

said to be a jealous God, then he is not worthy of worship (Isa. 45:5). The narratives of the Jewish Scriptures are often expanded to provide the main characters with motivations for their actions in accordance with the Gnostic myth. In the *Exegesis of the Soul*, allegory plays a prominent role. Texts of the Jewish Scriptures, the New Testament, and classical literature (Homer) are cited to support the elaboration of the cosmology and anthropology of the Gnostic myth.

Gnostics also left behind reasoned hermeneutical speculation, as attested in a letter by the Valentinian Ptolemy, which is preserved in Epiphanius (*Panarion* 33.3.1–33.7.20). It is an attempt to explain the difficulties observed between the Jewish Scriptures and the New Testament. Heracleon, another Valentinian, was the first to leave a commentary on a New Testament book (the Gospel of John).

THE END OF THE ANCIENT PERIOD OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

As the ancient period of biblical interpretation drew to a close, Judaism and the various forms of Christianity had each gone their separate ways. Yet, what divided them was not so much their methods of interpretation, where there was, in fact, often a remarkable degree of commonality. Rather, what distinguished them from one another was their fundamental presuppositions and beliefs about God, the world, human nature, and Jesus. These, in turn, determined the ends toward which their exegetical methods were directed. Clearly, the same interpretive methods could be employed in pursuit of a wide variety of exegetical goals.

Counting the very earliest instances of biblical interpretation, which were already taking place when the first biblical traditions were being formulated, there had been well over a thousand years of biblical interpretation as the ancient period reached its end. Medieval biblical interpretation would build on this extensive base, but would also need to address new problems that had arisen. The second volume of *A History of Biblical Interpretation* will treat biblical interpretation as it developed within both Judaism and Christianity during the medieval period.

CHAPTER 2

Inner-Biblical Exegesis in the Tanak

Esther Menn

INTRODUCTION

Interpretation of Scripture, which marks the history of Judaism and Christianity as a central religious activity, originated as an ancient and native Israelite phenomenon. Intentional study, exegesis, and revision of authoritative texts emerged as common practices long before the completion of the written works ultimately included in the Jewish biblical canon, commonly known as the Tanak (an acronym based on its three divisions: Torah, Nebi'im or Prophets, and Ketubim or Writings). Certainly there was a remarkable proliferation of extrabiblical exegetical literature in the centuries following the completion of the last books included in the Tanak, which are examined in the other chapters of this volume. To discover the deepest roots of scriptural interpretation, however, one must look even earlier, to the centuries that witnessed the composition of the biblical books themselves.

The narrative depiction of the priestly scribe Ezra and his levitical assistants reading and explaining a certain "book of the law of Moses" before the assembled community in a restored Jerusalem (Neh. 8:1–8) attests to the ascendancy of study and interpretation of key religious texts in postexilic Israel. But this explicit biblical portrayal of scriptural exegesis only confirms what is internally evident throughout the Tanak, in preexilic strata and, even more pervasively, in material from the exilic and postexilic periods. Signs of labor by anonymous scribes and passages that appear to be the work of authors very conscious of their belated position in a literary tradition point to the emergence of a religious imagination characterized by dependence on and

preoccupation with traditional texts. The glosses and explications, expansions and revisions, allusive responses and creative constructions of new works in relation to more ancient ones found throughout the Tanak indicate that a text-oriented religion predates the closure of the biblical canon. Although this basic truth often goes unrecognized, the Bible may be understood as an exegetical work in its own right, in addition to serving as the base text for the monumental exegetical cultures of Judaism and Christianity.

Viewed as the product of a long process of transmission, adaptation, and reuse of traditional writings, the Tanak models in itself various approaches to Scripture that attempt to extend historically the divine voice discerned through received texts and to preserve these texts as the preeminent focus of religious intellectual endeavors, while at the same time ensuring their relevance for contemporary communities (Fishbane 1986: 25). In this broad project of addressing present generations through the medium of texts from the past, and thereby honoring these texts even while transforming them, inner-biblical exegesis shares much with scriptural exegesis throughout the ages.

INNER-BIBLICAL EXEGESIS: DELINEATION OF TOPIC

This discussion of inner-biblical exegesis in the Tanak will concentrate narrowly on the phenomenon of biblical texts that seem to clarify, rework, or allude to identifiable precursor texts, many of which are also preserved in the canonical corpus. It will therefore not attempt to survey the broader range of hermeneutical activities undertaken in ancient Israel, many of which have been an object of study for historical-critical scholars since the Enlightenment. For example, there will be no discussion of the biblical appropriation and reinterpretation of mythic patterns from the greater ancient Near East (such as the reemployment in Exod. 15:1-18; Ps. 89:5-18; and Isa. 51:9-11 of cosmic battle imagery found in the Babylonian creation epic *Enuma Elish* and in the Ugaritic myths about Baal), nor of the oral retellings of traditional Israelite narratives and other materials later fixed in writing (for example, the narratives containing the sister-wife motif in Gen. 12:10-20; 26:6-11), which are commonly studied under the rubrics of tradition criticism and source criticism. Similarly, the interpretive impact of editorial activities generally treated by redaction criticism, such as the addition of introductions and conclusions to older works (Proverbs 1-9; Psalms 1 and 2; and Eccl. 12:9-14), will not receive attention here. While analysis of the wide range of interpretative activities evident in the Tanak suggested by these examples would contribute to a full understanding of the hermeneutical aspects of the canon,

limiting the focus to specific instances of textual explication or allusion facilitates exploration of issues raised by the emergence of a religious culture of scriptural interpretation. These issues include the relative authority of traditional texts considered revelatory over against subsequent human interpretation, the purposes and results of inner-biblical exegesis, the contribution of scriptural allusion to the formation of the canon, and the relation between the types of scriptural interpretation found in the Bible and those found in postbiblical interpretive genres.

At the same time, the present discussion of inner-biblical exegesis in the Tanak is broader than it might have been construed. Although in some cases glosses and clarifying comments do seem to have as their goal the explication of an older text (which might be described as "exegesis" in the modern understanding of the word), other treatments of earlier texts appear to have very different aims. Citation and mimicry of traditional writings may serve a variety of purposes that can be determined only through analysis of individual cases (Sommer 1998: ch. 1). Sometimes reference to an earlier text may simply indicate the influence of a literary tradition on a later author, sometimes it may be intended to create a pleasing style by echoing familiar language, and sometimes it may serve to connect the past to the present through a creative appeal to tradition. At other times, the purpose may be to qualify, revise, or polemically refute outdated teachings, or even to replace an earlier version of a written text. So while later usage of traditional writings may affect how one understands the original text, this is not necessarily the result. The terms "exegesis" and "interpretation" are therefore used in this article in an inclusive, and at times imprecise, sense, to designate a whole range of practices indicating a preoccupation with traditional written texts within a literate and literary culture. Indeed, most of the examples analyzed below are, more strictly speaking, allusions to, rather than interpretations of, precursor texts, undertaken for a variety of purposes and with a wide range of results. This expansive understanding of the topic of inner-biblical exegesis is intended to facilitate exploration of the text-based religious culture evident in the Tanak itself in instances of intentional reflection on, citation of, and allusion to precursor texts, rather than to predetermine the scope of that culture by examining only material that might be considered exegetical by modern standards.

ORIGINS OF SCRIPTURAL EXEGESIS

The phenomenon of textual exegesis is of course not unique to Israel, but may be set in the larger context of the ancient Near East, where already by the

second millennium scribes and other literate classes had produced written works exemplifying a wide variety of genres, including legal codes, myths, historical chronicles, wisdom literature, and prophecies. The cultural significance of certain of these works may be deduced from the archaeological discovery of multiple copies of the same work and from the presence in many of them of features indicating technical study and reuse of traditional material, including glosses, annotations, corrections, and the like. For example, whereas the Babylonian version of *Enuma Elish* features the divine protagonist Marduk, who establishes Esagila as his temple in Babylon, the Assyrian version of the same myth substitutes the god Ashur, who founds his temple in the metropolis bearing his name. Hittite law codes from the second millennium discovered at Boghazköy clearly describe former legal practices (for example the payment of certain fines for given offenses) and then explicitly stipulate their amendment. From a later period, demotic papyri from the third century BCE offer commentary on earlier, obscure prophecies concerning Egypt's fate.

In a similar way, certain writings attained prestigious status within Israelite culture and came to be perceived as appropriate objects for learned study, and eventually as sources of divine revelation. The preoccupation with written texts that came to characterize many sectors of Israelite society is projected far back into Israel's early history, for example, in the depiction of Moses placing stone tablets inscribed with the commandments in the ark to symbolize the covenant at Sinai (Exod. 25:16; Deut. 10:1-5; 1 Kgs. 8:21). Writing, collecting, and revising texts may have become especially prominent activities during periods of national expansion and revival, for example, during the reigns of David and Solomon in the tenth century and of Hezekiah in the eighth century. According to the biblical record (2 Sam. 8:15-18; 20:23-26; 1 Kgs. 4:1-6; 2 Kgs. 18:18, 37; Prov. 25:1), these kings employed scribe officials, as was the practice in royal courts throughout the wider ancient Near East. These literate members of the court most likely kept state archives (for example, the "Chronicles of the Kings of Israel" and the "Chronicles of the Kings of Judah," mentioned in 1 Kgs. 14:19, 29, and elsewhere), edited traditional materials (as indicated by the superscriptions, annotations, and colophons interspersed unsystematically throughout the books of the Tanak, for example, in Lev. 6:2 [9], 7 [14], 18 [25]; 7:1, 11, 37-38; Num. 5:29-31; Josh. 20:9; Isa. 1:1-3; Pss. 3:1 [superscription]; 51:1 [superscription]; 41:14 [13]; 72:18-20; 89:53 [52]; 106:48; Job 31:40; Prov. 10:1; 30:1; Eccl. 12:9-14), and copied and revised older texts (as Jer. 8:8 notes with dismay). It should be noted, however, that in addition to the royal court several other contexts within Israelite society most likely fostered the intense interest in written texts evident within the Tanak,

including circles of priests and temple personnel, judges and legal experts, prophetic figures and their disciples, and sages involved with the education of youth (Fishbane 1985; Kugel 1987: 274-77).

There are many indications in the book of Deuteronomy and in the Deuteronomist History (Joshua through 2 Kings) that dependence on written texts for religious guidance increased substantially beginning in the seventh century. According to the narrative in 2 Kings 22-23, Josiah initiated his religious reform (around 622 BCE) following the discovery of a scroll in the temple. Although this scroll was subjected to interpretation by Huldah the prophetess, the story illustrates a move away from the spoken oracle of the prophet as a medium of divine communication toward reliance on revelatory written texts. Also indicating the ascendancy of written texts, the seventh-century Deuteronomist Code presents Israel's ideal king writing out and studying a copy of "this Torah" (Deut. 17:18-20) as his most important duty. In a similar vein, the Deuteronomist historian tellingly alters a traditional military exhortation when he presents YHWH commanding Joshua to be strong and to meditate constantly on the book of the Torah to ensure success (Josh. 1:2-9; cf. Deut. 31:7-8) and when he presents David commanding his son Solomon to be strong and to keep the commandments as they are written in the Torah of Moses to ensure the continuation of the Davidic dynasty (1 Kgs. 2:1-4). The book of Deuteronomy expresses a consciousness of the importance of stable and authoritative writings that should not be altered and repeatedly portrays Moses urging all Israelites to study the Torah of Moses (for example, Deut. 6:6-9). From a slightly later period, wisdom psalms most likely stemming from the exilic or postexilic periods describe the virtues and benefits associated with meditation on the Torah (Pss. 1:2; 119:12-16, 97-104). Whatever the precise identity of the written "Torah" mentioned in the passages described above, these examples indicate the emergence of a text-centered religious culture that stressed the study of traditional, authoritative writings as a vehicle for understanding the divine intentions for human life. (For additional examples of passages depicting the consultation of written texts, see Dan. 9:2, discussed below, and Neh. 13:1-3.)

Further illustrations of the growing role of texts in Israel's religious life appear in connection with developments within Israelite prophecy. The prophetic call narrative, for example, increasingly portrays the divine word as embodied in written form. Whereas in Jeremiah's call narrative, YHWH places words directly in the prophet's mouth (Jer. 1:9), in Ezekiel's call narrative, YHWH gives the prophet an actual scroll to eat on which are written words of lamentation and woe that he finds surprisingly sweet (Ezek. 2:8-3:3). Another clear illustration of the rise of written texts may be discovered in Jer-

emiah 36, which depicts Jeremiah's secretary Baruch writing oracles dictated by the prophet on a scroll (Jer. 36:4), only to have to rewrite these oracles along with further additions on another scroll after King Jehoiakim burns the original in his brazier (36:27-32). The literalization of the prophetic word of God formerly associated with the prophet's verbal oracle is even further dramatized in writings attributed to the postexilic prophet Zechariah, who depicts a gigantic scroll flying through the air, inflicting punishment on the wicked (Zech. 5:1-4). This graphic vision of God's word active in history in written form symbolizes the growing power and independence of written texts in the culture's imagination and correlates with a shift in perception of revelatory media from direct theophanies, orally delivered prophetic oracles, technical divination, and dreams, to Scripture and its interpretation.

Once certain traditional writings were perceived as holding an honored and even, in some cases, revelatory status, various types of hermeneutical activities emerged in different sectors of Israelite society to keep these texts comprehensible, applicable, and relevant to audiences of successive generations. At times these activities were stimulated by perceived problems in the text itself (including difficulties in wording and grammar or insufficiencies of detail), but at other times they were motivated by broader changes in the historical or cultural situation (such as the crisis of the exile, the emergence of rival political parties, or innovations in theology) that required adaptation or reauthorization for the present. The exegesis and reuse of texts evident in the Tanak exemplify diverse origins, forms, and purposes, some of which will be illustrated in the selected examples analyzed below.

IDENTIFYING INNER-BIBLICAL EXEGESIS

The examples of inner-biblical exegesis explored below do not appear in distinct exegetical genres that clearly distinguish between scriptural text and interpretive comments, such as those that developed in postbiblical times (including, for example, the *peshet* at Qumran or the midrashic commentary of rabbinic Judaism). Rather, inner-biblical exegesis in the Tanak is incorporated within the many genres of literature that comprise the canon, including legal codes, historical narratives, liturgical poetry, wisdom literature, and prophetic oracles.

The project of identifying instances of this phenomenon therefore requires various tactics. At times, consciousness of dependence on earlier texts is explicitly indicated through the usage of a citation formula, for example, "as written in the book of the Torah of Moses" (2 Kgs. 14:6) or "as written in

the Torah of Moses" (Ezra 3:2; 2 Chron. 23:18), even though the cited passage may not always be found in extant writings (Neh. 10:35 [34]; Num. 21:14). Alternately, this consciousness may be suggested by the use of deictic terms that sometimes introduce gloss-like interpolations into older writings (Josh. 18:13; Esth. 3:7; Exod. 32:1; Ezra 3:12; Isa. 29:9-12, discussed below). In the frequent absence of such clear indicators, however, such as in cases involving implicit reference to a particular text (for example, the allusions in Mal. 1:6-2:9 and Psalms 4 and 67 to the ancient priestly benediction in Num. 6:23-27), or the inclusion of unmarked glosses and explanatory comments (Deut. 22:1; Gen. 30:38; Jer. 25:8-14, discussed below), detecting the phenomenon of inner-biblical exegesis in the Tanak becomes more difficult. In general, the broaching of a common topic through the vehicle of identical terminology in more than one passage suggests a relationship between precursor and later texts, especially when clusters of the same words and phrases are shared. Even in these cases, however, it is not always clear that dependence on an earlier written text best explains the similarities between biblical passages. Other factors such as common religious practice, shared linguistic milieu, or underlying oral tradition may explain these similarities. The problem of identification is further exacerbated because interpreters and alluding authors sometimes obscure the novel aspects of their treatment of traditional material through a variety of techniques, for example, by pseudepigraphy or by reissuing oracles and laws, which formally minimize the gap between divine revelation and human exegesis (Fishbane 1985: 527-42; Levinson 1992).

In the face of these difficulties, identification of instances of inner-biblical exegesis may sometimes be facilitated by comparison between different manuscripts and versions, including the Masoretic Text, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, the targums, and the textual evidence from Qumran. At other times, examination of internal evidence, including the appearance of grammatical irregularities, redundancies, and resumptive repetitions, suggests either the work of later editorial hands or a compositional technique that includes unmarked citation of earlier writings. Despite the difficulties involved in isolating particular instances of dependence on and allusion to earlier writings, the evidence in the Tanak is strong enough to indicate that interpretation of traditional texts was an important component of Israelite culture, before, during, and, most prominently, after the period of exile in Babylon.

EXAMPLES OF INNER-BIBLICAL EXEGESIS

The following sections present illustrative examples of inner-biblical exegesis in the Tanak, including simple glosses and explanatory interpolations found in a number of biblical genres, and more substantial interpretations and reworkings of two selected types of materials, namely laws and oracles. These examples, while far from comprehensive, suggest the wide variety of types of inner-biblical exegesis (see Fishbane 1985 and Zakovitch 1992 for more comprehensive overviews of the phenomenon) and raise a number of critical issues, including the stability and adaptability of written texts in ancient Israel, the authoritative status of received writings and of subsequent reworkings of them, the purposes served by appeal to earlier texts, and the ingenuity of including authors who create new works that stand in relation to traditional materials. Following the discussion of the examples and the issues that they raise, two remaining topics will receive attention: the emerging consciousness of a nascent canon or collection of authoritative texts as indicated through certain instances of inner-biblical exegesis, and the continuities between inner-biblical exegesis and the types of exegesis that appear after the composition of the latest biblical books.

Scribal Glosses and Explanatory Interpolations

The simplest examples of inner-biblical exegesis consist of short glosses and explanatory interpolations that one might reasonably attribute to anonymous scribes responsible for copying, correcting, and transmitting written texts. One type of gloss that appears in the Tanak consists of an equivalent word or phrase inserted immediately after a more obscure one. For example, in Josh. 18:13 a gloss clarifies the older geographical name "Luz" by indicating that this place is also known, perhaps more familiarly, as "Bethel" ("Luz, which is Bethel"). Foreign words also receive glosses, as in Esth. 3:7, which identifies the meaning of the loanword *pâr* for an audience without the linguistic background to understand it ("pâr, which is the lot"). In both of these cases, a deictic particle (*hî* or *hû*; "which is") introduces the interpretive gloss and highlights the explanatory, secondary nature of the insertion (Fishbane 1985: 44-55).

Even in the absence of deictic elements, redundancies consisting of a word or phrase immediately following a difficult reference suggest scribal efforts to clarify unfamiliar terms. For example, in the prohibitions of various types of mixtures in Lev. 19:19, the nature of the "mixed garment" that one

should not put on is clarified by a single word, apparently designating a certain kind of cloth ("and a mixed garment, *ša'atnez*, should not be put upon you"). In time, the word *ša'atnez* itself became problematic, so that in Deut. 22:11, this term is defined (or at least paradigmatically illustrated) by the subsequent phrase "wool and linen together" ("You shall not wear *ša'atnez*, wool and linen together"). Similarly, in the description of Jacob's ruse to make Laban's flocks produce speckled and spotted offspring in Gen. 30:38, the obscure phrase "in the runnels" is glossed by the longer explanatory phrase "in the watering troughs" ("He set the rods which he had peeled in front of the flocks in the runnels, in the watering troughs, where the flocks came to drink").

In other instances, inserted words or phrases do not explain specific lexical items but clarify ambiguities due to awkward syntax. For example, Ezra 3:12 contains a description of the people's mixed reactions to the foundation of the second temple that, read one way, seems historically ludicrous: "But many of the priests and levites and heads of fathers' houses, elders who had seen with their eyes the first house *when it was founded* . . . wept with a loud voice, and many with a shout of happiness raised up a loud voice." In this sentence, it is not entirely obvious what the phrase "when it was founded" modifies. If this phrase modifies the preceding phrase, "the first house," then the sentence incredibly asserts that the old men present had actually witnessed the construction of the first temple during Solomon's reign, over 400 years previously! To prevent this infelicity, someone interpolated the disruptive but explanatory phrase "this is the house" (namely the second, rebuilt temple standing during the lifetime of the person responsible for the phrase) to specify the antecedent of the pronoun "it" in the preceding phrase "when it was founded." With this addition, the sentence more credibly states that those who had seen the first temple before it was destroyed in 587 BCE and lived to see the founding of the second temple some seventy years later were overcome with emotion.

At times, however, explanatory interpolations do not simply define obscure lexical items or clarify ambiguous grammar, but more substantially affect the sense of a passage as a whole. An especially striking example occurs in the prophetic denunciation in Isa. 29:9-12, which employs metaphors of drunkenness and sleep to describe loss of spiritual discernment. Since the subject of the passage is not clearly defined in 29:9, one might suppose it to be the population of Jerusalem or the people as a whole, as in the surrounding oracles, especially since the people's dullness is a theme elsewhere in Isaiah (6:9-10). In 29:10, however, a scribe has introduced two glosses, effectively circumscribing the castigation to a single class within Israelite society: "For

YHWH has poured out upon you a spirit of slumber, and he has shut your eyes — namely the prophets — and your heads — the seers — he has covered.” The secondary nature of the references to the prophets and seers may be seen in their disruption of the chiasmic structure of 29:10b, which originally followed the pattern of verb followed by direct object and direct object followed by verb typical of biblical poetry (“and he has shut your eyes, and your heads he has covered”). These glosses appear to accomplish a revision of the original significance of the text and may be considered a tendentious correction (Luzzatto 1855: 337–38).

Taken together, these examples indicate that the activity of copying and transmitting written works in Israel was not a mechanical occupation, but involved close attention to textual details and ad hoc efforts to render difficult and obscure aspects comprehensible. The presence of brief glosses and interpolations such as those described above also suggests that although the texts in which they are found were at one point in their literary history still fluid enough to allow the incorporation of additional, clarifying words and phrases, they were fixed enough to warrant the preservation of obscure terms and awkward grammar (cf. Deut. 4:2). The conservative retention of original wording alongside later glosses, while certainly intended to serve the dignity of traditional writings, actually highlights the presence, of later, interpreting handlers of these texts. Somewhat paradoxically, explanatory glosses and interpolations sometimes significantly transform those very texts whose sense they aim to preserve. This situation is especially evident in the case of Isa. 29:9–12, where later, human exegesis becomes merged with divine oracle, radically altering its sense and redefining Isaiah’s prophetic revelation for subsequent generations.

Exegesis of Legal Materials

Exegesis of legal materials in the Tanak presents a special case, since the Pentateuch narratively presents Israel’s law, whether civil, criminal, or religious in nature, as divinely revealed to Moses at Sinai. Despite this depiction of commandments and laws as the eternally valid stipulations of the covenant with YHWH, there is clear evidence in the Bible that legal traditions did indeed develop and change, as cases were tried, judicial precedents were set, and social conventions evolved. The legal codes in the Pentateuch (the Covenant Code in Exodus 20:22–23:33, the Holiness Code in Leviticus 17–26, and the Deuteronomistic Code in Deuteronomy 12–26) themselves stem from different historical periods, and many of the laws they contain bear signs of applica-

tion, adaptation, and substantive revision. Outside the Pentateuch as well, in prophetic and historiographic writings, evidence points to the intentional study and reworking of laws in legal and judicial circles, as well as possibly in more scholarly and speculative contexts.

The interpolation of glosses, illustrated above in the discussion of laws concerning garments made of mixed materials (Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:11), represents a very simple method of clarifying the application of a given law. Reflection on and evolution of legal tradition are also indicated through more extensive clarifications and alterations attached to earlier laws. A telling example appears in the law concerning the sabbatical year in Exod. 23:10–11. This law deals primarily with the management of agricultural fields, which are to be sown and harvested for six years but left fallow for the seventh to benefit poor people and wild animals. At its conclusion, however, an appendage enlarges the law’s application: “You shall do likewise with your vineyard and with your olive orchard.” Since vineyards and olive orchards are not sown annually, this expansion of the law leaves some questions about acceptable practice unanswered. The revision of the old law from the Covenant Code concerning the sabbatical year in Lev. 25:2–7 subsequently integrates provisions for the pruning and harvesting of vineyards into the main body of the law, parallel to the instructions concerning agricultural fields (Lev. 25:3–5). The secondary nature of this material is confirmed by the awkward retention of the singular possessive suffix in a phrase quoted from the older law, “and you shall gather its produce” (Lev. 25:3), even though one might expect “their produce” since the revised law deals explicitly with both field and vineyard. The levitical law also more broadly defines those who should benefit from the produce of the fallow fields and unpruned vineyards, including the owner himself and his household and domestic animals as well as wild beasts (Lev. 25:6–7).

Similarly, the seventh-century deuteronomistic law concerning the release of Hebrew slaves after six years of service (Deut. 15:12–18) restates many elements of an earlier law found in the Covenant Code (Exod. 21:2–6) but also incorporates a number of substantial additions and alterations. For example, the Deuteronomistic Code extends the scope of the law to include female slaves as well as male slaves (Deut. 15:12, 17; cf. Exod. 21:2, 7), provides for slaves to receive payment on release (Deut. 15:13–14, 18), changes the location of the ceremony in which a slave announces his intention to stay with his master (Deut. 15:12, 17; cf. Exod. 21:2, 6), and advocates a gracious attitude toward the released slave through appeals to the memory of the exodus from Egypt and the economic benefits of the slave’s indenture (Deut. 15:15, 18).

In both cases, the sabbatical year and the law regarding Hebrew slaves, the older law is not entirely rejected but significantly altered, clarified, and ex-

tended to additional areas of application, and these adaptations appear to reflect the gradual development of a trajectory of legal tradition.

The situation is radically different in other cases, which do not maintain continuities with older legal traditions, but instead represent decisive ruptures with the past. The legal material in Deuteronomy 12, restricting sacrificial offerings to the single, central site of the Jerusalem temple, presents a good example of such a departure from precedent. To express this innovation, the authors of the deuteronomistic passage employ specific terminology and phrases from the older Covenant Code, which presents sacrifice at local sanctuaries as normative in ancient Israel (Exod. 20:24-26). Whereas the older law clearly states that various types of sacrifices are acceptable at altars "in any place" where the divinity causes his "name" to be remembered (Exod. 20:24), the deuteronomistic law restricts sacrifices to the single place that the divinity has chosen for his "name" (Deut. 12:5), and cautions against offering sacrifices "at any place" other than that particular one (Deut. 12:13). Fragmented allusions such as these to the earlier law, placed within the new literary context of the Deuteronomistic Code, press familiar and venerated language into the service of unprecedented reform. Clearly the Covenant Code was not canonical for the authors of the Deuteronomistic Code in the same way that the Torah later became canonical for the rabbis, even though the biblical authors found it imperative to address the old traditions in some fashion. Indeed, one suspects that the new law concerning sacrificial practice in Deuteronomy 12 was intended to replace the old one entirely. In this and similar cases (such as the reformulation of Passover as a pilgrimage festival in Deut. 16:1-8), the reuse of older legal materials in Deuteronomy appears to be programmatic and intended to garner the authority of tradition for innovative measures (Levinson 1991, 1997).

In addition to this type of selective citation of earlier legal material, the authors of the law of centralization in Deuteronomy 12 use another technique to authorize their innovations. They conceal their own authorship by employing the technique of pseudepigraphy, presenting their argument for the transformation of traditional practice in the voice of Moses himself, who claims only to reiterate what YHWH earlier commanded at Sinai (Deut. 12:21). Other interpreters of ancient laws present their legal innovations in markedly different ways, however, as the examples of the treatments of the Sabbath law in Jer. 17:21-22 and of the law against intermarriage in Ezra 9:1-2 illustrate.

Unlike the examples of legal exegesis discussed to this point, the interpretation of one of the ten commandments in Jer. 17:21-22 appears not in any corpus associated with the Sinaitic revelation, but in an oracle attributed to

the prophet Jeremiah, who lived centuries after Moses. The divine voice itself alludes to the Sabbath law ascribed to that earlier period and, in language specifically recalling the version of that law found in Deut. 5:12-15 (cf. Exod. 20:8-11), commands those who enter the gates of Jerusalem not to do any work but to keep the Sabbath day holy (Jer. 17:22). The prophetic reissuing of the Sabbath law does more than repeat the original commandment, however, since it prefaces its citation of the deuteronomistic version with additional material most likely reflecting this law's long history of interpretation. (For other indications of ongoing reflection on aspects of this law and its application, see Exod. 31:12-17; 34:21; 35:2-3; 16:4-30; Num. 15:32-36; Isa. 58:13-14; Neh. 10:32 [31].) In the Jeremian oracle, keeping the Sabbath day becomes a matter of life or death (Jer. 17:21; cf. Exod. 31:14-15), and the nature of the proscribed work is further defined by two additional clauses: the first prohibits carrying burdens in through the city gates (Jer. 17:21); the second (perhaps a later addition, in light of its more general nature and its absence from the continuation of the oracle in 17:24) prohibits the transfer of any burden from the private to the public domain (17:22). At the conclusion of this expanded rendition of the law, the divine voice, once again alluding to material from the version in Deuteronomy ("as YHWH your God commanded you," Deut. 5:12), presents additions, all as part of the original divine revelation to Israel's ancestors ("as I commanded your fathers," Jer. 17:22). Material arising from the human history of interpretation is thereby presented alongside the commandment itself as stemming from Sinai; and, as in the case of the law of centralization in Deuteronomy 12, novel aspects are not explicitly acknowledged. The goal seems to be to prolong the Sinaitic revelation into later times by obscuring the gap between original and later material through the divine voice's phrase of its own words from that foundational period.

In striking contrast to the revealed nature of interpreted law in Jer. 17:21-22, Ezra 9:1-2 presents exegesis of the law forbidding intermarriage with non-Israelite women from Deut. 7:1-6 in entirely human terms. Officials in postexilic Jerusalem report to Ezra that the people, including priests and levites, have married Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites, thus mixing Israel's holy seed. This list recalls Deut. 7:1. There the Israelites entering the land are commanded to refrain from marrying the native inhabitants of Canaan because Israel is a holy people to YHWH. But the postexilic restating of the law contains substantial revisions. In place of two of the original ethnic groups from the period of conquest listed in the deuteronomistic law, the officials substitute three foreign peoples encountered by those returning from exile, namely Ammonites, Moabites, and Egyptians. This alteration not only renders the older law rele-

vant to the contemporary situation but also indicates learned reflection on another traditional writing, since these three nations are the subject of laws dealing with exclusions from the assembly of YHWH in Deut. 23:4-9 (3-8). In Ezra's confessional prayer following the officials' report, the scribe associates the deuteronomical law against intermarriage with yet another earlier source, when he identifies the basis for this prohibition as the prophetic warning concerning the defiling abominations of the autochthonous populations (cf. Lev. 18:24-30). This conflation of sources suggests careful scrutiny of the legal corpus and synthesis of material perceived as topically related. Similarly, the solution to the crisis forwarded by the layman Shecaniah, that the men expel the foreign wives and their children "according to the law" (Ezra 10:1-5), represents an innovative addendum to Deut. 7:1-6, most likely informed by the stipulations in Deut. 23:4-9 (3-8) that the descendants of Ammonites and Moabites should be excluded from the assembly of YHWH even to the tenth generation and that the descendants of Egyptians should be admitted only after three generations.

Crediting a specific layman for the interpretation of the practical demands of the law prohibiting intermarriage contrasts remarkably with the techniques of pseudepigraphy and oracular reissue of law illustrated in the previous examples. This contrast suggests a movement from the practice of obscuring the signs of legal development to open validation of human exegesis of laws in the postexilic period. Despite this significant difference, all three cases share the common goal of maintaining the preeminence of revealed law by oscillating between traditional and interpretive material, modifying received texts while seeming to uphold their authority. These examples thus illustrate the central and abiding tension associated with the interpretation of authoritative texts, which must be transformed through exegesis in order to retain their privileged position within a religious system.

Exegesis of Prophetic Oracles

Prophetic oracles constitute another genre that engaged the exegetical energies of interpreters, who sought to clarify the sense of the oracles' often obscure poetic expression to indicate their fulfillment in historical events and to specify their continuing relevance. Although generally delivered orally by the prophets, oracles subsequently came to be preserved in writing (Isa. 8:16), making them available for study by later interpreters.

At times, the evocative mode of poetic expression characteristic of prophetic oracles proved too elusive for later commentators to let stand un-

altered. The explanation of vague oracular imagery interpolated into the oracle in Isa. 9:12-16 (13-17) illustrates this point. This passage warns that YHWH will cut off Israel's head and tail, palm branch and reed, all in one day (Isa. 9:13 [14]). The gloss placed immediately after these figurative entities explains that "elders and dignitaries are the head and prophets who teach lies are the tail" (9:14 [15]; cf. 29:10, discussed above). A further example illustrating the practice of inserting phrases to clarify obscure references is Jer. 25:8-14, which describes the invasion of Jerusalem and its environs by "all the peoples of the north" (cf. 1:14-15; 6:1) and then specifies a particular historical figure, "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant." This identifying phrase, as well as other references to the Babylonian conqueror in the oracle (25:11, 12), appear to be later glosses, judging from their striking absence in the Septuagint version of the oracle. Not only do these glosses clarify the identity of the invading forces, making them in that regard *vatichnium ex eventu* (prophecy from the event), but they also provide closure for at least the first part of the oracle, which in its revised form finds fulfillment in the historical events of the sixth century.

Such concern for the fulfillment of prophetic oracles motivated many exegetical revisions, extensions, and re-predictions intended to provide closure. Biblical prophecies did not always find immediate fulfillment in historical events. For example, two centuries after Micah predicted the destruction of Jerusalem (Mic. 3:9-12), the citizens of that city understood that his prophecy had remained unfulfilled because of the people's repentance (Jer. 26:18-19). This lack of correlation between oracle and historical reality was frequently perceived as problematic, however, as the criterion of true prophecy came to include accuracy of prediction (Deut. 18:22). For example, the prophecy against Moab in Isa. 15:1-16:12 apparently remained unfulfilled longer than expected, since it is reissued in Isa. 16:13-14, which acknowledges that the preceding oracle was formerly the word of YHWH but goes on to allow an extension of an additional three years until Moab's destruction. The oracle concerning the destruction of Tyre and Sidon in Isa. 23:1-12 experienced a much longer period of postponement, so an addition appended to this eighth-century oracle almost two centuries later insists that the destroying forces destined to fulfill the prophet's words are not the Assyrians but the Chaldeans (23:13). The closure provided by this additional remark simultaneously imbues an old oracle with contemporary relevance for the sixth century, since the events it describes are now located not in the distant past but in the present.

This type of adaptation of an older oracle to address changing times may be illustrated through the remarkably fertile history of interpretation of Jeremiah's prediction of a seventy-year period of Babylonian domination over the

Southern Kingdom and the surrounding lands (Jer. 25:8-14). As noted above in the discussion of clarifying glosses in prophetic oracles, the first instance of interpretation occurs within the oracle of doom itself, which specifies "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant," as the leader of the invading forces from the north (Jer. 25:9). Another early interpretative treatment of this oracle appears later within the book of Jeremiah, in the letter that the prophet sends to the citizens of Jerusalem exiled in Babylon (Jeremiah 29), in which Jeremiah counsels the people to settle in the foreign country until the seventy years of Babylonian hegemony are completed. At that time, YHWH intends to bring them back to Jerusalem and restore their fortunes (29:10). This allusion to the oracle actually transforms its impact, for whereas the original prediction in 25:8-14 stresses the lengthy period of Babylonian rule over Jerusalem and its environs, the letter articulates divine intentions for the exiles' return and the city's restoration following the completion of this period. The letter recalling the earlier oracle of doom therefore addresses later, exilic concerns and alludes to the prediction in order to deliver a message of encouragement and hope for those already experiencing Babylonian domination.

The first allusion to Jeremiah's oracle outside the book itself appears in 2 Chron. 36:17-21. The destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and the exile of the people to Babylon are included as part of the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy, although his original oracle specified only military conquest and a preordained period of foreign domination. Just as striking is the Chronicler's additional explanation that the land was left desolate for the seventy years of Babylonian rule in order to make up for sabbatical years that had been desecrated. This understanding of the period of desolation reveals an interpolation of Jeremiah's oracle in light of Lev. 26:34-35, which presents military defeat, exile, and the fallow wastage of the land as consequences of disobedience to the commandments — particularly those concerning the sabbatical year. Since the larger context in Leviticus 26 consists of an oracle concerning exile and restoration, the conflation of this material occurs rather naturally and reflects a harmonizing and anthologizing consciousness in relation to earlier texts. Following the depiction of the seventy-year period, the Chronicler portrays a time of restoration, consisting of a return from exile for the purpose of rebuilding the temple (2 Chron. 36:22-23; cf. Ezra 1:1-4). Thus the temple, which Jeremiah never mentions in his oracle or in his reference to the oracle in his letter to the exilic community, becomes a central focus of the Chronicler's understanding of the prophecy, in keeping with the concerns of the postexilic community.

This preoccupation with the temple characterizes the postexilic prophet Zechariah's references to the Jeremiah oracle as well. When Zechariah asks

YHWH when he will show mercy to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which he has been angry for seventy years (Zech. 1:12; cf. 7:4-7), the oracle that follows emphasizes divine compassion for the city, to be expressed in the near future not only generally through a return of prosperity but specifically through the rebuilding of the temple (1:13-17). It may well be that calculations of the seventy-year period beginning with the destruction of the temple in 587 BCE galvanized the drive to rebuild that structure advocated by Zechariah and his contemporary Haggai and thereby influenced the course of history.

The most elaborate interpretation of Jeremiah's oracle appears in the second-century BCE pseudepigraphic book of Daniel. Narratively set during Babylon's decline in the middle of the sixth century, Daniel 9 depicts a Judean official at the foreign court poring over books containing Jeremiah's prophecy of Jerusalem's seventy years of desolation (Dan. 9:1-2). After confessing Israel's sins that brought on the calamitous events foretold also "in the law of Moses" (9:11, 13, possibly alluding to passages such as Deut. 28:15-45 and Lev. 26:14-39), Daniel prays for forgiveness and requests the speedy restoration of Jerusalem. In response to his prayer, the angel Gabriel appears, and explains that the prophecy's seventy years actually means seventy weeks of years, or a total of 490 years (Dan. 9:24-27), which are further divisible into significant periods. The angelic interpretation of the seventy years in terms of weeks of years may not be an innovation by the author of Daniel, however, but rather a further development of an established trajectory of exegesis, already evident in 2 Chron. 36:17-21, that views Jer. 25:8-14 in light of the land's Sabbaths (the seventh years of fallow rest) described in Lev. 26:34-35. Whatever the case, the interpretation in Daniel extends the time-frame of the Jeremian prophecy by bringing the period of Seleucid rule in the second century BCE (the actual time of Daniel's composition) within its purview. In so doing, it presents a coherent vision of reality and time and holds out hope for future restoration to those suffering under the persecutions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. This example also illustrates the transition from oral oracles of living prophets to the interpretation of written texts, in this case specifically a prophetic text, as a central means of revelation concerning a contemporary situation. The message of hope to the contemporary community comes through the medium of textual interpretation, albeit in this case angelic interpretation given to a prayerful student of books containing Jeremiah's old prophecy. The angel's interpretation of this scriptural passage, as well as other visions and explanations, are in turn bound and sealed in a book (Dan. 12:4, 9), so that Daniel's story attests in more than one way the emergence of a religious culture centered on written texts.

The interpretations of Jeremiah's prophecy described above illustrate

how through the medium of exegesis an oracle can be made to address a succession of generations from preexilic, exilic, postexilic, and Hasmonean times. The presence of multiple interpretive layers of a single scriptural passage in the Tanak points to the adaptability of traditional texts to the ongoing life of religious communities.

INNER-BIBLICAL EXEGESIS AND THE EMERGING CANON

Traces of exegetical activity in the Tanak indicate a developing appreciation of and homage to a limited collection of central and authoritative writings — in other words, to a canon, albeit in nascent form. As certain texts achieved prominent and revered status, they came to be studied and interpreted in light of each other as parts of a selected library of texts. The emerging concept of the unity of a limited number of writings may be seen in certain examples of inner-biblical exegesis, found in various genres and parts of Scripture.

The synthetic combination of legal traditions preserved in different parts of the Pentateuch has already been observed in Ezra 9:1-2, which develops the law prohibiting intermarriage in Deut. 7:1-6 by incorporating elements from Deut. 23:3-8 and Lev. 18:24-30. There are also harmonizations of conflicting legal traditions, each of which came to be included in the Pentateuch. One example of this phenomenon occurs in the narration in 2 Chron. 35:13 of the Passover celebrated after Josiah's temple reform, which attempts to take seriously discordant laws concerning the preparation of the Passover sacrifice. Exod. 12:8-9 specifically declares that the sacrifice should be roasted, not boiled, but Deut. 16:7 claims that it should indeed be boiled. To resolve this discrepancy, the Chronicler explains somewhat incongruously that the men of Josiah's time "boiled the Passover lamb in fire according to the ordinance," conflating the two conflicting laws to depict an innovative practice conforming to neither. This example indicates comparative study of the texts now preserved in Exodus and Deuteronomy, most likely within a living legal and judicial context, although scholarly and speculative study of the laws cannot be ruled out. But whatever the social context, both conflicting traditions were esteemed as authoritative and therefore taken seriously in the Chronicler's account of the reformer king's practices.

Another feature pointing to the emergence of intentional study of certain texts in light of each other appears in the superscriptions prefixed to some of the Psalms. Of particular interest are the historical designations of the periods in David's life when he composed certain Psalms, connecting narrative and poetry that are now preserved in two different parts of the Tanak, the

Prophets and the Writings. For example, anonymous editors attribute Psalm 51 to the time that David asked forgiveness for his sin "when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba" (Ps. 51:2 [superscription]); cf. 2 Samuel 11-12). The many thematic and verbal links between these two writings attest to the editors' careful scrutiny of the texts and make their association plausible (Childs 1971), but this interpretive movement was by no means inevitable. In making this connection, the editors chose to read Psalm 51 in light of a specific character and event in Israelite history recorded in another text, rather than stressing the universality of important themes in the psalm, such as contrition and petition for forgiveness. The superscription thus reveals the editors' presupposition that the David narratives and the Psalms should be considered a unity and exemplifies the practice of cross-referencing within a corpus of writings and the interpretive process of transforming the lives of national characters into exempla. It also reveals a historicizing tendency in the interpretive activities of the early biblical exegetes, according to which the Psalms are understood as the prayers of specific characters, rather than as set liturgical pieces for performance in the Temple.

The postexilic prophets similarly demonstrate a broad and studied knowledge of their predecessors. Just as Daniel labored over books containing Jeremiah's oracle, prophets living during and after the Babylonian exile also familiarized themselves with earlier prophetic utterances and other writings, as is clear from their frequent references to these works. For example, the material found in Isaiah 40-66, attributed to an anonymous sixth-century prophet (or prophets) sometimes designated in scholarly circles as deutero-Isaiah, cites Jeremiah, Isaiah ben Amoz, the Psalms, and pentateuchal narratives, suggesting that these writings held a certain claim on his imagination (Sommer 1998). For example, Isa. 62:4 recalls the old threat from the Assyrian period in Isa. 1:7 that "your land will be desolate" and reverses its force by promising that "your land will no longer be called desolate, but . . . your land [will be called] owned." Similarly, the ancient prophecy of hope beginning in 9:1 (2) with the assertion that "the people who walk in darkness shall see a great light" receives exuberant confirmation in 60:1, which urges a later generation to return from Babylon to Jerusalem: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord shines upon you; for now darkness covers the earth . . . but the Lord shines upon you!" Indeed, allusions such as these to the oracles of the eighth-century Isaiah ben Amoz in deutero-Isaiah may have been one of the factors impelling the decision to join the two works into one corpus. If this is indeed the case, then inner-biblical exegesis influenced the structure of a biblical book in its final edited form.

Other postexilic prophets, including Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi,

also quote extensively from earlier prophetic material, effectively crafting their oracles from the language of former mantic figures in whose shadow they found themselves. The book of Zechariah, for example, explicitly indicates an awareness of "the former prophets" (Zech. 1:4; cf. 7:7, 12) and incorporates interpretations of their sayings into the series of night visions found in the first part of the work. Specific examples of this practice appear in the third and fourth night visions and their explanations in Zech. 2:5-3:10 (2:1-3:10), which creatively allude to Ezekiel's image of the man with a measuring line (2:5-9 [1-5]; cf. Ezek. 40:3-42:20), to Jeremiah's concept of an influx into Jerusalem from the north (Zech. 2:10 [6]; cf. Jer. 1:13-16), to Isaiah's and Jeremiah's appellation "Branch" for the ideal Davidic king (Zech. 3:8; cf. Isa. 4:2; Jer. 23:5; 33:15), and to Micah's depiction of peaceful security under vine and fig tree (Zech. 3:10; cf. Mic. 4:4). The anthological style that characterizes this passage illustrates the postexilic prophets' employment of ancient oracles to address the changed situation and the unique concerns of the restoration period. The multiple allusions to different prophetic precursors furthermore suggest that the postexilic prophets may have been conscious of a collection of writings forming an early core of the second division of the Tanak, eventually known as the Prophets. In any case, the postexilic prophets' treatment of earlier texts attests to the developing concept of a canon, defined as a collection of a limited number of writings worthy of study and commentary (Smith 1982).

Not only do the examples discussed above reflect an emerging recognition of a limited number of written texts as having a certain status, but, viewed from another angle, this type of reuse of and allusion to traditional textual materials also helps solidify the authority of the books that eventually become part of the canon. The citation and exegesis of traditional materials signal their authority and keep them the focus of attention for the next generation, thus contributing to their inclusion in the Tanak. Inner-biblical exegesis in the Tanak therefore performs vital functions in addition to interpreting specific passages within earlier writings, including contributing to the contents and sometimes even to the structure of biblical books, as well as furthering the formation of the canon by giving prominence to some of the written material eventually included.

CONTINUITY BETWEEN INNER-BIBLICAL EXEGESIS AND LATER INTERPRETIVE ACTIVITIES

One remaining issue concerns the connections between inner-biblical interpretation and the later forms of scriptural interpretation that flourished fol-

lowing the completion of the writings eventually included in the canon. These include the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the examples of pesher interpretation discovered at Qumran, the works of Philo and Josephus, rabbinic midrash, and Christian exegesis found in the New Testament and the writings of the Church Fathers, which all exploded following the completion of the writings that became included in the canon. A central question expresses this issue succinctly: is there a clear break between the exegesis found in the Tanak and the exegesis of the Tanak found in later works, or do continuities predominate?

Scholars used to stress continuity with later forms of interpretation, including but not limited to rabbinic midrash (Bloch 1957; Vermes 1961), citing such characteristics as close attention to the details of the text, filling of gaps, solving of ambiguities, explicit citation of texts, harmonization of discordant passages, and use of specific exegetical techniques such as the *qal wāḥomer*, a form of argumentation that draws conclusions concerning weighty issues from lesser cases. While there may be a nuanced continuum between specific types of inner-biblical exegesis in the Tanak and postbiblical exegetical activity, including rabbinic commentary, there are significant differences as well. For example, in rabbinic exegesis, a clear demarcation is made between Scripture and later commentary on it, due to the fundamentally different situation arising from the completion of the biblical books and the establishment of a canon, the subsequent demise of rewriting traditional texts as a form of interpretation, and the emergence of clearly exegetical genres, such as the homily and commentary. In addition, interpretation of Scripture in rabbinic Judaism is more systematic and comprehensive in comparison with the ad hoc and occasional quality of the exegesis evident within the Bible itself. Calling the exegetical material in the Bible "midrash," as used to be common, obscures, therefore, real differences between the interpretation preserved in the Bible and the specific forms that emerged much later in rabbinic Judaism. "Inner-biblical" exegesis is a more cautious and accurate term (introduced by Sarna 1963), in that it allows the phenomenon to be described on its own terms.

Despite the validity of these qualifications, it must be acknowledged that the Bible models a great diversity of exegetical procedures and techniques that may be viewed as the antecedents of postbiblical interpretation, although other influences such as Greco-Roman hermeneutics should not be discounted. For example, the pseudepigraphic style of Deuteronomy and Daniel presents biblical precedents for a number of Second Temple works, including *Jubilees*, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, and the *Temple Scroll*. The retelling of biblical narratives, such as the version of Israel's history in Chronicles, which revises the version presented in Samuel-Kings, parallels the

retelling of Genesis in *Jubilees* and in the *Genesis Apocryphon*. Allegorical and typological methods, which predominate in the exegetical writings of Philo and the Church Fathers, are anticipated in the allegorical interpretations of laws in the prophets (Jer. 2:3; cf. Lev. 22:14-16), in the typological interpretation of the exodus as a pattern for later episodes of national redemption (Jer. 16:14-15; Isa. 43:16-21; cf. Exodus 14-15), and in the typological interpretation of Abraham as a figure foreshadowing postexilic restoration in the land (Isa. 51:1-3; cf. Gen. 12:1-3). Explicit citation of Scripture and glossing techniques noted in earlier examples bear affinities with the pesher type of interpretation found at Qumran. The anthological style characteristic of the post-exilic prophets is replicated in the Hodayôt (Thanksgiving Hymns) found at Qumran and in florilegia circulated in Jewish and Christian circles.

Some particular exegetical techniques typical of rabbinic midrash are also found in the Bible itself, including the *qal wāḥomer* type of argument (Ezek. 33:24), although this specific technique may be a universal type of argument, not limited to a single hermeneutical tradition. The precedents for the earliest postbiblical interpretations of Scripture are therefore apparent within Scripture itself, which provides models for later exegetes, or at the very least validates their exegetical intents and energies.

The presence in the Tanak of multiple strata — of texts and interpretive materials that revise, actualize, and reauthorize the traditional literature of the past — establishes through example the fundamental importance of scriptural interpretation as a religious activity. The sacred corpus of Israel represents revelation and interpretation as part of a continuous dialectic process in which successive generations contribute to the received tradition through exegesis, thereby creating a layered textual mode that emerges as a resource for later, postbiblical interpreters. This understanding of the Tanak echoes aspects of the traditional dual Torah doctrine of rabbinic Judaism, which maintains that from the moment of Sinaitic revelation itself there existed a parallel oral transmission and interpretation of the written Torah (Mishnah 'Avot 1.1; see Danby 1933: 446). This theological statement concerning the value of rabbinic interpretation articulates something akin to the import of the examples of inner-biblical exegesis presented above, namely that Scripture is never transmitted free of an interpretive tradition. The evidence of scriptural exegesis in the Tanak shows that an interpretive tradition, arising from various social origins and exemplifying diverse techniques and purposes, flourished during the period that witnessed the composition of the biblical books and the formation of the canon. The composite, interwoven final form of the Tanak, containing multiple traditions and layers of interpretations, itself makes a theological statement about the value of the interpreta-

tion and reinterpretation of Scripture. Religious truth is articulated with a voice that is both old, because it is inspired by and draws on inherited texts, and new, because it reverberates, alters, and transforms ancient language to reappropriate tradition for the present generation. The Bible therefore presents Judaism and Christianity not only with a sacred text, but also with illustrative ways of relating to Scripture. Viewed as an interpreting work, the Tanak serves as prelude and invitation to further exegesis.

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