

## OLD TESTAMENT METHODOLOGIES: AN EVALUATION

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### ABSTRACT

The late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have witnessed the rise of a cornucopia of methodologies in the study of the Old Testament. This, to a great extent is attributed to the plurality of innovative Biblical scholarship that has drawn much from its surroundings of literary work. However, much depends on the scholarship of past Biblical exegetes and theologians. Methodologies are as diverse, as in the manner in which scholars make use of them. The task of the Old Testament scholar is to use a methodology and remain faithful to the Hebrew Bible text. Methodologies have their own merits and weaknesses at the same time. A befitting methodology for the study is therefore no easy task. This means to a great extent the scholar needs to explain the nuts and bolts of a methodology they choose to employ, no-matter how obvious the methodology appears to be. This paper attempts to make an evaluation of selected Old Testament methodologies, establishing their merits and demerits. This is done against the determination to remain orthodoxy to the Biblical text. Accordingly, the multiplex methodology is a suggested preference—it is grounded on sound biblical hermeneutical assumptions.

**Key words:** Methodology, OT center and methodology, Multiplex methodology, Hermeneutics, Historical critical method, Historical biblical method, Presuppositions, Assumptions.

### INTRODUCTION

It has been observed by Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton that the study of the Old Testament (OT) is a mammoth task.<sup>2</sup> Their observation as OT scholars concurs with Gerhard Hasel who, speaking of an element of OT methodological studies, declares, “the question of methodology in OT theology is complex.”<sup>3</sup> This study considers thematic issues on methodological ideas, whose outline is suggested by Gerhard Hasel.<sup>4</sup> The selection of Hasel has been done on the basis that he represents evangelical scholars, among them Charles Scobie,<sup>5</sup> and Sidney Greidanus,<sup>6</sup> who advocate for a biblical theology (BT) of the OT called the multiplex methodology. The paper’s shortness will not afford the luxury to consider all of them. Most significantly, Hasel’s position, along with others has received attention in the past<sup>7</sup> and continues to do so today. Graeme Goldsworthy,<sup>8</sup> as recent as 2012 made a critical evaluation of the multiplex methodology.

A history of OT theology is a history of methodologies. It ought to be noted that there is no specific unison when it comes to the criteria of what should be classified as OT biblical methodologies. We can

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<sup>2</sup>Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 1991), 3.

<sup>3</sup>Gerhard Hasel, *Old Testament Theology Basic Issues in the Current Debate*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 35.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Charles Scobie, *The Ways of our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003).

<sup>6</sup>Sidney Greidanus, *Sola Scriptura: Problems and Principles in Preaching Historical Texts* (Toronto, Canada: Wedge, 1970).

<sup>7</sup>H.G. Reventlow, *Problems of Biblical Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986), 148.

<sup>8</sup>Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012).

make two categorizes—historical critical method (HCM), and the historical biblical/grammatical method (HBM/HGM). Both the HCM and the HBM will be treated separately, for the aforementioned reason. Besides, these two methods can be treated as hermeneutical in principle. Nevertheless, the veracity and adequacy of an OT methodology, among other things, is “the matter of integrating the complete OT in all its variety and richness.”<sup>9</sup>

## OLD TESTAMENT METHODOLOGIES

### Dogmatic-Didactic Methodology

R. C. Dentan expresses categorically when he states, “The most basic affirmation of the Old Testament religion is that Yahweh is the God of Israel, and Israel is the people of Yahweh.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, Dentan, among others, is an example of proponents of dogmatic-didactic methodology for studying OT. It can also be explained as an approach that seeks the “God-man-salvation or theology-Anthropology-Soteriology.”<sup>11</sup> Scholars such as Georg Lorenz Bauer used it as early as late 18th century. While it is possible to stretch this approach to other teachings, arguably, Dentan applied it to the doctrine of God and no further.<sup>12</sup>

The shortfalls of this method include the limitations of the theology-Anthropology-Soteriology scheme to the corpus of the OT.<sup>13</sup> It fails to let the OT speak for itself. Besides, it is deductive and has limitations in presenting the OT theology.<sup>14</sup>

### Genetic Progressive Methodology

It is a time-honored methodology according to Hasel,<sup>15</sup> with regards to scope, function, and the structure of the OT. It rests on the premise that God has revealed himself progressively in history. The epochs of time are segmented and study is structured in this way as a method of understanding the OT. Chester K. Lehman is an example of a scholar who uses this methodology in his OT studies.<sup>16</sup> Others include R. E. Clements, who argues that there is thematic center in the OT, save the being of God around which makes the unity of the OT.<sup>17</sup> Besides, he excludes the other books of the OT, the wisdom literature, though he sparingly makes use of a few Psalms.<sup>18</sup>

There are valuable elements with this methodology, for example, it offers a sectional study of historic events and seeks to establish their meanings in the given context. However, it fails to meet the true nature of the OT canon, in that the OT text does not provide an intended or present a historic progression in the context of a tripartite structure.<sup>19</sup>

### Cross Section Methodology

Advocated by W. Eichrodt in the 1930s,<sup>20</sup> and he based his arguments on the fact that in true science there is an element of subjectivity. As such he argues for a view that approaches the OT in the same perspective. The methodology is selective in its choice of materials. Subjectivity denotes a selected criterion too, in which some parts of the OT are relegated to the less important, the peripherals, than the others.

<sup>9</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 49.

<sup>10</sup>Robert C. Dentan, *The Knowledge of God in Ancient Israel* (New York, NY: n.p., 1968), 45.

<sup>11</sup>Gerhard Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 45.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Chester K. Lehman, *Biblical Theology: Old Testament* (Goshen, IN: Biblical Viewpoints, 1998), 38.

<sup>17</sup>R. E. Clements, *Old Testament Theology: A Fresh Approach*. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012).

<sup>18</sup>Gerhard Hasel, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 49.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 47.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 51.

The cross-section methodology is selective, using the model of Eichrodt, though it remains historical. It applies the principle of covenant, and congenially uses both to establish a three strand of or structure that studies the OT. These are; “God and the people, God and the world, God and the man.”<sup>21</sup>

The challenge with the cross-section methodology is that is very artificial in nature.<sup>22</sup> The historical developments are done outside the NT context. More so, the major challenge is its use of the principle of selectivity, which does not account for the criteria arrived at, to value certain parts of the Scriptures above the others. Even where a center for doing the OT theology as a methodology, there is a problem too of using the selective principle. This renders the selective principle of OT methodology not preferable too, though it has some elements useful to textual analysis.

### The Topical Methodology

The topical methodology, in our discussion, is different from both the dogmatic and cross sectional methodologies. It denies the use of extra biblical categories to be used in its functionality. John L. McKenzie was its proponent.<sup>23</sup> He is reputed to have authored his book as though the NT was not in existence.<sup>24</sup> So when he argues for non-use of outside grid, the NT is excluded too. He perceives the NT as not equal to the OT in canonicity. Right here there is a challenge with this OT methodology. Its outright denial of the unity of the NT and the OT as one canon. Without further considerations of what else it offers, one is persuaded to consider it as less favorable for scholars who uphold the tota-scriptura principle.

The methodology also employs the selective principle as evidenced in McKenzie selection of the Israelite cultus as a pivot for doing his OT theology. This is based on the “quantitative frequency of experience,”<sup>25</sup> The methodology therefore switches between qualitative and quantitative selections of the OT text in the context of experiences related to the Israelite cultus. This is evidence of its deficiency and methodological bankruptcy in OT theological studies. Besides, the advocates are not consistent to the topical methodology because sometimes they follow a book-by-book sectional study.<sup>26</sup> When we consider that the expression topical, may have even changed to the contemporary theological issues, we may not dismiss it completely. Assuming that topical could mean theme, it’s a methodology that can add insight to the textual study of the OT.

### The Diachronic Methodology

Diachronic methodology is synonymous with the name of G von Rad, which he used to arrive at the “theologically important,”<sup>27</sup> in his study of the OT. He worked on the OT using the HCM and sought to construct a history of Israel and Yahwism on the dashboard of the “kerygmatic picture,”<sup>28</sup> built on the HCM, “retelling remains the most legitimate form of theological discourse on the Old Testament.”<sup>29</sup> The text is embellished with elements that need not concern the reader, according to this view. Only by reconstructing the narrative, can the meaning be arrived at. Its conceptual framework to read the text with lenses that look for the theological implications is enriching, yet incomplete. This approach may be used; however, it seems

<sup>21</sup>H. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie. Die Offenbarungsreligion in ihrer vorchristlichen Entwicklungsstufe* (Leipzig, Germany: n.p., 1896).

<sup>22</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 57.

<sup>23</sup>J. L. McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament* (New York, NY: n.p., 1974), 319.

<sup>24</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 57.

<sup>25</sup>McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament*, 35. Also it has been noted that above the “qualitative individual experience.” The criteria being used often makes one wonder on complexities of methodologies put together. Further reading on the mid-twentieth century mind on this may include Georg Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion* (Berlin, Germany: n.p., 1969) and W. Zimmerli, “Gottes Offenbarung. Gesammelte Aufsätze zum,” *AT Theologische Bucherei*. 19. Munich, Germany: n.p, 1963. Though these two scholars begin their procedure differently, they are both topical in their OT methodology.

<sup>26</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 69.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid. See also G. A. “Knight Rediscovering the Traditions of Israel,” *Society of Biblical Literature*, no. 9 (Missoula, MA: Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, 1973).

<sup>28</sup>For further study see O. Cullmann, *Salvation in History* (New York, NY: n.p., 1967).

<sup>29</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 73.

to be rooted in the traditio-historical approach—understood to construct or rebuild a history of Israel, exclusive of other details. The scholar who accepts the historicity of the OT will find this less attractive for OT methodology. However, diachronic in contemporary scholarship, denotes a different meaning Hasel attaches to it in his treatise. For that reason, it should be noted there seems nothing untenable for doing a diachronic textual methodological study on the biblical text. On the one hand others employ the synchronic methodology of studying a text or passage.

### **The Formation of Tradition Methodology**

The formation of tradition methodology is a part or an element of the previous methodology, i.e., diachronic method. Hartmut Gese advocated it.<sup>30</sup> The critical issue about this methodology is that biblical theology of the OT can only be done on the conveyor belt of tradition history.<sup>31</sup> It is described as descriptive of living processes formative of tradition.<sup>32</sup>

Gese and his mentors, namely G von Rad and Stuhlmacher share one thing in common, i.e., they seek to redefine theology and present it as the realm of tradition forming. However, E. Grasser observes that Gese is avoiding a deliberate forthright use of the critical methodology, rather, in his view he sees them in their methodology accommodating a ‘mild’ use of the HCM.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the Formation of Tradition methodology attempts to avoid the establishment of a center of OT theology, besides proposing a late closure of the canon or later for some its proponents. It subscribes to the reduction hypothesis of the historical critical method.<sup>34</sup>

There is possible reasons to conclude that the Formation of Tradition methodology is short of some key issues as an option for doing OT theology. First, it seems to be a methodology of “history tradition-building and its theology.”<sup>35</sup> Hasel makes very strong remarks when he states that it is “a Biblical or OT theology turned into a phenomenology of tradition building process.”<sup>36</sup> An OT methodology that seeks its roots and foundation outside of itself and yet clamor to be the preferred option for OT theological methodology is not to be considered by any scholar who uses the Scripture to define own methodology of study. While Hasel here sounds too strong it may be suggested that the methodology should be appraised for its merit regarding the study of extra biblical materials in relation to the OT.

### **The Thematic-Dialectical Methodology**

The Thematic-Dialectical Methodology was advocated by W. Brueggemann as a new methodology that would be preferred above the Formation of Tradition Methodology. It was regarded, as an unlocking matrix in the hot debates of OT preferred methodological quagmires.<sup>37</sup> Its proponents agreed, but differed in their ‘intra-methodological’ strands of using the same methodology.<sup>38</sup> They were unison in their being dialectical, yet diverse in the type of the dialectic they chose.<sup>39</sup> Westermann opted to exclude the wisdom literature genre in his dialectic,<sup>40</sup> while Terrien used the motif of presence as an elimination of the covenant motif of the OT.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>30</sup>See an article by Hartmut Gese, “Erwagungen zur Einheit der biblischen Theologie,” *ZThK*, no. 67 (1970). Also, read Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 75.

<sup>31</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 76.

<sup>32</sup>Hartmut Gese, “Erwagungen zur Einheit der biblischen Theologie,” 317.

<sup>33</sup>E. Grasser, “Offence Fragen im Umkreis einer Biblischen Theologie,” *ZThK*, no. 77 (1980): 200-221.

<sup>34</sup>Gese, “Erwagungen zur Einheit,” 323.

<sup>35</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 81.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, 81. See S. Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: Toward a New Biblical Theology* (New York, NY: n.p., 1978), Paul Hanson, *Dynamic Transcendence* (Philadelphia, PA: n.p., 1978). C. Westermann, *Theologie des AT in Grundzügen* (Göttingen, Germany: n.p., 1978).

<sup>39</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 81.

<sup>40</sup>Westermann, *Theologie des AT in Grundzügen*, 11.

<sup>41</sup>Terrien, *The Elusive Presence*, 72.

The common and noticeable challenge is that both are selective in their “dialectic” material of the OT text. Besides, they do not draw criteria that leave the biblical text as sola scriptura in their process of doing theology. Thus, the underpinning of the thematic-dialectical method, is a form of the HCM.<sup>42</sup>

### The New Biblical Theology Method

Brevard Childs sought to go beyond most methodologies by use of the New Biblical Method. It has however been noted that it was a reaction and option proffered against the historical critical method (HCM) and its diverse forms in that it makes a wall between the past and the present reality. In this regard, it might mean formation of tradition, history of religions and even comparative religions.<sup>43</sup> It sought to understand the text in its context taking into account what the text meant and what it means today.<sup>44</sup> This sounds and appears lucrative, however, Childs seeks to build a new theology that excludes the OT and the NT theologies,<sup>45</sup> and in the process he advocates for a separation of OT from NT theologies. The OT theology does not speak of the historical development of Israel for this methodology. Be that as it may, he does his theological enterprise in way that evidences elements that are useful in doing BT, as long as the given deficiencies can be noted. The HCM and the HGM are evaluated next.

### The Historical Critical Method

Without much ado, the HCM with all its forms<sup>46</sup> goes back to the times of Wilhelm Vatke who used the Hegelian philosophy to interpret the OT text. He argued that the thesis (nature of religion), antithesis (spiritual religion), and the synthesis (absolute, universal religion –Christianity), should be imposed on the OT text, rather than derived from within it.<sup>47</sup> Bruno (1809-1882) published a book based on the same philosophy, though he had different conclusions.<sup>48</sup> It was Jean Astruc who adopted and used the literary analysis on the OT, with special emphasis to the idea that Moses used different sources to compile his books.<sup>49</sup> However, it was Julius Wellhausen, using the pioneering work of other scholars,<sup>50</sup> after the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1876-1877), who popularized the Documentary hypothesis.<sup>51</sup> Advocates against the HCM include E. W. Henstenberg, J C. F. Steudel, H. A. C. Haevernick and G.F. Oehler. They argued against the HCM. Steudel was outstanding in his denial of the HCM even though he used the structure of dogmatics in his methodology. Oehler made the “most significant and lasting,”<sup>52</sup> contribution to the development of biblical theology. He denied Marcionism trends introduced by Fredrick Schleiermacher and insisted that the OT theology is most intelligible only as it is allowed to “function properly only within the larger canonical context.”<sup>53</sup>

Wellhausen is renowned for popularizing the HCM through the publication of his book *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*,<sup>54</sup> while Oehler is reckoned as the defender of “salvation-historical” treatise, both in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Along with others the OT theology was shaped to defend the historicity of the biblical text during this period. Several scholars<sup>55</sup> approached the issue from different angles yet congruent in the essence of the matter. J. C. Konrad von Hoffman did an excellent analysis on this matter by chronicling

<sup>42</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 86.

<sup>43</sup>See Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1970). 141.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>See Hasel, *Biblical Interpretation Today*.

<sup>47</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 25.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Hill and Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 77.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 26.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>55</sup>These include Gottfried Menkon, Johann T. Beck, J. C. Konrad von Hoffman. Ibid., 29.



that it is the purpose of the Godhead to serve mankind through Jesus.<sup>56</sup> However, Clinton Wahlen,<sup>57</sup> gives reasons why the HCM is not preferable. Though massive reaction was done against the HCM, it was the publication of Wellhausen's book that took the day, and OT theology was now shaped or influenced by the HCM. To do OT theology was to employ the HCM and all its forms, for most scholars. Ernst Troeltsch articulated what can today be referred to as the pillars of HCM; i.e, principles of correlation,<sup>58</sup> analogy<sup>59</sup> and principle of criticism.<sup>60</sup> The HCM became one of the methodologies that drove OT theology, and remains influential to many methodologies of both the OT and NT today. It could also be viewed as the bedrock of assumptions of critical scholarship.

### The Historical Grammatical/Biblical Method

The years after World War 1 in 1918 saw the rise or revival of the historical grammatical method (HGM). More specifically OT theology began to recover, and several reasons or causes are sited—(1) evolutionary naturalism loss, (2) denial of the motion that science carries evidences for the present, and (3) a return to orthodoxy.<sup>61</sup> In 1922 E. Koning defended the HGM, though he is noted to have equated the rise of Israelite religion to specific theological history.<sup>62</sup> The attempt Koning was met with debates on what entails OT theology. It has been observed though that the OT theology, special moment began in the 1930s, with many scholars, at that period taking part.<sup>63</sup>

The HGM may best be seen as an overarching methodology applicable to all testaments and cannot be described as a unique methodology for the OT per se. It is best viewed as a hermeneutical methodology that emanates from the entire Bible. It underscores a philosophical theology that respects the entire bible as a historical document that is an indivisible union of the divine and human. We still need to look for or propose specific OT methodologies that are built on this base or foundation. In the wake of the deficiencies of some methodologies we need to look further than was considered. It is perhaps best, to view the HGM as more of a philosophical underpinning that provides a ground upon which other methodologies are built on, rather than merely a methodology that is exclusive of the rest.

### Hermeneutics as Part of OT Methodology

The history of BT theology is a history of hermeneutics<sup>64</sup> in the same manner, just as “the history of any denominational church is also the history of its interpretation of Scripture.”<sup>65</sup> Hermeneutics has been

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>57</sup>Clinton Wahlen, “Hermeneutics and Scripture in the Twenty-First Century,” *Biblical Research Institute of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington DC: Biblical Research Institute of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2015): 1-9.

<sup>58</sup>Denies divine cause to historical events. Rudolf Bultmann subscribed to this school of thought. Hasel, *Biblical Interpretation Today*, 73. J Maxwell and Karl Bath bought the same idea. Ibid., 74. About Maxwell see J. Maxwell, *The Old Testament and the Historian* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1976), 13.

<sup>59</sup>It argues that the window through which the past can be known is present experiences. Hasel, *Biblical Interpretation Today*, 75.

<sup>60</sup>“Our judgments about the past cannot simply be classified as true or false but must be seen as claiming only a greater or lesser degree of probability and always open to revision.” Van A Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer* (New York, NY: n.p., 1966), 29-30. Published also in 1996 by University of Illinois Press.

<sup>61</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 31.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 31.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 33.

<sup>64</sup>Kwabena Donkor discusses the history of biblical hermeneutics as he looks at hermeneutics in the contemporary world. Kwabena Donkor, “Hermeneutics Today,” *Biblical Research Institute of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington DC: Biblical Research Institute of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2015): 1-8.

<sup>65</sup>Hasel, *Biblical Interpretation Today*, 1. Also, Barton, John. *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996); See Bruce Corley, Steve W. Lemke, Grant I. Lovejoy, eds., *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2002); Grant, R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1991); Walter C., Kaiser, Jr., and Moises Silva, *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993).

categorized into specific areas,<sup>66</sup> described in various ways. However, its basic definition is that it is a science and an art of interpretation,<sup>67</sup> in a more general way. When applied to the biblical text the definition gets more detailed, “Biblical hermeneutics is the study of the basic principles and procedures for faithfully and accurately interpreting God’s Word.”<sup>68</sup> Grant R. Osborne states, “The science which delineates principles or methods for interpreting an individual author meaning.”<sup>69</sup> This cements the idea of discovering intention<sup>70</sup> of the text. Besides, it “is a case for understanding God’s mind in His revealed word.”<sup>71</sup>

To discuss methodology means discussing Biblical hermeneutics in relation to OT. In this case, our study inevitably draws our attention to this element as it relates to BT. A book edited by Willem A. VanGemenen serves as a good example of scholars attempting to explore OT exegesis.<sup>72</sup> The biblical text of the OT has not been entered into without some hermeneutics that guide it, if we go by the dictum that says hermeneutics is principles and procedures of interpretation of the biblical text. Regarding the above observation, the theology of the OT over the centuries arises from the biblical hermeneutics applied to the text of the OT. In addition, it can also be said there can never be a time when the OT text has not been dealt with outside of some hermeneutical principles and procedures. These may be biblical originated or not. The task of establishing a theology of the OT is also a look at the history of hermeneutics. However, we look at the nature, locus and motivation of the OT first before we consider the methodologies that arose or developed over the centuries, but particularly during the period that saw the establishment of biblical theology as a discipline, i.e., the mid-17th century.

Craig C. Broyles has made immense contribution on OT interpretation in doing OT biblical theology. His masterpiece on OT exegesis cannot be excluded in this discussion.<sup>73</sup> In his discussion, he explores the specific steps to be followed when doing OT textual exegesis. Also, he amplifies his discussion in another chapter of the same book when he focusses on intertextuality.<sup>74</sup> This is helpful because his discussion attempts to show the interconnection of the selected text with the rest of the OT text and even the NT. The steps that he discusses are put in a clear way as to give a guide, which becomes a methodology of interpretation of the OT in a way. Some of the scholars discuss philosophical conceptual frameworks

<sup>66</sup>Niall Keane and Chris Lawn, eds., *The Blackwell Companion Hermeneutics* (West Sussex, UK: John and Wiley, 2016), 2. Here the two authors, in their classical treatise identify jurisprudence, philology and theology as areas of hermeneutics. Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 5.

<sup>68</sup>Richard M. Davidson, “Principles on Biblical Hermeneutics,” *Andrews University Lecture Notes* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Seminary, 1995), 11. Also, he notes, “From the biblical examples showing the necessity of Scriptural interpretation, and other biblical data, we may deduce three major tasks of biblical hermeneutics: (1) to understand what the human writers of Scripture intended to convey to their hearers or readers (see, e.g., Acts 2:25-31); (2) to grasp what the divine Author intends to communicate through the words of Scripture, which meaning may not always have been fully understood by the human writer or his contemporaries (1 Pet 1:10-12); and (3) to learn how to communicate and apply both form and content of the Biblical message to modern humanity today (see, e.g., Matt 5:17-48; 1 Pet 1:15-16).” Ibid

<sup>69</sup>Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 21.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>71</sup>Mario Veloso, “Hermeneutics: A Case of Biblical Understanding,” in *The End from the beginning: Festschrift Honoring Merling Alomia*, ed. Benjamin Rojas, Teofilo Correa, Lael Caesar y Joel Turpo (Lima, Peru: Universidad Peruana Union, 2015), 286.

<sup>72</sup>Willem A. VanGemenen, ed., *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: The Introductory Articles from the New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999). The book carries chapters authored by various outstanding OT scholars on different methodologies of talking OT theology. It provides a compact overview of OT hermeneutical scholarship among others. Also, read Stanley E. Porter and Beth M. Stovell, *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2012).

<sup>73</sup>Broyles C. Craig, “Interpreting the Old Testament: Principles and Steps,” in *Interpreting the Old Testament: A Guide for Exegesis*, ed. Broyles C. Craig (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001), 13-62.

<sup>74</sup>Broyles C. Craig, “Traditions, Intertextuality and Canon,” in *Interpreting the Old Testament: A Guide for Exegesis*, ed. Broyles C. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001), 157-176. The term *intertextuality* denotes various nuances too elaborate to be discussed in this paper.

without necessarily giving step by step explanation of how to do the actual interpretation. In this regard, Broyles' discussion is very handy for the discussion on OT methodologies.

William R. Telford discusses modern biblical interpretation in his book.<sup>75</sup> We do well to consider his take on this. He notes that biblical hermeneutics in relation to the OT text is surrounded by scope, nature and complexities. Telford acknowledges that the task of modern biblical hermeneutics is both "multifarious," and "multitudinous," in its ways of, in our context, biblical theology.<sup>76</sup> He labors to be meticulous about highlighting the technical difference between "approach," and "methodology,"<sup>77</sup> an aspect most scholars do not put interest in. John Barton concurs to the import of defining terms.<sup>78</sup> This however is helpful for him to argue his case for methodologies. He notes that doing theology, irrespective of the diverse methods, the major agenda should be to establish or formulate a theology of God and how He relates to humanity.<sup>79</sup> In this explanation, one hears the echoes of systematics at play, when he talks of formulating a theology on a given subject.

In addition, Telford notes that there are three specific areas that must be noted in methodological issues—historical, literary and theological elements. Hermeneutics, for Telford takes place within an interplay of these three aspects. BT for Telford then takes account of when a satisfactory consideration or application of these has been done to the text. What follows Telford's discussion on hermeneutical elements, is a look at the pluralistic existence of methodologies,<sup>80</sup> an issue that will be considered when we look at current methodologies.

Conclusively, Telford is in agreement with others who argue that there are many methodologies today that can be used to explore the text. Furthermore, he proffers a conceptual framework in which the procedures of exegesis ought to take place in doing BT today. There is no one method to use, rather, all are used with the agenda of the scholar platforming such operations. One might call these presuppositions. Each of the methodologies is used within the context of presuppositions. Telford opts to identify this as approach, the interpretative environment, which is placed in history according to his structure of doing theology.

Mario Veloso, in his discussion suggests that there are hermeneutical principles we must not follow in OT studies.<sup>81</sup> These include human rights hermeneutic, meta hermeneutic, redemptive hermeneutic, a mix of several different methods of biblical studies.<sup>82</sup> Veloso concludes his discussion by pointing to hermeneutics of Christ.<sup>83</sup> This is a hermeneutic Merling Alomia has given a detailed discussion.<sup>84</sup> While human rights, and such like issues as noted above must be looked at from a biblical perspective, they should not in and by themselves become the hermeneutic/assumption, lenses, and/or methodological tool for exegesis of the biblical text.

## OT Centre and Methodology

The discussion on a center for OT is said to have begun before or after Gerhard von Rad.<sup>85</sup> Based on the discussions on different methodologies considered above, it is apparent that scholars attempt to establish a

<sup>75</sup>William R. Telford, and John Barton, ed., *Biblical World*, vol. 2 (New York, NY: TJ International, 2002).

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, 430.

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid.* *Approach* for Telford refers to the "interpretive framework," while *methodology* refers to "procedures," steps of exegesis to establish the meaning of a text. *Ibid.*, 429-430.

<sup>78</sup>John Barton writes, "A lack of agreement about the use of terms bedevils many areas of study in the humanities, and my impression is, this is true to a particularly great extent in biblical studies." Barton, *Holy Writings, Sacred Text*, 157.

<sup>79</sup>Telford and Barton, *Biblical World*, 431.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, 436-438.

<sup>81</sup>Mario Veloso, *Hermeneutics*: 294-298.

<sup>82</sup>Telford and Barton, *Biblical World*, 436-438.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>84</sup>Merling Alomia, "Some Basic Hermeneutic Principles Established By Christ for the Exegetes of All Centuries," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 10, no. 1-2 (1999): 475-485.

<sup>85</sup>Rolf Rendtorff, "Approaches to Old Testament Theology," *Problems in biblical Theology: Essays in Honour of Rolf Knierim*, ed. Henry T. C. Sun and Keith L. Eades (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 16.



center of doing OT theology. Suggested elements seemed to have failed.<sup>86</sup> There seemed to be a struggle to balance many factors; inclusion of the NT in doing OT theology, incorporating many elements of the diverse books of the OT in their different types of genre. Some scholars excluded some books because they failed to include them and maintain their structure of suggested methodology. Simply, others just excluded or were just selective, and differently, in various degrees, made use of the HCM in their argumentation.

Against this background, the OT remains a unit of literary work, however, this should not be limited or perceived as books just bound together, but rather, a more underlying pin must unite these books and their content. For this reason, Hasel exclaims, “the quest for the center of the OT (and the NT) which is based on the inner Biblical witness is not only justified but must be carried on with utmost vigor.”<sup>87</sup> This might be needful, for how else can we speak of the unit of the OT, if elements that point to that effect cannot be established? A deliberate recognition of the nature or essence of the OT and NT—the OT is ‘theocentric’ while the NT is ‘Christocentric.’<sup>88</sup> The thematic issues or theological motifs if one likes to call them need to be established, so we can talk of OT theology of health, creation, people of God, covenant, for example.

There comes a forceful and declarative statement by Hasel in which he seems to concur with other scholars, i.e., “God is the dynamic unifying center of the OT.”<sup>89</sup> The OT begins with God, ends with God and has God at the center.<sup>90</sup> It is a revelation of God that characterizes the OT. There are areas in which He manifests of His revelation that are taken into account—actions, creation, words, presentation of Himself as God of the world.<sup>91</sup> The people of Israel respond to God’s revelation in praise and worship.<sup>92</sup> God is presented as a saving God, presupposing that divine salvation is at the core of divine action in divine revelation of the OT. The different books, the Pentateuch, historical, prophetic or wisdom books of the OT attest to this fact.<sup>93</sup> God comes in between Himself and the sinner (mankind), and builds a bridge for restoration and communion. This seems the unifying center of the OT. It remains dynamic giving room for a descriptive script of “the rich and variegated theologies and to present the various longitudinal themes, motifs, and ideas,”<sup>94</sup> of the various genres of the OT, to speak to the unifying center, i.e., God. In this structure, all theologies, such as creation, man, wisdom, etc., are safe of being discussed because they are “not relegated to an inferior status,”<sup>95</sup> as suggested in the other unacceptable methodologies early on considered. It can therefore be concluded that the center and unit of the OT is God revealing Himself to mankind.<sup>96</sup> This resonates and connects well with the NT, which has already been described as Christocentric. With this clarity, we can proceed to the discussion of a preferred methodologies of the OT. It must be methodologies that acknowledges that God is the unifying center of the OT, only then can it be a coherent and most applicable to BT of the OT. Our argument here is that there are many methodologies or approaches if we may use this expression interchangeably, to do a theology of the OT.

## The Multiplex Methodology

<sup>86</sup>Inclusive of the various motifs: covenant, communion, election, promise, the kingdom of God, holiness of God, experience of God. Ibid., 138. These were just examples to show that it is a challenge to draw up a center for OT methodology or theology.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 138.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., 139.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., 139. See also J. Lindblom, *Werden und Wesen des AT* (Berlin, Germany: n.p., 1936); A. Heschel, *Man Is Not Alone* (New York, NY: n.p., 1951).

<sup>90</sup>See Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 140.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., 140-141.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 140.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 141.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., 142.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., 142.

<sup>96</sup>“It is proper to speak of YHWH’s self-revelation as center of OT theology because He exercises divine temporality in Israel’s and other nations’ historical movement.’ Innocent Gwizo, “A Survey of Old Testament Methodologies and Their Implications for Biblical Studies,” *Asia-African Journal of Mission and Ministry* 20 (2019): 44.

The multiplex methodology<sup>97</sup> is rooted in the HGM methodology in its philosophical, conceptual framework and essence. Hasel's discussion has been singled out to represent scholarship on this methodology as pointed out earlier. Besides, scholars continue to respond to Hasel on this matter in the present. The methodology unlike others, proposes 7 steps to be followed.<sup>98</sup> Each of these elements or characteristics distinguishes the multiplex methodology from the many methodologies, whose hermeneutics, conceptually and philosophically are rooted in the HCM. The task of doing BT is in itself a methodology. Through a description of how a theology of the OT can be done, the multiplex methodology is clarified. The steps are discussed as follows.

### **Biblical Theology as Historical-Theology**

The context meant here is that the task of doing OT theology engages the scholar to do Ancient Near East (ANE) historical study of the OT and Israel.<sup>99</sup> This is done to establish the world of the text in which it was born or established. The exercise leads to a knowledge of 'what the text meant to them,' before an application of 'what it means today' is arrived at.<sup>100</sup> It means to 'walk in the villages' of the OT stories. The testimonies of the witnesses of the people of the OT are historical and theological at the same time.<sup>101</sup> Historical nature in that their testimonies, attest to divine temporality and the reality of the historicity of the accounts. Theological in the sense of their concept of the divine.

There is a blend of the two areas of study that are stationed uniquely. Systematics makes use of current philosophy to develop or categorize its motifs or themes. On the one hand, biblical theology uses the biblical text to do the same about its motif, themes and concepts.<sup>102</sup> Consequently, the two must work together in a non-competitive way, rather in a complementary manner to benefit each other profoundly. The two have the same task, to make an exposition of the theology of the OT and the NT.

### **Exegesis Based on Sound Principles and Procedures**

It has been noted that some methodologies are not preferred by evangelical scholars because of their link to the HCM, though some elements within them are also common to non-critical methodologies. However, the challenges of OT theology are to a great extent, compounded by the revolution caused by the HCM in the 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Most effectively when Wellhausen popularized the HCM in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, 1876-77.<sup>103</sup> The multiplex methodology is arguably rooted on sound biblical hermeneutical principles and procedures of interpretation of the OT text.<sup>104</sup> OT theology guides the exegetical process that avoids an atomistic dealing with texts of the OT, even though it takes textual criticism<sup>105</sup> into account. An atomistic approach has a danger of misinterpretation or isolation of textual meaning that may render other sections of the OT text as irrelevant. When this happens the traps of some elements of unpreferred methodologies surges in. In the same vain, exegesis will also check the theology of the OT.<sup>106</sup>

### **Theology Based on the OT Text**

<sup>97</sup>Gerhard Hasel, "The Future of Biblical Theology," in *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology*, eds. K. S. Kantzer and S. N. Gundry (Grand Rapids, MI: n., 1979), 179-194.

<sup>98</sup>See Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 169-183.

<sup>99</sup>See Bill T. Arnold and Richard S. Hess, *Ancient Israel's History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014).

<sup>100</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 169.

<sup>101</sup>*Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>102</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup>Hill and Walton, *Survey of the Old Testament*, 77. See Broyles, *Interpreting the Old Testament*, 13-62. See also Robert B. Chisholm Jr, *From Exegesis to Expositions: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998).

<sup>104</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 171. For further reading on exegesis of the OT see Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2014).

<sup>105</sup>About Textual Criticism see Ellis R. Brotzman and Eric J. Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016).

<sup>106</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 171.

The use of other materials, such as archaeological findings is helpful to illuminate the text in the context of the ANE.<sup>107</sup> However, primacy of the OT must be respected in so far as developing or doing OT theology is concerned. The shortfalls of other methodologies could be seen as seeking to take the underpinnings, principles or frameworks solely useable on secular materials, but not the biblical text of the OT.

The theology of the OT that takes into account the historical and archaeological<sup>108</sup> context of the ANE<sup>109</sup> in its procedures avoids the pitfalls and alleys of doing a theology of traditions, history of religions or criticism or reductionism.<sup>110</sup> It will remain a theology of the OT that takes into account the theological motif and themes of the various books of the OT. In this process there is deliberate intent to refrain from systematizing elements that are impossible to be systematized without a loss of their essential nature.<sup>111</sup> In this regard, God remains central of the OT central subject.<sup>112</sup> Thus, “the OT Scripture has a central content without falling into the trap of organizing the event-centered character and manner of God’s self-revelation into a system.”<sup>113</sup> When we consider this dimension of doing theology, the OT becomes a source document, of course used along with the NT, of doing a theology without an artificial dependence on external materials. The extra-materials may be informative; however, the OT text is without substitute and cannot be replaced for anything else regarded better.

Furthermore, it should be pointed that Hasel could have been more elaborate to clearly state that archaeology is informative of the biblical text. His theological thinking, taken as whole attests to this fact. His theological pattern is in actuality accommodative of other disciplines for doing theology—within the bounds of the assumptions of the HGM. New methods may be accommodated as long as they explore the biblical text taking into account the aforementioned preferable assumptions.

### Date and Origin of Books Preferred to MT Sequence

It is well attested by many scholars that the identification of dates, for the origin of the books of the OT is a herculean task.<sup>114</sup> Books on introduction to the OT attempt to address this challenge.<sup>115</sup> However, the theologies of the books are easy to establish and follow with better exegesis for an OT theology when the dates of origin of the books are taken into account. When consideration is taken to note that the books of the OT present diverse theologies, the sequence of their origin is helpful to this end. There is no dispute or contention about this observation, except that the issue of minimalists and maximalists, when discussing chronological issues must be noted. Adherence to one or the other has serious implications to BT and its methodology for OT studies.

### The Unit of Major Themes of the OT.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., 177.

<sup>108</sup>Christopher Chippindale, “Archaeology in the Contemporary World,” in *The Oxford Companion to Archaeology*, ed. B. Fagan (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996); See also John D. Currid, *Doing Archaeology in the Land of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999); James B. Pritchard, *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008); Leo, G. Perdue, ed., *Archaeology and the Biblical Interpretation* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1987).

<sup>109</sup>See Alfred J. Hoerth, Gerald L. Mattingly, Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Peoples of the Old Testament World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994). Also, see Bill T. Arnold and Brent A. Strawn, *The World around the Old Testament: People and Places of the Ancient Near East* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2016).

<sup>110</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 179.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., 170-180.

<sup>115</sup>On introduction to the OT see Bill T. Arnold, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), Tremper Longman III and Raymond B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity, 2007); Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of the Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2007); Victor H. Mathews, *The Cultural World of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2015).

It has been noted that the major themes of the OT can be drawn together by a theology of the OT itself, for it alone sets the boundaries and limitations for itself.<sup>116</sup> There are several major themes and motifs that recur in the OT. The examples that may serve this purpose include but not limited to (1) the covenant and its major elements of worship and divine judgment runs through the corpus of the OT, (2) the election as seen in the choice of Abraham, Jacob, Israel among nations, (3) the remnant also runs through the MT. (4) Creation, (5) man, (6) eschatology, (7) divine judgment, and many others, are major themes that run through the OT corpus.

In addition, regarding Israel, (8) the divine act of deliverance shown in the exodus from Egypt, (9) deliverance of nations from the bondage of sin, (10) the reign of God as King, and the list goes on.<sup>117</sup> A theology of the OT sees these overarching themes and motifs that show the unity of the OT corpus made possible by God as the unifying center. It is therefore possible to speak of an OT theme, and in this way, establish major themes as existing threads above themes and motifs that recur within a single book.

### **An Inner of OT Books' Theologies**

It is contended that establishing an inner book's theology is challenging task equal to that of establishing major themes without making them the center of OT. The diverse theological motifs and themes, utterances, testimonies are to be seen as intrinsically connected on the basis of revelation-inspiration, and canonicity of the HB.<sup>118</sup> Revelation-inspiration of the bible leads to the single agenda of the Godhead, i.e., salvation of mankind. It attests to divine temporality for mankind's salvation.

This brings us back to God as center of the OT in other words. There is a warning that the seemingly less important themes of some books of the OT, such as wisdom literature, should be made to stand alongside the major themes.<sup>119</sup> The wisdom books may seem contradictory and at tension with each other, rather the seeming tension evidences fruitful unit. When this is done the unit that binds the theologies of the OT is not only made visible, but inevitably seen to be inseparable. To this there is little to argue about. This is self-evident to those who accept the corpus of the OT and NT as a total unit. However, genre of the text ought to be considered as well.

### **OT Theology Related to NT Theology**

The OT theology should be understood to be a theology that is done in the context of the entire corpus of Scripture. If, the term Hebrew Bible theology is understood to mean exclusiveness of the NT, then we may speak of OT theology.<sup>120</sup> Additionally, unless clarity is rendered in a given discussion, the term OT sounds the most appropriate for some scholars-to avoid misunderstandings. It is the contention of this writer that it is possible to speak of the Hebrew Bible Theology with an understanding that the NT theology is taken into account, because the multiplex methodological suggested principles do not work exclusive of each other.

The two testaments work in a mutual manner, complementing the other comprehensively, and deepening the understanding of their theologies.<sup>121</sup> The unit of Scripture is at the core of canonical authority as tota scriptura. Doing theology exclusive of this principle is to deny the OT its completeness and context of interpretation. The scholar cannot decide to ignore the NT and do OT theology as though the NT did not exist. Such an attempt is in essence a denial of the OT in verity.

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<sup>116</sup>Hasel, *Old Testament Theology*, 180.

<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup>*Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>119</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.*

## Evaluation of the Multiplex Methodology

As noted earlier, the multiplex methodology has been advocated mostly by evangelical scholars who include Hasel, Sidney Greidanus, and Charles Scobie. Goldsworthy<sup>122</sup> took the task to evaluate their proposition and show gaps that exist in this preferred methodology. Perhaps, he is one of the most recent scholars to make an evaluation of the multiplex methodology.

Goldsworthy disputes the argument that “some kind of multifaceted approach is incompatible with the idea of a center or controlling theme of biblical theology as”<sup>123</sup> suggested by Hasel. He further bemoans Hasel’s negative presentation of canonical biblical methodology,<sup>124</sup> as well as his negation of some key scholars in his discussion.<sup>125</sup> In addition, he argues that Hasel’s synchronic approach is at individual books’ and cooperate books’ level, positing that a diachronic approach would intergrade the corpora.<sup>126</sup> He also argues that Hasel does not discuss the key to structuring of biblical theology. Thus, Goldsworthy responds to the multiplex methodology propagated by Hasel decades ago.

Besides, Goldsworthy argues that the multiplex methodology refutes progressive revelation that provides a structure of BT.<sup>127</sup> Connected to this, he also notes that there is credence in linking the entire bible through the Christocentric theme.<sup>128</sup> John Reumann adds his voice to an evaluation of Hasel when he points out that Hasel’s list of OT 9 theological methodologies are difficult to align to his list of 4 in the NT.<sup>129</sup> For Goldsworthy, the multiplex methodology is a force to reckon with and it surely has merit but it is not tenable in BT for the deficiencies, according to his perspective, that it raises.

However, an evaluation of Goldsworthy is in order. It is apparent that Goldsworthy seems to ignore the other elements advocated by Hasel, or simply put, he seems to misunderstand some aspects of the whole concept. Hasel postulates that a theology of the whole arises from a theology of individual parts—individual books of the biblical text. This includes both the OT and the NT taken into account. In addition, Hasel’s suggestion for a center of theology is tenable—first, no scholar comes to the text without assumptions. Second, scholars continue to debate on what should be regarded as center of OT—that points to the import of this aspect. Third, the declared or undeclared assumption regarding center of OT, shapes the theology of the scholar. Thus, the scholar must declare his option on this aspect, and for the present paper—A God who self-reveals Himself in salvific history of all humanity is pivotal to OT theology.

Regarding scholarship, the fact that Hasel should have noted the scholars he left out is perhaps a tenable argument. However, in principle the books contain the same content as those he used. On the aspect of a center of BT, it is the suggestion of this writer that Hasel could have elaborated further in the light of what he advocated for. Overall, Hasel’s theological development and argumentation should not be considered selectively—it must be evaluated in consideration of the context of the assumptions (of the HGM) it utilizes. Biblical theology, for the evangelical scholar, demands unreserved loyalty to Scripture.<sup>130</sup> BT Based on these observations it seems, in principle, that Hasel’s argument for a center of OT theology is tenable in the context of multifaceted methodologies irrespective of their nature as has been observed in the arguments of other scholars.

<sup>122</sup>Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles*.

<sup>123</sup>*Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup>*Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>128</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup>Reumann, *The Promise and Practice*, 3.

<sup>130</sup>“Because theologians are architects of theological pluralism, and because it is they who have laid the foundation for erosion of biblical authority...” Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, *Receiving the Word: How New Approaches to the Bible Impact our Biblical Faith and Lifestyle* (Berean Books, 1996), 211. Regarding biblical authority Nils Ehrenstrom and Guthrie Gassman suggest normative priority above normative supremacy. Nils Ehrenstrom and Guthrie Gassman, *Confessions in Dialogue: A Survey of Bilateral Conversations among World Confessional Families 1959-1974* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1975), 150.



## CONCLUSION

This study set out to evaluate OT methodologies used in BT, and considered the work of Hasel, who represents evangelical scholars such as Charles Scobie and Sidney Greidanus that advocate for the multiplex methodology. Hasel has written on the issue more than others, his work continues to receive extensive responses from current scholarship. More specifically, the multiplex methodology was given a fresh evaluation. The study has shown that the HCM's underpinnings permeate some of the OT methodologies that are less tenable for evangelical OT bible scholarship. While some elements of some OT methodologies, may be useful in BT, their overall conceptual frameworks show deficiencies too elaborate to be ignored. On the other hand, the HGM is hermeneutical and preferable, and is best represented by the multiplex methodology. In light of the different methodologies discussed in this paper, the multiplex methodology, remains a preferable alternative for an OT biblical theology. Its steps must be utilized as a whole to yield intended results for a sound BT of the OT that uphold the biblical text as authority above all else. Other disciplines of learning (such as archaeology, ANE studies etc.) remain illuminative to BT, yet the text must be exegeted for what it is.

In selecting a viable methodology for BT, the evangelical exegete must be aware of his/her personal presuppositions, and/or assumptions of the methodology selected. The OT and NT are one Scripture, to deny one in preference of the other is tantamount to denying the authority of both. Theology and biblical studies are complementary, and are best utilized as such for a sound BT of the OT. Thus, the task of BT for OT is not easy, yet it is doable in the wake of a plethora of methodologies. Once again, the reevaluated multiplex methodology is grounded on sound biblical hermeneutical assumptions, and remains viable for OT theology. It is also applicable to the NT.

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