

TWO TESTAMENTS IN PARALLEL: THE INFLUENCE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT ON THE STRUCTURING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

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The relation between the two Testaments continues to be an important field of scholarly exploration, and the present article is intended as a contribution to a greater elucidation of their multifaceted interdependence. The discussion is often focussed on uncovering OT motifs and themes that find further use and development in the NT,¹ or the analysis of OT allusions and quotations to be found in the NT.² These areas of scholarly effort, however, by no means exhaust the interconnections between the Testaments. My aim is to explore whether there are *structural* connections between the two canonical corpora, namely the question of a correlation and dependence between the macrostructural arrangement of the OT and that of the NT. Put more simply, is the order of the NT books influenced by the ordering of the books of the OT? If so, what are the implications for reading the Bible as one book? This is not an entirely new issue, but it is one that has not received the recognition and consideration it deserves.³

Before proceeding any further, it is necessary to consider what status is to be given to the phenomenon of book order. The sequential ordering of the biblical books is part of the *paratext* of Scripture. The term “paratext” refers to elements that are adjoined to the text but are not part of the text *per se*.⁴ The scriptural paratext also includes features such as book titles and the internal partitioning of books (e.g. paragraphing and chapter breaks). The (differing) order of the biblical books is a paratextual phenomenon that cannot be put on the same level as the text itself. It is a post-authorial imposition on the text of Scripture, albeit an unavoidable one when texts of different origin are collected together in a canonical corpus. Where a biblical book is placed relative to other books inevitably influences a reader’s view of the book, on the supposition that juxtaposed books are related in some way and therefore illuminate each other. A prescribed order of books is a *de facto*

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¹ For a helpful survey, see David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship between the Old and New Testaments* (3d ed.; Nottingham: Apollos, 2010).

² E.g. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

³ I briefly touched upon this issue in a previous publication, see Greg Goswell, “The Order of the Books in the New Testament,” *JETS* 53 (2010) 225–41, esp. 225–27.

⁴ For the concept of paratext, see Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (trans. Jane E. Lewin; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

interpretation of the text.⁵ It is, therefore, as part of the history of the interpretation of the Bible as one book (in two parts) that the issue of book order must be approached. A study of biblical book order uncovers an early stage in the reception history (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) of Scripture, fossilizing as it does the insights and convictions of ancient readers within the synagogue and church. If the order of NT books has been influenced by the order of the OT books, it potentially gives access to how those responsible understood the books of the NT, and indeed, how they viewed the books of the OT.

I. A PARALLEL STRUCTURE TO THE GREEK OLD TESTAMENT?

The organization in the NT canon on the basis of genre is plain to see, with the books arranged in four generic groupings: Gospels, Acts, letters, and Revelation (apocalypse). According to David Trobisch, evidence for this is that the titles assigned to the NT books include a reference to their literary genre, though this is questionable in the case of the title “Revelation.”⁶ Trobisch attributes the familiar canonical order of the NT to an editorial desire to reflect the generic principle of ordering used in the Greek OT, with the majority Greek order exemplified by Codex Vaticanus (B 03).⁷ On this understanding, the Gospels correspond to the Pentateuch, Acts to the Historical Books, the Letters to the Poetic Books, and Revelation to the Prophetic Books. Roger Beckwith recognizes parallels, though he neglects to draw a connection between the Letters and the Poetic Books. Beckwith is cautious and does not posit a direct influence of either Testament on the other, given the variations in the Greek OT tradition.⁸ He is only willing to go as far as to say: “the Old Testament and New Testament lists seem to be the work of kindred minds.”⁹ He makes the point, for example, that the list (in Greek) of “the old books” (τῶν παλαιῶν βιβλίων) by Melito, Bishop of Sardis (c. AD 170) ends with the prophetic books followed by Esdras (= Ezra-Nehemiah).¹⁰ This order produces

⁵ Referring to paratextual features such as book titles and book order, Robert W. Wall states: “[A] variety of interpretive clues are added to the final form of the biblical canon to guide its faithful use”; see “The Canonical View,” in Stanley E. Porter and Beth M. Stovell, eds., *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012) 111–30 (here 120; suspension points mine).

⁶ *The First Edition of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 63. For a discussion of the titles generally, see Gregory R. Goswell, “What’s in a Name? Book Titles in the New Testament,” *Pacificia* 21 (2008) 160–74. See further the discussion below.

⁷ *First Edition of the New Testament* 63, 64; cf. Henry Barclay Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek, Appendix: Containing the Letter of Aristean* (ed. H. St. J. Thackeray; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902; rev. R. R. Ottley; New York: Ktav, 1968) 218.

⁸ There is no uniform Greek order; see B. Botte and P. -M. Bogaert, “Septante et versions grecques,” in *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible* (ed. L. Pirot and A. Robert; Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1996) 12:535–691, esp. pp. 541–43.

⁹ *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985) 184. For patristic NT lists, see B. F. Westcott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament* (6th ed.; Cambridge: Macmillan, 1889) 539–79; Theodor Zahn, *Grundriss der Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons: Eine Ergänzung zu der Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1904) 76–92.

¹⁰ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.26.13–14. For comments on Melito’s list, see Martin Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of Its Canon* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002) 60–63; E.

the structure: Torah-History-Wisdom-Prophecy-History, an arrangement that cannot be brought into alignment with the order of the NT. The list of Melito also exposes the error of thinking that Greek and Hebrew canonical lists are entirely unrelated to each other, for Western (Palestinian) Hebrew orders regularly close with Ezra-Nehemiah.¹¹ In Sinaiticus (Ⲙ 01) and Alexandrinus (A 02), the Poetic Books are placed last, so that the final section in these two Greek codices is not all that different from the final section (Writings) in Hebrew canons. These are indicators that we are not to overplay the difference between the (relatively settled) Hebrew order and the (less uniform) Greek orders of the canonical books.¹²

In a valuable discussion of the issue, Peter Brandt (dependent on Otto Kaiser) notes that Otto Eissfeldt was probably the first to allocate the division of the OT in its Septuagintal (LXX) arrangement into the three dimensions of time: past (historical books), present (poetic books) and future (prophetic books).¹³ Building on this insight, a number of scholars find a correlation between this tripartite chronological arrangement and the common ordering of the NT books. As an example, reference may be made to the following table of comparison found in the *Introduction* by Erich Zenger:¹⁴

Foundation	Torah	Gospels
Past	Books of History	Acts of the Apostles
Present	Books of Wisdom	Apostolic Letters
Future	Books of Prophecy	Revelation of John

According to this scheme, the OT, like the NT, is understood to be a two-part structure, of which the first part constitutes a “foundation,” while the second part is arranged in three subsections, with the groups of books generating the temporal categories of past, present, and future. It is plain that a chronological principle is an important factor at work in shaping the macrostructure of both Testaments.¹⁵

The parallel between Gospels and Pentateuch can be argued for on the basis of their common generic classification: the Gospels are composed as biographies of

Earle Ellis, *The Old Testament in Early Christianity: Canon and Interpretation in the Light of Modern Research* (WUNT 54; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1991) 10–12.

¹¹ See Peter Brandt’s detailed discussion in *Endgestalten des Kanons: Das Arrangement der Schriften Israels in der jüdischen und christlichen Bibel* (BBB 131; Berlin: Philo, 2001) 148–55.

¹² See the tables of OT lists in early Greek (Eastern) and Latin (Western) orders up to the fifth century provided in Lee Martin McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), Appendix B, pp. 439–42; Albert C. Sundberg Jr., *The Old Testament of the Early Church* (Harvard Theological Studies 20; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964) 58, 59; Éric Junod, “La formation et la composition de l’Ancien Testament dans l’église grecque des quatre premiers siècles,” in *Le canon de L’Ancien Testament: Sa formation et son histoire* (ed. Jean-Daniel Kaestli and Otto Wermelinger; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1984) 105–34 (appendix with 16 texts, pp. 135–51).

¹³ *Endgestalten des Kanons* 359, n. 1718; see Otto Kaiser, *Introduction to the Old Testament: A Presentation of its Results and Problems* (trans. John Sturdy; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975) 407; Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (trans. Peter R. Ackroyd; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965) 570.

¹⁴ Erich Zenger, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1995) 34.

¹⁵ This is emphasized by Marvin A. Sweeney, “Tanak versus Old Testament: Concerning the Foundation for a Jewish Theology of the Bible,” in *Problems in Biblical Theology: Essays in Honor of Rolf Knierim* (ed. Henry T. C. Sun et al.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 353–72 (here 360–61, 364–65).

Jesus Christ,¹⁶ just as the Pentateuch can be seen as the biography of Moses, with Exodus–Deuteronomy framed by his birth and his death, and Genesis read as an “introduction.”¹⁷ The premier position given to the Gospels indicates that the life of Jesus Christ is viewed as foundational for Christian revelation, just as the revelation of God’s law framed by “the life of Moses” (*De vita Mosis*) forms the foundation of the rest of the OT. Something more than just chronological priority of the events recorded in the Gospels is involved. God’s act in Christ is the foundational saving event for Christians just as the exodus was for ancient Israel (cf. Luke 9:31: “his departure [τῆ ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ], which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem”),¹⁸ and therefore, the four Gospels are rightly put at the head of the NT. Compatible with this reading, Meredith G. Kline argued that the origin of the Gospel genre is to be found in the structuring of the book of Exodus.¹⁹ Few if any scholars have taken up his suggestion, but Kline is right to find a “Moses-mediator typology” in the evangelists’ portrayal of Jesus, dependent upon the Pentateuchal portrait of Moses.

The superscription of Matthew, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (on analogy with Gen 5:1 LXX), may be intended to cover no more than the genealogy (Matt 1:2–17), and the repetition (in reverse order) in 1:2–17 of the triad of names found in the opening line of the Gospel could be construed as evidence for limiting the intent of the superscription to this: Abraham (1:2), David (1:6), and Jesus, who is called the Christ (1:16).²⁰ Davies and Allison, however, opt for the view of Matt 1:1 as the title for the entire Gospel,²¹ with the introductory use of βίβλος γενέσεως (“The book of the genealogy”) intended to set the story of Jesus as a counterpart to another “history of origins,” the book of Genesis. If that is the intention, it signals that this book tells of the renewal of creation through the person and work of Jesus (cf. Matt 19:18). This makes Matthew a credible first book of the NT, but, as noted by J. Ramsey Michaels, the other three Gospels also open with reference to some kind of beginning, and so each in its own way recalls the first chapter of Genesis.²² The heading of the Gospel of Mark reads: “The beginning (ἀρχή) of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God” (Mark 1:1). Luke acknowledges his use of earlier traditions deriving from “those who from the beginning (ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς) were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word” (Lk 1:2). Finally, the opening of the Gospel of John is an unmis-

¹⁶ For the Gospels as a subtype of Graeco-Roman biography, see Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 105–251.

¹⁷ Rolf P. Knierim, “The Composition of the Pentateuch,” *SBL 1985 Seminar Papers* (ed. Kent Harold Richards; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985) 393–415; John H. Sailhamer, “The Mosaic Law and the Theology of the Pentateuch,” *WTJ* 53 (1991) 241–61.

¹⁸ See Jindřich Mánek, “The New Exodus in the Books of Luke,” *NovT* 2 (1957) 8–23; esp. p. 21: “In Luke’s conception Jesus is obviously and purposely the new Moses.”

¹⁹ Meredith G. Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority* (2d ed.; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1997) 172–203.

²⁰ As noted by W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume 1* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988) 149.

²¹ Their reasons are given in *Gospel According to Saint Matthew* 150–54.

²² *Gospel of John* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010) 46.

takable echo of Gen 1:1 (“In the beginning [ἐν ἀρχῇ] was the Word”), and again the point may be the new creation made possible through Jesus Christ.

Matthew has the structurally significant formula “When Jesus finished...” (Matt 7:28[–29]; 11:1; 13:53[–58]; 19:1; 26:1),²³ which marks the close of this Gospel’s most striking feature: the Pentateuchal scheme of five great dominical discourses. The miracles of Jesus in Matthew 8–9 have significant connections with Mosaic signs and wonders (e.g. the removal of leprosy and the control of wind and sea).²⁴ The mountain location of Matt 5:1–2 is more than a mundane geographical description; it is a Sinai allusion that has theological significance for the author of the first Gospel (cf. 4:8; 5:1; 8:1; 17:1; 21:1; 24:3; 28:16).²⁵ Jesus is one who sits and teaches like Moses (23:1) and, indeed, is greater than Moses. Though the priority of Matthew in the common order of the four Gospels may well be due to its popularity in the early centuries (especially in the West),²⁶ Matthew’s strong links with the Pentateuch show that it is appropriate for this book to stand at the head of the NT, laying the foundation of the teaching of Jesus, the Second Moses.

The Pentateuchal link may be most obvious in Matthew, but the other Gospels by no means fail to connect Jesus with the figure of Moses. For example, in Mark, the feeding of the 5000 (6:35–44) is prefaced by the comment that the crowds are “like sheep without a shepherd” (6:34). This expression recalls the leadership role of Moses in the wilderness (cf. Num 27:17) and the dominical feeding recapitulates the provision of manna. With regard to Luke, as noted by Darrel L. Bock, the book opens with the miraculous conception of Elizabeth that recalls the theme of the barren wife conceiving in the patriarchal narratives of Genesis, notably the successive situations of Sarah (Genesis 18), Rebekah (Gen 25:21) and Rachel (Gen 30:22, 23).²⁷ The scene of the transfiguration in Luke includes the divine command that Jesus’ disciples “listen to him” (αὐτοῦ ἀκούετε; Lk 9:35), and the wording is derived from the instruction about the prophet like Moses in LXX Deut 18:15.²⁸ The presentation of the person and work of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel leads the author to show that the divine revelation in Jesus surpasses that provided

²³ See B. W. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew* (New York: Holt, 1930).

²⁴ Cf. Exod 4:6–7; 14:21–29. See Michael Theophilus, *Jesus as New Moses in Matthew 8–9: Jewish Typology in First Century Greek Literature* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2012).

²⁵ Terence L. Donaldson, *Jesus on the Mountain: A Study in Matthew Theology* (JSNTSup 8; Sheffield: JSOT, 1985) 111–18. Donaldson argues that the Sinai typology of Matt 4:23–5:1 has been absorbed by a more dominant Zion eschatology. For a reevaluation of Donaldson’s downplaying of Sinai allusions, see Trent Rogers, “The Great Commission as the Climax of Matthew’s Mountain Series,” *BBR* 22 (2012) 383–98.

²⁶ Édouard Massaux, *The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature before Saint Irenaeus* (5 vols.; New Gospel Series 5; trans. Norman J. Belval and Suzanne Hecht; ed. Arthur J. Bellinzoni; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990); Graham N. Stanton, “The Early Reception of Matthew’s Gospel: New Evidence from Papyri?” in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study: Studies in Memory of William G. Thompson S.J.* (ed. David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011) 42–61.

²⁷ *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* (JSOTSup 12; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987) 58.

²⁸ Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern* 115.

by Moses in the law (e.g. John 1:17; 5:46; 6:32).²⁹ In each Gospel, therefore, the Pentateuch provides an essential backdrop to the purposes of God that find their fulfilment in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

More briefly, with regard to the postulated parallel between the ordering of the other books of the NT and the order found in the Greek OT, if the book of Acts is construed as a history of the early church, it corresponds to the history of Israel provided by Joshua–Esther. The General Letters and the Letters of Paul, like the Poetic Books, deal with ever-contemporary practical issues and dilemmas,³⁰ and the ethical focus (e.g. Romans 12–15; Ephesians 4–6; 1 Peter) and wisdom content of the letters (e.g. James) provide support for the parallel being drawn. Finally, the book of Revelation, viewed as a prophecy (Rev 1:3: “the words of this prophecy”), draws much upon the Prophetic Books of the Old Testament (though it never actually quotes them).

Before we give wholehearted support to this scheme, it is well to note (following Brandt) that things are more complex than they at first appear. The table of Zenger has a four-part structure for the OT but there is (as much as) a five-part division in the NT, for the section designated “Apostolic Letters” conceals the bifurcation of this epistolary category into Pauline and General Epistles.³¹ The separation of Acts and Letters, while justified on the basis of the obvious generic differentiation, does not take into account the fact that in all Greek textual witnesses Acts prefaces the General Letters and these are considered a fixed and coherent canonical unit (*Praxapostolos*).³² This implies that “Acts found its significance as the context for understanding the non-Pauline apostolic witness.”³³ The combining of Acts and General Letters in one unit does not fit the posited parallel of Acts with the Historical Books and the Letters with the Poetic Books. As well, the proposed chronological shift from Acts (past) to the Letters (present) is to some extent artificial, for Paul wrote most of his letters within the time and circumstances depicted in the second half of Acts. The only exceptions are the Pastorals, which should

²⁹ On this subject, see Stefan Schapdick, “Religious Authority Re-Evaluated: The Character of Moses in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Moses in Biblical and Extra-Biblical Traditions* (BZAW 372; ed. Axel Graupner and Michael Wolter; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007) 181–209. For a general discussion of Moses and Christ in the New Testament, see John Lierman, *The New Testament Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses and Israel in the Setting of Jewish Religion* (WUNT 2/173; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004) 258–88.

³⁰ Sweeney, “Tanak versus Old Testament” 365.

³¹ *Endgestalten des Kanons* 359, n. 1720.

³² See the listing provided in *The Greek New Testament* (4th rev. ed.; ed. Barbara Aland et al.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/United Bible Societies, 2001) (= GNT⁴) 6*–18*. Further evidence is found in Codex Alexandrinus at the conclusion of the letter of Jude where the subscription treats Acts and the Catholic Epistles as a unit (πραξεις των αγιων αποστολων και καθολικαι). David Trobisch argues that in modern printed editions of the NT, “It seems especially important not to separate Acts from the General Letters” (“The New Testament in the Light of Book Publishing in Antiquity,” in *Editing the Bible: Assessing the Task Past and Present* [ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Judith H. Newman; Atlanta: SBL, 2012] 161–70, here 169) (addition mine).

³³ Robert W. Wall, “The Acts of the Apostles in Canonical Context,” in Robert W. Wall and Eugene E. Lemcio, *The New Testament as Canon: A Reader in Canonical Criticism* (JSNTSup 76; Sheffield: JSOT, 1992) 110–28 (here 121).

perhaps be dated after Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment.³⁴ Finally, we could question the strength of the proposed correlation between the Letters and the Poetic Books, for the more likely parallel is Latter Prophets with Letters (see below).³⁵ None of these considerations, however, disprove the thesis that the order of the Greek OT materially influenced the canonical order of the NT.

II. A PARALLEL STRUCTURE TO THE HEBREW BIBLE?

A comparison can also be made between the order of books of the NT and that found in the Hebrew Bible (Torah-Prophets-Writings), and Christopher R. Seitz has suggested that the tripartite Hebrew canon has influenced the shape of the NT canon.³⁶ He posits that the relation of Deuteronomy to the preceding books is analogous to John's relationship to the Synoptics. Seitz likens the interconnected character of the Book of the Twelve (= Minor Prophets) to the Pauline corpus, and he views Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles and Revelation as standing in parallel to the Writings. More recently, Seitz has repeated (but not elaborated) his suggestion that it would be fruitful to compare the function of John in the Gospel collection with the role of Deuteronomy in its final location within the Pentateuch and the canonical shaping of the Book of the Twelve with the Pauline Letter collection.³⁷ His comments do not cover all of the NT, but they are sufficient to indicate that this could be a viable alternate thesis with regard to the influence of the structure of the OT on the ordering of the NT. A table of comparison can be drawn up as follows:

Torah	Gospels
Former Prophets	Acts of the Apostles
Latter Prophets	Apostolic Letters
Writings (esp. Daniel)	Revelation

The generic principle is not quite so dominant in the Hebrew Bible as it is in the Greek canon, for the second division (Prophets) combines books largely consisting of narrative (Former Prophets) with books that are anthologies of prophetic oracles (Latter Prophets),³⁸ and the third division (Writings) has a *catch-all* character for it is generically diverse to a remarkable degree (e.g. Psalms, Proverbs, Daniel, Chronicles). If the Hebrew Bible was the model upon which the structure of the NT was based, the Gospels match the Pentateuch, and Acts is in parallel with the

³⁴ See the discussion provided by J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (Black's New Testament Commentaries; London: Adam & Charles Black, 1963) 34–36. For a different view, see I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999) 66–71.

³⁵ Brandt, *Endgestalten des Kanons* 360.

³⁶ *The Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets: The Achievement of Association in Canon Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009) 103; cf. Stephen G. Dempster, "Canon and Old Testament Interpretation," in *Hearing the Old Testament: Listening for God's Address* (ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and David J. H. Beldman; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012) 154–79 (here 178).

³⁷ Christopher R. Seitz, *The Character of Christian Scripture: The Significance of a Two-Testament Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011) 161, 166.

³⁸ The odd one out is the book of Jonah, a narrative *about* a prophet.

narratives of the Former Prophets. Duane L. Christiansen views the NT as modelled (consciously or unconsciously) on the OT, but for him, the Gospels plus Acts are seen as a five-book “New Torah.”³⁹ If Acts is connected to the Catholic Letters (*Praxapostolos*) rather than with the preceding Gospels, then Acts–Letters parallel the Former and Latter Prophets. This finds support in the formal and thematic similarities between Acts and Former Prophets. For example, the book of Joshua opens with the affirmation of Joshua as Moses’ replacement, and Acts starts with the question of a replacement for Judas (and it turns out to be Matthias). Likewise, the end of the Former Prophets (the release of Jehoiachin from prison in 2 Kgs 25:27–30) could be compared with the closing scene of Acts (the relative freedom of prisoner Paul in Rome in Acts 28:17–31), the theme of both sections being that of divine judgment on the Jewish nation and the open question of its future.⁴⁰ The Letters bear a relation to the Latter Prophets (cf. Jeremiah’s letter to the exiles in Jeremiah 29), for as in the recorded oracles of the prophets, in the Letters the faults of God’s people are exposed and corrected. Revelation with its special dependence upon Daniel could be seen as parallel to the Writings (which includes Daniel),⁴¹ though its relation to the rest of the Writings is less obvious.

Building on his theory of the symmetry of the Hebrew Bible (excluding Daniel),⁴² D. N. Freedman suggested that the NT was constructed in much the same way: with Synoptic Gospels and Acts (John excluded) equivalent to the “Primary History” (= Pentateuch and Former Prophets), Pauline Epistles matching the Latter Prophets, and the rest of the books of the NT (John, Revelation and Catholic Epistles) corresponding to the Writings,⁴³ but the adjustments of NT book order required to support Freedman’s scheme make it less than convincing. My main point, however, is that a credible case can be made that *either* order of OT books (Greek or Hebrew canons) could have influenced the arrangement of the NT.

III. TWO READINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

If the analysis of the two alternatives offered above is accepted, and neither alternative is given absolute priority over the other, the posited macrostructural parallel between the Testaments, in effect, produces two different (though compatible) readings of the NT. The discernment of relations between blocks of biblical

³⁹ “The Center of the First Testament within the Canonical Process,” *BTB* 23 (1993) 48–53; idem, *The Unity of the Bible: Exploring the Beauty and Structure of the Bible* (New York: Paulist, 2003). Christiansen’s whole approach is highly speculative.

⁴⁰ Cf. Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (NSBT 15; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003) 233.

⁴¹ Dempster also makes the connection with Daniel (*Dominion and Dynasty* 234); see G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 1984); Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation* (JSNTSup 115; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 45–63.

⁴² *The Unity of the Hebrew Bible* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1991).

⁴³ Hershel Shanks, “An Interview with David Noel Freedman, Part 2: The Undiscovered Symmetry of the Bible,” *Bible Review* 10/1 (1994) 34–41, 66 (here 37–39); see the table provided by Brandt (*Endgestalten des Kanons* 361).

books in the two Testaments opens up “intracanonial conversations” between these collections that potentially throw light upon their content and guide their application to individual believers and the Christian community.⁴⁴ Depending on the comparisons drawn (e.g. comparing Apostolic Letters with the Latter Prophets of the Hebrew canon, or with the Poetic Books of the Greek canon), different themes or features are highlighted. The parallel between the Pentateuch and the four-part Gospel collection is unaffected by privileging either the Greek or Hebrew arrangement of the OT books, and so I will not add to the extensive discussion provided above.

If the book of Acts is viewed as parallel to the Historical Books of the Greek canon (Joshua–Esther), the potted summaries of OT history provided by the speech of Stephen (Acts 7) and the complementary speech of Paul (Acts 13) bear an obvious relation to the (largely) negative historical surveys found in the equivalent OT corpus (cf. Judges 5; 1 Samuel 12; 2 Kings 17; Nehemiah 9).⁴⁵ This suggests that the events of Acts are a continuation of the history of God’s purposes for Israel described in the Historical Books and now come to fulfilment in Jesus Christ and the work of the Spirit in the church. The demise of the Israelite kingdom plotted in the Historical Books begins to be repaired through the Gospel mission recounted in the book of Acts (NB Acts 1:6).⁴⁶ The suggested parallel also gives prominence to the theme of Jewish rejection of the Gospel and its messengers found in Acts, consistent with Paul’s climactic use of Isaiah 6 in Acts 28 (28:25: “The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet: ...”). The rejection of Jesus (and subsequently of the apostles) is in accord with the pattern set by the earlier rejection of the prophets (NB Acts 7:52: “Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?”). In the books of Samuel and Kings, prophetic figures become a regular feature of the narrative, and Kings may be analysed in terms of the repeated pattern of confrontations between kings and prophets.⁴⁷ The final judgment of the two kingdoms is due to their rejection of the message brought by “my/his [God’s] servants the prophets” (2 Kgs 17:13, 23; cf. Ezra 9:10, 11; Neh 9:26). Read against the background of the Historical Books, the activ-

⁴⁴ The expression is that of Wall, “Canonical View” 117.

⁴⁵ Joachim Jeska, *Die Geschichte Israels in der Sicht des Lukas: Apg 7,2b–53 und 13,17–25 im Kontext antike-jüdischer Summarien der Geschichte Israels* (FRLANT 195; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001) 252, 253. Paul in Acts 13:17–20a, in effect, summarizes Stephen’s speech and in 13:20b–22 takes the historical survey further. Richard Bauckham, “Reading Scripture as a Coherent Story,” in *The Art of Reading Scripture* (ed. Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 38–53 (here 41–42).

⁴⁶ Acts 1:6 does not need to be read in narrowly nationalistic terms (cf. Luke 2:38; 24:21), for in 1:7–8 Jesus affirms the disciples’ concern and clarifies how God’s kingdom will be restored (with Israel given an important place within it), see Alan J. Thompson, *The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: Luke’s Account of God’s Unfolding Plan* (NSBT 27; Nottingham: Apollos, 2011) 103–8. The kingdom theme in Acts is highlighted by the fact that the book begins and ends (*inclusio*) with twin references to the kingdom (1:3, 6; 28:23, 31).

⁴⁷ E.g. Victor H. Matthews, “Kings of Israel: A Question of Crime and Punishment,” in *SBL 1988 Seminar Papers* (ed. David J. Hull; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 517–26.

ities of Stephen, Philip, Peter, and Paul are seen to be in the context of Jewish opposition.⁴⁸

Significantly, several of the 42 numbered chapter divisions found in the first half of Acts in Codex Sinaiticus highlight the opposition experienced by Stephen, Philip, and Paul.⁴⁹ A new chapter, for example, begins at Acts 6:9 (ch. 18), the point at which opposition to Stephen emerges, and not earlier at 6:1 or 6:8. There are also headings (κεφάλαια) in the form of 27 running titles (τίτλοι) at the top of columns throughout the book of Acts in Sinaiticus. The 6th heading “The things concerning Saul” is connected to 9:22, rather than to 9:1. This may be because, as in the case of Stephen, it is the opposition experienced by Saul that is of interest to those responsible for the headings. Stephen and Philip can be viewed as precursors of Saul: both Stephen and Saul are persecuted (headings 3 and 6) and both Philip and Saul are troubled by a magician (headings 4 and 10). Headings 24–26 specifically label (and thus highlight) Paul’s apologetic speeches before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. Given that the latter chapters of Acts are dominated by Paul standing before governors and kings (Acts 24–26; cf. 9:15, 16), it is no exaggeration to suggest that Paul’s suffering (and incarceration) is viewed as fundamental to his vocation and, indeed, to the presentation of the book as a whole.⁵⁰

If, on the other hand, Acts-Epistles is viewed as a parallel structure to the Former and Latter Prophets of the Hebrew canon, the role of Acts is seen a little differently, namely as providing an interpretive framework for the letters that follow.⁵¹ One effect would be to highlight the teaching content of the speeches in Acts, for example the addresses by Peter and James at the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15:7–11, 13–21, respectively) and Paul’s farewell speech to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17–35).⁵² The resolution of potential tension in Acts 15 between Paul’s Gentile mission and the Jewish mission of James and Peter sets the context for the apostolic witness of the letters that follow. The order of the General Letters may be modelled on the order of the three “pillars” (James, Cephas [= Peter] and John) in Gal 2:9 (another account of the Acts 15 meeting).⁵³ On the other hand, Robert W. Wall argues that the decisive role played by James at the conference in Acts 15 (James has the last say) best explains the placement of the Letter of James

⁴⁸ For the importance of the suffering theme in Acts, see Paul R. House, “Suffering and the Purpose of Acts,” *JETS* 33 (1990) 317–30.

⁴⁹ See Gregory R. Goswell, “Ancient Patterns of Reading: The Subdivision of the Acts of the Apostles in Codex Sinaiticus,” *JGRChJ* 7 (2010) 68–97.

⁵⁰ Cf. David Peterson, “Luke’s Theological Enterprise: Integration and Intent,” in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 521–44 (here 543): “Acts gives the reader a theology of suffering that is particularly exemplified by the life and work of the apostle.”

⁵¹ Cf. Kline, *Structure of Biblical Authority* 72.

⁵² Alan Thompson gives a helpful analysis of the speeches of Acts that in total take up about a third of the book, showing that this action-packed book is also full of teaching (*Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus* 88–101).

⁵³ Dieter Lüthmann, “Gal 2⁹ und die katholischen Briefe: Bemerkungen zum Kanon und zur *regula fidei*,” *ZNW* 72 (1981) 65–87.

as the “frontpiece” of the Catholic Epistle collection.⁵⁴ The mission activities of Peter and John in Palestine (but not elsewhere) receive brief mention in Acts 8:14–25 and 9:32–11:18, though nothing is said of James venturing beyond Jerusalem. The letters connected to the three “pillars” are directed to the Jewish-Christian Diaspora. This is explicit in the addressees in Jam 1:1 and 1 Pet 1:1, and the Jewish provenance of the Johannine letters is widely accepted.⁵⁵ Likewise, the churches planted by Paul in Acts receive letters from the same apostle in the adjoining epistolary section of the canon (e.g. Thessalonica, Corinth, Philippi).⁵⁶ In this way, Acts provides the background to help situate individual Pauline letters in their time and location within the apostolic mission to the Gentiles.

Though Acts makes no allusion to Paul writing letters, the juxtapositioning of Acts and Letters would appear to assert that the missionary Paul of Acts is the same Paul who wrote the letters.⁵⁷ Some scholars have found what they view as evidence that certain Pauline letters were used by the author of Acts.⁵⁸ The failure of the author of Acts to mention that Paul wrote letters, or to quote from any of his extant letters, is best seen as an indication that Acts and Apostolic Letters need each other and are meant to be read together to provide a paradigmatic picture of early Christianity.⁵⁹ Likewise, though the Former Prophets feature prophetic figures (especially in Samuel and Kings), they make virtually no mention of the Writing Prophets, the only exceptions being Jonah (a bare mention in 2 Kgs 14:25) and Isaiah (2 Kings 18–20, a synoptic passage with Isaiah 36–39). The canonical proximity of Former and Latter Prophets, their balanced structure as two four-book groupings,⁶⁰ the classifying of all eight books as prophetic, and the *lack* of substantial overlap between the two main parts, are best viewed as indicating that those responsible for constructing the canon in this way intended that the Former and

⁵⁴ “A Unifying Theology of the Catholic Epistles: A Canonical Approach,” in *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition* (BETL 176; ed. J. Schlosser; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004) 43–71 (here 44–55).

⁵⁵ On the latter, see Judith M. Lieu, *The Theology of the Johannine Epistles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 16–21; John A. T. Robinson, “The Destination and Purpose of the Johannine Epistles,” in *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London: SCM, 1962) 126–38.

⁵⁶ Colossians is the sole exception, the explanation being that the church in Colossae was not founded by Paul (Col 2:1).

⁵⁷ See Stanley E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts: Essays in Literary Criticism, Rhetoric, and Theology* (WUNT 115; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999) 187–206. For the view that Acts attempts to rehabilitate the Paul of the letters, see Thomas E. Phillips, *Paul, His Letters, and Acts* (Library of Pauline Studies; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009).

⁵⁸ Steve Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle: The Portrait of Paul in the Miletus Speech and 1 Thessalonians* (SNTSMS 108; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 199–214; William O. Walker Jr., “Acts and the Pauline Corpus Revisited: Peter’s Speech at the Jerusalem Conference,” in *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson* (ed. R. P. Thompson and T. E. Phillips; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998) 77–86, argues for the dependence of Acts 15:7–11 on Galatians 2; see also Richard Pervo, *Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 2006) 51–147.

⁵⁹ See Robert C. Tannehill, “Acts of the Apostles and Ethics,” *Int* 66 (2012) 270–83. He finds an ethic that covers such areas as humble leadership, bold witness, the use of possessions and relations with authorities.

⁶⁰ Namely: Joshua-Judges-Samuel-Kings and Isaiah-Jeremiah-Ezekiel-Twelve. See Greg Goswell, “The Order of the Books in the Hebrew Bible,” *JETS* 51 (2008) 673–88 (here 678, 679).

Latter Prophets be read together, with the book of Kings providing a historical framework for the oracles of the Latter Prophets.⁶¹

In the usual sequence, the Pauline letters are ranked according their decreasing length.⁶² This was a common principle of book order in the ancient world, and the sequence of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and the Twelve in the rabbinic *baraita* found in the Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Bathra* 14b (pre-AD 200) may also be arranged on the basis of descending order according to length.⁶³ Though the position of Romans at the head of the Pauline corpus is due to the mechanical principle of length, it is also the most treatise-like of Paul's letters and functions as a theological introduction and framework for the Pauline corpus it fronts.⁶⁴ The same applies to the position of the prophetic booklet Hosea at the head of the book of the Twelve. Amos is probably to be dated before Hosea, seeing that the superscription of Amos only mentions Uzziah (Amos 1:1), whereas Hos 1:1 also lists the three subsequent Judean kings. As suggested by Paul R. House, Hosea may stand at the head because of its greater size and because it is theologically comprehensive.⁶⁵ It lays down the dynamics of the covenant relationship, so that Hosea 1–3 function to introduce and summarize the leading themes of the Twelve as a unit (covenant infidelity, subsequent punishment, and final restoration).

Paul wrote letters to seven churches, Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, Thessalonica (just as John did in Revelation 2–3), and there are seven Catholic Epistles (one by James, two by Peter, three by John, and one by Jude).⁶⁶ The numerical schematization (seven = totality) has been taken as indicating that the (mostly) apostolic instructions on local issues contained in these letters are deparicularized and are now applicable in all times and places.⁶⁷ Similarly, the commonly assigned titles of the separate books of the Latter Prophets (e.g. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Malachi) amount to abbreviations of much longer superscriptions, and so do not give all the information that the superscriptions do. The failure of the brief titles to specify to whom the prophet speaks (whether to Judah, to Israel, or to the exiles), which information is often in the superscription from which the

⁶¹ Only Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi take the reader beyond the point reached in 2 Kings 25.

⁶² Subsidiary factors are the separation of letters to churches and letters to individuals, and letters to the same church/individual are placed together.

⁶³ This is the view of Beckwith, *Old Testament Canon* 162. See Julio Trebelle-Barrera, "Qumran Evidence for a Biblical Standard Text and for Non-Standard and Parabiblical Texts," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context* (ed. Timothy H. Lim et al.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000) 89–106 (here 94–95) for other texts that reflect the order: Jeremiah–Ezekiel–Isaiah.

⁶⁴ Brevard Childs, *The Church's Guide for Reading Paul: The Canonical Shaping of the Pauline Corpus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 7, 66–67, 104, 117.

⁶⁵ *The Unity of the Twelve* (Sheffield: Almond, 1990) 74–76.

⁶⁶ See David R. Nienhuis, *Not By Paul Alone: The Formation of the Catholic Epistle Collection and the Christian Canon* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007) 9–12.

⁶⁷ This was a patristic argument that Paul's letters were for the *ecclesia catholica*, see Krister Stendahl, "The Apocalypse of John and the Epistles of Paul in the Muratorian Fragment," in *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Otto A. Piper* (ed. William Klassen and Graydon F. Snyder; London: SCM, 1962) 239–45. The argument assumes the exclusion of Hebrews. If Hebrews is included in the Pauline canon, then Paul's letters number 14 (2x7), and the point can still be made.

title is extracted (cf. Isa 1:1; Ezek 1:1–3; Am 1:1), is a feature that helps to universalize their message. Both in the case of the Letters and of the Latter Prophets, the canonical presentation no longer views their contents as tied to the original occasion or audience. As well, if the Pauline corpus is read in the light of the Latter Prophets, the reader is alerted to the nature of the Apostle's conversion and commissioning on the Damascus Road as a prophetic call (Gal 1:15; cf. Jer 1:4, 5),⁶⁸ to possible use by him of prophetic modes of speech when denouncing and correcting the faults of his addressees,⁶⁹ and to the eschatological character of his proclamation (e.g. Gal 1:4; 1 Thess 1:10).⁷⁰

On the other hand, if the NT is viewed as patterned on the Greek OT, the Letters (General and Pauline), on analogy with the Poetic Books, deal with current issues and perennial concerns and have a distinctly ethical orientation. This reading can be justified by the ethical second half of many Pauline letters (e.g. Romans 12–15; Ephesians 4–6; Colossians 3–4). Taking Ephesians as an example, in the fourth-century system of capitulation found in Vaticanus, a chapter division is placed at Eph 4:1 (= chap. 72).⁷¹ At this point the tenor of the letter changes from doctrinal teaching to paraenesis. This produces a basic two-part division of the letter into doctrine (chaps. 1–3) and ethics (chaps. 4–6). This does not mean that doctrine and ethics can be neatly separated, as is made immediately clear, with the apostle in 4:1 urging his readers “to lead a life worthy of the calling to which [they] have been called.” The logical connector in 4:1 (“therefore” [οὖν]) makes the same point,⁷² and it is found a number of times at the beginning of the hortatory second-part of Pauline letters (cf. Rom 12:1; 1 Thess 4:1; Col 2:12 or 3:5). Another chapter division is placed at Eph 5:15 (chap. 74). This chapter continues as far as 6:9 inclusive and contains instructions about Christian behaviour.⁷³ The opening verse (5:15) uses the metaphor of the ethical “walk” (“Look carefully then how you walk”), with this being the final use of what is a key word in the letter (περιπατέω) (found at 2:2, 10; 4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15). The capitulation in Vaticanus effectively highlights this theme, for the occurrence of this term coincides with several of the chapter divisions (4:1, 17; 5:15 [chaps. 72–74]).⁷⁴ This ancient scheme of division throws the

⁶⁸ Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (trans. Frank Clark; London: SCM, 1959) chap. 1: “The Call.”

⁶⁹ E.g. Calvin Roetzel, “The Judgment Form in Paul’s Letters,” *JBL* 88 (1969) 305–12.

⁷⁰ See Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (trans. John Richard De Witt; London: SPCK, 1977); J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980).

⁷¹ The chapter numbering in Vaticanus is continuous throughout the Pauline corpus, see Gregory R. Goswell, “An Early Commentary on the Pauline Corpus: The Capitulation of Codex Vaticanus,” *JGRChJ* 8 (2011–12) 51–82.

⁷² Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Translation and Commentary on Chapters 4–6* (AB 34A; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1960) 426.

⁷³ Peter T. O’Brien views 5:15–6:9 as a unit, putting it under the heading: “Be careful how you live: generally and within the Christian household” (*The Letter to the Ephesians* [PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999] 378).

⁷⁴ As well, Eph 2:10 is close to the start of the second chapter division at 2:8 (chap. 71).

weight upon the ethics of Paul and reminds the reader that the apostle did not teach doctrine for its own sake.

Two further examples that justify connecting the Letters with the Poetic Books of the Greek OT are 1 Peter and James, for the suggested connection illuminates the contents of the letters. 1 Peter is in large measure a homily based on Psalm 34, which is quoted at length in 1 Pet 3:10–12 (cf. LXX Ps 34:13–17).⁷⁵ James is categorized by the assigned title as a letter written to diaspora Jewish-Christians (Jas 1:1).⁷⁶ The pervasive wisdom content of James (e.g. 1:5: “If any of you lacks wisdom, . . .”) draws extensively upon Proverbs and other wisdom material (canonical and intertestamental), all filtered through the teaching of Jesus.⁷⁷

In the case of Revelation, its title “Revelation” (Ἀποκάλυψις) is an incipit, taken from the first Greek word in the book (1:1: “The revelation of Jesus Christ”), with Rev 1:1–2 amounting to a superscription for the book. The sense of the opening words is that this writing contains “the revelation *from* Jesus Christ,”⁷⁸ who is the mediator of God’s revelation to believers (via his angel and his servant John). The title “Revelation” (or Apocalypse) was later viewed as a genre designation, and indeed it has given its name to a genre (apocalyptic), but in the book itself this is the only time the term is used. John is not describing his composition as belonging to the literary type called “apocalypse,” nor does it appear that non-canonical apocalyptic works (mostly to be found in the Pseudepigrapha) are the context within which the writer wishes his own work to be interpreted.⁷⁹ It is likely that Ἀποκάλυψις is an allusion to Daniel 2 (LXX/Theodotion), wherein the verb ἀποκαλύπτω (“to reveal”) is used up to six times.⁸⁰ The writer of Revelation draws heavily upon Daniel,⁸¹ which in the Hebrew canon is situated near the end of the Writings. As well, the temple theme, an important one in Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles,⁸² is another link between Revelation and the last books in the Writ-

⁷⁵ For a brief exploration of the use of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter, see Gordon Wenham, *Psalms as Torah: Reading Biblical Song Ethically* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012) 186–89; for a more extensive discussion, see Sue Woan, “The Psalms in 1 Peter,” in *The Psalms in the New Testament* (ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken; London: T&T Clark, 2004) 213–29.

⁷⁶ For the genre of James, see Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, “Der Jakobusbrief im Licht frühjüdischer Diasporabriefe,” *NTS* 44 (1998) 420–43. Niebuhr interprets James within the diaspora letter tradition of Jeremiah 29, the Epistle of Jeremiah, 2 Maccabees 1–2, and 2 Baruch 78–86.

⁷⁷ Richard Bauckham, *James: Wisdom of James, Disciple of Jesus the Sage* (New Testament Readings; London: Routledge, 1999) 29–60; Luke Leuk Cheung, *The Genre, Composition and Hermeneutics of the Epistle of James* (Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs; Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster, 2003) 15–52.

⁷⁸ David E. Aune argues that Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ is a subjective genitive, with this interpretation supported by the succeeding clause “which God gave him” (*Revelation 1–5* [WBC 52a; Dallas: Word, 1997] 6); cf. Tobias Nicklas, “The Words of the Prophecy of this Book: Playing with Scriptural Authority in the Book of Revelation,” in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism* (ed. Mladen Popović; JSJSup 141; Leiden: Brill, 2010) 309–26 (here 318).

⁷⁹ A point made by Bruce W. Jones, “More about the Apocalypse as Apocalyptic,” *JBL* 87 (1968) 325–27, esp. p. 325, n. 1.

⁸⁰ The suggestion is that of G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) 181.

⁸¹ For a summary, see Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 306–28.

⁸² See Greg Goswell, “The Temple Theme in the Book of Daniel,” *JETS* 55 (2012) 509–20.

ings (see Rev 3:12; 7:15; 11:1–4, 19; 21:22).⁸³ The important theme of praising God in Revelation is clearly influenced by one of the most significant books in the Writings, the Psalter (e.g. Rev 4:8, 11; 5:8–10; 11:17–18; 15:3–4).⁸⁴ A number of scholars have explored the relation of the Psalms to apocalyptic ways of thinking,⁸⁵ two examples (provided by Susan Gillingham) being: the depiction of throne scenes (e.g. Revelation 4–5; cf. Dan 7:9–10, 13–14; Ps 82:1), and the motif of divine victory over beasts in the sea (e.g. Revelation 13; cf. Dan 7:1–12; Ps 74:13–14).

The dependence of Revelation upon a wide range of OT prophetic works is brought to the reader's attention if the final position of Revelation in the NT is viewed as parallel to the Prophetic Books of the Greek OT. Within the book itself, this writing of John is termed a prophecy (Rev 1:3: "the words of the prophecy"). The similarly worded 22:7, 10, 18 ("the words of the prophecy of this book") and 22:19 ("the words of the book of this prophecy") with 1:3 form an *inclusio* around the book as a whole. As well, the verb "to prophesy" (προφητεύω) is used in Rev 10:11 to describe the writer's task: "Then I was told, 'You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.'"⁸⁶ Other passages of relevance to the evaluation of the author as a prophet include Rev 1:1, 10; 4:1–2; 17:3; 19:10; 21:10; 22:9. These refer either to his Spirit-endowment or to him under the (usually) prophetic title of "servant". There is no actual quotation from the OT prophets in Revelation (nor of any OT book for that matter), but prophetic images, allusions and phraseology form the warp and woof of the work.⁸⁷

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In this study of the macrostructure of the two Testaments and of the possible dependence of the order of the books of the NT on the order of the books in the OT, I have sought to give due recognition to book order as a paratextual phenomenon. This precludes the idea that one order of the OT books (whether the Greek or Hebrew canon) can be given absolute priority over the other, or that either order can dictate the meaning of the NT. I have argued that *either* OT order could have influenced the structure of the NT, the result being that the structure of the NT

⁸³ See G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (NSBT; Downers Grove, InterVarsity, 2004) 313–34.

⁸⁴ Steve Moyise, "The Psalms in the Book of Revelation," in *Psalms in the New Testament* 231–46.

⁸⁵ E.g. Stephen L. Cook, "Apocalypticism and the Psalter," *ZAW* 104 (1992) 82–99; Susan Gillingham, "Psalmody and Apocalyptic in the Hebrew Bible: Common Vision, Shared Experience?," in *After the Exile: Essays in Honour of Rex Mason* (ed. John Barton and David J. Reimer; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996) 147–69.

⁸⁶ See David Aune's arguments in favour of the prophetic character of Revelation in *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 274–88.

⁸⁷ See Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation*; G. K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation* (JSNTSup 166; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); *GNT²* 891–901, esp. pp. 896–900 for allusions and verbal parallels of prophetic books in Revelation; H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St John* (3d ed.; London: Macmillan, 1909) cxi–clviii; Swete identifies half the uses as from Psalms (27 times), Isaiah (46), Ezekiel (29) and Daniel (31) (p. cliii, n. 1). See Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), who argues that Revelation presents itself as the summation of the whole biblical tradition of prophecy (especially chaps. 5, 9).

parallels that of the OT. If the fit is not exact, the explanation may lie in the fluidity of the Hebrew and Greek OT canons (greater in the second case than the first). Both OT orders, each in its own way, throw light on how those responsible for the ordering of the NT understood the books that make up the NT (and also how they viewed the OT). Alternate connections between canonical blocks of books suggest different (though not contradictory) perspectives, and the differences are most noticeable when it comes to the interpretation of the Apostolic Letters, namely whether they are to be read against the background of the Poetic Books or the Latter Prophets.