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Deuteronomy 31 and 2 Corinthians 3

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Abstract: This essay argues that Deut 29-32, esp. Deut 31, plays a significant role in 2 Cor 3, esp. vv.7-18: Paul's elusive allegorical narrative draws especially on Deuteronomic motifs of 'closure' (the end of Moses, of the law, and of the Israelites), the national observance of reading the law and encountering the Lord face-to-face, and the succession of Moses by one named Ἰησοῦς in the LXX. This analysis extends scholarly discussion of Paul's use of Deuteronomy and contributes to the wider debate about Paul's use of Scripture and his understanding of Jesus' relationship to Moses and the Mosaic covenant.

I.   **Introduction**

Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians is sometimes known for containing the fewest

scriptural quotations of any of the Pauline *Hauptbriefe*, yet paradoxically it is a letter of

profound significance for the discussion of his attitude to Israel's scriptures. The thematic

focus of his vivid imagery in 2 Cor 3-4 lends it this importance. Paul's images are difficult to

unravel because they are overdetermined and multilayered, but he foregrounds allusions here

both to the foundational event of the giving of the written law[1] and to its continuing

liturgical lection, while pointing to the metamorphosis that takes place once Christ is seen.

The early church recognised the importance of this passage for Christian understanding of

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[1] H. Löhr, 'Steintafeln: Tora-Traditionen in 2Kor 3', *Der zweite Korintherbrief: Literarische Gestalt –*

historische Situation – theologische Argumentation. Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von Dietrich-

Alex Koch (ed. D. Sänger; FRLANT 250; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 175-87 argues

persuasively that for Paul the tablets represent the whole Torah, not just the Decalogue.

scripture.[2] Several church fathers followed Origen in interpreting Paul's contrast between letter and spirit as a contrast between literal and allegorical exegesis, privileging the allegorical sense.[3] Later the church took his terms καινὴ διαθήκη and παλαία διαθήκη and applied them to the two 'testaments' of Christian scripture, 'old' and 'new'.[4] Both these interpretations are anachronistic for Paul, but they highlight perceptively that 2 Cor 3-4 is significant for the Christian scriptural economy and its relationship to Israel's sacred texts. Modern scholarship has continued to privilege its place in this discussion. For example, Richard B. Hays' *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul,* known for ushering in a 'new era' in the study of Paul's use of the Old Testament,[5] dedicated a lengthy discussion to this

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[2] M. M. Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2010) 67-78.

[3] Athanasias, Didymus of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Cyril of Alexandria: see B. Schneider, 'The Meaning of St. Paul's Antithesis "The Letter and the Spirit"', *CBQ* 15 (1953) 166-187.

[4] Marcion was probably the first to use the terms in this way, but the church adopted it only much later and in an anti-Marcionite sense: W. Kinzig, 'Καινὴ Διαθήκη: The Title of the New Testament in the Second and Third Centuries', *JTS* 45 (1994) 519-44.

[5] D. Lincicum, 'Paul's Engagement with Deuteronomy: Snapshots and Signposts', *CBR* 7.1 (2008) 44.

passage, on grounds that it was the closest thing in Paul to an extended hermeneutical

discussion of the paradox of continuity with Scripture and new revelation in Christ, 'a

problem that Christians later came to know as the relation between the testaments.'[6]

Paul's own use of particular scriptures in this passage may be considered a test case for

extrapolating if not an overarching hermeneutical theory, at least his underlying

hermeneutical assumptions from what he says about the letter and spirit or the two

covenants. Scholarship on this aspect of 2 Cor 3 has focused primarily on his engagement

with Exodus 34.29-35. The discussion of allusions to other scriptural texts usually

subordinates them to this controlling passage.[7] There is no denying that Exod 34.29-35 is

significant: in addition to a near-quotation of LXX Exod 34.34 in 2 Cor 3.16, Paul's motifs of

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[6] R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven/London: Yale University, 1989)

123.

[7] A few scholars place more weight on other intertexts: E. Richard, 'Polemics, Old Testament, and

Theology. A Study of *II Cor.*, III, 1-IV, 6', *RB* 88 (1981); C. K. Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil and the*

Glory of the New Covenant: The Exegetical Substructure of II Cor. 3,1-4.6 (AnBib 116; Rome:

Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblica, 1989); J. W. Aernie, *Is Paul Also Among the Prophets? An*

Examination of the Relationship between Paul and the Old Testament Prophetic Tradition in 2

Corinthians (LNTS; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2012).

the 'glory' on Moses' face when he descended from the mountain with the tablets, and the

veil he used to cover it when speaking to the Israelites, are rooted in this passage. However,

Paul's elaboration of the story is markedly different from the Exodus narrative, to the extent

that his relation to the scriptural text is by no means clear. Did he even regard himself as

interpreting scripture at this point? It is not self-evident that he intended primarily a piece of

scriptural exegesis rather than, for example, an account of sacred history (influenced by

biblical motifs and language) or a piece of literary imagery (taken from the domain of

scriptural narrative, but formally akin to the other similes and metaphors that enrich 2 Cor 3-

4, including the triumphal procession, incense, and earthen vessels). The history of the

exodus and gift of the law at Sinai had already become for the Jews 'a *mythos*: a life

teaching through which an "objective past" recurrently gave way to a subjectivized event of

the present';[8] in viewing contemporary situation through the lens of the sacred past Paul

may be meditating typologically[9] rather than reading exegetically. The assumption that 2 Cor

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[8] M. Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken,

1979) 121-2.

[9] J. Jeremias, 'Μωυσῆς', *TDNT* 4 (1987) 869; S. Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (WUNT 2.4;

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981) 233-9 describes 2 Cor 3:1-4.6 as an 'antithetical typology between

the Sinai theophany and the Damascus Christophany', with a special focus on the typological

relationship between Paul and Moses; J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (London:

3.7-18 is primarily an interpretation of Exod 34.29-35 owes much to the influence of Hans

Windisch's 1924 commentary, which has justly been termed 'the starting point for modern

research on 2 Cor 3'.[10] Windisch identified these verses as a 'Christian midrash' on this

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SCM, 1959) 58-61 avoids the term 'typology', but like Kim finds a strong comparison between

Moses and Paul, *not* a Moses-Christ typology. Munck understands Paul as 'the servant of the

spiritual principle, and Moses of the literal principle'. Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil,* 41-2, 150-3 also

prefers 'comparison', 'contrast' and 'counterpart' to 'typology', but emphasises Moses' relationship

to Paul more than to Christ. F. Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London/New York:

T&T Clark International, 2004) 281-313 accepts the 'typology' between 2 Cor 3 and Exod 34.29-35

(281); he observes the comparison between Paul and Moses but places the emphasis on unveiling

Christ: 'Paul reads scripture in the light of Christ only *in order* to read Christ in the light of

scripture; scriptural interpretation *per se* is of no interest to him. And yet, in interpreting the

Christ event, it is genuinely scriptural interpretation that Paul practises – an interpretation that

acknowledges the indirect and sometimes anomalous character of the scriptural testimony, as

symbolised by Moses' veil' (298).

[10] S. Hulmi, *Paulus und Mose: Argumentation und Polemik in 2 Kor 3* (SFEG 77; Göttingen:

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999) 4.

passage of Exodus, and as potentially detachable from their context in 2 Corinthians.[11] Much

subsequent scholarship continued to focus on Paul's use of Exod 34 in these verses even

after 'intertextuality' replaced 'midrash' as the most widely adopted category of scholarly

analysis of Paul's use of scripture.

The present essay hopes to make a twofold contribution to these debates. Firstly, it seeks to

show that among Paul's scriptural 'intertexts' in this passage, Deuteronomy is far more

significant than has been recognised. Through considering its role, the essay also intends to

develop our understanding of the nature of Paul's engagement with Scripture here. I begin

with previous scholarship on these verses, whose focus has been on discerning a composite

citation that is elsewhere clearly marked with an introductory formula.[12] The remainder of my

essay, however, adopts a less determinate approach to intertextuality. The biblical stories

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[11] H. Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief* (9th repr. edn.; MeyerK 6; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970 [1924]) 112.

[12] This corresponds to the second of Dietrich-Alex Koch's seven categories of citation in his *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums* (BHT 69; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986) 21-4. For critique of his categories, see C. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (SNTS.MS 69; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992) 35-6.

were known to Paul both as text and as narrative, and I argue for a meditative and

multilayered appropriation of them. In seeking a critical vocabulary for analysing such an

indirect relationship to scripture in this passage, I consider the potential and limitations of

Francis Young's definition of 'typology'.[13]

II.　　Earlier Scholarship on Deuteronomy and 2 Corinthians

Since the early 1990s, research on Paul's use of Deuteronomy has blossomed.[14] However, its

role in 2 Corinthians 3 has been little discussed. B. S. Rosner, in an article devoted to

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[13] An excellent defence of indeterminate and multilayered approaches to intertextuality is offered

by C. R. Moss, 'Nailing Down and Tying Up: Lessons in Intertextual Impossibility from the

Martyrdom of Polycarp,' VC 67 (2013) 117-36.

[14] Hays, *Echoes,* esp. 163-4; J. M. Scott, 'Paul's Use of Deuteronomistic Tradition', *JBL* 112 (1993)

645-65; Watson, *Hermeneutics,* 415-513; J. R. Wagner, 'Moses and Isaiah in Concert: Paul's

Reading of Isaiah and Deuteronomy in the Letter to the Romans', *"As Those Who Are Taught":*

The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL (ed. C. M. McGinnis and P. K. Tull; Atlanta,

Deuteronomy in the Corinthian correspondence, claims that there are no discernible allusions to Deuteronomy in this letter;[15] nor is 2 Cor 3 singled out for discussion in either of the two recent monographs on Paul's use of Deuteronomy.[16] Exegetes primarily concerned with 2 Corinthians rather than Deuteronomy have sometimes discerned one allusion to the latter in 2 Cor 3.14-15, but it takes such a small place in the discussion that it is easily overlooked, and prone to be overshadowed by wider debates about veils. I shall begin with this closely textual finding of earlier scholarship, then introduce the terminology of 'typology' with a view

GA: SBL, 2006) 87-103. See also nn.15-16, below. For the history of research, see Lincicum, 'Paul's Engagement with Deuteronomy'.

[15] B. S. Rosner, 'Deuteronomy in 1 and 2 Corinthians', *Deuteronomy in the New Testament: The New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel* (ed. S. M. Moyise and J. J. Maarten; London: Continuum, 2007) 118-35, esp. 133. Watson, *Hermeneutics,* 283-6 draws on Deuteronomy to help unpack what Paul thought was written on Moses' tablets and hence what was contained in the 'ministry of death'; he does not describe this as an 'allusion' to Deuteronomy, though does briefly affirm that 'the letter kills' (2 Cor 3:6) 'reflect(s) not only the Pauline problematising of the Law, but also its scriptural roots in the concluding chapters of Deuteronomy' (p.463).

[16] G. Waters, *The End of Deuteronomy in the Epistles of Paul* (WUNT 2.221; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); D. Lincicum, *Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter with Deuteronomy* (WUNT 2.284; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

to arguing that the scope of allusion to Deuteronomy here should be considered very much

broader.

II.1 'Until Today' (Deut 29.3 and 2 Cor 3.14-15 *and* Rom 11.8)

After declaring that Moses used to veil his face so that the sons of Israel could not behold to

the end (and/or 'goal') of what was fading away, Paul mentions a contemporary counterpart:

> [14] ἀλλὰ ἐπωρώθη τὰ νοήματα αὐτῶν. ἄχρι γὰρ τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας τὸ αὐτὸ κάλυμμα
>
> ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναγνώσει τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης μένει, μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον ὅτι ἐν Χριστῷ
>
> καταργεῖται· [15] ἀλλ᾽ ἕως σήμερον ἡνίκα ἂν ἀναγινώσκηται Μωϋσῆς κάλυμμα ἐπὶ τὴν
>
> καρδίαν αὐτῶν κεῖται·

> But their thoughts were hardened, for *until today* the same veil abides at the reading
>
> of the old covenant, it not being revealed that in Christ it is abolished; but *until today*
>
> whenever Moses is read a veil lies on their heart

<div align="center">(2 Cor 3.14–15)</div>

'Until today' receives emphasis both by repetition at the start of successive cola (ἄχρι τῆς

σήμερον ἡμέρας ... ἕως σήμερον) and by the periphrastic expression for σήμερον in the first of

these expressions.

Carol Stockhausen argues that the veil at the reading of the old covenant 'until this day' is

associated with the hardening motif that Paul presents in Romans 11.7–8.[17] There he speaks

of those who were 'hardened (ἐπωρώθησαν), as is written in scripture:

> ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμα κατανύξεως,
>
> ὀφθαλμοὺς τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν καὶ ὦτα τοῦ μὴ ἀκούειν,
>
> ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας
>
> God gave them a spirit of stupefication,
>
> eyes to not see and ears to not hear,
>
> until today

Paul's quotation does not exactly replicate any known passage in the Septuagint.[18] It

appears to be a catena. The first part recalls the unusual πνεῦμα κατανύξεως ('spirit of

stupefication') in Isaiah 29.10, where God poured such a spirit over people so that they could

not see or read the book. The theme of God-given blindness and deafness in the next line

of Paul's quotation appears in many prophets but is particularly prominent in Isaiah, from the

first ominous announcement of this punishment in Isaiah 6.9–10 to the messianic promises of

restoration of sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf later in the book. Thus at first the

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[17] Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil,* 133–50; she argues that John 12:36-9 belongs to the same tradition.

See also: O. Hofius, *Paulusstudien* (WUNT 51; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989) 105-6; W. C. van Unnik,

'"With Unveiled Face": An Exegesis of 2 Corinthians iii 12-18', *NovT* 6 (1963) 162-3.

[18] For discussion of Paul's Septuagintal *Vorlage*, see esp. Koch, *Schrift,* 48-57.

reader thinks that Paul's framework is wholly Isaianic. However, his closing words modify this

impression. The phrase ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας in the context of God-given blindness and

deafness resonates with Moses' woeful comment to the Israelites as he concludes his account

of the sights of the Exodus and prepares them for his death:

> Καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῖν καρδίαν εἰδέναι καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς βλέπειν καὶ ὦτα
>
> ἀκούειν **ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης**
>
> And the Lord God did not give you a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear,
>
> **until this day**.
>
> (Deut 29.3)[19]

Moses' observation that the Israelites were unable to see or hear so as to understand the

wonders of the Exodus 'until this day' may explain how Paul claims to find in scripture (καθὼς

γέγραπται) that his Jewish brethren have not been given eyes to see or ears to hear 'until

today'.

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[19] J. W. Wevers (ed.), *Deuteronomium* (Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate

Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum, 3.2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977) 316.

Wevers' edition of Deuteronomy will be cited unless otherwise stated. Textual variants relevant to

the argument will be noted.

Stockhausen and others have suggested that the same combination of texts lies behind

Paul's language in 2 Cor 3.14.[20] He uses ἐπωρώθη as in Rom 11.7, together with the motif of

not being able to see properly 'until this very day'. There is no 'spirit of deep sleep' (πνεῦμα

κατανύξεως) but Moses' veil may have reminded him of Isaiah's account of covering the

heads of the seers in the very same verse. This is in the Hebrew of Isa 29.10;[21] and although

studies have shown that Paul usually used an Isaianic text corresponding to the modern

critical edition of the Septuagint, he did sometimes use a Greek text that had been revised so

as to be closer to the Hebrew, and he probably knew the Hebrew as well.[22] As in Romans,

however, Paul's epistle to the Corinthians interprets the Deuteronomic image of hardening so

as not to see or hear 'until today' as articulating more than just the extended obstinacy of

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[20] Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil,* 142-3; S. J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses and the History of Israel: The*

Letter/Spirit Contrast and the Argument from Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3 (WUNT 81; Tübingen:

Mohr, 1995) 375-7.

[21] M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, ed., *The Book of Isaiah* (Hebrew University Bible Project; Jerusalem:

Magnes, 1981).

[22] J. R. Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans*

(Leiden: Brill, 2003) 344-5. The Greek Isaiah used by Eusebius reads καὶ ἐκράτυνε τοὺς

ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑμῶν [καὶ] τοὺς προφήτας καὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας ὑμῶν τοὺς ὁρῶντας ἐκάλυψεν (noted

by Ziegler in the Göttingen Septuagint 1939, ad loc.).

the Israelites. In his text it emerges as an eschatological turning-point, enscripted in the 'law

and the prophets' by Moses and Isaiah, and now realised in the life of the Christian

community. The 'minsitry of death engraved in stone letters' descended with Moses from

Sinai, as recounted in Exodus, but the hardening of the Israelites went on 'until today', where

Moses' 'today' on the borders of the promised land and Paul's 'today' among the church in

Corinth narratively coincide.

This is a closely textual relationship between Paul and a fixed combination of Old Testament

passages. However, the role the intertext serves in this passage does, I suggest, go beyond

the verbal limits of citation. At this point it is helpful to consider a richer critical vocabulary

for analsying intertextuality.

II.2   A Typological Interpretation

The introduction of critical terms is necessary, but problematic. Gérard Genette's humorous

equivocation about his own critical endeavour concerning intertextualities is apposite, for it is

'a question … of choosing between drawbacks.' The technology of critical vocabulary is wont

to seem 'barbaric to lovers of belles lettres', for it enters an area 'we regularly grant to

intuition and empiricism'.[23] Michael Fishbane points to a similar concern in approaching

relationships between sacred texts, quoting Martin Buber's sense that the reader of the Bible

must read 'with an appreciation of its poetic form, but also with an intuitive grasp of the

suprapoetic element which transcends all form.'[24] And yet, both Genette and Fishbane saw

that some attempt to name what is happening textually, intertextually, and palimpsestuously,

is a useful, though transitory, step to grasping what is 'knowable … at the heart of the

mysterious'.[25]

The term that I suggest is most fruitful, despite its problems, in approaching Paul's

interaction with Deuteronomy in 2 Corinthians 3, is 'typology'. It is a modern coinage, but it

interacts with the biblical use of the nouns *typos* ('imprint', 'pattern', 'model', 'replica', 'cast')

and *antitypos*. Its meaning has been much debated, and I use it here in the sense that

Frances Young argued for in analysing early Christian patterns of reading their scriptures:

> Typology … is a "figure of speech" which configures or reads texts to bring out
>
> significant correspondences so as to invest them with meaning beyond themselves. …

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[23] G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1980) 263.

[24] Fishbane, *Text,* xiii-xiv.

[25] Genette, *Narrative,* 23.

Typology belongs to the literary phenomenon of intertextuality, to the genre of liturgy and sacred story.[26]

The most significant relationship, she shows, is not historical, where one event precedes another, but literary and liturgical, where the basic 'type' signifies something not merely *subsequent* to the original, but *transcendent and eschatological*. The relationship between them is mimetic, marked by correspondences.[27]

Working with this definition, Paul's probable allusions to Deuteronomy and Isaiah in 2 Cor 3.14-15 raise the possibility of a typological reading of those texts. We have already seen a coincidence of temporal markers from scripture and contemporary experience, consummated in the liturgical setting. Furthermore, this unveils something both eschatological and transcendent. This is the juncture where Paul shifts his attention to the eschatological 'today', which is marked by the availability of the transcendental gift of the Spirit for anyone who turns to the Lord. Some scholars have described 2 Cor 3 as a typological reading of the

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[26] F. Young, 'Typology', *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder* (ed. S. E. Porter, P. Joyce and D. E. Orton; Biblical Interpretation Series 8; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 48.

[27] Young, 'Typology', 38-9.

Exodus narrative; the rest of this essay will investigate whether it is also a typological reading of the end of Deuteronomy.

III.   Paul's Encounter with the End of Deuteronomy

Because typology makes a mimetic relationship central, it requires neither quotation nor reiteration of vocabulary. However, it does presuppose that Paul knew and pondered deeply the text that he interpreted in this way. The present section will investigate aspects of Paul's encounter with the end of Deuteronomy, particularly the story of Moses' death and the succession by Joshua in Deuteronomy 31. It will consider the form in which Paul is likely to have known this biblical account, the wider discussion of it in his day, and whether other parts of his extant letters suggest interest in its narrative theology.

III.1   Text

Our modern critical editions are, of course, not the same text as Paul is likely to have used, and he may have used more than one recension anyway. However, among the books of the Septuagint, the text of the Pentateuch was particularly stable, and a number of citations by

Paul have been identified which strongly suggest he was using a text coinciding with those

known in extant manuscripts, while the variations in his citations are slight and usually best

explained as his own interpretive rewordings, or those that he received from his tradition.[28]

But, to what extent did Paul use a written text at all when he quoted, cited, or alluded to

scripture? He could not have carried complete Torah scrolls around with him, although some

of his quotations suggest he was using written texts. Koch and Stanley argue that he

probably made excerpts and kept them to hand.[29] If this were so, it would raise the question

of whether Deuteronomy 31 was ever among his excerpts. Guy Waters, in his monograph on

The End of Deuteronomy in the Epistles of Paul, declines to write 'Deut 27-32', preferring

'Deut 27-30, 32' because in his judgement 'there are no discernible engagements of Deut 31

in Paul's letters'.[30]

Paul's ancient cultural setting, however, renders it most likely that he memorised the

scriptures as a child, and that the twin practices of memorisation and meditation continued

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[28] Koch, *Schrift,* 51-55.

[29] Koch, *Schrift,* 99-101, 253, 284; Stanley, *Language,* 71-9.

[30] Waters, *End,* 2 n.7.

to nourish his pattern of devotion as an adult.[31] Furthermore, in the synagogues, the Law

would have been read sequentially on the Sabbaths. It cannot be proven that there was a

system of *lectio continua* at this period; it is plausible that there was, but even if not, the

markings on early Hebrew manuscripts suggest that the portions of text to be read out

would have included a section starting at Deut 31.1.[32] In addition, when Paul did open the

scroll of Deuteronomy, if he were keenly interested in 'Deut 27-30, 32' then it would be

surprising for him to pass over Deut 31, particularly in the absence of modern chapter

divisions. Paul, then, probably not only knew the Deuteronomic narrative of Moses' end and

the succession, but knew it by heart and heard most or all of it in the liturgy. This story was

integral to the Jewish *mythos* of the exodus, which saw beyond the wilderness to the

inheritance of the promised land.

III.2   Intertext

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[31] Here I concur with Wagner's emphasis on memory: *Heralds,* 21-8. See also: S. Safrai,

'Education and the Study of the Torah', *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical*

Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions, (ed. S. Safrai et al;

Assen: Van Gorcum, 1976) 945-70, esp. 953.

[32] Lincicum, *Paul,* 22-39, esp. 35-7.

In Deut 31 Moses has finished giving the law and is preparing for his death. He writes down

the law and commits it to the priests and elders of Israel, giving them instructions to read it

in the hearing of all Israel (ἀναγνώσεσθε τὸν νόμον τοῦτον ἐναντίον παντὸς Ἰσραὴλ εἰς τὰ ὦτα

αὐτῶν, v.11) when they gather for the Feast of Sukkot. This is closely concerned with the

juncture between later liturgy and the scene depicted in Deuteronomy itself: these are

Moses' preparations for continuity between his own role both enacted and described in this

book, and what comes afterward for the people of Israel. Immediately after speaking of

Sukkot, attention is focused on a further preparation: God asks Moses to appear before him

with Joshua (LXX Ἰησοῦς) at the Tent of Meeting where God will commission him (Deut 31.14–

15). At that point, the Lord appears to them and predicts that the Israelites will break his

covenant (διαθήκη) and turn to other gods (Deut 31.16, 20). He speaks of hiding his face from

them and of the disasters that will come upon them when that happens. The book of the

law, which is initially written and included in the liturgy in order that people should learn and

obey (Deut 31.11), is eventually preserved by the ark simply as a witness against Israel (Deut

31.26). Or rather, the *stone tablets* are placed in the ark (cf. Deut 10.2, 4–5) and the

Deuteronomist paradoxically juxtaposes this with the *book* that Moses writes, and with

Deuteronomy itself that writes about that book.[33] Moses speaks in conclusion of the stiff-

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[33] D. T. Olson, 'How Does Deuteronomy Do Theology?' in *A God So Near: Essays on Old

Testament Theology in Honor of Patrick D. Miller* (ed. B. A. Strawn and N. R. Bowen; Winona Lake,

necked disposition of the Israelites both in his day and thereafter (Deut 31.27-9), although he

had earlier prophesied that when the Lord brought them into the land of their inheritance,

he would multiply them and cleanse their heart and the heart of their seed to love the Lord

their God with their whole heart and whole soul, so that they might live (Deut 30.5-6).

The Deuteronomist's story is distinctive and focused very differently from Paul's; yet Paul's

narrative in 2 Cor 3 resonates with this Deuteronomic account in motifs, themes and some

vocabulary. This essay will focus on Paul's appropriation of the idea of Jesus'/Joshua's

succession at Moses' end, and the preparation for it through the reading of the book of the

law in the presence of all Israel. First, however, we must examine other hellenistic Jewish

responses to this text for emphases and approaches they may share with Paul, and must

then consider the compatibility of a Deuteronomic 'succession' with other evidence for Paul's

theology of Jesus' relationship to Moses and the old covenant.

III.3 Tradition

Hellenistic Jewish and early rabbinic texts retell, elaborate and interpret the Deuteronomic

account of Moses' end and the succession. In Deuteronomy, Moses goes up to Mount

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IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003) 210.

Nebo. God shows him the promised land, but denies him entry. Instead, Moses 'ends' there (ἐτελεύτησεν ἐκεῖ Μωυσῆς), and the narrator tells us that 'they buried him ... and nobody knows his grave until this day' (οὐκ οἶδεν οὐδεὶς τὴν ταφὴν αὐτοῦ ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης, Deut 34.6). Some ancient interpreters thought Moses' soul was taken up into heaven, while his body remained on earth; others, that he was physically assumed into heaven.[34] Some perceived significant parallels with Moses' earlier ascent at Sinai: Pseudo-Philo elaborates apocalyptic visions bestowed upon Moses at both Sinai and Nebo; it is at the law-giving and at his death only that Moses is glorified (LAB 19.16).[35] Philo depicts both Sinai and Nebo as mystical ascents, where not only did Moses receive revelation but his soul was divinised.[36]

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[34] G. Lohfink, *Die Himmelfahrt Jesu: Untersuchungen zu den Himmelfahrts- und Erhöhungstexten bei Lukas* (Munich: Kösel, 1971) 61-9; A. W. Zwiep, *The Ascension of the Messiah in Lukan Christology* (NovTSup 87; Leiden: Brill 1997) 64-71.

[35] Further discussion in H. Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's* Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (2 vols.; AGAJU 31; Leiden: Brill, 1996) 2.653; K. J. Ruffatto, 'Visionary Ascents of Moses in Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum: Apocalyptic Motifs and the Growth of Visionary Moses Tradition', (PhD diss; Marquette University, 2010).

http://epublications.edu/dissertations_mu/84 (accessed 07.06.2013).

[36] Sinai: *Gig.* 54; *QE* 2.29; *Mos.* 1.155-8; Nebo: *QE* 1.86; *Virt.* 53, 72-9; *Mos.* 2.288-92. Discussed in Ruffatto, 'Visionary Ascents', 56-62. For later Jewish and Samaritan traditions that associate Sinai

The tradition of Moses' physical assumption into heaven may be assumed by the Synoptic narratives of Jesus' transfiguration, which is itself evocative of Sinai.[37]

For many Jewish authors, Joshua's succession was integral to this story. According to Pseudo-Philo, God establishes his covenant with Joshua immediately after Moses' burial: *et in tempore illo disposuit deus testamentum suum cum Ihesu filio Nave* (LAB 20.1). Howard Jacobson detects here a verbatim quotation from Genesis 15.18, substituting Joshua's name for Abraham's.[38] God then instructs Joshua to put on the garments of Moses' wisdom, and gird himself in the belt of his knowledge, and declares that he will (then) be changed and be another man. Not all Second Temple texts celebrated Joshua so highly: Philo mentions Joshua only once in his two volume *bios* of Moses; he describes the succession elsewhere, as an example of Moses' humanity, and celebrates Joshua as Moses' 'pupil and imitator' (*Virt.* 66). Josephus took more interest in Joshua than Philo, seeing in this general and prophet a

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and Nebo, see W. A. Meeks, *The Prophet King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (NovTSup 14; Leiden: Brill, 1967) 211-14, 244-6.

[37] Zwiep, *Ascension,* 70-1; D. M. Millar, 'Seeing the Glory, Hearing the Son: The Function of the Wilderness Theophany Narratives in Luke 9:28-36', *CBQ* 72 (2010) 498-517.

[38] בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כָּרַת יְהוָה אֶת־אַבְרָם בְּרִית (Gen 15:18); discussed in Jacobson, *Pseudo-Philo,* 2.658.

prototype for himself, but he nonetheless treats the succession quite briefly (*Ant.* 4.165, 186-7, 324).[39] One text probably contemporary with Paul, however, appears to have been devoted entirely to narrating Moses' preparations for the succession, followed by his own end. Known as the *Assumption of Moses,* and plausibly dated to the early first century CE, it was often discussed among the church fathers, but the latter portion is now lost. Originally written in Greek, the extant remains are in Latin.[40] Joshua is described as *arbiter* (1.14) and *successor* (10.15) of Moses' covenant (*testamentum*). Moses gives him his books to be set in order, anointed with oil of cedar, and put in earthern vessels until the day of repentance and visitation (1.16–18).   Idolatry and disaster are anticipated during Moses' absence.

These traditions show that there was Jewish interest in both Moses' end and Joshua's succession in Paul's day, and that some of these include motifs or emphases akin to Paul's in 2 Cor 3. Stories of Moses' end frequently associated it with Sinai; both were scenes not merely of revelation and glorification, but also places where Israel was gathered as a nation at the foot of a mountain and their identity forged through their allegiance to Moses. Joshua sometimes received extended and even exalted attention, his key role being the

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[39] See further: L. H. Feldman, 'Philo's Interpretation of Joshua', *JSP* 12 (2001) 165-78.

[40] J. Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses: A Critical Edition with Commentary* (SVTP; Leiden: Brill, 1993) 85-122.

bearer of the covenant that Moses gave him, and the one who would take the people into

the promised land.

III.4   Theology

Does Paul's own theology, as evident more widely in his epistles, show a place for

contemplation of Moses' end and the succession? Paul is not renowned for his interest in

Moses as a character in biblical narrative, much less for attention to Joshua Son of Nun,

whom he never mentions. He twice cites Moses to quote what he said in scripture, but

usually he prefers to write simply that 'the law says' a thing; John Lierman suggests he may

prefer to think of the law's divine origin rather than as something Moses wrote.[41] However,

the importance of the exodus tradition as a *mythos* for making sense of the situation of the

church within salvation history has been observed by several scholars. For the church, as for

Israel, Paul perceived that God led his people out of bondage through water, in the hope of

taking possession of their inheritance according to the promise given to their forefathers.

There they could hope for a renewed and fruitful land, the restoration of glory, the gift of the

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[41] J. Lierman, *The New Testament Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses and Israel in the Setting*

of Jewish Religion (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 162-6.

spirit, and freedom.[42] This paradigm has usually been associated chiefly with Romans and

Galatians, while the use of Exodus imagery in the Corinthian correspondence is more isolated

(1 Cor 10; 2 Cor 3), but at least this shows that more widely in Paul's theology, the Exodus

paradigm was compelling, and did not stop with Sinai. Christ was the one through whom

the promised inheritance would be granted, and if the fulfilment of this is interpreted chiefly

through the image of sonship and the ancestry of Abraham in Galatians, it is not to be ruled

out that Paul could *also* interpret it through the idea of Jesus as Moses' successor, when he

did, for once, focus on Moses (and not Abraham) as a narrative character (2 Cor 3).

The idea of 'succession' is rare in Paul, but his imagery in Romans 7.1-6 uses the idea of a

succession of husbands to portray how the situation of the devout has changed through the

death of Christ. The imagery is perplexing, because the image (vv.1-3) does not map

precisely onto Paul's interpretation of it (vv.4-6). Most scholars think that the woman's first

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[42] Hays, *Echoes,* 87-104; N. T. Wright, 'Romans and the Theology of Paul', *Pauline Theology, Vol.*

III: Romans (ed. D. M. Hay and E. E. Johnson; Minneapolis: Fortress,1995) 30-67; F. Thielman, 'Story

of Israel and the Theology of Romans 5-8', *Pauline Theology, Vol. III,* 169-95; S. C. Keesmat, *Paul*

and his Story: (Re)Interpreting the Exodus Tradition (JSNTSup 181; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic,

1999); T. A. Wilson, 'Wilderness Apostasy and Paul's Portrayal of the Crisis in Galatians', *NTS* 50

(2004) 550-71.

husband is the law, and her second is Christ, or at least that this is a plain reading of vv.1-3,

albeit the illustration is not followed through consistently.[43] Some have further interpreted

the first husband as sin or the old self, the second as Christ.[44] John Earnshaw argued that

the first husband is Christ under the law, or Christ in the flesh, the second the risen Christ.[45]

Others have abandoned the attempt to construe the imagery allegorically at all.[46] For the

present essay, what is significant is that Paul thinks of the new relation to God in the spirit in

terms of a new marriage, a second husband, following the first who has died. He uses the

imagery of marriage, which was biblical and traditional for Israel's covenant relationship to

God as forged at Sinai, and which he also used in his own portrayal of the church's

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[43] H. Leitzmann, *An die Römer* (HNT 8; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1933) 72; A. Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (London: SCM, 1952) 272; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: Black, 1962) 136; D. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grant Rapids, MI: Eerdmans: 1996) 413-4; E. Lohse, *Der Brief an die Römer* (KEK 4[15]; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003) 207.

[44] Augustine, *Propos.* 36, cited in U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (EKK VI/2; Zürich: Benziger, 1980) 66 n.256; F. J. Leenhardt, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary* (London: Lutterworth, 1961) 178.

[45] J. D. Earnshaw, 'Reconsidering Paul's Marriage Analogy in Romans 7.1-4', *NTS* 40 (1994) 68-88.

[46] Nygren, *Romans,* 273; Wilckens, *Römer,* 66.

relationship to Christ (e.g. 2 Cor 11.2). Furthermore, his conclusion resonates closely with 2

Cor 3:

> Νυνὶ δὲ κατηργήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα, ὥστε δουλεύειν
>
> ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος (Rom 7.6)

Only here and in 2 Cor 3 does Paul use the double contrast of 'newness and oldness'

together with 'spirit and letter';[47] the prominence of the difficult but characteristically Pauline

verb καταργέω in both the marriage image (v.3) and this interpretation of it (v.6) reinforces

the resonance between the two texts (cf. 2 Cor 3.7, 13-14). Origen's second *Homily on*

Joshua draws on imagery from both this passage and 2 Cor 3 when he discusses how 'Moses

the servant of God has died, and Jesus the Son of God obtains the leadership.' He recounts

how a 'little book' (probably the lost ending of the *Assumption of Moses*) tells that two

Moseses were seen, one alive in the spirit, the other dead in the body, and he interprets this

as an allegory for the emptiness of the letter of the Law (Moses himself is dead in body), but

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[47] He uses each of these contrasts separately on other occasions: παλαιότης/καινότης – Rom 6:4,

6; 2 Cor 3:6, 14; Eph 4:22-4; Col 3:9; and γράμμα/πνεῦμα Rom 2:29; 2 Cor 3:6. See C. E. B.

Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegestical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Vol. I* (ICC;

Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998) 339. M. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (ICC; Edinburgh:

T&T Clark, 1994) 249, argues that 'Paul must have instructed his Corinthian converts in the line of

thinking about the Mosaic religious system which he sets out in Romans.'

'if you remove the veil, and understand that the law is spiritual, that is Moses who lives in the spirit' (*Hom. Jes. Nav.* 2.1.83-86).

When Paul contemplated the glory of the Sinai covenant and its 'ministry of death' in 2 Cor 3, he contemplated also the way beyond that 'ministry of death' to the glory and life of the new covenant. The present discussion has shown that it is congruous with Paul's wider thought for him to contemplate the way beyond Sinai through the lens of the exodus tradition, and that the concept of a succession in covenantal relationships is a possibility in his theological imagery for understanding how the church moves, through Christ, from the oldness of the letter to the newness of the spirit.

IV.   Paul's Use of Deuteronomy in 2 Cor 3

It remains to work out in more detail the plausible intertextual relationships between the end of Deuteronomy and 2 Cor 3. I will focus on three aspects of the Deuteronomist's account with which Paul's intersects: the emphasis on closure (Moses' end, the end of the Israelites); the liturgical command to read the book of the law at Sukkot; and the appointment of

Joshua (LXX Ἰησοῦς) to succeed Moses after his 'end'. The pertinence of Francis Young's

language of 'typology' will be considered.

IV.1 Moses' End and Other Closure

Paul's use of Exod 34.29-35 in 2 Cor 3 is conspicuous, yet the very narrative motifs that

resonate most strongly with that passage – Moses' stone-tablets, glory and veil – are

contaminated by allusions to both causing and suffering death, when seen and heard without

the 'spirit of the Lord', which is received in gazing upon the glorious icon of God in the face

of Christ (2 Cor 3.17-18; 4.4-6). The motif of death probably draws in part on the death dealt

to the disobedient Israelites at Sinai, Israel's archetypal narrative of disobedience and

punishment for apostasy.[48] However, it is developed through other imagery of ending and

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[48] Watson, *Hermeneutics,* 286-91. Watson's exclusive emphasis on the Calf episode is, I suggest,

tied to the fact that he is principally considering the 'ministry of death' (v.7), which does have its

home at Sinai in the imagery/allusion. My interest, however, is in what happens after that,

especially the 'end of that which was fading away' (v.13), and beyond. Paul's 'ending' language

shifts its focus from the idolatry that starts at Sinai and continues in the form of Israelite hard-

heartedness. The latter continues up to and beyond Moses' death, but inasmuch as it is the veil

fading, which expands the focus from the Israelites to the law, and Moses' own person, who is the focus for their hardened gaze. I suggest that Paul is bringing the story of Moses and the Israelites as told in Exodus 34.29-35 under the shadow of the last chapters of Deuteronomy with their varied emphasis on 'ending'. As in Young's account of 'typology', the relationship is mimetic, drawing out correspondences, rather than built around quotation or citation.

Paul underscores themes of death, mortality, impermanence and closure in 2 Cor 3 in many ways. The ministry that Moses brings is described as a 'ministry of death' (διακονία τοῦ θανάτου). It is engraved in stone lettering, where stone tablets are understood as the antithesis of the spirit of the *living* God (ζῶντος θεοῦ, 2 Cor 3.3 cf. 3.7-8). It comes in glory that is described as καταργουμένην, and this word closes the sentence that opened with the 'ministry of death' such that, as M. Theobald comments, the ministry of death ends by dying itself (2 Cor 3.7).[49] The theme of closure is drawn out with evocatively ambiguous repetition of καταργέω (2 Cor 3.7, 11, 13, 14), to which τέλος is once added (2 Cor 3.13). If understood

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on his very face that hides the 'end of that which is fading away', the accumulation of 'ending' language comes to find its focus personally in him.

[49] M. Theobald, *Die überströmende Gnade: Studien zu einem paulinischen Motivfeld* (FB 22; Würzburg: Echter, 1982) 184 n.79.

as 'fade' and 'termination' respectively, these terms clearly accentuate the emphasis on dwindling to extinction; καταργέω also has the sense of 'abolish', 'render ineffective', and τέλος, more perplexingly, of 'goal'.[50]   Paul is imprecise concerning their referents: they are associated with the Mosaic ministry and all that attends it, but by using neuter forms (τὸ καταργούμενον, 2 Cor 3.11, and probably τοῦ καταργουμένου, 2 Cor 3.13) or omitting the subject of the main verb (καταργεῖται, 2 Cor 3.14), Paul shrouds their intention in a mysterious amphiboly. The Israelites who behold a veiled Moses with hardened hearts fail to see τὸ τέλος τοῦ καταργουμένου, but Paul does not say whether this alludes to Moses' death, their own death, the end of the old covenant, or its glorious goal and purpose in Christ. One significant implication of the ambiguity is that the nature of the Israelites' end (and that of the Mosaic icon at which they gaze) is open to a twofold consummation, according to whether or not they turn to 'the Lord' (2 Cor 3.16-18).

With the exception of the term τέλος (2 Cor 3.13), Paul's vocabulary is different from the Deuteronomist's. However, his narrative shows significant thematic correspondences, both in

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[50] On καταργέω, see esp. Hafeman, *History,* 301-9. On τέλος, see e.g. J. F. Collange, *Enigmes de la deuxième épître de Paul aux Corinthiens: Étude exégétique de 2 Cor. 2:14-7:4* (SNTSMS 18; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1972) 97-8; Hays, *Echoes,* 136-9; Hofius, *Paulusstudien*, 102; Thrall, *Second Epistle,* 256-8.

his emphasis on closure, and in the twofold characterisation of the end. Moses completes

the writing of the law, speaks of his own end, and looks forward to the end of the Israelites.

The vocabulary for 'ending' is varied but insistent: *συνετέλεσεν ... ἕως εἰς τέλος*, Deut 31.24;

ἔσχατον τῆς τελευτῆς μου ... ἔσχατον *τῶν ἡμερῶν*, Deut 31.29; ***ἕως εἰς τέλος***, Deut 31.30;

συνετέλεσεν, Deut 32.45.[51] Moses is preoccupied with how the history of Israel will be

consummated in the face of his own demise and with the role of the law-book now written

'to the end'. His perspective is as ambiguous as Paul's *τέλος*: at one time he has the

completed law-book preserved in the ark to bear witness against Israel, because he foresees

that they will be punished eschatologically for idolatry and thus consummate a history of

infidelity that begins before and continues after his own decease. Later, however, he insists

concerning the laws he teaches, that *οὐχὶ λόγος κενὸς*[52] *οὗτος ὑμῖν ὅτι αὕτη ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν* (Deut

32.47). The law grounds Israel's opportunity to live long and enjoy their inheritance. Readers

in Paul's day would know that the stone tablets preserved in the ark had been removed long

ago by the Chaldaeans and in this way come to an end; the law-book, however, was

preserved and continued to be read in the hope of life.[53] In 2 Cor 3, like Deuteronomy, Paul

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[51] Wevers, Deuteronomium ad locc. notes grammatical variants but the vocabulary for ending

stands in all extant manuscripts.

[52] Some manuscripts read *καινος*: A M 707[txt] 57 75 30'-343'.

[53] Olson, 'How did Deuteronomy', 210.

explores a twofold possibility of consummation around the 'end' of the written and personal

Mosaic revelation, but where Moses makes it centre on keeping the law (the 'word' that is

'your life'), Paul interprets it according as one turns to 'the Lord' unveiled or not.[54] The

images are very different; it remains to be seen whether Paul nonetheless intends this as a

particular *way of reading* the law rather than a new focus (icon) altogether.

IV.2 Reading of the Old Covenant

Reading Moses' book is one of Moses' final commands in Deuteronomy (31.10-13); it is also

a practice assumed by Paul in 2 Corinthians 3.14-15, where it locates the 'end' that occurs in

Christ when the veil is removed on turning to the Lord (2 Cor 3.15-16). However, the mere

motif of reading the law does not alone suggest a close connection between Paul and

Deuteronomy. Paul in fact glides smoothly from the foot of Sinai where Moses used to veil

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[54] Watson, *Hermeneutics,* 454-5 similarly emphasises the significance in general for Paul of

Deuteronomy's twofold ending for the Torah, but underscores the sufficiency of divine initiative

for salvation by contrast with the requirements of the Mosaic covenant (cf. pp.464-5). The

present passage in 2 Corinthians, however, does not draw this clear distinction between the

demands upon divine and human initiatives under the two covenants, or the twofold *telos* open

to the gazing worshippers.

his face to the contemporary reading of Moses and back to the Tent of Meeting again; this

dream-like overlay of different narrative locations invites closer investigation.

Scholars who seek to identify the veil that, according to Paul, remains 'until today at the

reading of the Old Covenant' (2 Cor 3.14) often discuss the veils that might have been used

at synagogue services, assuming this is the setting for Paul's 'reading of the Old Covenant'.

The synagogue setting is evoked by the parallel clause, where Paul says that the Israelites

have a veil on their heart 'whenever Moses is read' (2 Cor 3.14). This suggests a communal,

public reading which happens frequently enough for the indefinite ('whenever') to make

sense. The synagogue was the primary place for Torah study at this period.[55] Paul's

comment about the veiled-hearted Israelites parallels (and inverts) his vignette of the

Corinthians themselves as a letter written in the heart and read by all people, written not

with ink but the spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on parchment/fleshly hearts

(2 Cor 3.2-3). His imagery of the Corinthians as a letter read out interacts creatively with the

worship setting of where his own letter would be being read aloud amongst them, and this is

the Christian counterpart to the Jewish synagogue gathering. Thus it is plausible that the

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[55] S. J. D. Cohen, 'The Temple and the Synagogue', *The Cambridge History of Judaism, Vol. 3: The*

Early Roman Period (ed. W. Horbury, W. D. Davies and J. Sturdy; Cambridge: Cambridge

University, 1999) 304-6; Horbury, *Jews and Christians,* 230 with n.15; Lincicum, *Paul,* 31-3.

synagogue is indeed in Paul's mind in 2 Cor 3.14-15.

However, the synagogue gathering is not the *only* setting that gives shape and sense to Paul's account. In Deut 31.10-13, Moses commands that after seven years in the year of release (ἄφεσις / שְׁמִטָּה) at the Festival of Sukkot when all Israel gathers 'to be seen before the Lord' (thus LXX; Hebrew לראות also allows the reading 'to see the Lord') at the place which the Lord has chosen, they are to read 'this law' before all Israel, so that they may hear and learn to fear God and do the words of the Lord and live long in the land they are crossing the Jordan to inherit. This public reading before the whole nation is essentially different in character from the small-scale synagogue reading with exegesis.[56]

There are several points here that invite comparison with Paul's narrative in 2 Cor 3. Before embarking on that comparison, however, it may be objected that Paul cannot be understood closely with this Deuteronomic provision because there is little evidence that the Israelites

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[56] L. H. Schiffman, 'The Early History of Public Reading of the Torah', *Jews, Christians, and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue* (ed. S. Fine; New York: Routledge, 1999) 38. On the national setting: Deut 31:10-11, see: H. Ulfgard, *The Story of Sukkot: The Setting, Shaping, and Sequel of the Biblical Feast of Tabernacles* (BGBE 34; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998) 94; Schiffman, 'Early History', 38.

carried out the command for public reading of the Torah that was laid down in Deut 31.10-13. The main exception is the reading by Ezra depicted in Neh 8, where the form of the ceremony is adapted for a closed group who considered themselves the community of returned exiles in the Babylonian diaspora, quite different from Paul.[57] Paul, however, is layering contemporary practice with motifs and narrative derived from scriptural texts and from the sacred past; he emphasises that 'the same veil' remains from Moses' day until his own. Most likely, then, he is thinking of the contemporary synagogue service but interpreting it in ways intended to resonate with Moses' practices of speaking at the foot of Sinai (Exod 34.29-35). I suggest, however, that he is *also* engaging with Moses' commands for public *reading* of the Torah as he approached his *end* (Deut 31.10-15). Paul shares Deuteronomy's explicit interest in the relationship between hearing and seeing Moses in his lifetime and contemporary practices of listening to him. Like the Deuteronomist who equivocates between the stone tablets, the book that Moses writes, and the book the Deuteronomist compiles, Paul too equivocates between ink-writing and stone-tablets in 2 Cor 3.4, and again between stone-tablets and modern Moses-reading in 2 Cor 3.7, 13–14.

A number of Paul's motifs are closer to Deut 31 than to the synagogue service; some of these are also shared with Exod 34; the two Pentateuchal texts lend different perspectives to

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[57] Ulfgard, *Sukkot,* 94, 108-12.

the nuances of Paul's text. Like the public, national reading at Sukkot, Paul envisages how

'the sons of Israel' *en masse* beheld the veiled Moses with 'their' thoughts hardened (2 Cor

3.13), and he emphasises continuity with those who now hear Moses read with a veil ('the

same veil') on 'their' hearts (2 Cor 3.14-15). Rather than focus on extended exegetical

discussion as in the synagogue liturgy, he underscores 'beholding' (2 Cor 3.13, 18), which

implies a more comprehensive and personal encounter. His fleeting piece of explicit exegesis

(2 Cor 3.16-17) builds up to a vision of Christ vouchsafed to 'us *all* who behold with unveiled

face', not just to a small community such as a synagogue, let alone to just Moses or another

individual (2 Cor 3.18).[58] Thus in both the collective emphasis and the public and

comprehensive character of the encounter depicted, Paul's allusion to reading Moses

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[58] Most commentators understand ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες in 2 Cor 3:18 as a reference to all Christians:

e.g. Collange, *Enigmes,* 115; M. J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on*

the Greek Text (NIGTC; Grant Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005) 313; R. Schwindt, *Gesichte der*

Herrlichkeit: eine exegetisch-traditionsgeschichtliche Studie zur paulinischen und johanneischen

Christologie (Freiburg/New York: Herder, 2007) 223-4; a minority think that it refers to the

apostles only: H. A. W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians*

(trans. and ed. W. P. Dickson and W. Stwewart; CECNT 2; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1879), 2.217; P. E.

Hughes, *Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NLCNT; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott,

1962) 117.

resonates more closely with Deuteronomy than with the synagogue setting. In Exod 34 too, all the Israelites looked and listened as Moses communicated the commands of the Lord received in the Tent of Meeting, but only in Deuteronomy is the public encounter with Moses considered in relation to Moses' end and the juncture with future liturgy, when the Old Covenant will be *read* as a whole, not just received *ex tempore* in small doses following Moses' private visits to the Tent of Meeting.

Paul's visual imagery for 'beholding' Moses, turning to the Lord (implying Moses' encounter at the Tent of Meeting), and beholding the image of God face to face, also suggests a real engagement with the matter of *seeing* the divine. Deuteronomy's account of the instructions for preservation of Moses' book as he approaches his end combines two themes of visual encounter: Moses' and Joshua's encounter with God at the Tent of Meeting (Deut 31.14-15),[59] where, according to Exodus, Moses always wore a veil (Exod 34.33-5), and the command to the Israelites to go up at Sukkot to see God, which, in later times, was fulfilled by going to the Temple where the veil of the Holy of Holies was drawn back and the

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[59] Olson, 'How did Deuteronomy', 211 emphasises the surprise of this 'full-fledged theophany' alongside the 'verbal, aural, and distant God'.

Tabernacle furniture displayed before the gaze of assembled worshippers.[60] Paul's imagery

of 'all' beholding the glorious image at the reading of Moses when the veil is removed from

the face, thus resonates both with Moses' private experience at the foot of Sinai,[61] and with

the national experience at Sukkot where the covenant was read and the veil drawn back to

see the Divine Presence in the Holy of Holies.[62]

Paul is problematizing the Jewish sacred gaze, suggesting that the experience of 'seeing God'

is a veiled one without Christ. Moses' book in this setting functions more as witness against

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[60] G. A. Anderson, 'Towards a Theology of the Tabernacle and its Furniture', *Text, Thought, and*

Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity: Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium of

the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, jointly

sponsored by the Hebrew University Center for the Study of Christianity, 11–13 January, 2004 (ed.

R. Clements and D. R. Schwartz; STDJ; Leiden: Brill, 2009) 161-94.

[61] 2 Cor 3:16 // Exod 34:34. Exodus' narrative of how Moses was hidden in a cleft to behold

God's hind-parts resists the idea that Moses ever saw God face-to-face (Exod 33), but this is in

tension with (and perhaps originally intended to correct) the impression left by the narrative

about his entry into the Tent of Meeting or his glorious face after speaking with God on Sinai.

[62] In some early Christian thought, Christ was the face or presence of God who was hidden by the

veil to the Holy of Holies (Clem., *Strom.* 5.6.34, cf. *Paed.* 3.2.4.1–5.2).

Israel (cf. Deut 31.26) than as teacher and saviour (cf. Deut 31.11). But for those who do turn

to the Lord there is 'freedom' (ἐλευθερία, 2 Cor 3.17). The term 'freedom' is surprising as

Paul has not been using imagery of slavery in the immediate narrative.[63] The development

of his image suggests freedom from veils together with the darkness, hardening and ministry

of death that attend them. However, the intertextual associations with the events of the

Exodus and subsequent wanderings may suggest also freedom compared with slavery in

Egypt; and perhaps the freedom associated with the 'year of release' (ἐν καιρῷ ἐνιαυτοῦ

ἀφέσεως) which Moses stipulates as the time when his law should be read and Israel should

assemble together to see God at Sukkot (Deut 31.11).

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[63] Exegetes give diverse interpretations: Hays, *Echoes,* 149-53 thinks of hermeneutical freedom in

interpreting scripture; Thrall, *Second Epistle,* 275-6 suggests it is a positive status, as depicted in

Gal 4 and Rom 8, and that the latter passage may have been known to the Corinthians, for whom

'freedom' was in any case an appealing concept; H. D. Lietzmann, *An Die Korinther I-II* (ed. W. G.

Kümmel; 5th edn; HNT 9; Tübingen: Mohr, 1969) 113 compares different kinds of Pauline freedom

in Romans, 1 Corinthians and Galatians. My own reading is closer to Harris, *Second Epistle*, 312-

13, who emphasises that it is unqualified and therefore includes all freedom implied in the literary

context.

The relationship between Deuteronomy and 2 Corinthians 3, then, transforms Paul's account

of the problems of reading Moses in the synagogue into a depiction of the nation of Israel

located before the presence of God, poised to see and to hear the divine presence if ever

the veil is removed. Young's interpretation of 'typology' is again relevant, for the

intertextuality is mimetic, liturgical, and eschatological. The resonances with Exodus and

Deuteronomy lift the depiction of the contemporary liturgy into the sacred narrative of

national history, not stuck fast at Sinai, but now located on the edge of the promised land, at

the moment of Moses' imminent demise.

IV.3 Handover from Moses to Joshua(Ἰησοῦς)/Christ

In Deuteronomy, the way forward after Moses' end is prepared by appointing a successor.

Joshua is to 'go ahead before the face' of Israel into the promised land (Ἰησοῦς ὁ

προπορεύομενος πρὸ προσώπου σου, Deut 31.3; εἰσελεύσῃ πρὸ προσώπου τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου, Deut

31.7), and at the same time the Lord God will go ahead with them and will not leave or

forsake them (Deut 31.6, 8). The handover of leadership from Moses to Joshua takes place

at the Tent of Meeting, where Joshua had always been when Moses himself went to speak to

the Lord even before this (Exod 33.11); now the Lord descends in a pillar of cloud and

delivers his final instructions to Moses (Deut 31.15-16), who in turn commands Joshua to

bring the sons of Israel into the promised land, and the Lord shall be with him (Deut 31.23).

After teaching and recording his Song (Deut 32), he and Joshua appear before the people

again; Moses gives another lengthy blessing, then goes up to Mount Nebo and 'comes to an

end': LXX uses τελευτάω for what happened to Moses, rather than offering any explicit term

for a 'death'.

The story of Deuteronomy is chiefly concerned with Moses; Joshua is a necessarily significant

character but he is never placed in the spotlight in this book as Moses is. For Paul, however,

the climax of the story is when Jesus rather than Moses becomes the figure 'before the face'

of the Israelites, indeed before the face of 'us all' (2 Cor 3.18). His vocabulary of καταργέω

and τέλος preserves the Deuteronomist's ambiguity over Moses' end, while his vision of

turning to the Lord (as at the Tent of Meeting) culminates in beholding the glory of the Lord,

which, we soon learn, is seen 'in the face of [Jesus] Christ' (2 Cor 4.6 cf. v.4).

It has already been shown that among Paul's contemporary Jews, Moses' end was glorified

and Joshua was supported as a less interesting, but still important, successor. Paul's reading

of the Deuteronomic narrative, I suggest, works with the same tradition of interest in this

narrative, but casts the story in a different way, to celebrate Jesus as the true successor to

Moses and to offer an end to idolatry and disaster for those who gaze at him instead of his otherwise poorly discerned forbear.

Already in Romans 7.1-6, Paul had used imagery of a succession of covenantal relationships to different 'husbands' as a way of understanding how Christ's death made it possible for the church to be released from the oldness of the letter and from bondage to sin and death, to form a new marriage, a new covenantal relationship, to a second man, in spirit and in freedom.[64] His vocabulary there was similar to the terms he uses in 2 Cor 3. I suggest, then, Paul's development of the idea of 'succession' from Moses to Jesus in this passage is underpinned by typological meditation on the end of Deuteronomy, where typology refers to correspondences with eschatological and transcendental significance.

This result may seem surprising, since 'Joshua typology' for Jesus is usually thought to be later than Paul. It became widespread in the early church, but it was usually associated with an emphasis on the shared name (Ἰησοῦς),[65] whereas Paul does not use the name at all in

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[64] See above, III.4.

[65] Jude 5 (?); Barn 6.8-19; Tert., *Adv. Iud.* 9.21-2; these and other texts are discussed in R. Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology in the New Testament* (WUNT 2.328; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 10-18. See also: Clem. Al., *Paed.* I.vii.60.3; Tert., *Mon.* 6.39-44. Luke attributes to

this little vignette. It is plausible that the shared name is part of what drew his attention to

resonances between the roles of Jesus and Joshua in succeeding Moses before the face of

the Israelites, however, this feature is not highlighted in his account.[66] The epistle to the

Hebrews may offer the earliest extended example of Joshua typology for Jesus, and its

depiction of Jesus' Joshua-like role merits comparison with 2 Corinthians.[67] Notwithstanding

their significant differences in linguistic style, narrative, motifs, theology and Christology,

there are many striking similarities between these two epistles. Hebrews too is interested in

Ἰησοῦς as Moses' successor, and here the depiction of 'Jesus' and 'Joshua' coincides, though

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Jesus another Hebrew forbear named Ἰησοῦς (Lk 3:29), a reading that some may have been

uncomfortable with, as Alexandrinus reads Ἰωση instead. See discussion in L. Greenspoon,

'Translating *Jesus* and *the Jews*: Can We Eradicate the Anti-Semistism without Also Erasing

the Semitism?' in *Soundings in the Religion of Jesus; Perspectives and Methods in Jewish and*

Christian Scholarship (ed. B. Chilton, A. Le Donne, and J. Neusner; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress,

2012) 13-14.

[66] In 2 Cor 3:16-18, Paul writes of 'the Lord'. However, he emphasises the name Ἰησοῦς in 2 Cor

4:10-11 and probably also in vv.5-6; in these verses he five times uses Ἰησοῦς on its own, a usage

which is generally rare in his letters.

[67] Recently investigated in Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology,* by which my exegesis of Hebrews here is

chiefly informed.

homonymity of their names is assumed rather than discussed (cf. Heb 4.8). Both epistles are

closely concerned with Jesus' role in establishing a 'new covenant' (Heb 8.8; 9.15; 12.24 etc;

cf. 2 Cor 3.6; also 1 Cor 11.25). In Hebrews, Jesus is depicted as the one who would

successfully lead the people into the promised land, but also as the one who would

correspondingly open a way for them through the veil into the Holy of Holies (Heb 7.19-20;

10.19-20). Like 2 Corinthians, Hebrews envisages a 'vertical' dimension to this pilgrimage,

aiming to arrive ultimately not in an earthly, temporary, man-made sanctuary, but in the

'once-and-for-all' heavenly dwelling, not made by man (Heb 8.2, 5; 9.7, 11, cf. 2 Cor 5.1-2).

Like 2 Corinthians, Hebrews uses verbs of seeing in inviting people to fix their eyes on Jesus

in order to follow faithfully (βλέπομεν, Heb 2.9; ἀφορῶντες Heb 12.2). Both, however,

combine this invitation to visual focus on the exalted Jesus in the sanctuary with a

recollection that at present Christians 'walk' 'by faith and not by a visible form' (2 Cor 5.7);

their 'faith' is 'the assurance of things hoped for, the proof of things not seen' (Heb 11.1).

Both emphasise 'today', Hebrews as the juncture when the command is given to listen to 'his'

voice and harden not their hearts (Heb 3.13, 15; 4.7, quoting Ps 95.7); 2 Corinthians as the

time 'until which' the Israelites' minds have been hardened with veils on their hearts (2 Cor

3.14-15). This 'today' is located explicitly at (Heb 3.16), or alludes plausibly to (2 Cor 3.14-15

cf. Deut 29.3, discussed above), the point of entry into the promised land. These many

similarities between Hebrews and 2 Corinthians do not indicate a close literary relationship, since there are also many differences, but they do make some relationship likely.

It is plausible, then, that Paul's typological reading of the end of Deuteronomy in 2 Cor 3 went so far as to envisage Jesus as Moses' successor, who could protect the people from idolatry and grant them the restoration of glory, the gift of the spirit and of freedom, which were associated with the inheritance of the promised land. Furthermore, this typology became more fully and explicitly expressed in later Christian thought, demonstrating its significance for Paul's own successors.

V.   Paul's Use of Scripture and 2 Corinthians 3

This essay has drawn on Frances Young's understanding of 'typology' to propose that in 2 Cor 3 Paul suggests correspondences between the eschatological present and the narrative of Moses' end, the public reading of the law that gives form to the nation's collective identity, and Jesus' succession as the one 'before the face' of the people, on whom they focus in living out their faith while looking forward to a heavenly dwelling and new creation.

In the Jewish imagination, it was integral to the exodus paradigm that everything did not end with the end of Moses, but rather the sacred narratives themselves held out the prospect of receiving the inheritance promised to the forefathers. For Paul, it was always Jesus Christ who made it possible to receive that inheritance, and in 2 Cor 3, where alone he develops Moses as a character in narrative, he envisages also Jesus as the successor to Moses in the eye and heart of the faithful.

In this concluding section I would like to return to the hesitation that accompanied the introduction of critical terminology into the analysis, and point out the complexity of the 'intertextual' relationship here. As observed at the outset, this passage has often been considered especially significant in understanding Paul's hermeneutics of Scripture, and his attitude to the Mosaic / 'Old' covenant. And yet, what we find is anything but a tidy hermeneutical theory or critical method. Paul does not explicitly set out to exegete a passage of text, citing and then explaining it (with the fleeting and partial exception of 2 Cor 3.16-17). He does not apply a scientific method to distil meaning from scriptural narrative. Formally 2 Cor 3.7-18 is a partially allegorical (literally 'other-speaking') narrative, and it spills beyond these few verses, interacting with and contributing to Paul's imagery both earlier (esp. 2 Cor 2.14-3.6) and later (2 Cor 4.1-5.12 – and beyond). The correspondences with sciptural characters are not developed in a tightly-knit, systematic way: Paul compares

himself with Moses but Jesus cannot be *Paul's* successor; he equivocates between the idea of

Jesus as the successor to Moses as the centre of the Israelites' sacred gaze and the idea that

the Christ is actually the divine presence that Moses used to see in the Tent of Meeting.

Paul's narrative logic cannot be neatly tied down. The relationship between scriptural

intertexts and Paul's words is neither purely literary, relating only to the verbal surface of

each tale, nor is it purely 'real', depicting a precise isomorphism between scriptural past and

the Christian present at Corinth, as in a tightly worked out typological system.[68] Rather,

there are *both* correspondences *and* differences at *both* the literary *and* the historical level.[69]

In Paul's depiction of coming to behold Christ when the veil is removed, he seeks to focus

the gaze on Christ, and the depiction acquires depth in relation to Israel's sacred narrative

through evocation of its relationship to scripture and its major characters. Paul is not using

the scriptural narrative as a *mould* (τύπος) in which to cast the present, as if it were an image

(εἰκών), for Christ is the likeness of God himself (εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ, 2 Cor 4.4); in this sense there

is no 'Joshua typology'. But insofar as Christ appeared within history, the Corinthians'

encounter with him has been taken into the sacred narrative and its patterns, as they are

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[68] For this distinction, see further Ounsworth, *Joshua Typology*, 4-8, 19, 32-40.

[69] Cf. the recent plea in this journal for greater tolerance of ambiguity at the lexical level of

exegesis: F. G. Downing, 'Ambiguity, Ancient Semantics, and Faith', *NTS* 56 (2010) 139-62.

known from the scriptures.[70] Thus it becomes possible to contemplate Christ not just as a

shining face, but as succeeding Moses after his 'end' (in this like Joshua), setting the people

free (compare reading the scriptures and beholding God 'in the year of release'), and going

'before their face' in their pilgrimage to their heavenly home, when their hearts are made

ready, as Moses promised. The imbrication of Pauline and Mosaic narratives suggest

relationships between the two that give the Corinthian encounter with Christ not only

content (through the closest points of resemblance) and implied extension (inasmuch as the

intersecting scriptural narrative unfolds a fuller story than Paul does, pointing to the history

of Israel's past and promised future), but also depth (by suggestively but not definitively

intertwining the Corinthian present with what is known of God's interaction with Israel in the

scriptures). Paul's main point is not about how to read scripture, so much as how to

perceive Christ, but his scriptural imagery shows that the encounter with Christ is both part

of the scriptural tradition and something new and immediate for those who turn to *Moses'*

appointed successor with unveiled face. This 'succession' is not 'supersession', and it is

Moses' words about Ἰησοῦς that help configure the new relationship to God through Jesus.

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[70] I am carefully avoiding suggesting a diachronic division in Paul's mind between the sacred

'past' and the Corinthian 'present': cf. Young, 'Typology', 44-5, 47-8.