the Hebrew University Bible Project (see the various issues of the annual *Textus*, as well as Goshen-Gottstein, *Book of Isaiah*) and of the United Bible Societies' Hebrew Old Testament Text Project (Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*).

shown, new religious groups go through an identity crisis as they break away from a parent group.[12] Beck categorizes the anti-Jewish polemic of the Second Testament into three kinds: christological, supersessionist, and defamatory. These are comparable to the kinds of polemic in which Protestantism has engaged in its break with Catholicism. Just as the latter polemic has not been totally resolved, despite the modern ecumenical movement, so the polemic Christians have directed at Jews beginning in the Second Testament has not been resolved.

That polemic came to a dramatic head when the text of the Passion Play at Oberammergau came to the attention of the rest of the world after the Second World War and the Holocaust of the Jews by Hitler. Here was a startling example of how a pious vow made in 1633, and its faithful fulfillment by an Austrian village every decade since that time, indeed a model of dedication and commitment for all Christendom, came to be viewed as the essence of Christian anti-Judaism. The exposure of the text of the play to inter-faith dialogue showed a dark side that could not be seen when viewed only by faithful Christians, no matter how intelligent they thought they were.[13] Careful study of the text of the Oberammergau Play shows that its anti-Judaism stems directly from the text of the four canonical Gospels, from which it is taken. If Beck is right in his thesis, Christianity is now, after twenty centuries, in a position to move to a more mature expression in this regard. Beck identifies seven interrelated factors in Christian teaching of contempt for Jews. His hope is that Christians in the twenty-first century will be able to name the factors, confess the sin of them, and move to Christian maturity. One hopes he is right.

Basic, however, to Christian anti-Judaism is the text of the Second Christian Testament, and especially the texts of the Gospels and of the Acts of the Apostles, the most sacred literature of all Christendom. *The thesis of the present paper is that since Second Testament scholarship in the past century has convincingly made a distinction between the date of the composition of the text of the Gospels and Acts, and the historical events they purport to recount, serious attention should now be paid to the gap between the records and the events they relate.* Other than brave, unsubstantiated attempts to try to date this or that Gospel to an earlier first-century date, scholarship is in near universal agreement that the composition of the Gospels and Acts dates from the last third, or even last quarter, of the first century of the common era when most Christian synagogues were becoming independent of any other form of Judaism. But because the text purports to have been written by eyewitnesses of the events themselves, the impression is left that the situation of the last part of the century was actually that of the first part. Nothing could be further from the truth, and it is time to correct the impression, because it is that pervasive impression that lies at the root of Christian anti-Semitism.[14]

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[12] Beck, *Mature Christianity*.

[13] See Sanders, "Identity, Apocalyptic, and Dialogue"; and Sanders, "Intertextuality and Dialogue."

[14] It is interesting that a similar purpose of correcting long-standing impressions is advanced as the basis for "going public" by the Jesus Seminar. The Seminar, which represents a minority

The Dead Sea Scrolls

One of the results of work on the Dead Sea Scrolls during the past almost half century is considerable revision of the history of early Judaism, the term used to refer to the Judaism that arose out of the ashes of the old kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the sixth century BCE and lasted until the fall of the second temple in 70 CE.[15] Judaism in that period was highly pluralistic, having a number of different shapes and forms, leaving a variety of Jewish literature either preserved by the early churches (such as the so-called Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus, and the Second Testament) or recovered through modern archaeology (such as the Dead Sea Scrolls). What rabbinic Judaism preserved after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE was of a certain type of Judaism only.[16]

What has become quite clear is that all early Christians were Jews, whether by birth or by conversion. If non-Jews joined "the Way," they joined a Jewish sect, that is, they became Jews even though of a particular sort. But all forms of Judaism at the time were of a particular sort, no matter the later history of rabbinic Judaism. Jesus and his followers were all Jews.[17] We were all Jews, so to speak. It was not until the last third or quarter of the century that Christian Jewish synagogues began to break away from any Jewish identity at all.[18] The expression "Christian Jews" should not be confused with the expression "Jewish Christians." The latter term in NT studies designates those in early Christianity who insisted on keeping halakah all the while preaching Jesus as Messiah (e. g., Acts 15:1–35). The term "Christian Jews" simply designates all early, first century Christians, whether born Jewish or converted to this particular sect of Judaism in the early first century who believed in "the Way." The crucial point is that the break with Judaism did not take place early in the century and did not take place all at once. Some Christian synagogues in the various towns, cities, and villages of the Mediterranean area (including Palestine), would have remained within Judaism longer than others. We were, indeed, all Jews – a point underscored by the churches' insistence in the first century on adding the Gospels and Epistles onto Jewish Scripture and, then in the second century, insisting on keeping the "Old Testament" in the Christian canon.

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of NT scholarship, mostly in this country, claims that it has recovered the ipsissima verba of Jesus, but it turns out that the Jesus they have recovered is hardly Jewish at all; further unintentionally enhancing the non-Jewish character of the biblical Jesus. A minority of scholars have thus pictured Jesus as a Hellenistic cynic or hero having little or nothing to do with the various forms of Judaism of the first century. See Hays, "Corrected Jesus," a critical review of Funk, ed., *The Five Gospels*.

[15] Within that time frame one may also refer to middle Judaism, which extended from 300 BCE to about 200 CE. So Boccaccini, "Middle Judaism."

[16] See, e. g., Shanks, *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism*.

[17] See, e. g., Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*; and Charlesworth, *Jesus' Jewishness*.

[18] See the excellent study by Saldarini, "Delegitimation of Leaders," esp. 664–67nn19–22.

The Polemics of Separation

It was in the period of the breaking away of individual Christian congregations (*ecclēsiai*) from any form of Judaism that the texts of the Gospels and Acts were composed. It was a period of hurt and rejection experienced by most Christians. The Johanan ben Zakkai/Aqiba, or rabbinic, type synagogues were becoming more and more concerned about the deepening Hellenistic influence in the Christian synagogues, and were disturbed about their apparent lack of loyalty to Moses and the Torah, as they interpreted and understood them. On the other hand, Christians were everywhere experiencing increased persecution by the Romans as well.

Christians often became scapegoats for whatever went wrong in this or that locale, or in the Empire generally – essentially taking over the role of scapegoat for the ills of society that Judaism in general had played for centuries, ever since the diaspora in the Persian Empire (see the book of Esther). Anti-Jewishness generally stemmed from the fact that Jews scattered in foreign lands could not follow the generally accepted tenets of hospitality in that they could not bow down to their hosts' idols or essential values – a primary requirement of accepting the hospitality of foreign hosts. From the standpoint of the hosts, it was a small matter; everyone they knew was and always had been polytheist, so, in their view, it would be but a minor little gesture on the part of grateful guests to bow down also to the values of the hosts (sort of "Love America or leave it"?) as well as to continue worshipping Yahweh! But the essential mark of Judaism is its exclusive monotheism. Brave Jews were convinced they could not do that and be true to their faith, and so experienced persecution from hosts who could not comprehend a thoroughgoing monotheism.[19]

The rabbinic synagogues of the late first century apparently feared that some Christian Jews were expressing their christologies in polytheistic terms; and indeed, idolatry and polytheism have been a Christian temptation since the earliest attempt to understand what God was doing in Christ, and how. The trinitarian formula affirming the triune God was precisely devised by thinking Christians, in the latter part of the period of the split of Christian synagogues from other forms of Judaism, to avoid polytheism and idolatry; they had apparently become convinced of the danger through dialogue with other Jews of the period.[20]

But, unfortunately, the language of polemic against the parent group, to use Norman Beck's terms, became the language of the composition of the Gospels and Acts; and while it is not absent in the rest of the NT, there is where the polemical language has damaged Christianity ever since.[21] This, joined with the necessity on the part of early Christians to gain some kind of acceptance or at

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[19] See Sanders, *Montheizing Process*.
[20] See Richardson, *Doctrine of the Trinity*; Sanders, "Identity, Apocalyptic and Dialogue"; Sanders, "Canon as Dialogue."
[21] Beck, *Mature Christianity*, 75–131, 313–20.

least tolerance for existence in the Roman Empire, by appealing to the widespread anti-Semitism caused by the Jewish rebellion against Rome in the war of 66–73, colored the language of the NT in such a way as to disguise the sectarian Jewish character of Christianity for centuries to come.[22]

If Bible translations of the Gospels and Acts are to continue uncritically to present this "historical" section of the Second Testament as accounts of what happened in the first half of the century, the late polemical language in which they were written must finally be addressed.

Inclusive Language

But there might be a clue in the hermeneutic of translation pursued by the NRSV translation committee for a basically formal-equivalence translation. Among other aspects, the NRSV hermeneutic of translation clearly demanded inclusive language in English insofar as gender of humans was concerned. It was argued that exclusivity based on gender for humans was an ancient cultural matter not of essence to the biblical message. It was decided not to attempt inclusive language on the question of divine gender, even though biblical scholarship generally affirms that God is both male and female, and neither.[23] The failure of the National Council of Churches (NCC) and the New Revised Standard Version. (NRSV) committee to address the question of gender for God has resulted in the confusion that has reigned in the churches stemming from the Re-Imagining Conference held in Minneapolis in February of 1994. It underscores the argument of those who pressed for inclusive language in the NRSV: biblical translations wield tremendous influence on the thinking of the faithful in the pew.

The full inclusion of women with men in the concept of humanity has brought about felicitous changes in the churches with regard to the vocation of women in ministry, despite the patriarchal nature of ancient Mediterranean cultures in which the biblical text is cast. Failure to address the issue of divine gender has left the faithful with the age-old confusion of symbol and reality. Such confusion is typical of the uncritical mind: because the biblical languages reflect Hebrew and Greek cultural traits of the biblical period, many faithful actually view God as male, confusing symbol (or metaphor) with reality. Since the Bible comes from a full millennium in antiquity, spanning five culture eras from the Bronze Age to the Greco-Roman, the Bible may be viewed as a textbook in how to re-image God for the limited human mind in ever-changing contexts. God is God and

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[22] Shemaryahu Talmon has effectively demonstrated how comparable in certain ways early Christianity, as an early Jewish sect, was to the Qumran community – even though it was very different from surviving rabbinic Judaism, in "Oral Tradition and Written Transmission"; see also Talmon, "Die Gemeinde des erneuerten Bundes."

[23] That effort was assigned to an Inclusive Language Lectionary Committee by a task force appointed by the National Council of Churches. The result has been the three-volume *Inclusive-Language Lectionary*. The present writer was a member of both the task force and the NRSV translation committee.

cannot adequately be imaged in any way. The task force, however, weighed the problems involved and decided that the NRSV might simply not be used at all in most churches if inclusive language for God were attempted at that point in time, and it may have been right.

It is nonetheless strange that the word "inclusive" had come to be used only with regard to gender, whether for humans or God. I have often thought that if we had put in the time and energy to make the NRSV inclusive on a basic, human level, of the sort we put in on the gender level, we might have been forced to face up to the problem of the polemical anti-Jewish language of the NT.

The Bible as a whole is very self-critical; there may be no other literature quite like it in that regard. The Bible includes and does not soften intra-group polemics in the Torah, Prophets, or Writings, and so also the Second Testament. In fact, one of the shames of Christian anti-Semitic use of the OT against Jews is in citations of the harsh criticisms against Israelite and Judahite leaders by the ancient Israelite and Judahite prophets. But in those instances, it is clear, in the Hebrew (and ancient Greek translation) texts used, that the prophetic criticisms had always originally been intramural. That trait in the Second Testament gets lost because of the fact that the Gospels and Acts were composed precisely in the period when the movement away from Jewish identity generally had begun for an increasing number of Christian congregations and individuals.

The tensions of the later period are well reflected in the anomalous sentence in Matt 13:54, "He came to his home town and began to teach them in their synagogue …" As an account of what went on in Jesus' ministry, the phrase "their synagogue" contradicts the first part of the sentence about Jesus' going to his own home town to teach. What it then falsely conveys to the current reader is that Jesus was speaking in an unfamiliar place. Translating the phrase "their synagogue" by "the synagogue there" would not only do no violence to the story, it would enhance the truth of it by conveying more clearly the point of the narrative (in all three Gospels) that Jesus' sermon at Nazareth was preached to his own family and friends among whom he had grown up (Mark 6:3–4; Matt 13:55–57; Luke 4:16). And it would not stretch the hermeneutic of human inclusiveness beyond that of the NRSV. "He came to his hometown and began to teach them in the synagogue there …" CEV has "their meeting place" and the NTP "their synagogue."

When the observation about the date of composition of the Gospels and Acts is then combined with the fact that the manuscripts we have of the NT come from an even later period, the polemical aspect or intramural critique within it looks and sounds almost totally extramural. It has gone even further in that some Christologies developing in the early churches were becoming more and more pre-existent in thrust, thus permitting one to view Jesus as not only non-Jewish but extraterrestrial. Docetism has always been an attractive heresy to the uncritical Christian mind.[24]

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[24] This is not to suggest that Christologies developed historically from adoptionist to pre-existent. On the contrary, pre-existent Christologies, based on earlier Hellenistic-Jewish

Since, on the contrary, it is clear that Jesus was a Jew, that all his early followers were Jewish by birth or by conversion to a sect of Judaism, and that the Dead Sea Scrolls have shown that Christian Judaism was as much a Jewish community as any other within the Jewish pluralism of the time, then the polemic within the NT against "the Jews" needs to be addressed for what it really was, instead of allowing the NT language of Christian hurt and rejection at the end of the first century to continue to color what was going on in the first half thereof. If Bible translations like the NRSV can legitimately "correct" exclusion on one level, caused by the patriarchal cultural trappings in the text, they ought to be able to "correct" exclusion on the broader level, so that the text reflects what was essentially an intramural Jewish situation of the early first-century period that the narratives purport to describe, and hence provide clear mirrors for Christians today to see their own humanity reflected in those around Jesus, instead of identifying with Jesus and dehumanizing his fellow Jews.

The Jews

The phrase *hoi Ioudaioi*, the Jews, occurs about 192 times in the NT: 79 in Acts, 71 in John, 24 in the Pauline corpus, 16 in the Synoptic Gospels (6 in Mark, and 5 each in Matthew and Luke, more than half of which occur in the expression "King of the Jews"), and twice in Revelation. It is interesting that it occurs more often in Acts than in other NT books, but only five times in the Gospel of Luke. Luke, or his Gospel sources, would have needed to use the term less often there than in Luke's story of the earliest Christian movement when many non-Jews joined it, as reported in Acts.[25] This highlights the frequency of its use in the Gospel of John. By far the most numerous occurrences are in Acts and John, and there precisely is where most of the problematic uses of the term occur.

A comparison of three current translations, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the Contemporary English Version (CEV), and the New Testament and Psalms (NTP) is revealing.[26] The NRSV, which frequently abandoned the Hebrew and Greek texts of the two Testaments in order to sponsor inclusive translations of words and phrases dealing with human gender, is quite literal in translating *hoi Ioudaioi* in the passages compared for this study, and even followed the KJV in adding the word "the Jews" in English where it does not occur in Greek manuscripts (Acts 23:30).

In eleven passages in John 7, 8, and 11, and in eight passages in Acts 18 and 23, the CEV is the most consistent in using paraphrases instead of translating

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ideas of the pre-existence of Wisdom, were apparently an option from earliest days of the movement. See Sanders, "Dissenting Deities." The pre-existent (essentially divine, not human or Jewish) nature of Christ eventually became the dominant Christology.

[25] Might the book of Acts have been composed later than the Gospel of Luke, more deeply into the period of the polemics of separation? The differences in Scripture citations in the Gospel and Acts might also indicate a later date for Acts.

[26] See Burke, "Translating 'The Jews'."

hoi Ioudaioi literally. The paraphrases are "the leaders," "the Jewish leaders," "the people," and "many people" – all reflecting an intramural Jewish setting for understanding the passages. (In one passage [John 7:13] the CEV adds the modifier "their" where the Greek does not have the personal pronoun, and it is not clear why it does.)

The NTP is inconsistent in its effort to modify translations of *hoi Ioudaioi* in the same passages in John and Acts as noted above. It used the NRSV as base translation on which to make changes in masculine references to God to be more gender inclusive. In John 7:11, 13, 15 the NTP translates *hoi Ioudaioi* by "the religious authorities," and in John 8:48 and 52 by "the religious leaders" or "the leaders"; but in most of the passages the NTP simply follows the NRSV, in all cases of which the term is translated literally.

In John 11:54, however, the NTP reverts to intramural language in translating *hoi Ioudaioi*. In fact, a comparison of the three translations of John 11:54 is very interesting:

"Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews." (NRSV)
"Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among his own people." (NTP)
"Because of this plot against him, Jesus stopped going around in public." (CEV).

The NTP obviously used the NRSV as base translation, but in the place of NRSV's "the Jews," it offers "his own people." Given the inconsistency of the NTP in following the NRSV in the other passages checked, this effort, though felicitous, appears almost like an afterthought on the part of the NTP translator.

Acts 28:25 is an interesting case. The majority of manuscripts read *pros tous pateras hymōn*, and so the NRSV, followed by the NTP, translates the phrase "to your ancestors." One sixth-century uncial manuscript and numerous eleventh- to fourteenth-century Byzantine manuscripts read *hēmōn* for the personal pronoun, so that the KJV translated it "to our fathers" and the CEV "to our ancestors." The setting is Paul's address to Jewish leaders in Rome.

"Scribes and Pharisees"

The expression "scribes and Pharisees" has become a pejorative term because of the Gospels and has been used for most of two millennia in Christian propaganda or apologetics against so-called "Jewish legalism." In the six passages checked, the NRSV, followed faithfully by the NTP, translates the expression literally. The CEV also translates Pharisees literally wherever it occurs, but nuances "scribes" with "teachers of the law" in Acts 23:9 and John 8:3. It would be our contention that to correct this centuries-old distancing of Jewish religious leaders from Christian readers, and to make them available for current readers to see in them our own similar tendencies toward legalism (especially in church judicatories), we might translate "scribes" as "Scripture scholars" and "Pharisees" as "religious experts," context permitting.

Going Public

These are but a few examples of the hermeneutic of translation here being advanced for basically formal-equivalence translations, such as the NRSV purports to be. The proposal needs cautious consideration and debate. There are difficulties, of course, especially for those of us who focus on intra-biblical midrash and intertextuality throughout the biblical text.

A pluriform Bible, for which we have frequently argued otherwise on text-critical grounds, would offer both the formal-equivalence translation and the dynamic-equivalence one in parallel columns for immediate comparison.[27] Normally a formal-equivalence translation is preferable for midrashic and intertextual study of the Bible, while dynamic-equivalence translations are valuable for less advanced students and those who do not know the history of the formation of the biblical text.

The real issue is whether biblical scholarship is prepared to "go public" with the truth about the crucial gap between record and event in the case of these canonical narratives of Christian origins. If we think we have arrived at that point, then we should offer historically dynamic translations such as those here suggested, or we should print in banner headlines across the top of the usual formal-equivalence translations of the Gospels and Acts that they were written decades after the everts recorded and in a quite different situation with regard to Christianity's Jewish origins. The present falsehood, with all the pain and damage it has for centuries caused both Christians and Jews, cannot in good conscience be permitted to continue.

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27. Sanders, "Hebrew Bible *and* Old Testament"; Sanders, "Stability and Fluidity"; and Sanders, "Integrity of Biblical Pluralism."

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12

Intertextuality and Canon[1]

(1999)

The term "intertextuality" is currently used in three basic but distinct senses: the interrelation of blocks of text (large or small) in close proximity; the function of older literature cited or in some way alluded to in later literature; and the interrelation of text and reader. The reader is in essence a human text with his or her own hermeneutics and psychological texture, engaging a literary text. There are other ways in which the term is used, but these seem to be the most common uses.[2]

My own interest in intertextuality, which dates from well before the term came into common usage, has been largely in its second sense, the function of older literature in a newer writing where the older is called upon, usually to authenticate or illumine a point the writer or speaker wants to make. The modes whereby this happens in early Jewish and Christian literature are basically seven in number:

(1) quotation with formula

(2) quotation without formula

(3) weaving of familiar phrases into a new composition

(4) paraphrasing or facilitating the meaning of the older in the new, usually for clarification in the terms of the later language

(5) allusion, usually to authoritative events and persons of the community's past

(6) echoes of key terms and ideas of an older writing in the new

(7) reflection of the literary structure of the older in the structure of the new.[3]

These modes illustrate the adaptability of literature that got onto a tenure track toward canon by repetition/recitation in ever-changing situations and conditions in the community's ongoing life.[4]

The third way in which the term is used is a part of the human experience, which in postmodern terms is a conscious admission of human limitations, subjectivity, and indeterminacy.[5]

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[1] It is a distinct pleasure to dedicate the following *étude* to my colleague of twelve years, George M. Landes. I often think it was those twelve years with George on the Union Seminary faculty that taught me what real collegiality is about.

[2] See Boyarin, *Intertextuality*, 12, 135n2.

[3] See Sanders, "Dead Sea Scrolls and Biblical Studies."

[4] See Sanders, "Adaptable for Life," and the seven characteristics of canon noted in Sanders, "Canonical Criticism."

[5] See Sanders, "Scripture as Canon."

It is the first sense noted above that is usually at play when the focus is on the so-called final forms of canons.[6] The word "canon" itself connotes two quite different senses of the term: *norma normans*, where focus is on the function of a community's authoritative or canonical literature (in the seven modes listed above), the sense operative in most of my own work;[7] and *norma normata*, where focus is on the structure of canons effected by the phenomenon of canonical "closure."

Comparison of canons of Jewish Scripture can be very informative. When the early churches had the temerity to add to Jewish Scripture their own growing corpus of sectarian writings, they appended them to a Jewish corpus called Torah, Prophets (Luke 24:27), "and other writings" (prologue to Sirach), and they did so before the phenomenon of closure came about. For decades it was thought that closure occurred at a "council" of rabbis that met at the Palestinian coastal town of Yavneh or Jamnia after the fall of the Second Jewish Commonwealth and the expulsion of Jews from the largely destroyed city of Jerusalem. Jack P. Lewis's study of the references in rabbinic literature to Jamnia proved clearly, however, that while there was indeed a gathering of surviving Pharisees at Yavneh after 70 of the common era, it was not a canonizing council in any sense that Christians should, or Jews would, attribute to it. Many things about Judaism, including Torah and Scripture, were discussed at Yavneh, but few decisions were made of an authoritative nature, and none that could be called comparable to such ecclesial decisions familiar in later church councils. Judaism was not and is not structured in such a hierarchical way.[8]

Such councils would only have been able to ratify what was happening in the communities among the people. It is now commonplace to suggest that the Jewish canon was not "closed" until the middle of the second century, after the Bar Kokhba revolt, with firm evidence coming even later.[9] And it is not certain at what date the Jewish canon was generally viewed as tripartite, perhaps not until the talmudic period.[10] The quadripartite Christian canons, seen already in some so-called LXX codices, clearly contradict the Jewish tripartite sequence; whether the Christian sequence of First Testament books in the LXX was done in blatant contradiction of the emerging Jewish sequence, or vice versa, has not been proved. The likelihood is that by the time codices came into common use, displacing scrolls, thereby highlighting the issue of the order of books, the two forms of Judaism, rabbinic and Christian, had gone their separate ways and arranged their Bibles to suit their quite distinct needs and views of the Abraham/Sarah religion.

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[6] Most of Brevard Childs's work is focused on the final form of the canon of the Reformation. See Childs, *OT Theology*.

[7] Since Sanders, "Habakkuk in Qumran." See Sanders, "Canon," and Sanders, "Scripture as Canon." Gerald Sheppard calls canon as *norma normans* "canon 1" and *norma normata* "canon 2." Sheppard, "Canon."

[8] Lewis, "What Do We Mean by Jabneh?"

[9] See McDonald, *Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*, 92–94; Beckwith, *OT Canon*, 274–337; and Sanders, Review of *The OT Canon*. And see now David Carr's in-depth study of "the diversity of scriptural structures in Second Temple Judaism." Carr, "Canonization."

[10] Pettit, "Shene ʾemar: The Place of Scripture Citation."

The Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls have impacted biblical studies in a number of ways, and one of those has been a dramatic revision in understanding the history of early Judaism (from the fall of the first temple to the Babylonians to the fall of the second to Rome). The consensus before the impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls was that formulated by George Foot Moore of Harvard, namely, that Judaism in that period was made up of two major types: normative Judaism, expressed in the Pharisaic/rabbinic form of Judaism, on the one hand, and heterodox Judaism (expressed in the so-called apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, Philo etc.) on the other. In 1973, Prof. Michael Stone of Hebrew University published an article in *Scientific American* that was almost immediately accepted in the field as "right"; he then followed the article with a book.[11] It has now become commonplace to speak of Judaisms in the early Jewish period. Early Judaism was pluralistic with the strength and influence of the Pharisees in the pre-destruction period debated still.[12] The Torah and Prophets were set and stabilized probably by the time of Ezra and Nehemiah in the middle of the fifth century BCE, at which time it was believed by some Jews (by no means all), particularly those who became known as Pharisees, that prophecy, or revelation had ceased.

Jewish literature that was later added to the Torah and Prophets varied considerably in the early Jewish period, as may be seen from the various codices of the LXX and in the Qumran literature. The Jewish canon as it is known from the Talmud and from medieval codices is only a fraction of the Jewish religious literature that was available and used in authoritative ways by different communities in the early Jewish period, when Judaism was highly pluralistic. This has always been known from various LXX codices, but now, in light of the Dead Sea Scrolls and their trove of heretofore unknown Jewish religious literature, the sheer amount of it appears little short of massive.[13] How many of these writings functioned canonically for this or that Jewish community before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE has yet to be determined.

The Structure of a Canon (*norma normata*)

The accompanying chart[14] offers a simple comparison of four lists of current canons of the First Christian Testament with the Tanak or Jewish canon (as found in the first four editions of *Biblia Hebraica*). The difference in the messages conveyed by the variant orders of biblical books between the Tanak and the Christian canons is radical. Exploring those differences is the main purpose of

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[11] Stone, "Judaism"; Stone, *Scriptures, Sects and Visions*.
[12] See Schwartz, Abstract of "MMT, Josephus and the Pharisees."
[13] See Charlesworth, *OT Pseudepigrapha*; García Martínez, *Dead Sea Scrolls*; Wise, Abegg, and Cook, *Dead Sea Scrolls*.
[14] Lundberg and Reed, "What Do We Mean by the Bible," 3.

the present study, which is, in effect, an exercise in the study of the phenomenon of canon as *norma normata*, as well as an exercise in intertextuality, in the first sense noted above.[15]

The Jewish canon is tripartite in structure; the Christian "Old Testament" is quadripartite in structure. The contents of the Protestant First Testament are precisely the same as those of the Tanak. This was due to the *Hebraica veritas* principle set forth by Jerome (and to a large degree followed by him in the Latin text of the Vulgate), and then followed by Luther.[16] What issued was a Christian First Testament that violated the structures of both the Tanak and the Septuagint (insofar as the structure of the pre-Christian "Old Testament" in Greek can be known, since Septuagint manuscripts were preserved only by the churches).

The Pentateuch is stable in all canons of the First Testament. In the Jewish tripartite canon, the Pentateuch or Torah is followed by the Prophets, then the Writings. In the Christian canons, the Pentateuch is followed by books suggesting the history of ancient Israel and Judah, and the beginnings of Judaism in the postexilic period, with the "historical novels," Ruth and Esther, inserted at appropriate chronological points to flesh out the history; the historical books are then followed by the poetic/wisdom books; then finally the prophetic corpus comes last in Christian canons. Each arrangement or structure makes its own theological statement, even though the actual texts are basically the same.[17]

Table 1. Comparison between the Jewish Canon and Four Canons of the Old Testament

Jewish	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Russian Orthodox
Tanak	Old Testament	Old Testament	Old Testament	Old Testament
Torah	*Pentateuch*	*Pentateuch*	*Pentateuch*	*Pentateuch*
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy

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[15] Most of the present writer's work in the concept of canon has been on canon as function, that is, as *norma normans*. The discussion in Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, touched on the issue of *norma normata* to the extent that it probed the question why Joshua (the story of fulfillment of the promise of the land) began the prophetic corpus and did not conclude the Pentateuch, or Torah in *sensu stricto*, Judaism's very charter. See Sanders, "Scripture as Canon."

[16] See Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Text Criticism." [And Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Establishing the Text."]

[17] Some LXX translations indicate different *Vorlagen*, or concepts if not *Vorlagen*, of the text at hand – notably, Jeremiah and Proverbs, but also Samuel, Exod 35–40, and Isaiah.

Jewish	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Russian Orthodox
Prophets	*Historical Books*	*Historical Books*	*Historical Books*	*Historical Books*
Joshua Judges Samuel Kings	Joshua Judges Ruth 1 & 2 Samuel 1 & 2 Kings 1 & 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Joshua Judges Ruth 1 & 2 Samuel 1 & 2 Kings 1 & 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Tobit Judith Esther + additions 1–2 Maccabees	Joshua Judges Ruth 1–4 Kingdoms 1 & 2 Paralipomenon 1 Esdras 2 Esdras (Ezra–Nehemiah) Tobit Judith Esther + additions 1–3 Maccabees	Joshua Judges Ruth 1 & 2 Samuel 1 & 2 Kings 1 & 2 Chronicles 1 Esdras (Ezra–Nehemiah) 2–3 Esdras (Apocryphal) Tobit Judith Esther + additions 1–3 Maccabees
Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel Twelve Prophets – Hosea – Joel – Amos – Obadiah – Jonah – Micah – Nahum – Habakkuk – Zephaniah – Haggai – Zechariah – Malachi				
	Poetry/Wisdom	*Poetry/Wisdom*	*Poetry/Wisdom*	*Poetry/Wisdom*
	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs Wisdom of Solomon Ecclesiasticus	Job Psalms + Ps 151 Prayer of Manasseh Ecclesiastes Song of Songs Wisdom of Solomon Ecclesiasticus	Job Psalms + Ps 151 Prayer of Manasseh Ecclesiastes Song of Songs Wisdom of Solomon Ecclesiasticus

Jewish	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Russian Orthodox
	Prophets	*Prophets*	*Prophets*	*Prophets*
	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Baruch and Letter of Jere- miah Ezekiel Daniel + The Prayer of Azariah, Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Baruch and Letter of Jere- miah Ezekiel Daniel + The Prayer of Azariah, Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Baruch and Letter of Jere- miah Ezekiel Daniel + The Prayer of Azariah, Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi
Writings				
Psalms Job Proverbs Ruth Song of Songs Ecclesiastes Lamentations Esther Daniel Ezra–Nehe- miah Chronicles				

Within each section of Jewish and Christian canons, after the Torah or Penta-teuch, there are variations in order, both according to available ancient canon-ical lists and the available manuscripts. As Israel Yeivin has indicated,[18] there is no stability in the order of books after Genesis to Kings, that is, after the Torah and Early Prophets, in Hebrew Bible lists and manuscripts. What is clear is that prior to the technological advance from the use of scrolls to the use of the codex, the only clear sequence of books would have been the story line from Genesis to Kings. If a member of the Qumran community, for instance, goofed because it was late perhaps, and had grown dark, and replaced a scroll of Judges in the cubbyhole before Joshua, there was no problem. He would simply put it back in its right place the next morning when there was sufficient light to see where it should go; or he wouldn't bother because it made no difference since the story line was so clear. But after Kings, beginning with the major prophets, the sequence of books varied, with the tripartite order in the Jewish canon, and the quadripartite order in the Christian, remaining constant.[19]

The Jewish Canon

The structure of the Jewish canon makes a statement about history that is quite clear even if one has only a basic knowledge of the textual content of the Tanak. The story line that runs from Genesis through Kings is rather remarkable in itself, and needs to be noted in any discussion of nationalism, universalism, or monotheism in the Bible. In the ancient Near East, as well as in the Greek clas-sical world, the human story was always told in terms of the relations of deities and humans. In the Bible the most important actor in "history" was God: "In the beginning God created …" Genesis 1–11 sets the universal stage for God's work in the world, and through Israel. Most creation accounts in the ancient Near East show clearly (1) the need of humans to understand that God or the gods created a secure place against the threats of chaos for humans to dwell, and (2) that humanity was created in large part to be servants to the gods.[20] The "rage for order," which seems to be an integral part of the human psyche, can be seen in the need of humans to engage in annual or regular myth-and-ritual exercises designed to reassure the faithful of these two points, (1) cosmic order and (2) the place of humans in that order. In the Bible, creation means bringing order out of chaos, and only God could do that. Asserting that humans are made in the image of God assures humanity of a rightful and responsible place in that order.

The biblical gospel story of salvation or redemption begins in Gen 12, with a pastoral call by God on Abraham and Sarah, in which God invited them to sacrifice their birth-given identity and take on a new one. Along with the invi-

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[18] Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*.
[19] See Swete, *Introduction to the OT in Greek*; Leiman, *Canonization of Hebrew Scripture*; Beckwith, *OT Canon*; McDonald, *Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*.
[20] See Clifford, *Creation Accounts*.

tation went two promises: land and progeny. Those promises were fulfilled in a dramatically climactic way in 1 Kgs 10, when the Queen of Sheba paid a call on Solomon. She came calling ostensibly to witness for herself Solomon's famed wisdom, but the reader does well to remember that Solomon's wisdom was a gift of God (1 Kgs 3:12–13). What the good queen did, for the implied reader, was provide an international witness to God's having fulfilled the two promises made to the patriarchs of land and progeny. If one looks for tangible, observable fulfillment in the Bible, there is no portion of it that provides a story of fulfillment quite like 1 Kgs 10. Everything in Jerusalem was of gold; silver was as common as stones (1 Kgs 10:27).

But God appointed satans, or testers for Solomon, and he failed all tests. Beginning in 1 Kgs 11, everything went downhill. The united kingdom of David and Solomon split asunder. The northern kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722 BCE, and the southern kingdom to Babylon in 587 BCE. And that is where the story line of Genesis to Kings leads, defeat. Second Kings 25 ends in ignominy and shame: the only status the exiled King Jehoiachin had was what the Babylonian monarch, Evil Merodach, deigned to give him; he otherwise had naught but God's promises, and they had apparently failed.

The story that began with the universal God's promises to Abraham and Sarah reaches marvelous, stunning fulfillment, only to be lost entirely by the end of the story. And that is all by way of a running history that the Bible offers, until one reaches the end of the Tanak (in most lists and some manuscripts) when "history" is resumed and revised in the books of Ezra–Nehemiah and Chronicles. And even there (2 Chron 36), Israel's continued existence is shown to be dependent on the good graces and policies of Cyrus, king of Persia. In fact, it may be said that much of the Bible, of whatever canon, is an effort to explain defeats: the defeats of the united, northern, and southern kingdoms, the defeat of the second Jewish commonwealth, and the crucifixion of the master/teacher from the Galilee.

In the light of that observation, the fact that the prophetic corpus follows immediately after the book of Kings makes its own statement. Following Kings in the Jewish canon are the Books of the Three (major prophets) and the Book of the Twelve (minor prophets), fifteen case histories, as it were, to validate the lesson the Deuteronomist makes about the message of Torah: (1) it is not God who let us down in these defeats; (2) it is we who let God down by polytheism and idolatry; (3) but if in destitution we take what the prophets said to heart, God will restore us and every gift God has given us, bigger and better than before; and (4) remember that God sent prophets, early and often, to tell us how it really is in the divine economy. Those four points are clearly made in Deut 29–31, but they ring true to the general message of the Torah and the Early Prophets.[21] In fact, the Torah makes it abundantly clear that God is the God of risings and fallings, victories and defeats, what we humans might call good and what we might call evil (e. g., Deut 32:39). And it makes it clear also that God can convert the evil we do and turn it into good (e. g., Gen 50:20), just as the good we think we do, at one point

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[21] See Sanders, "Deuteronomy."

in time, may turn out later to be what we would call evil (Eccl 9:11). There is but One God; there is no other. These are the tenets of monotheism hardest to grasp, but the Torah and the Prophets make these points time and again with utter clarity.

Then if one scrutinizes the Writings of the Jewish canon (the Ketuvim) one sees many musings and meditations on those and other points found in the Torah and the Prophets – indeed, how to live out life and understand it in the belief in One God of All – but no further speculation, as in the prophets, about what God will do next. The one possible exception is the book of Daniel, which Christian canons include in the Prophets. But that depends on the hermeneutic one brings to Daniel. For the Jew it is a wonderfully inspiring wisdom story on how brave, young Jews can practice monotheism in the court of a foreign king, who himself will experience his fallings, just as he has experienced his risings and momentary dominance over Jews. For the Jew it fits well in the Ketuvim following Esther, which tells of how a brave, young Jewess practiced monotheism (without mentioning God's name) in the court of a foreign king. Christians bring a different hermeneutic to Daniel, see in it a foretelling of the Son of Man (Dan 7:13), and place it in the prophetic corpus. The speculative element is definitely there, as well as the inspiring stories about brave young believers, but each group brings with it the hermeneutic that highlights the one or the other.

The Community and the Individual

A major strain that runs through the Bible is that of the tension between corporate worth and responsibility, and individual worth and responsibility. Semitic culture generally stresses the corporate, and Greek or European culture the individual – neither to the exclusion of the other, of course. The concept of covenant is a corporate concept. The covenants God made with Noah, Abraham, and Moses were corporate in concept; those individual figures in fact represent the corporate relation God had with humanity, and with Israel. The preexilic prophets declaimed judgment on the two kingdoms corporately; it was a 100 percent judgment God was leveling against his own people.

It is understandable why these prophetic writings would be included in the canon, because they explained, in advance of the exile, the reasons for the defeats. But they also explained how God can work through fallings to bring about risings, or indeed death to bring about life. These would have been picked up and read, again and again, in the surviving Jewish communities in exile because they made sense of the evil that had befallen them, but also gave them hope for new life as Jews. Such literature thus got on a sort of tenure track toward canon. The folk in preexilic times, the so-called false prophets, who claimed that God, or Egypt, would save the old institutions and send the Babylonians away, would simply have been set aside as so much dust in the mouth if reread in a prisoner-of-war camp in Babylonia. A later theologian from Tarsus would say, "None was righteous, no not one" (Rom 3:10, echoing [Ps 14:1–2; 53:1] Eccl 7:20), which reflects the indictments of the preexilic prophets generally, as well as Deuteronomic theology.

Individual Responsibility

Beginning apparently in the late preexilic period, debates arose about individual responsibility within the corporate, and how to understand that. The disintegration of the experience called Israel meant that those who retained their Yahwistic identity in destitution needed assurances that they would not have to continue to pay for the sins of their ancestors, as Torah clearly states they might (Exod 34:7). First Jeremiah, then Ezekiel, insisted that the people stop citing the old proverb about how, though the ancestors ate sour grapes, it was the children that paid for it (Jer 31:29; Ezek 18). Later, the rabbis would discuss the contradiction and debate whether Ezekiel "soiled the hands," that is, was inspired or authoritative.

The Book of Job stands as a major exilic statement refuting the efforts of Job's friends to apply preexilic, prophetic, corporate views of sin to Job as an individual; their efforts to say that Job's suffering proved he had earlier been sinful were duplicated and matched many times in early Judaism in the doctrine of *purʿanut*, a form of meritocracy that argues that comfort indicates God's favor and deprivation indicates God's disfavor.[22] Most of the Bible, from the Pentateuch to whatever canonical end, is fundamentally about the grace of God and refutes meritocracy, but it has reasserted itself in both Judaism and Christianity as a companion (Yang-Yin?) to the ideas of individual worth and responsibility that arose in the early exilic period.

A major feature of biblical literature is its dialogical nature. When it came time to assert the worth and responsibility of individuals in historical perspective, the Chronicler revised the Genesis-to-Kings story and upgraded the records of those who, in the earlier Kings version, were described as blatantly sinful. For instance, Chronicles does not even mention David's affair with Bathsheba. And where 2 Kings makes Manasseh the scapegoat for all that went wrong in preexilic times, indeed the principal reason God sent Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians to punish the nation as a whole for the sins of their kings (2 Kgs 21:1–18), Chronicles reports that King Manasseh repented. His repentance was accepted by God, and he was restored (2 Chron 33:13).

Chronicles in its turn failed to record Manasseh's prayer of repentance, but that was supplied in later early Judaism in the "apocryphal" Prayer of Manasseh. The prayer is found in Greek and Russian Orthodox Bibles as canonical, testifying to a major tenet of Judaism, God's great mercy in accepting the repentance of even the worst of sinners.[23] It is understandable that this became a major Jewish doctrine, since Jews have been scattered in dispersion in all kinds of conditions ever since the exile, and have needed to know that they do not have to continue to pay for the sins of ancestors (Ezek 18:21–23). Nay, even the worst sinner's repentance is accepted by God.

As one leafs through the Ketuvim, the third section of the Jewish canon, one is struck by how much focus there is on individual worth and responsibility. While

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[22] See Sanders, *Suffering as Divine Discipline*.
[23] Sanders, "Introduction and Annotations"; [Sanders, "Book of Job."]

the Talmud (*Baba Bathra* 14b) lists Chronicles as last in the Ketuvim, all the classical Tiberian masoretic manuscripts, as well as Spanish manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible, put Chronicles first. In fact, the oldest complete Hebrew Bible in the world, a manuscript dating from 1005 CE called Leningradensis, which has formed the text base of the last two editions of *Biblia Hebraica*, and is the text base of the fifth (*Biblia Hebraica Quinta*), has Chronicles first in the Ketuvim despite the fact that the third and fourth editions of *Biblia Hebraica* printed editions continue to print it last (as in the Talmud list and in German and French MSS).[24]

The placement of Chronicles makes a statement in itself. After the message of the Torah and the Prophets has been conveyed (the four points above), the Writings shift gears entirely and focus on the fact that it is possible for individuals to obey and please God. A major tenet of Judaism is that it is possible to obey and please God.[25] To begin the Ketuvim with the Chronicler's reconsidered view of history, wherein individual worth and responsibility is stressed, prepares one to hear clearly the theme of the first psalm in the Psalter, which immediately follows Chronicles: "Blessed is the person who walks not in the counsel of the wicked … but whose desire is in the Torah of Yahweh" (Ps 1:1).[26] Views of individual worth and responsibility were always seen as operating within the corporate, and some Jews were more hellenized than others. Therefore, many who fully celebrated the idea of God's presence being with Israel as a people (Emanuel) could not accept the idea of God's being incarnate in one Jew; that was going too far toward Hellenism, and was the basic, fundamental reason for Pharisaic/rabbinic Jewish rejection of eventual Christian claims about Christ.

Anonymity and Pseudepigraphy

Another aspect of the strain between the corporate and the individual is in the fact that most of the Bible is anonymous. This is true of both Testaments. We actually have no idea who wrote most of the Bible. Because modern, critical study of the Bible is a result of the Renaissance of Greek culture in Europe, biblical criticism attempts to wrest from the biblical text, studied in its ancient historical contexts, authorial intentionality. This was undoubtedly in response to the call Baruch Spinoza issued in 1670 to write the history of the formation of the biblical text.[27] Spinoza had claimed that the truth of the Bible would be

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[24] See Freedman and Beck, *Leningrad Codex*.

[25] Preexilic royal psalms after the fall of Jerusalem were read by and for individual Jews as speaking directly for the lay person and having nothing to do with royal entries, and the like; see Sanders, "Hermeneutic Fabric."

[26] Unfortunately, the NRSV, following its mandate to use inclusive language, pluralized the word *ʾîš* (usually translated "man," really "person") and translates: "Happy are those who do not …" This compromises the focus of the psalm and of much of the Psalter as read in early Judaism in totally different *Sitze im Leben*, which is largely on individual worth and responsibility, understood within the corporate covenant of Israel as God's people.

[27] See Sanders, "Scripture as Canon"; Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Text Criticism." [And Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Establishing the Text."]

found in a history of its literary formation. His call spoke directly to the Renaissance mind, with its emphasis on the worth and responsibility of the individual, because it meant historically reconstructing the origins of the Bible through its individual authors. And a great deal about the formation of the Bible has been learned, despite the shifts in perspective that take place every decade or so and the differences in concept and method according to the school of thought the scholar adheres to.

But the fact remains that most of the Bible is anonymous literature despite the efforts of the past three hundred years of critical study of its formation. It was under pre-Christian Greek influence and pressure that Jews felt the need to attach well-known names from their past to whole books. The whole Psalter began to be attributed to David despite the numerous superscriptions to individual psalms attributing them to others (even Solomon, Ps 72), all of Proverbs and all the sayings in Ecclesiastes to Solomon, all the Torah to Moses, etc. In other words, the Semitic emphasis on shared literature belonging to the community meant that the Bible's anonymous literature became, in Greek-European terms, pseudepigraphic literature.

While Paul wrote some of the letters attributed (even by critical scholarship) to him, we actually have no idea who wrote the Gospels. The Gospels, like the entire Bible, are basically Semitic in origin, but under Greek influence it was felt necessary to attribute discrete literary units to individual names. One often hears comments from lay folk to the effect that we would know much more about the third Gospel if we only knew who Luke was. In the popular mind, he was the companion of Paul mentioned in Colossians (Col 4:14), "Luke, the beloved physician." I sometimes refrain from disabusing lay folk of their understanding that the third Gospel was written by a physician, and a beloved one at that. At other times, I mention the fact that Henry Cadbury, one of the truly great NT scholars of the early part of the twentieth century, wrote his dissertation at Harvard showing that neither Luke nor Acts contains vocabulary from the medical world of ancient Greece or the Hellenistic world. Cadbury had done a thorough search of all relevant Greek literature of the era before he wrote the study. My teacher, Samuel Sandmel, once remarked that Henry Cadbury got his doctorate by depriving Luke of his. The story simply underscores how much the "modern" mind is influenced by the Greek emphasis on individual worth and responsibility, and the conviction that truth lies there, because of the Renaissance.[28]

Christian Canons

Christian canons differ markedly from the Jewish. Despite the fact that Jerome, followed by Luther, made translations of the First Testament (more or less) directly from the Hebrew, Christian canons kept what they had inherited from

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[28] See Sanders, "Communities and Canon."

the Septuagint of the order and arrangements of the books. Jerome placed the larger "pluses" of the Greek forms of Esther and Daniel, as well as the books in the Septuagint that did not survive in the Jewish canon, into a section he called "Apocrypha." In the cases of Esther and Daniel, he named the long "pluses" of the Greek *addenda ad Esther* (or *ad Daniel*. It in effect violated the integrity of the Greek forms of those books. Some twentieth-century translations have restored the Greek Esther to its full integrity by placing the shorter Hebrew Esther in the canonical part of the translation, and the full Greek Esther in the apocryphal section (e. g., Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible, 1976; Revised English Bible, 1992).

The structure of Christian Bibles conveys its message also. The same basic theology obtains in both Jewish and Christian canons. God is One, indeed the God of risings and fallings, life and death, and the Pentateuch and Historical Books, the first two sections of Christian canons, are designed in large measure to explain the defeats suffered by ancient Israel. But the history of each has quite a different thrust. Whereas the Jewish canon eliminates speculation beginning after the exile about what God would do next, or even in the distant future, the Christian view of Israel's history is that God continued to be active in human affairs well after Ezra and Nehemiah. Whereas the Pharisees and later rabbis believed that prophecy or revelation had ceased at the time of Ezra, other Jewish communities, those that produced most of the so-called Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Qumran literature, and the Christian, firmly did not believe that prophecy or revelation had ceased. On the contrary, those Jewish groups produced literature of comfort for Jews under many eras of persecution, particularly the Seleucid and the Roman, and that comfort was expressed precisely in speculation about how God and the heavenly hosts were going to bring justice and salvation to surviving Jews.[29]

That view of "history" prevails in Christian canons. Ruth and Esther were placed in the "historical books," as were the "apocryphal" books that could be thought of as "historical": 1–3 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, and the Books of the Maccabees. This had the effect of lengthening the history of God's work with ancient Israel and early Judaism down almost to the point where hanging the Gospels and Acts (Christian sacred history) onto that earlier sacred history would seem appropriate and believable. God's work was continuing. This is a major theme in Luke–Acts, which is clearly theocentric in hermeneutic, where the Gospel may be understood as God's work in Christ, and the book of Acts as God's continuing work in the early churches.[30] As with the community at Qumran, prophecy or revelation had definitely not ceased in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Finally, Christian canons place the Prophets last, just before the Gospels. Whereas the prophetic corpus in the Jewish canon exhibits the monotheizing process in the risings and fallings, and risings again, of ancient Israel and early Judaism, in the Christian canon it serves to foretell Christ and the church, also in fallings and risings (crucifixion, resurrection, birth of the church). The different

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[29] See Sanders, "Torah and Christ"; Talmon, "Oral Tradition."
[30] See Evans and Sanders, *Luke and Scripture*, 4–14.

locations in the two structures suggest the hermeneutics by which the books of the Prophets were to be read in the two communities. In the Jewish canon the prophets explain how it is in the divine economy, with hope for the fulfillment of God's promises, especially the return to the land. In the Christian, they are poised to point to the gospel of Jesus Christ. If one goes through the prophetic or Haftarah passages that are read in synagogue liturgy in conjunction with the annual lectionary for reading the Torah through each year, one sees that the message of hope is considerably more prominent than that of indictment and judgment, just as Christian lectionaries tend to select portions from the Prophets that support the Gospel lesson each week.[31]

The structure of a canon conveys a message of its own and suggests the hermeneutic by which the community reads or hears the actual texts themselves. Jewish and Christian canons may have largely the same basic text of the First Testament, even the exact same books as in the Protestant canon, but they present two different Bibles through their respective structures. The first meaning of intertextuality, noted above, is as important in studying Scripture as canon as the other two.

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[31] Christian abuse of the prophetic indictments against ancient Israel and Judah, as indictments against all Jews, is a travesty that requires full exposure and discussion. See Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Translation."

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13

What Alexander the Great Did to Us All

(2004)

Since September 11, 2001, the Western world has become starkly aware of the deep-seated cultural differences between the Muslim and Western worlds, between the cultures of the Eastern and Western hemispheres of Planet Earth, and between individual rights and national security. I shall attempt to draw some lines between East and West in antiquity but also show how they became interfused and interrelated in early Judaism and in the Bible itself.

The Bible, both Jewish and Christian, is basically Semitic in culture and outlook, not European or Western. This is the case not only of the Hebrew Bible, or First Christian Testament; it is also true of the Second Christian Testament. It was not until Alexander's Greece conquered the pre-Christian world of the late fourth century BCE that European cultural values and Semitic cultural values came into critical contact, conflict, and a fusion called Hellenism, thus creating the cultural crucible in which both Christianity and rabbinic Judaism were born.

Alexander's Conquests

In order to appreciate what Jesus was doing in his time, to understand what the figure of Christ meant in early Christianity, and to understand how and why rabbinic Judaism arose, we need to comprehend the vast importance of what Alexander the Great did to the Eastern Mediterranean and Near Eastern worlds, and eventually to the Western world. The Bible as a whole is based on an understanding of humanity that was centered in the patriarchal family and clan.[1] Individuals had their worth but only in the context of family, clan, and people. This was a corporate view of human worth and responsibility. When Alexander, however, fought the non-Semitic but nonetheless Asian Persian Empire, and brought it to its knees in the late fourth century BCE, he radically challenged the social system of most of the world. There has rarely been a force more powerful unleashed on the world than this son of Philip of Macedonia, dedicated student of the great Athenian philosopher, Aristotle.

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[1] Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*; Perdue et al., *Families in Ancient Israel*; Gerstenberger, *Theologies of the OT*, 25–91; Sanders, "Family in the Bible."

The Greek geographer Strabo relates anecdotes about Alexander that help understand how his early admirers understood him.[2] Alexander conquered Egypt when he was only twenty years old, Persia when he was twenty-five, and the world (at least to the Indus Valley in current Afghanistan) when he was thirty. Strabo relates an incident that showed who the young man in childhood was in the eyes of his followers (cf. Luke 2:40–52). When Alexander was a child twelve years old he watched his father's best horsemen fail at taming a wild horse. The lad asked his father, King Philip of Macedon, if he, Alexander, could try. He gave his son permission and Alexander proceeded to tame the horse and make it his own! His father, according to Strabo, told Alexander he would have to create a larger kingdom of his own because Macedon would soon prove too small for him.

But Alexander's lasting power was not in horsemanship and military prowess; it was in his dedication to Greek culture and philosophy, which challenged abuses in patriarchal systems throughout the known world. Alexander was an evangelist for Greek ways of thinking. Everywhere he went he established Greek-type cities, the *polis*, and in those cities, which he usually named Alexandria, he established schools to propagate what he himself had learned in Athens. I imagine he established a "peace corps" in Athens to staff the schools and to teach the world what Aristotle had taught him. And at the heart and core of what they taught was individual worth and responsibility. Greece was indeed the birthplace of democracy and individual human rights, though it often violated those rights.

Socrates was sentenced to die in 399 BCE, not because he had "corrupted the youth of Athens," as was officially charged, but because he had defended the Athenian constitution's guarantee of an individual's right to a fair trial. After the ignominious defeat of the glorious Athenian navy by the Spartans, in the Battle of the White Isles in 406 BCE, many citizens wanted to have the six admirals tried in one mass trial, because they had competed with each other for personal gain in the battle instead of fighting the Spartans. In order to do so, the constitution would have to be suspended by a unanimous vote of the Senate, but Socrates defended the constitution against popular demand, and alone voted against suspension. This was not forgotten. Against the popular demand for "justice," Socrates defended each individual's right to a fair trial.

Hellenization and the Bible

A few examples will have to suffice to explain how Alexander's hellenization of the known world affected early Judaism. The hellenization process was the historic interaction between the Hellenic culture that Alexander espoused and the local Semitic and other cultures of the eastern Mediterranean world.

The Bible is basically a community literature. Most of it is anonymous. We have no idea who wrote most of either Testament, with the exception that the

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[2] Strabo, *Geogr.* 15–16. See Jones, *Geography of Strabo*.

Apostle Paul wrote some letters to some churches he had founded. Even modern scholarship, which itself is very influenced by Hellenism's focus on individual worth and responsibility, has attributed signs to ancient hypothetical sources of biblical literature – such as J, E, D, P, Q, Mk, L, etc., in order to account for the contradictions, anomalies, and different points of view in the Pentateuch and Gospels. We have no idea who wrote the great stories and histories of the Bible, or the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the four Gospels, or some of the New Testament epistles.

In the Semitic world, anonymity of inspired literature put the focus on God as the author(ity) of what would become sacred literature, instead of on human authors. This is generally true in Oriental cultures, where traditional art and literature are anonymous. But when the Greeks came calling, they inevitably would ask who wrote this great literature. The Jew would have responded, "Why, the Torah is our Book, it tells us who we are and what we should do." "Yeah," the Greek would say, "but who wrote it? We know who wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, so who wrote the Torah?" That information was far more important to Greeks than it was to Jews, until they too became hellenized. Then they could answer, "Moses wrote the Torah; David wrote all the Psalms; Solomon authored the book of Proverbs," etc. This, despite the fact that it is clear they did not, and the fact that such claims were superimposed later. Attribution of a biblical book to a well-known name from the community's past is called pseudepigraphy, which happened because of the Greek cultural focus on individual responsibility, when a Semitic community was forced to assign original authors to its common literature.

So-called conservatives today are so hellenized that they are offended when this is pointed out. They think it is an attack on the Bible to say the truth about its anonymous or community origins. But we have no idea who wrote the Gospels. Superscriptions, such as "According to Luke," were not affixed to manuscripts of the Gospels until well into the second century CE. It has been convincingly shown that whoever wrote Luke did not use any of the Greek medical terms of the time, but the tradition of Luke being the same person as the beloved physician who was companion to Paul in Col 4:14 is so imbedded in popular thinking it is difficult to surrender it. The truth is that the Bible is so Semitic in basic outlook that it is essentially a community literature, formed and shaped in the ancient communities that found value in its stories and wisdom, with later communities adapting them, glossing them, and adding to them, to speak more directly to their later situations, until the canonical process came to a close. Western insistence on locating an "original" author is deeply Hellenistic.

The prophetic books in the Hebrew Bible, which bear in their superscriptions the names of ancient figures, have many additions appended by later communities that found value enough in them to adapt them to their later situations and thus add to them to make them relevant to their own community needs – until the canonical process ceased, and took another turn.[3] The individual proph-

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[3] Sanders, "Issue of Closure."

ets' names in those books are presented in them as those through whom God worked; the focus in the prophetic corpus is always on God's word working through such persons and their followers, not on the prophet as a great individual through whom God worked. Books in the Hebrew Bible do not have titles or "by-lines," as the ancient Geek translations of the Hebrew Bible gave them, and New Testament books in Greek have, but are referred to by the first words, or the salient word of the first verse of the book.

So-called conservatives in the neo-Puritan tradition today confuse personal morals with social ethics. They think that if an individual leader is personally upright, his policies will be good for the nation as a whole, but this is clearly not true, as some "evangelicals" admit.[4] A leader may indeed be faithful to his wife and family but still practice greed, selfishness, and subtle forms of bigotry, and sponsor policies that encourage greed and corporate irresponsibility. The Bible Belt has as high a rate of divorce and unmarried couples as any other. Focus on individual salvation and personal morals does not necessarily issue in worthy social behavior. There is an ancient saying from early Christianity, "God's grace works through human sinfulness" (*errore hominum providentia divina*). Paul stressed the very point in his Epistle to the Romans. Then he asked, "Shall we therefore sin the more that grace may the more abound?" And his answer, of course, was "By no means" (Rom 6:1–2). On reading any biblical passage one must always ask what God was doing, and only thereafter focus on what humans should do in the light of God's grace, whether personally or collectively. Celebration of God's works should precede deciding human works. Saying one is committed to "the whole law" is impossible. One generation stresses "laws" important to them (tribalism, patriarchalism, slavery, genocide, segregation, misogyny, homophobia), while the next sets those aside and stresses those that suit them.

The upshot of Alexander's revolution for the biblical world was to bring focus as never before to individual worth and responsibility within the community. Both Jeremiah (31:29) and Ezekiel (ch. 18) had earlier introduced the idea of generational (not yet individual) responsibility in the context of the devastating defeat of Judah in the Babylonian conquest of the early sixth century BCE. It was designed to help the destitute survivors, the remnant in Babylonia, to understand that their generation would not have to continue to pay for "the sins of the fathers," or of earlier generations, as the Torah, on the contrary, insists they would (Exod 20:5; 34:6–7). This patent contradiction was the major reason some rabbis later doubted whether the Ezekiel book "soiled the hands," or was "canonical."

The corporate or family dimension of the Bible and the subsequent Judaism never ceased, but it became infused with the idea of individual worth and responsibility. The book of Chronicles is a revisionist history of Israel with focus on individual responsibility. For example, in the earlier book of Kings, Manasseh is

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4 Barna, *Index of Leading Spiritual Indicators*.

depicted as a scapegoat and the symbol of all that had gone wrong with the monarchy, while in Chronicles, Manasseh repents and his repentance is accepted by God. The "Prayer of Manasseh," which is in some Eastern Orthodox canons, is a model for how in early Judaism the individual could repent and be restored. In the classical Tiberian masoretic manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible, Chronicles is placed first in the Writings, or third section of the Jewish Bible, followed immediately by the book of Psalms, the first of which focuses on individual responsibility: "Blessed is the person who walks not in the council of the ungodly …"

The concept of resurrection was originally a collective concept, as in Ezek 37, God's resurrecting the new Israel, early Judaism, out of the ashes of old Israel and Judah in the Babylonian exile. The focus was on the act of God who willed the restoration of his people. But later, after the gradual hellenization of Judaism, resurrection began to be seen as an individual affair, as in Isa 24 and Dan 12, Pharisaic Judaism, and Christian Judaism. The extended Torah story, or epic poem, in Sir 44–50 that begins, "Come, now, let us praise famous men" (meaning the patriarchs, prophets, scribes and priests) would have been anathema to traditional Judaism, which had always praised God and God only in retelling the biblical story. The focus was on God's working through those humans. But in Sirach the story of God's promises to and work with the patriarchs and prophets was in the Greek form of the encomium, or praise of the humans through whom God worked.[5]

Hellenization and the Renaissance

We can see the effects of hellenization in many ways in our own lives. The Protestant Reformation was a child of the Renaissance, and the Renaissance was the "rebirth" of the hellenization process after the Christian Dark Ages in Europe. One of the most interesting ironies of history, looking back from the present, is that it was the rise of Muslim civilization and culture, which flourished from the eighth to the fourteenth centuries CE across the Near East and North Africa into Europe, that was the cradle of the great Golden Age of Jewish culture of the time, and became the catalyst for the Renaissance in Christian Europe. In the wake of its sweep westward across the Mediterranean world, Islamic scholars translated Plato and Aristotle and the other great Greek philosophers and poets into Arabic. When Cordoba in Spain was the cultural jewel of the world of the time, Baghdad's only rival in that regard, Paris was a backwater.

Medieval Jewish culture flourished under Islam and produced some of the greatest Jewish thinkers of all time: Maimonides, Yefet ben Eli, Abulwalid, Saadya Gaon, Ibn Ezra, and others. But when Christians came into power in Spain, under King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, the same royal couple who financed Christopher Columbus's adventures west across the Atlantic, they

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[5] Mack, *Wisdom and the Hebrew Epic.*

expelled the Jews from Spain. The date that Americans celebrate as "the discovery of America," 1492, Jews lament as the date of the expulsion of Jews from Spain. The great achievements of the Muslim culture of the time, algebra, calculus, engineering, medicine, anatomy, optics, and the inclusivist tendencies of a vigorous belief in One God, were the major stimulants that brought about the Renaissance in Europe and its child, the Protestant Reformation.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Christian West went into a gradual but serious decline during the European Dark Ages. And out of those Dark Ages in Europe came the medieval Christian crusades against Islam and Judaism. Islam then went into serious decline because of attacks also from northeast Asia. But it was because of Islam's achievements, largely stimulated by the ancient Hellenic and Hellenistic civilizations from which Islam had learned so much, that the Renaissance could take place in Europe. Alexander's influence continued to be felt fifteen centuries after he had conquered the Mediterranean and Near Eastern worlds.

Hellenization and the Reformation

When Martin Luther read the Bible for himself in the sixteenth century, and then translated it into German so others could as well, he could do so largely because Muslim culture had invented paper for use in the newly invented printing press, to replace parchment. Luther severed the Bible from Roman Catholic accumulated doctrine, called the Magisterium, to which for centuries it had been tethered. Luther thus invited individuals to interpret the Bible for themselves. Luther's doctrine of *sola scriptura* was a direct result of the Renaissance emphasis on individuals' worth and ability to read the Bible and think for themselves about it without the church's interpretation. Finally, in 1943, the Catholic Church, in the encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu*, allowed Catholic scholars to study Scripture historically, apart from the Magisterium. In the secular world one need but think of Rodin's famous statue *Le Penseur*. And what was the sculpted serf or slave thinking as he pondered his condition? I suggest that he was asking himself whether God really intended him to be a serf or slave all his life, as his masters had taught him. In Martin Scorsese's film version of *The Last Temptation of Christ*,[6] Pilate remarked to Jesus after his arrest, "You do not want simply to change the way people live and act: you want to change the way they think. And Rome does not want that!" I suggest that it was Jesus' teaching of a new way for humans to think that Paul intended when he spoke of having "this mind in you, which was in Christ Jesus, that, being in the form of God he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but humbled himself" and took on human form (Phil 2:5–11). If one thinks radical "class-inversion" thoughts like that about the heavenly realm, one might be tempted to ask radical questions about class structures in human society.

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6 Kazantzakis, *Last Temptation of Christ*, 373–76, note Scorsese's film version.

The Reformation did not stop with Luther, of course. It eventually developed the left-wing Reformation of those who almost obliterated their corporate or community dimension from their forms of Christianity. Thus arose the Anabaptists and their heirs the Baptists, such as Roger Williams who founded Rhode Island and who insisted that each individual should read the Bible for him/herself, and that each reading was valid for that individual. Protestantism generally is a trip into the world of individualism. Some Protestant churches, however, (such as the Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Methodist) continue to practice infant baptism and reading Scripture from a common lectionary, marks of corporate worth and responsibility. Others practice only "adult baptism" meaning that the individual must make the decision to be Christian, not the individual's family. They usually support the freedom of individual pastors to select whatever passage they want to preach from – permitting them to leave the congregation ignorant of vast portions of Scripture (except to engage in trivial pursuit of superficial data?). Protestants speak of the number of members in their congregations, while Jews, Catholics, and the Orthodox speak of the number of families in their congregations. Many Protestant groups developed their own "magisteria," particularly in the seventeenth century, through which so-called conservatives insisted that the Bible must be read.[7] This developed into heresy trials of individual scholars, who insisted on reading Scripture historically apart from the post-Reformation magisteria, during the so-called modernist-fundamentalist controversies of the nineteenth century.

Reformation or Enlightenment came comparatively late to Judaism. The Reform Jewish movement evolved out of the rise of the Jüdische Wissenschaft (Jewish Science, or Enlightenment) movement in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century.[8] When it then moved to America, it flourished under the direction of Isaac Mayer Wise in Cincinnati and Stephen Wise in New York City, and it continues to grow. At the heart of the movement was belief in God's purpose for Jewry in dispersion and the adaptation of Torah and tradition to Enlightenment thinking. The "mission of Israel" was to bear witness to a contemporary understanding of Torah and to be a catalyst for ethical standards in the larger community wherever Jews settled. The Reform movement in Germany, and its heirs in the new world, is seen as Judaism's re-entry into the general cultural history from which nascent rabbinic Judaism had departed into ghettoes in the second century CE after the Bar Kokhba revolt, to resist further influence from the Greco-Roman world.[9] According to David Hartman, of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Israel today, a major result of the Enlightenment in Judaism was the establishment in the mid-twentieth century of the State of Israel, a Jewish, Western-style democratic state, in the Middle East. While this is well supported in the West, it has not been well accepted in much of current Islam, which is still basically "family" oriented and suspicious of the trappings of democracy.

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7   Sanders, "Scripture as Canon."
8   Wiener, *Abraham Geiger*.
9   Silberman, "From Apocalyptic Proclamation."

Hellenization and Early Christianity

Alexander's cultural conquest had a profound effect on enough pre-rabbinic Jews that some were able to hear a message in the first century, emanating from the Galilee, that God in their time had been incarnate in one person, or one Jew, for the sake of all persons of whatever tribe or family anywhere. "Emanuel = God with us" had always meant God's being with the Jewish people ("with us"). Early Christians, however, resignified it and applied it to their belief in God's being incarnate in one Jew, the Christ, whom God sent to be with the whole world. Hellenistic individualism permitted them to hear the message that God had resurrected that one person for the sake of every individual in the world. When those hellenized Christian-Jews emerged into the Greco-Roman world outside Palestine the message was rapidly embraced by many. It is astounding to the historian how rapidly Christianity, with its almost uncanny combination of Semitic emphasis on corporate worth and Greek emphasis on individual worth, spread through the world Alexander had hellenized. There were many Jews, like those at Qumran and the Pharisees, suppressed and oppressed as they were by the Greeks and the Romans, who resisted such individualization in the Christian message. For Jews who bravely resisted hellenization, the idea of God's incarnation in one person was pagan and should be rigorously opposed. But it spread with amazing speed out in the Greco-Roman world. Later Maimonides would speak of God's incarnation in "the people" (*ha-ʿam*). Others would develop the idea of God's incarnation in Scripture,[10] but never before in one person. Messiahs would be anointed and appointed by God, but would not appear by incarnation.

Alexander had paved the way, and so had the hellenization of a good portion of early, pre-Christian Judaism. It was the combination of the two worlds, the Hellenic and the Semitic Jewish, that gave Christianity its basic character. When Paul and John tried to develop an ecclesiology, a biblical view of the nature of the church, they drew upon the corporate idea of the church being *en Christō*, "in Christ." This eventually led to the doctrine of "the church as the corporate body of Christ resurrected." The left-wing churches in the continuing Reformation developed the further idea that salvation was not in the church, but came about when individuals accepted "the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal savior." The left-wing Reformation went its own way in embracing individualism to the point of understanding the church as the sum of the individuals who make personal decisions "for Christ."

They in effect set aside the earlier tradition of the church being the heir of Israel called forth by God in a pastoral call on Abraham and Sarah in Gen 12 but expanded by Christ to the whole world. Such minority forms of highly hellenized, so-called conservative Christianity today tend to be sectarian and exclusivist, admitting only those individuals who recite the same confession of personal faith and share similar emotions about a personal experience of salvation.[11]

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[10] Fishbane, *Garments of Torah*.
[11] Sanders, "Scripture as Canon."

The Catholic-Jewish statement of August 12, 2002, *Reflection on Covenant and Mission*,[12] that there should be no Christian effort to convert Jews because they are a people of an earlier covenant with God, exhibits a typically Catholic understanding of salvation in community, or in the church. Southern Baptists objected vigorously because they reject anything but the idea of a personal decision of the individual for their particular understanding of Christ.

The New Family in Christ

Viewed from the standpoint of the development of biblical thought from emphasis on the worth and responsibility of the family, tribe, clan, and community, to embracing the idea that anyone anywhere from any ethnic family or tribe could become a member of a new family in Christ, the phenomenon of the advent of Christ into the world was culturally revolutionary. But it was truly revolutionary only as long as a balance was kept between the community and the individual. In Christ a new family was formed in which, it was claimed, anyone on earth could join the mighty flowing stream that had begun when God made those promises to Abraham and Sarah in Gen 12. Christianity did this by keeping the older Testament in its double-Testament Bible despite efforts to exclude it. The two things on which all early Christians agreed, whether hellenizers or Judaizers, Pauline or Petrine, were (1) monotheism and (2) the belief that the church superseded Judaism as God's true Israel.

Jesus, the Galilean, who was himself considerably influenced by Hellenism, is reported as saying that unless one hated his mother and father, wife and children, sisters and brothers, even his own life, he could not join the new family in Christ being formed of folk from many families, clans, and tribes (Luke 14:26 = Matt 10:37; cf. Luke 8:21; 9:59–60). This notion is then explicitly developed in the book of Acts. That was a serious challenge to those who revered the fifth commandment (Exod 20:12 and Deut 5:16), which was used to claim that one could not leave the God-given identity of the family or clan into which one was born from his mother's womb, still largely the case in the non-Western world today. Christian converts from Islam anywhere in the world are very few after centuries of missionary effort. Luke also reports Jesus saying, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it" (Luke 8:21). And it is Luke also who reports that Jesus advised one, who excused himself from following Jesus because his father had died, that he should leave the dead to bury their own dead, and that he should instead go and proclaim that a new family, a new kingdom indeed, was being formed (Luke 9:60). These are radical challenges to all earlier genetic views of the family. The new day of focus on individual worth and responsibility, throughout the Mediterranean world, was dawning, in which the Jesus movement would rapidly spread out in the Greco-Roman world.

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12 Consultation of the National Council of Synagogues and the Bishops Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, *Reflections on Covenant and Mission*.

This new family was not just another clan, in Christian belief, but "in Christ" a new multicultural family in which each individual was precious.

Because of the transcultural and multicultural nature of the Bible as a whole there has always been a mix of understanding of corporate worth and responsibility and individual worth and responsibility in the Bible, with focus often more on the one than the other, but moving generally from corporate to individual. Any viable society or culture has to find its own balance between the two. Individual responsibility recognizes human rights, including the right of the individual to migrate culturally and change community identity, as nearly every second-generation migrant family has done. Second-generation Americans are usually bilingual and bicultural. But their children, the third generation, become monolingual and monocultural English-speaking Americans. This country is, so to speak, the far western end of the hellenization process and at least theoretically sponsors human rights, that is, individual rights.[13]

If one wants to be true to the Bible, in all its dialogical strength and power, one should come to a true appreciation of the importance and power of the family to the human enterprise. The tension or dialogue between Israel's center in the patriarchal family and Jesus' radical openness to the worldwide human family as a whole can be resolved or understood as a biblical pilgrimage from the Bronze Age to the Greco-Roman, which indicates how we ourselves should continue by dynamic analogy on a similar but different route in our day. Understanding the Bible as a paradigm or model for how continually to bring the biblical past into the ongoing present in contemporary terms provides a map of God's will and desire for the progressive pilgrimage of constantly breaking through the old patriarchal and tribal limits to new horizons about the worth and responsibility of all families and of all individuals in God's creation – the common good.

Israel as a Pilgrimage

Just as prominent as the metaphor of the family for the covenant relationship between God and Israel is the metaphor of Israel or the church being a pilgrim folk. Pilgrims cannot limit God's Word to a meaning from the past, either traditional or scholarly. Believers of all stripes regularly resignify the Bible in order to render it relevant to the present. Moses asked God one day on a desert mountain, "Is it not in your going with us, I and your people, that we are distinct from all other peoples on the face of the earth?" (Exod 33:16). In David's consecration of the massive gifts offered so that Solomon could later build the temple, David prayed thus:

But who am I, and what is this people, that we should be able thus to offer gifts so abundantly? For all things come from you, O God, and of your own have we given you. We are strangers before you, O God, and sojourners, as all our ancestors were; our days on earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding (1 Chron 29:14–15).

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[13] Mandelbaum, *Ideas that Conquered the World*.

And the psalmist sang, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry … For I am your passing guest, an alien, like all my ancestors" (Ps 39:12). Abraham Heschel called it a fatal illusion to assume that a human being is the same as being human. "Being human," he said, "means being on the way, striving, waiting, hoping."

Israel, in this view, is a pilgrim folk constantly on the move from bondage to freedom. This should never be understood as a form of escapism – the "this world is not my home" syndrome – but as the essential character of any people who would claim to be Israel, to be on the move to address ever-new challenges, to sing a new song to the glory of God, to break camp morning by morning to seek God's will to live by it, to change what can and should be changed, to accept what cannot be changed, with a prayer for wisdom to know the difference – constantly vigilant to oppose dehumanizing others on the way because they are different. This would truly be a move beyond tribal thinking.[14] Such vigilance is to witness to the power of Torah and tradition, or of Scripture and Christ, as led by the Spirit.

Jesus was a clear embarrassment to the conservatives of his day. Luke reports that Jesus accepted invitations to many parties in the Galilee and on his fatal trip to Jerusalem. At one such party Jesus showed the depths of God's grace to a woman of ill-repute who bathed his feet in her tears and kissed them unashamedly in public as the prime example of what *agapē* (God's love) means (Luke 7:36–50). That story in the Gospel ought to shock every Christian who ever claimed to read the Bible literally, and it ought to shame any who forget the radicality of Jesus' teaching in the context of first-century Judaism, and of God's divine love and grace that know no bounds.

The key is first to focus in biblical stories on what God was doing through the sinful humans in them, and to moralize later, that is, to celebrate God's creativity, love, and grace first, and thereafter to ask what humans should do in the light of that celebration. The day may yet come when Christians will develop a vigorous theocentric Christology, and thus move on in their pilgrimage from traditional christocentric theologies. And if God is truly One, as we all claim we believe, the day may also come when Jews, Christians, and Muslims will have the humility to see the need to learn from each other, and be afraid neither that one is trying to convert the other, nor that learning from others dishonors Torah, Qur'an, or Christ. On the contrary, it would honor them all.

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Origen and the First Christian Testament

(2006)

A number of editions of the Hebrew Bible have appeared and more are in prospect.[1] And new editions of the Septuagint are in process and forthcoming.[2] The present writer has since before 1994 been urging the field to prepare and make available to serious students a pluriform or multiform First Testament in order to provide a balance to the tendency in critical scholarship to pillage the LXX, or other witnesses, to correct the MT with the purpose of reflecting a supposed "original" text lying back of both.[3] It is all the more urgent, now that an eclectic edition of the Hebrew Bible is in preparation, the Oxford Hebrew Bible, which will produce a text (not just apparatus) composed of the readings preferred by current scholars at the present time.[4]

Since I have already set forth the main arguments for a pluriform Bible, I want in the context of this tribute to our esteemed colleague to offer some observa-

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[1] See Sanders, Review of *Jerusalem Crown*, and Sanders, Review of *Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Ezekiel*, for a comparison of some of the more recent Hebrew Bible editions. Note also the publication in November 2004 of the first fascicle of the fifth edition in the Biblia Hebraica series, Schenker, *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*. [By 2018 twelve fascicles had been published.]

[2] Holmes and Parsons, *Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, the early eighteenth-century critical edition, is still very valuable, followed by the Cambridge editions, the Göttingen, and Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (explained in some detail in Swete, *Introduction to the OT in Greek*, and Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*). A major current project on the Septuagint is directed by Marguerite Harl at the Sorbonne. See Dogniez and Harl, *Pentateuque d'Alexandrie*. The extent of the revival of interest in the Septuagint in recent times can be gauged by the publications of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, esp. the annual "Record of Work"; note the especially rich compendium volume, Taylor, *X Congress of the IOSCS*. The growing interest in the Septuagint is indicated by an introduction to it by evangelicals Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*.

[3] See Sanders, "Stability and Fluidity," 211 ff., elaborated on in Sanders, "Task of Text Criticism." I repeated this in Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Text Criticism," and in Sanders, "Hebrew University Bible and *BHQ*." A similar suggestion was made by Talmon, "OT Text," esp. 175–99, and by Barthélemy, "L'enchevêtrement de l'histoire textuelle," 39. See also Aejmelaeus, "Translation Technique," 30–31. Emanuel Tov has now added his strong voice to the call for a pluriform Bible edition, in Tov, "Status of the Masoretic Text," 249.

[4] See Barr, Review of *Invitation to the Septuagint*, in which he in passing supports creating an eclectic edition of the Hebrew Bible, citing Tov, but Tov ("Status of the Masoretic Text," 249) has now declared there is no critical basis for creating an eclectic edition such as is being prepared by Ronald Hendel and his team for the Oxford Hebrew Bible. See Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Text Criticism"; Sanders, "Keep Each Tradition Separate"; Sanders, "Impact of the Judaean Desert Scrolls."

tions from study of the textual situation in the early church that may provide further background to the need of a pluriform edition of the First Testament. The work of Eugene Ulrich on the Septuagint is well known and deeply appreciated. His study clarifying the quest for the "Old Greek" and the contributions of Origen and of the Hexapla to its recovery is well and judiciously stated.[5] He has rightly held to the importance of the Septuagint both for textual criticism and for its intrinsic value to Christians, as well as to historians of early Judaism. Among the many gifts of the discovery of the Judean Desert Scrolls has been the recovery among them of Hebrew texts of certain biblical books that appear to witness to *Vorlagen* of the LXX, and we are all indebted to Gene Ulrich for his illuminating work in this regard.[6]

When one thinks of a polyglot Bible one thinks spontaneously of the work of the second-century Alexandrian and Caesarean scholar Origen and the Hexapla that he inspired and saw to completion on what must have been about 6500 pages in fifteen volumes. It took some fifteen years to complete the work. The classical polyglot Bibles, undoubtedly inspired by Origen's work and convictions, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included the Aramaic, Syriac, Latin, and Arabic versions, with Latin translations.[7] Origen died in Tyre in 254 but most likely had finished work on it while still in Caesarea (*pace* Epiphanius, *Haer*. 44.3). One might well express continuing gratitude to the benefactor who funded the work that provided Origen with enough students and disciples to see the work accomplished. Unfortunately, this magnum opus has not survived because of the destruction of the Caesarean library in 638 CE, some thirteen years before the destruction of the magnificent library at Alexandria, in which there surely must have also been a copy of the Hexapla as well, and where Eusebius says Origen started work on it before his move from Egypt to Caesarea. What we know of Origen and his work is due mainly to Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica* (cf. 6.16). Thanks to the work of Frederick Field (1801–85), the Syro-Hexaplar, and a few other witnesses, we have a working idea of what the Hexapla was like.[8]

The first of the six columns of the Hexapla was a text of the proto-masoretic text that Origen would have acquired from rabbis whom he knew and sometimes consulted for clarity on their understanding of passages.[9] Unfortunately none of this column remains in any form, but we can be fairly certain that it was in the tradition of the stabilized proto-masoretic text from the late first century CE.

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[5] Ulrich, "Origen's OT Text." See also his earlier paper, Ulrich, "Septuagint Manuscripts from Qumran." See the earlier compendium volume, Kannengieser and Petersen, *Origen of Alexandria*, and the even earlier work of Nautin, *Origène: Sa vie et son oeuvre*.

[6] See Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 165–289 (Part 2).

[7] Conveniently listed by Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 77–78.

[8] Besides indirectly in Eusebius, the Hexapla partially survives only in Ceriani, *Codex Syro-Hexaplaris Ambrosianus*, published in 1874, Psalter fragments published by Cardinal Mercati, *Psalterii Hexapli Reliquae I*, in 1958, further work by Georgio Castellino of the University of Rome, and a few other witnesses. The standard collation of the Hexapla is still Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae Supersunt*. See the convenient listings of extant MSS in Ulrich, "Origen's OT Text," 208 (also 212, 217, 220), and in Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 127–33.

[9] See Barthélemy, "Origène et le texte," 215–16.

Nor do we actually have any direct witness to the second column, the transliteration of the first column in Greek letters, which supposedly served non-Hebraists who could not read the Hebrew text of the first column. Harry Orlinsky was of the opinion that the whole arrangement of columns, especially the second column, was designed to teach Christians enough Hebrew to make informed arguments in the controversy with the Jews of the day about crucial passages. Sidney Jellicoe concludes his discussion of the issue by quoting a colleague who said that Origen's main object was to save the Old Testament for the church.[10] The point would have made considerable sense at the time since by then most Christians knew, *pace* Marcion and others, that if Christians did not keep a double-Testament Bible, the two points on which all Christians apparently agreed, namely, monotheism and supersessionism,[11] would have been lost. All Christians of all persuasions believed it was the One God of All who was revealed in Christ and gave birth to the church, and that the church of Jesus Christ and not rabbinic Judaism was the true heir to ancient Israel. The early Christian sect (much like the sect at Qumran) had felt free to add their own literature to received Jewish Scripture to score the two points, and then thereafter kept the First Testament in place to underscore them.

Origen, in responding to Africanus, who had criticized his work, stated his reason rather clearly:

We take pains not to remain ignorant of that transmitted among them so that, in the dispute with the Jews, we will not offer something that is not transmitted in their manuscripts, and so that we adduce what is transmitted among them, even if it is not transmitted in our books. For if we are prepared in this way, they will not scorn us.

Africanus had faulted Origen for drawing on the story of Susannah because it was not found in the Hebrew Bible, and was obviously composed in Greek and had no Hebrew *Vorlage* because of certain word-plays in the story tenable only in Greek. Though Africanus's letter of objection to Origen was relatively brief, Origen's response was extensive and in depth. He outdid Africanus in showing how he had made an in-depth study of the issue and agreed that not only was the story of Susannah Greek in origin, there were many others in the Greek Jewish Bible that had no Hebrew *Vorlage*.

He then described to Africanus his work in marking the "pluses" in the Greek by an obelisk, and those in Hebrew by an asterisk. Thereupon he pressed Africanus's argument to its logical conclusion and asked if Christians should then drop from their Bibles all passages not found in Hebrew texts of the OT, to the point that he showed the absurdity of such a proposal. Origen then advanced with great fervor a theocentric argument asking if Providence had been negligent in building the church on Holy Scripture and God's suffering love for humanity witnessed in the passion of Christ. On the contrary, went the argument, God had

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[10] See Orlinsky, "Columnar Order of the Hexapla." Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, 111. See also Tov, *Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint*.
[11] Masterfully treated in Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*.

precisely provided the church from its foundation with a Greek edition of Holy Scripture corresponding to the role God willed for it. Noting that there were divergent texts and versions in use among Jews, Origen argued the necessity of comparing them all in parallel columns to provide Christians with in-depth information about the entire situation so that they not be scorned in the ongoing controversy with Jews.[12]

Most Christians of the second century were keenly aware of the variant readings between the Hebrew and Greek, for example, at Isa 7:14, but most did not know Hebrew sufficiently well to engage in the dispute. Origen wanted to correct that situation even though it is doubtful that he himself knew much Hebrew.[13] One suspects that Origen's mode of access to the Hebrew text was similar to that of Philo over two centuries earlier: one asked a *tanna* or a rabbi; or there may have been a Hebrew–Greek glossary of some sort to consult, certainly in Alexandria, probably in Caesarea.

There are limited witnesses to the following four columns: Aquila, Symmachus, Origen's LXX, and finally Theodotion. The four columns were called Tetrapla by Epiphanius (*Haer*. 44.3), and the whole was given the title Hexapla, or Octapla, by Eusebius (*Hist. ecc.* 6.14.11 ff). There is no evidence that Origen himself used any of these terms.

Origen borrowed the usage of obelisk and asterisk from Homeric scholarship of the time but re-signified them for use in the Hexapla. In Homer, the obelisk indicated an interpolated passage (a "plus") and the asterisk a genuine one, whereas in the Hexapla the obelisk simply indicated a "plus" in the Greek text over against the Hebrew while the asterisk indicated a "plus" in the Hebrew text over against the Greek. But his students and followers later apparently failed to remember the re-signification and treated them as they were used in the better-known Homeric texts, so that the pluses in Greek were falsely read as less authentic and the pluses in Hebrew as genuine. This misunderstanding may have inspired Jerome to go live in Bethlehem for thirty years to learn Hebrew in depth, attach himself to a rabbi there to espouse his doctrine of *Hebraica veritas*, translate the Bible into Latin, and in doing so to create a new category of apocryphal or deuterocanonical books (and portions of books) not in the Hebrew text. The NT gives evidence of early use of fluid Hebrew texts and Greek translations, as well as use of the LXX (especially in the longer citations edited in Matthew and Luke), but thereafter prior to Jerome the Septuagint was the Scripture of the early Greek-speaking churches (and its translation, *Vetus Latina*, in Latin-speaking churches).

In fact, Dominique Barthélemy, in several treatises probing the entire available Origenic corpus, made it quite clear that Origen was a champion of the LXX and believed that the LXX was the true First Testament of the Christian double-Tes-

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[12] Origen, *Epistola ad Africanum* 5, in Delarue, *Origenes, Opera Omnia*, 1:12–30.
[13] Ulrich, "Origen's OT Text," 216. Barthélemy deemed it likely that while Origen inspired the Hexapla he may well have had the work done by others in his *atelier* sponsored by his benefactor, and that he himself then made use of it; see Barthélemy, "Origène et le texte," 210–14.

tament Bible.[14] Barthélemy began his basic study of Origen with the assertion: "No one has ever prepared documentation as complete of the Greek Bible as did Origen. No one has ever had as decisive an influence on the text thereof as Origen, nor as catastrophic."[15] The "catastrophic" influence was due not to Origen but to his less than scrupulous disciples who proceeded to "correct" the LXX on the basis of the Hexapla. Origen had a deep respect for the Septuagint that the students lacked. He criticized severely those who would "improve" the text by introducing conjectures on what an original reading might have been. In his commentary on John (Tome VI) Origen explained why he provided parallel columns of Theodotion, Symmachus, and Aquila, claiming that they were too recent to have been corrupted in transmission but would provide witness to the actual state of the Hebrew text they translated. Origen probably had no direct knowledge of the dramatic stabilization by the end of the first century CE of the earlier fluid Hebrew texts of the Bible in early Judaism (what S. Talmon calls "the Great Divide").

Origen gained a keen respect for the Hebrew text, but instead of opting for its authenticity over against the Greek, he developed a kind of biblical dualism arguing for the authenticity of both, complementary and not antithetical. By providing a stereoscopic edition of the First Testament he would permit the faithful to plumb the spiritual depths of Scripture in its fullness and move beyond petty controversy focusing on single words and verses. Augustine followed Origen in this, but not Jerome, who apparently misunderstood the re-signified Homeric sigla. In his exegetical works, Origen showed respect for the variant readings and tried to understand how they might speak to the faithful. He was fully aware that it was impossible to reconstruct an "original" text, but that it was valuable to sift through the ruins still available to find the gold nuggets whereby God or Holy Spirit might speak to a new situation.[16]

Jerome thus pressed Origen's interest in the value of the Hebrew text for the First Testament of the Church's double-Testament Bible into his doctrine of *Hebraica veritas*. His friend Augustine disagreed with Jerome and followed Origen's firm belief in the LXX as the church's Scripture (*Civ. Dei* 18.42–44). He also followed Origen in his belief in a biblical dualism or dual inspiration of both the Hebrew Bible and the LXX. As Barthélemy so aptly put it: Augustine

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[14] See the similar arguments of Hengel, *Septuagint as Christian Scripture*, and the citation of Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 15.14, by Hanhart, "Introduction," in which Augustine argued that "the seventy" were moved by the Spirit to deviate from the Hebrew not in the manner of interpreters but with the freedom of a prophet to contemporize the message of Scripture for the Hellenistic world at the time. This is a good statement of the canonical process. For Christianity, as for the ancient sect at Qumran, prophecy had not ceased in the time of Ezra–Nehemiah, as it had for rabbinic Judaism.

[15] Barthélemy, "Origène et le texte." Barthélemy, "L'AT a mûri à Alexandrie" and "La place de la Septante dans l'église" had already indicated his conviction in this regard.

[16] So Barthélemy ended his "Origène et le texte," 217. See his position even more explicitly stated in Barthélemy, "L'AT a mûri à Alexandrie," 139, in which he several times denied that canonicity depends on being an exact squeeze as of a lapidary inscription; rather, the LXX would represent the actualization (maturing) of the Mosaic message for the hellenized world.

proposed as original form of the Christian OT a Bible in two columns: the one would present the Septuagint of the first centuries of our era, and the other the Hebrew text of rabbinic Judaism.[17]

Such a two-column edition of the First Testament would fully honor both traditions, Augustine's and Jerome's, and offer the modern reader a true picture of the textual riches (and peculiarities) of both. Gene Ulrich's appreciation of the LXX for itself, as well as its value in textual criticism of the First Testament, would he honored and the biblical student of the twenty-first century immensely enriched.[18]

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[17] Barthélemy, "La place de la Septante dans l'église."

[18] It might also have the felicitous result of stopping calling the First Christian Testament the Hebrew Bible (= *Biblia Hebraica* = Tanak), as is now done in most Western Christian seminaries. Even if one adopts with Jerome and Luther the Hebrew for the text, the structure is still that of the First Christian Testament. See Sanders, "Issue of Closure."

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The Hermeneutics of Establishing the Text

(2017)

The work of the Masoretes (Hebrew Bible [HB] manuscript traditionists and scribes) of the early Middle Ages is handsomely preserved in a few codices of the HB dating back to the early tenth century CE.[1] Their work contained five major elements that make up a Masoretic Text (MT) of the HB: (1) the consonants of the text; (2) the vowels of the text, represented by signs placed under, above, and within the consonants; (3) accent marks (*teʿamim*) on each word to indicate how the vocalized consonants were to be pronounced; (4) intervals in the text including spaces small and large; and (5) cryptic notes (*masorot*) in the lateral margins (*masorah qetanah=masorah parva* [small]) and in the top and bottom margins (*masorah gedolah=masorah magna* [large]), providing succeeding scribes further information about problematic words and phrases and their different particular occurrences within the HB as a whole. In addition, there is also a final note (*masorah finalis*) at the end (typically) of books, listing the number of words in each textual unit, which subsequent scribes were scrupulously to heed to ensure accuracy.[2]

The MT was the result of a centuries-long development of preserving the text of the HB that started after the "great divide" in Judaism caused by the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.[3] Before the divide, early Judaism had been highly diverse with many different forms of expression. This may be seen in the so-called Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, as well as in the differing forms of biblical texts. This is also more recently illustrated by the literature of the sect of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The focus of transmission of the text had been on preserving the message of a text in its various parts, which permitted slight scribal changes in the text itself. This enabled the communities served by the scribes to understand its message and relevance to the ongoing life of the various sects.[4]

However, after the divide, the focus shifted dramatically to preserving the words of the text rather than its message, which had been subject to a wide variety of interpretations due to the differing convictions of the various expressions of Judaism before the divide. This shift was a radical change in the hermeneutic of the text – from preserving the messages of the text to focusing on "verbal

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[1] Fuller, "Text of the Tanak."
[2] Würthwein, *Text of the OT*, 12–41.
[3] Talmon, *Text and Canon*, 439–42. See also Talmon, "Textual Study."
[4] Sanders, "Task of Text Criticism."

inspiration" of the text itself, apart from any interpretation. This soon evolved into a focus on even the letters of the words, that is, "literal inspiration,"[5] which in turn resulted in the stabilization of the Hebrew text and rigidly-literal-type translations in Greek (those of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus) during the second century CE. The change can be seen also in the later Hebrew manuscripts found at Qumran, which were considerably more like the MT than the earlier pre-masoretic biblical Qumran texts. This is the reason the period after the divide up to the work of the Masoretes is called the proto-masoretic period of the history of transmission of the text. This was followed by the period of the MT itself.

The five elements that made up the MT as received from preceding generations in effect fixed the transmission and wording of the text for centuries to follow. Some elements, such as the consonants, vowels, accents, and intervals, are crucial to understanding and interpreting the text, while the marginal and final *masorot* were in effect notes from one generation of scribes to the next; these were designed to ensure accurate copying and transmission while only tangentially affecting interpretation of the text, if at all. The word count ensured a high degree of scribal accuracy and allowed succeeding scribes to count words in a literary unit backward and forward – without regard to meaning. Bible editions used in Jewish synagogue study and prayer have often omitted the *masorot* and have followed the crucial matter of intervals according to talmudic stipulation rather than what the Masoretes themselves handed on.[6] Also, Torah scrolls housed in synagogue arks normally contain only the consonants. Bible editions used in Christian study and in translations for worship and interpretation (*Biblia Hebraica* 1 and 2, or *BH*[1] and *BH*[2]), used the available *Rabbinic Bible* texts (esp. the *Second Rabbinic Bible* [1524–25] of Jacob ben-Hayyim [ca. 1470 to ca. 1538]) until the recovery of the classical Tiberian masoretic codices in the early twentieth century, accredited in large part to the work of Paul Kahle. Kahle was a German scholar of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who worked on the manuscripts discovered at the end of the nineteenth century in the Cairo Genizah. He also studied in depth the work of the Masoretes in both the Orient and the West.[7]

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[5] Sanders, "Issue of Closure."
[6] Dotan, *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia*, vii–xxiii.
[7] Kahle, *Masoretische Text*; Kahle, *Masoreten des Ostens*; Kahle, *Masoreten des Westens*. For an excellent overview of the history of the HB, following the establishment of the MT in the classical Tiberian manuscripts up to the beginning of modern textual criticism, see the introduction to the first volume of the final report of the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project in Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle* 1:*1–*114; ET: Barthélemy, *Studies in the Text of the OT*, 2–141.

Editions of *Biblia Hebraica*

Abbr.; Date	Edition	Base Text; Date	Editor(s); Publisher(s)	Features
BH[1]; 1905–1906	*Biblia Hebraica Kittel* 1	Jacob ben-Hayyim, *Mikraʾot Gedolot.* Venice: D. Bomberg, 1524–25	Rudolf Kittel; Leipzig: Hinrichs	Footnotes on Hebrew text, based on LXX, Samaritan Pentateuch etc.
BH[2]; 1913	*Biblia Hebraica* Kittel/Kahle 2	Jacob ben-Hayyim, *Mikraʾot Gedolot.* Venice: D. Bomberg, 1524–25	Rudolf Kittel & Paul Kahle	Same as *BH*[1]; and a list of word-count errors.
BH[3]; 1929–37 (1st one-vol. edn: 1937)	*Biblia Hebraica* Kahle/Kittel 3	Photocopies of the Leningrad Codex (Leningradensis=L); 1005 CE	Paul Kahle & Rudolf Kittel	Revised footnotes
BHS; 1968–76 (1st one-vol. edn: 1977)	*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensis*	Photocopies of the Leningrad Codex (Leningradensis=L); 1005 CE	Paul Kahle; Deutsche Bibel-gesellschaft	Revised masoretic notes
BHQ; 2004– (completion anticipated by 2020)	*Biblia Hebraica Quinta*	Color photocopies (1990) of Leningrad Codex (Leningradensis=L); 1005 CE	Adrian Schenker et al.	*Masorah magna*; Commentary on *masorah*; variants rarely cited
… not to be confused with …	*Biblia Qumranica* Project	Biblical scrolls from Qumran	Beate Ego, Armin Lange, Kristin DeTroyer	Toward a synoptic edition of Qumran biblical MSS.

The manuscripts of the HB subsequent to the work of the Masoretes were sometimes marred by scribal errors and lack the value of the classical Tiberian manuscripts. Later medieval manuscripts of the Tanak, collated by the British scholar Benjamin Kennicott and the Italian Bernardo de Rossi, may in a few cases reflect true variants in the HB going back before the work of the Masoretes. The few cases that do so need to be carefully scrutinized before assuming this to be the case. The most accurately preserved of all the classical Tiberian MT manuscripts is called Aleppensis (A, dated to 915 CE). This manuscript was recovered from

a synagogue in Aleppo in 1948 during the Arab–Israeli conflict following the establishment of the modern state of Israel, but it lacks several leaves [sold by the congregation to raise money[8] or] lost in a fire in the synagogue. Kahle had tried to make a photocopy of A in Aleppo but failed to secure the cooperation of the synagogue authorities. He did, however, have photocopies made of Leningradensis (L, dated to 1005 CE), and these were used in preparing the third and fourth editions of *Biblia Hebraica*, *BH*³ and *BHS*. The first two editions of *BH* (1905–6 and 1913) had used the *Second Rabbinic Bible* as the base text. The fifth edition, *BHQ*(*uinta*), is based on the excellent photographs taken of L in 1990 by a team sponsored by the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center in Claremont of the Leningrad Codex.[9]

Very important for textual criticism of the HB, but rarely cited, are the Rabbanite and Qara'ite commentaries contemporary to the later Masoretes, notably those of Yefet ben Eli (Qara'ite; late tenth century), Daniel al-Qumisi (Qara'ite; died in 946), Saadya Gaon (882/892–942), David Z. Lichaa (eleventh century), and Salmon ben Yeruham (Qara'ite; tenth century). Most of their work is available only in fragmentary form in scattered manuscripts. The most prolific and important of the medieval Qara'ite commentators on Scripture was Yefet ben Eli, whose works in Judeo-Arabic are mostly unpublished but are preserved in manuscripts located in museums and libraries in Leningrad, Berlin, Paris, London, Oxford, Cambridge, and New York. They are available on microfilm from libraries in those loci.[10] Yefet was copious in commenting on all the books of the HB except Lamentations. Because he wrote in Judeo-Arabic and was contemporary to the later Masoretes in Tiberias, Yefet is the best witness that we have for understanding the mind and work of the Masoretes. Yefet would have had in mind the very thinking of those who fixed the vocalization and the accent marks of the classical Tiberian manuscripts. His work is a treasure rarely used by modern textual critics, despite the fact that it is rich in knowledge of the grammar and syntax underlying the MT. Yefet's knowledge was based on his intimate acquaintance with the Arabic language of the time in Tiberias in the Galilee, where the Masoretes also resided and worked. Most modern Hebrew grammars are based on European knowledge of the syntax and morphology of the classical languages and therefore limited.

Yefet, acquainted also with numerous exegetical traditions before him, not infrequently provides rich solutions to text-critical problems throughout the HB that have plagued Western scholars for centuries. Being himself from the area where the Masoretes worked, he would have had in mind the thinking and reasoning of those who fixed the vocalization and accent markings of the classical Tiberian manuscripts. Thus, his copious commentaries serve as witness to the mentality of the Masoretes themselves and to numerous exegetical traditions before them. Since Yefet lived in Palestine and wrote his commentaries in

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[8] [Verbal information from Shemaryahu Talmon just before his death.]

[9] Sanders, Review of *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, fasc. 18; to view the manuscript, see Freedman, *Leningrad Codex*.

[10] Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 1:665; ben Eli, *Libri Psalmorum* (see two editions in the bibliography).

Judeo-Arabic between 950 and 1000, he is the most important source for understanding the text-critical work of the Masoretes. Other Jewish exegetes (Rabbanite and Qara'ite), contemporary to the Masoretes and hence to the model masoretic codices of Cairo, Aleppo, and Leningrad, were principally Daniel al-Qumisi and Saadya Gaon (preserved only in fragmentary form) and Salmon ben Yeruham on Psalms, Qohelet, and Lamentations.

In addition to these are the slightly later *glossateurs* who composed their comments on Scripture in Old French (*le vieux français*).[11] Their work preserves traditions extant before the well-known French rabbinic commentator Rashi (1040–1105), whose work, usually in medieval Hebrew, is normally included in rabbinic Bibles and is far better known. There are six distinct glossators whose work is available, again, mostly in unpublished manuscripts. Though the Judeo-Arabic commentators and the glossators have hardly been known heretofore, even in the best scholarship on the text of the HB, the work of all these was invaluable in preparing *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*,[12] and required constant reference to microfilms of the available manuscripts. We often found that modern, critical solutions of the last two centuries to some especially difficult textual problems were but echoes of their unheralded much earlier work, or lacking for ignorance of it. Modern, critical "solutions" have often sanitized the textual problem treated rather than solved it.

The earliest Jewish exegete to flag probable errors in the HB text was Ismail al-Ukbari (ca. 840). Echoing his work, Jacob Qirqisani (Qara'ite; first half of tenth century) remarked that the number 33 in Gen 46:15 should actually be 32, thus daring to suggest an error in the received text.[13] Abraham ibn Ezra (1089–1164) cited an anonymous grammarian who estimated that more than a hundred words of Scripture should be replaced by others.[14] The grammarian cited was probably a student of Abulwalid (982 to ca. 1057), a Qara'ite commentator who wrote in Judeo-Arabic and whose name was Isaac ibn Yashush de Toledo (ca. 1040). Ibn Ezra was offended by the suggestion, but Abulwalid accused ibn Ezra of simply not having the audacity to agree.[15] In his own exegesis of the passages, Abulwalid accepted about eighty of the cases himself. Careful study of medieval Jewish exegetes, like ibn Ezra and others, reveals the fact that while they were reluctant to correct Scripture, they subtly adopted many such corrections in their own exegetical work. By this is not meant the common rabbinic exegetical technique of *ʾal tiqrēʾ* ("do not read" what is in the text, "but read" a similar but different word) in reading the text, but in their exegetical explanations and elaborations of the passages treated. Often in his commentaries, Abulwalid offered substitutions of words for what is in Scripture. It

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[11] Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 1:638, but omitted in the ET, Barthélemy, *Studies in the Text of the OT*.
[12] Barthélemy et al., *Critique textuelle*, vols. 1–5 (1982–2015).
[13] Qirqisani, *Kitab al-Anwar wal-Maraqib*, 1:56.
[14] Abulwalid, [*Kitab al-Lumaʿ*] *Le livre des parterres fleuris*, 294.
[15] See Bacher, *Aus der Schrifterklärung des Abulwalid*, 28–29.

might be called exegesis by substitution and permutation.[16] Even so, Abulwalid was not the first to do this. Ibn Ezra cites Saadya Gaon as having suggested some of these cases himself.[17] But even before Saadya, Judah ben Qoreish had offered similar solutions. And between Saadya and Abulwalid there was Abraham ha-Bavli who did so as well. The Qara'ite lexicographer David ben Abraham al-Fasi (second half of tenth century) used the same exegetical technique. It was a means employed by close or careful readers of the Hebrew text to solve or avoid difficult textual problems. Most Rabbanite and Qara'ite scholars of the time engaged in in-depth study and close readings of the morphology, lexicography, and syntax to understand textual difficulties. These included certainly Yefet ben Eli, but also Abraham ibn Ezra, Aaron ben Joseph (end of thirteenth century), and David Qimhi (1160–1235). Sanctes Pagnini, a Dominican of the early sixteenth century CE, used in depth the grammar and the dictionary compiled by Radaq (David Qimhi) to suggest numerous solutions to problems in the text.

Martin Luther, who challenged the Roman Catholic Church in the early sixteenth century because of what he viewed as its departure from biblical teaching, especially in the Gospels and Paul's letters, set about to invest that challenge with a translation of Scripture into the German vernacular of his day and region around Wartburg. He began in 1517 with the NT, which he was able to complete in two years, because he wisely used the humanist Erasmus's Greek text. Erasmus only shortly earlier (1516) had collated and established, out of the multiple and highly divergent Greek manuscripts available at the time, a single text of the NT for study and translation.[18] After completion of his NT translation, Luther turned in 1519 to the First or Old Testament, and that was when he began to realize that he was going to have to be a textual critic whether he had planned to be one or not. One wonders how Luther would have proceeded with his NT translation if he had not had Erasmus's text, since NT Greek texts and other early witnesses vary so widely. Luther was a well-educated monk and knew both Hebrew and Greek very well. He accepted Jerome's principle of *Hebraica veritas* and sought the best text to translate, but in order to make a responsible translation of the OT, he had to gather as many copies of the Tanak as he could find in the immediate vicinity of Wartburg and Erfurt. Because of the numerous variants among them, Luther realized that he had to develop a hermeneutic of the text to guide his work and that of his students and collaborators. It was the way he devised to try to bring consistency to the work and to the final translation. He instructed his cohorts that wherever the text seemed troubled, especially in those passages that are quoted in the NT, they should disregard everything in the texts except the Hebrew and Aramaic consonants. Those should be regarded as sacrosanct, but everything else – the vowels, accents, intervals, and *masorah* – should be ignored, he said, if the consonants could be read in accord with the

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[16] Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 1:*2–*3.
[17] Bacher, *Aus der Schrifterklärung des Abulwalid*, 28–29.
[18] Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum Omne*.

NT quotation of a passage, or with a NT interpretation of a concept expressed in a HB text.[19]

This hermeneutic Luther called *res et argumentum*.[20] The word *res* in Latin is still used today in legal parlance to refer to the "principal matter" involved in a legal case. For Luther, *res* ("principal matter") meant "the gospel of Jesus Christ." Wherever and whenever the Hebrew consonants could be understood to look forward to the gospel they should be read that way. For Luther, *argumentum* would be those passages in the OT that did not directly point to the gospel, but had largely to do with ancient, temporal custom and culture. They could be translated as seemed best to the translator, so long as they did not contradict the *res*. In denigrating everything but the consonants in the HB, Luther took his lead from the fourth-century Jerome, who had taken on the same task as Luther, but twelve hundred years earlier, in translating the Hebrew into the vernacular Latin (*Vulgata*) of his day. Jerome had called his hermeneutic *Hebraica veritas*, meaning that, in his opinion, the church should use the rabbinic (proto-masoretic) text of his time as its First Testament text and not the earlier Greek translations of it (the so-called LXX). Before Jerome, these had been the texts of the OT used in the early church, and they formed the basis of the Latin translations of the LXX, called *Vetus Latina*, which were available to non-Greek-speaking Latin Christians. The *Vetus Latina* were rather literal translations of the Greek into Latin. Jerome in his time, and Luther in his, had in part the same goal, to afford lay folk a translation of the Bible in a language they could read and understand. Luther felt, of course, that he had a strong defense for his OT work, in pointing back to Jerome's similar work twelve hundred years earlier, but careful reading of Jerome's commentaries and his other work has brought some scholars to doubt that Jerome's defense of *Hebraica veritas* was as solid as Luther had thought.[21]

For his idea of *Hebraica veritas*, Jerome had depended on the work of Origen, the late second- and early third-century church father and exegete who had compiled a massive six-column collation of the OT text, called the Hexapla. One column offered the then current (proto-masoretic) Hebrew text of the HB, which Origen had obtained from his rabbinic consultants in both Alexandria and Caesarea Maritima, each of which had excellent libraries at the time. Another column provided a Greek transliteration of that text that Christian interlocutors could use to pronounce the Hebrew in debating the text of the Bible with rabbis. This was followed by four Greek translations of the (proto-masoretic) Hebrew text in circulation at that time. Origen was a genius, and he is rightly called "the father of textual criticism" because of his work on the Hexapla. However, it has recently been cogently argued that Jerome misunderstood both Origen's hermeneutic of the text and the symbols Origen had used in the Hexapla concerning

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[19] Sanders, "Hermeneutics of Text Criticism." See also Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 1:*4–*9.

[20] Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 1:*4–*9.

[21] Sanders, "Origen and the First Christian Testament."

the variants in the text between the Hebrew and the Greek, and because of that misunderstanding he had come up with his *Hebraica veritas* principle. It has further been argued that Jerome's friend and colleague, Augustine, also a dévoté of Origen, understood Origen aright. Augustine viewed both the Hebrew text used by the rabbis and the Greek translation (or LXX) used by the church to be equally inspired – a dual canon, so to speak, of the First or Old Testament.[22] But because Luther followed Jerome in this regard, the early Greek translation (LXX) of the First Testament has ever since taken a lower place of value for determining the early Hebrew texts it translated, even though it is still seen to be, especially after study of the Judean Desert Scrolls, the principal and earliest non-Hebrew witness to the biblical text. While Luther valued the Hebrew text, his acerbic anti-Semitism may possibly be traced to his arguments against rabbinic interpretations of crucial Hebrew passages. He claimed even that Jews, in their defiance of Christianity, had for fifteen hundred years (until his time) purposely changed the meaning of verses in the HB that otherwise pointed to the gospel.

After Luther, the next scholar of note was Sebastian Châteillon (Castalio or Castellio) (1515–63), who in 1551 translated from the Hebrew into Latin a restored text by recourse to Greek (LXX) or Latin translations (*Vetus Latina*, then Jerome's *Vulgata*), or by conjecture – with brief and concise critical notes.[23] Châteillon thus started the trend of proposing conjectured readings (that is, ones that have no basis in any manuscript witness) that would continue for centuries after him to the present day. Of the twenty-two cases where he suggested a conjecture, he was followed by later critics without attribution. For instance, when Julius Wellhausen, followed by S. R. Driver, borrowed from Châteillon, he mistakenly identified him as Edmund Castell (1606–85), the author of the *Heptaglotton* Lexicon.

While the sixteenth century witnessed a few translations using corrections of various sorts, the seventeenth saw the beginnings of "textual criticism" as a discipline, marked by rather chaotic and impassioned debates. The debates concerned the vowel points, the accent markings (*teʿamim*), and the intervals marking divisions (paragraphs), large and small, within the text itself. Buxtorf Sr. (1564–1629),[24] following Elias Levita (1469–1549),[25] sought to establish that these marks were recent inventions of the rabbis or Masoretes, while Louis Cappel (1585–1658) sought to establish that they had been devised over a long period and tested by hundreds of readers of the text and by the scribes. Cappel's earlier work on the Hebrew vowel points[26] was edited and published by the cel-

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22 Barthélemy, "L'AT a mûri à Alexandrie"; Sanders, "Origen and the First Christian Testament."

23 Châteillon, *Biblia Veteris et Novi Testamenti*.

24 Buxtorf Sr., *Tiberias, sive Commentarius Masorethicus*. Buxtorf Sr. also wrote a *Thesaurus* and *Lexicon* of Hebrew.

25 See Levita, *Masoret ha-Masoret* (2 editions in the bibliography), and Levita, *Sepher ha-Zikronot*.

26 Cappel, *Arcanum Punctationis Revelatum*.

ebrated scholar Thomas Erpenius (1584–1624), in 1624. In 1650 Cappel published his major work on the subject, *Critica Sacra*. Even though Buxtorf Sr. had opposed Cappel's work and method, no one answered Cappel's masterful treatise for twenty years. Buxtorf Sr. died in 1629, and thereafter his son, Buxtorf Jr. (1599–1664), took up the cudgels and in 1653 published a refutation, *Anticritica*. Cappel in turn responded to Buxtorf Jr. soon thereafter, but it was not published until 1689 in Amsterdam by his son, Jacques.[27] Cappel's *Critica Sacra* would precipitate vigorous debates for some time to come.[28]

In his *Critica Sacra*, Cappel established the legitimacy and necessity of subjecting the Hebrew text of the Bible to the same critical analysis as that used on any great literary work. One hundred fifty years later, Rosenmüller, in his *Handbuch*, credited Cappel as the pioneer of textual criticism of the HB.[29] Moreover, Cappel defended his work against many prejudices and superstitions regnant in his day. Swiss Calvinist theologians forbade students to study Cappel's work, and he had difficulty finding a publisher for his work until his son, Jacques Cappel, found three Catholic religious scholars, including Jean Morin (1591–1659), who would undertake the work. The Swiss Calvinist Formula Consensus of 1675 demanded that Protestant pastors and teachers sign a pledge countering Cappel's work for three reasons: (1) God had directed Moses, the prophets, and the apostles to write, and God, with paternal benevolence, guarded the transmission of the texts down to their time; (2) the Hebrew text of the OT down to their time was authentic and the touchstone of all the versions, oriental and occidental, for the Christian faith; and (3) the Bible did not in any way have merely human origins or transmission. Some younger pastors rebelled and conformity was rendered less strict. These debates clearly indicate the greater freedom Catholic scholars had over Protestant, because while Protestants for the most part subscribed to Luther's principle of *sola scriptura* and thus felt obligated to defend the divine nature of their one source of authority, Catholics had always professed the belief that the Bible was a product of the earliest church and was but one source of authority, along with later magisteria of the church and its *regula fidei* (rule of faith).

Jean Morin (1591–1659), who was originally Protestant, converted to Roman Catholicism precisely because it did not subscribe to the *sola scriptura* doctrine, but allowed more freedom to analyze the Bible critically. Morin entered the Oratoire (a French monastic movement focused on sanctifying secular priests, with an emphasis on holiness and scholarship) in Paris in 1618 and soon persuaded some cardinals that to prohibit Cappel's work would, unfortunately, make it all the more attractive. Cappel for his part continued to resist and fight the reactionaries. He showed by comparing internal biblical doublets, and then various ancient versions, that there were numerous variants within the Bible itself. He showed also that the (proto-masoretic) Hebrew text that Jerome used was differ-

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[27] Cappel, *Commentarii (Arcanum, Vindicae) Notae*.
[28] See also Buxtorf Jr., *Tractatus de Punctorum Vocalium*.
[29] Rosenmüller, *Handbuch*, 1:470.

ent from that in use during the seventeenth century. The Protestant Cappel and the Catholic Morin were old friends and co-defenders of the origins of biblical criticism, which they were themselves in the very process of developing. Morin's work on the Septuagint, as well as on the Samaritan Pentateuch and its targum, was published in 1628.[30] He used the *Polyglot of Alcala* (also known as the *Complutensian Polyglot*, 1517/1522),[31] probably the Aldine edition (1518–19), which included the Samaritan Pentateuch and its targum, to make some of his observations about variants in the text.

Morin introduced the idea of the "autograph" (assumed original work of the biblical authors) and affirmed that if the autographs of either Testament were discovered, they would, of course, be the measure of authority for the biblical text over against all other manuscript witnesses. While Morin offended both Catholics and Protestants by some of his work, they nonetheless tended to recognize his erudition and the originality of his hermeneutic of the text. It was not, as Luther insisted, what was in the OT that pointed to the gospel that was authentic, but what was in the autographs. Thus, by the time Morin died in 1659, the base of textual criticism for centuries to come was now clearly stated. Morin had reversed, by 180 degrees, the very aim of textual criticism. Cappel, for his part, became a sort of champion for facilitating solutions to textual problems that Buxtorf Jr. rightly called attention to. Cappel himself recognized that Buxtorf's highlighting of these problems, if not his work generally, was justified, even though Cappel himself did not endorse all of Buxtorf's work. Cappel, in offering conjectures as solutions to textual problems, was thus arguably the founder of the mode of textual criticism that would prevail for years to come, in some circles, until today.

Seventeenth-century textual critics Cappel and Morin, and the anti-critics, the Buxtorfs, agreed in principle that if they had the autographs of Moses and the prophets, the text of the autographs would be the norm. They also agreed that the MT that was available to them was unified. These two agreements between them actually narrowed the debate. Cappel and Morin also agreed that the LXX was the principal source of any true variants to the MT text they had, and that nearly all the variants between the MT and the LXX were due to differences in the *Vorlage* of the LXX. The anti-critics, however, attributed the differences to errors committed or liberties taken in translation, or to accidents that occurred during the transmission of the text. By the seventeenth century, the authority of the LXX was the opposite of what it had been before Jerome, when it was the first and only Old Testament of Christianity. Jerome's influence was immense. It is felt today more than ever in the custom among many biblical scholars to refer to the Christian First Testament as the "Hebrew Bible," as though it were the Tanak itself, instead of the Old Testament, as it had been for centuries, with a different order of biblical books and therefore quite a different hermeneutic

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[30] Morin, *Vetus Testamentum secundum LXX*, and Morin, *Exercitationes Ecclesiasticae* (1631). See also Morin, *Exercitationes Biblicae*.
[31] Ximénes de Cisnero, *Polyglotte d'Alcala.*

by which it was read. Augustine's view that the LXX and the HB were equally authoritative, affording the church a dual canon of its First Testament, has almost entirely been lost and is hardly known today even among respected scholars.[32]

The variants in the Samaritan Pentateuch, only recently made available in the seventeenth century, caused serious doubts about its authority as the newcomer on the scene. The critics focused their time and energy on the variants of the MT texts available to them. They hoped to dismantle the unity of the MT witnesses they had, and to find the true *Vorlage* of the versions available to them, especially, of course, of the LXX. The anti-critics believed firmly that the MT had been guarded with paternal affection by God in the transmission of the manuscripts, so that the apographs (copies) they had available to them were in essence identical to the autographs. Cappel and Morin, on the contrary, were convinced they would eventually be able to show that the various manuscripts differed too widely in important readings for that to be the case.

At this point, Benedict Spinoza's (1632–77) ideas about inspired authors entered the discussions. It did so through the work of Richard Simon (1638–1712), whose formulae and basic ideas had been (and still are) almost totally ignored in surveys of this important juncture in the development of textual criticism. Simon was another Protestant who returned to the Roman Catholic fold and became a member of the Oratoire in Paris. His *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, published in 1678, a year after Spinoza's death, was roundly denounced by Bishop Bossuet (1763), which accounts largely for the silencing of the voice of Simon ever since.[33] Simon also criticized the works of Cappel and Morin, charging that they had not been diligent enough in use of the riches of the library of the Oratoire, or of the royal library itself, also in Paris. All his life long Simon refused to compromise, and his work was denounced by the church to which he had returned. He has thus been almost totally ignored by subsequent critics, especially the well-known German critics who came on the scene in the eighteenth century. Their focus was on establishing the aim of textual criticism as an "original text" that would have lain back of the different books and sections of Scripture, very much as it is among scholars today who follow the similar view of the nineteenth-century Paul de Lagarde (1827–91).[34] Spinoza, Simon, and their work will be explored in more detail later in this essay.

Another important scholar of the period, C. F. Houbigant (1686–1784), used the same Paris libraries to fill in what he viewed as missing from the works of Morin and Cappel. In 1753, he published the magnificent four-volume work of 3,759 pages, *Biblia Hebraica cum Notis Criticis et Versione Latina ad Notas Criticas Facta*. The congregation of the Oratoire provided the necessary funds for it. This epochal study was republished in Frankfurt and praised by Johann David Michaelis (1717–91),[35] but the German edition was subsequently criticized by

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[32] Barthélemy, "L'AT a mûri à Alexandrie"; Sanders, "Origen and the First Christian Testament."

[33] See Bossuet, *Correspondence de Bossuet*.

[34] See de Lagarde, *Bibliothecae Syriacae*.

[35] Michaelis, *Deutsche Übersetzung*, 2:14.

one of his students, who perceived that the Frankfurt edition had omitted numerous critical notes by Houbigant and had misunderstood and mutilated others. Michaelis thereupon published his regrets that such an important work had been so poorly edited when published in Germany (three-fifths of the critical comments by Houbigant, as well as the critical apparatus to which the notes referred, were lacking). Most text critics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, worked with the deficient Frankfurt edition. This means that many scholars since the late eighteenth century have pillaged the work of Houbigant, and therefore of Cappel, without attribution to either. For instance, E. F. K. Rosenmüller (1768–1835) roundly criticized the work of Houbigant because he knew and used only the inferior, truncated Frankfort edition of Houbigant's work. But Michaelis, after careful study of Houbigant's work in French, praised his work as indispensable to textual criticism of the MT.[36] The tendency of biblical scholars to follow the work of German critics and ignore that of the French critics continues today, to the detriment of biblical scholarship.

Cappel and Houbigant both ignored or belittled the value of vowel points, accents, and the *masorah*. Kennicott (1718–83) followed these two scholars, negatively judging the value or authenticity of the masoretic demarcations. Neither of them bothered to study the work of Richard Simon or to take into account Simon's arguments (see below). Beginning in the early eighteenth century, there grew an interest in locating the most ancient manuscripts collated in part by Johann Heinrich Michaelis (1668–1738), Johann David Michaelis (1717–91), and Georg Johann Ludwig Vogel (1742–76). Therefore, Kennicott, in his own massive collations of manuscripts, which he located during travels in Europe, searched for what he considered to be the oldest manuscripts. In doing so, he valued only the consonants in them.[37] Kennicott's work in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and in other libraries in Britain brought him to realize that scribes had made a considerable number of mistakes in important passages that he studied in 2 Samuel and in 1 Chronicles.[38] J. D. Michaelis (in his doctorate of 1739)[39] praised Kennicott but disagreed with him about ignoring the *masorah* and the vowel points. He also criticized Kennicott's work comparing Samuel and Chronicles, accusing him of being too dependent on the idea that they should have had the same text. Rather, as Michaelis noted, they were like the Gospels in the NT: composed by different authors writing at different times and places. In sum, Michaelis was doubtful about the work and conclusions of Kennicott in general.[40]

Kennicott, while adept at raising funds, was less scrupulous in his publications. The manuscripts Kennicott actually collected and collated were very young, full of copyist errors and lacking in what might be considered "true variants." He

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[36] Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 1:*30; Michaelis, *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek*.
[37] Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum*.
[38] Kennicott, *State of the Printed Hebrew Text*.
[39] Michaelis, *Dissertatio Inauguralis*.
[40] Michaelis, *Deutsche Übersetzung*, 2:1150ff.

was later roundly criticized by both Rosenmüller and Eichhorn.[41] By contrast, Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi (1742–1831), professor at Parma, collated manuscripts in Rome that were overlooked by Kennicott. He personally owned 413 manuscripts and 159 published editions of the HB. De Rossi published five volumes of "scholia critica" between 1784 and 1798, collating, in all, 1,793 codices.[42] However, as Eichhorn was constrained to admit, very few of the manuscripts collated by Kennicott and de Rossi helped in addressing most text-critical problems.

Already in 1772, Gabriel Fabricy (1726–1800) had stated that of the manuscripts available in Europe that Kennicott and de Rossi had collated, none was older than seven, eight, or, at most, nine centuries. However, he added that there had to be important manuscripts in Africa and the Orient, where Jews had lived since the destruction of the temple.[43] Fabricy was indeed prescient, for when Kahle in the early twentieth century began work on the masoretic manuscripts of the Orient, the situation changed dramatically. This was specifically due to findings in the Firkowitz collection and the discoveries in the Cairo Genizah[44] – the classical Tiberian codices that would become the base text beginning with *BH*³, or *BH*(*Kahle*). One of these, Leningradensis, would become the base text of *BH* thereafter (*BH*³, *BHS*, and now *BHQ*), but the Cairo Codex of the Prophets and the British Library MS Orient 4445 of the Pentateuch are also very valuable. Aleppensis (A), mentioned by Kennicott in his *Dissertatio Generalis*, housed in a synagogue in Aleppo in Syria, would in the middle of the twentieth century join the other great Tiberian manuscripts as crucial to establishing the text of the HB.[45] In the eyes of most scholars, A is the best executed of them all, despite its lacking several leaves. But it was the discovery, also in the middle of the twentieth century, of manuscripts in caves near the Wadi Qumran in the Judean desert, a thousand years older than any known before, that confirmed the antiquity and authority of the proto-masoretic consonantal text. And they confirmed the prescience of both Morin and Cappel that the LXX rested on a different textual tradition from that of the MT, the position recently associated with Paul Kahle[46] and adopted in effect by two current HB projects, the Hebrew University Bible and *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*,[47] in contrast to the forthcoming Oxford Hebrew Bible, which does not presume a different Hebrew textual tradition for the LXX from that of the MT.[48]

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[41] Eichhorn, *Einleitung ins Alte Testament*.

[42] de Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti Librorum*. See also de Rossi, *Manuscripti Codices Hebraici Bibliothecae*.

[43] Fabricy, *Des titres primitifs*.

[44] See Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*.

[45] Goshen-Gottstein, "Authenticity of the Aleppo Codex"; see also Goshen-Gottstein, "Aleppo Codex and the Rise of the Massoretic Bible Text."

[46] Talmon, *Text and Canon*, 383–418.

[47] Sanders, "Hebrew University Bible"; Weis, "*Biblia Hebraica Quinta*." For the Hebrew University Bible, see as example, Goshen-Gottstein, *Isaiah: Sample Edition*, and Goshen-Gottstein, *Book of Isaiah*.

[48] Following Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 163–90. For the Oxford Hebrew Bible, see http://hbce online.org/. (Last accessed 31/10/2018.)

As noted above, the battle between the *Critica Sacra* group and their *Anti-critica* opponents would have been resolved, both sides agreed, if the autographs of Moses and the prophets should be discovered. This agreement was, however, attacked by Spinoza who, in effect, introduced the idea of historical criticism into biblical study.[49] His work in this regard was anticipated by that of Thomas Hobbes[50] and Isaac de la Peyrère (1655).[51]

Hobbes noted three passages that traditional theories of the Bible's origins could not solve: (1) Moses' writing about his own death (Deut 34); (2) the phrase "the Canaanite was still in the land" (Gen 12:6); and (3) the reference to "The Book of the Wars of Yahweh" (Num 21:14). Hobbes still thought that Moses wrote most of the Pentateuch, especially "the Book of the Law," but went on to offer conjectures about the authors of the Pentateuch, their era, and the eras of the redactors. He included in his concept of the history of the formation of the text the final step of the making of canons that, he thought, would have been determined by civil authorities. Isaac de la Peyrère, a Calvinist from Bordeaux, who also converted to Catholicism, wrote two works in 1655. These works were in the library of Spinoza when he did his early work. And Richard Simon knew him personally, because de la Peyrère, once he had converted, also became a member of the Oratoire in Paris. He claimed that biblical works were written considerably later than the times of which they spoke. Moses undoubtedly, he thought, wrote books, but what we have are only edited extracts of whatever they were. He held the same for the historical books (Joshua to Kings and Chronicles). He stated clearly that he believed it impossible to retrieve the autographs, in fact, that we have neither the autographs nor the apographs, but rather only *apographum apographi*, copies of copies. Finally, he stated that only those portions of the Bible dealing directly with "our salvation" are secure, while the rest resides in obscurity. Neither Hobbes nor de la Peyrère offered a systematic form for their views. That was left to Spinoza in his *Tractatus*.[52]

We now turn to a more detailed discussion of the work of Spinoza and Simon. Spinoza had little regard for professional theologians, saying that they tended to declare out of Scripture's obscurities "whatever passed through their minds." He was convinced that we can understand Scripture only by knowing the historical and cultural situation out of which its various writings arose. We should also strive, he said, to learn as much as feasible about the life and culture of the author and his time, as well as his purpose or intention in writing. Scripture, in general, should be interpreted only in terms of the history out of which it arises. Only the meaning that arises out of that historical context could be the real meaning, and that must not be assumed by reason alone. Biblical criticism, he insisted, has three requirements: (1) in-depth knowledge of the languages in which Scripture

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[49] Spinoza, *Tractatus* (1670), published in Latin and German in 1979 with the original pagination.

[50] Hobbes, *Leviathan*.

[51] de la Peyrère, *Systema Theologicum*.

[52] Spinoza, *Tractatus* (1979), chs. 7–10.

was written; (2) the lessons learned from a section of Scripture must be listed and grouped; and (3) the author's meaning of those lessons should be determined as far as possible within their historical context. Spinoza coined the term "higher criticism." This method, he thought, should be applied to all Scripture, including the final stage of the history of formation of the text, that of a canon.[53] Only by knowing the times and cultures of the authors can we begin to understand the intention of the authors. Spinoza then turned reductionist and claimed that seeking out the universal lesson for all mankind is the only worthy pursuit of the real meaning of Scripture. When contradictions are found, then it is necessary to discern the historical circumstances that gave rise to the need for the contradictions. He concluded that love of God and love of neighbor are the basic principles or lessons that emerge from such study.

Spinoza recognized that his method had problems, and he addressed them sequentially. The first problem, he said, is the difficulty Europeans have in learning the Hebrew language in sufficient depth: (1) its alphabet has laryngeals that are often confused by Europeans; (2) its conjunctions and adverbs are inherently ambiguous; (3) the lack of a real correspondence between its verbs and our verbs; and (4) the vowels and accents, which, he contended, were invented and fixed at a date and time later than the consonants. These facts mean that there will always be ambiguities and that there cannot be a single method that will resolve all the difficulties.

Another difficulty he perceived had to do with higher criticism, because there are serious gaps in knowledge about various periods of the history of the Bible. Many authors of the various parts of the Bible are totally unknown or doubtful. Furthermore, we do not know into whose hands Scripture fell after the time of the authors, when many of the discrepancies probably occurred. Because of these and other obscurities in the history of the formation of the Bible, we do not know what situations many passages were addressing, nor (anticipating recent views) will we probably ever get to know the intention of the various authors. Because of all these difficulties, we are at a loss to understand the intention and purpose of many of the writings in the Bible. We are then left with incertitude.

Even with all these difficulties, Spinoza claimed that true salvation and well-being consist in the true repose of the soul; we do not find true repose except when we understand something very clearly. Still, he insisted, we can indeed understand those things in Scripture that pertain to salvation and the well-being of the soul, and we should not bother ourselves too much with the rest. Spinoza had already declaimed in the preface to his *Tractatus* that the Word of God does not consist in a certain number of books, but in a very simple concept of divine thought (Torah, or God's way of thinking) revealed to the prophets – that to obey God in practicing justice and charity brings repose to the soul. To this end, it is clear that the sum of the Torah/Law is in loving God above all and in loving the neighbor as the self. Whatever, therefore, is ambiguous in Scripture is the uncertainty in understanding that arises from speculation. The

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[53] Sanders, *Torah and Canon*.

traditions that had arisen in synagogue and church to explain what is lacking in Scripture mean that the history of the formation of the text, which is necessary for understanding it, remains incomplete or is misleading. History is often falsified by such church traditions, he claimed.

Reconstructing a valid history shows how the traditions have falsified the history itself. It also shows that the books that the Pharisees of the Second Temple canonized were not the autographs of the prophets. At this point, Spinoza took up the same observations that Hobbes and de la Peyrère had made to show that the author of the Pentateuch was not Moses, and also that the so-called history books were written a long time after the events to which they refer. He also asserted that we have only apographs as text sources. Theologians try in vain to establish their speculations on parts of Scripture that human intelligence cannot grasp, since a history of the formation of the text of the Bible is not in their time certain enough to complete such a history. The canonical books are too much interpolated and our knowledge of Hebrew is too tenuous for us to be able to determine the intention of the prophetic authors. Spinoza had, already in 1656, been excommunicated by the Synagogue of Amsterdam, and when the *Tractatus* was published, he was roundly denounced by both Protestants and Catholics. Spinoza died at age forty-four in 1677, seven years after its publication.

Richard Simon gathered the necessary elements for his considerable criticism of traditional explanations of the origins of Scripture and in 1678 published his pivotal *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*. He agreed with Spinoza's hermeneutic and stated, as clearly as Spinoza had, that one had to know the history of the formation of a text in order to understand its message. In fact, he followed Spinoza in crucial ways, even though he fails to cite him, except in the first chapter of his work. One assumes Simon knew that crediting Spinoza with the ideas he borrowed from him would have meant instant rejection. Simon questioned traditional explanations for the origins of Scripture but at the same time softened his critique of traditional views of Scripture. For instance, he distinguished carefully between the authority of Scripture and literary authenticity along three lines: (1) divine inspiration worked with the formation of the various blocks of Scripture, from the very first literary unit, through later hands and redactors, up to the completion of the canon; (2) the prophetic spirit worked through the imagination and intelligence (cultural and historical) of the prophet, while the Holy Spirit worked with the results to effect a second and fuller meaning of their messages pointing to the Messiah; and (3) authentic and inspired traditions evolved through the old covenant to render them fit for the canon. In making clear his hermeneutic in this regard, he defanged the attacks of Bishop Bossuet on his earlier work. Simon glossed over what he learned from Spinoza but was obviously very much influenced by him. He mentions Spinoza only in his first chapter, but the following six chapters show considerable influence by him.[54] Bossuet's constant criticisms helped Simon sharpen his hermeneutic of the two senses, the literal meaning of a passage (induced by the prophetic spirit) and the

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[54] Auvray, "Richard Simon et Spinoza," 207.

second or fuller sense (*sensus plenior*) guided by the Holy Spirit. Simon argued, for instance, that Jews may well have been right about their interpretation of the prophecy in Isa 7:14, which they saw to be referring to the wife of the prophet. This did not disturb Simon at all. He simply argued that the second or fuller meaning was to point to the Messiah or Christ, and that the second sense was the principal meaning the Spirit intended and was no less true than the first meaning. In arguing for the truth or validity of the "second meaning," he pointed to the Jewish understanding of "midrash," or later application, which involves a resignification of a passage of Scripture.

Simon had a keen understanding of the Jewish idea of midrash. While it has mistakenly been taken to mean "commentary" on a Scripture passage, its real meaning is rather "searching" (from the Hebrew verb, *d-r-sh*) Scripture for light concerning ongoing human existence and problems. Or, to put it more aptly, midrash is the opposite of commentary on Scripture; it is, in fact, the seeking of light from Scripture on ever-changing and ongoing problems in human existence and experience in each age. In this way, Scripture can have quite different comments to make as circumstances change in the human problematic. Midrash is thus a way to understand the second or fuller messages from the same Scripture passage – for example, the prophet's wife for the eighth-century prophet Isaiah, and the Messiah or the Christ as the light Scripture threw and throws on the divine act in the Bethlehem event. The prophet may have had in mind only the primary meaning, but the Holy Spirit continued to work with the passage and resignified a more "sublime" meaning of it for the birth of Christ. Simon then extended the work of the Spirit to those who collected, edited, and transmitted the traditions. This extended, therefore, even to the Sanhedrin itself. For this understanding, he cited the rabbinic tradition describing Moses' gathering of the seventy elders, at God's command, as a Sanhedrin (Exod 24:9). When it was objected that the Sanhedrin was implicated in the condemnation of Christ, Simon then made a distinction between the inspiration of the prophets and that of the Sanhedrin. It was not an infallible inspiration as it had been of the prophets. Jewish Oral Law (Talmud) was a similar resignification of Scripture. Even the Qara'ites had traditions, a view confirmed later by scholars in the twentieth century specifically studying the Qara'ites. Simon's principle of "public scribes/prophets" extended to his denying absolute authority to the original authors, the authority Spinoza had tended to stress. He applied this notably to the book of Job, for which we have no author and which itself clearly states that Job was an Edomite, not a Jew; the Holy Spirit was behind even this. When Moses supposedly used the memoirs of the patriarchs in writing Genesis, this too was inspired. Even compilers must be seen as under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Simon also noted that the divergences and discrepancies in doublets or parallel passages within Scripture need to be accorded the same respect, noting that the compilers and redactors themselves respected the divergences and did not try to harmonize them away.

In sum, Simon opened the path for Jean Astruc (1684–1766) and others, who later claimed that Moses used patriarchal memoirs in his compilation of much

of the Pentateuch. Simon analyzed sources for the Pentateuch and for Scripture. He also opened the way to understanding that redactional activity of Scripture lasted until a rather late date in the composition of the whole text. Much of what Simon initiated has been followed by recent understandings of textual criticism. He stressed the ongoing inspiration of the Holy Spirit through the redactional activity of its transmission up to the point of the stabilization of the text. Until quite recently, some critics still focused on the inspiration of the great individual "authors," with a tendency to ascribe "secondary" passages or editorial additions to a lower or "spurious" rank of authority within Scripture. They thus ignored (Simon's) extending inspiration to subsequent anonymous "scribes/prophets."

Simon also advanced the idea that Holy Scripture itself is prophetic and inspired in all its parts, even the "secondary" or added passages that were in essence a demonstration of its relevance to a later period. In other words, according to Simon, scriptural authority is not the same as literary authenticity. In contrast to much scholarship since Simon that, until very recently, has ascribed authority only to the "authentic" or "genuine" words and verses of the original prophet, denigrating the passages that biblical criticism has determined are "secondary" or "spurious," Simon already in the seventeenth century viewed *all* levels of Scripture as inspired. Simon thus opened the path to understanding the application and resignification of Scripture by later redactors and scribes. These redactors and scribes saw that the relevance of Scripture to the problems of their communities at the later time was just as inspired as the base tradition contained in Scripture. The "second sense," he claimed, was often more "genuine" than the so-called original or first sense. One might say that Luther had adumbrated this view of Simon's in his intuition that the NT meaning of passages was more authentic than the first meaning in the OT.

Spinoza's influence on Simon led Simon to seek authenticity for the second meaning that actually made it more authentic than the first. Such an orientation is effected by a "rereading" (*relecture*) of Scripture and tradition that went along with the first meaning. The literal and historical meaning of a passage was still the actual purpose of the prophetic spirit in the first place, but the second or fuller meaning was just as authentic. Spinoza had expressed some doubt about correctly interpreting the prophets, for whom we do not have the full historical context that the prophet addressed. Simon tended to agree with Spinoza on this point, but he went on to claim that authority of the second sense of Scripture, as perceived by later canonical hands or redactors who sought the relevance of a passage for their later day, was not affected by this lack. Explication of the second meaning progressed along the same path as the first. "Comparative midrash" (tracing the function of a passage through early Judaism into Christianity and rabbinic Judaism) was thus established because with it the continuing interpretation of Scripture illumines the second or *sensus plenior* in the NT.[55] The textual form that must serve as a point of reference would not be made up of the

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[55] Evans, *To See and Not Perceive*; Callaway, *Sing, O Barren One*; Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4."

autographs of Moses and the prophets, thought Simon, but by the status of the divinely guided maturity of the books of Scripture at the point of the fulfillment of those prophecies, that is, the epoch when the Messiah will come to renew all things.[56]

In effect, this set up the tension that would mark the debates during the following centuries between the aim of textual criticism being some "original" form of the text at an early point in its development, the "final form" of the text, or the point at which a text became canonically functional, that is, its first becoming a community text (and no longer a text in the hands of a "school" of redactors).[57]

This development of thought concerning the provenance, authenticity, and status of the text of Scripture – from late antiquity and the Middle Ages, into the Renaissance, and during the age of the Reformation and the Enlightenment – provides a solid background for understanding what has happened in the art and science of textual criticism down to our own day.

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[56] Barthélemy, "L'AT a mûri à Alexandrie."
[57] Sanders, "Task of Text Criticism"; Talmon, *Text and Canon*, 419–42.

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Part 5: Theology

16

God is God

(1974)

The address that I gave at Tantur on March 15, 1973, on the occasion of the Institute's monthly public lectures, will appear in the forthcoming George Ernest Wright Festschrift, to which the manuscript had been committed. Entitled, "Adaptable for Life: The Nature and Function of Canon," the address dealt with the early history of the canonical process, *eventus* of my *Torah and Canon*.

I am taking the occasion of the present publication to resubmit an essay published a decade ago in *Foundations* 6 (1963). The present form is an improved and updated version. In short compass it contains the perspective I consider most responsible and fruitful for current work in biblical theology, monotheistic pluralism. It seems most appropriate to the theme of common study at Tantur: *mysterium salutis*. Stressing the continuity of the Old and New Testaments, it centers in the overall message of Gen 1–11 that I think the exilic priestly redactors wanted to convey to scattered Israel seeking some continuity of identity in the new diaspora situation: there is but one God, and he is not among the gods of Israel's powerful, conquering neighbors among whom they are scattered, but is the one who had gathered Israel's ancestors in the first place from widely scattered areas to Canaan, and intends to do it again.

The bibliographic background of "God is God" is too extensive to record here. The discerning reader will easily see the influence of Gerhard von Rad's redaction-critical work on Genesis as well as ideas gleaned from both H. Gunkel and U. Cassuto's commentaries on Genesis. It is only fair to point out, however, that the essay has been for the most part ignored in the decade since it first appeared. It has, nonetheless, been very gratifying to see the field move in the direction indicated. A review of the following works, which have appeared since 1963, indicates that the debate about Gen 1–11 has largely centered in the issue raised here, namely, *how* Israel's exilic theologians used the polytheistic materials of her neighbors: Brandon, *Creation Legends of the Ancient Near East* (1963); Lambert, "New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," (1965) 288 ff.; Westermann, *The Genesis Accounts of Creation* (1964); Westermann, *Genesis* (1966); Westermann, "Das Reden von Schöpfer und Schöpfung im Alten Testament" (1967); Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos* (1967); Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift* (2nd ed. 1967); Zimmerli, *Die Urgeschichte.* I. *Mose 1–11* (3rd ed., 1967); Payne, *Genesis One Reconsidered* (1968); Weinfeld, "God the Creator in Genesis 1" (1968); Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World* (1970); Whybray, *The Heavenly Counsellor in Isaiah XL:13–14*

(1971); Hasel, "The Significance of the Cosmology in Genesis 1 in Relation to Ancient Near Eastern Parallels" (1972).

The last-mentioned work, by G. Hasel, assumes a position closest to my own. It is in large part Hasel's study that encourages me to restate, in this manner, my own position on the message of the exilic theologians in their shaping of Gen 1–11. Before I had seen Hasel's article, however, I had already received considerable encouragement from Prof. Frank Moore Cross Jr., in an oral description of an essay on Gen 1 on which he has been working. I do not mean to say that Cross would agree with the synthesis that I here propose, but it seems clear to me that his work as philologist and historian does not run counter to the view here offered but, on the contrary, affords considerable supportive evidence unavailable in 1963. *Par contre*, if what I saw then, rather intuitively, in any measure supports his far more technically grounded thesis of today, then I am pleased indeed.

God is God

Salvation, broadly speaking, is the experience of the divine presence.[1] The promise of salvation is contained in the biblical statement, "I will be with you." The fulfillment of salvation is contained in the biblical affirmation of the sovereignty (kingdom or kingship) of God. To experience God's sovereignty, to affirm his kingdom, is to know salvation. God alone is the author of salvation.[2]

In Christ, we say, God was acting. In Christ, we say, God stooped to conquer. In Christ, we say, God came all the way to us and became a man among humans, suffering what we suffer and dying our death. He subjected himself to our indignities and inhumanities. He experienced with us what can happen in creation to a good human in an evil situation. He entered into a world of nationalism versus colonialism. He was a citizen of a small struggling nation suffering under the heel of European colonialism. He heard about him the cries of "Rome, go home" being drowned out by the clatter of marching swords and the vowels of an unholy tongue.

In the midst of it all he taught of God – of himself, as it were. He told story after story and parable after parable emphasizing the Old Testament view of God as one who actively seeks out humans, entering with them into the huts and hovels of Egypt and Babylonia, knowing with them their sufferings in Egyptian slavery and Babylonian exile, conferring with Abraham and Amos, weeping with

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[1] Divine favor in antiquity was expressed in a number of figures, quite frequently that of the presence of the deity; divine disfavor was expressed as well by suggesting the withdrawal of the divine presence, the turning of the back and the like. In this regard, see especially the "Prayer of Lamentation to Ishtar," 11.38 ff. in Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 384. Note also the exhortation found in Babylonian tablets of moral teachings: "Offer to him daily, and you will get your reward, then you will have full communion with your god." Thomas, *Documents from Old Testament Times*, 106.

[2] Cf. Köhler, *OT Theology*, 218.

David and Isaiah; the God who told them he would be with them always – even, and especially, in their sufferings. Christ told them parables of God: God is like a shepherd who goes out into the night with all its dangers to hunt for a foolish sheep that got lost; or God is like a father who, with a heart bursting, runs down the road to embrace the returning prodigal son.

What he tried to get them to see was that the God who called on Adam in Eden, who had accompanied Abraham to Moriah, who had claimed his people from Raamses and had wrested his sheep from Nabonidus, the same God, in all his sovereignty, had now come to them all the way. He who walked in Eden now walked in Galilee – not to blast the Romans off the map, but simply once again, this time finally and completely, to join humanity in fellowship, never abdicating his sovereignty. Salvation, broadly speaking, is the experience of the divine presence.

In this paper we shall look at salvation in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, emphasizing the lines of continuity between them. In doing so, we shall be witnesses to the mighty works of God in his divine journey with his people. This divine odyssey is not, as some would have us believe, a mere transfer of mythical scenery from Mt. Zaphon, the Canaanite abode of the gods, to Mt. Olympus, its Greek counterpart. This journey is one supplied, on the contrary, with date-lines, times and places. It is the story of how the one God of all creation has made history. The journey was made in Old Testament times against a background of Near Eastern polytheism, and in New Testament times against a background of late Persian and Hellenistic polytheism, especially dualism. It will be necessary, especially in the New Testament, to recognize and deal with a vocabulary of terms that can be misleading. We shall conclude with an affirmation of the monotheizing process and the salvation available in the cross of Jesus Christ.

I

The handbooks and dictionaries list the following as definitions of salvation in the Old Testament: victory in battle; deliverance from defeat or adversity; enjoyment of prosperity, safety, health, and welfare; the remission of some punishment expected or due; atonement for sins; and redemption of the lost, wandering, or perishing.[3] Johannes Pedersen, the Danish scholar, writes that "peace is … the lasting state of harmony and happiness, salvation the momentary acquisition thereof …" Salvation, he goes on, "comprises all acquisition of happiness," noting that the opposite of salvation is trouble, the state of narrowness.[4]

It is important, of course, to point out the basic, concrete meanings of ancient terms in their most ancient contexts, but we go far afield in any attempt to find

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[3] Cf. Burrows, *Outline of Biblical Theology*, 176–78.
[4] Pedersen, *Israel*, 1/2:332.

in them overall biblical connotations. One should not, one must not, be content with adding up, as an adding machine might total, the basic contextual meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words for salvation.[5]

For contrast, I would invite you to consider the thesis that salvation is the overarching theme of the whole Bible. The theme is not to be found in every biblical passage; indeed, it is seemingly lacking in some biblical books. But, more importantly, it can be carefully stated that no biblical passage or book contradicts the theme: Salvation is the experience of the divine presence, the one God of all creation, who has come to humanity and has established the divine-human fellowship, first with Israel and then in Christ.

The overall methodology employed in this paper takes seriously the fact that the Bible, in both Testaments, is about God. The methodology is theological; that is, the question is constantly asked, "What is the Bible here (or there) saying about God?" I mean to suggest that biblical theology is the solution to the church's Christology. Of Christ we must ask about God. If God was in Christ, then what is the New Testament saying about God? God is the active agent in both Testaments. It is his journey recorded in them both; it is his presence that saves. And if one first acquaints oneself with God in the Old Testament, the New Testament story of Christ falls into place as the last leg of the biblical divine journey. The odyssey is there continued, and one then finds oneself speaking of the Christ in biblical, not just in New Testament terms. Biblically, we should not look for the divinity of Christ but for the humanity of God. It is biblically better to say not that Jesus was divine but that in Christ God was human. If one must have Jesus unique, he can be so only because the One God of All chose of his holy will to be present in him. When we speak of Christ we speak of the presence of the one unique God, not of "some more divinity." God, and God only, is divine. If one must say that Christ is divine, one must know that one is saying that God in Christ is divine – naught else.

Christ is not in the Old Testament; rather, the God of the Old Testament is in Christ.

Any attempt on the basis, let us say, of Deutero-Isaiah, to establish the biblical theme as one of God as Creator and Sustainer, or generally speaking, the providence of God, is defeated from the start. In Isa 40–55 itself, the passages that affirm God as Creator are found in the context of the prophet's gospel of salvation, the proclamation of Israel's return from exile in Babylonia. The sub-theme of creation in Deutero-Isaiah but serves his larger message of salvation. How else could the prophet so effectively state that Cyrus king of Persia was only the instrument of God for salvation, but by affirming that Yahweh, the God of Israel, was the one God of all creation and could use Cyrus for blessing as well as he had used Nebuchadnezzar for curse? On the contrary, the prophet insisted that the people now freed by Cyrus understand that it was the same God

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[5] This point is convincingly argued by Barr, *Semantics of Biblical Language*; cf. Barr, *Biblical Words for Time*.

who had sent them into exile who now freed them; and that both acts of God, the judgment and the salvation, had to be seen as two parts of the same blessing. God did it all, both the exile and the return. He had not sent them packing off to Babylonia just to have the divine joy of bringing them back; on the contrary, the judgment had been an essential part of the salvation. No, even in Deutero-Isaiah – nay, especially in Deutero-Isaiah – the major theme is that of salvation by theophany.

Theophany, that is, God's search for humanity, is usually a dramatic event, and the Bible often speaks of nature's responses to God's stirrings, whether for curse or blessing. If for curse, the theophany is indicated, as, for instance, in Amos, by the poetry of the withering of Mt. Carmel and the mourning of the pasturelands. If for blessing, the theophany is indicated, as for instance in Deutero-Isaiah, by the poetry of mountains being levelled, valleys being lifted up, and rough places being made plain, even more dramatically, by mountains and hills singing and by trees clapping their hands. Or, as in the New Testament, for blessing, the poetry of a blazing star and angels singing, or for curse, darkness at midday and earthquake.

But not all of God's search for humanity is theophany in the strictest mythical sense. On the contrary, God comes so often to people in the Bible that nature's accompaniment to his frequent visitations is very often omitted or overlooked by the biblical writers, save in what appear to be very crucial instances. God reveals himself so often in the Bible, acts so frequently on the people's behalf and speaks so many times with the prophets that it might be said, in light of our thesis, that the Bible is one great record of God's continuing theophany. But that would be playing with a word, which is not necessarily helpful.

II

The story of salvation begins properly with Abraham and Gen 12. But the editors of the Pentateuch, in all their wisdom, place before the story of the patriarchs and the distant origins of Israel eleven chapters designed to state carefully the "extramanence" of God and God's Oneness.[6] The overarching statement of Gen 1–11 is that God is God and creation is creation, and they must never be confused. God is Creator, and all else is creation. They are utterly different categories of being. God is not trapped in his creation, nor does creation harbor some bit of divinity. Nothing in creation is God, and nothing of God is created. Genesis 1 and 2 make it abundantly clear that God is the subject of the verbs of creation, and *all else* is the object. God alone is not created; all else is created.

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6 "Extramanence" is the contrapositive of "immanence." It is used by Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, to avoid some of the extreme connotations of the word "transcendence." The materials in Gen 1–11 were undoubtedly a part of ancient Israel's oral traditions in Canaan well before the exile. The central point here is that an apologetic argument emerges in the form that the priestly writers of the Pentateuch gave them during the exile and the early postexilic period.

Genesis 3–11 goes on carefully to state that while God is God, humans are humans, and the two must never be confused. Humans are created, God is Creator. Humans are mortal; God is immortal. Any attempt on humanity's part to achieve immortality is doomed to failure. Genesis 3–11 states with bristling clarity that humanity cannot become God. Any movement on humanity's part from creation to divinity is stricken eternal blows from which it cannot recover. Immortality is not the only distinction between God and humanity, but in Gen 3–11 it is the principal vehicle for stating the distinction.

Genesis 1 is an apologetic in liturgical form with satirical overtones. Written in its final form in the late sixth century BC, it states with shocking clarity that there is but one God and all else is created by him. Israel in exile in Babylonia had been under tremendous temptation to think positively, weigh the evidence of Babylonian power and victories, and worship Marduk and the other gods of the Babylonian pantheon. Then, when Cyrus, king of Persia, defeated Nabonidus, the last king of the neo-Babylonian empire, there was the even greater temptation to express appreciation to Cyrus's god, Ahura Mazda, for the freedom Cyrus brought to the captive peoples.

Not only did Deutero-Isaiah combat such "positive thinking," but so did the faithful priests who had endured the exile with him. Against the backdrop of the apostasy of many "positive thinking" Jews, the priests reshaped an old (Canaanite?) liturgy of celebration of creation similar to the Babylonian liturgy of celebration of creation. On the fourth day of the annual New Year's feast, the Babylonian priests recited the Babylonian creation account that we call the Enuma Elish, a long theogony or story of the origins of Babylon's gods and of the world. In succinct, terse terms the faithful priests of God in exile ridiculed everything in the Babylonian religion by proclaiming the creatorship of the one true God and the createdness of all else.

Reflecting much of the vocabulary of the Enuma Elish, Gen 1:1–2 denies any truth whatever to that foreign document. Calling to the Jewish mind the drama of Marduk, Tiamat, and Apsu, it denies the truth of the drama by insisting that the one true God created all creation (heaven and earth). And then, post-haste, the references turn toward Persian theology and its dualism of the gods of light, Ahura Mazda, and the darkness, Ahriman. In Gen 1:3–5 God immediately creates light, separating it from darkness and giving them names, day and night. The statement is clear: these are not gods; they are but part of creation. They are created the same as all else.

Furthermore, the one true God has given them names. In antiquity, to bequeath a name was to set limits. For God to give names to light and darkness was to show his sovereignty over them. The statement of Ps 139 that darkness is not dark to God is already made in Gen 1:3–5.

The inquiring mind honestly asks how there can be day and night, light and darkness, already on the first day of creation, when the sun, moon, stars, and the rest were not created until the fourth day. And the answer is simply that such a question was of no interest to the priestly writers who penned the liturgy of Gen 1. Genesis 1:3–5, the first day of creation, has as its purpose the statement

that Cyrus's gods are no gods at all; they are created and named like all else. And Gen 1:14–19, the fourth day of creation, has as its purpose the statement that the Babylonian and Egyptian heavenly gods are no gods at all. On the fourth liturgical day of creation (note the fourth day of the Babylonian Akitu festival), it is clearly stated that neither Shamash nor Hammu, the Babylonian sun gods, nor Aten nor Re, the Egyptian sun gods, are gods at all. On the contrary, it states that the one true God created "the greater light to rule the day." But the irony is, of course that Shamash is no ruler at all, no god at all. Likewise, the moon god, by whatever names he was known (the most prominent being Sin), is no god at all, nor are the stars. (Star deities were the most common in the ancient world.)

On the third, fifth, and sixth days of the liturgy in Gen 1, it is stated that all vegetation and all animals were created. But the real affirmation is that nothing in all nature can be divine or deity, because all nature is created. It is especially stressed that all the vegetable kingdom was created, "yielding seed according to their own kinds," and that all the animal kingdom of sea and land was created with the blessing and commandment to "be fruitful and multiply." In other words, in the third, fifth, and sixth days we find the expected attack on the fertility cults. How absurd to worship fertility gods such as Baal of Canaan when fertility itself is a part of creation, a built-in element of creation.

The sixth day of creation also sees the creation of humanity. Humanity alone is created in the image and likeness of God. In what does the *imago Dei* consist? The text is about as clear as it can be. To be in the image of God is to reflect his dominion or mastership. How absurd that humans should worship nature deities as all Israel's neighbors did. Far from worshipping such nature deities, humans are commanded by the one true God to have dominion over all the rest of creation – to subdue it, to have it for food. Nothing in creation should command humanity's fear; only God can do that, only God should be worshipped. Psalm 8 reflects Gen 1: humanity is made a little less than God – how absurd that they should worship any but the one true God who placed them here.

The seventh day saw all God's work of creation done. The Hebrew expression for creation is "heavens and earth." The statement is that all creation was finished, when actually there was no pretense on the part of the priestly writers to list all the categories of creation at all. Rather, they were stating that God is one, unique and alone, and that the so-called gods of all Israel's neighbors were no gods at all. This chapter on creation is really a chapter on the Creator and his oneness; it is a chapter of radical monotheism. On the seventh day of every week Israel worshipped the God of creation, not just on the fourth day of an annual Akitu festival.[7]

The concluding statement is the crowning blow to polytheism: "These are the generations of creation in its createdness." This is such an emphasis on the statements already made: these are not gods but items in creation! Israel lacked a theogony. A theogony, like the Babylonian Enuma Elish, is an account of the births of all the gods of heaven and earth – the heaven deities and the earth dei-

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[7] [See now Sanders, *Monotheizing Process*.]

ties. The Israelites in exile, feeling already inferior, must have complained to their priests that one of the many things wrong with the old faith of Israel was that it lacked a decent theogony. How could any self-respecting people go about without a theogony in their religion? A religion that was any religion at all had a theogony in those days. And thus, the concluding statement of the priestly liturgy of creation is that the liturgy itself is theogony enough for Israel. A theogony recounted the generations of births of the gods, and so we read, "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created" (Gen 2:4). This is the point of the whole liturgy emphasized: these are no gods at all the Babylonians and Persians worship; they are but a part of "createdness." Only the one true God is not created.

Thus, we see in Gen 1 a clear and definite line drawn between the concept of Creator and the concept of creation. The two categories are established: the one is unique and exclusive, and the other is plural and inclusive; the one is Creator, and the other is his creation. The two categories must not be fused or confused in any sense whatever; the one is God, and the other is absolutely all else, whatever it is and wherever it is. There is no pantheism or panentheism or naturalism in any guise possible for a Bible that begins with Gen 1.

III

Following Gen 1 comes Gen 2–4, a more primitive formulation of mythical etiologies. In this account, the human is made first, not last. He is formed of the dust of earth and the breath of God. Here we find the desert oasis called Eden with its spring and rivers watering the garden of humanity's first abode. Here there is no reflection of heaven or earth deities, only a beautiful picture of a fruitful oasis with its beasts and birds. This is paradise, and into it God comes walking in the cool of the evening to call on Adam. He seeks him out. God comes to where the humans live and asks, "Where are you?" The medieval question of omniscience has no place here. Our Yahwist writer does not address himself to the question of whether God knows everything or not. What he does state very clearly is that the man and God visited of an evening in the garden of Adam and Eve's abode. God comes to humanity.[8]

Is this the same God as in Gen 1? Yes, it is the same God; only the theological writers of the two sections are different, not God. The important point to note is that the final editor of the Pentateuch (we call him R^P) knew that the truth of the combination of the two accounts of creation far outweighs the discrepancies between them. The interest in these chapters is not primarily in the questions of the how and when of creation. Their overriding interest is in establishing what kind of God this is, and this is what we should look for. Overemphasis on contradictions in the Bible is the best way to miss what the biblical authors, and especially R^P, are trying to say. What was created first and what last, and how

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[8] [See Heschel, *God in Search of Man*.]

God did it, and whether he covered everything in his act of creating – all these are questions that the serious student puts to the text, but they are not the crucial ones if one is honestly trying to find out what the text says.[9]

If the important question here is what the name of God was, then we shall simply miss the message of what kind of God he is. The first chapter of Genesis calls him by the general title God, and the second chapter calls him Lord (or Yahweh) God. The big question is this: Was R[P] only a collector who disregarded what the text finally says, or was R[P] an editor who collected and at the same time had regard for the message of his material? R[P] collected according to the rules of collecting traditions. He could not change too much in the traditions he collected, because he respected the traditions himself and so did the people who would receive the edited text. But R[P] was also a theologian, and when he placed Gen 1 in front of Gen 2 he knew what he was doing. At least he knew what he had to say vis-à-vis the religions of Israel's neighbors all around.

R[P] lived and worked in the latter part of the sixth century BCE. He dealt with the problems of that time, and his biggest problem was to preserve the monotheizing heritage of the Mosaic faith. Persia had freed Israel from bondage in Babylonia. But God is not Ahura Mazda or Ahriman or Marduk or Ea or Enlil or Shamash, as the Israelites in exile would have been sorely tempted to believe, worshipping the god that would do them most good. This is faith by evidence, i. e., Marduk defeated Yahweh because Babylon's armies defeated Israel's armies; and now Cyrus's gods have triumphed over all. In combatting the obvious apostasy of his time in the great flood of Jews who went over to worship Persia's gods, Deutero-Isaiah had to insist that Yahweh, the one true God, forms light and creates darkness, makes weal and creates woe (Isa 45:7). R[P] was a late contemporary of Deutero-Isaiah and was fighting the same battle. In the light of this, one must understand that the contradictions that we moderns see so facilely in the Genesis accounts simply were not of great interest to the late sixth-century biblical theologians. They had another message to deliver, and this they did very well indeed, namely, God is one, and he is awesomely distinct from his creation. He is not light or darkness or sun or moon or stars or fertility; God is the Creator of those items of creation. He is other than they; there must be no fusion or confusion here, says R[P].

This same R[P], nonetheless, places the J account immediately after Gen 1. After establishing the otherness of God, the Bible presents right away an earthy, almost homely story of how this God came calling in Adam's bower one evening. After drawing very distinctly the line between Creator and creation in Gen 1, the Bible in Gen 3 says God himself violated the distinction and came calling on Adam. Is this a contradiction? If it is, it is a contradiction within God himself, and one that the Bible affirms in Old Testament and New Testament. No, within the two accounts of creation, the P and the J in Gen 1–3, we have the major biblical statement about God that the New Testament itself will affirm: God is God and humans are humans, and only God can come to people, people

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[9] Akenson, *Surpassing Wonder*, 28–31 et passim.

cannot attain unto divinity. From R^P's juxtaposition of the first three chapters of Genesis, we have the heart and the essence of biblical theology: God comes to humanity, granting his presence and offering his fellowship. After the statement of God's awesome extramenence comes the statement of his awesome humility. It is extremely important to observe that it is God himself who walked in the garden. He did not leave off being God in order to have fellowship with humanity, but rather, he humbled himself, in divine terms, and came calling.

That the last installment of this biblical, holy story should state that he walked in Galilee should occasion no great surprise; the metaphor is but fully extended in the New Testament to say that in doing so he had become a man. There is no incarnation in the Old Testament; let that be clearly stated. The surprise in the New Testament, the stumbling-block there, as Paul clearly states, is the Christ, not God. The God of the New Testament, specifically, the God in Christ, is the God of the Old Testament. When the Christians at Pentecost in many tongues praised God and told "the mighty acts of God" (Acts 2:11), they were actually telling the Old Testament holy story of God's mighty acts and how his latest great act in Christ was its climax. If not, the devout Jews from every nation who heard them would not have known to say, as they did, that the spirit-inspired Christians were telling of those mighty acts. The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament. One who studies the Old Testament theologically – that is, for what it says of God – can move right on into the New Testament without a pause or distraction if one studies it also theologically – that is, for what it says of God. The vocabulary is different, but the mighty acts of God are the same.

And those mighty acts are anticipated by the story of how the awesome God of Gen 1 is the humble God of Gen 3. The movement of the biblical story is from God to humanity, whether in the Old Testament or the New Testament. The New Testament proclamation is not that a good Jew of Nazareth of the first century became a god, but rather that God humbled himself and became a human. The direction is toward humanity from God, not the other way around. There were two trees in the garden of which the fruit was forbidden to Adam and Eve – the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They ate of the latter, but of the former they could never eat. Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever …" (Gen 3:22). The text goes on to say that the Lord God sent him forth from the garden, drove him out and placed guards at the way to the tree of life. The final and important statement of Gen 3 is the denial of immortality to humanity. The apodosis of the protasis above is left out: lest he eat "also of the tree of life and live forever." Humans became like gods by losing their innocence and attaining discrimination, but if they ate of the tree of life they would become gods.

The expression "become like one of us" is taken from Babylonian mythology, which the sixth-century Israelites in exile would have known very well. In Mesopotamian mythology, a man could be awarded immortality by the gods and thus become like one of them; so it is said of Utnapishtim in the Babylonian

flood story. Genesis 3 ends with the clearly emphatic statement that humans cannot become gods; the cherubim and the flaming sword guard the way to immortality and divinity. In the Bible, in contrast to all the mythologies and theologies of Israel's neighbors, any effort on a human's part to become a god is thwarted. It is this closing statement, I suggest, that R^P wanted to emphasize in Gen 3 along with God's humility. God can be humble and cross the line of distinction between Creator and creation by coming calling on Adam, but a human cannot be arrogant and cross the line by attaining unto divinity. God's humility we call his providence, and human arrogance we call sin; and they are akin in the one respect that they both are seen as crossings of the line of distinction between God and human. God comes to humanity; a human cannot become a god.

Genesis 4 carries the affirmation into the story of the first death, the first murder; and just as humans are not God, so vengeance is a divine prerogative; it belongs only to God.

Genesis 5 and Gen 10 are of priestly origin. These are the genealogies, the soporific begets and begats. All we normally remember of them is that all the ancestors of Abraham lived a very long time. "Thus all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years and he died." "… and he died … and he died … and he died." This is the refrain of Gen 5. Friederich Delitzsch once pointed out that Gen 5 and 10 are both overloaded with the names of minor Mesopotamian deities. I suggest that in all probability our priestly editors, in constructing these genealogies, were merely further reemphasizing the point they had already made. "… and he died." In other words, these are no deities at all, says R^P; these are but men; these are but your granddaddies, O Israel! God is one. Be not seduced by the attractive Babylonian pantheon. Far from being gods, they are but humans like yourselves. They are but human ancestors, nothing more. Of Enoch only is the phrase "and he died" of Gen 5 omitted. But there can be no error, for in its place is the statement, following some ancient popular tradition, "God took him." The exceptions prove the rule. Only Enoch and Elijah in the Bible do not die, but they do not, like Utnapishtim, merit or earn immortality and divinity.

Between Gen 5 and 10 lies the biblical account of the old Mesopotamian flood story. The J and the P accounts are here amalgamated but they follow the Gilgamesh epic very closely. The building of the arks, the lists of passengers, and many other points in the two accounts are parallel. R^P, I suggest, purposely wanted the biblical account to sound like its forerunner, the Babylonian account. Utnapishtim of the Gilgamesh myth is very much like Noah in the biblical. The biblical story is designed to call to mind the Babylonian. The parallels serve to emphasize the one big contrast that is in the climax of the story. Utnapishtim and Noah both survive death in arks riding out the flood. They both send out doves and ravens. And they both offer lavish sacrifices on debarkation. But there the parallels and comparisons abruptly cease. Where Utnapishtim is granted immortality, Noah is granted a covenant by the one true God. And where Utnapishtim is taken to dwell with the gods in the Far Distance at the mouth of the Rivers, Noah becomes the first tiller of the soil, becoming drunk on his own wine

and disgracing himself with his children. Noah emphatically remains a man. The text puts it very simply, "All the days of Noah were 950 years; and he died" (Gen 9:29). "… and he died."

Ancient Israel in exile, upon hearing the biblical account of the flood, would think throughout of the Gilgamesh myth and of Utnapishtim; and in so doing they could not miss the point of the biblical story: and he died. The Bible is a story of the mighty acts of God, not of the mighty acts of men. The Babylonian story ends thus:

Thereupon Enlil went up into the ark: he took hold of my hand and made me go aboard, he bade my wife go aboard and made her kneel at my side. Standing between us, he touched our foreheads and did bless us, saying: "Hitherto Utnapishtim has been but a man; but now Utnapishtim and his wife shall be as gods like ourselves. In the Far Distance, at the mouth of the Rivers, Utnapishtim shall dwell." (*Epic of Gilgamesh* XI.21)

The contrast with Noah, who is but the biblical Utnapishtim, could not fail to strike the ancient ear. In the Bible the movement is from God to humans, not from humans to God. Noah died.

The third attempt of humans to become divine, to attain unto divinity, is seen in the story of Babylon's ancient ziggurat, the biblical Tower of Babel that people built in order to climb up to the top story of the universe to make a name for themselves, manifestly to attain unto divinity. Just as God had to place the guards on the way to the tree of life in Eden, now he had to strike people with confusion of tongues, so that they could not reunite and cross the established line of distinction between Creator and created.

IV

The basic ground rules of biblical theology are laid in these first eleven chapters of Genesis: (1) God is God and all else is created, and (2) while God may intrude into his creation, humans may not intrude into the category of God. God comes to humanity and not humanity to deity, but even in so doing God does not leave off being God. The first eleven chapters of Genesis establish these rules. God is awesomely God, never to be confused with God's creation.

Then begins the peculiar story of Israel, and we find this awesome God calling on Abraham in Ur with a plan: "Go from your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you" (Gen 12:1). The idea was that Abraham would become the father of a mighty nation that would be a means for God to bless his whole creation. That, as Gerhard von Rad has said, was the great prophetic contribution of the Jahwist writer to the patriarchal stories. And it is clearly the essential key to understanding what the Pentateuch really is.

The Pentateuch in a very real sense is Mosaic, just as the Psalter, and much of 2 Samuel and the book of Isaiah are Davidic. Not that Moses wrote any of the Pentateuch, but that the Pentateuch is the document of Mosaic faith. The Pentateuch is a story of a divine journey that begins in Ur and continues rather circuitously

to the waters of the Jordan. The hero of the story is God. The material of the story is that of the ethnic origins of a rather normal, small, ancient Near Eastern nation called Israel. It begins in the living room of Abraham, a resident of Ur in Mesopotamia, and it is concerned mainly with the migrations of Abraham and his descendants, and all the various elements that went to form the people Israel. This Pentateuch or divine odyssey makes itself quite clear: this is a non-located deity, the hero of the story. If one asks where one may find him, the only answer one receives is, "I will be there" or "I will be with you."

And he *is* there throughout the story. We follow him in his odyssey, in his quest for humanity and for his people, from Ur in Mesopotamia to Shechem in Palestine, from Shechem to Egypt, from Pithom and Raamses to Sinai, from Sinai to Kadesh, from Kadesh around Edom and Moab to the Jordan River. At the Jordan a new phase begins but the story continues,[10] and he goes with David to Jerusalem. It is only a short way then to Bethlehem.

Moses once asked God, "Is it not in thy going with us that we are distinct, I and thy people, from all the people on the face of the earth?" (Exod 33:12). They were a normal people who knew many migrations, many battles, and many hardships. God never promised that they would not have battles and hardships or that they would not live in the realities of the world; all he promised them was that he would be there, that he would be with them. Sometimes Israel used the ancient pictures of warrior gods to think of the one true God and sometimes she used the ancient pictures of pastoral myths and royal myths to think of the one true God. But within and through the variety of expressions that Israel used, one affirmation was constant: the divine promise to be with his people for better or for worse, in good times and bad. God never promised that life would be a bed of roses; s/he only promised to be there.

That is all God was really saying in the burning bush to Moses: "I am who I am" (Exod 3:14).[11] This left him free, not strapped to any sanctuary or holy place; an itinerant God is he. He joined them in Egypt, entered the huts and hovels there and fought Pharaoh on his own ground. Out in the desert, symbolized in various ways by the ark or the fire or the cloud or the "glory," he would sometimes travel out ahead of them by three days journey showing the way. Wherever they went, they could worship him just as fully as at any other place. Sinai was a rallying point, as the Bible finally speaks of it, and not a sanctuary in which God was trapped. Wherever they went, they could say he has been here, he is here.

And when they finally settled in Palestine and moved the ark from Kiriath-Jearim into the Jebusite city of Jerusalem, David's great compromise with the Canaanites, there were still the prophets to insist that God was God and naught else holy. Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in Babylonia, advising them to pray there for the Babylonians, was not theological innovation. A person of the true Mosaic

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[10] Cf. Mendenhall, "Hebrew Conquest of Palestine."
[11] So von Rad, *OT Theology*, 1:180.

faith knew that one could worship God on enemy soil just as a person of the true Mosaic faith knew that one should pray, as Jeremiah advised, for enemies (Jer 29:7). God went with the Israelites into their exile. He who dispatched his children into banishment because of their sins went with them there, just as he had been with them, long before, in their slavery in Egypt. And when later the Roman eagle had come to roost in the holy of holies, a person of the true Mosaic faith knew that one might know this God in a cradle – at least those knew who remembered well what the Mosaic faith really was, and what Isaiah and Jeremiah had said God was like, and what it was Job had cried out for. This God had called Israel his son and David his son; it is quite understandable that he should call Christ his son (Ps 2:7 – Matt 3:17; Hos 11:1 – Matt 2:15). This God had suffered with his children in Egypt and Babylonia: it is quite understandable that he should get onto a cross. The God who had walked in the Garden now walked in Galilee. He who had called on Adam now became a human, suffering our indignities and dying our death.

This is salvation: God's coming all the way to us in Christ. He had promised to be with us, and in Christ he was and is with us, granting his presence and offering his fellowship.

Out of the apparent dualism of the New Testament, the early church councils made a clear affirmation of monotheism. The councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon were undoubtedly aided to their formulations of Christian monotheism by the sharp attacks of Judaism upon the young Christian sect. The solutions they reached are well stated in the idea of Christ being fully God and fully human. But they came to this felicitous issue not only because of heresies within the church that compelled them to it, but also because of the very incisive attacks by the rabbis of the late first century and the second and third centuries. I speak not of the more obvious rabbinical attacks on the person of Jesus himself, his birth and death, but rather of the real concern among the rabbis for monotheism.

The New Testament is written in the language of Persian dualism, in which, so to speak, evil is given its due. In Zoroastrian dualism, which was the widespread mode of thinking in the late Hellenistic Mediterranean world, a genuine cosmic struggle was envisaged between good and evil, between light and darkness, or, as formulated at Qumran, between the sons of light and the sons of darkness, both here and beyond. Gnosticism took over the vocabulary of this dualism and found itself at home in Christian circles accustomed to the dualistic vocabulary of the New Testament.

The New Testament was written in the first century CE for people to read and understand. It was not written in esoteric language; it was written in the exciting prose of the people at the time to whom it was addressed. It was written in the vocabulary that people knew; and the vocabulary that people knew was highly dualistic in cosmology. It drew on the massive glossary of terms familiar in the so-called Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Tannaitic literature, Philo, Josephus, and so on, apart from which the New Testament vocabulary cannot be understood.

But at the same time, the New Testament itself insists that there is only one document important for its understanding, and that is the Old Testament. Someone has estimated one-seventh of the New Testament to be quotation of, reference to, or allusion to the Old Testament. Outside of a few references, no other body of writings is recognized. The writers of the New Testament themselves insist that nothing is new, that all is old brought to fruition, that the New Testament offers naught but fulfillment of the old faith of Israel in the Old Testament.[12] The New Testament writers studiously avoid any thought of innovation or novelty in Christ or his church. They themselves insist that the God of the Old Testament is the God in Christ.[13]

But their vocabulary is not the vocabulary of Moses and Jeremiah but of their own time. They intended to be understood by their contemporaries. They used the highly dualistic vocabulary of their time and this disturbed the rabbis sorely. The rabbis of the first three Christian centuries devoted a good bit of thought to the heresy of the two powers (*shetey reshuyot*). What they meant by the error of the two powers is two-fold: the assumption that God is the author of good only and therefore not truly God or sovereign where evil is concerned, and the excessive insistence on God's holy otherness or transcendence, which leads to the positing of an intermediate power. From the standpoint of the rabbis, as George Foot Moore put it, "It was evident that Gentile Christianity with its supreme God, the Father, and its Son of God, Creator and Savior, was founded on the doctrine of the two powers."[14] Portions of the tractate *Megillah* in Mishna, Tosefta, and Talmud are dedicated toward warding off the very popular heresy of the positive or peace-of-mind thinking of the times, the temptation to deny the sovereignty of God in adversity. When Satan and the prince of this world and the forces of darkness start competing with God, there is genuine dualism. The rabbis said that anyone who prays only for the good that God has wrought should be stopped in his prayer.[15]

I am convinced that the dualism of the New Testament is more apparent than real. In and through the late Hellenistic language of the New Testament shines the sovereignty of the one true God, Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer. At those points where the New Testament seems about to slip off into a genuine dualism it providentially quotes the Old Testament, the Pentateuch or some prophet or some psalmist, to make itself clear. There is no cosmic competitor to God; he alone is God and all else is under his gracious sovereignty.

Proof enough for me that the dualism of the New Testament is more apparent than real is in the decisions of the church councils of Nicaea (325 CE) and of

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[12] See the brilliant argument to this effect (*apud* Cullmann, "Significance of the Qumran Texts") by Stendahl, New Testament professor at Harvard, in "Scrolls and the New Testament." In close agreement with him is his colleague Cross, *Ancient Library of Qumran*, 183–84 (1961 ed. 242). For additional arguments, see Sanders, "Habakkuk in Qumran."

[13] See the discussion of the variety of eschatological hopes in the intertestamental period in Eichrodt, *Theology of the OT*, 490.

[14] Moore, *Judaism*, 1:364.

[15] *m. Meg.* 4.9.

Chalcedon (451 CE). Both councils affirmed Christian monotheism. Threatened by the pluralistic heresies and prodded by the rabbis, they insisted that God is one, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[16] Christ, they said, is fully God and fully human, and thus did Gen 1 shine through their decision. Christ, above all, is not a fusion or confusion of God and his creation, of humanity and God. "Fully God and fully human" does not mean 50 percent God and 50 percent human; it means 100 percent God and 100 percent human. This was no cosmic blending or fusion. Jesus Christ was a man, 100 percent a man; the temptation stories in Matt 4 and Luke 4 insist on it. But the God who had constantly violated the distinction between Creator and creation by crossing over for fellowship with his people came this time completely into his world by becoming the very human Jesus. Jesus was not God nor a god who pretended to be a man. Jesus was 100 percent a man as Abraham and Jeremiah had been. It was God who was God and none other, but he, of his own holy will, took the last step of his own divine odyssey and got down into the cradle in Bethlehem, never abdicating his sovereignty. God did not leave off being God when he came to us in Christ and Jesus did not leave off being a man, or else the whole story is a sham. Jesus of all men, we say, most let God be God, so obedient was he as a man. And certainly, God let Jesus be for him the man that he was. Jesus did not become a god; God became a man. We should speak not of the divinity of Jesus but rather of the humanity of God.

God, who had entered the huts and hovels of Egypt and Babylonia, now became a man; he emptied himself taking on the form of a slave. When we speak of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we are still speaking, like the first Christians at Pentecost, of the "mighty acts of God" – the one God who loves us so that he comes to us all the way, like a shepherd who looks for the one lost sheep, or a woman for her coin, or a father who runs down the road to embrace a wayward son. He comes all the way in Christ to grant us his presence, to be with us as he said he would.

We speak of God in metaphorical and mythical language, whether in the Old Testament or the New Testament. Like Jesus with his parables, Isaiah had to remind his people what God was like. God's covenant is one of love, Isaiah said, and when you think of God and his love for Israel, think of a swain, a farmer's son who has a little plot of land and a sweetheart he wants to give it to. The farmer gets on his hands and knees to dig the rocky land of its stones and to clear it for cultivation; he digs a wine vat in it and builds a watch tower in the midst of it. Such is God's love for his beloved, said Isaiah (Isa 5:1–7). When you think of God and his covenant, think of gnarled and loving hands digging the rocky Palestinian soil of its stone. For our Lord to come later and say that we should think also of a woman on her hands and knees looking for a coin, for that is what the kingdom (or sovereignty) of God is like, should therefore occasion no surprise.

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[16] Cf. Moore, *Judaism* 3, n110; and the Qur'an, Surah 4:169–71; 17:111; 19:34–37.

The later Isaiah spoke of the love of God for his people in the metaphorical language of shepherds. After Israel had been in exile for some fifty years, this prophet answered their baffled questions of where God had been all that time by using the figure of a shepherd who had worked fifty long years for his sheep. God, he said, is like a shepherd who has worked for his sheep and now is taking them across the desert: "Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him, feeding his flock like a shepherd, he gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom, gently leading those that are with young" (Isa 40:10–11). For our Lord to come later and say that, to know God and his love, we should think of a shepherd who has safely corralled ninety-nine sheep in the fold and after counting them goes out looking, seeking and searching for the lost one, should but confirm for us that it is the one Creator God who pervades both Testaments, the same God who restlessly seeks his loved ones.

The prophet Micah said that a person should walk humbly with God, for it is God who humbly has walked among people (Mic 6:8). The God who in the Old Testament is called the Father of Israel and the Father of David is the same one who in the New Testament is called the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And for our Lord to say he is like the father who runs down the road to embrace a wayward son is simply to say that it is the same God still restlessly loving us, loving us so much that he emptied himself.

That is the true sovereignty of God – the emptying, the humbling, the coming, the calling, the cradle, the cross. And the empty tomb but confirms what we already knew. He who had gotten into the cradle and onto the cross in Jesus was truly God. The resurrection story but states the obvious, so to speak. Make no mistake about it, this was God, the only God there is, the Creator God, who had come and lived among us the life of a human; who subjected himself to humanity, suffering our inhumanity and indignity, loving us in our rejection of him, loving us from the cross. And that is salvation – that burning, judging, loving presence on the cross. The vocabulary of the Old Testament differs from the vocabulary of the New Testament, and the vocabulary of the modern world differs from the biblical vocabularies. But may the world say of the church today what it said of the church at Pentecost: "We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty acts of God" (Acts 2:11).[17]

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[17] For a parallel development of the exegetical and theological arguments here presented, especially from the standpoint of the prophets of ancient Israel, see Sanders, *OT in the Cross* (1961).

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17

The Book of Job and the Origins of Judaism

(2009)

The book of Job marked a crucial moment in the emergence of Judaism in the early Persian period after Cyrus had presented the exiles with a problem hardly anticipated in the waning years of the reign of Nabonidus, the last king of the neo-Babylonian empire, when the remnant of old Israel and Judah was still in shambles.

Cyrus's edict (538 BCE), after he had conquered Babylonia and liberated peoples earlier taken captive, allowed Judahites to repatriate, and called for thinking in new ways about what survival finally might mean. The Isaiah of the exile (Isa 40–55) took it to mean a joyous return to the land, which some yet believed Yahweh had given their ancestors centuries earlier. Those ancestors had also lived in Mesopotamia, so the trek back to Palestine would parallel Abraham's and Sarah's journey there (Isa 41:2–10). Others were not so sure, as the same prophet recognized (Isa 46:12), those whom he called "stubborn of heart" (Isa 51:7) and the unrighteous (Isa 55:7). He even pled with the recalcitrant to seek Yahweh during this theophany marked by Cyrus's advanced foreign policy, to forsake their doubts and to join the caravan headed back home (Isa 55:6–9).

Others chose not to return but to settle down in the Babylonia where they were born and had grown up, now governed by Cyrus's Persian satraps, and make their permanent home there. Many had adopted Babylonian names and customs, and they all now followed the Babylonian calendar. Most, apparently, so accommodated to their Mesopotamian context that they no longer felt themselves attached to the old sod, and many simply lost their identity with the past. Even so, some of the latter kept their old identity to the extent that they could, and in the measure that their new life allowed. They didn't want to go back to that desolate place down there, but they also did not feel themselves to be either Babylonian or Persian. Most, apparently, stayed, for the largest Jewish community in the world from then, the sixth century BCE, until the sixth century CE was the Babylonian – twelve centuries. The official Jewish Talmud was developed and codified in Babylonia (the Bavli). Along with those who did go back they would be called the "remnant," these who had suffered loss and destitution but kept ties to the past whether they stayed or returned. Most, however, no longer spoke or even knew Hebrew. Aramaic was the official common language of the Persian court and government (there were many local languages, but only one lingua franca), and they were comfortable with that. In fact, the Babylonian Talmud is in Aramaic. There wasn't much drawing them to uproot themselves

now that life looked considerably more promising right where they were. After all, Jeremiah had written their grandparents soon after they had been taken into exile that they should settle down, build houses, and marry off sons and daughters right there in exile. He had even urged them to pray for Babylon and to find their welfare there (Jer 29:5–7). They were told their grandparents had not liked the prophet's advice, but, after all, he was a prophet and all the rest he said turned out right. They would stay put.

Torah

As things turned out, most freed Judahites, now called Jews, stayed in Babylonia and were in a position to help shape the Judaism that arose to accommodate both them and those who chose to go back. Down in Judah the returnees would build a shrine to operate as the new temple, where a priestly religion would function sponsored by their new overlords, the Persians (Hag 1–2 and Zech 1–8; cf. Ezra 6:1–13). This new temple would replace the one that was destroyed by the Babylonians down there, but another icon was in the works up in the growing Jewish community in Babylonia, and that new icon would be called the Torah. A number of the old preexilic traditions, considerably modified to make sense in the new situation, were pulled together by the new priestly leaders, and then finally edited by Ezra, the scribe. It would start with some adapted Mesopotamian accounts of creation, followed by their understanding of the great flood, and then a story explaining the ziggurat tower that they called the Tower of Babel (Babylonia), with their own meanings attached. Then it would continue with some of the old stories about the patriarchs who had come from Mesopotamia in the first place, the promises of Yahweh to Abram and Sarai, then the descent into Egypt in the time of Jacob and Joseph, the exodus and wanderings in the desert, led by an Egyptian Jew named Moses, and the giving of the Law.

But it would end, not with the story about settling in Canaan (the way the old recitals did in 1 Sam 12:7–8; Deut 26:5–9; Josh 24:2–13; Pss 78, 105–106, 136; et passim), but with Moses's death on Mount Pisgah on the east bank of the Jordan. It would remind them who they were and where they originally came from, but it would not end, as most of the old recitals did, with settling in Canaan, but with the encampment on the plains of Moab and the death of Moses on Mount Pisgah there. That way the Torah form of the old story as recited in future would not exclude these who chose to make their home where Jeremiah had said they should; it would reach its climax in a sort of perennial hope of fulfillment of the promises made to Abram and Sarai at the beginning of it all.[1] The original settlement in the land, as told in Joshua, would now be a part of the following section of their Scripture called the Prophets, and the prophets would convincingly tell why it did not work and why they were destroyed by the Assyrians and Babylonians and led away as prisoners to Babylonia.

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[1] Sanders, *Torah and Canon*.

The story, as newly shaped, would provide the context for the laws that God had also given them when Moses had them camp at Sinai. These laws included cultic, ethical, civic, and social precepts by which to live fruitful lives wherever they might wander, or settle. Many were adapted from Mesopotamian and Egyptian law codes, but some seem to have arisen peculiarly out of their own lives together. Their laws were appreciated already by the Persians and would be admired by the Greeks. (It would be said that this Jewish epic with its laws was so appreciated by the Greeks that it was the only "barbarian epic" translated into Greek!) They were laws forged on the anvil of long experience, especially including laws admonishing kings and all leaders to rule by law and not by personal power and whim. The story about having kings included all the agony their early leader, Samuel, had suffered, and whether they should have their first monarchy, under Saul and David (1 Sam 8–15). The books of Kings put the failure of Israel and Judah squarely at the feet of their kings, even David and Solomon. In fact, reviewing the whole of the early "history" of the people in the land, one sees that all had sinned, none had been "righteous." This would lead psalmists to say that "none was righteous, no not one" (Ps 14:1–2; Ps 53:3; cf. Rom 3:10).

The disaster of the Assyrian and Babylonian destruction of Israel and Judah had had to be faced, and the Torah and Prophets explained it as God's judgment on all of them, the whole of old Israel and Judah, especially the kings for their unrighteous policies and idolatry. They also made it clear, however, that the judgment was not only punitive but constructive, that deep in the old burnt-out stump would be a holy seed (Isa 6:13), that the adversity had a positive purpose in that God signified the adversity (that Assyria and Babylon were causing anyway) also as the pain necessary for the purging (Isaiah) of God's people, and for the divine surgery of implanting God's will (Jer 34 and Ezek 36) in a new Israel to spring forth from the old. And therein lay the origins of early Judaism, the new Israel the prophets promised.

So the Torah included both story and law, *mythos* and *ethos*, haggadah and halakah, as they would come later to say. This form of the old traditions, including laws, had its debut or introduction to the people in Jerusalem around the middle of the fifth century BCE, about seventy years after Cyrus's edict. Ezra, a scribe, took it with him from Babylonia down to Jerusalem and arranged with the Levitical leaders to introduce it in a gala celebration centered in the Water Gate to the city (Neh 8–9). On a dais especially built inside the gate for the occasion Ezra read from the Torah from dawn until noon with Levites standing on either side of him to translate it into Aramaic for the people. According to the record in Nehemiah, the festival lasted some days. It was a festive occasion. A feast was held that included everybody, even the poor. It was so moving it is reported that people wept upon hearing the Torah read. It reminded them of who they were and how they should conduct their lives. It made clear that they had a past, and now they would have a future! To conclude the occasion Ezra uttered a prayer that recapped their history from Abram and Sarai to the present (Neh 9:6–37), all of God's gracious deeds, but also the sins committed that caused the disaster that had fallen upon the people at the hand of the Babylonians, and finally their sad

situation under the Persians seventy years after liberation. By the time of Arta-xerxes, the great promise of Cyrus had deteriorated to the point that they thought of themselves now as slaves of the Persians (Neh 9:36–37; cf. Esther). But in the face of the new situation, so much like the old, the people nonetheless rejoiced in this renewal of their identity and of their covenant with God (Neh 8:38). They had a purpose, they had a reason to live.

But while the story was now relatively stable, the laws would – like all laws everywhere – need constantly to be adapted to new situations. The Torah included cases where that had already happened in the past (compare the older laws in Exod 20:22–23:33 with the later adapted ones in Deut 12–26) and pro-vided a kind of pattern or paradigm for how to adapt laws in future. Torah was actually in itself a kind of dialogue between past and present, and would adum-brate how it could be adapted as time went by – as would clearly be seen in the rabbinic Talmud later on, also codified in Babylonia. Some of the efforts at adapting the old to the new could be seen in comparing the stories in the books of Samuel and Kings to those in the book of Chronicles, and the comparison would provide a sort of paradigm of how to do the adapting for all time to come, because both would be kept in their developing canon. Other dialogues in this developing Scripture would include keeping what the preexilic prophets had said but also keeping what ancient sages or wise ones who lived during the same peri-ods said, for they were often quite different. Putting away foreign wives, which Ezra felt was necessary in his time, could be contrasted with the quite different view espoused in the story of Ruth, or with most of Genesis. Having both sides of issues included would be of great benefit through the ages. What was started with the official adoption of the book of Torah in Jerusalem (Neh 8) would set Judaism on the path to keep contrasting ideas in different contexts within the literary context of a canon, despite the apparent contradictions, as paradigms for dialogue in the development of laws for the future.[2]

Prophets

One such case of apparent contradiction within the developing canon of early Judaism was the difference quite evident between the specific law that God would visit the sins of ancestors on their descendants to the third and fourth generation (Exod 34:7), and the denial of that in both Jeremiah (31:29) and Eze-kiel (ch. 18). In fact, the contradiction is so blatant in Ezekiel that later on rab-bis would debate whether the book of Ezekiel even belonged in the canon with Torah. And rightly so, because the idea of later generations suffering for what earlier ones had done made for a real debate in early Judaism, and that debate itself became enshrined in the growing canon. The issue was a major one for

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[2] Ellenson, "Halakhah for Liberal Jews." Ellenson is currently president of the Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion, hence Chief Rabbi of the world-wide Reform Movement of Judaism.

early Judaism. How to reconcile some of the old ideas from before the exile to those that became necessary after it would be a continuing discussion (see Gen 18:22–32). Jeremiah and Ezekiel made clear that the generations after the exile should not have to pay for sins committed before it. The barely emergent Judaism in early Persian times needed to know that it would not be clobbered again with punishment for those old sins – any more than they already had been. And there were several ways in which early Judaism dealt with the problem.

It was clear that they had already paid excessively for those old sins ("double" in Isa 40:2). They had lost both temple and land to the Babylonians and had suffered woefully as a people under the Assyrians and Babylonians. They were faced sharply with the problem of excessive suffering dealt to them as punishment for their old sins. The call in Isa 40 to "comfort my people" was a command by God to his heavenly council or phalanx of messengers to correct the excess by going forth to proclaim that Cyrus's edict was the work of Yahweh, now the God of All, and that due compensation for the excess was forthcoming (cf. Ps 82). Punishment by a just God went a long way toward explaining what had happened. But what happened to them was too heavy to be explained solely by signifying the suffering as punishment. Most of the preexilic prophets had also said that the suffering and destitution would serve as a sort of vale of tears (Valley of Achor) leading to a door of hope (Hos 2:14), or like a purging of dross from metal as in refining gold, and like cleansing by flood waters (Isa 1:25; 8:7–8; 28:18–19), or maybe discipline and paternal instruction for the future,[3] or like the breaking of a vessel by the potter who would reshape it into something better according to his standards (Jer 18:6–8), or, indeed, surgery by God the great physician to suture his will onto their heart (Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:26–27).

Deuteronomy summed up the prophetic message in this regard in a four-point overview (Deut 29–31):
– It is not God who let us down
– It is we who let God down, but
– if in destitution we should take it all to heart,
– God would restore all in better shape than before.

The suffering of a small people caught in the vise of late Iron Age Near Eastern imperial ambitions thus had a meaning worth remembering by the remnant after the exile: it had meanings both negative (punishment) and positive. Suffering was not just the obvious fate of a beleaguered people defeated time and again by far superior powers; it now had meaning for them. The whole prophetic corpus was essentially an argument affirming the uses of adversity in the hands of the One God of All.[4] It would serve to explain why old Israel and Judah were destroyed.

But none of it addressed the issue of the excessive suffering of an individual. In fact, it was not intended to address such an issue, but because it was so meaningful and important to the Judaism that emerged out of the ashes of old Israel

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[3] Sanders, *Suffering as Divine Discipline*.
[4] Sanders, *Torah and Canon*.

and Judah, it became a major problem that had to be faced early on for the remnant. Those who chose to remain Judahites, now "Jews," and retain the transformed identity, found so much value in the old preexilic traditions of Torah and Prophets that they became a kind of canon to guide them in new situations in the future. They called the results "Torah and Prophets." The preexilic prophetic view of purposive suffering described in it gained a kind of sacred value of divinely revealed truth, so that when the problem of the excessive suffering of an individual known to be good in his community arose, many tried to apply the value to that case as well. It worked for the people as a corporate unit, the new Israel called early Judaism, in bringing the old prophetic traditions into the light of the new situation, but it caused utter consternation in the new situation when used to explain excessive individual suffering. It worked as a buffer against inter-generational responsibilities (as Ezekiel clearly explained it in ch. 18), but it did not work when applied to individuals. The Isaiah of the exile (Isa 40–55) opined that the excessive suffering of the people as a whole should be understood as vicarious suffering for the sake of all peoples (Isa 52:13–53:12), but he did not address how it would work in the case of the individual who suffered excessively. Efforts were made to make it work, as may be seen in a number of Psalms. Evidence of the struggle can also be seen in the book of Ecclesiastes (e. g., ch. 7).

Job

One exceptional effort became enshrined in a poetic work that has lived ever since in the tension of the dilemma. There was an old story from high antiquity about a righteous man who suffered far more than indicated by any sin he might have himself committed. His name was Job (cf. Ezek 14:14). He was an Edomite, not even Israelite, the story says in Job ch. 1. One view expressed in the book simply claims that Job suffered valiantly and patiently and in personal adversity curried the favor of God, who restored his fortunes to what they had been before the disasters that had befallen him (Job 1–2; 42:10–16). Another effort, on the contrary, probed deeply into the problem in a wrenching and very honest dialogue, told in poetry for the most part, about how the same man, known to be totally righteous and upright, fought such efforts to justify the ways of God on those terms, and wrestled profoundly with the old traditions. He argued that they could not willy-nilly simply be applied to his situation, a righteous man who lost everything for apparently no reason at all. Both these stories are told in one biblical book, the book of Job. It starts out telling about a patient sufferer who accepted all the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune without questioning God, but goes on to include the agony of quite a different Job, one who preferred to struggle through the whole problem of unjust suffering and not just accept the old solution for the new situation. The result is a literary gem of ancient literature unsurpassed by anything of the sort before or since.

The patient Job's experience with suffering and disaster has entered into many languages as a common metaphor and continues in modern usage to apply to

anyone who is longsuffering and patient in the face of undeserved pain and the trials of life. This is the Job vaguely known throughout the Western world as one who suffers without complaining. My mother, who completed only the third grade in the back country of Fayette County, Tennessee, knew Job as a symbol or mirror of her personal experiences as a mother of eight children, the last of whom, I am sure, provided her many trials and tribulations! The patient Job also provided a mirror for the tennis star Arthur Ashe.[5] Though he claimed that he suffered more as an Afro-American from racial prejudices of Americans than from the affliction of AIDS he had contracted from a blood transfusion, Ashe nonetheless exhorted his readers not to ask, "Why me, O Lord?" in the face of suffering unless they had earlier asked, "Why me, O Lord?" when good things happened to them and all seemed to go well. Ashe was the patient Job, indeed.

The other Job is the impatient Job. While reception criticism indicates that most literary reflections on the Joban figure have through the ages been of the patient Job, Samuel Terrien, in preparing his last book before his death, found that artists through the ages have sometimes been considerably nuanced in their appreciation of the biblical Job. According to Terrien, "artists have seen in him the prophet of a new life, a philosopher of suffering, an intercessor for sexual reprobates, and in modern times, the poet of questionable existence." As he says, "painters and sculptors have represented this enigmatic pagan – an Edomite – not only as a model of piety under duress but also as a rebel who looked beyond conventional religion." These would have been attempts to see the figure Job as one single person.[6]

The framework of the book, including the prose prologue and epilogue, the speeches of Elihu, and those of Yahweh speaking in the wind, would represent the patient Job. This is the image of Job my mother and the author of the Epistle of James (5:11) knew. I'm sure too that it was the phrase in the NT epistle she echoed and not the First Testament book. But there are at least two Jobs resident in the biblical book that bears the Edomite's name, the patient and the impatient.

It is still important to ask what, nonetheless, emerges from the biblical book as a whole when the reader valorizes both Jobs in the same book, when we read it as it comes to us, not letting the one Job overwhelm the other, nor separating them so distinctly as to ignore the book itself as it stands. This has rarely been responsibly done, it seems to me. Early Greek translations of Job and the so-called Job Targum from Qumran Cave 11 show that the amalgamation of the two occurred early on. In fact, it is quite clear that the poet of the Rebel Job used the earlier figure as a framework from which to project his complaints against the facile efforts by the friends to apply the old prophetic views directly onto Job as an individual. Including both in the one book is actually typical of much of the Bible.

As Donald Harman Akenson clearly and effectively demonstrates, the later biblical writers, when they wanted to advance their ideas, used well-known

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[5] Ashe, *Days of Grace*.
[6] Terrien, *Iconography of Job*.

earlier literature as the vehicle for doing so.[7] They knew they could not edit the earlier too much or they would lose the authority of the older vehicle they wanted to ride. They simply added their bit to what was already familiar. This often in the Bible led to contradictions and anomalies in the text. The basic tendency of biblical criticism in the first place was its attempts to locate the different sources that gave rise to the problems in the text. But Akenson, who is not a biblical scholar but a Canadian expert in Irish literature, makes the case vividly, almost poetically, for much of biblical literature beyond what biblical experts have done. In antiquity such contradictions and discrepancies did not bother the reader or hearer of the text, as they do us. The very art of writing/reading was a "mystery" to most people of the time. Just to be able to read a language (priests, scribes) brought wonder to the miracle of writing.[8]

Most of the Bible is anonymous in authorship and includes opposing points of view (the yin and the yang?) as indeed most Oriental literature and art do. We don't know who wrote most of the Bible, and it was not until the Greeks came calling in the Hellenistic period that Jews were even interested in assigning their common or community literature to individual authors. This gave rise to the phenomenon called "pseudepigraphy," attributing accepted or received community literature, no matter its inner consistency or lack of it, to well-known names from the past. Thus, Moses became the author of the pentateuchal Torah, David of all the Psalms, Solomon of Wisdom literature, and indeed Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John the "authors" of the four Gospels.

It is interesting in the light of the pseudepigraphic craze that overtook Judaism under the heavy Greek influence that the book of Job escaped attribution to Solomon or any such well-known name from Israel's past (see Ezek 14:14). It seemed to be able to stand on its own strength and power as a story and a statement about the balance between divine and human responsibility. Job is not presented as an Israelite or as a Jew, but as an Edomite from "the land of Uz." The story has universal interest. The poet who gave us the Rebel Job used the older story to good advantage. The experience is of Israel as a people, given a promise by their God, who had the gifts rescinded that had accompanied the promise, progeny and land, taken back by the God who gave them. Why? The shape of the tri-partite Jewish canon was designed to answer the question, "Why?"

The story line that moves from creation and the promises, through one mishap and problem after another, finally reaches a climax in 1 Kings 10 when the Deuteronomistic "historian" relates how the two promises to Abram and Sarai in Gen 12 were gloriously fulfilled. The visit of the Queen of Sheba represents the nations round about who supposedly admired this phenomenal accomplishment. Everything in Jerusalem was of gold, very little of silver. But in the next chapter, God appointed three satans to test Solomon and he flunked all three trials. From that point on it was all downhill until the united kingdom of David and Solomon was divided in two (1 Kgs 12) and both fell ignominiously before the

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[7] Akenson, *Surpassing Wonder*.
[8] Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*.

neo-Assryian (2 Kgs 17) and neo-Babylonian expansionist forces (2 Kgs 24–25) in the region. By the end of 2 Kings, the end of the section in the Jewish canon called the Early Prophets, or the Early History, the experiment is over, finished, and the survivors of the promised people are scattered, either in exile in Babylonia or assimilating to other identities in the area of Palestine.

After the Early Prophets (Joshua to Kings) in the Jewish tri-partite canon come fifteen books called the Latter Prophets (Isaiah to Malachi). Deuteronomy seemed to make the most sense of it all, when it was re-read in the exile, in the summary in Deut 29–31. The arrangement of books in the Tanak or Jewish canon makes it clear that the prophets are presented after the history of promise, fulfillment, and failure, to explain the four points Deuteronomy makes in its summary. One after the other the prophets give the reasons the disaster befell the people and go on to explain that if the suffering and dismemberment are taken seriously there will be a corporate resurrection of the fallen experiment and God will then have a new Israel, presented in the postexilic literature as early Judaism, a priestly religion dedicated to promulgation of the Torah and adherence to it. Torah proved to have the power of life for early Judaism and became the only enduring icon of the new religion after the destruction of the Second Temple by Rome in the first century CE. "Judaism is Torah and Torah is Judaism," as the old expression goes. All Jews were urged to live lives of Torah, to be obedient, and to remember that all they had were gifts of God, nothing ever again in the created order was to be made into idols to worship: they were to remember to worship God as the Giver and never to worship the gifts God gave, or to love God's gifts more than God the giver of all gifts. The temple was to be forever retained in memory by continued use of its calendar and clock to designate the seasons and hours of prayer and study, but Torah, in its full sense of all authentic tradition, alone provided the binding force of Judaism thenceforth to the present day.

As the process of this death of the old (Israel and Judah) and the resurrection of the new (Ezek 37) was taking place, what Jeremiah called the total shattering of the potter's vessel and its complete reshaping by God (Jer 18), Judaism began gradually to embrace, as never before perhaps, the idea of individual worth and responsibility. In the preexilic period the emphasis had been on God's covenant with the people, Israel, as a whole. The prophets' indictments, or reasons offered for the disaster's taking place, were of the people or the nation as a whole. There was no dividing of sheep and goats, no separating good individuals from bad. The judgments of God had devolved on the people or nation as a whole. Many passages in the Prophets stress the point because it was necessary to explain to the destitute in exile why the disaster had taken place. But by the end of the seventh century BCE, forms of individualism began to reach expression, not the full-blown individualism of the later Hellenistic period, but a sort of generational idea of responsibility, as in Ezek 18. Each generation would be responsible for its own sins and errors so that the present generation in exile would no longer have to pay for the sins of its ancestors. As Hosea had put it more than a century earlier, the Valley of Achor had by now become a Door of Hope (Hos 2:14) for Israel's peoplehood.

The idea of individual worth and responsibility began then to demand attention. By the time of the so-called Second Isaiah the prophet could speak of those in whom the Torah, or God's will, was implanted, on the one hand, and on the other, those who lacked Torah in their lives. Both groups co-existed in the same POW camp with the prophet in Babylonia (cf. Isa 46:12 and 51:7). These nascent ideas of individual worth and responsibility gave hope and assurance that there could be a future for this new Israel, called early Judaism, and the past should be taken as a stern lesson but not as a Damocles's sword forever threatening new disasters. Now if there was suffering it had to be because of individual worth and responsibility, with all its attendant problems. This meant hope that Jews, scattered as they were throughout the Persian Empire, could live lives of Torah pleasing to God without the fear of getting clobbered again because of the sins of their ancestors (cf. Exod 34:7). Stories developed that were designed to offer encouragement to young Jews to be faithful to Torah, especially its central concept of there being but One God of All, even when they lived in the court of a foreign ruler – stories such as those of Daniel, the Three Children, Susanna, Esther, Tobit, the Mother and the seven children, others in the books of the Maccabees, and many others.

But there were still those who wanted to bring the corporate ideas in Deuteronomy and the Prophets over into this nascent Judaism and apply them to individuals. They were those who read their common literature from the past in a literalist sort of way so that they saw the curses for disobedience and the blessings for obedience (as in Deut 27 and 28), which had earlier been addressed to Judah as a whole, now devolving directly onto individuals. This is sometimes called the orthodox view of suffering, that if the individual unjustly suffered it had to have been because of the magnitude of his or her own sins (Pss 34, 49, 73), and that the ease of life the wicked enjoy is a passing illusion. The poet of the Rebel Job addressed that particular problem – that of some theologians dumping corporate views of morality onto the individual. Our rebel poet cried a loud No to such static views of Scripture and tradition. He thus posited a righteous individual, a foreigner supposedly representing all humanity, who lived a life of true piety, who nonetheless was clobbered four times over and lost all the evidence he had of his righteousness. He was reduced in a very short period of time from high honor to ignominious shame. Job found himself sitting on a dung heap, scratching his boils with potsherds when three "friends," who used to stand up to honor him in the city gate, came to visit. The best thing these so-called friends did was to remain silent for seven days. But after Job registered his complaint, wishing he had never been born (Job 3), they began to heap on his poor head all the old Deuteronomic and prophetic teachings that were designed as lessons for the people corporately in the preexilic period, and had worked well to explain in exile the corporate disaster of destitution. But they hauled phrases and paraphrases of Scripture and tradition into the dialogues and directed them at Job, an individual (Job 13:1–12).

The Rebel Job said No! God was not like that (Job 23:6–7). And in some of the most stirring poetry the world has ever known, this Job denounced their

static knowledge of tradition and of God as being misplaced and impertinent to his situation. He was an individual; he was not a whole people whose national catastrophe needed an explanation! Job had lived a life of righteous piety, he had done what was expected of an individual, but nonetheless got clobbered. That was the issue the poet wanted addressed. It was a given of the story. The reader or hearer, no matter how orthodox or pious, would not be able to second-guess the author and assume Job must have sinned. No, the old prose story set the stage the poet wanted to address. How can one understand Scripture and tradition as truly relevant in the new situation and not as a burden from the past? The parts representing the traditional view also spoke stirringly and reflected hauntingly on the old traditions. The Job poet did not cheat and give the friends weak arguments or poor poetry to express their view. The poem is one of the powerful works of world literature, in any language.

While it is true that there are several stirring Egyptian and Mesopotamian literary works dating from the Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age (1990 to 1100 BCE) about the unjust suffering of individuals, early Judaism's intensely peculiar situation of needing the explanation for the corporate destruction of old Israel and Judah, which the prophets and Deuteronomy offered, set this story of suffering of a righteous individual in a new problematic the others had not had. The poignancy and the power of the book of Job ring forth in this later setting in ways that earlier similar ones do not.

Job in Dialogue with Tradition

A dissertation published in 2003 addressed this problem. Using the critical tools of intertextuality and applying them on two levels it shows that Job and the friends often paraphrased and echoed hallowed phrases from Deuteronomy and the prophets. It also shows that it was genuine dialogue in that the speakers echoed what Job said and Job what they said during the three cycles of speeches. The effect of the study is to show that the friends understood Scripture and tradition as static and unbending, not making the adjustment necessary to apply its principles to the new situation of the heavy burden of each individual.[9] It concludes by addressing the enigmatic verse in Job 42:7, where Yahweh finally says to one of the friends, "My wrath is kindled against you and your two buddies, because you have not spoken what is right about me as my servant Job has." The study shows convincingly that what the poet in that section intended was that the argument of the friends represent a view of Torah that had not been adjusted to the new situation of early Judaism where individual worth and responsibility would be taken more seriously and where God's mercy and grace were abundant for those whose identity was rooted in the old traditions but resignified and adapted to the new situation and condition. It was a view that some of the early

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[9] Pyeon, *You Have Not Spoken*.

Jews held of Torah that it was the static Word of God enshrined in the text valid for all time. The rebel poet wanted to say as poignantly as possible that Torah, on the contrary, was the dynamic "Word of God" embedded in the earlier traditions that had sustained Israel and Judah but needed to be adapted, modified, and resignified to address the life and problems of the new Israel scattered throughout the Persian and then Greco-Roman worlds, quite different indeed from those of the Iron Age as discerned by static readings of the Torah and Prophets.[10]

The so-called friends engaged, actually, in blatant moralizing, which is what so-called conservatives, that is, static thinkers, are wont to do – wanting to make the present look and act like the past. Job, by contrast, kept trying to theologize, to find where God was in the tragedy, but the friends said, in effect, "Wow, Job, look at you, poor guy. You must have sinned something awful. Confess now, you committed some whoppers, didn't you?" But Job refused to play their game. It would be like Joseph's brothers in Genesis stupidly saying, "Selling our brother into slavery really paid off. Here he is prime minister of Egypt just when we need food. It worked. So, let's sell some more brothers into slavery!" The Bible provides very few models for individual morality but many, many mirrors for human identity. Or, to cite an old Latin theologem: *Errore hominum providentia divina* (God's grace works through human sin).

The Rebel Job through all the pain and agony held out one possibility of hope. He consistently rejected sops that would let a static view of God off the hook, such as granting the individual personal immortality as a recompense, or individual resurrection, or personal restoration to his former station of honor in society (Job 14:7–14). The questing poet had a perspective on the honor/shame syndrome that has governed and organized most human societies throughout history – and still does. He has his Rebel Job seek one more act of God. The single act of God the Rebel Job now seeks that would restore their relation would be to grant Job an audience, a personal interview before the heavenly council, in which Job would have some pretty tough questions to pose. The speeches of Yahweh in the whirlwind asked Job some very tough questions but were something like the opposite of what Job sought in the dialogues. Through the wind God hurled questions at Job like thunder bolts from on high (Job 38–41). The whirlwind did have the effect of saying that the human condition needs to be put in the perspective of understanding God as awesome Creator as well as gracious Redeemer, a little like getting the point of and understanding the quite different views of God set forth in Gen 1 and 2, before reading the rest of the book.

But that was not what Job sought. Throughout the Joban speeches Job advances the idea of being permitted to attend, like Isaiah (Isa 6), Jeremiah (Jer 23:18–22), or Micaiah ben Imlah (1 Kgs 22), a meeting of the heavenly council (cf. Ps 82), precisely like the meeting the prose prologue describes in Job 1. That's all he now asked. The Rebel Job begins the dialogues with the "friends" by lamenting the day of his birth and the night of his conception (Job 3), a lament

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[10] Ellenson, "Halakhah for Liberal Jews."

built directly on Jeremiah's similar lament of his own birth in Jer 20:14–18. As indicated by the method of intertextual analysis, we now can see that Job reflects several times on the sufferings of Jeremiah to try to understand his own (Jer 6:12, 15; 12:1–4; 15:17–18).

In ch. 9, Job toys with the idea of a referee or arbiter between him and God, but he knows that God himself cannot be such an arbiter (Job 9:33); after all God is the accuser. In ch. 12, Job reflects upon former days when he says, "I am now a laughingstock to my friends, I, who used to call upon God and he would answer me" (Job 12:4). This is pressed further in Job's deposition in ch. 29. Job 29–31 forms a sort of deposition Job would make during the audience he sought for himself before the heavenly council. He first muses on his "autumn days when the heavenly council met at my house" (Job 29:4). That was when the honor/shame syndrome of human society worked well for Job. As he makes clear in ch. 30, now he is rejected by the same syndrome in total shame. In ch. 31, then, he offers oath after oath that he would make in the hearing, in his conviction that he was essentially blameless and upright. This was to be Job's case presented in court (chs. 29–31).

In Job's speech in ch. 13, the poet gives us the one possibility Job contemplates.

This will be my salvation, that a godless man shall not come before him … Listen carefully to my words, and let my deposition [Job 13:17] be in your ears. Behold, I have prepared my case; I know that I shall be vindicated. Who is there that will contend with me?

He would say to God:

Only grant me two things, then I will not hide myself from your face: first, withdraw your hand from me and let not dread of you terrify me. Second, summon me, and I will answer; or let me speak, and you reply to me. How many are my iniquities and sins? Show me my transgression and my sin. Why do you hide your face and count me as an enemy? Will you terrify me like a dried-up driven leaf or chase me like chaff before the wind? (Job 13:16–25)

In ch. 16, Job cries out, "Oh, that he would grant the right of a human with God, like that of a person with his neighbor!" (Job 16:21). And in ch. 19, Job shouts out:

Oh, that my words were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book! Oh, that with an iron pen and lead they were graven on a monument forever! For I know that my advocate lives (supposedly in the heavenly council) and that he will stand as a guarantor by my grave and after my skin has been destroyed then without a body I shall see God, whom I shall see at my side and my eyes shall behold, and not another. (Job 19:23–27)

This idea will be repeated in Job's deposition in ch. 31. Job says in ch. 23:

Oh, that I knew where to find him, that I might come even to his throne! I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would like to know what he would answer me, and understand what he would say to me. Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No, he would give heed to me. There an upright person could reason with him, and I should be acquitted forever by my judge. (Job 23:3–7)

These ideas find expression again in the final deposition Job offers in chs. 29–31, of what would happen if he were granted an audience, like Micaiah, Jeremiah, or Isaiah, in the heavenly council. "I would give him an account of all my steps; like a prince, I would approach him" (Job 31:37).

The Book of Job

After resonating with the Rebel Job and appreciating his promethean cries, there comes the time to re-read the book as a whole and to hear the urgent plea that Torah and Prophets are not rigid and dead, consigned to the past, but are adaptable for life, adaptable even to the problem of the undeserved suffering of the righteous individual.[11]

The Prophets and Deuteronomy in memory served early Judaism well by explaining the terrible adversity of the common loss and deprivation of the people as a whole in defeat and exile, and by advancing the idea that the suffering had a dual purpose of both judgment and transformation of the people as a whole. But after the dismantling was complete and if there was to be a remnant, any continuity with the past at all, the old needed to be adapted to the new situation of new beginnings of nascent Judaism, and the Joban dialogues provided an in-depth look at how irrelevant a static application of the past truly was, but how life-giving a dynamic resignification of tradition and re-application of it could be, and thus could render the Torah and the Prophets, this primitive canon of early Judaism, adaptable to the new life in the new situation. While the rabbis vigorously debated whether Ezekiel "soiled the hands," or was canonical, it is the nature of the Bible as canon to include opposing points of view in dialogue with each other, and so they acceded finally to Ezekiel's place in giving life to Judaism. The Qumran sect, the early Christians, and rabbinic Judaism, centuries later, heard this message and understood clearly the fact that both Torah and canon are living traditions and readily adaptable to whatever problems arise. This is evident in both Talmud and midrash, and in many wonderful stories, such as the story of Moses slipping into a class of Rabbi Akiba's in the early second century CE and being baffled by their discussion of Torah, or the story of the debate amongst some rabbis about a point of halakah in which God sided with the one rabbi and made a miracle to support his argument, but his opponents still disagreed and cited Deut 30:12, *Loʾ bashamayim hiʾ*, "It [Torah] is not in heaven." It was not what the Torah somehow eternally meant, but what it could dynamically say to the new situation: that was the living Torah. The essential was to use a monotheizing hermeneutic in adapting the old text to the new circumstance. Similar methods of adaptation and resignification can be seen in the Qumran pesharim, indeed in all early Jewish literature, including the New Testament, where Jesus

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[11] Sanders, "Adaptable for Life."

and Paul are both presented as molding Scripture and tradition to Greco-Roman culture, though they did so in an eschatological/apocalyptic mode.

Biblical criticism and scholarship cannot rest their case solely with recovery of original meanings and messages, as important as they continue to be. So-called original meanings should constantly be sought and pursued, but that is only the beginning of it all in any aspect of the biblical experience. Enlightenment scholarship should take responsibility for indicating how those meanings have been and can yet be resignified and applied to those who read Scripture not only critically as history but also relevantly as canon. The methods for doing so are embedded in the diachronic and synchronic dialogue Scripture itself presents.

There are many canons in use in believing communities today: the Jewish, the Protestant, the Catholic, the Greek Orthodox, the Russian Orthodox, the Ethiopian Orthodox, and others, and they all differ one from another significantly. There is, in other words, no agreement on what a canon should finally contain nor in what order of books, but they all agree on one thing: each canon is believed to be continuously relevant to their ongoing communities. The scholarly community must take seriously the process of bringing the past into the present in ever-changing contemporary terms. It cannot be left to theologians and preachers, who, for the most part, have only the published scholarly work of original meanings through archaeology and philology to work with. The case of the dating of Job is a case in point. While somewhat similar literature from the ancient Near East may be dated much earlier, understanding the place of the book of Job as a crucial part of the struggles of the origins of early Judaism in its efforts to bring the past forward into a totally new situation gives it an importance far beyond such comparisons. The task of discerning the canonical process has begun, but needs to be developed further and vigorously pursued.[12]

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Comparative Wisdom: L'oeuvre Terrien

(1978)

Samuel Lucien Terrien received his early theological and philological education in Paris between 1927 and 1933. During those years he studied and lived at the Faculté Libre de Théologie Protestante de Paris, boulevard Arragot. During the last three of those years he attended lectures also at the École des Hautes Études, the Louvre, and in 1932–33 at the Institut d'Archéologie. It was in those formative and impressionable years that the course of his life's work was set. Then it was that he perceived the mind and thinking of such scholars as Charles Virolleaud, Adolphe Lods, and René Dussaud in Akkadian and Ugaritic at the Hautes Études, Étienne Drioton in Egyptian at the Louvre, and Édouard Dhorme at the Institut. In 1933–34 he spent a year at the École Biblique in Jerusalem continuing Egyptian with Couroyer and reading Hammurabi with Barrois. He then came to Union Seminary as French Fellow, taking the STM in 1936 and the ThD in 1941. His dissertation for the latter was written while teaching at Wooster College 1936–40, his first position and the only one outside Union Seminary where he taught for 35 years until retirement in 1976.

Which of the French giants had the greatest influence on Terrien? They were all important in the formation of his thinking, but it was perhaps Drioton's course in "le théatre égyptien," in which the dramatic element in ancient ritual was stressed, combined with Dhorme's comprehensive and engrossing lectures on Job, that posed the leading questions Terrien was to pursue the next four decades. Already as a student in his last year in Paris he began the quest for divine presence-in-absence in a series of *causeries* or conversations at the Association d'étudiants chrétiens. It was in study of the book of Job that these central interests took focus and became the mark of originality of Terrien's contribution to scholarship on Job – the ritual setting for the dialogues and the theological import of the whirlwind speeches.

What is the shape of the Terrien corpus to date?[1] It is best described, perhaps, as a tension between two forces, that of a history-of-religions perspective on the Bible, and that of a search for a theological unity to it. The resolution of

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[1] There were to 1978 eight published books of single authorship, beyond the STM and ThD dissertations; five more on which he collaborated; and seven composite works to which he contributed, including two Festschrifts. He worked some eighteen years total as associate editor and contributor to the *IB* and *IDB*. To 1978 there were twenty-three articles in thirteen journals and fifty-seven reviews in twelve.

the tension (if such indeed there be) has centered in Terrien's appreciation of the contribution of international ancient Near East Wisdom to biblical thought and literature.

I

Neither the STM thesis (1936) nor the ThD dissertation (1941) was published, and that is regrettable for two reasons: they are very revealing in terms of the direction Terrien's mind was to take in later years, and they were at the time fresh and valuable contributions to ancient Near Eastern studies. The thesis on "La valeur des tablettes de Ras Shamra pour l'étude de l'Ancien Testament" judiciously explored the rich contributions of Canaanite faith and theology to the OT, anticipating some of the later ideas of Marvin Pope, Mitchell Dahood, and Ephraim Speiser. The dissertation, "The Sceptics in the Old Testament and in the Literature of the Ancient Near East," was a study of heterodoxy in the OT. Those in the OT who questioned orthodox beliefs did so in the same terms generally as other sceptics of the ancient Near East: they all confronted the problem of existence experientially and they shared a respect for an ancient international Wisdom that knew no boundaries and seemed to be part of many cults and cultures. Such Wisdom entered the OT in two principal ways, through laws adapted in the Pentateuch and reflected throughout the Bible, and through popular thought such as one finds in Proverbs and in numerous OT stories and legends.

Terrien came to biblical studies with a love of classics. From lycée he brought to Paris more interest in reading Sophocles than in reading the Bible. His appreciation of a wide range of literature from the ancient Near Eastern and the classical, through modern existentialism, and how one can illumine the other, shows up in numerous writings. As one reads the Terrien corpus one gains an impression of a scholar engaging in a discipline as yet unnamed: Comparative Wisdom. For Terrien not only has a vivid appreciation of the commonality of human experience in Near Eastern antiquity, but he also has demonstrated, perhaps more than any other modern scholar, how ancient and modern wisdom may illumine each other. The riches of Western poetry contained in his thematic books on Psalms[2] and on Job[3] betray not only an enviable file compiled by an ordered mind; they reveal a basic conviction discernible already in the STM and doctoral theses – the importance of reading the Bible in as broad a literary and experiential *Sitz* as possible, both ancient and modern.

For Terrien, the history of religions is not a narrowly conceived method. It hardly knew bounds, and in his hands Comparative Literature became Comparative Wisdom. Whether he is attempting to determine the abiding contribution of Canaanite religion to Israel's faith,[4] or exploring Christianity's debt to a mod-

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[2] Terrien, *Psalms and Their Meaning*.
[3] Terrien, *Job: Poet of Existence*.
[4] Terrien, "Omphalos Myth."

ern pagan,[5] Terrien is treading one and the same route, that which brought him to love Sophocles, explore ancient Egyptian drama, and discover Ugarit. It was a conviction that *J. B.* should, despite objections, be compared to Job,[6] Albee's theological message be underscored,[7] painters be viewed as theologians,[8] and contemporary theatre be exposed where polytheism lurked.[9]

In other words, Terrien, quietly but persistently, raised a voice for God as Creator of All in an era when God's redemptive Mighty Acts were being celebrated by most others, theologians and biblical scholars, as a canon within the canon and the unity of the Bible. His interest in history of religions was manifest also in his contributions on the history of Israel's religion to the revised Hastings's Bible dictionary,[10] and to *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary*,[11] as well as in the little *Golden Bible Atlas*.[12] Such comparative studies formed a part of Terrien's vision of the place of the Bible in the literary heritage of the world.

His greatest contributions stemming from that vision are in his studies on Job[13] and in his article on Wisdom in Amos.[14] In Joban studies, Terrien has been a worthy successor of Dhorme, whose influence was considerable. His first work on Job, beyond the incidental treatment in the dissertation, was the fully developed commentary in the *IB*.[15] His mastery of the literature and the weighty arguments advanced on the major issues brought him immediate recognition as an authority on Job. The fresh perspective he brought to the problem of the date of Job lent new credence to what had theretofore been a minority opinion: Job antedated Deutero-Isaiah for the simple reason that the Joban poet who had so skillfully shown intimate knowledge of Israel's literature up to his time betrays no knowledge whatever of crucial contributions of Deutero-Isaiah, especially that of vicarious suffering. The latter, on the contrary, drew skillfully on some points in Job. The perspective was not entirely new, but it was daring. Since Terrien's work it is the regnant position.

The basic results of his work on the *IB* commentary show up in *Job: Poet of Existence* (1957) three years later. *Job: Poet of Existence*, however, is a work of an entirely different order. As noted above, Terrien here literally surrounded Job with hundreds of quotations from the world's poetry, especially English, not so

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[5] Terrien, "Christianity's Debt."
[6] Terrien, "*J. B.* and Job"; cf. Letter to the Editor, *Christian Century* 76 (4 February 1959) 138. [*J. B.* was a play based on the book of Job by Archibald MacLeish, first performed in 1958.]
[7] Terrien, "Albee's Alice."
[8] Terrien, "Modern Painting and Theology."
[9] Terrien, "Demons Also Believe."
[10] Terrien, "Israel."
[11] Terrien, "Religion of Israel."
[12] Terrien, *Golden Bible Atlas*.
[13] Terrien, "Book of Job: Introduction and Exegesis"; Terrien, *Job: Poet of Existence*; Terrien, *Job*, CAT 13; Terrien, "Book of Job," *Oxford Annotated Bible*; Terrien, "Quelques remarques"; Terrien, "Le poème de Job"; Terrien with Barthélemy, *Le livre de Job*; Terrien, "Yahweh Speeches."
[14] Terrien, "Amos and Wisdom."
[15] Terrien, "Book of Job: Introduction and Exegesis."

much to show the influence of the biblical book on later authors, but to engage in Comparative Wisdom, letting modern poetry illumine the ancient and vice versa.

The best of Terrien on Job, however, is the volume in the French commentary series,[16] followed by what is perhaps his most brilliant single article, exploring a valid literary and historical relation between Job and Deutero-Isaiah.[17] In fact, it is in this article that Terrien betrays the clearest self-awareness of his own personal pilgrimage from the history-of-religions studies in thesis and dissertation to his appreciation of international ancient Near Eastern Wisdom in the OT generally. A truly valid issue of the old history-of-religions approach to the OT is Comparative Wisdom. Here he cites the early work of Jirku, Causse, Humbert, and Gressmann, and concludes: "C'est grace à ces enquêtes de littérature comparée que l'étude de la sagesse d'Israël est entrée dans une phase véritablement révolutionnaire."[18] It is in this study that he makes most clear his argument for the priority of Job over Deutero-Isaiah, the force of which centers in parallel observations in each work. The problematic passage in Isa 53:9 where it is stated that the Servant had committed no violence or deceit is solved if it is viewed as dependent on Job 6:30, 16:17, and other passages that claim that Job had no falsehood or violence on his hands. On the other hand, says Terrien, Job's suffering had no significance in itself whereas that of the servant was claimed to be an offering for sin (Isa 53:10). The reason that the Joban poet does not broach the question of vicarious suffering, neither accepting it nor rejecting it, is that he simply did not know Deutero-Isaiah. The most likely reason for that, concludes Terrien, is that, as only a few scholars had suggested (Cheyne, Dillmann, Naish, Pfeiffer), Job antedated Deutero-Isaiah.[19] In this paper he anticipated his next major study: "C'est le poème de Job qui a introduit le motif de la création transcendentale au sein des combats existentiels de la foi. Le Deutéro-Esaïe a transposé ce thème et l'a appliqué a son interprétation de la mission d'Israël dans l'histoire."[20]

Three years later Terrien published his work on Job as a para-ritual drama for celebration of the New Year.[21] Here, as in perhaps no other single study, the several aspects of his interest in history of religions were woven together. The dialogue form of the Joban poem suggests a cultic celebration. Both Job and the great Greek tragedies were influenced by a common source in the ceremonial past of the Mediterranean East, especially Egyptian.

In this view, Job might be seen as the incarnation of a collective personality in royal terms, the primordial first-person. Young and virile, he had a personal deity in the heavenly council, which met on the New Year Day. In view of the destruction of the temple, the poet would have composed his poem for

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[16] Terrien, *Job*, CAT 13.
[17] Terrien, "Quelques remarques."
[18] Ibid., 296.
[19] Ibid., 298–310.
[20] Ibid., 310.
[21] Terrien, "Le poème de Job."

a para-cultic celebration of the autumn feast. There is evidence for such experimentation. "Chassés de l'espace sacré, ils se regroupèrent autour des temps sacrés."[22] The poet himself would not have thought consciously of an allegory of the elect people, but discovering the story we know in the prose prologue, about a hero tortured by dialogue and theophany, wrote a dramatic poem for an autumn New Year feast. He thought of the royal servant of Yahweh baffled, naked, emasculated, and symbolically put to death. "La théophanie cultuelle lui permit de proclamer l'inanité de la justification de soi (40:8), la foi sans calcul, le service sans récompense, un sens théologique du péché, et la participation de l'homme en tant qu'homme – l'homme universel – à l'acte gratuit."[23]

Such a thesis, attractive as it is in accounting for so many troublesome elements in Job, nonetheless raised the question for Terrien of why Job was preserved, not in the priestly cult for *Rosh ha-shanah*, but in didactic circles. The answer lay in the Zion myth, which Terrien views as perhaps the strongest element in the character and birth of Judaism in the sixth century BCE.

In the following year, then, "The Omphalos Myth and Hebrew Religion" was published. The historian of religion asks what from the legacy of old Canaanite faith and religion of ancient Jebus persisted into the new Judaism of the exilic era. It was the old omphalos myth in which Jerusalem was viewed as the navel of the earth. It was then called upon in postexilic Zionism for spatialization of the presence of God and the dehistoricization of the covenant. Belief in the Zion-space myth permitted surviving Judaism after 587 BCE to maintain sociological identity and create Judaism.[24] Zion viewed as a sort of cosmic umbilical gave shape to the eschatological hope of nascent Judaism. The eternal mission of Judaism may be traced to the old Jebusite omphalos myth and not to Mosaic Yahwism. "The importance of the omphalos myth for Judaism cannot be underestimated."[25]

The logical progression of thought in these studies on Job and its origins testifies to the ordered mind of Samuel Terrien. They symbolize in intensity the history-of-religions approach in his method.

But it is not only on Job that Terrien has brought this method to bear. Of great influence in the field of study of the prophets is Terrien's single study on the prophet Amos, in the Muilenburg Festschrift.[26] Hans Walter Wolff has credited him with the discovery of the importance of Wisdom influence on Amos.[27] He found in Amos's rhetorical and stylistic features language common in ancient Near Eastern Wisdom; he also related some of Amos's ideas to Wisdom thought, such as the designation of Israel by the name Isaac with the association there to Beer-Sheba and the connections with Edom, a center of Wisdom thinking, and Amos's knowledge of astronomy as well as geography, history, and social

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[22] Ibid., 233.
[23] Ibid., 234.
[24] Terrien, "Omphalos Myth," 333–34.
[25] Ibid., 338.
[26] Terrien, "Amos and Wisdom."
[27] See Wolff, *Amos the Prophet*, 14n40, 89n203, and Wolff's remarks at the outset of his essay "Micah the Moreshite."

customs outside Israel. The focal observation, however, was on ethics in Amos. Amos made ethical behavior the prerequisite of divine favor, but Terrien found it to be an ethic common to many peoples and independent of revealed legislative traditions of Israel.[28]

It cannot be surprising to find, therefore, in the writings of such a scholar, interest in the "Wisdom" of our own time and essays that extend such Comparative Wisdom to consideration of modern and contemporary literature and art.[29]

II

But concurrent with Terrien's interest in what was common to Israel and her ancient neighbors is an equally keen desire to locate the theological unity of the Bible, and to demonstrate its relevance to contemporary issues. His inaugural address, given on the occasion of his promotion to full professorship at Union Seminary in the fall of 1953, was on what he termed an aspect neglected at that time in biblical theology, the importance of the individual in Israelite and Jewish faith.[30] It was published in the same year (1954) as his commentary on Job in the *IB*, and dealt with Job as an individual of great faith: Job and Paul, he found, viewed righteousness as a gift of God. The same theme found expression again some twenty years later in an unpublished paper by Terrien:

The disproportionate interest of the theology of salvation in the problems of history seems to have been replaced by an equally disproportionate interest in the political scene, and this trend (from covenant theology to the theology of liberation) is concomitant with a neglect of the reality of individual faith and the disregard of the sacrality of the solitary life … The theological ministry of the church will not serve the ethics of the gospel without at the same time facing the void of the inner self in search of the ultimate, witness either the flashy come-back of all forms of fundamentalism or the secular inroads within church membership.[31]

But Terrien's quest for theological unity has not ended in some form of biblical individualism. Far from it, that unity is discernible only in a theocentric view of the Bible as a whole, and such a view leads one directly to a theology of the presence of God.

"The Hebraic theology of presence may provide the principle of canonical growth which Wright, Childs and Sanders (to mention only those on these shores) have been calling for."[32] The fascination of the biblical concept of the

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[28] Terrien, "Amos and Wisdom," 115.
[29] Terrien, *Job: Poet of Existence*; Terrien, "*J. B.* and Job," and the Letter to the Editor, *Christian Century* 76 (4 February 1959) 138; Terrien, "Christianity's Debt"; Terrien, "Am I Alone?"; Terrien, "Albee's Alice"; Terrien, "Modern Painting and Theology"; Terrien, "Demons Also Believe," et al.
[30] Terrien, "Currently Neglected Aspect."
[31] The paper was written for a small professional discussion group during the days of campus unrest. It is to appear in a revised form in Professor Terrien's new book.
[32] Ibid.

Deus absconditus, or the presence of God in his absence, was evident already in Paris in the *causeries* he conducted there with fellow students. It was also the concept of presence-in-absence in the ritual drama of ancient Egyptian theatre that captured the young man's attention in Drioton's lectures. In speaking of irony in the theophany of Job[33] he shows that Job had tried to limit God by conceiving justice not in theocentric macrocosm but in anthropocentric microcosm; Job had ignored the theocentricity of life in living in his egocentricity: evil is a symbol of the freedom of God. About the psalmists, Terrien says, "While poets they were profound theologians. And that is the reason for which their hymnal remains a living book for today."[34]

Is this the same searcher who in his inaugural address spoke up in the high neo-orthodox days for the importance of the individual of faith, and who, soon after the publication of Karl Barth's *Menschlichkeit Gottes* and Abraham Heschel's *God in Search of Man*, wrote movingly of "The Anthropology of God"?[35] Can the historian of religion be a biblical theologian? Samuel Terrien is both.

In his contribution to *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary* on "The Religion of Israel," the approach and method are clearly that of Comparative Religion. And the sum of his search he states thus: the distinctiveness of Israel's religion was a "determined and even obstinate will to live in the presence of the Holy God."[36] Once more it is Job that provides the focus for understanding. Terrien refers to the failure of the sublime theism of the friends as a "failure of monotheism."[37] That was written in the fifties when one suspects Terrien, as in the inaugural and other writings, felt the need to challenge the regnant neo-orthodoxy of the time. In the sixties, in speaking of the same problem in Job, he wrote of the failure of religion to assure anthropocentric happiness.[38] In the latter he makes clear that Job's "confession" in Job 42:6 was not repentance of moral error but abandonment of egocentricity.[39] Why was it Job could sacrifice his egocentricity? Because, as Terrien movingly put it, God had transcended his transcendence and manifested himself to suffering man.[40] The goal of the poet was to show the triumph of faith in the complete "dénuement du moi."[41] The problem of theodicy arises only in anthropocentrism. Because God transcended his transcendence, as the Creator God in the theophany, Job could and did transcend his anthropocentrism. The God who thus offers himself to man is not yet, Terrien insists, the God who empties or despoils himself in the Philippian hymn. True monotheism for Terrien (not the theism of the friends) leads to a trinitar-

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33 Terrien, *Job*, CAT 13, 46.
34 Terrien, *Psalms and Their Meaning*, 270.
35 Terrien, "Anthropology of God"; cf. Barth, *Die Menschlichkeit Gottes*; Heschel, *God in Search of Man*.
36 Terrien, "Religion of Israel," 1158.
37 Terrien, *Job: Poet of Existence*, 66–100.
38 Terrien, *Job*, CAT 13, 6.
39 Ibid., 47.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid., 48.

ian understanding of God. The communion with the God who offers himself permits humanity to triumph over the scandals of existence and to persevere in being. Like Paul, Job knew that justice is the work not of humanity but of God; it is a gift of God so that humanity can practise *imitatio Dei* and participate with the Creator in creative work.[42]

Having reached such stages of thinking in focusing on the problems presented by the book of Job, Terrien turned once more to weave such insights into his developing theology of the presence of God in absence. The time was ripe in January 1969 to do so when he prepared his lecture for the traditional Monday Morning Lectures of the Women's Committee of Union Seminary.[43] The committee asked each of the four speakers for the series to speak generally on new directions in faith and lifestyle; Terrien's topic was "Toward a New Theology of Presence." The time was ripe indeed, for Terrien directed his remarks not only to sceptics in whom he had long been interested[44] but also to the then popular death-of-God theologies as well as to "activists." Union Seminary had been hit by the gale of protest both in the spring of 1967 and, along with Columbia University, in the spring of 1968. Terrien claimed that a theology of presence would "prevent Protestants from separating their spirituality or their moral activism from a life of ritual and prevent Catholics … from separating their sacramentalism from the insecurity and risks of faith."[45] But a theology-of-presence-in-absence would also challenge the new secular and political theologians.

Terrien could thus address himself to those contemporaries who, like himself, identified with sceptics and humanists, yet speak out of the Bible about a God who hides himself to good purpose and for human benefit. His work on Job brought him to realize that the sheer honesty and candor of the Bible exceeded his own, and he wanted to share that with fellow Christians, especially the secularists who in his day were expressing an appreciation for international modern Wisdom similar to that of the Joban poet, and other biblical thinkers, for international ancient Near Eastern Wisdom in their day. Job, Qoheleth [Ecclesiastes], Proverbs, and other Wisdom literature in biblical antiquity were able to present God as Creator without any reference whatever to God as redeemer and sustainer. Terrien has found that the absent presence of the Creator God of the Job theophany was the Joban poet's answer to the problems raised by the old *heilsgeschichtlich* doctrines of redemption and providence; and he found it immediately relevant to the newly developing secular and political theologies of the sixties.

God as Creator of all the world was the source of even the world's very humanistic-sounding Wisdom; and that Wisdom found its place in the Bible precisely or especially where the doctrine of God the Creator was stressed, so that the doctrines of redemption and providence were set aside or bracketed.[46] What

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[42] Ibid., 47.
[43] Terrien, "Toward a New Theology of Presence."
[44] Cf. Terrien, "Sceptics in the Old Testament."
[45] Terrien, "Toward a New Theology of Presence," 235; (in *New Theology, No. 7*, 148).
[46] Cf. Terrien, "Creation, Cultus and Faith."

Terrien had in the fifties seen as relevant to Christian existentialism[47] he now knew to be a direct challenge to Christian secularism and particularism. Terrien had entered into the world of the Bible through probing ancient secularism; he now found in its theocentrism, and its persistent quest for the presence of God in his absence, a voice for the new age. The voice was, however, not one that gave support willy-nilly to the new secularism; far more often it challenged its shallowness and immaturity.

III

Terrien's calm assurance of the relevance and pertinence of the Bible to the problems arising out of modern Wisdom can be traced at several junctures. In fact, he has been not infrequently ahead of his time on some issues.

A full ten years before Gerhard von Rad wrote his commentary on Genesis, Terrien wrote a paper on the theological significance of Genesis[48] in which he anticipated redaction-critical treatments of the book as a whole.

In many ways Genesis resembles a mediaeval church which was built on the foundations of a Gallo-Roman temple dedicated to the goddess Isis: the stones of its crypt reveal the signs of Byzantine art, the columns of its apse are in pure Romanesque, the vaulting of its transept and nave show the grace of middle Gothic, its Western rose window displays the wealth of the Flamboyant; and one of its portals, which fell during the VIIIth century, has been rebuilt in the Baroque style. In spite of its composite origin … it offers an esthetic message which is wholly its own, and it must be interpreted and understood as a single work of art. *Mutatis mutandis*, the book of Genesis as it exists today may represent several schools of widely different or conflicting conceptions of ethics and religion. Nevertheless its final editor has succeeded in presenting a relatively homogeneous document with a singleness of purpose and a dominant message which overshadows the discrepancies of details.[49]

Distinctly Terrien in style and imagery, drawing as he would on the arts,[50] such a description of the final textual state of Genesis though made up of numerous sources, is as apt today as it was in 1946. But it was ahead of its time.

His concern for the faith (and doubt) of the individual, expressed as a distinctly minority view when he gave his inaugural address,[51] was a forerunner of those theologians today whose interest is in private journeys and pilgrimages. His quest for the anthropology of God[52] was well in advance of current secular theology. His pioneering work in these regards has not always been fully recognized. His work on Wisdom in the book of Amos, by contrast, has received

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[47] Terrien, *Job, Poet of Existence*; Terrien, "J. B. and Job"; Terrien, "Christianity's Debt"; Terrien, "Am I Alone?"
[48] Terrien, "Theological Significance of Genesis."
[49] Ibid., 29.
[50] Terrien, "Modern Painting and Theology."
[51] Terrien, "Currently Neglected Aspect"; cf. Terrien, "Am I Alone?"
[52] Terrien, "Anthropology of God."

international attention. And in his paper on a biblical theology of womanhood[53] Terrien shows himself to be in the forefront of those who are rethinking the question of Bible as canon and are attempting to recover the dynamics of the hermeneutics employed in and back of biblical literature itself.

Canonical hermeneutics will not attempt to harmonize the conflicting points of view which appear in the sixty-six books, as if the canon had to be statically conceived … It will seek to discover, beyond atomistic scholarship, the motivating principle of continuity which leads from the faith of the early Hebrews to the proclamation of the loving Lord in the early church. The function of canonical hermeneutics is no longer to look at the question of law versus gospel … the faith of Israel began with gospel … The faith of Israel and of Christendom alike began with a gospel of liberation, at the Exodus, and at Easter, the New Exodus … It is from the perspective of their destiny that man and woman discover not only their equality and their complementariness but also the paradox of their freedom. Biblical faith … lays the basis of a theology of womanhood which goes counter to the traditional attitudes and practices of Christendom and challenges the church of today to rethink critically and creatively the respective functions of man and woman.[54]

The following excerpts from an unpublished paper by Samuel Terrien on the long relation between biblical theology and dogmatic theology are typical of the vigor and timeliness of his thinking. With his long experience in quest of the presence of God in absence, Terrien stands ready to be of service when the field comes to realize once more that biblical theology is not only a viable but a necessary pursuit in biblical studies.

If a Biblical Theology is to emerge from the present hermeneutical questioning stage, with its consequent fragmentariness and analytical parochialism, it will have to respect the Hebraic theology of presence. The entire literature of the Bible portrays the Deity as coming to man … [Earlier attempts to center biblical theology in the idea of covenant] ignored the diversity of its meaning in Israel and its relative absence from the crucial expressions of biblical faith from the patriarchal times to the end of the first century BC. It is in effect to impose an unimportant and fluid motif on all periods and on all aspects of biblical religion. It is also to confuse the means with the end, for the idea of covenant was in any case subservient to the prior reality of presence … The sapiential literature assigned no role whatever to the motif, ritual or ideology of covenant … It was not the covenant theology but the Hebraic theology of presence which constituted the most potent impulse in the field of forces that linked Hebraism, over against Zion-centered Judaism, with the church, and the canonical growth from Hebrew Bible to New Testament must be viewed in a new light … The Hebraic theology of presence may provide the principle of canonical growth [which students in the field are calling for].[55]

The apparent tension in the work of Samuel Terrien between a history-of-religions method of study of the Bible and an abiding quest for a valid biblical theology and theological unity to the Bible is caught up in his appreciation of the contribution of international ancient Near Eastern Wisdom to biblical thought and literature. Fully to appreciate that considerable element in the biblical make-up

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[53] Terrien, "Toward a Biblical Theology of Womanhood."
[54] Ibid., in *Religion in Life*, 322, 333; in *Male and Female*, 17, 27.
[55] From the paper mentioned above, n32.

is to seek the presence of God not only where he may be found, but even in the absent places; for the unity of the Bible is in God's presence, the presence not only of Israel's covenant God of redemption and providence, but also in the presence of the Creator God of all the world, the source of all wisdom. Resolution of such an apparent tension may well be called Comparative Wisdom.

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IV

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Fortunately, l'oeuvre Terrien is by no means complete. The retirement in Connecticut is a well-planned sabbatic Jubilee. The long-awaited book, *The Elusive Presence*, is due soon from Harper & Row.[56] The much-needed commentary on the Psalms is in purview.[57] The public lectures "Toward a Biblical Theology of Womanhood" will be edited for publication;[58] and we can expect a history of interpretation of the Magnificat.[59] A history of interpretation of Job in literature and in art is in progress: the iconography of Job will have a prominent place.[60] There are already 783 representations of Job in hand and the word is that throughout history the two types of interpretation complement each other and form parallel commentaries.

Clearly the shape of the corpus will be the one we already know from the work in hand, happily it is to be greatly expanded and enriched. May the God of the Eternal Presence, "the only Wise God, our Savior," give Sam and Sara long life and strength that the rest of us may be blessed by what remains to be done. Those who know l'oeuvre Terrien know the truth of the Terrien family motto (since 1476): *firmus in terra, ad coelum securus.*

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[56] [Published in 1978 as *The Elusive Presence: Toward a New Biblical Theology*.]
[57] [Published in 2003 as *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary*.]
[58] [Published in 1985 as *Till the Heart Sings*.]
[59] [Published in 1995 as *The Magnificat: Musicians as Biblical Interpreters*.]
[60] [Published in 1996 as *The Iconography of Job*.]

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19

A Disciple in Damascus

(2018)

The book of Acts has three accounts of Saul of Tarsus's dramatic change of attitude toward and later intent to join the budding new Jewish messianic sect (Acts 9:3–19; 22:6–16; 26:12–18; cf. Gal 1:11–17) that was growing rather rapidly (Acts 2:41; 9:31) but that he had been intent on eradicating. The part in Paul's change of heart played by Ananias, a Damascene disciple, does not appear in the last of the three accounts in Acts. It is recounted fully in the first (ch. 9) while in the second (ch. 22) the experience on the way to Damascus and then in the city is cursorily recounted by Paul in Jerusalem in a speech the Roman tribune allowed him to give on the steps of the tribune's barracks there. In the Jerusalem speech Paul gives a cursory account of his experience on the way to Damascus and then of his life-changing visit with Ananias in Damascus that is crucial to the whole story. However, Paul, in the course of his trials in Jerusalem and Caesarea, tells the truncated story in the later chapters, but omits details told by the earlier narrator in ch. 9.

Despite the debate that obtained for centuries about Paul's so-called conversion, it has become clear that Saul the Pharisee did not leave Judaism but changed rather into an adherent of a new messianic Judaism of the pre-70 period, indeed into a believer that the messiah had come.[1] Not only so, he became convinced after his retreat "into Arabia" and return to the congregation in Damascus, that God had set him apart before birth to be an apostle to the gentiles (Gal 1:15–17). Paul's belief that he had been set apart before birth for his new role in Judaism he drew directly from the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 1:5), but in Paul's echo of the prophet's self-understanding the question of Paul's own pre-existence arises. It thus obviates the issue concerning early belief in Jesus' pre-existence. Not only so, in the massive literature coming from the pre-rabbinic period one reads of the pre-existence of Torah, Moses, Enoch, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others.[2]

In the fuller account in Acts 9 the Apostle Paul tells of hearing a voice on the road ask him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" One who knows Scripture, as the early followers of Jesus would indeed have known it, cannot but recall the strikingly similar question that the young David put to King Saul when David and his pal Abishai paid a call on the old king in his tent while Saul and his army, led by Abner, all slept soundly (1 Sam 26:7). Abishai wanted to kill Saul

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[1] Ambrose, *Jew among Jews*.
[2] Hurtado, "Pre-Existence."

right there in the tent, but David refused, not wanting to kill an anointed of the Lord. The young David's aspirations would have prevented him doing such a rash deed as assassinating the Lord's own anointed if he himself indeed wanted someday to replace Saul. One doesn't kill kings who are monarchs "by divine right," especially young aspirants who someday might themselves be as vulnerable. David suggested instead that they take with them Saul's spear and water skin as "negative calling cards," as it were (1 Sam 26:7–12; cf. Gen 38:18).

Later when David and Abishai hid some distance from Saul's camp, and Abner awoke, David chided the latter for not guarding the king as he should have, claiming that he had accidently chanced on Saul's spear and water skin, offering them as evidence that somebody had broken in to kill Saul, and holding them up so that Abner could clearly see them. Saul himself then awoke, and recognizing David's voice asked if it was indeed David. At that point David asked Saul, "Why does my lord pursue his servant?" The two questions, the one the young David asked King Saul back then and the one Jesus asked Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, are in essence the same, for the words in both Hebrew and Greek meaning "pursue" can also mean "persecute." Anyone who knows Scripture, whether in Hebrew or Greek (LXX), as Saul certainly did (whether the author of Acts knew Hebrew or not), can hardly miss the echo of the question the young David put to King Saul in what Jesus asked Saul of Tarsus in the story in Acts, and would hardly miss the point:

King Saul back then did not join the new kingdom the young David would establish, while Saul of Tarsus will join the new kingdom under this new David.

But the trauma Saul experienced on "the road to Damascus" barely introduces the story of the reversal of conviction Saul experienced. In fact, it left Saul in shock and blinded, so that he had to be led the rest of the way into the city, but he was still Saul of Tarsus. The important part of the full story, in fact, occurs not on the road to Damascus but after Saul was taken there blind and ill. The narrator tells of a vision of Jesus experienced by a disciple of "The Way" who lived in Damascus, not unlike Saul's vision on the way over. In his vision, the Damascene disciple is instructed to go visit the patient who has been given lodging in the home of a man named Judas in the Jewish quarter. Ananias was understandably reluctant to obey Jesus' commission in the "vision" because he had heard from many about how zealous this Saul of Tarsus had been in trying to eradicate the sect, and that he had come over from Jerusalem with authority from the high priest to arrest members of the sect and take them back to Jerusalem for a fate similar probably to Stephen's (Acts 7:58). In a manner that commands the attention of the reader or hearer, the narrator provides a crucial clue to what gave Ananias the courage to obey.

Ananias had an experience of Jesus, not dissimilar to Saul's but in the city after Saul had arrived, instructing him to make a pastoral call on the offending but now smitten visitor. Folk like myself who have no psychic abilities or mystic tendencies find it difficult to relate to the idea of the mechanics of a personal vision. Perhaps it might be helpful to speak of Ananias's vision in the terms of

what happens when one hears news such as the community would already have heard about Saul's purpose in coming to Damascus. They were understandably scared and apprehensive about the purpose of his trip over from Jerusalem. Then they would later have heard that he'd been in some kind of accident on the way over in which he was blinded and was led the rest of the way into the city. If one is committed to the beliefs and purposes of the sect, then that commitment becomes the vehicle for hearing all such news. But the fear with which they had heard news about Saul's mission in the first place was probably considerably mitigated when they heard about his being somehow stricken ill on his way over. Most probably even hoped that he would not be able to carry out his declared intentions. They were on edge in any case and keen to hear any good news that might come with travelers entering the city, and alert to various possibilities.

Anyone who has lived in the Near East for any length of time knows that news travels as fast as those who journey from one place to another. In antiquity folk traveled either by foot or by hoof, as some in that part of the world still travel today. Only the better-off could afford riding on an ass or a cart drawn by some animal (cf. Acts 8:27–28). Today much travel is done by the *service* or scheduled taxis that depart when full of passengers and move between cities, dropping off and picking up fares as seats become available. These travelers often provide in the people's minds a more reliable source of hard information than the radio or television, which are state-controlled and, frankly, not usually attuned to what is important to locals. Travelers then share news learned en route when arriving at their destinations.

Travelers to Damascus would have provided the news that members of the sect needed. And if there was an incident of the sort described in the book of Acts, travelers passing the scene would have been eager to pass on the news upon arrival. Most of the sect in Damascus who got the earlier news would not only have been very apprehensive, but some probably would have started planning on how to escape Saul's attention. They had heard about his role as witness to the stoning of Stephen, and they knew what kind of person he was and of his purpose in making the trip, breathing threats against them as he came. The later news, that he was injured and might take a while to heal, would have given them time to discuss and plan how to deal with the new situation, figuring the threat was nonetheless still pending.

Let us suppose that one member of the little Christian community in Damascus named Ananias had a working image of the Christ in his head, a very active mental concept of Christ, a kind of *phronēsis*, or mindset, as Paul would later call it in his letter to the young church at Philippi (Phil 2:5; cf. Luke 1:17). Ananias would interpret whatever news they got about Saul through his working image of Jesus in his mind or heart. The text suggests that only one follower of The Way in Damascus had the vision, and that, we'll see, was sufficient. Scripture is full of stories about how God used just one person to turn history on its head, and that is surely the function of Saul's "vision" out on the road. Saul, being well educated in Jewish theology and tradition, as a student of Gamliel (= Gamaliel:

Acts 5:33–39; 22:3), would undoubtedly upon reflection have understood his arresting experience on the road as ominous, perhaps visionary.

Ananias heard the news of Saul's indisposition and arrival differently from others in Damascus. Ananias was scared too, as the narrator makes clear, but he also had an urge develop inside him about what to do, and what Jesus would have him do on this occasion. He knew he might be called on to make the same kind of witness Stephen had made earlier back in Jerusalem. But he must have asked himself if his role was simply to be brave enough to die a martyr. Maybe he could make a more positive witness somehow, even if he still had to die. Saul was blind and sick nearby there in the Jewish quarter, so maybe he needed to hear that Jesus could heal the sick, even the blind (Luke 7:22 echoing Isa 58:5–6 and 61:1).[3] Ananias figured that all Saul had heard so far was what a threat the Jesus sect was to the Jewish state and religion because of the rising tension with Rome and the increasing rumors of a serious Jewish revolt.

Jesus' followers were more of a threat than the messianic Essenes (or whoever they were) who had the good sense to go live deep in the desert where they could think and do what they wanted to and not bother the authorities with their crazy ideas. But these Jesus people lived and practiced what they believed where they were a real threat, at least as Saul believed, because they were trying to get people to change the way they actually thought about life and living under Roman oppression and dominance. And he knew that Rome did not want people under their rule to start thinking differently about the so-called *pax romana*. Changing the way people act or live is one thing, but changing the way they actually think about living under Roman colonization could be very dangerous.

Ananias had a clear vision of the situation, the text says. He was convinced enough by his Jesus-*phronēsis* to do what he had been taught Jesus did, even with Roman soldiers and collaborators, and what Jesus actually taught when he was here about God being the God of All (*elô’ah ha-kol*). Perhaps Ananias had a kind of vision like those of the prophets of old who put themselves at great risk in their time to say what they were convinced, by their vision/concept of the monotheizing process, they needed to say. The prophets back then had explained that the reason they felt they had the authority to speak in God's name, when Israel was being threatened with extinction by Mesopotamian forces, was that they had had a sort of vision or *phronēsis*, so to speak, back in their time, a strong conviction that God was the God of All, even Assyria and Babylonia, and not just a national deity.[4] Ananias's *phronēsis* apparently proved just as strong.

One might call it a strong working image of God's Christ that Ananias had in his head, or heart. It must have been a forceful one to overcome the instinctive fear the news about Saul's mission otherwise caused. The story says that Jesus and Ananias had a conversation (Acts 9:10–16). And it makes it clear not only that Ananias was scared, but that even so he felt that he had to do something, even go make a call on his enemy, the stricken visitor from Jerusalem. It was compelling

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3 Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4."
4 Sanders, "Book of Job"; Sanders, *Monotheizing Process*, 28–46.

enough, in any case, to set him on his way over to Straight Street, instead of just cowering, waiting at home for Saul to get well and probably resume his mission. Maybe there was an alternative to the martyrdom that Stephen suffered. He'd go see. It wouldn't be easy, but neither would waiting around to be stoned like Stephen be easy. And if it meant martyrdom either way, this at least would provide him a chance to monotheize on a personal level, that is, love his enemy – the way Jesus said they should (Luke 6:27–36; Matt 5:43–48).[5]

What could possibly have been a vision strong enough to give Ananias the courage actually to make the call on an enemy who wanted to kill him? Maybe it was as strong as the prophets' vision that Israel's God was God also of her enemies. The story goes on to say that Ananias actually went over to Judas's house to visit Saul lying on a bed there. Saul was blind and ill, so the sick room was probably quiet, even dark. Ananias approached the bed, laid his hands on Saul's forehead, and said quietly, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way over here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight." The text says something like scales fell from Saul's eyes and he could see again. Again, I don't know from scales, but it is clear according to what happened thereafter that Saul gained from Ananias's daring visit a totally different vision of who these Jesus freaks were and what they stood for (Acts 11:26). The first thing Saul saw when his eyes opened was one person totally alone, one he was supposed to arrest, one he had called enemy, who stood there with his hand on his forehead calling him "Brother." He'd never seen or heard anything like that in his life, but it helped him see life and himself in a way he'd never before thought possible. Ananias was totally alone, unarmed as it were, with a combination of fear and love in his eyes. Saul had undoubtedly never seen anyone who had such courage and conviction that he put himself in mortal danger like that to practice what he believed, actually to help Saul see and heal.

What Ananias saw, on the other hand, was a man he had feared, lying there vulnerable and probably still ill, but with new sight able perhaps to arrest him on the spot. I imagine Ananias, having fulfilled his mission, wanted to get out of there as fast as he could. He had confessed in his conversation with Jesus who sent him to visit Saul how scared he was. Mission accomplished. Time to go home. How did he know Saul would not simply resume his stated mission to eradicate the sect that meant so much to Ananias?

But as Ananias made his way to the door, Saul might have said, "Hey, wait a minute, will you? I'd like to know where you got the guts to come in here and call me Brother. I appreciate a man who has such courage, and I'd like to know how you dared come here and help me." I imagine Ananias might then have paused at the door, peered back into the sick room, and asked, "You really want to know?" Saul would have responded, "Yes, I want to know. Come tell me."

I imagine Ananias might slowly have returned to the bedside and said, "Well, there's a little poem we learned at our meetings that I recited to myself again and

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[5] Sanders, *Monotheizing Process*, 77–81.

again as I walked over here, and that's what gave me the courage to come see you." Saul would then have said, "Recite it for me, would you? I'd like to hear it."

We need to pause at this point and note that Ernst Lohmeyer, a NT scholar, published a thesis some time ago that might help at this point.[6] Lohmeyer suggested that the Song of Christ, or *Carmen Christi*, that Paul later shared with the church at Philippi, had probably been composed originally in Hebrew or Aramaic by an early Palestinian disciple. That was as much as Lohmeyer ventured about the Philippian song. Others have suggested that Paul composed the poem himself, but since the poem reverts so well back into Hebrew (or Aramaic) it seems likely that Paul indeed learned it from an early Jesus follower.

We can well imagine that Saul would supposedly have learned it after he had joined the sect, perhaps from Ananias himself. It might have been about the time Saul changed his name, in traditional biblical manner, to Paul (Acts 13:9). Anyway, Lohmeyer did not offer a name for the disciple who taught it to Paul, nor did he relate it to this story in Acts, but I suggest that it might well have been our Ananias.

Ananias might well have responded to Saul's request in the following way:

There was One, you see, who though in the form of God,
did not count equality with God a thing to keep to himself,
But emptied himself,
Taking on the form of a slave,
Having been born in human likeness.
Being then in human form,
He humbled himself
And became obedient unto death,
Even death on a cross.
Therefore, God has highly exalted him
And given him the name
That is above every name,
So that at the name of Jesus
Every knee should bend,
In heaven and on earth and under the earth [Isa 45:23],
And every tongue confess
That Jesus Christ is Lord,
To the glory of God the Father [Phil 2:6–11].

Ananias would have gone on to explain, "I just kept reciting that poem again and again on the way over here until I felt I could come in here and offer you some comfort. I mean, if Jesus could come all the way down from the throne of God and live our lives with us on earth, persecuted and oppressed for what he taught, and died on a cross because he told the truth and was not afraid to do so, then I figured the least I could do was come over here and call you Brother. You see, he taught us to love everybody because all people, even enemies, belong to God."

We can't be sure, of course, that all this happened exactly this way, but from what Acts and Paul have left us to ponder it seems quite possible. The experience

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⁶ Lohmeyer, *Eine Untersuchung zu Philipper 2,5–11*.

would have caused Saul to rethink his whole position with regard to the sect – rethink, indeed, his whole life. The text says that when he got well he joined the congregation in Damascus (Acts 9:19–22), made a personal retreat in Arabia, then rejoined the congregation in Damascus (Gal 1:17), whereupon he started himself to preach about Christ, confounding his mainstream compatriots by his dramatic change of identity, and by his preaching (Acts 22:22–24).

Later while he was in prison (probably at Rome) he wrote to the little church he had founded in Philippi about his experiences and what brought about his arrest. He exhorted them to stand firm, "striving side by side with one mind (*mia psychē*) for the faith of the good news we have ourselves heard, and be in no way intimidated by opponents" (Phil 1:27–28). In doing so he would have wanted to share with them the poem Ananias had recited to him when he was sick at Judas's house back in Damascus.

It is especially poignant then to note that Paul in the beginning of his letter to the little church at Philippi admits that his imprisonment had brought him to contemplate whether he himself was facing martyrdom, or worse, suicide (Phil 1:19–24).[7] One cannot but reflect on Ananias's deliberations in himself whether to accept martyrdom like Stephen's upon Saul's arrival in Damascus, or be bold enough to go pay a visit on his enemy and witness to his understanding of the Christ event by reciting the poem he'd learned in the meetings of the small but growing Jesus sect in Syria.

He would have introduced the poem by reflecting on what Ananias had done for him in Damascus, anticipating it with something like the following:

If there is any courage by being in Christ, any strength stemming from (Christ's self-giving) love, any sharing in the Spirit (of Christ), any compassion and sympathy for 'others,'… have the same *phronēsis* Christ had … Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility look at others as better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests but to the interests of 'the other.' And you should have in you the same *phronēsis* that Jesus himself had (Phil 2:1–5).

All these qualities that Paul attributes to being in Christ were those he had seen in Ananias, indeed those attributed to God himself in the early Greek translations of Jewish Scripture. He thus claims that those divine thoughts and qualities are now available to those who believe in the Christ.

Paul's use of the word *phroneō*, bidding his followers to think a certain way, recalls crucial passages in Scripture that express what having God's Torah, or God's way of thinking, as the way the prophets thought in their time and wanted the people to think as well. Torah means far more than simply "law." A mere glance at the Pentateuch shows that Torah is made up of both haggadah and halakah, or gospel and law – God's story and God's law. Torah for the Jew means God's most precious gift that all peoples will flow to Jerusalem to learn (Isa 2:2–3), how the God of All actually thinks.[8]

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[7] Holloway, "Deliberating Life and Death."
[8] Sanders, "Torah and Christ"; Sanders, "Torah and Paul."

In Isa 55:8–9 the exilic prophet offered as explanation for God's grace (in allowing any and all exiles, even those who had defected during exile, the right to return home) that God's thoughts are not human thoughts and ways. God's thinking is as different from human thinking as the heavens are above the earth, the prophet said. It is hardly surprising then that to receive these divine thoughts God has to "open the eyes" of his people. One immediately thinks of the prophet Elisha, whose stories are alluded to in Luke (4:27; 7:11–17), who petitions God, "O Lord, open the eyes (διάνοιξον τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς) of the lad, and let him see" (2 Kgs 6:17). This language is echoed in Luke's resurrection narrative, where the evangelist speaks of hearts burning within the disciples when Jesus "opened Scripture" for them on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:31–32). Their "eyes were opened and they recognized him" and they ask one another, "Did not our hearts burn within us?" (cf. 2 Macc 1:4, "May he open [διανοίξαι] your heart to his law and his ordinances …"). Without divinely opened hearts, the disciples could not have received the revelation of God's thoughts, which are so very different from the thoughts of humans.

More importantly, all the preexilic prophets (except perhaps Amos) argued that God's judgments against his people executed through the imperial expansionist policies of the late Iron Age Mesopotamian powers would also be transformative for the people if they took them to heart as God's desire to instill God's ways of thinking into the people themselves. Jeremiah promised that the adversity would be a divine surgery in which God would suture his Torah onto the heart of the people collectively (Jer 31:31–34). Ezekiel claimed much the same when he argued that the adversity in the hands of God would effect a new heart in the people and implant a new spirit in them so that they could think God's Torah thoughts themselves (Ezek 36:26–27). Hosea had his way of saying much the same (Hos 2:14; 6:1; cf. Mic 6:8).

Mind you, these were the prophets whose messages were despised in the pre-war days when they actually lived and preached back home, but were upon recollection in exile and thereafter heard in an entirely new way because they explained how God could let old Israel and Judah be destroyed (cf. Deut 29–31), in order to transform them into a new Israel that became early Judaism, into which both Jesus of Nazareth and Saul of Tarsus were born and nurtured. A metaphor Jeremiah used was that of circumcising the heart of the people collectively (Jer 4:4; Deut 10:16 and 30:6). The heart was viewed in both biblical Hebrew and Greek as the seat of thinking, not emotion as we do today; that was expressed metaphorically as the bowels and/or wombs (Jer 4:19; Phil 1:8, 2:1; Col 3:12). God was implanting through adversity a kind of *phronēsis* of God's own Torah thinking into the remnant, those in whose hearts God's way of thinking took root (Isa 51:7), the opposite of those who were still stubborn of heart (Isa 46:12) and resisted Torah thinking.[9]

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[9] Sanders, *Torah and Canon*, 70–88; Sanders, *Monotheizing Process*, 28–46.

Paul, knowing well the prophetic literature in both Hebrew and Greek, would then have copied his Greek translation of the poem into his letter to the followers of The Way in Philippi, encouraging them to be as loving toward those who threaten them as Ananias had been to him back in Damascus. Reflecting himself upon the same poem, he made his decision: like Ananias he would face possible death but only by continuing to witness to what God had done in Christ by "remaining in the flesh … so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:24–26).

The otherwise unknown disciple in Damascus, Ananias, by hearing the news that his enemy, Saul of Tarsus, had had an accident and was blind and ill, and by understanding it through the *phronēsis* of God's Christ in his heart, inspired by reciting a little poem he'd learned in their meetings in Damascus, took his life in his hands and went over to Judas's house and called his enemy "Brother." And in doing so Ananias in effect gave the apostle Paul the courage and boldness he himself later needed when depressed by imprisonment in Rome for preaching precisely what Ananias had taught him about Jesus. After all, Jesus did command his followers to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them (Matt 5:44; Luke 6:27–28; 7:22). To be able to do that one would have to become *telos*, "perfect" like God, being able to empathize with the other as also God's creature, thus qualifying to become "sons of God in heaven" (Matt 5:45), indeed members of God's own heavenly council whose job was to see that justice was done on earth (Ps 82; cf. Job 1–2; Isa 40:1–11; et al.).

Having such a *phronēsis* (or God's Torah thinking) in his heart had a rippling effect when Ananias made his bold decision to go show the kind of love he'd learned about Jesus, even to the dreaded Saul of Tarsus. Ananias would have had no idea that his decision to pay a visit to his enemy would have been the cause for Saul of Tarsus becoming the Apostle Paul, who would later share it in his correspondence that would be read by many for two millennia to come.

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Paul and Theological History

(1993)

One is so unaccustomed, after Bultmann, to New Testament scholars reading the New Testament scripturally that Hays's work, and especially his book *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, comes as a welcome surprise. A great deal of New Testament scholarship seems to strive to decanonize the New Testament, reading it synchronically only in terms of its Hellenistic context. In fact, Hays's book is stunning to one who takes the canonical process and canonical hermeneutics seriously.

Hays's approach to Paul is basically intertextual, exploring Scripture as metaphor and its intertextuality as diachronic trope or metalepsis. Taking a clue from Robert Alter, Hays notes that "literature as language is intrinsically and densely allusive."[1] With reference to Michael Fishbane's work, Hays notes that within Israel as a reading community all significant speech is scriptural or scripturally-oriented speech.[2] Beyond Fishbane, Hays rightly seeks out the hermeneutics whereby the older word functions in the newer.[3] For Hays, that hermeneutic is basically ecclesiocentric. Paul's concern was to establish lines of continuity between Scripture's understanding of Israel as the called people of God and the people in his time being gathered in Christ; these are called now to re-read Scripture in the light of God's just-accomplished work in Christ and continuing work in church and world.

Hays engages early on with the question of who it is that heard or hears the echoes he claims are there. In whom did/does the hermeneutical event take place? There are five possible answers to the question: Paul's intention; the perception of the original readers; the text itself; the modern reader's reading; or a community of interpretation. Hays tries to hold them all together in creative tension, and in my mind, succeeds remarkably well, largely because this allows him to admit from time to time that the answer to the question may lie in the third or fourth option given above, rather than the first or second. He then offers seven tests for his method but does not pursue them. Instead he rightly notes that

texts can generate readings that transcend both the conscious intention of the author and all the hermeneutical strictures that we promulgate … To limit our interpretation of Paul's

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[1] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 20.
[2] Ibid., 21. See Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*; Fishbane, *Garments of Torah*.
[3] See my reviews of Fishbane's books: Sanders, Review of *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, and Sanders, Review of *The Garments of Torah*.

scriptural echoes to what he intended by them is to impose a severe and arbitrary hermeneutical restriction … Later readers will rightly grasp meanings of the figures that may have been veiled from Paul himself.[4]

This comes down to appreciating Scripture not only as historically generated literature but also as canon. What critical scholarship denies to a text, the poet, peasant, and preacher may affirm in it. Texts in Scripture did not necessarily make it into the canon because of what an original speaker or writer intended; they might well have made it in because of what the experiences of later communities permitted them to see in the texts. This truth can be affirmed for much of Scripture. Hays does not claim to be dealing with the canonical process in this book, but whether he as its author intended it or not, he does indeed deal throughout the book with aspects of this process.

Hays's insistence that Paul's basic hermeneutic is ecclesiocentric rather than christocentric is enlightening and in part convincing. Hays does not see Paul as claiming that the old Israel κατὰ σάρκα (1 Cor 10:18) has been replaced by a new spiritual Israel that will never fall into sin and corruption; on the contrary, Paul challenges the church at Corinth for having so fallen (1 Cor 3:1–4)! Rather, and this is a crux in Hays's argument, "there always has been and always will be only one Israel … into that Israel Gentile Christians such as the Corinthians have now been absorbed."[5] For Paul, taking Deuteronomy seriously, there is but one God and one Israel. In all this Hays is basically right.

But one must be careful. Paul's hermeneutic is not ecclesiocentric, it is theocentric. There is indeed but one God at work throughout Scripture. As Hays rightly notes, Paul's reading of Scripture is not typological as that term is normally understood;[6] Paul does not fret about correspondences between types and anti-types. Rather, Paul's argument, like Isaiah's and Luke's, and indeed much else in the Bible, is from theological history. What can we discern about God's current activity? One turns to (*drash*es) Scripture to discern a pattern of divine activity and speech and to seek light on what is going on in the present (whenever that might be). Paul thus affirms God's past work; it is not superseded. And Paul affirms Scripture; it is the record of that work. Read in this way, Rom 9:30–10:4 does not pit faith against works, but asks in whose works one has faith, God's or one's own. Hays does not express the idea in quite this way; but he could – or perhaps should – have done.

Deuteronomy 30 weighs heavily in Paul's (and Hays's) thinking. Hays cites the well-known passage from *B. Meṣ.* 59b that relates the dialogue among Rabbis Eliezer, Joshua, and Jeremiah and contrasts it to Paul's understanding (Rom 10:5–10). In the former passage, Eliezer calls on heaven to affirm by signs and miracles his halakhic interpretation of Scripture, and miracles are reported to have occurred on the spot. But his interlocutors remained unimpressed, with Joshua citing Deut 30:12, "It is not in heaven." This apparently amused God

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[4] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 33.
[5] Ibid., 97.
[6] Ibid., 100–104.

considerably and, laughing for joy, he said, "My children have defeated me, my children have defeated me." Hays takes this to be the opposite of Paul's meaning, which stressed Scripture's "living flexibility and capacity for hermeneutical transformation to disclose God's grace in ways unfathomed by prior generations of readers."[7] But the passage from *Baba Meṣiʿa* can be read in just the same way, that is, Scripture's "right" interpretation is not in some *tavnit* (Idea, or Form) in heaven, that is, not in God's hands to be confirmed by miracles from heaven; it is in the hands of succeeding generations of interpreters who read and re-read Scripture out of ever-changing community needs. God gave Torah on Mount Sinai, but once he had done so it belonged to Israel. Modern scholarship may be quite sure what an Isaiah meant, but once his utterance (or its heir in the memory of his disciples) became community property (canon), it was out there on its own diachronic and intertextual pilgrimage.[8]

The same passage affirms that "Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed [descendants] to love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your being that you may live" (Deut 30:6). This astounding promise has a history and a context that Hays failed to note; it echoes those passages using the concept of the circumcised heart.[9] In Deut 10:16 and Jer 4:4 Israel is exhorted to circumcise their hearts to God. This metaphor rests at the heart of all the prophetic pleas in the eighth and seventh centuries, before the destruction of Israel and Judah, to repent and return to God's ways. Clearly the people could not do it themselves. Then the affirmation is made that, in the very adversity of the destruction and death of old Israel and Judah, and God's subsequent act of restoration (resurrection), God himself will effect the transformation. This had been affirmed already by Hosea (6:1), Jeremiah (30:12–13; 31:31–34), and Ezekiel (36:26–27). What was not effected by human will (through exhortation) will be effected by divine surgery in the adversity itself (Isa 51:7). The adversity was punishment for sin, no doubt about it; but it had a further, positive purpose. It was a divine operation effecting a new Israel by death and resurrection (Deut 32:39); and both the death and new life were the work of God.

These echoes become crucial in reading 2 Cor 3, where Hays rightly notes that Ezek 36:26–27 is vital for understanding the passage.[10] There Paul seems to set letter against spirit. But as Hays, again rightly, notes, that is a misreading. It is a question of where and how the writing is done. The church at Corinth is Paul's letter of recommendation; that letter (ἐπιστολή) lives in their hearts. How? By God's act in the judgment/salvation event, God's spirit has been put inside the people (Ezek 36:27; just like the Torah written inside them on their heart in Jer 31:33), and God will see to it that they obey. Clearly, as in the Jeremiah passage, God's Torah/Word is no longer only commandments written by God on stone tablets; it is written by God's Spirit on the people's hearts. It is in this sense

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[7] Ibid., 3.
[8] See Rosenblatt and Sitterson, "Introduction"; Sanders, "Integrity of Biblical Pluralism."
[9] See Sanders, "Deuteronomy," esp. 92–93.
[10] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 122–53.

that the letter (γράμμα) kills and that God kills (ἀποκτείνειν/κτείνειν – Deut 32:39; 2 Cor 3:6); and it is in this sense that God brings to life (ζῆν ποιεῖν/ζῳοποιεῖν – Deut 32:39; 2 Cor 3:6). God is the God of death and of life. To rest with reading Scripture in the old way, only by God's letter given and granted on Mount Sinai, is to miss its significance revealed by this further act of God in calling an unboundaried people through Christ. This next chapter in God's theological history forces a rereading of the old texts, both to affirm that God has once more acted in consonance with the record of previous divine work and to insist that every new chapter throws light on those that precede it.

Echoes of Scripture is a remarkable book. For those of us who read the literature of the Tanak and of early Judaism diachronically as well as synchronically, from inception through to the fall of Jerusalem to Rome in 70 CE, it is like a beacon of light and a breath of fresh air. The point of these reflections on it is that more can be affirmed of Scripture's intertextual depths than even Hays has seen; it is a question of the ongoing canonical process.

The crucial question is, wherein lie the constraints, if one thus dares to move beyond historical/critical (ever-changing) determinations of "original" or authorial intentionality? Addressing that question is a part of the canonical process; it is an exercise of canonical criticism. The rules of Hillel, as well as those of Ishmael and the classical thirty-two rules, arose as constraints on a process already under way of adapting Torah and canon to ever-changing cultural and social situations and problems. But they failed to constrain the vibrant conviction that Scripture was canonical (of continuing relevance and not purely historical); all sorts of hermeneutic devices were, and continue to be, brought to bear on the adaptive process.[11]

In a seminar of mine, Hays's book was scrutinized with the following question in mind: what difference would comparative midrash make to each of Hays's claims about intertextual echoes in Paul? How did the very same First Testament passages and concepts "echo" in Jewish literature prior to Paul? What flexibility or fluidity of application of the older word in the stream of newer words is evident from inception in the Tanak down to Paul? And by what hermeneutic did the tradent in each case effect changes to the older concept by means of the newer? Tracing the pilgrimage from inception within the Tanak itself (following Fishbane's emphasis, but also going beyond Fishbane) through the Septuagint and its descendants, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the so-called Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus, Tannaitic literature, and the Vulgate, provides a clear view of the breadth of function that Scripture and tradition had in a stream of communities of interpretation before its function in Paul or the Gospels; discerning the intertextual hermeneutics all along the way provides a clear view of what kinds of constraints, if any, were operative in the canonical process.

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[11] See, e. g., my discussion in Sanders, "Adaptable for Life," and Sanders, "Text and Canon: Concepts and Method."

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Identity, Apocalyptic, and Dialogue

(1997)

Among the most delightful and gratifying teaching experiences I have ever had took place in the spring of 1992 and of 1994 at Ghost Ranch in northern New Mexico. Lou Silberman and I team-taught seminars on intertextuality in Jewish and Christian Scripture. The focus was on intertextuality in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Tannaitic midrashim, and the Second Christian Testament. On the first day of class Lou and I made it quite clear that while we both participate fully in Western Enlightenment culture and both read the literature under study with all the critical tools developed in scholarship since the Enlightenment, each of us had quite distinct faith identities that neither of us would set aside during the two weeks of the seminar.

Silberman and I share more in common than most inter-faith dialogue partners in that we are both graduates of the Hebrew Union College. Many of Lou's professors were still teaching at the College some fifteen years later when I was there. Our ties run even deeper. Lou Silberman taught for twenty-eight years at Vanderbilt University, succeeding Sam Sandmel, who had left the Hillel professorship at Vanderbilt University, my own alma mater, to join the faculty of the Hebrew Union College. Lou became a colleague at Vanderbilt of my first mentor in biblical studies, James Philip Hyatt, who was the one who advised me to study for a year at the College to get Jewish backgrounds to New Testament study, the formal track I was on at the time. But I never got to Yale, where Hyatt and Sandmel both had studied, and where I was going to study New Testament with Paul Schubert. Sam Sandmel at the College became my advisor and first reader for my dissertation on suffering as divine discipline in the Tanak and early Judaism.

Silberman and I wanted the students in the University of New Mexico seminar to know where our backgrounds were similar but also where our faith identities differed. It was a fulfillment of a dream for me.

I had long dreamt of reading biblical and other religious texts with Jewish colleagues, as an aspect of inter-faith dialogue, on just such an intensive and sustained basis. The course was on intertextuality in early Jewish and Christian literature – in two senses of the word "intertextuality." That is, we not only probed the function of earlier Scripture in later Scripture and Jewish religious literature, but we did so quite conscious of the fact that we were texts ourselves encountering each other as well as encountering the written texts we were reading together. It was exhilarating.

Tannaim

Because Silberman and I had shared rabbinic training in reading the Tanak, we both had therefore read the entire Hebrew Bible, not only critically in terms of the history of its formation, but also as the very ground of all our other study. Lou at one point explained to the students at Ghost Ranch that a *Tanna* was a computer with stored memory of every phrase of Hebrew Scripture, so that all one had to do was press the right keys and Scripture would pour out.

I had a moving experience of the sort only four years earlier in 1988 when, at commencement ceremonies at the Hebrew Union College where I had been invited to speak, I heard something in the service that prompted me to say quietly, but aloud, from where I was sitting with the faculty, the first (Hebrew) words of Hab 3:17. Spontaneously, and I am sure without thinking consciously about it, a few of the older professors around me automatically completed recitation of the whole verse, and then went right on with what they had been doing.[1] I had pressed the right buttons, and my own former *Tannaim* recited Scripture from memory. I had not consciously intended to trigger any such reaction, nor, I am sure, did they consciously do anything but continue the recitation, simply because a *pasuq* was there in the air to be completed. I had a very hard time restraining tears of joy just for being in such company. One of those who completed the passage that day was my closest friend and classmate at Hebrew Union College, Jakob Josef Petuchowski, who three years later passed away unexpectedly, in November 1991.

Scripture for a Jew is the ground of being, or as Michael Fishbane says, Torah is God incarnate.[2] It is that out of which everything else flows, it is truly the ספר חיים (the book of life), indeed the ספר שכול בו (the book that contains it all). Or, as Sam Sandmel often said, Torah is Judaism, and Judaism is Torah, *in sensu lato*, of course. At Ghost Ranch, I had weeks of again being in the presence of such a *Tanna*, an experience totally unavailable in *goyische* biblical scholarship, but abundantly so, with grace, in the company of Lou Silberman.

Dialogue and Identity

Jewish-Christian dialogue at the moment [1990s] is caught up in a much larger debate. A colleague at Claremont, Prof. Burton Mack, recently gave a paper titled "Caretakers and Critics: The Social Role of Scholars in Biblical Study."[3] In the paper Mack argues that biblical scholars, whether in the university depart-

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[1] Hab 3:17–18: "Though the fig tree do not blossom, and no fruit be on the vines; though the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food; though the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet will I exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation."

[2] Fishbane, *Garments of Torah*, 42, 125–29.

[3] Burton Mack, unpublished paper presented in 1989 at Wesleyan University and in 1993 at the School of Theology at Claremont.

ment of religion or in the seminary, are called on to be critics only. He proposes a game in which whenever a scholar seems to care about the role of Scripture in current communities of faith, the others would cry out, "Gotcha!" He even disparages the value of ethnic or liberation hermeneutics in Scripture study. For him, the Bible scholar should be critic only and not "caretaker," as he puts it.[4]

By contrast, Jon Levenson and James Kugel, both at Harvard, in a conference at Notre Dame in 1989, both denied that there can be an effective or meaningful Jewish-Christian dialogue, precisely because the dialogue would be based on the superficial common ground of narrowly conceived, Western cultural, critical study of the texts (and not on the genuine identities of Jews and Christians), the very sort of study Mack claims is the only truthful stance from which to study Scripture.

For Levenson and Kugel, critical study will in the end always give way to our true social locations as either Jew or Christian; they denied explicitly the possibility of what Mack calls for. Mack would counter that his own social location, as one who is distancing himself from his charismatic, evangelical roots, overrides his identity as a Christian. And Levenson and Kugel would respond finally that, whatever that may mean in Mack's own work as a scholar, it is not a basis for Jewish-Christian dialogue.[5]

My response to my colleague Mack was that, while I fully support and defend his right to his position, even on a theological seminary faculty, my concern is his assumption that only his position, a kind of academic fundamentalism, is a valid one for the critic, with his zeal as evangelist of his new position perhaps equaling his earlier evangelical role. I do not consider myself a caretaker of tradition, but a latter-day critical tradent or traditionist, on the order of a Silberman or a Petuchowski.

Criticism and Identity

A late twentieth-century traditionist, or tradent, who would engage in dialogue must read the Bible both critically and faithfully, that is, as a Western cultural reader (critic) *and* as a member, or at least heir, of a faith community. To put it another way, I believe the Enlightenment was a gift of God in due season, just as I believe that a vital, agile, ever-adapting faith is a gift of God. While we are learning from the southern and eastern hemispheres of the planet that the Western cultural forms of criticism are as limited in perspective as others, I must personally affirm the excitement that a combined critical and faithful reading of these texts renders. And it is on that dual basis that I believe the Jewish-Christian conversation can be fruitful for both parties. On the first day of the New Mexico

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[4] Other faculty responses indicated that very few academics or intellectuals have a singular identity but have hyphenated identities, even multiple ones.

[5] See Levenson, "Theological Consensus"; Kugel, "Cain and Abel." See also Levenson, "Why Jews Are Not Interested"; Levenson, *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament.*

seminar, Silberman and I stressed for the students our common critical training as well as our different faith identities, his at the foot of a mountain and mine at the foot of a cross.

Why stress both, why combine the two in interfaith dialogue? Simply put, the world needs the model of taking seriously both past and present, the Jewish past and the Christian past, as well as the newer gifts of the Enlightenment. To seek one's identity in only a present, Western cultural, critical reading of these texts is to deny any value to the thinking and experience of those who wrote, shaped, and passed them on. But to seek one's identity in only the traditioning process of one's faith identity is to continue to engage in denominational falsehood.

Oberammergau

A case in point is the Oberammergau Passion Play. In the years 1632–33 the Black Death raged throughout Bavaria and adjoining parts of Austria and Germany. The village of Oberammergau was largely spared, in comparison to towns in the lower Ammer Valley. In deep piety and faith, the folk of the village made a solemn vow to God to perform a play of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, in thanksgiving for God's grace toward them, and to perform it every ten years in perpetuity. As the *Offizieller Bildband* published in 1980 states:

Their pledge to enact the Passion culminates in their historic consciousness, which maintains its continuance throughout all hindrances, difficulties and dissensions. In this may be seen and recognized a moral pledge, a sense of being bound to norms and values, an unbreakable bond with custom and usage. The community of Oberammergau freely bound itself by a solemn oath: the people made a lasting vow, a sworn promise to God.[6]

One cannot imagine a testimony by any community to greater piety and faith, except (need I say it?) Jewish communities in Europe, which through centuries of Christian cultural dominance continued to recite Torah in all its phases.

But by the end of the Second World War, the post-Holocaust outside world had begun to listen in. What they found in and through all the faithfulness and piety was a play that in effect sponsored anti-Semitism and anti-Jewishness. In the English version of "The Official Text" for 1960, the Abbot of Ettal wrote, "What was once a pious custom, understood by all, often became in later years an offense to adherents of other creeds and to the cynical, even well-wishers were disquieted by the many unpleasant concomitants of increasing fame."

The abbot, however, goes on to defend the play.

Be that as it may; for those whose vision is still clear enough to penetrate through all changes and accidental blemishes, for those who are still sufficiently pure in heart to accept and absorb what they see and hear at this Play, it will remain what it has always been, and still is, in its deepest sense: the *Memoria Passionis Domini*, the remembrance of the suffer-

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6 Goldner, *Passion Oberammergau*, the fourth (unnumbered) page in the German, with translations into English and French.

ings of Our Lord … the remembrance of the suffering and death which Christ took upon Himself "for the life of the world," the mystery of the Cross, which for some is a vexation of the spirit, for others mere tomfoolery, but for believers a sign of the power, the wisdom and the love of God.[7]

The text of the play, despite much editing and modification, is basically taken from the four Gospels.

But, as the good abbot wrote; "adherents of other creeds" began to listen in. And here is my point. Piety and good works generated and sponsored solely within one tradition may be seen to be dehumanizing and evil from the viewpoint of a different, equally pious tradition. Learning to review one's own traditions only from a Western cultural, critical stance still may not reveal what listening to those traditions through the eyes and ears of a different tradition cherished by a different identity group may reveal.

One God

Belief that there is but One God, and belief that Jews and Christians, and Muslims as well, worship that same God through differing traditioning processes, requires and mandates dialogue. As Jacob Neusner has said, it requires sharing of stories that are meaningful to each tradition so that we can at least try to understand what Israel means to Judaism and what Christ means to Christianity.[8] From a distance, each looks like sheer idolatry to the other. In dialogue, it may be possible for each to confess its own idolatry rather than just silently accuse the other of embracing idolatry at the heart of its faith.[9]

The sharing of stories should begin with common readings of Scripture, that compendium of stories that surpasses all others. That would be an exercise in intertextuality in a mode beyond what has yet been seriously attempted. But Levenson and Kugel are right that it cannot be a sharing of Western cultural, critical readings of biblical passages only. It must be a sharing of readings also through both Jewish and Christian traditioning processes. And that is what Silberman and I tried to do for our students at Ghost Ranch. Using the vehicle of the Dead Sea Scrolls and its massive amounts of intertextuality as a catalyst, we probed the function of Scripture in Tannaitic midrashim and in the Second Testament.

I hope Lou will not object to my saying that by the final session on the last Friday morning, there was little left for us to do but embrace and pass the peace; and there was, I dare say, not a dry eye in the room. It was moving. One had the

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[7] Hoeck, "Foreword," 11.
[8] Neusner, "Different Kind," 36. Anthropologist Michael Taussig, speaking at the University of Florida in 1988, quoted Columbian Indians' explanation for imperialism's success: "The others won because their stories were better than ours" (quoted by my colleague Prof. Jack Coogan, "Moving Image").
[9] See Sanders, Review of *The Garments of Torah*.

feeling of the joy that comes with recognizing what John Calvin called God's *opus alienum*, the work of God elsewhere than in one's own tradition.

Silberman and Apocalyptic

I would like to highlight the relevance of Silberman's work on apocalyptic, in early Judaism generally, and in early Tannaitic literature, to the question of the relation of synagogue and church in the sixty-year period between the two Jewish revolts of 66 to 75 and of 132 to 155 CE. I am thinking especially of his contribution to the James Philip Hyatt memorial volume;[10] his work on Albert Schweitzer's understanding of eschatology and apocalyptic;[11] and his more recent work on Rabbis Tarphon and Akiba.[12] In these Lou has drawn a map of the terrain out of which apocalyptic rose.

Loss of identity through absence of community, as in prison or exile, gives rise to despair. Despair then gives rise to torpor, out of which one gives in to a death wish or turns to eschatological thinking in an apocalyptic mode, which is in actuality a rallying cry for a return to history.[13] "Apocalyptic serves as a means of signifying that hoped for future (return to history) in a particular context."[14] In contrast to the common wisdom that apocalyptic was occulted (marginalized) by the Pharisees soon after the first revolt, Lou has convincingly shown that apocalyptic, as in 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, was still alive and well in Pharisaic, emerging rabbinic Judaism during the period up to the Bar Kokhba Revolt.[15]

In study of a dictum from the period of Rabbi Tarphon, Silberman writes:

The events of the Second Revolt (132 CE) suggest to me that apocalyptic thought was still active, indeed, was able to ignite the flames of revolt under the leadership of Bar Kosiba (= Bar Kokhba) abetted by Rabbi Akiba. Thus it was only after the failure of that uprising and the subsequent persecutions under Hadrian that the apocalyptic fires faded into embers, not extinguished, but smouldering under the ashes of a failed hope.[16]

The situation of the Jewish community in the years between 70 CE and 132 CE … was one in which eschatological/messianic expectations had not faded but motivated many sections of the community, so that within two generations of the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple a second revolt against the Roman imperium flared up.[17]

With the failure of the Second Revolt and its tragic outcome for the community, all such conjecture … came … to an end and Judaism turned its back on the apocalyptic literature it had created.[18]

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[10] Silberman, "Human Deed."
[11] Silberman, "Apocalyptic Revisited."
[12] Silberman, "From Apocalyptic Proclamation to Moral Prescript."
[13] Silberman, "Human Deed."
[14] Silberman, "Apocalyptic Revisited," 498.
[15] Silberman, "From Apocalyptic Proclamation to Moral Prescript."
[16] Ibid., 54.
[17] Ibid., 56.
[18] Ibid., 60. Silberman goes on to say that even after 135 CE, apocalyptic simply went underground to emerge in various ways in Jewish literature through the Middle Ages.

I would suggest that what Lou has done with regard to rabbinic Judaism's continued engagement with apocalyptic until the middle of the second quarter of the second century CE has implications for the status of Christian Judaism within the larger picture of numerous Judaisms in the first century. Whereas it has become almost commonplace to think of a complete break between synagogue and church after 70,[19] it now is more responsible to view the break as occurring gradually between the two revolts. The historian's principle of the complexity of reality would indicate that the break was not a clean one at a specific moment in history but that, since early Judaism was highly multifarious, some Christian Jewish synagogues, or churches, were more hellenized than others, and some Pharisaic/rabbinic synagogues were more tolerant toward Christian synagogues than others. The Second Testament itself indicates this kind of complexity within Pharisaic/rabbinic Judaism and within the various forms of Christian Judaism.[20]

Συναγωγή and Ἐκκλησία

The passages that indicate enmity between συναγωγή and ἐκκλησία must now be seen on a larger scale of variation and diversity within Judaism until the end of the Bar Kokhba Revolt when the break indeed became complete. One should even allow for the possibility that perhaps a few Christian synagogues (Jacobean/Petrine?) became disillusioned over the apparent failure of the parousia, or Second Coming of Christ, and became a part of continuing halakic or rabbinic Judaism. As Silberman points out, a great deal of the literature that can be read one way can also be resignified as pertinent to the new non-apocalyptic situation. And, as he also notes, the disillusionment over the failure of either a First or a Second Coming of messiah, according to which קהל or ἐκκλησία one adhered to, came about also because such expectations caused neglect of obligations and duties.

Some time ago, following a paper of Abraham Heschel's published posthumously, I suggested that Torah, in all its senses, was made up of both haggadah

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[19] See Vermes, "Introduction." In the same volume, Kee, "After the Crucifixion," moves in the opposite direction, claiming that Christianity was distinct from "official Judaism" almost from the beginning. Such a position fails to take account of the immense shift in thinking about the older designations of "normative" and "heterodox" Judaism in the period; instead it is becoming almost commonplace to speak of the Judaisms, some forms more hellenized than others, of the period, without real certainty about Jewish normativeness. The study by Attridge, "Christianity from the Destruction of Jerusalem," esp. 151–74, is, by contrast, a judiciously nuanced study of the varieties of Christianity and their relations to other forms of Judaism in the crucial sixty-year period from 70 to 135 CE.

[20] Levine, "Judaism from the Destruction of Jerusalem," reflects well the sources read by the principle of the complexity of reality, with the exception of his passing remark on p. 129 supporting the simplistic view that Christianity separated from Judaism after 70 CE. He rightly agrees with Silberman's position that apocalyptic played a continuing role in Judaism in the sixty-year period 70–135 CE, but when he speaks of Judaism in that period he means only the Johanan ben Zakkai to Akiba/Gamliel II Judaism. His view of the canonical process in the period is also limited (139–40).

and halakah, that is, theocentric narrative or "gospel" (God's story), and law (God's will).[21] While Christian and other forms of eschatological Judaism fell heir to the former, rabbinic Judaism fell heir to the latter – an emphasis on pre-scripts for believers, rather than on speculations about what God was going to do next. The vast early Jewish writings, which exhibit considerable apocalyptic thought, were then preserved in translations by the early churches, but sloughed off by the surviving rabbinic synagogues.

According to Silberman's work, and I agree with it, the sloughing off would have been complete by the middle of the second century CE, but not as early as has been generally thought. The complexity of reality principle of the historian would lead to the hypothesis that some synagogues, in the sixty-year period between the two revolts, were clearer in their views than others, just as some would have been clearer about their opposition to the Christian Jewish sect than others.

The cataclysm of the Second Revolt would have caused the necessity of clean-ing up the mess left not only by violence but also by neglect of work due to the high eschatological expectations, hence the move from apocalyptic proclamation to moral prescript in both forms of surviving Judaism. But after 135 CE, those two forms of survival were more distinct, with a preponderance of converts to the emerging very distinct Christianity being Gentile causing the ἐκκλησία to energize (Phil 2:12–13) or work out their understandings of salvation in ways that were less and less rabbinic Jewish at all.

In other words, when both groupings found themselves turning more toward obedience in specifically recognized forms, away from eschatological expecta-tion, those forms of service and work made the distinctions between the two very clear, considerably more clear than when the emphasis was on expectations of what God was going to do next. When one focuses on God's grace rather than on how humans should respond to that grace, the differences between Judaism and Christianity, as we now know them, are minimal and can be summed up in large measure by Reinhold Niebuhr's two questions: The world is so evil, why doesn't the Messiah come? Or, the Messiah has come, why is the world still so evil? Neither question can be satisfactorily answered by either party. But when it comes to focusing on how humans should respond to stories of the grace of God, already established in a community as identity-giving stories, those responses take on distinct forms that separate and divide.

Dialogue Today

Implications arising out of Silberman's work in this regard are important for the Jewish-Christian dialogue today. We have learned since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls to speak of Judaisms in the Second Temple Period. We must

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[21] Sanders, "Torah and Christ." See also Sanders, *God Has a Story Too*.

now learn to extend that observation through to the period of the Second Revolt. This would mean that the whole of the Second Testament was written by Jews for Jews, or by Christian Jews for Christian Jews, with the number of Gentile converts to Christian Judaism differing according to the synagogue or ἐκκλησία, and its location. It would mean that the term οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι would have to be translated in differentiated ways, as has been attempted in the new Contemporary English Version.[22]

But it would also mean hermeneutically that Christians in reading the Second Testament would have to give up their centuries-long habit of reading the Second Testament as a non-Jewish or even anti-Jewish document. The New Testament is Jewish literature. It is as Jewish as the Dead Sea Scrolls, or the so-called Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. The conflicts in it were *intra muros Judaeos*, keeping in mind the highly diverse forms of Judaism of the period up to the Second Revolt. The criticisms of and challenges to the Jewish leadership of the first century must be seen, in their canonical context, as of the same order as the very similar criticisms and challenges of the Iron Age prophets to the leadership of their day, or historically as of an order similar to the anti-Pharisaic and anti-Hasmonean, and generally anti-Jerusalem polemics in the Qumran Scrolls. The Bible is a remarkable corpus of literature in that it enshrines an immense amount of self-criticism, and the Second Testament should be read in the same light.

It is basically a question of the hermeneutics brought to reading the Second Testament. One could call Isaiah or Jeremiah anti-Semitic if read out of canonical context. It means for Christians, keeping the First Testament in the Bible – as the churches, soon after the second Jewish revolt, in response to Marcion, have traditionally always insisted. [More recently, it is also important for Christians to remember that the Second Testament is also biblical, as much a part of the Bible as the First!]

The whole Bible is Jewish, with the understanding that in every period of its formation, the Bronze Age, Iron Age, the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods, elements of many cultures, as well as of converts and adherents originating in those cultures, find expression in its pages. The Second Testament is just not all that different, in terms of how Scripture functioned in it and helped shape it, from other Hellenistic Jewish literature of the period; it is part of a larger corpus of Jewish literature, with its own particular foci and contours.[23]

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[22] The context of each occurrence would determine the appropriate English word or phrase selected. The important point is to sponsor translations that reflect the multifarious forms of Judaism in the first century, the Christian form as one of them, albeit near the margin in the view of some, especially Pharisaic/rabbinic Judaism. Examples would be: "fellow Jews," "people," "Judaeans" (if they really were), "authorities," etc. "Scribes and Pharisees" could well be translated as "religious experts." The fact that the Gospels in the terms used often reflect the late situation is clearly seen in the strange statement in Matt 13:54, "He came to his hometown and began to teach them in *their* synagogue" (emphasis mine).

[23] See Talmon, "Oral Tradition and Written Transmission," esp. 127–32, where Talmon effectively compares and contrasts the Qumran community and early Christianity as two forms of Judaism within the larger pluriform Judaism of the first century.

Jews and Jews

During the Ghost Ranch seminars, one of the texts studied was the parable of the so-called Good Samaritan. In retelling the story, in the light of 2 Chron 28:8–15, the story of the good Samarians, the victim who had been mugged was described as a Jew who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Silberman remarked during the discussion that it was the first time he had ever heard the victim called a Jew. It was a sad remark, but true for myself as well. One should assume that he was a Jew, but most Christians hardly think of him at all in their focus on the Samaritan and the good deed he performed. What he did, he did for a Jew; and therein lies the power of the story in terms of the alienation of the time between the two Torah observing groups.

But Silberman's point has deeper implications; everyone in the Gospel accounts should be assumed to have been Jewish unless otherwise designated. Jesus has with good reason been called a marginal Jew;[24] but that again assumes that there was a normative Judaism at the time, and that assumption has been effectively challenged. The Christians of the first century can all be called marginal Jews in that even Gentile Christians understood themselves to have converted to a form of Judaism, even if from the standpoint of a Rabbi Akiba they would have been very marginal.

Lou's work on the influence of apocalyptic thought in surviving Pharisaic/rabbinic Judaism between the two revolts converges with other work on the Judaisms of the period to indicate a mandate on the part of Christians today to cease and desist anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish readings of the Second Testament. As Silberman rightly says, "metaphoric language permits new ideas to be poured into old vessels."[25] Christians have for two thousand years read their own supersessionist anti-Semitism into the metaphoric language of the Gospels and Epistles.

It is time now to eliminate the evil that the church has sponsored in its misreading of these texts. Reading it both critically and faithfully, and teaching the faithful how to do so, can offer both church and synagogue the καιρός, or opportunity, to proclaim to all who would listen that God is not a Jew, God is not a Christian, God is not a Muslim; God is God, *revelatus* and *absconditus*, the Integrity of Reality. And that Reality is far bigger and more complex than any single religion is capable of comprehending, much less expressing.

We need each other. We need to hear each other's understandings, in dialogue, of shared and unshared stories. Only in that way can we hope to enter the twenty-first century with hope that these two distinct identity groups can appreciate and even celebrate what each holds dear. And if, please God, that should happen, Lou Silberman's work and witness will have been an important factor contributing to the hope we all so desperately need to hear.

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[24] Meier, *Marginal Jew*. See also Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, with a response to his critics in "Jesus the Jew."

[25] See Silberman, "From Apocalyptic Proclamation to Moral Prescript," 60.

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Hoeck, Johannes Maria. "Foreword." In *The Passion Play at Oberammergau*. Oberammergau: Gemeinde Oberammergau, 1960.

Kee, Howard C. "After the Crucifixion – Christianity through Paul." In *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: A Parallel History of Their Origins and Early Development*, edited by Hershel Shanks, 85–124. Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1992.

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Levine, Lee I. A. "Judaism from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the End of the Second Jewish Revolt: 70–135 CE." In *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: A Parallel History of Their Origins and Early Development*, edited by Hershel Shanks, 125–49. Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1992.

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Sanders, James A. Review of *The Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics*, by Michael A. Fishbane. *ThTo* 47, no. 4 (1991) 433–35.

Sanders, James A. "Torah and Christ." *Int* 29 (1975) 372–90. [Republished in *From Sacred Story to Sacred Text*, by James A. Sanders, 41–60. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.]

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Silberman, Lou H. "From Apocalyptic Proclamation to Moral Prescript: *Abot* 2,15–16." *JJS* 40, no. 1 (1989) 55–60.

Silberman, Lou H. "The Human Deed in a Time of Despair: The Ethics of Apocalyptic." In *Essays in Old Testament Ethics: J. Philip Hyatt, in Memoriam*, edited by James L. Crenshaw and John T. Willis, 191–202. New York: Ktav, 1974.

Talmon, Shemaryahu. "Oral Tradition and Written Transmission, or the Heard and the Seen Word in Judaism of the Second Temple Period." In *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, edited by Henry Wansbrough, 121–58. JSNTSup 64. Sheffield: JSOT, 1991.

Vermes, Geza. "Introduction." In *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: A Parallel History of Their Origins and Early Development*, edited by Hershel Shanks, xvii–xxii. Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1992.

Vermes, Geza. "Jesus the Jew." In *Jesus' Jewishness: Exploring the Place of Jesus in Early Judaism*, edited by James H. Charlesworth, 108–22. New York: Crossroad, 1991.

Vermes, Geza. *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels*. New York: Liberal Jewish Synagogue, 1974.

Appendix
Curriculum Vitae

James A. Sanders
Professor Emeritus of Intertestamental and Biblical Studies
Claremont School of Theology

Professor Emeritus of Religion
Claremont Graduate School

Founder and President Emeritus
Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center for Preservation and Research

Born: 28 November 1927, Memphis TN
Married: 30 June 1951 to Dora Geil Cargille (d. 12 June 2016)
Child: Robin David, born 2 September 1955
Grandchildren: Robin David Jr., 19 September 1983; Alexander Jonathan,
2 November 1986

Degrees
BA *magna cum laude*, Vanderbilt University, 1948
BD with distinction, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 1951. Final year at La Faculté
    libre de théologie protestante de Paris and L'école des hautes études de l'uni-
    versité de Paris, 1950–51
PhD Hebrew Union College, 1955
LittD (*honoris causa*), Acadia University, 1973
STD (*honoris causa*), University of Glasgow, 1975
DHL (*honoris causa*), Coe College, 1988
DHL (*honoris causa*), Hebrew Union College, 1988
DHL (*honoris causa*), Hastings College, 1996
DHL (*honoris causa*), California Lutheran University, 2000
Nominated for an honorary doctorate by l'Université de Fribourg en Suisse,
    1990

Ordination
Presbyterian Church (USA) Presbytery of Cincinnati, OH, as evangelist for
    teaching ministry, 1955; member of Presbytery of Genesee Valley 1955–78,
    and Presbytery of San Gabriel 1978–.
Made honorary canon of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, 2010

Principal Awards
Phi Sigma Iota 1946
Phi Beta Kappa 1948
Fulbright Grant 1950–51
Lefkowitz and Rabinowitz Fellowships 1951–53
Rockefeller Grants 1953–54; 1985
Lilly Endowment Grant 1961–62; 1972–73, 1981–85
Theta Chi Beta 1974
Guggenheim Fellow 1961–62; 1972–73
National Endowment for the Humanities Grants for the ABMC 1980; 1991–92

Presented with a Festschrift in November 1996 titled *A Gift of God in Due Season: Essays on Scripture and Community in Honor of James A. Sanders*, edited by Richard D. Weis and David M. Carr. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996.

Presented with a second Festschrift in November 1997 titled *The Quest for Context and Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders*, edited by Craig A. Evans and Shemaryahu Talmon. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Presented with a third Festschrift titled "Celebrating the Life and Work of James A. Sanders." Special Tribute Edition of *Folio* 15, no. 1 (1998). Supplemented by Shemaryahu Talmon (Magnes Professor Emeritus of Bible at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem), "A Continuing Tribute to James Sanders." *Folio* 16, no. 1 (1999) 3–5.

Principal Posts
Instructor to full Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, NY, 1954–65

Auburn Professor of Biblical Studies, Union Theological Seminary, New York City, 1965–77

Adjunct Professor of Religion, Columbia University, New York City, 1966–77 concurrently with Union Seminary

Professor of Intertestamental and Biblical Studies, School of Theology at Claremont (now Claremont School of Theology), 1977–97

Professor of Religion, Claremont Graduate University – concurrently

Visiting Scholar, Stellenbosch Theological Seminary, South Africa, 1989

Visiting Lecturer in Canonical Criticism, L'Université de Fribourg en Suisse, 1990

Alexander Robertson Professor of Old Testament, Glasgow University, Scotland, 1990–91

Visiting Professor of Old Testament, Union Theological Seminary/Columbia University in the City of New York, 1997–98

Visiting Professor of Old Testament, Yale University Divinity School, 1998

Visiting Professor of Bible, Jewish Theological Seminary, summers 2001–2002

Professor of Biblical Studies, The Episcopal Theological Seminary in Claremont, 2005 to present

Other Posts

Annual Professor, American Schools of Oriental Research, the Jerusalem School (Albright Institute), Jerusalem, 1961–62

Associate editor, Hebrew Old Testament Text Project of the United Bible Societies, 1969–, preparation for *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*

Visiting Professor, Rochester Center for Theological Studies, 1970

Professor, summer session, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1972, 1974, 1976; Columbia Seminary, 1986; Vancouver School of Theology, 1987, 1989

Visiting Professor, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1975

Professor, summer session, Pacific School of Religion, 1985

Senior Fellow, Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Study, 1972–73 and 1985

President, Society of Biblical Literature, 1977–78; Associate in council, 1963–66

Trustee, American Schools of Oriental Research, 1975–77; associate trustee, 1963–66; Ancient Manuscripts Committee, 1962–; president, Alumni Association, 1964

Resident Scholar, Villa Serbelloni, Bellagio, Italy, Rockefeller Foundation, September 1985

Co-chair with Craig A. Evans of the Section "Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity" for the Society of Biblical Literature, 1990–96

First Annual Graduate Alumnus in Residence, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati campus, 2001

Chair, Celebration of completion of publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Society of Biblical Literature, Denver, 2001

Memberships

Society of Biblical Literature, 1954–, president 1977–78

National Association of Biblical Instructors, then American Academy of Religion, 1954–

New Testament Seminar, Columbia University, 1965–77

Founding member, Hebrew Bible Seminar, Columbia University, 1968–77

Member from inception, Hebrew Old Testament Text Project of the United Bible Societies (Stuttgart), the parent of *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, 1969–

Founding trustee, Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, 1970–75

Editorial Board, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1970–76

Advisory Board, *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, 1970–95

Advisory Council, *Interpretation*, 1973–78

Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, 1971–

Research Council, Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, Claremont, 1977–97

National Council of Churches Task Force to study revisions in the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, 1979–80

Revised Standard Version Bible Committee, 1981 to completion

Translator for the New American Bible

Editorial Board, *Biblical Theology Bulletin*, 1985–

Member of The Board of Directors of The Mobilization for the Human Family, 1997–

National Academic Advisory Board, The Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, 1997–

Member of the Board of Directors of the Center for Sexuality and Christian Life, 1998–

Member, Academic Advisory Council, Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion 2001–

Member, Advisory Council for the Hebrew Union College School of Graduate Studies, 2002

Member of Board of Directors, Institute for Religious Tolerance, Justice and Peace, 2011–

Publications

Suffering as Divine Discipline in the Old Testament and Post-Biblical Judaism. Rochester, NY: *Colgate Rochester Divinity School Bulletin* Special Issue (28) 1955.

The Old Testament in the Cross. New York: Harper & Row, 1961.

The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPsa). DJD 4. Oxford: Clarendon, 1965.

The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967.

The New History: Joseph, Our Brother. Valley Forge, PA: American Baptist Ministers and Missionaries Board, 1968.

Torah and Canon. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972 (eleven printings). Second revised edition, Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2005. French edition: *Identité de la Bible*. Trans P. Mailhé. Paris: Cerf, 1975. Translated also in Korean, Japanese, and Italian.

God Has a Story Too: Sermons in Context. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.

Canon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

From Sacred Story to Sacred Text. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1987.

Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke–Acts, with Craig A. Evans. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

The Monotheizing Process. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014.

The Rebirth of a Born Again Christian: A Memoir. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017.

Scripture in Its Historical Contexts. 2 vols. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2018–19.

Editor. *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century: Essays in Honor of Nelson Glueck.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970.

Associate Editor with Dominique Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*. 5 vols. OBO 50. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987–2015.

Editor with Craig A. Evans. *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*. JSNTSup 83. SSEJC 1. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993.

Editor with Craig A. Evans. *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*. JSNTSup 148. SSEJC 5. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997.

Editor with Craig A. Evans. *The Function of Scripture in Early Jewish and Christian Tradition*. JSNTSup 154. SSEJC 6. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998.

Editor with Lee McDonald. *The Canon Debate*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002.

Plus over 250 articles and reviews in international journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc.

Lectureships
Hebrew Convocation Lecturer, Concordia Senior College, Fort Wayne, 1968
Cunningham Lecturer, Austin College, Sherman, TX 1968
Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Toronto, 1969
Department of Religion, Acadia University, 1970
Ayer Lecturer, Rochester Center for Theological Studies, 1971
Shaffer Lecturer, Yale University, 1972
Convocation Lecturer, Acadia University, 1973
Willis Fisher Lecturer, School of Theology at Claremont, 1973
Address at *Sheloshim* Memorial Service for Abraham Joshua Heschel at the Jewish Theological Seminary branch in Jerusalem, January 1973
Lehman College, City University of New York, 1974–1976
Theta Chi Beta Lecturer, Syracuse University, 1974
I. W. Anderson Lecturer, Presbyterian College, Montreal, 1975
Fondren Lecturer, Southern Methodist University, 1975
Currie Lecturer, Austin Presbyterian Seminary, 1976, 1987
Colloquy, Relationships among the Gospels, Trinity University, 1977
McFadin Lecturer, Texas Christian University, 1979
Ernest Cadman Colwell Lecturer, Claremont, 1979
William Conrad Lecturer, Lancaster Theological Seminary, 1979
Crozer Lecturer and Ayer Lecturer, Rochester Center for Theological Studies, 1979
Hawaii Loa College, intersession, 1980; summer session, 1985
Zion Bible Lecturer, Principia College, 1981
J. W. Stiles Lecturer, Memphis Theological Seminary, 1981
Oreon E. Scott Lecturer, Phillips University, 1981
Troisième cycle lecteur, L'Université de Fribourg Suisse, 1981 (in French)
University of California, Riverside, 1981
Gordon Frazee Lecturer, Linfield College, 1981 and 1984
Hebrew Union College, 1982, 1983; commencement address, 1988
Oral Roberts University, 1982
Tulsa University, 1982, 1989
Conference on Sacred Texts, Indiana University, 1982
Conference on Hallowing of Life, Notre Dame University, 1982
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1982, 1990
Coe College, Cedar Rapids, 1983; baccalaureate address, 1988
San Diego State University, 1984
President's Lecturer, Garrett Evangelical Seminary, Evanston, 1984
Pepperdine University, Malibu, 1985
Commencement Address, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, MI, 1985
Catholic Theological Society of America, 1985
Wieand Lecturer, Bethany Seminary, 1986
Invited paper, Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, Atlanta, 1986

American Society for Jewish Studies, Los Angeles, 1986

Union Seminary (NYC) Sesquicentennial Biblical Jubilee, two invited papers, April, 1987

Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, 1987

William H. Brownlee Lecturer, Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, 1987

Sunstone Symposium, Salt Lake City, 1987

Tenth Annual Workshop, NCCJ, Minneapolis, 1987

University of Wisconsin, Madison and Milwaukee, 1987

University of Chicago, Oriental Institute, 1987

Wheaton College, 1987

Alumni/nae Lecturer, Columbia Presbyterian Seminary, 1988

University of Kansas School of Religion Lecturer, 1988

Weinstein-Rosenthal Lectures, University of Richmond, 1988

The Gray Lectures, Duke University, 1988

The Sizemore Lectures, Midwestern Baptist Seminary, 1988

The Wells Sermons, Texas Christian University, 1989

University of Notre Dame, conference lecture, 1989

Georgetown University bicentenary lecture, 1989

Philadelphia Lutheran Seminary lecture, 1989

Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, VA, 1989

University of Stellenbosch guest lecturer, 1989

Seton Hall University guest lecturer, 1989

Speaker, English Speaking Union, Detroit Area, 1989

Knippa Interfaith Lecture, Tulsa, 1989

Sprinkle Lectures, Atlantic Christian College, 1990

St. John's UMC/Texas Tech University, 1990

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, 1990

Fresno Lay Institute of Theology, 1990

Siena College, Institute for Jewish Christian Studies, 1990

Smithsonian Institution, Resident Associates Program, 1990

Gustafson Lectures, United Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, 1991

American Bible Society's 175th anniversary celebration address, 1991

Address at *Sheloshim* Memorial Service for Rabbi Prof. Jakob Josef Petuchowski in Temple Israel, Roslyn Heights, New York, 1991

Consultations with the Israel Antiquities Authority and the International Team of Dead Sea Scrolls Scholars, Jerusalem, January 1992

Process and Preaching Conference, Santa Barbara, 1992

Fifth Annual Morrow-McCombs Memorial Lecture with Rabbi Prof. Michael Signer and the Rev. Michael Kerze, California State University, San Bernardino, 1992

Address at E Pluribus Unum Conference, Claremont, 1992

Second Annual Lily Rosman Lecture, Skirball Museum, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles, 1992

Seminar on Intertextuality and Dead Sea Scrolls for the University of New Mexico at Ghost Ranch, NM, 1992

Lectures in 1991–1992 on the current state of Dead Sea Scrolls study: With Prof. Bruce Zuckerman of USC, for the Biblical Archaeology Society, Washington, DC, in Long Beach, Arcadia, and San Diego, CA; also with Zuckerman, at La Jolla UMC, and UCLA Faculty Center

Bishop's Roundtable in Anaheim, the E Pluribus Unum Conference, and the Skirball Museum Pasadena Methodist Foundation annual lecture, April 1992

Pittsburgh Presbyterian Theological Seminary annual archaeology lecture, October 1992

Symposium paper on "The Bible and Anti-Semitism," Princeton Theological Seminary, October 1992, and at the Society of Biblical Literature, November 1992

Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX, annual lectureship, October 1992

Los Alamos NM committee on the Dead Sea Scrolls, four lectures, November 1992

Winterbreak Convocation lectures, California Lutheran University, January 1993

Willamette University annual lectureship in religion, March 1993

University of Arizona convocation lecture, April 1993

Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, University of Chicago, invited lecture, August 1993

Peter Craigie Memorial Lecturer, University of Calgary, October 1993

Samuel Iwry Annual Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, October 1993

American Schools of Oriental Research Lecturer, Baltimore, October 1993

Biblical Archaeology Society lectures, Asilomar, 1986; San Diego, February 1994; Phoenix, 1995; Alaska Cruise, 1997; Portland, OR 1998

San Diego State University, Religious Studies Dept. lecture, March 1994

Texas Christian University conference on Bible and human sexuality, March 1994

Colgate Rochester Divinity School lecture on DSS, Rochester, NY, April 1994

University of New Mexico Religious Studies Dept. seminar with Lou H. Silberman, Ghost Ranch, May-June 1994

Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls Seminar, Southwestern College, Phoenix, January 1995

Visiting lecturer at Creighton University in Omaha, March 1995

Address at conference on Edmund Wilson and Judaism at the Mercantile Library in New York, May 1995

Keynote address at tenth anniversary of the founding of the Hunger Banquet Ministry in Sioux Falls, SD, June 1995

Seminar on What Makes Scripture Scripture at Ghost Ranch, NM, July 1995

Lecture at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, on "Canon as Dialogue" for conference on "Norm und Abweichung," October 1995

Invited lecture at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, October 1995

Week-long seminar on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible at the Ecumenical Theological Seminary, Detroit, November 1995

Speech at banquet celebrating the launching of the new Liberty Museum (321 Chestnut Street) in Philadelphia, November 1995

Lecture on "Canon as Dialogue" at the University of Michigan, November 1995

Lecture on "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Jesus" for The Scrolls and the Bible Seminar in Phoenix, February 1996

Baccalaureate address at Hastings College, May 1996

Lecture on "The Impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls on Biblical Studies" at the International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls held at Brigham Young University, July 1996

Lecture on "The Canonical Process" for the Philosophy of Religion/Theology Symposium at Honnold Library, Claremont Graduate School, September 1996

The Third Annual Womack Lectures at Methodist College, Fayetteville, NC, October 1996

Lectures at Grosse Pointe (MI) Memorial Church and at the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club on the occasion of the launching of the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center's publication of Codex Leningradensis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), October 1996

Participated in symposium on the Qumran Psalter and the formation of the MT Psalter, November 1996; and in another in celebration of the 100th birthday of James Muilenburg, November 1996, both at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in New Orleans, LA

Public Lecture at Florida Southern College, February 1997

Public Lecture at California Baptist College, February 1997

Visiting Scholar at Trinity Western University, Dead Sea Scrolls Institute, Langley, BC, March 1997

Public Lecture at the University of Northern Washington, March 1997

Biblical Archaeology Society Travel Seminar, Scottsdale, AZ, March 1997

Purcell Lecturer and Preacher, Barton College, Wilson, NC, April 1997

Session chair at International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, July 1997

Invited Lecturer at the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, July 1997

Biblical Archaeology Society Travel Seminar Lecturer on Holland/America cruise to the Alaskan Inland Waterway, August 1997

Invited Lecturer at the Columbia University New Testament Seminar, October 1997

Plenary Session Lecturer, Princeton Seminary Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls, November 1997

Invited Lecturer for celebration of 25th anniversary of Department of Religious Studies, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, November 1997

Read a paper by invitation at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Napa, CA, November 1997

Read a paper by invitation at the thirtieth anniversary meeting of the Columbia University Hebrew Bible Seminar, March 1998; With Morton Smith had been co-founder of the Seminar in March 1968

Led Biblical Archaeology Society Travel Seminars in Portland OR, Orlando FL, Long Beach CA, Chicago IL, and Boston MA, Ft Worth TX, Denver CO, Alaskan Cruise and Caribbean Cruise, 1998–2001, and several in the LA area

Interfaith Symposium, Temple Emanu-El, New York City, February 1999

Symposium paper on Scripture in the Church, Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei, The Vatican, Sept. 1999

Annual Bible Lectures at Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis, IN, November 1999

ELCA Bishops annual retreat leader, Mundelein, IL, 2000

Seminar at University of Chicago Divinity School, 2000

First Annual Graduate Alum in Residence, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, 2001

Skirball Institute annual seminary presidents' conference, 2002

University of New Mexico on the Mt Athos Project and Museum of Archaeology on Alexander and Judaism, January 2004

All-day seminar on "True and False Prophecy" at Shepherd University, Los Angeles, January 2004

Lectured and conducted a seminar at UCLA, March 2004

Led an invited seminar on the Hebrew University Bible: Ezekiel Volume at Jewish Theological Seminary, November 2004

Lectured for the Biblical Archaeology Society Fest VII in San Antonio, TX on "Taking the Bible Seriously Not Literally," November 2004

Taught intensive course on "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible" at Shepherd University, Los Angeles, January 2005

Gave the annual Lemuel C. Summers Lecture at Millsaps College, Jackson, MS on "Ancient Texts and Modern Communities," March 2005

Lectured at the Exploreum Museum of Archaeology in Mobile AL for the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit, March 2005

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