Intertextuality and Canonical Criticism: Lamentations 3:25–33 in an Intertextual Network

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This paper addresses basic theoretical questions relating to the intersection between intertextuality and canonical criticism. As a case study for thinking about these general questions, a text from the book of Lamentations, Lam 3:25–33, will be read in intertextual relationship to other parts of the Hebrew Bible and its interpretation, including both the New Testament and rabbinic literature.

Intertextuality and Canonical Criticism

About fifty years after Julia Kristeva and others initialized ongoing discussions about intertextuality, it is still relevant to ask about the remaining potential and problems of this concept in research on the Hebrew Bible. The endless discussions about intertextuality have two poles: a broad concept of intertextuality claiming that "all texts are a 'mosaic' of marked and unmarked citations from earlier texts" and a narrower understanding that describes citations, echoes, and allusions as more or less explicit references between texts.[1]

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1. For the former, see Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, ISBL (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 19; for the latter, see Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

Patricia K. Tull defines intertextuality as follows:

> Intertextuality is more an angle of vision on textual production and reception than an exegetical methodology, more an insight than an ideology. But by removing artificially imposed boundaries between texts and texts, between texts and readers, by attending to the dialogical nature of all speech, intertextual theory invites new ventures in cultural and literary perception that will certainly introduce shifts in the ways biblical scholarship is carried out for many years to come.[2]

Intertextuality has become a useful concept for describing inner-biblical interpretation. In contrast to redaction history, the concept of intertextuality hints at three characteristics of the relationship between texts:

1. Instead of asking about source and influence, the concept of intertextuality looks at the text as a process of production.
2 Every text is part of a network of references to other texts (intertexts).
3. The reader plays a prominent role in the interpretation of texts.[3]

Marvin A. Sweeney refers to three major types of intertextual work, which are currently used in the field of biblical studies:

1. the citation of biblical texts,
2. the sequential reading of biblical texts within a single work, and
3. the dialogical reading of texts in relation to other texts.

He tries to combine the concept of intertextuality with a diachronic reading.[4]

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2. Patricia K. Tull, "Intertextuality and the Hebrew Scriptures," *CurBS* 8 (2000): 83; see also her contribution in this volume.

3. Willem S. Vorster, "Intertextuality and Redaktionsgeschichte," in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel*, ed. Sipke Draisma (Leuven: Peeters, 1989), 21; Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and Biblical Studies: A Review," *VEcc* 23 (2002): 418–31.

4. Marvin A. Sweeney, "Synchronic and Diachronic Concerns in Reading the

In combination with the reconstruction of the historical and literary context of a text, intertextuality provides an additional angle of vision to the dialogical character of all texts. Every text of the Hebrew Bible opens a window to other biblical texts and to postbiblical interpretations. Intertextuality as a perspective on the relationship between texts in the Hebrew Bible and their ongoing interpretation shares some characteristics with canonical criticism but also differs from it in significant ways.

On the one hand, the concept of intertextuality enables the inclusion of the different Jewish and Christian contexts of reading and the perspectives of different canons. "All canonical texts have an intertextual disposition independent from their intratextually perceptible references to other texts. The canon itself establishes this hermeneutical possibility. The biblical canon sets the individual writings in new relationships, and it is precisely this intertextual connection that alters the meaning potential of the individual writings."[5] In addition to the historic analysis of echoes, allusions, and citations, an intertextual perspective adds the mutuality of the reading process. Different canons make different intertextual links possible. The concept of intertextuality includes the reader: In the interactive process of reading, readers link texts with each other and with their own world.

The rabbinic readers and the authors of New Testament writings combine texts from the Hebrew Bible with their own world and context. Canon is a result of dialogue: "a canon … presupposes the possibility of correlations among its parts, such that new texts may imbed, reuse, or otherwise allude to precursor materials—both as a strategy for meaning-making, and for establishing the authority of a given innovation."[6]

On the other hand, the concept of intertextuality, especially in its broader sense, stands in tension with the notion of a canon. By calling into question the borders between canonical texts and their interpretations, it undermines the idea of canonical boundaries and challenges the distinc-

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Book of the Twelve Prophets," in *Perspectives on the Formation of the Book of the Twelve*, ed. Rainer Albertz, James Nogalski, and Jakob Wöhrle, BZAW 433 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 21–33. According to Moyise, we can classify five types of intertextuality: intertextual echo, narrative, and exegetical, dialogical, and postmodern intertextuality ("Intertextuality and Biblical Studies," 419–28).

5. Stefan Alkier, "Intertextuality and the Semiotics of Biblical Texts," in *Reading the Bible Intertextually*, ed. Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 11–12.

6. Michael Fishbane, "Types of Biblical Intertextuality," *VT* 80 (2000): 39.

tion between text and commentary.[7] In addition, *canon* is a postbiblical Christian term.[8] The special relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament has no exact parallel in the relationship between the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic literature. Nevertheless, the concept of intertextuality allows seeing parallel processes on both sides. A combination of intertextuality and canonical criticism makes it possible to integrate the perspective of reading communities into exegesis. Nevertheless, the search for historic interpretation of a text in its original context remains the primary goal of exegesis.

Below, one text from the Hebrew Bible, Lam 3:25–33, will serve as an example for an intertextual approach. It will first be read in its own context, then in an intertextual network with other texts from the Hebrew Bible. Finally, it will be interpreted from a New Testament perspective and in context of rabbinic intertextuality.

Lamentations 3:25–33

The parenetic text Lam 3:25–33 has its origin in the postexilic community. Lamentations 3 is usually dated later than Lam 1, 2, and 4. As a postexilic reaction to Lam 2, it may be the latest of the five poems. Arguments for this late dating are the elaboration of the acrostic style (three lines beginning with every letter of the Hebrew alphabet) and the familiarity with many traditions of the Hebrew Bible, mainly from the Prophets and Psalms.[9] The "double-voicing" of different, sometimes contradictory approaches is a deliberate literary device to create a dialogic

7. Marianne Grohmann, "Psalm 113 and the Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1–10): A Paradigm for Intertextual Reading?," in *Reading the Bible Intertextually*, ed. Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 119.

8. Stefan Alkier, "Reading the Canon Intertextually: The Decentralization of Meaning," in *Between Text and Text: The Hermeneutics of Intertextuality in Ancient Cultures and Their Afterlife in Medieval and Modern Times*, ed. Michaela Bauks, Wayne Horowitz, and Armin Lange, JAJSup 6 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 288.

9. Christian Frevel, *Die Klagelieder*, NSKAT 20.1 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2017), 39, justifies this late dating with parallels in the style of argumentation in postexilic poetry such as Ps 77 and Isa 63:7–64:11; Ulrich Berges, *Klagelieder*, HThKAT (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2002), 43.

polyphony, especially in wisdom-like units.[10] The parenetic and didactic character of Lam 3:25–33 parallels Deuteronomistic concepts and elements of wisdom.[11] In Lam 3:25–33, we find an external voice talking about the "man" (גבר) who speaks in first-person in the first part of the poem (Lam 3:1–24).[12] The verses contain general statements about an anonymous גבר—representing the whole people of Israel, "the personified voice of the exile."[13]

The different voices in Lam 3 express a discourse that can be paralleled with the dialogic interaction of externally authoritative and internally persuasive discourse described by Mikhail M. Bakhtin.[14] The language in Lam 3:25–33 is impersonal, presented in proverbial formulations: "Reading as an internal dialogue, here the גבר recollects earlier aphorisms, relying on traditional explanations for the way things 'work' in the world."[15] Lamentations 3 combines descriptions of suffering with theological challenges to the suffering. The different voices are juxtaposed without being reconciled.[16] In this context, Lam 3:25–33 recommends a behavior of patience, humility, and forbearance in situations of violence:

25 טוב יהוה לקוו לנפש תדרשנו
26 טוב ויחיל ודומם לתשועת יהוה
27 טוב לגבר כי־ישא על בנעוריו:

10. Elizabeth Boase, *The Fulfilment of Doom? The Dialogic Interaction between the Book of Lamentations and the Pre-exilic/Early Exilic Prophetic Literature*, LHBOTS 437 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 207.

11. Claus Westermann, *Die Klagelieder: Forschungsgeschichte und Auslegung* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990), 187; Boase, *Fulfilment of Doom?*, 43.

12. Adele Berlin, *Lamentations: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 84, ascribes the whole of Lam 3 to the voice of "a lone male, speaking in the first person, about what he has seen and felt and what sense he can make of it."

13. For other theories concerning the identity of the גבר in Lam 3—for example, the identification with a historical person, either the prophet Jeremiah, King Jehoiakim, or King Zedekiah—see Kim Lan Nguyen, *Chorus in the Dark: The Voices of the Book of Lamentations*, HBM 54 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2013), 125–53; and Boase, *Fulfilment of Doom?*, 223–24; quotation from Berlin, *Lamentations*, 84.

14. Miriam J. Bier, "'We Have Sinned and Rebelled; You Have Not Forgiven': The Dialogic Interaction between Authoritative and Internally Persuasive Discourse in Lamentations 3," *BibInt* 22 (2014): 146–67.

15. Bier, "We Have Sinned and Rebelled," 158.

16. See Berlin, *Lamentations*, 86.

28 ישב בדד וידם כי נטל עליו:
29 יתן בעפר פיהו אולי יש תקוה:
30 יתן למכהו לחי ישבע בחרפה:
31 כי לא יזנח לעולם אדני:
32 כי אם־הוגה ורחם כרב (חסדו) [חסדיו]:
33 כי לא ענה מלבו ויגה בני־איש:

25 The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.
26 It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.
27 It is good for one to bear the yoke in youth,
28 to sit alone in silence when the Lord has imposed it,
29 to put one's mouth to the dust (there may yet be hope),
30 to give one's cheek to the smiter, and be filled with insults.[17]
31 For the Lord will not reject forever.
32 Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love;
33 for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone. (NRSV)

These verses urge endurance of suffering in the hope of a change of fate. The behaviors and images recommended here are negative signs of defeat in other contexts:

1. the yoke (Lam 1:14; Prov 20:23): The yoke usually has negative connotations, as a symbol for hard work in agriculture (Deut 21:3); the yoke of foreign rulers (Gen 27:40; Isa 9:3; 10:27); and the yoke of exile (Isa 47:6; Jer 28:4);
2. sitting alone (Lam 1:1);
3. putting one's mouth in the dust (Lam 3:16); and
4. the shame of having the cheek struck (Job 16:10).

These symbols assume some positive connotations in Lam 3:25–33, where they take on a meaning that is intensified in Jewish tradition, such as in the targum: "Jewish tradition views God's commandments as 'yoke,' and the phrase is interpreted this way in the Targum."[18]

17. My translation is: "He will give the cheek to the one smiting him, he will become sated/satisfied with insult/shame/reproach." The LXX translates this verse in the following way: *δώσει τῷ παίοντι αὐτὸν σιαγόνα χορτασθήσεται ὀνειδισμῶν*.

18. Berlin, *Lamentations*, 94.

In Lam 3:25–33, we find an admonition to accept the suffering that comes from YHWH. The text gives a perspective of hope for those who accept God's judgement.[19] Lamentations 3:30 leaves open to interpretation who the "smiter" is: humans (enemies) or God. While God is mentioned as the cause of the insults in the broader context—but not in verse 30—the targum introduces him to the verse itself: "Let him offer his cheek to him that smites him. Because of the fear of YHWH let him accept insult."[20]

The word לחי does not only mean "cheek" but includes "chin" and "lower jaw" as well.[21] "The paraphrase makes clear that the suffering consists of God's punishment; not acceptance of the persecutor's blows, but acceptance of God's punishment warrants the 'turning of the cheek.' This point was already made by the Targum in the preceding verses, with great specificity in v. 29 where 'his Master' is mentioned."[22]

The parallelism in Lam 3:30—giving one's cheek to the smiter and being filled/sated with insults/shame—stresses not the physical assault but the social and emotional consequence of it, the aspect of humiliation. A strike in the face is an expression of deep humiliation (Job 16:10) and public chastisement (Mic 4:14).[23]

Intertextual Links to Other Texts in the Hebrew Bible

The book of Lamentations has manifold intertextual links to other books of the Hebrew Bible, including Psalms, Leviticus, and Ezekiel. In the field of Hebrew Bible, intertextuality is similar to inner-biblical interpretation, an area of study that has been developed by Michael Fishbane and others. While inner-biblical interpretation is a one-way concept, intertextuality considers the dialogue between texts as a communication in two directions.

Lamentations 3 combines many elements from other texts of the Hebrew Bible. For example, in Isa 50:6, a verse in the third song of the

19. Hans Jochen Boecker, *Klagelieder*, ZBK 21 (Zurich: TVZ, 1985), 67.

20. Etan Levine, *The Aramaic Version of Lamentations* (New York: Hermon, 1981), 70.

21. Klaus Koenen, *Klagelieder (Threni)*, BKAT 20.4 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2015), 254.

22. Levine, *Aramaic Version of Lamentations*, 141.

23. Frevel, *Klagelieder*, 232.

servant in Second Isaiah (Isa 50:4–9), we find a parallel to the behavior of turning or giving one's cheek to smiters, in different words:[24]

> גוי נתתי למכים ולחיי למרטים פני לא הסתרתי מכלמות ורק:
> I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out[25] the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. (Isa 50:6 NRSV)
> *τὸν νῶτόν μου δέδωκα εἰς μάστιγας τὰς δὲ σιαγόνας μου εἰς ῥαπίσματα τὸ δὲ πρόσωπόν μου οὐκ ἀπέστρεψα ἀπὸ αἰσχύνης ἐμπτυσμάτων.* (Isa 50:6 LXX)

While Lam 3:30 might include both human strikes and God as causes of suffering, in Isa 50:6 mainly human strikes (probably by enemies) are addressed—מכים meaning both smites and smiters.[26] Isaiah 50:6 and Lam 3:30 are the only places in the Hebrew Bible where we find a combination of נתן + ל + מכה.[27]

A Qumran text (1QIsa[a]) has an interesting different reading here: מטלים, "those who bring to fall/let down" (from נטל or טול).[28] The LXX reads: *μάστιγας* ("whips/scourges/afflictions"). Approaches to exegesis that are informed by theories of intertextuality can highlight the value of permitting different textual witnesses (e.g., the MT, the LXX, and Qumran texts) to be read alongside one another and thereby set in dialogue.[29] It is useful to understand textual criticism as an intertextual dialogue of different versions more than a search for the earliest available form of the text, which is hard to reconstruct.

Regarding the intention of Lam 3:30 and the whole context, Prov 20:22 is another close parallel:

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24. Hans-Jürgen Hermisson, *Deuterojesaja*, BKAT 11.13 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2008), 113.

25. Another possible translation of מרטים is "those who make bare."

26. Boecker, *Klagelieder*, 67.

27. Koenen, *Klagelieder*, 254.

28. Edward Yechezkel Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1Q Isa[a])*, STDJ 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 255–56; Johannes Hempel, "Zu Jes 50,6," *ZAW* 76 (1964): 327.

29. Ulrike Bail, "Psalm 110: Eine intertextuelle Lektüre aus alttestamentlicher Perspektive," in *Heiligkeit und Herrschaft*, ed. Dieter Sänger, BTSt 55 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2003), 94–121.

אל־תאמר אשלמה־רע קוה ליהוה וישע לך:
Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the Lord, and he will help you. (Prov 20:22 NRSV)

Lamentations 3:30 opens another intertextual relationship to Job 16:10:

פערו עלי בפיהם בחרפה הכו לחיי יחד עלי יתמלאון
They have gaped at me with their mouths; they have struck me insolently on the cheek; they mass themselves together against me. (Job 16:10 NRSV)[30]

These texts reflect the common view that striking the cheek is combined with shame and degradation (חרפה). The subject is צרי, "my enemy" (Job 16:9). While Job 16:10 states that striking someone's cheek comes with reproach (בחרפה), Lam 3:30 recommends a behavior in which the shame is swallowed: one should become sated/satisfied by reproach/insult/shame. The texts highlight a human behavior of accepting injury and humiliation.

Intertextual Links from Lam 3:25–33 to the New Testament

Although Isa 50:6 and Lam 3:30 describe nonresistance to an evildoer, this behavior is presented as an antithesis in the Sermon on the Mount in Matt 5:38–39:

38 Ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη· ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ καὶ ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος.
39 ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ· ἀλλ᾽ ὅστις σε ῥαπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα [σου], στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην·
38 You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." 39 But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also. (Matt 5:38–39 NRSV)

Verse 38 presents a citation from the LXX including an introduction formula. Verse 39a offers a general ethical principle—*μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ* ("do not resist an evildoer")—as Jesus-tradition.[31] Verse 39b gives a first

30. My translation is: "They opened their mouths widely against me, with reproach they struck my cheek, they mass themselves together against me."

31. Concerning the origin and background of this text, see, for example, Martin Ebner, "Feindesliebe—Ein Ratschlag zum Überleben? Sozial- und religionsgeschichtliche Überlegungen zu Mt 5,38–47 par Lk 6,27–35," in *From Quest to Q: Festschrift*

example for this maxim, which is followed by others in verses 40–42.[32] Usually, this well-known text is not associated with Lam 3:30 but with other texts from the Hebrew Bible. By creating an intertextual link to the torah of retaliation עין תחת עין ("eye for eye"; Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21), it puts a verse that is well-known from the biblical background in the context of an opposition. We find one version of the *lex talionis* in Exod 21:22–27:

22 וכי־ינצו אנשים ונגפו אשה הרה ויצאו ילדיה ולא יהיה אסון ענוש יענש כאשר
ישית עליו בעל האשה ונתן בפללים:
23 ואם־אסון יהיה ונתתה נפש תחת נפש:
24 עין תחת עין שן תחת שן יד תחת יד רגל תחת רגל:
25 כויה תחת כויה פצע תחת פצע חבורה תחת חבורה:
26 וכי־יכה איש את־עין עבדו או־את־עין אמתו ושחתה לחפשי ישלחנו תחת עינו:
27 ואם־שן עבדו או־שן אמתו יפיל לחפשי ישלחנו תחת שנו:

22 When people who are fighting injure a pregnant woman so that there is a miscarriage,[33] and yet no further harm follows, the one responsible shall be fined what the woman's husband demands, paying as much as the judges determine. 23 If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. 26 When a slaveowner strikes the eye of a male or female slave, destroying it, the owner shall let the slave go, a free person, to compensate for the eye. 27 If the owner knocks out a tooth of a male or female slave, the slave shall be let go, a free person, to compensate for the tooth. (NRSV)

An intertextual approach to the Bible highlights that the citation of a few keywords in Matt 5:38 opens a window to the whole context in Exod 21:22–27. The textual context clarifies that עין תחת עין ("eye for eye") is not a general principle of the Old Testament, as it is often seen to be, but a "law" in the sense of תורה ("torah/teaching") in concrete cases of bodily

James M. Robinson, ed. Jon M. Asgeirsson, Kristin de Troyer, and Marvin W. Meyer, BETL 146 (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 119–42; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 4 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 613–16, 622.

32. Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, EKKNT 1.1 (Zurich: Benziger, 2002), 390–91.

33. The Hebrew word אסון can be interpreted as "miscarriage," but it refers to "damage/mischief/evil/harm" in a more general way as well. It is not clear whether the "harm" affects the child or the mother.

injury. This torah tries to find a solution for a forensic problem, namely special cases of bodily harm that lead to injury or death.[34] The *lex talionis* has parallels in the Code of Hammurabi (e.g., §§209–214; eighteenth century BCE), which lists different cases of physical injury requiring different punishments, including physical damage and financial compensation. In this context, the intention of the biblical *lex talionis* is a limitation of excessive violence.[35] The text in the Hebrew Bible is thus already open to being interpreted either literally or as referring to pecuniary compensation with the value of an eye, tooth, foot, and so on; ונתתה ("you shall give") in Exod 21:23 can be read as an allusion to pecuniary damage compensation. The preposition תחת ("for") can be translated as "instead of," thus highlighting the idea of substitution.[36]

The intention of Exod 21:22–27 is to interrupt the cycle of revenge and replace it with the concept of balanced compensation and responsibility; the bodily injury of different persons shall be settled by compensation for their value, not by the same physical assault.[37] The text aims at reduction of violence, compensation for damage, and reparation.[38]

Richard B. Hays's distinction between quotation, echo, and allusion has become standard in research on intertextuality.[39] The criteria for intertextual relationships between the Old Testament and New Testament—availability, volume, recurrence, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation, and satisfaction—are only useful for texts with close linguistic correspondences. In our example, they make sense for the citation at the beginning. The introduction in Matt 5:38, "You have heard that it was said," marks the following clause, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," explicitly as a citation.

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34. Frank Crüsemann, "'Auge um Auge…' (Ex 21,24f): Zum sozialgeschichtlichen Sinn des Talionsgesetzes im Bundesbuch," *EvT* 47 (1987): 411–26.

35. This line of interpretation has a long tradition: see, for example, Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.16.

36. Benno Jacob, *Das Buch Exodus* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1997), 668; cf. the translation "Augersatz für Auge," in *Die fünf Bücher der Weisung*, trans. Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, 10th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992), 209.

37. Manfred Oeming, "Vom Eigenwert des Alten Testaments als Wort Gottes," in *Gottes Wort im Menschenwort: Die eine Bibel als Fundament der Theologie*, ed. Karl Lehmann and Ralf Rothenbusch, QD 266 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2014), 333.

38. Eckart Otto, *Das Gesetz des Mose* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), 166–70.

39. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 29–32.

The guidance that follows not to withstand evil and to turn one's cheek to the smiter is presented as the word of Jesus, in antithesis to the citation of Exod 21:24 (Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21). In Hays's classification, it could be an echo of texts from the Hebrew Bible: Lam 3:30; Isa 50:6; and Prov 20:22. The only word that is used both in Matt 5:39 and Lam 3:30 LXX is σιαγών ("cheek"). The behavior is described in different words but reflects the same idea. While Lam 3:30 speaks only of the לחי ("cheek"), Matt 5:39 specifies the right cheek, which means a strike with the back of the hand, an even harder attack. Considering this context, it is plausible to understand δὲ at the beginning of Matt 5:39 more as an addition in the sense of "and" than as a marker of contrast ("but").

Matthew 5:38–39 presents Jesus as a teacher of the torah who refers to the legal principle of appropriate punishment, as formulated in the Hebrew Bible in Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; and Lev 24:20, and outside the Bible in the Code of Hammurabi. Already inside the Bible, there are hints that this measure is thought of as a general principle and refers to monetary compensation (Exod 21:18–19; 22:30). The concept of intertextuality enables us to see the biblical background of Matt 5:38–39. The principle of not resisting an evildoer has precedent in the Hebrew Bible, as we have seen in Lam 3:30 and Isa 50:6. While Isa 50:6 deals with human strikes and Lam 3:30 suggests that God is the cause of human strikes, it is clear in Matt 5:38–39 that human strikes are the focus.

Rabbinic Intertextuality

The question of whether *lex talionis* is to be interpreted literally or as referring to pecuniary compensation figures in early Jewish and rabbinic writings. Josephus is aware of both possibilities: a literal understanding and monetary compensation (*A.J.* 4.280). Targum Pseudo-Jonathan explains Exod 21:24 as follows: "the equivalent value [דמי] of an eye for an eye."

It is helpful to read the so-called antithesis in Matt 5:38–39 intertextually with rabbinic interpretations. The Mishnah gives clear regulations regarding remunerations: compensation for damage, compensation for pain and suffering, costs for curative treatment, and money for absenteeism and humiliation (m. B. Qam. 8:1). In the Gemara, the rabbis gather arguments in favor of monetary compensation and against the literal meaning of "an eye for an eye" (b. B. Qam. 83b–84a; cf. Midrash Sipra).

> Yet the rabbinic literature also contains much detail about what sort of restitution, if any, one needed to make for having either injured and/or humiliated another. The literature also speaks of the many ways in which one can injure and/or humiliate another, but the main examples are injuring the eye (which for the Rabbis meant both damage as well as physical pain); slapping (which meant pained embarrassment); and garment-taking (which meant embarrassment).[40]

A look at rabbinic texts clarifies that עין תחת עין never was understood in a literal sense but always as referring to monetary compensation.[41]

The behavior recommended in Matt 5:39 is to relinquish this right in some cases, not to go to court against an evildoer who caused one damage. The concrete example mentioned is getting involved in a fight. In accordance with biblical and rabbinic tradition, the ability to relinquish the right to compensation has its root in trust in God (Prov 20:22; b. Shabb. 88b; b. Git. 36b).[42] The verse contains an ethical guideline, not a new legal ruling.[43] "Matt 5:39b–41 describes metaphorically the extent of nonretaliation. One who has suffered insult and harm is called upon not just to tolerate what the evil assailant did to him. Rather, by turning the other cheek … he should be willing to accept twice the amount of harm that was done to him."[44]

In the Babylonian Talmud, a similar behavior is recommended by the rabbis:

> תנו רבנן הנעלבין ואינן עולבים שומעין חרפתן ואין משיבין עושין מאהבה ושמחין ביסורין עליהן הכתוב אומר (שופטים ה, לא) ואוהביו כצאת השמש בגבורתו
> Our Rabbis taught: They who suffer insults but do not inflict them, who hear their disgrace and do not answer, who act from love and rejoice in chastisement, of such the Scripture says, "May your friends [lovers] be like the sun as it rises in its might" (Judg 5:31). (b. Git. 36b)

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40. Herbert W. Basser, *The Gospel of Matthew and Judaic Traditions: A Relevance-Based Commentary*, BRLA 46 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 156.

41. Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 391.

42. Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, THKNT 1 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006), 145–47.

43. Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 391.

44. Reinhard Neudecker, *Moses Interpreted by the Pharisees and Jesus: Matthew's Antitheses in the Light of Early Rabbinic Literature*, SubBi 44 (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical, 2012), 105–6.

This rabbinic interpretation creates an intertextual link to Judg 5:31, where the friends are contrasted with the enemies mentioned at the beginning of the verse:

> כן יאבדו כל־אויביך יהוה ואהביו כצאת השמש בגברתו ותשקט הארץ ארבעים שנה
>
> "So perish all your enemies, O Lord! But may your friends be like the sun as it rises in its might." And the land had rest forty years. (Judg 5:31 NRSV)

The verse resembles חרפה in Job 16:10, cited above. Reading Lam 3:30 as an intertext for Matt 5:38–39 stresses the aspect of insult because it introduces the moral aspect of striking the cheek as an expression of emotional and social insult: "The parallel of cheek/insults drives home the point that Matthew's 'striking the cheek' is an expression of insult rather than physical damage."[45]

Intertextuality characterizes rabbinic exegesis (and perhaps much of Jewish exegesis) in general: rabbinic exegesis has a special interest in and sensitivity to the interconnectedness of texts. It uses texts from the Hebrew Bible in different senses and contexts without reducing their meaning to one aspect.[46] Rabbinic intertextuality finds a balance in the tension between canonical criticism and intertextuality. Having a special interest in and sensitivity to the interconnectedness of texts, the rabbis use texts from different parts of the Hebrew canon and bring them together in a new text.

This network of texts relativizes the antithesis in Matt 5:38–39 and shows that this New Testament text fits well in the framework of rabbinic exegesis. "It is sound to assume that at the time of the New Testament the biblical *lex talionis* was not practiced according to its literal meaning and that physical harm to a person was settled by pecuniary penalties."[47] It is reasonable to understand the New Testament discourse against the background of early Jewish and rabbinic interpretation of Scripture. Placing Matt 5:38–39 in a wider intertextual network than the cited text from the Old Testament shows that the "antithesis" is a rhetorical strategy. The recommended behavior is not as new as presented but has a firm basis in the Hebrew Bible (Isa 50:6; Lam 3:25–33; Job 16:10) and in rabbinic literature.

45. Basser, *Gospel of Matthew and Judaic Traditions*, 157.
46. Alexander Samely, "Art. Intertextualität IV. Judaistisch," *LB*, 303.
47. Neudecker, *Moses Interpreted by the Pharisees and Jesus*, 100.

Thus, the interpretation of Lam 3:25–33 above opens windows to different intertexts within the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and rabbinic literature. Reflecting different voices, the text is dialogic in itself. This dialogical character continues in later interpretations and is made visible via an intertextual approach.

Intertextuality and Canonical Criticism: Conclusions

The concept of intertextuality sheds light on the network of texts in which every biblical text is situated. While it is often difficult to date texts exactly, against the background of intertextuality, the relationship between texts is seen as a mutual process. Intertextuality is a frame for describing inner-biblical interpretation. Still, a remaining problem of intertextuality is the arbitrariness of relationships between texts: It is hard to define the borders of interpretation, and everything is possible. Rabbinic intertextuality finds a balance of plurality without arbitrariness.

The concept of intertextuality, especially in its broad sense, has a tense relationship with the notion of a canon. *Canon* is a term with a Christian background, developed in postbiblical times. Combining intertextuality with canonical criticism is a contradiction in itself. Nevertheless, an intertextual approach increases awareness of the dialogue between voices within the Bible, first within the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and within the New Testament separately. In a second step, the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the New Testament can be read together in their relatedness. The different voices relativize a contrasting relationship between the Old and New Testaments. Including the reader and reading communities, the concept of intertextuality makes visible the different possibilities for reading texts from the Hebrew Bible: "The canon serves as the frame for the production of meaning in the act of reading. It is a semiotic power that engages the reader in the manifold relations of the canon's different books."[48] Canonical criticism can be useful in the broad sense of the word—not when it is restricted to the Christian canon, but with regard to different canons. A combination of intertextuality and canonical criticism can serve as a background frame for the comparison between Jewish and Christian approaches to the Hebrew Bible.

48. Alkier, "Reading the Canon Intertextually," 289.