

## THE CANONICAL APPROACH TO THE OT: ITS EFFECT ON UNDERSTANDING PROPHECY

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Let us begin with a simple definition of the "canonical approach"<sup>1</sup> to the OT and, on the basis of that definition, turn directly to the application of the approach to the hermeneutical problem of prophecy and fulfillment. In its most general sense the canonical approach to the OT consists of taking seriously the fact that the OT, as we have it today, is a written text. By taking the written text seriously I mean that a canonical approach sees not only the content of the OT, but also its form, as theologically relevant. The final shape of the OT is as important as the actual course of events that are recounted in it. The message of the OT is as much a function of how it is written as of what it recounts. I do not understand the canonical approach to consist of driving a wedge between form and content, these two all-important features of the OT. It is not a matter of one or the other but of both.

With such an understanding of the canonical approach we can now turn to the problem of prophecy and fulfillment. Put simply, the problem of prophecy and fulfillment is the problem of the relationship of the OT to the NT.<sup>2</sup> How do we relate the message of the OT writers to that of the NT? How are we to understand the NT writers when they quote passages from the OT that seem to be about the political and historical life of ancient Israel and apply them to Jesus as fulfilled prophecy? What are the hermeneutics that lie behind such a use of Scripture? Or, more to the point, how does the canonical approach help uncover the hermeneutics of such a use of Scripture?

Let me begin with a summary of what I intend to say. First, I want to suggest that when we focus on the work of the final compilers or authors of the Biblical books we can see that their understanding of the events they recount is much the same as that of the NT writers. That is, they see the historical narratives they recount as fundamentally a picture, or foreshadowing, of the future. We might even say they understand their texts as "types" or "typologies" of the future. I will seek to demonstrate such a hermeneutic from the macro- and micro-structure of the first book in the OT, the Torah. Second, I want to suggest that the same sort of typological hermeneutic found within the Torah is picked

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<sup>1</sup>B. S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Fortress, 1979); M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford, 1985); R. Rendtorff, *Das Alte Testament: Eine Einführung* (Neukirchener, 1983); W. Richter, *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft* (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1971); J. A. Sanders, *Torah and Canon* (Fortress, 1972).

<sup>2</sup>M. Henschel, "Weissagung und Erfüllung," *RGG* (3d ed.), 6. 1588.

up and carried along not only by later Biblical writers but also by those who were responsible for the final shape of the OT canon. Specifically I have in mind here the final connecting links within the present Hebrew canon: the Law, the Prophets and the Writings. Though I think there are many such hermeneutically motivated connecting links within the present Hebrew canon, we will look at only the two links joining the three sections of the canon—namely, Deut 34:5 ff., the link that connects the Law and the Prophets, and Mal 3:22–24, the link that connects the Prophets and the Writings. Because of the scope of the paper, in what follows I will limit myself to only a few examples. I hope I do not leave the impression that only these examples exist. A full explication of all the examples would go far beyond our present limits.

## I. THE FINAL SHAPE OF THE PENTATEUCH<sup>3</sup>

1. *The unity of the canonical Pentateuch.* Whatever one's view of the origin and diversity of the individual parts of the Pentateuch, it is widely held today that the canonical Pentateuch exhibits a unified structure.<sup>4</sup> For our purposes we can move directly to the actual description of this canonical unity. It seems to me that the tools of compositional analysis are best suited for this purpose.

2. *Compositional analysis.* The task of a compositional analysis, as described by Georg Fohrer,<sup>5</sup> is to describe the method and techniques employed by an author in producing a final text. What large units of text has the author employed to build the final text? What functions do the individual units within the final text play in light of the completed whole?<sup>6</sup> What are the final touches given to the text by the author that determine how the text will be read and received? What is the religious and theological viewpoint of the final text?<sup>7</sup>

It has long been recognized that the final shaping of the canonical Pentateuch involved the sorting and placement of material consisting of at least four distinct literary types: narrative, poetry, law and genealogy.<sup>8</sup> The genealogical

<sup>3</sup>Previous studies: O. Eissfeldt, "Die kleinste literarische Einheit in den Erzählungsbüchern des Alten Testaments," in *Kleine Schriften*, vol. 1 (J. C. B. Mohr, 1962); R. Rendtorff, *Das Überlieferungs-geschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (de Gruyter, 1977); D. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch*; H.-C. Schmitt, *Die Nichtpriesterliche Josephsgeschichte* (BZAW; 1980); S. Tengström, *Die Toledotformel und die literarische Struktur der priesterlichen Erweiterungsschicht im Pentateuch* (ConB; 1981); R. Knierrim, "The Composition of the Pentateuch" (SBLASP; 1985).

<sup>4</sup>E.g. W. H. Schmidt, *Einführung in das Alte Testament* (de Gruyter, 1979) 41.

<sup>5</sup>Compositional analysis is to be distinguished from redactional analysis. The focus of a compositional analysis is on the features of a text that enable it to be read as a unitary work. The focus of a redactional analysis, on the other hand, is on the features of a text that have resulted from its being included within a larger context. G. Fohrer, *Exegese des Alten Testaments: Einführung in die Methodik* (Quelle and Myer, 1983) 140.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.* Cf. also Rendtorff, *Alte Testament* 134.

<sup>8</sup>H. A. Ch. Hävernick, *Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Carl Heyder, 1837) 194–199, 399.

texts play an important role in the early sections of the Pentateuch, especially in the book of Genesis,<sup>9</sup> but do not lead to fruitful conclusions about the shape or structure of the Pentateuch as a whole. A similar verdict can be drawn from a consideration of the large legal collections within the Pentateuch. The importance of such collections is beyond dispute, but they do not appear to be the means by which the whole of the Pentateuch has been shaped. A close study of the author's use of narrative and poetic texts, however, sheds considerable light on the final shape of the work.<sup>10</sup> The technique of using a poetic speech and a short epilogue to conclude a narrative is well known in Biblical literature<sup>11</sup> and occurs frequently within recognizable segments of the Pentateuch itself. The creation account in Genesis 1 and 2 concludes with the short poetic discourse of Adam in 2:23,<sup>12</sup> which is followed by an epilogue (2:24). The account of the fall in chap. 3 concludes with the poetic discourse in 3:14–19<sup>13</sup> and an epilogue in 3:20–24. The account of Cain in chap. 4 concludes with the poetic discourse in 4:23 and the epilogue (4:24–26).<sup>14</sup> The fact that this same pattern can be found throughout Genesis<sup>15</sup> suggests that it was an important part of the compositional technique of the author of the book. Most notably is the occurrence of this pattern in the Joseph story (Genesis 37–48), which concludes with the poetic discourse of Jacob's blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh (48:15–16, 20). More importantly, however, the pattern recurs at a much higher level within the Pentateuch, suggesting that the technique was extended as part of the structure embracing the whole of the book. First, the pattern is found in the inclusion of the large poetic text (Gen 49:1–27) at the close of the patriarchal narratives, along with the epilogue of Genesis 50. Second, the two major narrative units that follow that of Genesis—the exodus narratives and the wilderness narratives—are both concluded by a similar poetic section, Exodus 15 and Numbers 23–24. Finally, the pattern can be seen to embrace the whole of the Pentateuch in that the whole of the narrative of the Pentateuch, which stretches from Genesis 1 through Deuteronomy, is concluded by the poetic Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32–33) and the epilogue of chap. 34.

If such a compositional scheme lies behind the final shaping of the Penta-

<sup>9</sup>C. Westermann, *Genesis* (Neukirchener, 1983) 8 ff.

<sup>10</sup>Hävernick, *Handbuch* 396.

<sup>11</sup>Josh 10:12–13; Judg 5:1–30; 1 Sam 2:1–10; 2 Sam 22:1–23:7; Neh 9:1–37.

<sup>12</sup>H. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt* (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1977) 12.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20: "Die Flüche haben . . . strengere rhythmische Form."

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 52: "Der metrischen Form nach enthält das Lied zwei Vierer (die Introdution) und zwei Doppeldreier."

<sup>15</sup>Other examples in the Pentateuch are narrative (Gen 6:5–8:21), poetry (8:22), epilogue (9:1–17); narrative (9:18–24), poetry (9:25–27), epilogue (9:28–29); narrative (14:1–18), poetry (14:19–20), epilogue (14:21–24); narrative (16:1–10), poetry (16:11–12), epilogue (16:13–16); narrative (24:1–59), poetry (24:60), epilogue (24:61–67); narrative (25:1–22), poetry (25:23), epilogue (25:24–26); narrative (27:1–26), poetry (27:27–29), narrative (27:30–38), poetry (27:39–40), epilogue (27:41–45); narrative (37:1–48:14), poetry (48:15–16, 20), epilogue (48:21–22); narrative (Exod 1–14), poetry (15:1–17), epilogue (15:19–21).

teuch, as it appears, it would be wise to begin here with the question of the compositional purpose of the book. Are there any clues lying along the seams of these large units that point to the author's ultimate purpose? If so, we should be guided by them in any further probings into the author's purpose at a lower level in the text. We will begin our investigation of the compositional purpose of the Pentateuch with a closer look along the seams of these large units of narrative and poetry. Here we will attempt to uncover the basic hermeneutic of the author of the Pentateuch and from there demonstrate the use of that hermeneutic at lower levels in the text. We will then show how that same hermeneutic continued to guide the further incorporation of the Pentateuch into the Biblical canon.

## II. NARRATIVE/POETIC SEAMS IN THE PENTATEUCH

1. *Three macro-structural junctures in the Pentateuch.* The author has spliced a major poetic discourse onto the end of a large unit of narrative (Genesis 49; Numbers 24; Deuteronomy 31). A close look at the material lying between and connecting the narrative and poetic sections reveals the presence of a homogeneous compositional stratum. It is most noticeably marked by the recurrence of the same terminology and narrative motifs. In each of the three segments, the central narrative figure (Jacob, Balaam, Moses) calls an audience together (imperative: Gen 49:1; Num 24:14; Deut 31:28) and proclaims (cohortative: Gen 49:1; Num 24:14; Deut 31:28) what will happen (Gen 49:1; Num 24:14; Deut 31:29) in the "end of days" (Gen 49:1; Num 24:14; Deut 31:29).

The brief narrative prologue to the poetic text in Genesis 49 tells us that the central figure, Jacob, has called together his sons to announce to them "that which will happen at the end of days" (49:1b). Thus, however we may want to translate the terminology he has employed, in this seam introducing the poetic discourse of Jacob the author has provided the reader with an indispensable clue to its meaning. Jacob's poetic discourse is about what will happen at the "end of the days."<sup>16</sup>

In an identical macro-structural position within the seam connecting the poetic text of Deuteronomy 32 with the whole preceding narrative of the Pentateuch we find another narrative prologue with the same terminology and motif. The central figure, Moses, has called together (Deut 31:28) the elders of the tribes to announce to them the trouble that "will happen in the end of days" (31:29b). Again the reader is afforded an all-important clue to the meaning of the poetic text. In the seams connecting both poetic texts—Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 32—to the preceding narrative segments and using the same terminology the author has inserted an identical message to the reader as a clue that the poetic discourses are to be read "eschatologically."<sup>17</sup>

At one other crucial juncture connecting the large units of poetic and narrative texts in the Pentateuch the same terminology occurs: Num 24:14. Here, in the narrative prologue to the last words of Balaam, the author again provides the reader with the necessary hermeneutical clue to the meaning of the poetic

<sup>16</sup>E. Jenni, *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, 1. 116 ff. (*bē'ahārit hayyāmim*).

<sup>17</sup>It is not an issue at this point how developed the "eschatology" of this stratum is. See A. Jepsen, "Eschatologie II. Im AT," *RGG* (3d ed.), 2. 655 ff.

texts. Again it has to do with the "end of days." As in the other two passages, the events that lie ahead in the future days are revealed in the last words of the central narrative figure—that is, Balaam.

Such convergence of macro-structure, narrative motifs and terminology among these three strategically important parts of the Pentateuch can hardly be accidental. The fact that the phrase "end of days" occurs only one other time in the Pentateuch, and that also within a macro-structural seam,<sup>18</sup> argues strongly for our taking these connecting segments to be part of the final work that went into giving the Pentateuch its present shape. To state it clearly, they reveal the work of the final composer or author of the Pentateuch. As such they are also a clear indication of the hermeneutic of this author. Not only does the author show throughout his work an intense interest in events of the past. The fact that he repeatedly and strategically returns to the notion of the end of days in giving his work its final shape reveals that his interest lies not only in the past but in the future as well. To summarize what appears to be the overall strategy of the author in these three segments, we might say that one of the central concerns lying behind the final shape of the Pentateuch is an attempt to uncover an inherent relationship between the past and the future. That which happened to God's people in the past portends events that still lie in the future. Or, to say it another way, the past is seen as a lesson of the future.<sup>19</sup> For our purposes these observations lead to the following conclusion: A consideration of the macro-structural strategy lying behind the final shape of the Pentateuch suggests that the author worked within a clearly defined hermeneutic. Because of the terminology he uses, we could call it an eschatological reading of his historical narratives. The narrative texts of past events are presented as pointers to events that lie yet in the future. Past events foreshadow the future. It is not hard to see that such a hermeneutic leads to a form of "narrative typology."<sup>20</sup> In the next section, then, we will look for signs of such a typology in the composition of the smaller units of narrative in the Pentateuch.

2. *Gen 12:10–20 foreshadows Genesis 41—Exodus 12.* A small narrative segment that has attracted an extraordinary amount of attention over the years is the account of Abraham's visit to Egypt in Gen 12:10–20. The similarities

<sup>18</sup>Deut 4:30.

<sup>19</sup>A striking confirmation of this lies in the author's lexical choice of *bērē'sit* at the very beginning of his work. We might at first be tempted to say simply that he chose the word as the beginning because this was, in fact, "the beginning." Though we can hardly deny this observation, it misses the important point that elsewhere in Genesis the word for "in the beginning" is not *bērē'sit* but either *bēri'sōnā* (e.g. 13:4) or *battēhillā* (e.g. 13:3). So we should ask not simply why the author chose to open the book with a report of what happened "in the beginning" but, more importantly, why he chose to use this word only this one time. The answer may lie in the fact that throughout its usage in the Hebrew Bible *rē'sit* occurs regularly as an antonym of *'ahārit*, as in Isa 46:10: "I declare the end from the beginning." Thus already the author's choice of the first word in the Pentateuch strikes a note of anticipation of his last words, which turn the reader's attention toward the "end of the days" (*'ahārit hayyāmim*). The "last days" (Endzeit) are like the "first days" (Urzeit).

<sup>20</sup>Interesting and helpful analogies can be found in cinematography—e.g., in early films the "symbolic realism" of D. W. Griffith and the "cross-cutting" techniques of both Griffith and S. Eisenstein.

between this narrative and that of Genesis 20 and 26 are well known. Such similarities are most often taken to be a sign of historical or literary dependency. Another way to view the similarities, however, is to see them as part of a larger typological scheme intending to show that future events are often foreshadowed in events of the past. In fact many of the similarities in the patriarchal narratives may have originated out of such a scheme of narrative typology.<sup>21</sup> Further evidence suggesting that this may be the case comes from a comparison between Gen 12:10–20 and the large narrative unit that deals with the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt (Genesis 41—Exodus 12). The following chart suggests that the composition of Gen 12:10–13:4 has been intentionally structured to prefigure or foreshadow the events of Israel's sojourn in Egypt.

<i>Gen 12:10–13:4</i>	<i>Genesis 41—Exodus 12</i>
There was famine in the land (12:10)	There was famine in all the lands (41:54b)
When he drew near to to into Egypt (12:11)	When they came toward the land of Goshen (46:28)
He said to Sarai his wife (12:11)	Joseph said to his brothers (46:31)
And it shall come to pass when the Egyptians see you they will say (12:12)	And it shall come to pass when Pharaoh calls you he will say (46:33)
"Say . . . !" (12:13)	"Say . . . !" (46:34)
That it might be well with me on account of you (12:13)	That you might dwell in the land of Goshen (46:34)
And the officers of Pharaoh saw her and declared it to Pharaoh (12:13)	And Joseph came and declared to Pharaoh (47:1)
And the woman was taken into the house of Pharaoh (12:15)	And Pharaoh said, ". . . settle your father and brothers in the best of the land" (47:5)
And Abraham acquired sheep and cattle (12:15)	Put them in charge of the livestock (47:6)
And the Lord struck Pharaoh with great plagues (12:17)	One more plague I will bring against Pharaoh (Ex 11:1)
And Pharaoh called to Abram and said (12:18)	And Pharaoh called to Moses and Aaron in the night and said (12:31)
"Take and go!" (12:19)	*"Take . . . and go!" (12:32)
And Pharaoh commanded the men and they sent him and his wife away (12:20)	And the Egyptians urged the people to hasten to send them away (12:33)
And Abram went up from Egypt toward the Negev (13:1)	And the sons of Israel went out from Rameses toward Succoth (12:37)
And Lot was with him (13:1)	And also a great mixed company was with them (12:38)
And Abram was very wealthy with cattle, silver and gold (13:2)	And they were wealthy with livestock (12:38), silver and gold vessels (12:35)
to the place of the altar (13:4)	This is the Feast of the Passover (12:43)

<sup>21</sup>Cf. e.g. U. Cassuto, "'Abrahām," in *'Ensiqlōpedyā Miqrā'ūt* (Bialik, 1955) 61 ff.

If the similarities between these two narratives are not merely accidental, then it is clear that some sort of narrative typology lies behind their composition. The author wants to show that the events of the past are pointers to those of the future. One interesting confirmation that this particular text was in fact intended to be read in such a way is the role played by Lot within the narrative. It can hardly be accidental that Gen 12:10–20, which forms the frontispiece to the Lot narratives, is virtually duplicated, as a kind of *inclusio*, in Genesis 20, which comes after the last of the narratives dealing with Lot. This is especially noticeable in light of the fact that chap. 20 is both chronologically<sup>22</sup> and geographically<sup>23</sup> out of place in its narrative context. The positioning of the Lot narratives between these two remarkably similar narratives about Abraham is apparently a reflection of the narrative strategy.<sup>24</sup> Of special interest is the fact that in Gen 12:10–13:4 Lot occupies the same position as that of the “mixed multitude” (*rb*; Exod 12:38) in the narrative of Genesis 41—Exodus 12. In other words the author appears to want to draw the readers’ attention to the identification of Lot with the mixed multitude. It is as if Lot is seen as a prefiguration of the mixed multitude that comes out of Egypt with the Israelites. Along this same line it is significant that the last narrative dealing with Lot shows us that Lot is the father of the Moabites and the Ammonites (Gen 19:36–38), the very group that is prohibited from taking part in the congregational worship (Deut 23:4–5). Thus, as Lot is finally excluded from the assembly of Abraham, the reader is reminded that there is to be no “mixed multitude” in the Israelite assembly.

The question that naturally arises is whether such a typological reading of these narratives was ever appreciated by the original or early readers of the book. Fortunately in this case we have direct witness to the fact that it was. In Neh 13:1–3 the problem of marriage to foreign wives is handled by an appeal to Deut 23:4–5 where the Ammonites and Moabites are restricted from the worship assembly. The author of the book of Nehemiah then remarks that when they heard this, they separated out from them “all of the mixed multitude” (Neh 13:3b). Since this is the only other occurrence of the term in the Hebrew Bible<sup>25</sup> and since its use in Exod 12:38 has no association with the Moabites and Ammonites, the association between the mixed multitude and the Moabites and Ammonites could only have come from an association of the mixed multitude with Lot and his two daughters. In other words, Nehemiah appears to

<sup>22</sup>E.g. the problem of the Philistine barrenness within a span of one year.

<sup>23</sup>E.g. the *min* in 20:1 has no immediate antecedent.

<sup>24</sup>It is not hard to recognize a conscious attempt to focus the reader’s attention on the presence of Lot throughout chaps. 12–19. E.g., though there is no mention of Lot in 12:10–20, we are immediately reminded of his presence with Abraham during his time in Egypt in 13:1; and the narrative of chap. 18, where Lot is curiously not mentioned in conjunction with Sodom, is resumed in chap. 20 with no further reference to Lot. The Lot chapter has been inserted between the two texts with a back reference to chap. 18 in 19:20.

<sup>25</sup>The form *‘ereb* in B19 and the Ben Hayyim text only occurs in Exod 12:38 and Neh 13:3. It is distinguished in these texts from *‘ereb* not only by the *šerē* but also by the lack of an article.

have read the Genesis narratives "typologically," identifying Lot, the father of the Moabites and the Ammonites, with the mixed multitude. Such evidence offers a very early assessment of how the original readers of the Pentateuch understood and read the Pentateuchal narratives.

A summary at this point will prepare us for the last issue I intend to raise in this paper. We have tried to show two things. First, the final shape of the Pentateuch reflects an interest in reading the historical narratives both typologically and eschatologically. The events of the past are read as pointers to the future. The future is portrayed as like the past. Second, the internal composition of smaller narrative units also reflects this same interest in typology. Abraham is presented as a picture or type of the future Israel; Lot is presented as a type of the future mixed multitude. If these two points are valid, we may raise the following question: Does such a typological, eschatological reading of the narratives play any further part in the formation of the larger canonical units of the Hebrew Bible? Concerning this question we make the following brief observation.

3. *The theology of the canon.* Apart from the work of Brevard Childs and James A. Sanders,<sup>26</sup> two recent works have renewed the call for an investigation into the theological motivation of the formation of the Hebrew canon. What theological assumptions and tendencies lie behind the present shape of the canon?<sup>27</sup> Along the lines developed earlier in this paper, a likely place to begin an answer to that question is the section of the Pentateuch that appears to come directly from the hands of those who formed the Hebrew canon—namely, Deut 34:5 ff., "the (last) eight verses of the Torah," as they are called in the Talmud. Without raising the question of who actually wrote these verses it is agreed by most that Moses, the author of the Pentateuch, did not write them. They are, then, secondary and a part of the stitching that connects the Pentateuch to the Prophets. In that sense they are remarkably similar in form and content to the last verses of the Prophets, Mal 3:22–24, the stitching that connects the Prophets to the Writings.<sup>28</sup> We should also hasten to add that as evangelicals we would consider both these passages to be equally inspired along with the rest of the Scriptures, though in neither case are they the work of the original author.

The part of Deut 34:5 ff. that interests us most here is the final announcement that a prophet like Moses, doing great signs and wonders, had not yet arisen in Israel. Since the description of this prophet is totally individualistic

<sup>26</sup>See n. 1 *supra*.

<sup>27</sup>R. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church* (Eerdmans, 1985); Rendtorff, *Alte Testament*.

<sup>28</sup>Deut 34:5 ff. and Mal 3:22 ff. have much in common. Neither is an integral part of the book to which it is attached. Deut 34:5 ff. centers on the prophet Moses who is the one who did great signs and wonders, and Mal 3:22 ff. centers on the prophet Elijah who did great signs and wonders. Moses is the key prophet in the Torah, Elijah the key prophet in the Prophets. Both stress the central role of Moses and the Law. Both call Moses the "servant" of the Lord. Both are future oriented, projecting into the future an expectation of the return of the great men of the past.



and reflects a time period much later than the time of Moses or the next generations after him, the "prophet" who is in view here is not simply the "office of the prophet" (as might have been expected from Deuteronomy 18) but a specific eschatological prophet that had not at that time come. What is also important to point out is that this "prophet" is identified with the "prophet" of Deuteronomy 18. These last verses of Deuteronomy say, in effect, that the "prophet" announced by Moses in Deuteronomy 18 had not yet come. What this then shows is that the last eight verses have given the promise of the "prophet" in Deut 18:15 ff. a yet future (eschatological) orientation as well as an individual interpretation. The last eight verses have read Deut 18:15 ff. as not about the establishment of the "office of the prophet" but about the coming of "a prophet," which from the viewpoint of the author of those verses is yet future. What is of special interest is that the passage in Deuteronomy 18 is itself open to both an individual and a corporate interpretation—that is, as both that of an eschatological prophet and that of the "office of the prophet." In fact, in light of the further warnings in Deut 18:20 regarding the danger of the false prophets, the Deuteronomy passage seems more likely to be about the establishment of the "office of the prophet." In the last eight verses of Deuteronomy, however, Moses' words in chap. 18 are read futuristically and individualistically. In other words, these verses appear to interpret the words of Moses in chap. 18 typologically and eschatologically, precisely the way these words are read in the NT (Acts 3:22; 7:37). In these eight verses,<sup>29</sup> then, we can see firsthand the work and hermeneutic of those who collected and shaped the Hebrew canon. We can also see that such a hermeneutic was not foreign or out of step with the final composition of the Pentateuch. On the contrary, in substance it is at one with that of the author of the Pentateuch. The narratives of Israel's early history were collected and read as a guide not just to the past but, more importantly, to the future as well. Whether we are comfortable with the term "typology" to describe this kind of reading of the Biblical narratives, it does closely resemble the way in which later Biblical writers, both in the OT and the NT, read their Bibles. The lesson we can draw from this, I believe, is clear. When the NT writers appear to us to read their OT typologically and counter to its "historical" sense, we may have to exercise more caution before drawing the conclusion that they have misread their Biblical texts. When viewed from the standpoint of the final shape of the canon, their reading of the Bible may be much closer to the original intention than our own. As Paul puts it: "Now these things happened to them as a warning (*typos*), but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come" (1 Cor 10:11). Such a reading may be more in harmony with the intention of the original authors of the Hebrew Scriptures than that of our own historical reconstructions.

<sup>29</sup>The function of these eight verses is clearly to provide a link between the Torah and the Prophets, or specifically between Deuteronomy and Joshua. In any event, since the verses are not a part of the original Pentateuch of Moses and since the verses are inspired, they show that the notion of inspiration must extend beyond the work of the original authors to that of the level of the formation of the canon. The verses thus force upon evangelical theology the question of the role of inspiration in the formation of the OT canon.