

A SEVERE MERCY

*Sin and Its Remedy
in the Old Testament*

Mark J. Boda

SIPHRUT 1

Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures

A Severe Mercy

Siphrut

Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures

Editorial Board

STEPHEN B. CHAPMAN *Duke University*
TREMPER LONGMAN *Westmont College*
NATHAN MACDONALD *Universität Göttingen*
and University of St. Andrews

1. *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament*, by Mark J. Boda
2. *Chosen and Unchosen: Conceptions of Election in the Pentateuch and Jewish-Christian Interpretation*, by Joel N. Lohr
3. *Genesis and the Moses Story: Israel's Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible*, by Konrad Schmid

A Severe Mercy
Sin and Its Remedy in
the Old Testament

Mark J. Boda

Winona Lake, Indiana
EISENBRAUNS
2009

© Copyright 2009 by Eisenbrauns.
All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America.

www.eisenbrauns.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Boda, Mark J.

A severe mercy : sin and its remedy in the Old Testament / Mark J.
Boda.

p. cm. — (Siphrut, literature and theology of the Hebrew
scriptures ; v. 1)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-57506-164-1 (hardback : alk. paper)

1. Sin—Biblical teaching. 2. Atonement—Biblical teaching.
3. Bible. O.T.—Criticism, interpretation, etc. 4. Bible. O.T.—
Theology. I. Title.

BS1199.S54B63 2009

234'.5—dc22

2009032336

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.®™

Ad majorem Dei gloriam

To Tremper Longman III
Teacher, Mentor, Friend

Contents

Preface	ix
1. Introduction	1
Part One	
Torah	
2. Genesis	16
3. Exodus	35
4. Leviticus (Part 1)	49
5. Leviticus (Part 2)	77
6. Numbers	86
7. Deuteronomy	97
8. Torah: Conclusion	115
Part Two	
Prophets	
9. Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges	126
10. Former Prophets: Samuel	148
11. Former Prophets: Kings	165
12. Isaiah	190
13. Jeremiah	223
14. Ezekiel	253
15. The Twelve (Part 1): Hosea–Micah	294
16. The Twelve (Part 2): Nahum–Malachi	323
17. Prophets: Conclusion	351
Part Three	
The Writings	
18. Proverbs	359
19. Job	377
20. Psalms (Part 1)	395
21. Psalms (Part 2)	415
22. Lamentations	452
23. Daniel	460

24. Ezra–Nehemiah	472
25. Chronicles	490
26. Writings: Conclusion	506
27. Conclusion	515
Works Cited	524
Indexes	573
Index of Authors	573
Index of Scripture	580

Preface

The introduction to this volume explains the genesis of the present project, so I will not repeat that information here. I will deal with some little technical issues before taking this opportunity to express my thanks to those who made this volume possible.

Because of the number of texts under consideration in this volume, I have decided to use a base modern English translation for citations of Scripture, the New American Standard Bible (NASB). Unless stated explicitly, the translation used will be from the NASB. At times, I will slightly modify the NASB (“NASB, modified”), usually to render it in a more gender-inclusive way. At others, I will use my own translation (“my translation”) or other modern translations (for example, TNIV, NRSV) that reflect my reading of the original text.

All abbreviations in this book conform to the *SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander et al.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999). Versification follows the Hebrew tradition (see BHS), although the versification used in most non-Jewish English translations is also provided in square brackets [].

I want to express my gratitude first to Jim Eisenbraun for accepting this large tome for publication by his esteemed publishing house. I am thankful also to his editorial team at Eisenbrauns, especially Amy Becker, who spent countless hours conforming a large manuscript to the house style and making many helpful suggestions and revisions that have made this a better book in terms of quality of expression and accuracy of information.

My host institution, McMaster Divinity College, provided research time and support that made this project possible. I am grateful to the Senate and Board at the Divinity College for providing a research leave during the fall semester of 2006, which freed me to write this book. I am thankful to the Senate and Board for their affirmation of research and writing and provision of research assistance and professional funds to test my research among my peers in the Old Testament / Hebrew Bible guild. I am also grateful for my superb research assistant, Ms. Mary Conway, who pored over later drafts of this book. Her partnership is exemplary of the kind of academic collegiality that I have enjoyed with my students, who have studied with me over the past six years here at McMaster. Throughout the book, I make reference to rich conversation with several of my graduate students. I have found their fellowship an incredible encouragement and have appreciated the times they had the courage to advance a counterproposal and so forced me to rethink and, at times, to revise my own position.

It is the gift of academic friendship and collegiality that has been the most satisfying dimension of life within the academy. One of my desires has been to create an environment of academic hospitality within my own learning communities, one in which people are free to share with one another new insights within a safe space where ideas will be affirmed and challenged, so that we might together advance toward greater clarity and precision in our theological reflection. I learned this kind of academic hospitality early on in my academic journey from one who began as my teacher, exciting me about the study of the Old Testament, and then became a key mentor, taking the time to help me make the transition first to doctoral studies and then to full participation in the guild and to publishing my work. Along the way, he became a dear friend, always with a word of encouragement and interest in my life. So I am dedicating this book to my teacher, mentor, and friend Tremper Longman III, whose encouragement has made a volume of this character possible.

MARK J. BODA
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
9 May 2009

*Ego ex eorum numero me esse profiteor qui scribunt proficiendo,
et scribendo proficient*
Augustinus Epistle cxliii.2 via Ioannes Calvinus

Chapter 1

Introduction

Biblical Theology as a Discipline

It is often noted in introductions to biblical theology that the discipline owes its genesis to a lecture delivered by Johann Philipp Gabler in 1787 entitled *Oratio de justo discrimine theologiae biblicae et dogmaticae regundisque recte utriusque finibus* (“Address about the Correct Distinction of Biblical and Dogmatic Theology and the Right Definition of Their Goals”).¹ In this lecture, Gabler distinguished between biblical and systematic theology in the following way:

There is truly a biblical theology of historical origin, conveying what the holy writers felt about divine matters; on the other hand there is a dogmatic theology of didactic origin, teaching what each theologian philosophises rationally about divine things, according to the measure of his ability or of the times, age, place, sect, school, and other similar factors.²

For Gabler, biblical theology was an analytical task describing the thought of the biblical writers, whereas systematic theology was a constructive task of interpretation tracing how the church had appropriated the Bible. This division of theological labor was necessary to ensure that the Bible was studied as a document rooted in and conditioned by history before it was employed for the abstract and ahistorical enterprise of dogmatic theology.

Though Gabler’s lecture was certainly a key milestone in the history of the development of biblical theology as a discipline, it must be admitted that he was building on a foundation that others had laid in the previous century

1. Sandys-Wunsch and Eldridge (1980); Gabler (1992); Sæbø (1998); Stuckenbruck (1999). For the history of the discipline, see Hasel (1991); Ollenburger, Martens, and Hasel (1991); Alexander and Rosner (2000); Ollenburger (2004); Helmer (2005); Martens (2007). For debate over the agenda of biblical theology and its relationship to other disciplines of theology and religious studies, see Hasel (1984); Ollenburger (1985, 1991); B. Long (1997); Murphy (1997); Vanhoozer (2000); Green and Turner (2000); McConville (2001); Martens (2001); Sun and Eades (1997); Scobie (2003); Bartholomew et al. (2004); Marshall (2004); Helmer and Petrey (2005); Welker and Schweitzer (2005); Boda (2006b). See also two journals devoted to this discussion: *Journal of Religion* 76 (1996): 167–289; and *Biblical Interpretation* 6 (1998): 131–257.

2. Translation from Sandys-Wunsch and Eldridge (1980: 137).

in two very different interpretive circles.³ On the one hand, Spener had launched the pietistic movement in 1675 with his work *Pia Desideria*, in which he outlined his desire “to separate biblical theology from dogmatic theology in order to access the plain truth of a godly life described in the Bible and to avoid the ‘scholastic’ theological controversies” (Helmer 2005). On the other hand, in the decades before Gabler’s lecture, Semler had called for a distinction between dogmatic and rationalistic approaches to the study of Scripture, so that rationalists could engage in “free investigation.”⁴ Although these two movements had radically different religious commitments, both affirmed biblical theology in order to encourage access to a Bible freed from the confessional controversies and constraints of the church. The pietists approached the Bible devotionally, whereas the rationalists approached it rationalistically.

These two approaches can be discerned in the era that followed Gabler.⁵ Some biblical interpreters fused an orthodox view of Scripture with a historical approach to the Scriptures to write biblical theology. Others rejected the divine origin of the Scriptures and wrote instead the history of religion (*Religionsgeschichte*), accounting for the development of Israelite religion from primitive animism through prophetic monotheism to priestly ritualism. By the end of the 19th century, it was this history of religion that dominated the agenda of biblical studies.

After World War I, however, there emerged renewed interest in biblical theology,⁶ attributed by Dentan (1963) to three key factors: a loss of faith in evolutionary naturalism, a reaction against objectivity in historical research, and a return to the idea of revelation in theology. In the wake of the devastation of Europe, there was disillusionment with the “modern” project in general. Rather than looking for meaning solely in an often inaccessible historical world that lies behind the text, biblical interpreters gave increasing attention to the theological message of the text rooted in history. This shift toward the “theological” was encouraged by a broader shift in literary studies to more synchronic approaches (such as New Criticism and Structuralism) in the middle part of the 20th century. Thus, as the century progressed, biblical theology began to be written less on the basis of historical development and more on the basis of the canonical text, showcased especially in the work of

3. For this section, see Helmer (2005).

4. His work was entitled *Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Canon* (“Treatment Concerning the Free Investigation of the Canon”).

5. See a succinct summary of this in House (1998: 13–52). Especially note two early 19th-century biblical theological works that reflect the two approaches: G. P. C. Kaiser’s *Die biblische Theologie* (1813), which treated the Old Testament as “history of religion” and Wilhelm M. L. de Wette’s *Lehrbuch der christlichen Dogmatik* (1813), which “attempted to chart a path between traditional orthodoxy and committed rationalism.”

6. Key Old Testament theologies included, for example, Eichrodt (1961); von Rad (1962); Vriezen (1970); and Zimmerli (1978).

Childs (1985: 9), who encouraged scholars “to avoid dogmatism on the right and historicism on the left.”

The discipline continued to develop through the latter decades of the 20th century. The enduring critique of modernity soon resulted in more significant hermeneutical shifts in the final quarter of the century, which have impacted the discipline of biblical theology (see Vanhoozer 1998). Some, continuing trends evident in earlier eras of biblical theology, have accentuated the competing theologies in the Bible defined by sociopolitical settings (e.g., Perdue 1994; Knierim 1995; Brueggemann 1997; Gerstenberger 2002). The result was an accentuation of the diversity of theologies in the biblical canon with greater attention to synchronic dialogue between these theologies, rather than diachronic development. Others, truly embracing the emerging postfoundational agenda, recognized biblical theology as a constructive rather than descriptive exercise. In their view, because all interpretation is ideologically driven, biblical theology is merely an expression of the interests of particular interpretive communities, defined by tradition, ethnicity, gender, and so on (see Trible 1992). In these emerging models of biblical theology, the imagination is key to the writing of biblical theology as the interpreter creates a world in dialogue with the text.

This simplistic review reveals several key hermeneutical shifts that have occurred in the writing of biblical theology over the past three centuries. Biblical theology began as a movement concerned to interpret the Bible as a text rooted in its original historical context, rather than as a text read through the lens of contemporary creeds. Disillusionment with the Enlightenment led to a shift to a biblical theology focused on the literary world of the text in its canonical form rooted in history. Ultimately, however, there was a shift to a biblical theology driven by the agenda (admitted and embraced) of the contemporary world of the reader. This shift to the perspectival is ironically reminiscent of the concerns that gave rise to the discipline of biblical theology in the 18th century.

Works that were created throughout the 20th century reveal a variety of ways of expressing biblical theology, each of which reflects the kinds of hermeneutical approaches highlighted above.⁷ There were those who used categories already in use in systematic theology (theology, anthropology, soteriology; e.g., Jacob 1958; Vriezen 1970). Others, noticing the dominance of historical progression rather than abstract systematization in the biblical text, focused on development in the theology of the Bible, whether this meant the growth of traditions (e.g., von Rad 1962) or the history of redemption (e.g., Vos 1966; Barth and Bromiley 1991). Still others adopted a thematic approach, whether this meant identifying (a) core themes that ran like a scarlet thread throughout the Bible (e.g., Eichrodt 1961: covenant; Westermann

7. For some of these categories, see Hasel (1991).

1982: creation/salvation) or a multitude of themes that consistently arose from the biblical texts (e.g., Hasel 1991). Some have adopted intertextual approaches that involve the structuring of biblical theology according to the multitude of intertextual links (allusions to characters, episodes, vocabulary) found throughout the Bible (see Martens 2001). Dialogical approaches have stressed the competing voices within the biblical corpus (e.g., Brueggemann 1997; Mandolfo 2007). Canonical approaches gave closer attention to the shape of the message of the biblical books in their final form and at times the shape of the canon (e.g., Childs 1985). Ideological approaches focused on the interpretive agenda of a particular group (e.g., Tribble 1992). In light of the history of the discipline, the influence of one's hermeneutical approach, and the variety of ways of writing biblical theology, it is important at the outset to articulate clearly the approach pursued in this book.

The Present Approach

The biblical theological approach taken in the present work is canonical-thematic, tracing the presentation of the theology of sin and its remedy in the canonical form and shape of the Old Testament. Admittedly, this theme has been chosen because it is an area of personal interest, but most would agree that it is also a major feature in the textual world of the Old Testament.⁸ Past study and experience have prepared me for and attracted me to exploring this theme within the imaginative world of the Old Testament canon. My focus on the Old Testament is related to my Christian theological convictions, based on the New Testament and Christian tradition, that the Old Testament is indeed Christian Scripture and speaks authoritatively in inscripturated form ("it is written," see 2 Tim 3:15–17).⁹

The hermeneutical foundations for this present enterprise have been laid by others in past decades. The ground-breaking work of Brevard Childs is key, reflected in the following quotation:¹⁰

the object of theological reflection is the canonical writing of the OT, that is, the Hebrew scriptures which are the received traditions of Israel. The materials for theological reflection are not the events or experiences behind the

8. As Cover says in *ABD* 6:31: "The plethora of Hebrew terms and their ubiquitous presence in the Hebrew Bible testify to the fact that sin was a dominant concern of the Israelite theologians. Indeed, their highlighting of human failure, deficiency, or offense in the cultic, ethical, and moral spheres constitutes a central theme of OT theology."

9. In this way, I follow Childs (1964: 438), who writes: "The genuine theological task can be carried on successfully only when it begins from within an explicit framework of faith. Only from this starting point can there be carried on the exegetical task which has as its goal the penetration of the theological dimension of the Old Testament. Approaches which start from a neutral ground never can do full justice to the theological substance because there is no way to build a bridge from the neutral, descriptive content to the theological reality."

10. Though I am also indebted to the reflection of Sanders (1972; 1984) and Rendtorff (1993: esp. pp. 46–56; 2000a; 2005), among others.

text, or apart from the construal in scripture by a community of faith and practice. However, because the biblical text continually bears witness to events and reactions in the life of Israel, the literature cannot be isolated from its ostensive reference. (Childs 1985: 6)

It is the canonical form and shape of the Old Testament that will structure this study. This means, first of all, that it will focus on the canonical form of the various books of the Old Testament, rather than on critically determined precanonical levels. For instance, the Torah will be investigated not in terms of differences between Priestly and Deuteronomistic redactions but rather in terms of the message of its canonical units, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Second, it will focus on the canonical shape of the books of the Old Testament, which means the canonical placement of books will be taken into account in the study of the theme of sin and its remedy. For instance, because the Torah is placed first in the Old Testament, it will be treated as an introduction to the canonical collection.

This identifies a limited corpus and a particular shape for this corpus. But, as Childs notes, this focus on the canonical text does not mean that the historical context in which the text arose is irrelevant to the present enterprise.¹¹ The text is read not as an English work popular among secular reading groups this month in eastern Canada but rather as a Hebrew/Aramaic work read by Jewish religious communities in the first millennium B.C. in western Asia. At the same time, however, the contemporary world in which I am reading the text is not irrelevant to biblical theology. My theological interests are essential to this enterprise in theological imagination. At times, they grant me “privileged cognitive access” to the text;¹² at others, they blind me to foreign perspectives in the text. To overcome the challenge of blindness, I have sought out interpretive communities during my reflection, both past and present, both divine and human. The text in its canonical form is what mediates a textual world that allows for the contemporary reader to enter the world of the ancient reader and there experience the text anew.¹³ In this way, this enterprise is not merely descriptive but also normative. On the one side, it involves description of the breadth of imaginative experiences that will occur in the world of the text. On the other side, because these experiences take place within canonical boundaries affirmed by an ancient community and embraced by the present reader, this description is by nature normative, even in its diversity. As normative description, the focus is then on the articulation of the theology of the Old Testament rather than on the description of the religion of ancient Israel.

11. See Watson's (1994: 22–24, 44–59, 133–36) critique of Childs, Frei, and Lindbeck on this matter. Thanks to Patrick Franklin for pointing this out to me.

12. Wolterstorff (1995; 1997).

13. For this, see especially the work of Paul Ricœur; e.g., Ricœur (1976). Thanks to Mabi-ala Kenzo and David Beldman for this insight.

In light of this, Vanhoozer's proposal for the biblical theological enterprise is helpful:

biblical theology is that approach which describes the "word views" and literary shapes of the Bible, and especially that "thick" description of the canon as a divine communicative act. Biblical theology is a description of the biblical texts on levels that display their theological significance. Accordingly, biblical theology is nothing less than a theological hermeneutic: an interpretative approach to the Bible informed by Christian doctrine. The biblical theologian reads for the theological message communicated by the texts taken individually and as a whole collection. (Vanhoozer 2000: 63)

The present work will enter the imaginative space of the ancient canon of the Old Testament in order to highlight the "word views" and "literary shapes" of the "texts taken individually and as a whole collection."

Earlier biblical theological reflection often relied on word studies to investigate theological themes in the biblical corpus.¹⁴ This was based on the legitimate hermeneutical impulse to listen to the biblical text according to its own idiom and allow the theological themes to arise from the expression of the text rather than from a theological framework determined by contemporary perspectives and questions. The problem with this was not only the fallacious practice of etymologizing and the unhealthy consideration of words apart from their linguistic context but, more importantly, the inappropriate equation of biblical word and theological theme (see Barr 1961, 1972, 1987; Carson 1996).¹⁵ Surely, the work of Louw and Nida (1989) has provided a helpful resource for considering a broad lexical range for biblical theological reflection.¹⁶ However, sometimes a theological theme is described through negation of a lexical range, and often a theological theme is expressed through collocations and images, not individual words. Furthermore, words occur in contexts, and, although there are dominant glosses for words, the precise nuance of even a single gloss is dependent on specific contexts. It is these con-

14. See, for instance, *ABD* 6:31–32, which claims that a "survey of major Hebrew words for sin will illustrate how the Israelite writers conceived of sin in terms of their own language." Fortunately, the article is not limited only to a review of individual lexemes.

15. One example is the way the subtheme of repentance has been treated in the past. Past studies have placed inordinate focus on the Hebrew root שׁוּב, based especially on Holladay (1958). However, the theme of repentance is expressed throughout the Old Testament in a variety of ways that do not use the root שׁוּב, expressing this theme, for instance, through an image (the two ways of wisdom) or contrastive language (do not seek *x*, but instead seek Yahweh).

16. Thus, a search of Swanson (1997) returns 54 lexemes (some of these collocations) related to the Louw and Nida (1989) semantic range of "Sin, Wrongdoing, Guilt" (§§88.289–88.318). Key in this list are the dominant roots חטא, עון, פשע, רשע, עשם. Whereas these alert the reader to key passages related to the topic of sin, occurrences of these words are not the sole indicators that the passage is relevant or that they are even the most important passages for study.

texts that are most important to the present work, and so the best way to study this theme is to investigate specific passages and books to see how the theme in all its lexical and imagistic diversity is developed. Thus, a theological theme will be investigated as it is expressed through the variety of lexical, imagistic, and conceptual frameworks, what I call “word views” of the many Old Testament books.¹⁷

The present work will also look at the literary shape of the texts taken individually. For this, it will place the “word views” of the dominant expressions and various passages in the larger context of the biblical books in which they are found. For instance, Proverbs 1–9 expresses a certain retribution theology often associated with the wisdom tradition; however, this expression will be placed in the larger context of the book of Proverbs as a whole, which tempers the common caricature of the wisdom world view. In this, there is concern for the works in their ultimate canonical shape rather than in earlier forms.

Finally, the present work will look at the literary shape of the texts taken as a collection. Canonical shape will be important to this theological reflection. To look to canon as a structuring principle for biblical theological reflection necessitates the identification of the canonical corpus that is in view. In the present work, the Jewish Hebrew rather than Jewish Greek textual and canonical tradition will be followed.¹⁸ The translation from Hebrew into Greek

17. Thus, while being sensitive to the concerns of Barr and devoting much space to the message and rhetorical shape of larger pericopae and books, I will still give some exposure to the lexical stock (and images and conceptual frameworks) employed in the biblical texts to express sin and its remedy. Description of texts by necessity involves sensitivity to words, and at times I will provide an overview of the linguistic framework within particular textual units in the Old Testament. In this I am sympathetic to Watson's (1997: 17–28) careful response to Barr, especially in defense of biblical theology. After citing Barr's (1969: 49) critique of Cullman (“The whole case being argued is that the Bible has, and normally and constantly displays, a particular conception of time, which can be traced in its lexical stock and which forms an essential background or presupposition for the understanding of its theology. It is therefore naturally impossible to except any example of usage from full consideration on the grounds that it is ‘merely temporal’ and not of theological significance”), Watson (1997: 22) retorts: “the conclusion is *non sequitur*: the claim that the New Testament has a distinctive understanding of time that is reflected in its use of time-words in no way entails the further claim that *every* occurrence of a time-word *must* express that distinctive understanding of time. The fact that the latter thesis is obviously untenable tells us nothing about the truth or falsehood of the former.”

18. Here I speak of “tradition” rather than a specific manuscript, looking for consistent early patterns. By using the nomenclature Jewish Hebrew and Jewish Greek, I am trying to reflect the reality that the two textual traditions were originally both Jewish (not one Jewish and the other Christian). Whereas the Hebrew tripartite tradition (Law, Prophets, Writings) is clearly originally Jewish, the origin of the Greek canonical order(s) is not clear. Sir 39:1 does speak of law, wisdom, and prophecy, which may reflect an early Jewish attestation of the Greek canonical order, as per Di Lella (1987: 452). However, there is no reason to suppose this reference has canonical order in view; see Dempster (2003: 35 n. 41). Sweeney (1997c) emphasizes the Christian origins of the Greek canonical order, but this is based on the fact

created for the Old Testament a different text, not only in terms of the text itself but possibly also in terms of the books that were included and in which order they were arranged. This is not to disparage the Greek tradition, nor is it only a matter of personal preference. It appears that the Jewish Hebrew canon dominated the Jewish world of the 1st century A.D. and that evidence of its canonical shape can be discerned within the New Testament.¹⁹ It is true that New Testament authors often drew from the Jewish Greek text when citing the Old Testament, but this is understandable because they were writing in Greek, and it does not mean they affirmed the Jewish Greek text or order as canon.²⁰

This Jewish Hebrew tradition divides the Old Testament canon into three sections: Law (תורה), Prophets (נביאים), and Writings (כתובים). The membership of books within each of these sections was stabilized at an early stage:²¹

Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings (these first four designated at a later point as the Former Prophets), Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve (these last four designated at a later point as the Latter Prophets, with the Twelve including Hosea to Malachi)

Writings: Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Qoheleth, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra–Nehemiah, Chronicles

The names of the first two divisions (Law and Prophets) appear regularly in the New Testament (Matt 5:17, 7:12, 22:40; Luke 16:16, 29, 31; John 13:15, 24:14; Rom 3:21). Although the title of the third section is not attested early, the books of the third division are attested and linked to the first two divi-

that our only evidence of this sort of order is available from Christian sources; cf. McDonald (2007: 100–103). It may indeed have later Christian origins, and possibly the Greek tradition originally followed a tripartite order, but this is far from certain. In any case, any indications of canonical order in the New Testament suggest the Jewish Hebrew tradition; see House (1998: 55–56).

19. For fuller argumentation on this point, see the works of Childs (1970; 1979); Dempster (2003); Seitz (2002, 2006). In this, I am following Childs, as opposed to Sanders (1987: esp. 167), who highlights that the key difference between his approach and Childs's lies in the fact that "when Childs says 'context,' he means literary context; when I say it I most often mean historical context" (cf. Davies 1998: 48–53). This is a bit of a caricature by Sanders, because Childs (1979: 73) does see his canonical approach as a study of the Hebrew Bible "as historically and theologically conditioned writings which were accorded a normative function in the life of this community." There is plenty of criticism of Childs's approach; see, e.g., Brett (1991; 2000); Barr (1999: 378–451); Davies (1998: 51–53); Gerstenberger (2002: 12–17); Brueggemann (2003: 393–94); McDonald (2007: 465–75). For defenses, see Bartholomew et al. (2006).

20. For the diversity of sources for New Testament citations of the Old Testament, see Jobes and Silva (2000).

21. For this evidence, see the superb charts in Beckwith (1985: 450–64); cf. Leiman (1976); Ellis (1991); McDonald (1995).

sions in Sir 39:1, 2 Macc 2:13–14, and Luke 24:44.²² The order of the books in the Law and the first part of the Prophets (the Former Prophets) was also stable at an early stage. Variable, however, was the order of the Latter Prophets and the Writings.

Among the Latter Prophets, the Twelve is placed in the final position in nearly every tradition, and Ezekiel is never placed in the first position. Among the Writings, the earliest attestations place Chronicles in final position, with Ruth taking the first position, followed by the group Psalms/Job/Proverbs (in different orders), then the group Qoheleth/Song of Songs/Lamentations (in different orders, but Lamentations usually in the final position), and ending with the group Daniel/Esther/Ezra–Nehemiah (in different orders but with Ezra–Nehemiah always in the final position). As time progresses, another tradition comes to dominate, one related to a rearrangement of the Writings to reflect the use of the five scrolls for the five annual Jewish feasts. In this tradition, Chronicles is moved to first position before the group Psalms/Proverbs/Job (in different orders), then the five scrolls (Ruth, Song of Songs, Qoheleth, Lamentations, Esther), followed by the group Daniel/Ezra–Nehemiah.

Thus, the order of the Torah and the Former Prophets is stable, as is the fact that these are followed by the Latter Prophets, which are arranged in various orders. There are also stable groupings within the Writings: Ruth in first position, followed by three groups—Psalms/Job/Proverbs, Qoheleth/Song of Songs/Lamentations, Daniel/Esther/Ezra–Nehemiah—and concluding with Chronicles.

Sanders has warned,

Clearly one has to be cautious in constructing theories about “the shape” of the Jewish canon beyond the very secure (hi)story line beginning with the Torah and ending in 2 Kings, and the fact that the books of the three Major Prophets and the Twelve Minor Prophets always followed the record of that (hi)story; but even the order of these within the two categories may have been due as much to lengths of the books as to chronological order or any other factor. (*ABD* 1:841)

However, there is stability beyond the Torah and Former Prophets, with consistent groupings of books creating subcanonical collections within the Latter Prophets and Writings as well. This has led a series of scholars in recent years to look more carefully at the overall shape of the Jewish Hebrew canon in order to discern evidence of what has been described as “canon-consciousness.”²³ Most energy has been devoted to the relationship between

22. See also 4Q398 f14–17i:2–3 (= 4Q397 14–17 i; 4QMMT C 9–16): “we [have written that you must understand the bo]ok of Moses [and the books of the prophets and David and the annals of each] generation [and in] the book is written”; Martínez and Tigchelaar (1997–98: 2:803); cf. Ulrich (1999: 22).

23. Childs (1979: 60) takes this terminology from Seeligmann (1953), who called it *Kanonbewusstsein* and modified it to refer not to the editors but to the literary shape of the canon. See also Sheppard (1982).