

The Anthology in Jewish Literature

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Anthology in the Torah and the Question of Deuteronomy

Anthologies go back to the oldest stage in Jewish literature.¹ The Bible consists of twenty-four distinct books according to the Jewish count, and the very term “Bible,” though singular in English, goes back to the Greek plural *ta biblia*, “the books.” The original separateness of the Bible’s components was manifest in the fact that prior to the adoption of the codex (by Christians in the second and following centuries and by Jews after the talmudic period) it was, physically, a group of scrolls rather than a single volume.² Accordingly, early writers had no name for the collection as a whole and could use only descriptive phrases such as “the Law, the Prophets, and the other books” (Prologue to the Greek of Ben Sira [Ecclesiasticus]) and “the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms” (Luke 24:44). Several of the names eventually adopted also reflect the Bible’s anthological character: not only rabbinic *haSefarim*, “the books” (cf. Daniel 9:2) and *Kitvei ha-Kodesh*, “the sacred writings,” but the names used in the Middle Ages even after the codex was adopted: *ʿEsrīm ve-ʿarbʿah* or *Kaf-dalet*, “the twenty-four (books),” and *Tanakh*, the acronym for *Torah*, *Neviʿim* *uKetuvim*, “the Torah, Prophets, and Writings.” Note as well *Bibliothēca*, “collection of books,” used by Jerome and others.³

In this sense the Bible as a whole is what David Stern calls an explicit anthology.⁴ The same is true of certain of its individual books, which explicitly contain the works of different writers, such as Psalms, Proverbs, and *Trei ʿAsar*, “the Twelve” (i.e., the Minor Prophets, which were written on a single scroll).⁵ The term “anthology” also refers to a collection of the works of a single author. This sense applies to most of the individual books of the prophets, which consist of the collected speeches of the prophets whose names they bear.

Other books are implicitly anthological, combining materials from originally separate sources without explicitly saying so.⁶ A few prophetic books seem to contain the speeches of two or three different prophets, such as Isaiah, Hosea, Micah,⁷ and Zechariah. The best-known implicit anthology in the Bible is the Torah, as

its composition is understood in modern scholarship. In the next section we look more closely at its composition.

The Torah

The Torah presents a running narrative of Israel's early history composed of materials from originally separate sources. Its evolution was a process of composition followed by conflation. That is, three variant narratives of early Israelite history (called J, E, and P by scholars) were each created by the combination of originally separate materials; they are each, in other words, composite. Subsequently, these three variants were interwoven, or conflated, with each other, and a fourth source (D) was added, thus creating the Torah essentially as we know it today.

Sources

A typical view would summarize the process of composition more or less as follows.⁸ The original literary units underlying the Torah were narratives about the early Hebrew tribes and their leaders. Such narratives were for the most part created, and at first transmitted, orally, some think in poetic form. In the course of time some of them were gathered into cycles dealing with various individuals (e.g., Abraham, Jacob) or other common subjects (e.g., the Egyptian bondage, the Exodus); the cycles were later linked together into lengthier narrative series (such as the patriarchal period), and, later still, these series were linked into comprehensive historical epics (such as the history of Israel from the patriarchs through the death of Moses or the conquest, or later). Apparently from one such epic (what Martin Noth termed "G," for *gemeinsame Grundlage*, the "common basis") there branched off separate versions which then in the course of transmission developed their own unique characteristics in terminology, style, ideology, and content. These versions are called the Yahwistic, Elohist, and Priestly sources, or J (from German *Jahwistisch*), E, and P, respectively.⁹ By this stage the narrative was in prose. Whether G itself was written is debated, but in the view of most critics, J, E, and P were. By this time certain older written documents had also been incorporated into the narratives, such as the book of the Covenant (Exod. 21–23) and quotations from "the Book of the Wars of YHWH" (Num. 21:14). Other traditions about early Israelite history were omitted from these written sources. Some disappeared forever while others survived, either orally or in other written forms, for centuries and in some cases were picked up in postbiblical literature.

When the old narratives about early Israelite history were gathered into larger complexes, they were organized by the itineraries and genealogical links of the patriarchs and the Exodus generation and held together by the theme of the divine promise to the patriarchs of land, progeny, and protection. This promise was probably an original part of at least some of the old traditions. In any case, many of the original narratives had nothing to do with this theme; each had a meaning and function of its own. Once drawn together, however, these narratives were transformed into episodes on the way to, or threatening, the fulfillment of the

promises. Literary topoi were pressed into service to this end: for example, the promise was threatened by the repeated barrenness of the patriarchs' wives, and the future deliverer, Moses, was endangered and hidden in infancy and saved in a basket in a river.

The smaller cycles within the larger complex also have their own subthemes. The biography of Abraham, for example, appears as a story of personal growth from loyalty to God based on an expected reward to loyalty even when that reward is threatened. This theme, too, is not present in all the individual narratives, but it is imparted by the literary frame (note how Genesis 12:1–4 is echoed in 22:1–3) and the recurrent promises appearing in the narratives.

Redaction

After developing independently for a time, the two main offshoots of G (J and E) were ultimately conflated into a single running narrative, one serving as the basis of the new narrative, with selections from the other supplementing it. Later, two other elements were added to this complex. One was the P source, which was now spliced into the combined JE much as J and E had been joined. The fourth element, D, was placed near the end of the account of the desert period because for the most part it was not a variant account of the earlier history, parallel to J, E, and P, but dealt with Moses' last days. The relative order in which P and D were composed is debated. Most scholars have considered P the latest element, while a minority regard P as roughly contemporary with or earlier than D and think that P and D were joined to JE simultaneously. Recently a new approach has been suggested: the author(s) of the "Holiness Document" (H)—which was previously thought to be an older source embedded in P—represent a separate priestly school later than P; it was he / they who edited and rewrote P and blended it with the other sources, producing the Torah as a whole.¹⁰

By the time these documents were to be joined, their texts had become largely fixed, and the redactors did not have, or at least did not exercise, much freedom to revise them. Rather than rewrite the sources in their own words, they strove to incorporate them essentially as they found them, using the documents' own wording, making only such modifications as were necessary for fitting the various extracts together, or for other purposes they hoped to achieve with the new version. Where the two versions extensively duplicated each other, one version would be dropped, except for significant variants which were maintained alongside the other version. Depending on the nature of the materials or the redactors' intentions, the separate versions of the same episode might be interwoven to present what was taken as a more complete account of it (e.g., the account of the flood, where the doublets are presented as different moments in the unfolding sequence of events),¹¹ or left apart and treated either as separate events (as in the case of the three stories in which a patriarch presents his wife as his sister) or as a main account and a partial recapitulation with greater detail (as in the two creation accounts in Genesis 1–2). The redactors added their own connective and transitional phrases between the passages and often achieved fine artistic effects simply

by skillful arrangement of the material. Somewhere in this lengthy process, material deemed objectionable or not suitable for the traditionists' purposes was omitted, but on the whole they seem to have preserved as much as they could.

This summary is far from encompassing the complete range of opinion on the subject, but it gives a fair impression of the kinds of processes that most critical scholars think were involved in the evolution of the Torah. While the role of these processes in the case of the Torah is hypothetical, inferred from contradictions, doublets, and other phenomena identified by reading between the lines of the text, it can be documented, by the comparison of older and younger versions of many ancient texts that such processes regularly operated in the development of ancient literature.¹²

The Redactors' Thinking

That the redactors who combined the Torah's source documents preserved so much of the sources' original wording and contents, even when doing so caused inconsistency or redundancy, appears to be due to the status of the sources when they received them. The comparison of older and younger copies of certain ancient texts shows that in the earlier stages of a work's development, when it was not yet considered classical or sacred, editors felt free to rewrite almost at will, and early revisions of a work show very few inconsistencies even when new matter has been added to them. But once a work acquired sacred or classical status, it became increasingly difficult for editors to revise it even in order to remove inconsistencies. The inconsistencies in the Torah are due to the fact its source documents were combined at a time when they already had a quasi-canonical status, and the compilers did not feel free to do much more than juxtapose or interweave the sources and add some transitional phrases. Probably they resolved the inconsistencies exegetically in their own minds but did not feel free to add their explanations to the text.¹³ Some of the harmonistic interpretations of the Rabbis may well be similar to those of the editors.

It is hard to be certain exactly what the redactors thought made their sources almost inviolable even when they were inconsistent with each other. It could have been the authority of their respective authors. Talmudic and post-talmudic literature records numerous instances of liturgical texts created by combining the wording proposed by different rabbis because the authorities refused to choose between the differing views.¹⁴ Their thinking seems nicely expressed by a latter-day authority, Rabbi Jacob Emden, who explained how he resolved the disagreement over which version of Kol Nidrei to recite, the older one, which nullifies vows made from last year to this, or Rabbenu Tam's version, which refers to vows made from this year to the next:

The statements of the ancients of blessed memory, that the wording was formulated with reference to the past, are convincing, and I have no doubt at all about that. Nevertheless, in deference to the statement of Rabbenu Tam, since it comes from the mouth of that *tzaddik*, my custom is to say it in both formulations and to conflate the wording: "[vows] that we vowed and will vow, swore and will swear, with which we bound ourselves or will bind ourselves, etc. from last Yom

Kippur [to this and] from this Yom Kippur to [the next], etc.” so as to satisfy both views.¹⁵

But it could also have been the redactors’ belief that *’elu ve’elu divrei ’Elohim hayyim*, “these and those are the words of the living God,” that all of their sources were divinely revealed and hence were all valid, or at least potentially so. This phrase, in which the Talmud characterizes conflicting opinions of different sages,¹⁶ may be applicable as well to the redactors’ evaluation of their sources.

In either case, the redactors seem to have felt that no one version of the past, of a law, or of a belief necessarily preserved the whole truth, and where they felt unable to decide, they preserved what they had received, harmonized inconsistencies as well as they could, and left the rest to posterity. As one nineteenth-century scholar observed, “It is this way of writing that makes the Bible history so vivid and interesting,” for no book written by the modern technique of digesting and rewriting the sources “could have preserved so much of the genuine life of antique times.”¹⁷ By not imposing unity and consistency on the sources, the compilers preserved the variety and richness of ancient Israelite belief, tradition, law, and literature.

Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy, on the explicit level, is an anthology of speeches by Moses, connected by brief narrative passages. The speeches are the three main discourses (1:6–4:40; 5:1–28:68; 29–30) and the poem and blessing of Moses (*Ha’azinu* in 32 and *Ve-zo’t haBerakhah* in 33).¹⁸

Deuteronomy is also anthological on the implicit level. First of all, it contains some material from the non-Deuteronomic sources, JE and P as well as other sources independent of those, including the two poems just mentioned.¹⁹ Further, even some of the Deuteronomic narrative material seems to come from different hands within the Deuteronomic “school.”²⁰ But here I wish to raise the question of whether one may also view Moses’ first two discourses as implicitly anthological, that is, whether each of them consists of shorter, originally separate speeches.

The Analogy of Prophetic Literature

Before turning to these speeches, it is worth looking more closely at prophetic literature, which is analogous to Deuteronomy because it, too, consists of speeches. As was noted, most of the books of the classical prophets are clearly anthological. They consist of speeches by the prophets, and since most of them were active for many years (as is indicated in their headings), their books consist of different speeches uttered on different occasions during their careers (whether they also include interpolated matter not written by the prophets will not concern us here). The book of Jeremiah (36:2) says explicitly that God had him dictate to Baruch Ben Neriah “all the words that I have spoken to you . . . from the time I first spoke to you in the days of Josiah [the thirteenth year of Josiah, 627 B.C.E., according to Jer. 1:2] to this day” (in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, 605), and Jeremiah remained

active until after the exile began in 586. Many of his speeches, and those of other prophets, contain headings, often dated, indicating that they are separate speeches. Moreover—and this is why the subject is pertinent for present purposes—many scholars believe that these “speeches” are actually not single speeches, publicly delivered in their present form, but “literary speeches,”²¹ collections of shorter oracles, uttered on different occasions, that have been secondarily gathered together in the larger entities of which they now form parts.²² The demarcation of the putatively independent units is based on such criteria as introductory and concluding formulas, changes of subject, grammatical person or number or literary genre, different function, abrupt shifts, completeness and independence of thoughts, and above all, the obliviousness of one unit to another.

This approach is controversial because the testimony of such criteria is not always unequivocal, and some scholars deny the validity of at least some of them. We cannot be certain that what we perceive as logically unconnected would have been perceived the same way in antiquity.²³ The approach is especially problematic if one becomes so “programmed a priori to discover small separate units” that one ignores the units’ present context (regarding it as both chronologically and qualitatively secondary) and the meaning that it imparts to them, effectively ignoring the character of the prophetic book *qua* book.²⁴ Increasingly, scholars have shown that the prophecies are arranged in ways that show careful design, being grouped into complexes that share common subjects or extrinsic similarities (such as key words) and arranged in esthetic patterns (such as chiasmus) and framed by similar opening and closing verses, and that have meaning as wholes.²⁵ These groupings may sometimes be secondary, but after one reads the books over repeatedly in light of such studies, it can become increasingly difficult to be sure that these groupings are secondary.²⁶

On the other hand, ignoring the possibility of original separateness brings its own dangers, particularly the likelihood of forced interpretations and rationalizations that can be no less subjective than the criteria used for identifying separateness. Those criteria at least have the heuristic value of focusing attention on each unit’s potential discreteness and forcing the attentive reader to ask how it fits into its present context, a question that can stimulate one to discover the design of the context as a whole. Furthermore, even though separateness may be difficult or impossible to prove, it is also difficult or impossible to disprove, and as a historical question it is worth considering the possibility of original separateness and secondary arrangement as a working hypothesis to see how much clarity it brings to our understanding of a literary work.

The Units Underlying the Homiletic Speeches in Deuteronomy

Returning to Deuteronomy,²⁷ we can observe that in some places the homiletic speeches in 1:6–4:40 (the first discourse) and 5–11 (the nonlegal prologue and preamble to the second discourse) look as if they have incorporated brief sermons or teachings, or *précis* of such, that were originally composed for oral delivery²⁸ and at least some of which were originally separate from each other (whether

composed by the same author or different ones).²⁹ More important, many of the smaller sections within these speeches have no inherent connection to each other and are largely oblivious of each other. They could easily be moved elsewhere without the reader feeling that something is missing from their present context or that they are extraneous in their new context. Frequently, after a few verses the text seems to have reached a conclusion and then changes topics, sometimes without any transition.

All of these phenomena are illustrated by Deuteronomy 4:1–8.³⁰ Note first that although all of vv. 1–40 are a discrete unit within the first discourse of Deuteronomy, both vv. 1 and 5 have introductory formulas (“Hear” in v. 1 and “See” in v. 5; similarly, introductory formulas appear four times in chaps. 5–11, though they are presently part of a single discourse: “Hear” in 5:1; 6:4; and 9:1; “See” in 11:26). Vv. 1–4 read as follows:

And now, O Israel, give heed to [lit. “hear”] the laws and rules that I am instructing you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. You shall not add anything to what I command you or take anything away from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I enjoin upon you. You saw with your own eyes what the Lord did in the matter of Baal-peor, that the Lord your God wiped out from among you every person who followed Baal-peor; while you, who held fast to the Lord your God, are all alive today.

In this paragraph the consequences of the Baal Peor incident demonstrate that observing the laws, particularly the law prohibiting worship of other gods, is essential so that Israel may live to enter the Promised Land. Then in the next paragraph (vv. 5–8), the argument that observance is a matter of life and death is dropped and replaced by the argument that Israel should observe the laws because they are uniquely just and uniquely effective in securing God’s closeness, hence following them will demonstrate Israel’s wisdom to the nations.

See, I have imparted to you laws and rules, as the Lord my God has commanded me, for you to abide by in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. Observe them faithfully, for that will be proof of your wisdom and discernment to other peoples, who on hearing of all these laws will say, “Surely, that great nation is a wise and discerning people.” For what great nation is there that has a god so close at hand as is the Lord our God whenever we call upon Him? Or what great nation has laws and rules as perfect as all this Teaching that I set before you this day?

The two arguments are of very different character. The first, rooted in an experience in which gentiles lured Israelites to sin (Num. 25), is historical and is focused on a specific law. The second, unrelated to the first, refers to all the laws. It appeals to national pride and sounds almost contemporary in its contention that the Torah is uniquely just and will win Israel the respect of the gentiles, who are portrayed positively as appreciating justice and prepared to give Israel credit. Logically this argument has nothing to do with vv. 1–4 or the following verses (9–31) and, if moved elsewhere, would not be missed. In fact, vv. 5–8 would fit very nicely in chapter 6, before or after vv. 4–9 or 20–25. Finally, the arguments in 4:1–4 and 5–8

are brief and virtually beg for elaboration, suggesting that they are outlines or *précis* of longer speeches.

As in the prophetic books, in Deuteronomy units such as these appear as parts of larger groups that share common subjects, vocabulary, and themes and are arranged in esthetic patterns and framed by similar opening and closing verses (see below). It is these arrangements that may be secondary.

Again, as in the case of the prophetic books, the original separateness of these units is difficult to prove. They are not overtly contradictory, inconsistent, or characterized by a different worldview, style, or vocabulary the way that J, E, and P are. If they were originally separate from each other, they may still have come from one writer or school of writers who shared the same worldview, style, and vocabulary.³¹ But the occasion of viewing the Bible through the conceptual prism of anthologies suggests that we give this theory a try and see how much this perspective clarifies.

1. *Deuteronomy* 6:4–25. This passage (beginning with the introductory formula *shema*^c) is divided by the traditional *parashah* breaks into four units, (A) vv. 4–9, (B) 10–15, (C) 16–19, and (D) 20–25. A calls for exclusive love and loyalty toward YHWH, taking His instructions to heart and teaching them to future generations. B warns Israel, after they take possession of the Promised Land and its infrastructure, not to forget YHWH and turn to other gods, lest he wipe Israel out. C warns not to try the Lord but to do what is right and good in order to thrive and capture the land from the Canaanites. D calls on people to answer their children’s inquiries about the meaning of God’s commandments by telling about the Exodus and explaining how observing the commandments will bring merit. Although these four paragraphs share certain themes, they are themes common to much of Deuteronomy; they do not bespeak a closer connection between these paragraphs than between any one of them and many others in the book. The later paragraphs in the chapter do not build on the earlier ones, and they show no particular awareness of them. In fact, paragraph B seems to put the cart before the horse: its perspective is after Israel has already conquered the land, while paragraph C states that loyalty to YHWH is a precondition for successfully doing so. Furthermore not “try[ing] YHWH . . . as you did at Massah” in paragraph C refers to an incident when Israel lacked water (Exod. 17:1–7), a warning that fits oddly after paragraph B, which refers to the time when Israel will settle in a land full of bounty, including cisterns, vineyards, and olive trees. Not only could these four paragraphs appear separately in many other places in the book without seeming out of context or being difficult to understand, but in view of the incongruities between paragraphs B and C, some other locations might make those paragraphs easier to understand.

Notwithstanding the seeming disparateness of its components, however, as a unit 6:4–25 can also be shown to possess a chiasmic, symmetrical structure and certain shared themes well suited to its location in Deuteronomy. Paragraphs A and D mirror each other in referring to teaching God’s words and instructions to one’s children; paragraph B refers to God’s providence and C warns against testing His ability to provide. B’s warning not to forget God can be seen as continuing A’s exhortation to recite and teach His words constantly. In addition, C and D, emphasizing the rewards for obedience and the role of the laws in expressing and

inculcating reverence for God, echo the first paragraph of chapter 6, vv. 1–3, which, depending on the perspective from which it is viewed, can be seen as the concluding section of the previous masoretic *parashah*, 5:19–6:3, or as the introduction to the preamble to the laws given in Moab starting in 6:4.³² Deuteronomy 6:4–25 also suits its location following the Decalogue because allusions to the Decalogue, especially the first commandment, appear throughout the chapter. Vv. 4 and 14 restate the first commandment, “you shall have no other gods beside Me,” and vv. 12, 21, and 23 echo its introduction, “I the Lord am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage.” In v. 15 the injunction against worshiping other gods is backed with a warning about God’s jealousy, just as we find after the first two commandments. The exhortations to love God and keep His commandments in vv. 5 and 17 echo the Decalogue’s description of God as showing kindness to “those who love Me and keep My commandments.” V. 18 echoes the reward promised for observing the fifth commandment, “that it may go well with you” (vv. 2–3 also echo both rewards promised in that commandment). In light of these allusions, the exhortations to love God, to remember Him, to teach children about His words and deeds, and all the other themes of chapter 6 can be regarded as a sermonic reflection on the first commandment, explaining what must be done to carry it out. Thus, although the individual units of 6:4–25 do not relate directly to each other, they all relate in some way to the Decalogue of the preceding chapter.

2. *Deuteronomy 11:1–25*. This passage consists of three self-contained arguments for obedience to God’s commandments: (A) vv. 1–9 (which are a natural continuation of 10:12–22),³³ (B) 10–21, and (C) 22–25. Like 6:4–25, they share certain common Deuteronomistic themes³⁴ but have no inherent connection to each other. In A Moses argues from history that Israel should obey God’s commands because, having witnessed His punitive acts against Egypt and rebellious Israelites, which he enumerates, this generation is able to understand better than any future generation that success, both in conquering the land and in remaining in it, depends on obedience. In B he argues for obedience on the basis of nature and topography: the mountainous Promised Land, unlike Egypt, depends on rain, without which Israel would perish, and God will dispense the rain only if Israel is loyal and obedient. In C he urges obedience on the strength of a promise: if Israel is loyal and obedient, God Himself will dislodge the Canaanites for them. These arguments for obedience are independent of each other. A and C refer to military success while B refers to avoidance of starving. The three paragraphs make distinct points and none refer to each other or build on each other.

Nevertheless, these three paragraphs share many features and complement one another. Each calls for “loving the Lord your God” (vv. 1, 13, 22) and “keeping/obeying the commandment(s) which I command you (this day)” (vv. 1, 8, 13, 22; the verbs *shamar*, “keep,” and *shama’*, “obey,” sound alike). The first two paragraphs share the themes of “the land which you are about to cross into/invoke and occupy” (vv. 8, 10, 11)³⁵ and “enduring long upon the soil which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them” (vv. 9, 21). They complement each other in that the first and third section deal with God’s power as manifested in historical events, while the second deals with His governance of nature.³⁶ In context, B and C

explain the two conclusions of A (success in conquering the land and in surviving in it) in reverse order. All three paragraphs fit nicely as a sequel to 10:12–22. In the latter, having reviewed the Israelites' history of faithlessness during the wilderness wanderings, Moses summed up God's demand for loyalty and obedience, the central theme of Deuteronomy (10:12–22). In 11:1–25 he seeks to persuade Israel that its future depends on compliance with this demand. He frequently refers to it, urging Israel "to walk in all His ways," "to love Him," "to serve Him with all your heart and soul," "to keep/obey all His commandment(s) which I enjoin upon you this day," and "to hold fast to Him" (11:1, 8, 13, 22), echoing the same phrases in 10:12–13 and 20.

3. *Deuteronomy 4:1–40*. This speech, part of which has already been discussed, consists of four main sections, each arguing in its own way for obeying God's laws and rules: (A) vv. 1–4, (B) 5–8, (C) 9–31, and (D) 32–40. Section A calls for obedience, prohibits adding to or subtracting from the commandments, and backs up the prohibition by a reference to the worship of Baal Peor and its disastrous consequences. B appeals for obedience on the ground that it will earn Israel the admiration of its neighbors, who will perceive the justice of the laws and the nearness of God that Israel enjoys because of obeying them. C is a lengthy argument for obeying the prohibition of idols. It shows that this prohibition is based on the Exodus and particularly the encounter with God at Horeb, and it backs up the prohibition with the threat of exile. D argues on the basis of the Exodus and Horeb experiences that there is no other God but the Lord (YHWH) and that His laws should therefore be obeyed.

Logically each of these sections is self-contained. They do not refer to each other or rely on each other for their effectiveness and, in fact, any of them could be removed without the others losing any of their force. They are very different in character. A and B are short and skeletal, each appealing for obedience to all the commandments and briefly stating a reason for it. They read like précis rather than speeches or even parts of a speech. Unlike the others, B is based not on history but on the justice and effectiveness of the laws. C is a lengthy argument for the commandment against worshiping idols and heavenly bodies, based on a somewhat detailed narrative and warning of the long-range consequences of disobedience. D is an appeal, of intermediate length, to consider history and realize the truth of monotheism, followed by an appeal to obey all the commandments.

In context these four sections are held together by a frame in which Moses urges obedience to God's laws so that Israel may live to occupy the land and remain in it indefinitely (vv. 1, 40). This message is underscored within the chapter by a warning that failure to observe the law against idols will lead to banishment from the land (vv. 23–28). The four units of the chapter have numerous features in common, both thematic and verbal, which reflect the sermonic, didactic character of Deuteronomy. In all of them Moses refers to the laws he is teaching or commanding and to the land Israel is about to enter.³⁷ In three of the units Moses bases his argument on history. In A he argues that history shows the consequences of obeying or disobeying the commandments. In C he argues that history justifies the prohibition of images. In D he argues that history proves that the Lord is the only true God. Each unit opens with an appeal to the mind: "hear," "see," "do

not forget,” and “inquire” (vv. 1, 5, 9, 32). The themes of seeing and hearing—the senses through which Israel experienced history—are mentioned throughout,³⁸ as are teaching and learning (*l-m-d*),³⁹ knowing and making known (*y-d-^c*),⁴⁰ forgetting,⁴¹ wisdom and understanding.⁴² In each unit Moses lends immediacy to his words by referring to *ha-yom* (“today,” “this day,” “as is now the case”).⁴³ B and D show that Israel and its laws are unparalleled among the nations and the Lord is unparalleled among the gods.⁴⁴ C and D refer to the theophany at Horeb and the Exodus, and both speak of heaven and earth.⁴⁵

The four units of the chapter are arranged in reverse chronological order, based on their allusions to the past: A alludes to the recent incident at Peor (v. 3), C to the theophany at Horeb, the Exodus, and the division of nations (vv. 10–14, 19–20), and D to the creation and the patriarchs as well as the Exodus and Horeb (vv. 32–34, 36–37) (the order within each unit is not chronological).⁴⁶

Unlike 6:4–25 and 11:1–25, 4:1–40 as a whole doesn’t have many similarities to the preceding chapters. Its first unit, referring to the Baal Peor incident, does connect nicely with 3:22, which locates Israel at Peor. But the other events in the chapter have nothing to do with that incident, and although chapters 1–3 revolve around the issue of obedience and disobedience, the point of 1–3 is the importance of obeying God’s orders about conquering the Promised Land, whereas the emphasis of 4:1–40—and the rest of Deuteronomy—is obedience to God’s laws as a way of life in the land, not to ad hoc orders. Hence the transitional “And now” in 4:1 looks like an editorial link, and despite the many similarities and connections between these two sections, they may have had separate authors.⁴⁷

I do not believe that phenomena that lend unity and design to each of the three sections described are strong enough to argue that the units comprising them were originally composed to stand with the others as they now do. These phenomena consist primarily of simple patterns of arrangement (chiasmus, frames, reverse chronological order) that are not integral to the contents of the units, and common Deuteronomic themes and formulas. They do not overcome the disjointed impression that these sections make on the reader. For the sake of contrast, consider how different these sections are from chapters 7, 8, and 9–10. Each of these sections develops a single theme, and when another theme is introduced, it develops naturally from the main theme. Chapter 7, for example,⁴⁸ is concerned with the conquest. Its first section (vv. 1–6) states the requirement to eradicate the Canaanites and their religious artifacts, and its final section concludes with that theme (vv. 17–26). Since v. 1 refers to the Canaanites as more numerous than the Israelites, the second section (vv. 7–16) uses this statement as the occasion to warn Israel against delusions of numerical importance (v. 7) but promises that if Israel obeys God’s commandments, God will increase its numbers (v. 13). The last section urges Israel not to be discouraged by the Canaanites’ numerical superiority (v. 17), since God will defeat them. The surface unity of the chapter is supported by the fact that it is based on the covenant documents in Exodus 23:20–33 and 34:11–16 and that allusions to those documents are found throughout the chapter.⁴⁹

In view of this contrast between smooth-reading sections such as chapter 7 on the one hand and more disjointed sections such as 4:1–40, 6:4–25, and 11:1–25, a

plausible case can be made that the latter consist of originally separate units, many of them sermon *précis*, brought together by a compiler who arranged them in their present patterns. If this is indeed the case, it represents another sense in which Deuteronomy is anthological. Whether the smooth-reading chapters 7, 8, and 9–10 should also be seen as originally distinct works is a question that will have to be left to another occasion.

Conclusion

We have seen multifaceted aspects of explicit and implicit anthologies in the Bible, with special attention to the Torah, and to Deuteronomy in particular.

Anthology is not only a literary phenomenon but an intellectual one as well. As David Stern has written,

the anthology as a form and genre seems to touch upon essential aspects of the Jewish imagination: its desire always to incorporate opposites, to preserve multiplicities of traditions, to incorporate parallel traditions rather than impose orthodoxy by accepting one version and excluding the other.⁵⁰

The viewpoints of the various books gathered together in the Bible vary widely. The four main sources of the Torah not only have different views about the details of Israelite history and law, but—particularly Deuteronomy and the priestly materials—markedly different ideologies on such matters as God, sacrifice, the Temple, and holiness.⁵¹ Even within the priestly materials, recent scholarship has shown pronounced differences between H (the Holiness Document) and the rest of P.⁵² Similarly, Chronicles covers much the same ground as Samuel and Kings from the perspective of very different interests and ideology.⁵³ On key issues, such as eschatology and the relative status of ritual and morality, the classical prophets see things differently than the Torah and the Former Prophets do.⁵⁴ Wisdom literature differs from the Torah and prophecy regarding “the source, the ground, and the bearers of moral responsibility,”⁵⁵ while at the same time within wisdom literature Job and Ecclesiastes see the question of reward and punishment very differently than Proverbs, and the prose framework of Job has a different approach to that question than do the poetic sections of the book.

The Bible’s “anthological habit” set the pattern for subsequent Jewish thought about the Bible, as it did for many other aspects of Judaism, as is manifest in every chapter of this volume. The midrashic works of talmudic and later times bring together the teachings and sermons (or *précis* thereof) of numerous sages, both named and unnamed, along with the explicit and implicit views of their redactors.⁵⁶ A more recent case is the *Mikra’ot Gedolot*, in which separate commentaries “of diverse authorship, provenance, dating and exegetical approaches, often mutually incompatible and contradictory . . . coexist within the confines of a single page, all accommodated within the framework of a single tradition” (N. M. Sarna).⁵⁷ Ever since the Second Rabbinic Bible of 1524, no Rabbinic Bible has ever contained a biblical book accompanied by only one commentary, and different editions vie with each other to claim the largest number of commentaries on

their title pages (e.g., 32, 50, and even 120 commentaries).⁵⁸ As B. Barry Levy has observed, this practice

is a forceful statement about the multi-dimensional approach to Scripture put forth by the collective rabbinic tradition and the limitations inherent in approaching the text through the eyes of a single commentator.⁵⁹

The conviction that “these and those are the words of the living God” has thus followed both the composition and the interpretation of Scripture throughout history.

Notes

1. The vast majority of biblical books are anthologies, composed, according to M. Haran, to preserve the remnants of ancient Israelite literature and with the aim of becoming “canonical” or “scriptural.” See M. Haran, *Ha’Asupah HaMikra’it (The Biblical Collection)* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute and Magnes Press, 1996), pp. 5, 7, 39–40, 92, 308 (Hebrew).

2. See N. M. Sarna, “The Order of the Books,” in C. Berlin, ed., *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History and Literature* (New York: Ktav, 1971), pp. 407–8.

3. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “Bible,” etymological section.

4. David Stern, introduction to this book, p. 5. Stern observes, by the way, that “in the anthology, literary form, organization, even sequence, are all ideological subjects” (p. 3). Although this is not always the case (the components of an anthology can also be ordered by mechanical criteria, e.g., chronologically, by length, by similarity of phraseology or theme, etc.), it is nicely applicable to the differing organizations of the Hebrew Bible in the Jewish and Christian canons. The order described in b. Baba Bathra 14b ends with Chronicles, indicating that “for Jews, the canon of Scripture ends with a narration of the return of the Jewish community to its homeland” (M. Signer, “How the Bible Has Been Interpreted in Jewish Tradition,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. L. Keck et al. [Nashville: Abingdon, 1994], 1:65; essentially the same effect is achieved by ending with Ezra–Nehemiah, as in St. Petersburg [Leningrad] Codex b19^A and related manuscripts). Christian Bibles, on the other hand, follow the order of the Septuagint, which places the prophets last so that they immediately precede the Gospels, thereby reflecting the Christian view that the primary significance of the “Old Testament” is found in its prophecies of the Messiah.

5. N. M. Sarna, *Ancient Libraries and the Ordering of Biblical Books* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1989), pp. 9–10.

6. It is not clear whether and how the various royal chronicles and prophetic writings cited in Kings and Chronicles were used by the authors of those books. The text does not identify them as sources but as places where further information is found, but it is conceivable that the writers extracted information from them and perhaps even incorporated parts of them in their own texts. For a recent discussion see M. Haran, “The Books of the Chronicles ‘of the Kings of Judah’ and ‘of the Kings of Israel’: What Sort of Books Were They?” *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999):156–64.

7. The cases of Isaiah and Zechariah are well known and discussed in the standard biblical introductions and encyclopedias. On Hosea see Y. Kaufmann, *Toledot ha’Emunah haYisre’elit* (Jerusalem/Tel Aviv: Mosad Bialik/Dvir, 1955), 3:93–107, 319 (Eng. trans. by M. Greenberg, *The Religion of Israel* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960], pp. 368–

77); H. L. Ginsberg, "Hosea, Book of," EJ 8:1010–22. On Micah see Ginsberg, *The Israelian Heritage in Judaism* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1982), pp. 25–30.

8. The following several paragraphs are drawn from my "The Evolution of the Pentateuchal Narratives in the Light of the Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic," pp. 22–25, in *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism*, ed. J. Tigay (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985). Interested readers will find fuller documentation there.

9. The names Yahwistic and Elohist are based on the fact that in the J source the divine name YHWH is known to humans throughout the patriarchal period, whereas in the E source it is first revealed to Moses and until then God is called *Elohim*. The Priestly source is so called because it includes extensive cultic rules and even its narratives reflect the concepts and terminology found in those rules. Some scholars think that the priestly material was not a fully developed source document but rather a redactional strand produced by a priestly writer or school that edited JE and supplemented it with extensive priestly lore. For bibliography on, and a refutation of, that view see B. J. Schwartz, "The Priestly Account of the Theophany and Lawgiving at Sinai," pp. 103–134 in M. V. Fox et al., *Texts, Temples and Traditions. A Tribute to Menahem Haran* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996). It has long been recognized that the priestly materials are also not all of one cloth. The "Holiness Code," or H (Lev. 17–26 and some related passages), is generally thought to constitute a distinctive work; both it and P seem internally composite as well. The relationship of H and P is debated; see n. 10.

10. I. Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995). See further H. T. C. Sun, "Holiness Code," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3:254–56; J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), pp. 1, 13–42.

11. See Tigay, "Conflation as a Redactional Technique," in *Empirical Models*, pp. 53–89 and the comments of M. Greenberg cited there, p. 54.

12. See Tigay, *Empirical Models*.

13. Cf. Tigay, "Evolution," in *Empirical Models*, pp. 44f., and the comments of Greenberg cited there.

14. Tigay, "Conflation," in *Empirical Models*, pp. 84–85. See also D. Sperber, *Minhagei Yisrael* (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1989–), 1:39–45; 2:23–75, 203. Examples include various blessings, including the different versions of *Modim 'Anahnu Lakh*, the different answers to the Four Questions in the *Haggadah shel Pesah* (that is, the answers of Samuel and Rab, respectively—namely, *'Avadim Hayyinu* and *Mitehillah 'Ovedei 'Avodah Zarah*, b. Pesahim 116a), and *'Ahavah Rabbah* vs. *'Ahavat 'Olam*. Not only what is recited, but physical practices as well are sometimes "anthological," combining different versions of what a practice ought to be, sometimes intentionally trying to satisfy multiple opinions; one well-known example is the practice of wearing two different sets of tefillin, each made in accordance with a different view of how the texts in them should be arranged. See further Tigay, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Devarim) (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), p. 241, comment to Deuteronomy. 26:10. As Sperber notes, some Jewish practices are conflated because they are based on books of customs that are anthological.

15. *She'elat Ya'avetz*, no. 145, cited by Y. Weingarten, *HaMaḥzor HaMeforash, Yom Kippur, Nusah 'Ashkenaz* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 5747 / 1986–87), Introduction, p. 25.

16. B. 'Eruv. 13b; Git. 6b. See D. Weiss Halivni, *Peshat and Derash* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 116–19; A. J. Heschel, *Torah Min Hashamayim* 3 (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1990), esp. chap. 4. While the issue in *'Eruvin* is halakhic, that in *Gittin* deals with the interpretation of a biblical narrative and provides an

instructive example of exegetical harmonization. R. Abiathar (a third-century Palestinian Amora) and R. Jonathan debated the reason why the Levite's concubine deserted him (Judg. 19:1–2). The former held that it was because the Levite had become angry at finding a fly in his food, while the latter held that he had found a hair. R. Abiathar met Elijah and asked him what God thought of the matter, and Elijah answered that God had quoted both opinions. When R. Abiathar questioned whether God could have doubts, Elijah answered that both opinions are the words of the living God and went on to explain (harmonistically) that the Levite first found a fly but had not become angry, but later found a hair and did. By indicating that both opinions reflected different moments in the same episode, God had removed any conflict between them and enabled them to coexist, exactly as redactors do in arranging conflicting details of the same event (see earlier, text to n. 11, and "Conflation," in *Empirical Models*, p. 76).

17. W. Robertson Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, 3d ed. (New York: Appleton, 1892), pp. 328–29. For the evidence see Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models*, chap. 1.

18. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p. xii.

19. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, pp. xxiv–xxvi, 494–97, 502–07, 510–13, 518–21, 522–24.

20. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p. 504.

21. This phrase is modeled on "literary homily," a phrase used by J. Heinemann to describe the final stage in the redaction of homiletic midrashim, as he understood the process (J. Heinemann, "Profile of a Midrash: The Art of Composition in Leviticus Rabbah," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 39 [1971]:141–50; "The Art of Composition in Midrash Vayikra Rabbah," *HaSifrut* 2 [1971]:808–34).

22. The existence of short oracles does not depend on the now discredited evolutionary assumption that prophecy originally consisted of short oracles and only later of longer ones. Short oracles are actually attested, both early and late. See, for example, J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. 3d ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 624, texts e, f, and g (note the contemporaneous longer prophecies on pp. 623, 625–26); 1 Kings 20:13; 22:11, 17; Jonah 3:4; Josephus, *War*, 6.301, 304, 309.

23. Cf. M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20* (Anchor Bible 22; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), pp. 5–6.

24. A. Berlin, *Zephaniah* (Anchor Bible 25A. New York: Doubleday, 1994), pp. 17–23 (the quoted phrase is from p. 21).

25. See, for example, Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, Berlin, *Zephaniah*, and S. Paul, *Amos* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 11–15; M. Haran, "Amos, Book of Amos," *Entsyklopedia Mikra'it* 5, cols. 275–76.

26. The difficulty is nicely expressed in Steven Fraade's description of a similar problem in analyzing the composition of midrashic compositions:

Do the apparently disjunctive way in which individual traditions have been combined and the internal incongruities reflect the conscious creativity of the "storyteller" or rhetor who works such tensions into his narrative so as to hold his audience in suspense, or the haste of a collector/preserver of traditions who does not get to ironing out all such "seams"? . . . At what point does relative formal and thematic unity such as we have witnessed cease to reflect the redactor's conscious intent and begin to be simply the text's *effect* on the mind of its reader/listener? Here the line between the relatively objective literary criteria and more subjective impressions becomes blurred and our task of describing and evaluating the redactional activity which produced such a midrash meets its limits. For the more we read and reread this kind of text and it becomes lodged in our minds,

the better its pieces seem to fit together, the more its language seems to echo, and the more its messages seem to coalesce. The historian must be careful to recognize the limits of such inquiries into midrashic redaction, distinguishing always between controlled analysis and intuitive impressions. It is all too easy when searching for a consistent “mind” behind such a collective text to find it, but only after having read too much between the lines.

Steven D. Fraade, “Sifre Deuteronomy 26 (ad Deut. 3:23): How Conscious the Composition?” *HUCA* 54 (1983):292–93.

27. Much of the following is drawn from the pertinent sections of J. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, where interested readers can find fuller documentation.

28. Cf. C. Brekelmans, “Wisdom Influence on Deuteronomy,” in D. L. Christiansen, ed., *A Song of Power and the Power of Song* (Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbraun’s, 1993), pp. 125–27.

29. The tannaitic chronological work *Seder ‘Olam Rabbah* implies that the five main speeches of Deuteronomy actually consist of several shorter speeches. The *Seder ‘Olam* says that Moses expounded (*peresh*) the entire Torah—that is, delivered the speeches of Deuteronomy (ending at 31:14, *hen qarevu yameikha lamut*, “the time is drawing near for you to die”)—over a period of 36 days, from 1 Shevat through 6 Adar. See *Seder ‘Olam Rabbah* 10 (ed. Ratner, p. 41, re: Deut. 1:3). This implies that Deuteronomy contains 36 days’ worth of speeches, in other words that it consisted of units that were smaller and more numerous than what is implied by the headings in the book. This view leaves room for the possibility that the present arrangement is secondary and not in the order in which the speeches were originally given (*‘ein muqdam ume’uḥar baTorah*).

30. The translation that follows is based on *Tanakh, The Holy Scriptures* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985) (slightly modified).

31. See M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972).

32. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p. 74.

33. Together, 10:12–11:9 are printed in siddurim as *Parashat haYir’ah*.

34. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p. 109.

35. *Yarash*, “occupy,” is also echoed in the third paragraph, where it and its derivative are rendered “dislodge” and “dispossess” (v. 23), and in the assonant noun *tirosh*, “wine” (v. 14).

36. For the juxtaposition of these two themes, see Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, pp. 237–38.

37. Vv. 1, 5, 14, 21, 26, 40.

38. What Israel saw, or did not see, with its own eyes (vv. 3, 9, 12, 15, 34–36); the impression observance will make in the eyes of the nations (v. 6; see also 5, 19, 28); hearing (vv. 1, 6, 10, 12, 28, 30, 32, 33, 36).

39. Vv. 1, 5, 10, 14.

40. Vv. 9, 35, 39.

41. Vv. 9, 23, 31.

42. V. 6.

43. Vv. 4, 8, 20, 38–40.

44. Vv. 7–8, 33–34. Both of these units refer to “great” things (vv. 6–8, 32, 38).

45. See vv. 10–12, 26, 32–33, 36, 39.

46. This arrangement contrasts with that in Deuteronomy. 1:6–3:29, which begins with the departure from Horeb and progresses chronologically up to the encampment at Peor (see 1:6; 3:29) (N. Lohfink, cited by J. Levenson, “Who Inserted the Book of the Torah?” *HTR* 68 [1975]:203, 204).

47. See M. Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield University, 1981), pp. 13–14, 33–34.

48. Chapters 8 and 9–10 display similar integrity. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, pp. 91–92, 96–97.

49. See A. Rofé, *The Belief in Angels in the Bible and in Early Israel* (Jerusalem: Makor, 1979), pp. 289–97; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, pp. 34, 46.

50. Stern, “Introduction” to *The Anthological Imagination in Jewish Literature*, *Proof-texts* 17, no. 1 (January, 1997):6.

51. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, pp. 179–319; “Theological Currents in Pentateuchal Literature,” in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 1969, 117–39.

52. I. Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995).

53. S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997).

54. Kaufmann, *Toledot* 1:23–44 (Eng. trans., *The Religion of Israel*, pp. 157–66).

55. Kaufmann, *Toledot* 3:557–87 (Eng. trans. *The Religion of Israel*, pp. 316–27).

56. The redactional techniques of the midrashim are the subject of lively discussion. See, for example, Heinemann, “Profile of a Midrash”; R. Hammer, “Section 38 of Sifre Deuteronomy: An Example of the Use of Independent Sources to Create a Literary Unit,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 50 (1979):165–78; R. Hammer, “Complex Forms of Aggadah and Their Influence on Content,” *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 48 (1981):183–206; Steven D. Fraade, “Sifre Deuteronomy 26 (ad Deut. 3:23): How Conscious the Composition?” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 54 (1983):245–301; J. Neusner, *Judaism and Scripture. The Evidence of Leviticus Rabbah* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

Deuteronomy has more in common with midrash than its anthological character. Its argumentation resembles that of midrash in that it builds its arguments on specific premises much as midrash uses biblical verses as the premises of its arguments. In Deuteronomy the “texts” that serve as the premises of arguments are not verses of sacred writ but historical events (such as the Exodus, Horeb, the manna, the Golden Calf and Baal Peor incidents), the topography of the Promised Land, the justice of God’s laws, and other phenomena; these play a role analogous to that of biblical verses in midrash. When historical events are mentioned, for example, they are not narrated in full or for their own sake as they are in Exodus and Numbers, but in order to prove a sermon point: the Exodus and Horeb events are cited to show that the Lord is the only true God and that Israel should therefore obey His laws and shun idols (4:9–20, 32–40); the journey from Horeb to the Promised Land is cited to point out that Israel’s faithlessness caused an entire generation to perish in the wilderness (1:1–46); when the manna is mentioned, it is to show that God controls nature and can make anything He chooses nourishing, for which reason Israel should always obey Him (8:1–6). In this way Deuteronomy can be seen as a kind of forerunner of the homiletic exposition of biblical verses in the midrashim.

57. N. M. Sarna, *Studies in Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2000), pp. 69, 258–59.

58. See *Mikra’ot Gedolot ‘im l’b peirushim* (New York: Pardes, 1951); *Ḥumash q”k peirushim* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, n.d.); *Sefer Keter HaTorah. Ha”Taj” HaGadol . . . kolel ḥamishim mefarshim . . .*, ed. Y. Ḥasid (Jerusalem, 5730/1970).

59. B. Barry Levy, “Rabbinic Bibles, *Mikra’ot Gedolot*, and Other Great Books,” *Tradition* 25 (1991):69.