

Creation, Genesis 1-11, and the Canon

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The compositional strategy of Genesis 1-11 is reflected in the shape of the Pentateuch as a whole. It appears that the author of Genesis 1-11 is the author of the whole Pentateuch. His views can be seen in the way programmatic poetic texts have been distributed throughout the pentateuchal narratives. Explanatory comments inserted into the ancient poems, such as "in the last days" and "ships shall come out from the Kittim," reflect an overriding interest in an eschatology similar to that of the late prophetic literature—for example, Ezekiel and Daniel. A central purpose of the eschatological framework of the Pentateuch is to bring the whole of Genesis 1-11 into the realm of Israel's own history and thus prepare the way for an understanding of concepts such as the Kingdom of God in terms of the concrete realities of creation.

Key Words: Genesis 1-11, creation, canon, canonical context

0. INTRODUCTION

My aim in this essay is to make a few preliminary observations on the theology of Genesis 1-11 within the context of the Pentateuch and the Hebrew canon. My focus will not be on the bulk of the material in these chapters. I will not be looking at the creation account as such or the fall or the accounts of Cain and Abel, the flood, or the Tower of Babel. My focus, rather, will be on the way these stories have been integrated into the whole of the Pentateuch and, especially, the very last stages of this process, the formation of the OT canon. In pursuing this question, I do not intend to look extensively outside the Pentateuch. Although that would be a fruitful search, I believe there are already ample traces of canonical composition within the Pentateuch. Though they are few in number, their importance to the meaning of the Pentateuch as a whole, in my opinion, cannot be overestimated. This, at least, should be our starting point in seeking to understand Genesis 1-11 within its larger canonical context.

1. THE THEOLOGY OF GENESIS 1-11 WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE PENTATEUCH

To position myself correctly for approaching Genesis 1-11 theologically, let me raise two well-known biblical-theological questions about Genesis 1-11. The first was raised to an unusually high level of importance by Gerhard von Rad.¹ Von Rad asked if the OT, specifically Genesis 1-11, allows for the notion of a genuine revelation within creation as such—that is, outside of Israel's own unique history. His answer was an emphatic "no." As far as Genesis 1-11 is concerned, creation and nature could not be put on an equal footing with biblical revelation.² To quote von Rad,

"Neither J nor P is an independent essay on creation to be considered in its own right. Both are woven into a single course of history which leads to the call of Abraham and culminates in the conquest of the land. In both documents, the viewpoint of the "author" [*Verfassers*] lies within the innermost circle of the salvation which Yahweh has secured for Israel. In order to legitimize their salvation theologically, both presentations of the history (J and P) begin with creation and draw a line from there towards themselves, to Israel, the Tabernacle, and the promised land. As bold as it may sound—the creation belongs to the aetiology of Israel! . . . The beginning (of Israel's salvation relationship with Yahweh) is now predated to the event of creation. Such a redeployment of the beginning of Israel's salvation history was only possible because even the event of creation came to be understood as a salvation act of Yahweh."³

My interest in this question is not so much that of von Rad's—that is, what it may imply about the validity of natural revelation per se. As important as that is, my interest lies in what it might tell us about the theological intent of the Pentateuch. If Genesis 1-11 is about "general revelation," then, in my opinion, a legitimate question can be raised about the unity of the theology of the Pentateuch. How does a narrative about general revelation (Genesis 1-11) fit together with those that stress God's speaking and revealing himself to Israel (the rest of the Pentateuch)? Along a similar line, David Clines, in his discussion

1. G. von Rad, "Das theologische Problem des alttestamentlichen Schöpfungsglaubens," *Werden und Wesen des Alten Testaments* (BZAW 66; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1936) 138-47; reprinted in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1971) 136-47.

2. Rendtorff has also pointed out that von Rad himself eventually warmed up to the idea of natural revelation in his study of Israel's wisdom literature. This did not, however, change his view of Genesis 1-11. See Rolf Rendtorff, "'Where Were You When I Laid the Foundation of the Earth?': Creation and Salvation History," *Canon and Theology, Overtures to an Old Testament Theology* (trans. M. Kohl; OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) 92-113.

3. G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments, vol. 1: Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Überlieferung Israels* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1957) 142-43.

of the "Theme of the Pentateuch," chose to treat Genesis 1-11 separately because, he argued, these chapters "concern a world in which the divine promise to the patriarchs has not yet been spoken, and so their theme—whatever it may be—can hardly be subsumed under that of the patriarchal promises and their (partial) fulfillments."⁴

If, however, Genesis 1-11 is already focused on Israel's own history, then much of what is in these chapters would have a direct bearing on the concerns of the rest of the Pentateuch. That would mean the possibility of a remarkable unity to the whole of the Torah. Genesis 1-11 would, in effect, fall into place as an essential part of Israel's salvation history and the overall theme of the Torah. As Ludwig Köhler once suggested, Genesis 1-11 is not an answer to the question of how the world began. It is, rather, an answer to the question of the meaning of Israel's history.⁵ Along the same lines, Franz Delitzsch argued that Genesis 1-11 does not intend to tell us that the world had a beginning. Rather, it intends to lay a foundation for the history of Israel that follows in Genesis 12ff.⁶ Israel's history is grounded in the plans and purposes of the Creator.

Having raised this first question, I want to move directly to the second question: Is there a relationship between Genesis 1-11 and Israel's later prophetic eschatology? Here I have in mind the kind of eschatology that we find in passages such as Daniel 11 and Ezekiel 38. The general question of the place of eschatology in Israel's understanding of creation has been raised by Hans-Joachim Kraus in his book on systematic theology, which he wrote over a decade ago. According to Kraus,

Israel . . . learned to understand creation in light of the history of the coming Kingdom of God. The chosen people drew their own history very near to creation itself in the certainty and knowledge that the Kingdom of God, when it broke into Israel's history would from there go out to all the nations and would fill the entire creation. . . . The mystery of creation itself would at that time be open to all because the coming one was the creator himself. Thus creation and eschatology belong inseparably together.⁷

Kraus therefore understood Genesis 1-11 as a kind of "prophecy turned backwards."⁸ By that he meant that creation was portrayed

4. David J. A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (JSOTSup 10; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978) 61.

5. Ludwig Köhler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1966) 71.

6. F. Delitzsch, *Commentar über die Genesis* (3d ed.; Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1860) 91.

7. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Systematische Theologie im Kontext biblischer Geschichte und Eschatologie* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1983) 209.

8. "Rückwärtsgewandten Prophetie," *ibid.*, p. 209.

in the OT as an eschatological idea.⁹ The biblical prophets looked both backward and forward in their understanding of the intrusion of the Kingdom of God into human history. Creation had as much to do with the Kingdom of God as Israel's own prophetic eschatology. Kraus, like Köhler, saw the biblical notion of creation not as the beginning of a series of events; rather, the biblical notion of creation is itself a part of a single *Weltzeit*, or "total history." Such a history, according to Köhler, has the sort of beginning that compels one to ask when its completion and fulfillment will come.¹⁰ Moreover, standing within that history, one always knows what its end will be. Its end will be like its beginning.

With these two questions in mind—creation as a part of Israel's history and creation as an eschatological event—I want now to turn our attention to Genesis 1-11 by asking what it might look like when viewed from the perspective of the Pentateuch as a whole.

1.2. *The Compositional Framework of the Pentateuch*

To uncover genuine eschatological themes in Genesis 1-11 requires a careful dependence on exegetical method. Here I want to begin a description of the theology of Genesis 1-11 by looking at the compositional framework of the Pentateuch. I want to focus on the work of the author who gave the Pentateuch its final form. There may, of course, have been several stages of this final work, but as far as I can tell, it is uniform enough to consider it the work of a single author.¹¹

1.2.1. *Macrocompositional Seams*. Elsewhere I have suggested that an intentional compositional strategy lies behind the Pentateuch.¹² One important evidence of this strategy is the way programmatic poetic texts have been inserted into the continuous narrative texts. This can be seen at three junctures in the Pentateuch: Genesis 49; Numbers 24; and Deuteronomy 32. These junctures reveal a good deal of homogeneous composition. In each, the central narrative figure (Jacob, Balaam, Moses) calls together God's people (imperatives) and proclaims (cohortatives) "what will happen" "in the last days" (אַחֲרַיִת הַיָּמִים).

There are several important and unique features to these poems. I believe they help us, in a direct way, to identify the theological focus

9. "So gesehen ist es sachgemäss, die Schöpfung als eschatologischen Begriff zu bezeichnen," *ibid.*, 209.

10. Köhler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, 72.

11. See Markus Witte, *Die Biblische Urgeschichte* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998) 2 for a clear distinction between the work of a single author and a multiple redaction.

12. See John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) 34-59.

of the author of the complete Pentateuch. The first and most important feature is, of course, the phrase "in the last days" (אַחֲרֵי־יָמִים). By means of this phrase, each of the poems is presented to the reader as an account of future events. It is not important at this stage to debate how this term should be translated. Its singular usage within these seams in the Pentateuch speaks well enough for its importance, as well as the singular meaning in each of its occurrences. Clearly, in the present shape of the Pentateuch, the focus of the author is thematically on the "last days" (אַחֲרֵי־יָמִים) or whatever translation we might want to give this phrase.

A second feature of these poems is that their ancient poetic structure is often interspersed with concise, highly interpretive editorial comments. These comments might at first appear as random remarks on individual words and phrases. But when viewed in their entirety, throughout the whole of the Pentateuch, these comments reveal a kind of uniformity that suggests a single compositional strategy.

A third important feature of the poetic texts in the Pentateuch is the significant intertextuality between the various poems. Balaam's words about a future king in Num 24:9a, for example, are virtually identical to Jacob's words about the king of Judah in Gen 49:9b.¹³ "He crouches, he lies down like a lion. Like a lion, who will arouse him?" Again, Balaam repeats Isaac's words of blessing to Jacob in Gen 27:29, "Those who bless you will be blessed and those who curse you will be cursed" (Num 24:9b).¹⁴ Such close verbal parallels are not likely accidental. By means of such parallels and others that we will discuss below, the poetry of Numbers 24 is closely linked to the poetic texts in Gen 49:8-12; 27:29; 12:3; 9:25-27; and 3:15. Their themes are not only connected and intertwined but also extended and linked to the larger themes of the Pentateuch.

A final important aspect of the poetic texts in the Pentateuch is that in their present form they consciously link the two divine names YHWH and Elohim (or El).¹⁵ Franz Delitzsch, who had already identified this tendency in the poetry, saw it as an attempt by the author (for Delitzsch, Moses) to resolve the problem of the multiple names for God in the narratives.¹⁶ Delitzsch's observation makes it apparent that the author who inserted these comments into the poems was well

13. Note, for example, the similarity of Num 24:9a (כָּרַע שָׁכַב בְּאָרְזוֹ וּבֶלֶל בִּי אֱלֹהִים) and Gen 49:9b (כָּרַע רַבִּץ בְּאֲרֻזָּה וּבֶלֶל בִּי אֱלֹהִים יִקְיָמְנוּ).

14. מְבַרְכֶיךָ אֶרְוֶה אֶרְוֶה אֶרְוֶה אֶרְוֶה אֶרְוֶה אֶרְוֶה, Num 24:9b.

15. The nonpoetic comment in Gen 49:18 identifies God (אֱלֹהִים) in 49:25 as Yahweh (יְהוָה); compare Num 24:4, 8a, 16, 23 with 24:6b; and Deut 32:3 et passim.

16. See, for example, Delitzsch's remark on Gen 9:26-27, "Und wer wird die Absichtlichkeit darin verkennen, dass Noah den Elohim, der Jafeth ausbreitet, also Gott Sems Jehova nennt and dass Abraham den Gott, den Melchisedek אֱלֹהִים עֶלְיוֹן nennt, näher als אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה (sic) bezeichnet!" (Delitzsch, *Commentar*, 32).

aware of the problems posed by the multiple names for God in the Genesis narratives and that he had set out in this way to resolve the difficulties. What this also suggests is that, in putting the Pentateuch together in its present form, the author was already working exegetically and theologically with written texts. He shaped and forged his texts by means of these minimal explanatory comments.

An interesting example of this is Gen 49:18. Here a nonpoetic comment is attached to the poetic words about Dan. It states: "For your salvation, O Yahweh, I am waiting."¹⁷ Not only does this comment identify the divine name "God" (אל) in the poem (Gen 49:25) with Yahweh (in a way similar to Gen 14:22), but it also reveals an eschatological hope expressed in terms identical to those of the prophet Isaiah (Isa 25:9; 33:2; 40:31; 59:11).

There is still much to be learned about the theology of the Pentateuch from these poetic texts.¹⁸ I will limit myself here, however, to only a small part of the puzzle, that is, the relationship between these nonpoetic comments, taken as a whole, and key passages in Genesis 1-11.

To start with, I want to call attention to the relationship between the phrase אֱהָרִית הַיָּמִים in the introductory headings of the poetic texts and the unusual phrase "In the beginning" (בְּרֵאשִׁית) in Gen 1:1.¹⁹ The notion of a "beginning" in Gen 1:1 has become so commonplace that we often fail to appreciate its uniqueness. The use of רֵאשִׁית in Gen 1:1 has, however, long been the concern of early Jewish and Christian commentary. On a different and scholarly level, Hermann Gunkel surmised that the *subscription* in Gen 2:4a, "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth,"²⁰ was originally the title of Gen 1:2-2:3. It was replaced, Gunkel suggested, by what is now the opening sentence of Gen 1:1.²¹ According to Gunkel, in these opening words, "the writer establishes in a simple and powerful way the dogma that God created the world. There is nothing in the cosmologies of any other people which comes close to these first words of the Bible."²²

17. לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קָנִיתִי יְהוָה.

18. See Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch*, 35ff.

19. The use of the term רֵאשִׁית is unusual in Gen 1:1 because elsewhere in the Pentateuch the adverbial notion of "beginning" is not expressed with רֵאשִׁית but with רֵשׁוּנָה or תְּחִלָּה.

20. אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ.

21. בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ.

22. "(Gen 2:4a [אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ]) was originally a superscription (to Gen 1:2-2:3), but it was removed from that position by a redactor (Stade, *Bibl. Theol.* 349) either in order to begin the book with the term בְּרֵאשִׁית or to ease the connection (of Gen 1:2-2:3) to the J segment which follows"; Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt and erklärt* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977) 101.

Whether or not Gunkel was right in this particular case, his observation about the importance of the opening statement in Gen 1:1, as it now stands at the head of the Pentateuch, seems to me to be valid. It is hardly possible to imagine a more elegant opening. But it is not just elegance that בְּרֵאשִׁית contributes to the opening of the Torah. As far as I know, Delitzsch was the first to note that the term בְּרֵאשִׁית has its antonym in the Hebrew term אַחֲרֵית.²³ Delitzsch, however, did not carry through with this observation by noting the critical role of the term אַחֲרֵית in the poetic seams throughout the rest of the Pentateuch.

Later, Otto Procksch went on to note that the use of בְּרֵאשִׁית in Gen 1:1 revealed a deeply abstract way of thinking on the part of the author. The writer has chosen his words carefully.²⁴ According to Procksch, what would come immediately to the ancient reader's mind when he saw בְּרֵאשִׁית in Gen 1:1 was the notion of the אַחֲרֵית or אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים, "the last days," the absolute end of the present world. But Procksch did not appear to notice the strategic importance of the term in relationship to the expression אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים throughout the poetic seams.²⁵ He did, however, conclude that "In all probability, P has deliberately chosen the expression בְּרֵאשִׁית with a view to the אַחֲרֵית of all things."²⁶

In light of what we have noted about the use of the phrase אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים in the Pentateuch, Procksch's remarks are remarkably cogent. Seen from the broader perspective of the canonical Pentateuch, the אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים ("the last days") which Procksch "heard" in the בְּרֵאשִׁית of Gen 1:1 was, in fact, a vital part of the author's literary strategy. There was, in other words, already in place in the Pentateuch a

23. "Den alle Geschichte is ein von der Ewigkeit umschlossener Verlauf von בְּרֵאשִׁית bis zu אַחֲרֵית; ihre בְּרֵאשִׁית ist der der Anfang der Creatur und mit ihr der Zeit, ihre אַחֲרֵית die Ewigkeit" (Delitzsch, *Commentar*, 91).

24. Procksch, in fact, pointed out that in Biblical Hebrew, the antithesis of בְּרֵאשִׁית, "first or beginning," is not "second" (שְׁנִיית) or "third" (שְׁלִישִׁית) but "last" (אַחֲרֵית); Otto Procksch, *Die Genesis übersetzt und erklärt* (Leipzig: Deichertsche, 1913).

25. Procksch did, however, point to the semantic relationship between בְּרֵאשִׁית in Gen 1:1 and the אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים in Gen 49:1, "ihm korrspondiert der Begriff בְּרֵאשִׁית; (1,1 P)" (ibid., p. 265). This observation was of less consequence to Procksch because, in his view, the two terms did not occur in the same document.

26. "The antithesis of בְּרֵאשִׁית is not שְׁנִיית, or שְׁלִישִׁית, but אַחֲרֵית (Dt 11,12. Jes 41,22); also here (in 1:1) [immediately] comes to mind the notion of אַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים, the absolute end of the present world. In all probability, P has deliberately chosen the expression בְּרֵאשִׁית with a view to the אַחֲרֵית, of all things" (Procksch, *Genesis*, 425). In an early edition of his Genesis commentary, Franz Delitzsch had also noted the relationship between בְּרֵאשִׁית and אַחֲרֵית in Genesis 1, "Denn alle Geschichte ist eM von der Ewigkeit umschlossener Verlauf von בְּרֵאשִׁית bis zu אַחֲרֵית; ihre בְּרֵאשִׁית ist der Anfang der Creatur und mit ihr der Zeit, ihre אַחֲרֵית die Vollendung der Creatur und damit der Uebergang der Zeit in the Ewigkeit" (*Commentar*, 91).

specific terminology for the well-formulated eschatology that Procksch detected in these texts. It was the vocabulary of an *Urzeit* and *Endzeit*.²⁷ By the use of the terms אֲשֶׁר־יָרַד and אֲשֶׁר־יָרָא, God's activities are divided into a "beginning" (אֲשֶׁר־יָרַד) and an end, a "last days" (אֲשֶׁר־יָרָא אֲשֶׁר־יָרַד). This also implied a "time between" in which fell Israel's own history. By opening the Torah with the statement that "in the beginning (בְּרֵאשִׁית) God created the heavens and the earth," the author assigns the early chapters of Genesis to a larger eschatological schema in which its events are cast as those of the *Urzeit*.

Within that broad schema, there are remarkable parallels between the *Urzeit* of Genesis 1-11 and the *Endzeit* described in the poetic texts of the Pentateuch. These parallels are found not only in the poetic texts themselves but also, and in my opinion more importantly, they are found in the explanatory comments to these poetic texts. Such comments, as we have already said, suggest a conscious reflection on the meaning of Genesis 1-11 in light of the material found in the Poetic texts.

1.2.2. *The Poetry and Genesis 1-11*. In light of these general observations on the compositional framework of the Pentateuch, I want now to ask what they contribute to our specific understanding of the theology of Genesis 1-11. What I will look for in particular are the verbal parallels, or echoes, between the poetic texts (with their editorial comments) and the texts in Genesis 1-11. What is the compositional interplay (innertextuality) between the poems and the verbal (or literary) strategy of Genesis 1-11? Here I can only point to a few important features in each major poem.

Gen 49:1-28.²⁸ The central compositional theme of this poem is found in the segment about Judah (Gen 49:8-12). It presents a vision of the victorious reign of a future Davidic monarch whose authority extends even to the Gentile nations. The imagery of 49:11-12 suggests that the days of this monarch will be accompanied by a restoration of the abundance of the Garden of Eden.²⁹ There can be little

27. D. Wilhelm Bousset and Hugo Gressmann, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1966) 283.

28. At its conclusion, the poem is characterized as a "blessing" for each of the twelve sons. In actual fact, only Joseph and Judah received what might be called a "blessing." Verse 28 suggests that the writer who inserted the poem saw its importance in what it said about the "blessing" of Judah and Joseph. Since the Joseph material would have been more at home in the larger context of the Joseph story, the Judah material more likely reflects the primary interest of the writer. There are, in fact, several instances throughout Genesis 37-50 where material relating to Judah has been intentionally inserted into the story of Joseph. John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis* (EBC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).

29. "Die Fülle von Milch and Wein is auch sonst ein Charakteristikum der Endzeit" (Gunkel, *Genesis*, 482-83).

doubt that Jacob's words in this poem have the Davidic Covenant promises in mind.³⁰ This is confirmed by what is said of this king in the next major poem, Numbers 24.

Num 24:1-24. The Balaam oracles as a whole offer a complex view of the composition of the Pentateuch.³¹ In Num 24:5, Balaam begins his oracle with a vision of the restoration of the garden planted by Yahweh (24:5-7a) and the rise of a future king in Israel (24:7b-9). The poem thus begins with allusions both to the Garden of Eden, Genesis 2, and the king in Genesis 49. According to Balaam, the king, who is consciously identified with the king in Genesis 49, will be victorious over "Agag" (וַיִּרְם מֵאַגַּג מֶלֶךְ כּוֹן, 24:7b).³² Most if not all commentaries see the specific mention of the historical king, Agag, as an obvious attempt to identify the Davidic monarchy (which ruled over the Amalekites) as the fulfillment of Balaam's prophecy.³³ This interpretation can be traced to the Medieval Jewish peshat commentaries on this text (for example, Rashi). The "simple meaning" of the Masoretic Text was identified with a specific historical person, David.

There is, however, considerable difference of opinion within the actual textual history of the Hebrew Bible regarding the meaning in this text. Curiously, only the Masoretic Text has the word "Agag" (אַגַּג) in this passage. All other early texts and versions speak of an individual named "Gog" (גֹּג) in this verse.³⁴ Gog, of course, is well known from Ezekiel's vision in chaps. 38-39.³⁵ There, Gog is the leader of a powerful enemy that will attack Israel in "the last days" (בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים, Ezek 38:16). Also according to Ezekiel, Gog is that one about whom God's prophets spoke "in former days."³⁶ This raises an interesting question since there is, of course, no mention of this "Gog" anywhere else in the Masoretic Scriptures. To what passage, spoken "in former days," could Ezekiel be referring? In all probability Ezekiel

30. This, at least, is how the Chronicler has read this text (1 Chr 5:1-2). In my opinion, this does not necessitate a late date for the material in the poem, since it is clear throughout the rest of the Pentateuch that the focus of the writer is on the centrality of Judah (see my *Pentateuch as Narrative*).

31. Note that the poems in Numbers 24 are introduced as divinely inspired (וַתְּהִי עֲלֵיו רִיחַ אֱלֹהִים) oracles.

32. The intertextual references in Num 24:8 to Num 23:22; Num 24:9a to Gen 49:9b; and Num 24:9b to Gen 27:29 are hardly coincidental and reflect a conscious effort on the part of the writer to link these poetic texts within the final shape of the canonical Pentateuch (see my *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 408-9).

33. Rashi understood Num 24:7bα (וַיִּרְם מֵאַגַּג מֶלֶךְ כּוֹן) to be about Saul, the first king of Israel (Jacob) who conquered Agag, the king of the Amalekites; and Num 24:7bβ (וַתִּגְדַּל מַלְכוּתוֹ) to be about David, whose kingdom greatly increased over that of Saul.

34. See BHS apparatus.

35. The name "Gog" is found in only one other place, 1 Chr 5:4, where he is a son of Reuben. The two individuals are not related.

36. בְּיָמִים קְדָמוֹנִים, Ezek 38:17.

is reading from a non-Masoretic version of Numbers 24 that indeed had "Gog" in its text rather than "Agag." Ezekiel was also reading Numbers 24 along the same lines as reflected in the overall strategy of the composition of the Pentateuch: a davidic king will reign over the nations "in the last days," after the defeat of the last enemy, Gog.

Whether "Gog" or "Agag" is "original" in Numbers 24 is not now the most important question. What the variant readings show, however, is that an important biblical-theological moment surrounded the final stages of this text. It appears that even before the ink had dried, this question was raised: Was Balaam's prophecy about the historical future of Israel (that is, David and his kingdom), or was it about an eschatological future that involved a messianic king and the nations? It is clear that in the Masoretic Text, the noneschatological reading of the passage (Agag) won the day. But at an earlier, and more definitive, stage in the history of the text,³⁷ this interpretation represented only a minority opinion or perhaps did not yet exist. The prophet Ezekiel, at least, appears to have read Balaam's oracle within the context of Israel's prophetic eschatology.³⁸

Ezekiel's reading of Num 24:7 and its surrounding context is consistent with the presence of the phrase "in the last days" (בְּאַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים), which accompanies and provides the interpretative seam to Balaam's prophecies in Numbers 24 (see Num 24:14).

Num 24:17-19. The second part of Balaam's oracle in Numbers 24 envisions a distant³⁹ warrior who will defeat Israel's historical enemy, Moab, by smiting (מַחֵץ) their heads and taking Edom captive. This not only responds on a verbal level to the themes of Balaam's earlier oracle (Num 24:8b, מַחֵץ), but it is also a thematic link⁴⁰ with an important earlier poetic text in Genesis 1-11—that is, the "victorious warrior" who will smite (שָׁרַף) the head of the serpent and his seed (Gen 3:15).⁴¹ If such a link is intended within the final version

37. The LXX, Samaritan Pentateuch, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.

38. A reference to the defeat of "Gog" in this text, and its connection to Ezekiel is also consistent with the latter part of Balaam's oracle, which deals with the defeat of Assyria and Eber at the hand of the Kittim (Num 24:24). The LXX, in fact, links Balaam's last oracle to Gog. See note in BHS for Num 24:23. The commentaries uniformly recognize that Num 24:24 has in view the events recorded in Dan 11:30 and Ezekiel 38. We will return to these verses below. We should also not lose sight of the fact that the Balaam text in Num 24:7 is not an isolated and marginal part of the Pentateuch. It is, in fact, part of a major compositional and structural seam that gives the Pentateuch its final shape.

39. . . . אֲרָאֵנִי וְלֹא עָתֵדָה אֲשׁוּרֵנִי וְלֹא קָרוֹב. (Num 24:17).

40. For a helpful discussion of the various levels of textual support within a single context, see Shimon Bar-Efrat, "Some Observations on the Analysis of Structure in Biblical Narrative," *VT* 30 (1980) pp. 154-73.

41. The Hebrew word for "to smite" (מַחֵץ) is used in Num 24:8 for the first time and occurs in the Hebrew Bible 14 times and only in poetic texts (Num 24:8, 17; Deut 32:39; 33:11; Judg 5:26; 2 Sam 22:39; Hab 3:13; Ps 18:39; 68:22; 68:24; 110:5; 110:6; and

of the Pentateuch, it suggests the serpent and his "seed" in Gen 3:15 are to be identified with Israel's historical enemies, the Moabites and Edomites. Hence, the names of the two sons of Adam in Genesis 4 mysteriously appear in order to identify the "enemy" in these final visions of Balaam—that is, Seth in Num 24:17, and Cain in Num 24:22. "Edom" is thereby linked both to "Seth" and to "Cain." There is here,⁴² I believe, ample evidence that these names are the result of conscious exegesis of a written text of Balaam's oracles.

Num 24:20-24. A close reading of the text of the remainder of Balaam's oracles reveals a similar complicated history of interpretation. An important part of this history can be read in the numerous explanatory comments inserted throughout the poetic texts. In 24:22, for example, the conjunction and the lack of poetic meter suggest that the whole verse is not a part of the original poetic oracle. As it now stands, the verse is an explanation of Balaam's cryptic oracle in v. 21.⁴³ It identifies the Kenites with "Cain," Adam's son in Genesis 4, and it states that Assyria will take them captive.

Verse 24a also appears to be a comment.⁴⁴ It repeats the thought that no one among the nations will escape the coming judgment of God. What is most interesting about these comments is that they betray the attitude of the author regarding the material he is editing. In these comments we find the author consciously reflecting, exegetically, on his written accounts of Balaam's words. The comments also show that the scope of the author's reflection extends far beyond the immediate context of the oracles themselves. They extend as far back as Genesis 1-11 and as far forward as Daniel 11 and Ezekiel 38.

According to 23b, God will bring about a work of judgment from which no one will escape alive. In the comment in 24a, the divine work is identified as the rise of the "Kittim." In the distant future, the Kittim will destroy both Assyria and Eber.⁴⁵ They themselves will then suffer a similar fate. Though terse, these textual comments leave little doubt that in their present form, Balaam's oracles were being read in light of events and issues that extended far beyond the

Job 5:18; 26:12). In several of these texts there appear to be not only intentional allusions to Numbers 24 but also to Gen 3:15.

42. As well as in a comparison of texts such as Jer 48:45, **וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־בָּבֶל וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־אֲשּׁוּר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־כִּיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־עֵבֶר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן** and Num 21:28.

43. **וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־בָּבֶל וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־אֲשּׁוּר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־כִּיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־עֵבֶר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן**, Num 24:21b.

44. The lack of meter in 24:24a (**וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־בָּבֶל וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־אֲשּׁוּר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־כִּיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־עֵבֶר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן**) marks it as an explanation of Balaam's poetic oracle in 23b (**וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־בָּבֶל וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־אֲשּׁוּר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־כִּיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־עֵבֶר וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן וְהָאֵבֶר מִן־קֵיּוּן**). A further indication that 24a is a comment on v. 23b is the singular **הָאֵבֶר** in 24b, which can only resume the thought of the singular **מִן־** in 23b and not the plurals in 24a that lie between it and its antecedent.

45. Eber may be the Hebrews (LXX) or Babylon (Tg) or Egypt (Isa 18:1); Assur may be Assyrian or Persia (Ezra 6:22).

horizons of the preexilic davidic monarchy. The Pentateuch was not only being read eschatologically, but its eschatology was cast in terms identical to that of the books of Daniel (Daniel 11) and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 38-39).

It is just at this point that we must turn again to the question of the relationship of these poems to Genesis 1-11. In doing so we immediately see that, in the comments to Balaam's oracles, important links are established with the opening chapters of Genesis. First we should note that in Balaam's oracles there are five historical nations explicitly named. They are Israel, Moab, Edom, the Amalekites, and the Kenites. There are no connections here with Genesis 1-11. These nations are the stock cast of adversaries that populate the wilderness narratives and to some extent Genesis 12ff. Most important from the viewpoint of the composition history of the Pentateuch is the fact that these five nations occur only in the poetic parts of the Balaam text. They are not in the author's explanatory comments.

There are, however, five other nations named in Balaam's oracles. They are Seth, Cain, Assyria, Eber, and the Kittim.⁴⁶ These names are not derived from the immediate narratives but come directly out of the lists of names in Genesis 1-11. It is significant that these names occur only in the written comments to the poems. They are not part of the poetic texts. As such, they show us firsthand the author's own understanding of Balaam's visions, and they leave us without the need to probe further how Balaam himself might have understood them. The tendency in the popular interpretation of these texts has been to overlook the significance of these names within the text itself or to amend the text to suit a more general contemporary historical context.⁴⁷ Our focus will be on the earliest form of the Hebrew text precisely as it has come to us.

To discover the meaning of the explanatory comments, we must look at the role that these last five nations play in Genesis 1-11. In Gen 10:4, the Kittim are identified as the sons of Japhet. Assur is identified, along with Eber, as sons of Shem (Gen 10:22-24).⁴⁸ Curiously, Assur is also secondarily identified with the sons of Ham (Gen 10:11).⁴⁹ In working these names into his comments on Balaam's

46. It is possible that the description of Amalek as "the beginning of nations" (רֵאשִׁית גּוֹיִם עֲמָלֵק), Num 24:20b) is an allusion to Babylon in Gen 10:10 as "the beginning of his [Nimrod's] kingdom" (רֵאשִׁית מַמְלַכְתּוֹ).

47. Note that the NIV (with the KJV) renders the name Cain (קַיִן) as "Kenites." The NASV obscures the identity with Cain (Genesis 4) by rendering Cain (קַיִן) here as "Kain."

48. Note that Eber is singled out among the descendants of Shem in Gen 10:21, וְלִשְׁם יֶלֶד גַּם־הוּא אָבִי כָל־בְּנֵי־עֵבֶר אָחִי יִפֶּת הַגִּדּוּל. It is also worth noting that "Gog" (מָגוֹג, from "Agag," מֵאַגָּג) in Num 24:7b may be verbally linked to "Magog" (מָגוֹג) in Gen 10:2.

49. מִן־הָאֲרָץ הַהִוא יֵצֵא אֲשׁוּר נִיבֵן אֶת־נִינְוָה וְאֶת־רְחֹבֹת עִיר וְחֶת־כָּל־ח, Gen 10:11.

oracles, it appears that the author of the Pentateuch has intentionally enlisted the aid of Genesis 10. The oracles are interpreted by connecting them to the future events in the lives of the two sons of Adam (Cain and Seth) and the three sons of Noah (Shem, Ham, and Japheth). It is thus the Table of Nations that provides the context for the meaning of the Balaam oracles. Though Israel is not mentioned in the Table, it is by means of these connecting links that the whole of the Table is brought into the larger picture of the future of Israel.

The enormous effect that these comments in Numbers 24 have on our understanding of Genesis 10 is further strengthened by the poetic text (Gen 9:25-27) which links the Table of Nations to the preceding narratives. Using the last words of Noah in Genesis 9, the author has provided an interpretative frame for the central organization of the Table of Nations. In the poem in Gen 9:25-27, Noah tells his sons that God will "enlarge the sons of Japheth" and that they will "conquer" the sons of Shem and Ham. Here we find the identical thought of the comments in Num 24:24a. Furthermore, by means of Numbers 24 the vision of Israel's future in Genesis 9 and 10 is projected into the same future depicted in Daniel 11 and Ezekiel 38-39. God will enlarge the Kittim (Japheth), and they will afflict⁵⁰ Assur and Eber⁵¹ (Shem).

These observations have important consequences for the question of the nature of the eschatology of the poetic texts introduced by the phrase *בְּאַחֲרֵי יָמַי* (Genesis 49; Numbers 24; Deuteronomy 32). They also tell us much about the author's view of the *Urzeit* of Genesis 1-11. This *Urzeit*, it appears, extends at least as far as the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. It also is an *Urzeit* that is shaped by the same themes that are later found in Israel's prophetic eschatology (for example, Ezekiel and Daniel). Israel is surrounded by the nations, and God alone, the God of Shem, is the source of the blessing of all humanity. Seen in this light, the *Urzeit* of Genesis 1-11 extends to the fall of the city of Babylon in Gen 11:1-9, just as in Israel's later prophetic eschatology (for example, Isaiah 13-14). The call of Abraham (Genesis 12) is thus placed within the context of a Babylonian captivity of the descendants of Adam. It can hardly be accidental that the eschatology of the Balaam oracles merges with that of prophets from the exilic period such as Daniel and Ezekiel.

Deut 32:1–43. I want to turn now to the third and final poem

50. The author thus understands "dwelling in the tents of" as "living in their tents," namely, "to defeat in warfare." This is also the sense of the expression in 1 Chr 5:10.

51. The mention of Cain taken captive in Assyria (Num 24:22) may be an attempt to relate the future of the Kenites to the fate of Cain's exile "east of Eden" (*קְדֵמֹת־עֵדֶן*) in Gen 4:16b. In Gen 2:14 the border of the Garden of Eden is the Tigris River, "east of Assyria" (*קְדֵמֹת אַשּׁוּר*). These are the only two uses of *קְדֵמֹת* in the Pentateuch.

introduced by the phrase **בְּיַמֵּי הַיְיָ**, Deut 32:1–43. The poem assumes Israel's possession of the land and the future apostasy of Israel. But it also looks beyond that apostasy to a gracious act of God through which Israel gains victory over their enemies.⁵² As we have seen, this is very similar to the central themes of the other poems in the Pentateuch. The universal scope of the poem is also identical to that of Genesis 49 and Numbers 24.⁵³ According to Driver, the "'Song of Moses' is a presentation of prophetic thoughts on a scale which is without parallel in the OT."⁵⁴ The argument of the poem reaches its climax in the last verse: God will avenge the blood of his servants, he will require recompence from their enemies, and he will provide atonement for their land (Deut 32:43).

The first observation I would like to make about Deuteronomy 32 is the almost complete absence of any reference to creation as such. The poem is fraught with the themes of Israel's election and God's gift of the land, but there is no mention of creation. The only, even remote, reference to creation is Deut 32:6b, God's "creating" Israel in their election. Creation terminology is thus applied only as far back as the patriarchs and their prelude, the Table of Nations (Genesis 10).

However, at both its beginning and end, the poem in Deuteronomy 32 draws directly from two important sections of Genesis 1–11. After an extended introduction (Deut 32:1–6), the poem turns to the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. It was there that God apportioned each of the nations its own inheritance of land; and it was there that he also gave Israel, "his people," the inheritance of their land (Deut 32:8–9).

It is just at this point in the poem that the author begins to draw numerous allusions from Genesis 1 to illustrate, not creation as such, but God's care for Israel and his gift of the land. In Deut 32:10–14, God found Israel "in *tohu*" (**בְּתוֹהוּ**; see Gen 1:2a) and led them into their land (**אֶרֶץ**; see Gen 1:2a). In their land they ate freely from its rich produce. God had prepared their land for them as an eagle "hovers over" (**יִרְחַף**; see Gen 1:2b) its nest.

It is clear from these texts that in Deuteronomy 32 the author sees Genesis 10 in light of the "Land Promise" to Israel; and even more importantly, he sees the "Land Promise" in light of the narratives in Genesis 1 and 2. Israel's salvation history has made its way into the

52. According to Driver, "The thought underlying the whole (of the poem) is . . . the rescue of the people, by an act of grace, at the moment when annihilation seemed imminent"; S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895) 344.

53. It has been called a "compendium of prophetic theology" (Cornill, quoted by Driver, *ibid.*, 346). "The poem begins reproachfully; but, in general, tenderness and pity prevail above severity, and towards the close the strain rises into one of positive encouragement and promise" (p. 344).

54. *Ibid.*, 345.

two most universal passages in Genesis 1-11, chaps. 1 and 10. There are, in fact, a host of other allusions to Genesis 1-11 in Deuteronomy 32. Deuteronomy 32 virtually retells the story of Genesis 1-11 in poetic form and casts it into the prophetic future. Perhaps the strongest statement of this is found in the last verse, Deut 32:43.

The last verse of the poem links three key passages in Genesis 1-11; that is, Gen 3:17 (the curse of the ground), Gen 4:10-11 (the ground's curse affecting Cain), and Gen 8:20-9:6 (the apparent removal of the curse on the ground). In Genesis 4 the ground is said to be crying out because of the bloodshed of Abel. Abel must leave the land because it has been defiled. This is precisely the thought of Lev 18:25.⁵⁵ God will visit the polluted land and it will vomit out Israel. If Israel, and the nations, are to enjoy the land once more, the land must be purified. It must be atoned (כִּפֵּר).

The ground was cursed in the fall (Gen 3:17). In Gen 8:20ff., Noah's sacrifice is said to have turned away God's wrath against the ground and thereby removed the curse. In the same way, in Deut 32:43, God's vengeance for Israel's bloodshed will be upon the nations and "He will atone (כִּפֵּר) his ground [and?] his people" (Deut 32:43). When Noah offered a sacrifice after the flood, God accepted the sacrifice and vowed never again "to curse the ground because of mankind." Noah's sacrifice was accepted for the ground that had been cursed in Gen 3:17. In the same sense, the poem in Deuteronomy 32 looks forward not only to the redemption of his people Israel but also to the atonement of their ground.

Deuteronomy 32 thus provides an application of the author's understanding of Noah's sacrificial offering in Gen 8:21. Just as Noah's sacrifice provided an offering for the ground that had been cursed,⁵⁶ Israel's future enjoyment of the land must, necessarily, be based on a similar atonement of the ground.

2. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion I want to summarize what I think I have demonstrated exegetically in this paper. Second, I want to draw out some of

55. וַתִּטְמָא הָאָרֶץ וְאָפַקְבָּ עוֹנָהּ עָלֶיהָ וַתִּקַּא הָאָרֶץ אֶת־יִשְׁבִּיָּהּ. Lev 18:25.

56. Gen 8:21a, לֹא־אֲסַף לְקַלֵּל עוֹד אֶת־הָאָדָמָה בְּעִבּוֹר הָאָדָם, The syntax of this clause is subtle and should be understood along with the different syntactical construction in 8:21b, לֹא־אֲסַף עוֹד לְהַכּוֹת אֶת־כָּל־חַי, The example of Gen 18:29; 37:5, 8; 38:26; Ps 78:17 suggests that 8:21b reflects a common syntax. The clause states that the verbal action will not keep recurring, that is, God will not continue to destroy all life, as he had been doing in the flood. The syntax of 8:21a, on the other hand, is not attested elsewhere in Genesis and, if there is a semantic difference between the two clauses, it suggests the sense "I will not again curse the ground." For our purposes in this paper, a final resolution of the differences in these two clauses is not essential.

the biblical-theological implications of this exegesis. To simplify matters I will list my points with a few comments.

2.1. *Summary of Exegetical Conclusions*

(1) I have shown that in the present composition of the Pentateuch, Genesis 1-11 has been deliberately cast within a larger eschatological framework consisting of an *Urzeit* and *Endzeit*. The *Urzeit* is represented by the events of Genesis 1-11. The *Endzeit* is described in the poetry introduced by the phrase **בְּאַחֲרֵי יָמַי** in Genesis 49; Numbers 24; and Deuteronomy 32. The central features of each poetic text find an important literary echo (both verbal and thematic) in Genesis 1-11. Genesis 1-11 is "backward-looking prophecy." It views the future in light of the past. Much remains to be shown regarding both the further links between Genesis 1-11 and the larger structural framework of the Pentateuch, as well as the internal (innertextual) links within Genesis 1-11 itself.

(2) Once we have identified the work of the author of the Pentateuch within the compositional strategy of the poetic texts, it becomes clear that the central theme of each major poem is literarily linked to the basic eschatological themes of the later OT prophetic literature.

- Genesis 49 contains a vision of the time of the establishment of the kingship of the tribe of Judah and the restoration of the abundance of Eden in the land.
- Numbers 24 contains a vision of a victorious king who will defeat Israel's historical and eschatological enemies. In doing so he will fulfill the early promises made, not only to the patriarchs (Judah, Jacob, and Abraham), but also to the descendants of Noah (Gen 9:25-27) and Adam (Gen 3:15). It is significant to note that in Numbers 24 the fulfillment of the promises made to the descendants of Noah and Adam is cast in the specific terms of Israel's own unique eschatology. The crushing of the head of the serpent is identified with the defeat both of Israel's historical enemies, Edom and Moab, and its eschatological enemies, Gog, Assur, Eber, and the Kittim.
- Deuteronomy 32 contains a vision of the future redemption of the people of God. It is a redemption that specifically includes the physical redemption of Israel's ground (**אֶרֶץ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ**), the promised land.

(3) A close reading of the poetic texts of the Pentateuch (as well as many of the narratives) suggests that the actual task of composing

this work was itself exegetical and hermeneutical in nature. Old, sometimes obscure texts, were deeply pondered and rendered meaningful through arrangements, headings, comments, and conscious innertextuality. This allowed the extended meaning of one text to serve as the development and explanation of another.

2.2. *The Biblical-Theological Implications of Our Exegesis*

(1) By drawing Genesis 1-11 into the framework of Israel's own prophetic eschatology, these chapters come to be viewed within the scope of this eschatology—namely, Israel's history and the Promised Land. As von Rad once argued, Genesis 1-11 is a part of Israel's unique history of salvation. To repeat the observation of Köhler, Genesis 1-11 is not an answer to the question of how the world began. It is, rather, an answer to the question of the meaning of Israel's history.⁵⁷

(2) Given the relationship of *Urzeit* and *Endzeit* within the compositional seams of the Pentateuch, it is reasonable to expect to find the important eschatological themes of the poetic texts also in Genesis 1-11. Where this seems to me to be of particular importance is in the prominence given in the poetic texts to the idea of an eschatological kingdom. This suggests that the theme of the Kingdom of God may also be at work in Genesis 1-11. It is from such a perspective that, I believe, we can begin to feel some exegetical ground under our feet in the attempt to link the OT and NT into a single Biblical Theology. It is an exegesis that, as Eichrodt once lamented, is not "exhausted by a bare historical connection, such as might afford material for the historian's examination but no more."⁵⁸ What I think our exegesis suggests is that the canonical Pentateuch already appears to be in "the unique spiritual realm of the NT" in which, to quote Eichrodt again, there is a "fundamental identity" (*eine grundlegende Wesenseigentlichkeit*) between the NT and OT. For, to quote Eichrodt one more time, "that which binds together indivisibly the two realms of the Old and New Testaments . . . is the irruption of the Kingship of God into this world and its establishment here."⁵⁹

(3) If Genesis 1-11 is, in fact, an eschatological statement about the world of the future—if the "very good" of Genesis 1 points to the "glory" of the eschaton—then we have a right, and perhaps exegetical responsibility, to expect some kind of "this worldliness"

57. Köhler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, 71.

58. Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (trans. J. A. Baker; 2 vols.; OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961-67) 1.26.

59. *Ibid.*, 26.

(*Diesseitlichkeit*) in the Kingdom of God. Kraus is correct, in my opinion, when he argues that, "as our faith in a Creator diminishes, our eschatology will thereby dissolve into a merely abstract otherworldliness" (*Jenseitsvorstellung*).⁶⁰

Along similar lines, Anthony Hoekema has argued, "the doctrine of the new earth is important for a proper grasp of the full dimensions of God's redemptive program. . . . The total work of Christ is nothing less than to redeem this entire creation from the effects of sin." Hoekema argues, rightly I think, that one cannot properly understand biblical eschatology without an understanding of the "this worldly" nature of our future state. "[T]o leave the new earth out of consideration when we think of the final state of believers is greatly to impoverish biblical teaching about the life to come."⁶¹

(4) As I stated in the introduction, a central theological problem in Genesis 1-11 is its literary and theological relationship to the message of the rest of the Pentateuch. It is widely recognized that the central theme of the whole of the Pentateuch, excluding Genesis 1-11, is the "Land Promise" to the Fathers. How then does Genesis 1-11 relate to that theme? If the compositional links we have discussed in this paper are valid, there is good reason to view Genesis 1-11 as also an integral part of the Pentateuch as a whole. If these chapters are intended as a preview of Israel's own eschatological future, then we may expect the "Land Promise" theme to play an important role as well in these early chapters of the Pentateuch.

60. Kraus, *Systematische Theologie*, p. 209.

61. Anthony Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 274.