

A NEW
TESTAMENT
BIBLICAL
THEOLOGY

THE UNFOLDING OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW

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Preface

This book had its birth in a class on New Testament theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary that I began teaching in 1989. In the summer of 2007, I gave a plenary paper titled “The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology” at the third Triennial Plenary Conference of the Tyndale Fellowship at Swanwick, Derbyshire. This paper was a summary of the course that I had begun teaching in 1989, and it was subsequently published as “The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology” in *The Reader Must Understand: Eschatology in Bible and Theology* (Leicester: Apollos, 1997) and *Eschatology in Bible and Theology: Evangelical Essays at the Dawn of a New Millennium* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), both edited by Kent Brower and Mark Elliott. I am grateful to the conveners of the Tyndale Fellowship Conference for giving me the opportunity to deliver this paper and for including it in the published volume of papers from the conference.

The same paper was delivered at the Wheaton Conference of 2000 in Wheaton, Illinois, and an abbreviated and revised version of that paper and earlier article was published in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), edited by Scott Hafemann.

From there on, I published various articles that would be revised and integrated into parts of the present book. I continued to develop my thinking in this area as I continued to teach the New Testament theology course at Wheaton College Graduate School, beginning in 2002. Then in 2005, I began to work only on this project. Afterward, however, other projects crowded in and prevented me from bringing this book to its final form, though I continued to work on it here and there. Then, in the summer of 2008, I began working only on this project, and finally I submitted the manuscript to Baker at the end of the summer of 2010.

This New Testament biblical theology, therefore, is an expansion of the aforementioned article and the course on New Testament theology that I

taught. I have discovered along the way that some of the book's chapters themselves deserve full-length book treatments and need even further elaboration, but one has to stop somewhere. (I leave it to others to develop further some of the ideas proposed in the book.) I have come to recognize the impossibility of writing a New Testament biblical theology that covers everything one would want to cover. As it is, this book is already long. In chapter 27, I not only give a summary of the book but also discuss topics not directly developed in the book in order to give some indication of the direction in which I would take them. But even there, I am sure that some topics have been left out. If readers want a more in-depth overview of this book after perusing the table of contents, I would suggest they read the introduction and the two concluding chapters (27–28). This book may also be used as a reference or encyclopedic source, since I have written each chapter on one general theme that can be sufficiently understood independently from the rest of the book. Of course, a reading of the whole book will enhance the understanding of each chapter.

Working on this book has opened my eyes to themes that I had seen only dimly before. In particular, I have seen more clearly than ever that the already-not yet end-time new creation and kingdom is a lens that sheds much light on the Scriptures and enables one to see better the deeper riches of the major theological ideas of the New Testament. In addition, this approach to the New Testament has helped me to appreciate better the role of believers and the mission of the church within the redemptive-historical storyline of Scripture. It is my hope that the biblical-theological perspective of this book will provide greater fuel to fire the church's motivation to understand itself in the light of this stage of redemptive history and to fulfill its mission to the world.

I am indebted beyond words to my wife, Dorinda, who has discussed the theology of this book with me during the past years, and who remains as excited as I am about the subject. She has been one of the main instruments through which I have been able to understand this topic in more depth.

I am thankful for the careful editorial work done by the staff at Baker Academic, especially Brian Bolger. I thank Jim Weaver for initially accepting this book for publication and Jim Kinney for his flexibility and ongoing work with me as the project developed and grew.

I am grateful to a number of churches that over the years have asked me to speak at conferences on the themes of this book. Likewise, I am grateful to many students from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Wheaton College Graduate School who have asked insightful questions about the topic that have caused me to reflect more deeply and to clarify my perspectives. I am also grateful to the Greek Bible School of Athens, Greece, and the Evangelical Theological College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for inviting me to teach the course on New Testament theology and helping me to better situate my views in different cultural contexts.

I also express my appreciation to the following students who either helped with research or checked and edited the manuscript of this book: Stefanos Mihaios, Mike Daling, Ben Gladd, Mitch Kim, Matt Newkirk, Matt Durdreck, and especially Dan Brendsel, who labored beyond the call of duty (and among many other things compiled excursus 1 in chap. 20). A number of Wheaton College graduate students from my New Testament theology course and canonical biblical interpretation course in the spring of 2010 also helped with various aspects of editing and checking of primary source references.

Above all, I am grateful to God for enabling me to conceive the idea for this book, building on the shoulders of others before me, and for giving me the energy and discipline to write it. It is my prayer that through this book God's glory in some way will be more greatly manifested.

I am also indebted to Daniel Bailey, who sent to me the vast majority of his English translation of Peter Stuhlmacher's *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 2 vols., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992–99, which will soon be published by Eerdmans. I believe this to be an important book, especially with respect to the influence of the OT and Jewish background upon NT biblical theology. I have made several references to Stuhlmacher's work throughout my book, though these references are to the German edition, since the English translation has not yet been published.

A few comments about some stylistic aspects of the book are in order. Unless otherwise indicated, English translations follow the New American Standard Bible (sometimes using the marginal readings, and with some variation in the use of capitalization, italics, and quotation marks) or, when different, are my own. With respect to ancient works, when the translation differs from the standard editions usually referred to, it is mine or someone else's (in the latter case I indicate whose).

At various points in Scripture quotations italics or underlining of words or phrases is used. The default translation that I am using (the NASB) italicizes words that the translators supply but are not found in the Hebrew or Greek. Underlining is used to indicate key words or phrases that are in parallel, usually when two or more passages are compared with each other. Most of the time these lexical or cognate parallels indicate that the later text is alluding to the earlier text (e.g., OT in the NT) or has some kind of organically parallel relationship with it. Sometimes broken underlining is used to indicate conceptual parallels that likely indicate an allusion.

References to the Greek New Testament are from the *Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th ed.). References to the Hebrew Old Testament are from the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. For the Septuagint, I refer to the Greek text of *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament and Apocrypha with an English Translation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), which is dependent on Codex B, published by special arrangement with Samuel Bagster and Sons,

London. This will enable those not knowing Greek to follow the Septuagint in a readily available English edition.

My references to the Dead Sea Scrolls come primarily from the edition by Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); sometimes reference is made to the two-volume *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, edited by Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar (Leiden: Brill, 2000). In addition, other translations of Dead Sea Scrolls were consulted and sometimes are preferred in quotations (A. Dupont-Sommer, *The Essene Writings from Qumran*, translated by G. Vermes [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961]). At times, variations in the translation from the primary text of García Martínez are due to my own translation.

The primary sources for references to and quotations from various Jewish works are the following English editions: *The Babylonian Talmud*, edited by I. Epstein (London: Soncino, 1948); *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation* (the Jerusalem Talmud), edited by Jacob Neusner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982–); *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, translated and edited by Jacob Lauterbach (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976); *The Midrash on Proverbs*, translated by Burton Visotzky (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); *The Midrash on Psalms*, translated and edited by William Braude (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); *Midrash Rabbah*, edited by H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino, 1961); *Midrash Sifre on Numbers*, translated and edited by Paul Levertoff (London: SPCK, 1926); *Midrash Tanhuma*, translated and edited by John Townsend (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1989); *Midrash Tanhuma-Yelammedenu: An English Translation of Genesis and Exodus from the Printed Version of Tanhuma-Yelammedenu with Introduction, Notes, and Indexes*, translated by Samuel Berman (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1996); *The Minor Tractates of the Talmud*, edited by A. Cohen (London: Soncino, 1965); *The Mishnah*, translated and edited by Herbert Danby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983) (though sometimes reference is made to volume 2 of *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, edited by R. H. Charles [Oxford: Clarendon, 1977]); *The Pesikta de-Rab Kahana*, translated and edited by William Braude and Israel Kapstein (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1975); *Pesikta Rabbati*, translated and edited by William Braude (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, translated and edited by Gerald Friedlander (New York: Hermon Press, 1916); *Sifre: A Tannaitic Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy*, translated and edited by Reuven Hammer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); *Tanna debe Eliyyahu*, translated and edited by William Braude and Israel Kapstein (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1981); *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch, with the Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum, on Genesis and Exodus*, translated

and edited by J. W. Etheridge (New York: KTAV, 1968); the available volumes published in *The Aramaic Bible: The Targums*, edited by Martin McNamara et al. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1987).

References to ancient Greek works, especially those of Philo and Josephus (including English translations), are from the Loeb Classical Library. References and some English translations of the Apostolic Fathers come from the second edition of *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations of Their Writings*, translated by J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, edited and revised by Michael Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1992).

G. K. B.

1

Introduction

Of the writing of NT theologies there seems to be no end. When I teach a class on NT theology, I distribute a three-page bibliography of only NT theologies, the majority of which were written in the twentieth century. My attempt in this book is not to write a NT theology but rather a NT *biblical* theology. To some ears this may not sound like much of a distinction. Nevertheless, this introductory chapter and the following body of this book will indicate how different my project is from that of the typical NT theology genre.

The Principles and Definition of a Biblical Theology of the New Testament

The first task is to describe the particular discipline of NT biblical theology to be adopted in this book, which overlaps to some degree not only with whole-Bible biblical theologies but also with OT biblical theologies. The increasing focus will be on the unique aspects of doing NT biblical theology. Some parts of this description will overlap with the task of the NT theology genre, but the differences will increasingly become apparent.

First, many NT theologies spend much time discussing the question of the historical Jesus and whether a theology of the NT can begin with the life and teachings of Jesus. Some scholars conclude negatively about this (e.g., Rudolf Bultmann), whereas more conservative writers base the beginning of their theologies on Jesus as he was portrayed in the Gospels. I will not spend time analyzing this issue, but I will assume the conclusion of conservative scholars,

including conservative NT theologians, who decide that the Gospels portray a historically reliable picture of Jesus's ministry and thus start their study of the NT on that basis.¹

Second, more recent NT theologies directly address the issue of postmodern hermeneutics, especially with respect to whether it is possible to interpret scriptural texts without one's theological biases detrimentally affecting the interpretations.² This book will not address this issue, but a few comments are appropriate here. In the twentieth century, both liberal historical critics and many conservative scholars believed that readers could interpret texts "objectively," without their own presuppositions influencing their interpretations. Few, whether conservative or liberal, hold this view today, though some still do. The question now is whether one's presuppositions result in distorting the original meaning of a text and whether interpreters come away only with interpretative conclusions that reflect their own theological predispositions. Entire books can be, and have been, written on this issue.³ My assumption in this book is that all interpreters have presuppositions, and that some presuppositions are bad and distort the originally intended meanings of ancient texts, while other presuppositions are good and actually guide one into the truth of texts. The presuppositions of the biblical writers themselves as expressed in Scripture have the power through the Spirit to regrind the presuppositional lenses of its readers.

One such presupposition, for example, is that the Protestant canon of the OT and the NT composes the divinely inspired, authoritative material for doing biblical theology. This differs from some who do not want to limit NT theology to this database and want to include the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, and other early Jewish works as part of the authoritative framework.⁴ Although

1. See, e.g., I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004); Frank Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005). See the very important discussion of Peter Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), chaps. 2–13 (and at several other points throughout vol. 1), who well demonstrates in a balanced manner the historical reliability of the Gospels from a biblical-theological perspective, particularly in light of the OT and Jewish backgrounds. This section of Stuhlmacher's book is especially a response to his own recognition of the critical problems involved in basing a biblical theology of Jesus on the portrayal of the earthly Jesus in the Gospels (in chap. 2 of his book).

2. See Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 882–88; Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 30–33.

3. See, e.g., E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); Kevin Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998). These two scholars are optimistic about readers being able to discern sufficiently, though not exhaustively, authorial intentions of writers. For interaction with those who are skeptical, see Vanhoozer.

4. This was a typical approach of the Tübingen school in the second half of the twentieth century, especially characterized by Hartmut Gese and Peter Stuhlmacher (in this respect, see

these extracanonical sources do need to be considered in the interpretation of NT texts, I will assume that they are not on the same authoritative level as those texts. I will make the same assumption about the LXX in relation to the OT Hebrew text, the latter of which I take to be authoritative.⁵ Of course, there could be much discussion of the thorny issue of canon, but since the scope of this work does not allow for such elaboration, I must simply take the Protestant canon as my presuppositional starting point.

Another such presupposition is a particular definition of “intertextuality.” I will assume that later biblical quotations of and allusions to earlier Scripture unpack the meaning of that earlier Scripture, and yet the earlier passage also sheds light on the later passage.⁶ This is my view of the famous dictum “Scripture interprets Scripture.” Or, as Augustine put it, “The New Testament lies concealed in the Old, the Old lies revealed in the New” (*Quaest. Hept.* 2.73). I do not follow some postmodern understandings of intertextuality, which, for example, contend that later references to earlier texts interact in such a way that new meanings are produced that are completely unlinked and dislodged from the originally intended meaning of the earlier text.⁷ In this respect, I will study quotations of earlier Scripture by later Scripture as well as allusions. There has been much discussion about the criteria for validating whether a reference is actually a probable allusion. I have discussed these criteria at numerous points in my writings over the past years.⁸ The most important criterion is the recognition of sufficient verbal and thematic parallels, though interpreters will still debate whether such parallels exist in particular cases.

Thus, readers will make different judgments on the basis of the same evidence, some categorizing a reference as “probable,” others viewing the same reference as only “possible” or even so faint as not to merit analysis. I have

further discussion below of Gese and Stuhlmacher). However, I do agree with Stuhlmacher’s assessment that because the NT is Scripture inspired by the Spirit, anyone who does biblical theology of the NT documents should read and interpret them “in the way in which they want to be interpreted, namely, as inspired witnesses of the path which God in and through Christ took to humanity to lead them to himself and thereby to salvation” (*How to Do Biblical Theology*, PTMS 38 [Allison Park, PA: Pickwick, 1995], 88).

5. Though, of course, it is true that NT writers quote from the LXX and cite it as Scripture (e.g., the author of Hebrews). However, this is similar to a preacher today quoting an OT passage from the NLT of the Bible and calling it Scripture, even though that preacher would make a distinction between the originally inspired Hebrew OT and the NLT.

6. Another presupposition, in this respect, is that I will assume a typically conservative view for the dating and authorship of the OT and NT books. However, when critical views on dating differ from my approach, it merely means that the intertextual relationship will be reversed, but hermeneutically in such cases one can still hold to a mutually interpretative relationship.

7. For further reference to this hermeneutical debate, see G. K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 23n23.

8. In connection to issues concerning intertextuality, see *ibid.*, 22–34.

tried to include for study in this book those OT allusions whose validity are attested by sufficient evidence and that I consider to be probable (this includes not only references made by NT writers but also those made by later OT writers of earlier OT texts). I am sure, however, that some interpreters will still debate the validity of some of the references that I discuss.

Along these lines, Richard Hays touches on the problematic issue of how much a NT author (and I would include OT authors) can develop an earlier OT text and whether such creative developments still remain within the original conceptual contours of the OT context. He speaks about “the power of texts to engender unforeseen interpretations that may transcend the original authorial intention and historical setting.”⁹ This is to be seen not as an argument for a radical reader-response approach (where there is lack of concern for original authorial intention) but rather as a reading whereby one continues to see how an OT text keeps imposing its original sense on the later text’s author (albeit sometimes subliminally), even as that author is creatively developing that original sense beyond what may appear to be the “surface meaning” of the OT text.¹⁰ The notion of whether NT writers refer to OT texts with their broader context in mind is debated in the academic guild. My own assessment is in line with Hays’s approach and the earlier approach of C. H. Dodd.¹¹

Thus, Paul or later OT writers build on earlier OT texts that they interpret and develop creatively. This creativity is to be seen in understanding such earlier texts in the light of the further developments of the redemptive-historical epoch in which the writer lives. For example, NT writers interpret the OT in the light of the later events of Christ’s coming and work. In this respect, part of the creative interpretative development lies merely in the fact that fulfillment always fleshes out prior prophecy in a way that, to some degree, was unforeseen by earlier OT prophets. Another way to say this is that progressive revelation always reveals things not seen as clearly earlier. Geerhardus Vos’s metaphor for this creative development between the two Testaments is that earlier OT prophecies and texts are like seeds, and later OT texts develop the seeds into roots from which stems and leaves imperceptibly grow, and then in the NT the bud emerges and begins to flower; from one angle the blooming plant may not look like the seed or the root (as in botanical comparisons),

9. Richard B. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel’s Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 169.

10. *Ibid.*, 173–76.

11. C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952). For an example of the debate between scholars on both sides of this issue, see G. K. Beale, ed., *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1984). For a programmatic essay in which I argue for the contextual use of the OT in the NT, see G. K. Beale, “Did Jesus and His Followers Preach the Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? An Examination of the Presuppositions of the Apostles’ Exegetical Method,” *Themelios* 14 (1989): 89–96.

but careful exegesis of both OT and NT contexts can show at least some of the organic connections.¹²

Another important presupposition of this book is that the divine authorial intentions communicated through human authors are accessible to contemporary readers. Although no one can exhaustively comprehend these intentions, they can be sufficiently understood, especially for the purposes of salvation, sanctification, and glorification of God.

These three preceding presuppositions about canon, intertextuality, and authorial intention being accessible to modern readers overlap to varying degrees with the approach of more recent classic conservative NT theologies.¹³

In addition, a proper understanding and development of OT and NT theology reveals that theology is not only descriptive but also prescriptive. That is, the mere development of a theology of either Testament is a descriptive task, but the content of that theology manifests an imperative for God's people to follow and obey. For example, we will see that one of the important biblical-theological ideas formulated in this book entails that believers ought to take part in expanding God's new-creational kingdom and that they glorify God. This kind of prescriptive element, however, is found to varying degrees in other NT theologies.

The preceding discussion has shown some slight differences but also primarily commonalities between this project and other NT theologies that have been written. However, the following shows the unique traits of my approach to a NT biblical theology in distinction from the usual NT theologies.

(1) The approach of this book overlaps with that of a whole-Bible biblical theology in that it addresses more directly the theological storyline of the OT. I will discuss early in the book precisely what I mean by a "storyline."¹⁴ In this respect, my work begins formally in the next chapter with a focus only on a thumbnail sketch of the development of the OT storyline beginning in Genesis and developing throughout the OT. This storyline consists of a synthetic formulation about God's purposes in creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. In contrast, classic NT theologies stay formally only within the bounds of the NT canon. Of course, a long book could be written on the tracing of such an OT storyline, so that I will have to rest content with attempting to discern the main thrusts of such a storyline in two substantive introductory chapters (see chaps. 2–3). Thus, the OT storyline formulated in this book is based on a

12. On which, see Geerhardus Vos, "The Idea of Biblical Theology as a Science and a Theological Discipline," in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos*, ed. Richard B. Gaffin Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1980), 11–15.

13. Marshall, *New Testament Theology*; Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*; Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*.

14. For a fuller discussion of what I mean by "storyline," see chap. 2 under the heading "The Repeated Cosmic Judgment and New Creation Episodes of the Old Testament," and esp. chap. 6.

study of OT theology and especially how the theological threads of Gen. 1–3 are developed throughout the rest of the OT. Many would be skeptical that a unifying storyline of the OT is possible,¹⁵ and others would say that this is difficult to do in one or two chapters (see chaps. 2–3). Nevertheless, the hope here is that the main outline of this kind of study is sufficiently headed in the right direction such that it holds potential to be fleshed out and validated by subsequent substantive research by others.

(2) The main facets of the OT narrative story are then traced into and throughout the NT. The main elements of the OT plotline become the basis for the formulation of the NT storyline. Of course, insofar as the OT plotline is somewhat provisional, so will be its basis for the NT storyline. But this is a problem inherent to any project that focuses on the NT, even a NT biblical theology. A volume longer than the present one would need to be written to validate further both the OT and the NT storylines proposed here.

Thus, the NT storyline will be a transformation of the OT one in the light of how the NT is seen to be an unfolding of the OT, especially through fulfillment of the OT. The main theological categories for the tracing of OT and NT theology therefore arise not first from considering the categories of systematic theology but from attempting to trace the respective canonical storylines in the two Testaments. I will try to determine how the NT develops the OT plotline and then let the major parts of the transformed storyline of the NT form the major subjects to be considered in the biblical theology of the NT.¹⁶

Consequently, it is the main categories of the NT storyline that then become the main conceptual categories for the organization or outline of the biblical theology of the NT (which this book develops in chaps. 5–28).

(3) The bulk of discussion in this biblical theology of the NT consists of attempts to elaborate on the main plotline categories of thought through surveying the places in the NT where that thought is expressed. Such a survey occurs through studying the use of key words and concepts relevant to the major category of focus. Also, discussion of each category will occur

15. See, e.g., James Barr, *The Concept of Biblical Theology: An Old Testament Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 375–76.

16. Some topics of chapters that I have chosen do overlap with systematic categories—e.g., chap. 15 on justification and chap. 16 on reconciliation. There is truth to the overlap, though I contend that these are also biblical-theological notions, and they will be developed as such. Likewise, chaps. 23–24 on “The Church’s New Creational Transformation of Israel’s Distinguishing Marks” discuss topics such as the Sabbath, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, the office of elders, and the NT canon. In addition, chaps. 13 and 14 deal directly with the image of God, but the focus on this is through the biblical-theological lens of Gen. 1–3 and how Christ relates to restoring the divine image that became distorted in the first Adam. All these topics are addressed in systematic theologies, but I will attempt to discuss them as biblical-theological concepts. These systematic topics thus also fit naturally into various components of the biblical-theological storyline proposed in this book.

through exegetical analysis of crucial passages and of OT quotations, allusions, and sometimes of discernible themes. Such concentrated studies, especially of the NT's use of the OT, are not characteristic features of most NT theologies. Although many are doubtful that it is possible to find a theological unity among the NT writings,¹⁷ I am more optimistic and hope that my proposed storyline proves fruitful to others in perceiving more of a unity to the NT.

In contrast, some NT theologies try to place the documents in chronological order and focus on an attempt to trace the historical genealogical development of concepts. This often involves also studying what lies behind these documents, so that the full purported process of historical development can be more precisely reconstructed. This then entails that one also speculate about the theology of the sources behind the written document (e.g., in the Gospels), which of course are no longer extant in any literary form. The weakness of the approach is that it has to speculate about hypothetical sources and becomes too much a study of the theology of such sources instead of focusing on the study of the theology of the NT documents themselves.¹⁸ Furthermore, apart from the problem of hypothetical sources is, among other problems, the difficulty of dating the NT documents with enough certainty that a development among them can be traced chronologically.¹⁹

NT theologies are organized in a variety of ways,²⁰ but the habit of a number of classic NT theologies is to conduct a consecutive theological analysis of each NT book,²¹ usually in the canonical order of each corpus,²² and then to draw up a final comparison of each of the theological emphases of each of the books.²³ Such projects sometimes conclude with an attempt to find a major theological thrust in the NT.²⁴ Others who do NT theologies set up certain major themes for the whole NT and then trace those themes consecutively

17. See, e.g., G. B. Caird and L. D. Hurst, *New Testament Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 15–17.

18. Here I am following Marshall, *New Testament Theology*, 25–27.

19. On which, see further the critique by Caird and Hurst, *New Testament Theology*, 8–15, which lays out several problems with the developmental approach.

20. On which, see D. A. Carson, “New Testament Theology,” *DLNTD* 799–804.

21. Often the books in each corpus are arranged by date.

22. E.g., see Frank J. Matera, *New Testament Theology: Exploring Diversity and Unity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), who, however, groups John's Gospel with the Johannine Epistles and places them after discussion of the Synoptics and Paul's epistles (which he studies in order of date), and he places Acts together with Luke. Within the evangelical sector, e.g., see Roy Zuck and Darrell Bock, eds., *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1994), which is like Matera's order except for the primary difference that it groups John's Gospel, the Johannine Epistles, and Revelation together directly after the Synoptic Gospels. The book is a broad survey of various themes in each book and corpus of the NT.

23. E.g., Marshall, *New Testament Theology*; Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*.

24. E.g., Marshall (*New Testament Theology*) determines that the major thrust of NT theology is mission, which I find helpful but not sufficiently comprehensive.

through its books, usually in the order of the canon.²⁵ The challenge for these thematic approaches is validating the probability of whether the major themes chosen are in fact the major themes of the NT. The themes chosen according to this approach sometimes are derived from systematic theology.²⁶ On the one hand, the whole-Bible biblical theology of Charles H. H. Scobie's work is closest in this respect to my approach, since he is much more synthetic and does not trace themes in the OT or the NT consecutively book by book or corpus by corpus. On the other hand, his work is different in that it is structured by themes and not by the elements of a formally postulated storyline, though I think that he would say that ultimately he has derived these themes from a biblical storyline.²⁷

(4) Another unique feature of this biblical theology of the NT in contrast with most other NT theologies is that it is concerned with how important components of the OT storyline are understood and developed in Judaism.²⁸ This is significant because it is important to see how the major biblical-theological notions in the NT develop these same OT components and whether they do so in dependence on Judaism or in line with Judaism or in contrast to it. The results from such a comparison and contrast should shed interpretative light on the development of the NT. Accordingly, most chapters in this book have discrete sections on how Judaism developed the

25. E.g., George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), though he sets up relatively different themes for each major NT corpus, including Acts and Revelation, and conducts only a general survey of the Johannine Epistles without setting up themes; Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*. This is also the procedure of the whole-Bible biblical theologies of Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), and Charles H. H. Scobie, *The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), though he does not proceed book by book or corpus by corpus.

26. E.g., Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1981), though he does integrate biblical-theological topics into his broad systematic scheme and provides brief introductory sections on OT and Jewish background for a number of the major themes that he studies, which give his book a biblical-theological flavor; so also, to some degree, Leon Morris, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), which, while structured corpus by corpus (with Paul first), tends to organize the themes within each corpus by systematic topics, though it also integrates biblical-theological themes into the organization.

27. See Scobie, *Ways of Our God*, 91–99, where he proposes the broad fourfold framework of proclamation, promise, fulfillment, and consummation, though the specific themes that he traces through each of these four categories he derives from “an extensive study of the numerous proposals that have been made by biblical scholars, especially for a so-called center or focal point of BT” (p. 93). See also the whole-Bible biblical theology of Keith A. Mathison, *From Age to Age: The Unfolding of Biblical Eschatology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2009), who looks at each book and corpus consecutively in general canonical order (with a few exceptions) in the OT and then in the NT and attempts conceptually to trace the developing theme of eschatology throughout Scripture.

28. Though, as we will see in this chapter, the NT theologies of Hans Hübner and Peter Stuhlmacher make significant references throughout to Judaism.

OT notion under study.²⁹ Such analysis will also show the historical rootedness of the theology of the NT.

(5) This approach to NT biblical theology will focus more on the unity of the NT than on its diversity. The reason for this is that such a theology attempts to trace how the overall storyline of the NT develops from the OT and develops throughout the NT material. In this respect, more classic NT theologies have opportunity to show more of this diversity and historical particularity than the biblical theology being done in this book. This is a limitation of the present project. Such diversity could, however, be discussed sufficiently if twice the space were allotted to the present book. Nevertheless, discontinuities will be shown between the major themes of the OT and those of the NT, especially in terms of how the NT transforms these notions.³⁰

(6) On the one hand, it is not usual to find a concise definition of what is a classic NT theology. On the other hand, my working definition of NT biblical theology is the following, in dependence on Geerhardus Vos's definition of a whole-Bible biblical theology: "Biblical theology, rightly defined, is nothing else than *the exhibition of the organic progress of supernatural revelation in its historic continuity and multiformity.*"³¹ In this light, a biblical-theological approach to a particular text seeks to give its interpretation first with regard to its own literary context and primarily in relation to its own redemptive-historical epoch, and then to the epoch or epochs preceding and following it. This definition, while true of a whole-Bible biblical theology, is equally applicable to the doing of a NT biblical theology and differs from the usual approach of standard NT theologies. In particular, the present project places the interpretation of NT texts in relation to the preceding epochs found in the OT, which often occurs through analyzing the use of particular OT passages in the NT. I will also try to be sensitive to how parts of the NT relate to one another in the development of the storyline, and how the NT era of inaugurated fulfillment of the OT relates to the consummative era.³² In fact, chapter 27

29. While the majority of chapters on the NT (chaps. 3–26) have such sections, a few do not, since it was deemed less important in these chapters (i.e., chaps. 20–21 on the church as eschatological Israel and chap. 25 on Christian living). However, there are a few chapters where such sections on Jewish interpretation would have been helpful, but, among other factors, lack of space hindered such an inclusion (see chap. 15 on justification, chap. 16 on reconciliation, chap. 22 on the land promises, chap. 23 on the Sabbath in relation to the church, the sections in chap. 24 on baptism and the Lord's Supper, and chap. 26 on the law and marriage).

30. See, e.g., chap. 27.

31. Vos, "Idea of Biblical Theology," 15. Carson ("New Testament Theology," 807–8) agrees with Vos's definition and elaborates well upon it.

32. The definition of biblical theology offered so far in this paragraph is in line with programmatic essays by D. A. Carson, "Current Issues in Biblical Theology: A New Testament Perspective," *BBR* 5 (1995): 17–41; idem, "New Testament Theology," 798–814. The latter especially should also be consulted for the history of the problematic issues involved in biblical theology (esp. NT theology), for the massive relevant literature on the subject of NT theology, and various perspectives on the topic, especially from the early part of the twentieth century

tries to summarize the main thematic storyline components discussed in the book by showing how the NT theme relates to the OT through observing its various inaugurated fulfillments of the OT and then how these inaugurated fulfillments relate to the time of the consummation of these fulfillments.

(7) The scheme of this book is generally closer to a couple of works that also style themselves as NT biblical theologies: both Hans Hübner³³ and Peter Stuhlmacher³⁴ have written such books with the identical title *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (*Biblical Theology of the New Testament*). Hübner sees that the key beginning point of his work is that of determining how the NT writers interpret particular OT quotations and allusions. This is a promising approach. He has numerous references to the OT in the NT and interesting discussions of them. Hübner's focus, however, is on how the OT is "received" in the NT rather than on how the OT itself relates to and informs the NT. While showing some continuity between the two Testaments, he highlights more discontinuity.³⁵ He sees that there is more of a separation or gap than a conceptual bridge between the original meaning of OT passages and the meaning that NT writers gave such passages. In this respect, his program can be described as the "New Testament takeover (*in novo receptum*) of the Old."³⁶ The NT writers' perspective "in Christ" overrides the original contextual meanings of the OT texts that are referred to.³⁷

Following Brevard S. Childs, Stuhlmacher criticizes Hübner's project. Stuhlmacher asserts that using only OT citations and allusions as the starting point for a NT theology does not result in a deep and comprehensive enough understanding on how the two Testaments are related. Each Testament deserves to have its own witness heard separately on its own terms, after which and in light of which the two can then be related to each other.³⁸ I would also add

up until the early 1990s. Also helpful is Brian S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology," *NDBT* 3–11; Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie*, 1:13–28.

33. Hans Hübner, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 3 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990–95).

34. Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie*.

35. On which, see the criticism by Carson, "New Testament Theology," 802. However, Hübner (*Biblische Theologie*, 1:258–59) rightly says that Jewish exegetical methodology should not be seen as the key to understanding Paul's interpretation of the OT, but rather Paul's approach must be based primarily on an examination of his letters themselves.

36. Carson, "New Testament Theology," 802.

37. For a succinct summary of Hübner's programmatic discussion of his view on "Vetus Testamentum in novo receptum," see *Biblische Theologie*, 1:64–70, 2:344.

38. Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, 77, following Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 77–78, 225–27. In this introductory section, I will focus on the English translation of this work by Stuhlmacher because it summarizes his general approach in his German NT biblical theology and thus is more accessible to English readers. I have also read a prepublication copy of the English translation of Stuhlmacher's two-volume *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (trans. Daniel Bailey and forthcoming by Eerdmans); however, after this introductory section, I will refer to the published German edition.

specifically that the NT use of OT passages is significantly influenced by the context of those OT texts, even though there is development of the meaning in the NT. Stuhlmacher's approach is the beginning of a recent trend among NT theologies that attempt, to varying degrees, to understand the significance of Christ and his redemptive work in light of the conceptual categories of the OT.³⁹

Therefore, in distinction to Hübner's procedure, Stuhlmacher wants to focus not only on the particular use of OT texts in the NT but also on the wider theological framework of the OT.⁴⁰ He sees that the OT truly sheds light on the NT and vice versa.⁴¹ Accordingly, the OT is not, as entailed in Hübner's position, "a preliminary stage to the New, the significance and worth of which will only be decided on the basis of the New Testament revelation."⁴² In this respect, in the view of Stuhlmacher, Hübner's hermeneutical strategy faces a very difficult main question of whether the God of Israel is the same God as the Father of Jesus and the Lord of humanity.⁴³

In the English-speaking world, C. H. Dodd's small yet profound book *According to the Scriptures* made two major points in line with Stuhlmacher's general approach, but preceding him. Dodd argued that OT quotations and allusions in the NT have in mind the broader context of the OT passage from where they come. Furthermore, he contended that the OT formed the "sub-structure" of NT theology, providing the NT writers with major theological categories and their framework of thought, which was finally interpreted by the saving event of Jesus's coming.⁴⁴

The approach of this book is most in line with Stuhlmacher's and Dodd's theory of NT biblical theology (though in the case of Stuhlmacher there is a different understanding of the canon).⁴⁵ Nevertheless, this book sets out in a

39. See Marshall, *New Testament Theology*; Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*; Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, on which see the further survey in D. A. Carson, "Locating Udo Schnelle's *Theology of the New Testament* in the Contemporary Discussion," *JETS* 53 (2010): 133–34, which also summarizes some German NT theologies that are a part of this recent trend. See, e.g., Ulrich Wilckens, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 5 vols. (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2002–5), which especially in the first volume has significant discussions of the OT and Judaism as significant background for the following study of NT theology. Already in the mid-1970s, Leonhard Goppelt, in introducing his theology of Paul, affirmed that the OT provided a framework of "promise and typology" within which Paul interpreted the OT and applied it to Christ and the church (*Theology of the New Testament*, trans. John E. Alsup, ed. Jürgen Roloff, 2 vols. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981–82], 2:52–62).

40. See, e.g., Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, 79.

41. *Ibid.*, 2–12.

42. *Ibid.*, 79.

43. *Ibid.* See Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie* 1:37–38, for similar and further critique of Hübner's position.

44. I agree with Marshall, *New Testament Theology*, 39–40, on this significance of Dodd's work.

45. Stuhlmacher says that "one must speak of one canonical process from which the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint [including the apocryphal books] and the New Testament all proceed and

different direction in the way it executes how the two Testaments are related. The first major section of this book attempts to summarize the main storyline of the OT (chaps. 2–3), whereas Dodd and Stuhlmacher, among others, make no substantive attempt to do so. Stuhlmacher’s first segment begins with Jesus. Furthermore, neither Dodd nor Stuhlmacher attempts in a significant manner to see how the broad OT storyline relates to that of the NT. In general—and this is the major difference between their work and the present project—they do not attempt an in-depth examination of how the OT influences each of the major theological concepts of the NT. Dodd’s book is especially thin on this score (and we should note that it was not his aim to do such a thorough study). Stuhlmacher chooses God’s righteousness and justification as the central concern of the OT and especially of the NT.⁴⁶ To be fair, however, Stuhlmacher would see his “center” of God’s righteousness and justification to be the essence of the biblical story.⁴⁷

Howard Marshall has said that Hübner and Stuhlmacher have “so thoroughly demonstrated” the OT background for a biblical theology of the NT that “no further demonstration here” is required, and he “is content to assume this approach rather than to justify it.”⁴⁸ I think that Marshall’s assessment needs some modification. Indeed, as late as 1999 James Barr could say that classic NT theologies have had “even less eagerness to establish connections with the Old Testament” than have OT theologies tried to make links with the NT.⁴⁹ Barr may be overstating the situation somewhat, since Hübner and

which, although multi-layered, represents a continuum” (*How to Do Biblical Theology*, 78). This canonical “process ends with the formation of the two-part Christian canon in the fourth century CE” (*ibid.*, 81). Hartmut Gese held that the NT writers accepted the Apocrypha, Qumran writings, and other early Jewish writings as Scripture, and that the NT was responsible for closing the OT canon (see Gese, “Tradition and Biblical Theology,” in *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament*, ed. Douglas A. Knight [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977], 317–26; for a summary and critical evaluation of Gese’s position, see Barr, *Concept of Biblical Theology*, 362–77). My view is that there was a distinct canonization of the Hebrew OT and later of the NT, though it is better to speak of a recognition of the divine canonical authority of books, not a process of the church creating a canon, as some scholars hold. In this respect, as alluded to earlier, I do not see the LXX to have been originally divinely inspired like the Hebrew text, but to be a noninspired translation.

46. Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, 26–27, 33, 36–38, 63 (where apparently he uses “salvation” synonymously with the concept of justification; so also 81). See Scott J. Hafemann, “‘The Righteousness of God’: An Introduction to the Theological and Historical Foundation of Peter Stuhlmacher’s Biblical Theology of the New Testament,” in Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, xv–xli. Hafemann shows that Stuhlmacher saw that the central notion of the OT and especially of the NT is the righteousness of God and justification, and that the NT develops this idea from the OT. Hübner’s work also emphasizes justification in the NT (on which, see Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, 79).

47. See Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, 63, where he gives a brief formulation of a storyline, though with emphasis on the NT role in that storyline; see likewise p. 81.

48. Marshall, *New Testament Theology*, 708–9.

49. Barr, *Concept of Biblical Theology*, 183.

especially Stuhlmacher and Dodd have made significant strides in showing the connection between OT and NT theology. Indeed, Stuhlmacher's project should be seen as the best attempt to show most consistently the continuity between the OT and the NT in the area of NT theology. Nevertheless, Barr's critique still had some force up until the beginning of the twenty-first century. A more thoroughgoing demonstration of the relation of the OT to NT theology still had not been written.

The need to demonstrate the OT background to NT theology has begun to be met in the recently published *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*,⁵⁰ where nineteen NT scholars have analyzed every major OT quotation and significant allusion in the NT. This is the first time in the history of biblical scholarship that this kind of material has been brought together in one volume. This is a major step forward in understanding the biblical theology of the NT, since all the contributors affirm in one way or another that the two Testaments hang together theologically, and that the NT writers to varying degrees have referred to OT passages with their broader OT context in mind. However, this project did not attempt to synthesize the results of each contributor's interpretative work on the use of the OT in the NT. Consequently, the unifying threads of the NT arising out of the use of the OT are not analyzed and discussed. Furthermore, as Stuhlmacher mentioned earlier, focusing only on OT quotations and allusions does not give a deep and comprehensive enough understanding of how the two Testaments relate and how this bears on NT biblical theology. Each Testament needs to be heard on its own, and then how they relate can be focused upon. In particular, the storylines of both Testaments need to be reflected upon, and then one can try to determine how these storylines relate to each other.

Therefore, I believe that more work needs to be done to validate further the program of Stuhlmacher, as well as that of Dodd and others who have shown agreement with them. Consequently, one of the main goals of this book is to demonstrate further the OT background for the theology of the NT. The hope is that others will also contribute to this goal from other various angles.⁵¹ Of course, in a NT biblical theology project like this one, the coverage of the OT must be abbreviated in comparison with that of the NT, which is a limitation. But this will always be a limitation of theologies of the NT, even of the NT biblical theology genre.

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

51. Even though the earlier-mentioned book edited by Zuck and Bock is titled *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, it does not have significant discussion either of how the storyline (or broad themes) of the OT relates to the NT, or of how particular OT texts are used in the New (though there are a few exceptions with respect to the latter). It might better have been titled merely *A New Testament Theology*, since it deals only broadly with themes of the respective NT books.